

AFGHAN HOUND

A breed standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance including the correct colour of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function. Absolute soundness is essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure. However, if a dog possesses a feature, characteristic or colour described as unacceptable, it must not be rewarded in the show ring.

Most recent changes to this Standard have an effective date of 01/01/2026

ORIGIN

Afghanistan. (Patronage: Great Britain).

UTILISATION

Sighthound.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

[ed. from FCI Breed Standard No. 228]

The first Afghan Hounds arrived in Britain in the early 1900s and one, called "Zardin", won in spectacular style at the 1907 Crystal Palace show in London. The breed is also known as the Tazi, supporting its resemblance to a Russian breed of that name. One of the typical Sighthounds of the world, the Afghan Hound - who, as his name implies, comes from the mountains of Afghanistan - is a hunter and will chase if given opportunity. Nowadays it is also a glamorous show dog that must combine strength and dignity; with a long, silky coat as well as having an Oriental expression.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Gives the impression of strength and dignity, combining speed and power. Head held proudly.

CHARACTERISTICS

Eastern or Oriental expression is typical of breed. The Afghan looks at and through one.

TEMPERAMENT

Dignified and aloof, with a certain keen fierceness.

HEAD

Skull long, not too narrow, with prominent occiput. Foreface long, with punishing jaws and slight stop. Skull well-balanced and mounted by a long 'top-knot'. Nose preferably black; liver permissible in light-coloured dogs.

Eyes:

Dark for preference, but golden colour permissible if in keeping with colour of the dog. Nearly triangular in appearance, slanting slightly upwards from inner corner to outer corner.

Ears:

Set low and well back, carried close to head. Covered with long, silky hair.

Mouth:

Jaws strong, with a perfect, regular, and complete scissor bite, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws. Level bite tolerated.

NECK

Long, strong, with proud carriage of head.

FOREQUARTERS

Shoulders long and sloping, set well back, well-muscled and strong, without being loaded. Upper arm long and sloping. In profile, this brings the elbow vertically below the wither. Forelegs straight and well-boned, elbows close to ribcage, turning neither in nor out.

BODY

Back level, moderate length, well-muscled, back falling slightly away to stern [*ed. note: referring to the croup*]. Loin straight, broad, and rather short. Hip bones rather prominent and wide apart. A fair spring of ribs and good depth of chest.

HINDQUARTERS

Powerful, well-bent and well-turned stifles. Great length between hip and hock, with comparatively short distance between hock and foot.

FEET

Forefeet strong and very large both in length and breadth, and covered with long, thick hair; toes arched. Pasterns long and springy, pads well down on ground. Hind feet long, but not quite as broad as forefeet; covered with long thick hair.

TAIL

Not too short. Set on low with ring at end. Raised when in action. Sparsely feathered.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Smooth and springy with a style of high order.

COAT

Long, and very fine texture on the ribs, fore- and hindquarters and flanks. In mature dogs, from the shoulder backwards and along the saddle, hair short and close. Hair long from the forehead backwards, with a distinct silky 'topknot'. On the foreface hair short, ears and legs well-coated. Pasterns can be bare. Coat must develop naturally. Any evidence of clipping or scissoring undesirable.

COLOUR

- All colours, except merle which is unacceptable. However, white markings on the head or collar are highly undesirable.

SIZE

Ideal height at withers:

Males: 68cm – 74cm (approx. 27" – 29").

Females: 63cm – 69cm (approx. 25" – 27").

***N.B.** Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum. Only functionally and clinically healthy dogs, with breed typical conformation should be used for breeding.*

FAULTS

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog, and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

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When judging this breed at FCI International Shows, use:

FCI Standard No. 228: AFGHAN HOUND

FCI Classification: Group 10 – Sighthounds.

Section 1 – Long-haired or fringed Sighthounds.
Without working trial.