

## DALMATIAN

*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

Croatia.

### UTILISATION

Hunting dog. Companion dog, family dog, suitable to be trained for various purposes.

### BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

[ed. for interest – from Wikipedia: The Dalmatian]:

The FCI recognised Croatia as its country of origin, citing several historical sources. The first known written reference to a Dalmatian is from 1375, when Peter, Bishop of Dakovo, mentions a hunting dog principally found in Dalmatia, with short white hair and black round spots on various parts of the body, naming the breed *Canis Dalmaticus*. The earliest illustrations of the breed, in a fresco and an altar painting (c.1600), have been found in Croatia. In 1771, Thomas Pennant described the breed in his book, *Synopsis of Quadrupeds*, writing that the origin of the breed is from Dalmatia; he referred to it as *Dalmatian*. The book by Thomas Bewick, *A General History of Quadrupeds*, published in 1790, refers to the breed as *Dalmatian or Coach Dog*. During the Regency period, the Dalmatian became a status symbol and those with decorative spotting were highly prized. The breed was also used to guard the stables at night. The breed was developed and cultivated chiefly in England. The first unofficial standard for the breed was introduced in 1882. In 1890 with the formation of the first Dalmatian Club in England, the standard became official.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

A distinctively spotted dog, balanced, strong, muscular, and active. Symmetrical in outline, elegant, free from coarseness and lumber.

### CHARACTERISTICS

A carriage dog of good demeanour, capable of great endurance and a fair turn of speed.

### TEMPERAMENT

Outgoing and friendly, not shy or hesitant, free from nervousness and aggression.

### HEAD

Of fair length, skull flat, reasonably broad between ears, moderately well defined in front of ears. Entirely free from wrinkle. Moderate amount of stop. Muzzle powerful, never snipey. Distance from nose to stop equals that from stop to occiput. Lips clean, fitting jaws moderately closely. Nose in black-spotted variety always black, in liver variety always brown.

#### Eyes:

Set moderately well apart, medium size, oval in shape, bright and sparkling, with intelligent expression. Colour dark brown in black-spotted, amber in liver-spotted, with uniformly pigmented irises. Fully pigmented eye-rims, black in black-spotted, and liver brown in liver-spotted.

#### Ears:

Set on rather high, moderate size, rather wide at base, gradually tapering to rounded point. Fine in texture, carried close to head. Marking well broken up, preferably spotted.

### **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.

### **NECK**

Fairly long, nicely arched, light, and tapering. Entirely free from throatiness.

### **FOREQUARTERS**

Shoulders well laid back, clean, muscular with length of shoulder and upper arm approximately equal. Elbows set close to body. Forelegs perfectly straight with strong round bone down to feet, with slight spring at pastern joint.

### **BODY**

Length from point of shoulder to point of buttock slightly greater than height from withers to ground. Chest not too wide, but deep and capacious with plenty of lung and heart room. Ribs well-sprung and carried well back. Well-defined withers, powerful level back. Loin strong, clean, muscular and slightly arched.

### **HINDQUARTERS**

Rounded, muscles clean with well-developed second thigh, good turn of stifle, hocks well-defined.

### **FEET**

Round, compact, with well-arched toes, cat-like, round, tough, elastic pads. Nails black or white in black-spotted variety, in liver-spotted, brown or white.

### **TAIL**

Length reaching approximately to hock. Strong at insertion gradually tapering towards end, never inserted too low or too high, free from coarseness and carried with a slight upward curve, never curled. Preferably spotted.

### **GAIT / MOVEMENT**

Great freedom of movement. Smooth, powerful, rhythmic action with long stride. Viewed from fore and aft, the legs should appear straight with a degree of convergence towards the centre line at the trot. The feet should move along straight lines with the rear feet tracking the fore. A short stride and paddling action is incorrect.

### **COAT**

Short, hard, dense; sleek, and glossy in appearance.

### **COLOUR**

- Ground colour pure white.
  - Black-spotted dogs having dense black spots, liver-spotted dogs, liver brown spots; not running together, but round and well defined. In size 2cm – 3cm (approx. 1") in diameter as well distributed as possible. Spots on extremities smaller than those on the body.
  - Tricolours and spotting other than black or liver unacceptable. Bronzing on spots undesirable in adults. Some patching on ears or head not to be penalised.
- Any other colour or combination of colours unacceptable.

### **SIZE**

#### **Ideal Height at withers:**

**Males:** 58cm – 61cm (approx. 23" – 24").

**Females:** 56cm – 58cm (approx. 22" – 23").

Overall balance of prime importance.

### **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. 153: DALMATINSKI PAS (DALMATIAN)**

**FCI Classification: Group 6 – Scenthounds and related breeds**

Section 3.1. Related breeds.

Without working trial.