

DEERHOUND

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

Great Britain.

UTILISATION

Racing dog, hunting dog, companion.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

[ed. from FCI Breed Standard No. 164:]

The Deerhound, known at one time as the Scottish Deerhound, has mystery surrounding his origins, but there are grounds for thinking the Deerhound may have been introduced to Scotland by Phoenician traders. Certainly, there were running Hounds there when the Romans arrived. The breed has hunted the red deer for a thousand years, and although, today, more accustomed to the show ring, he has remained similar in type over the centuries.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Resembles a rough-coated Greyhound of larger size and bone.

CHARACTERISTICS

The build suggests the unique combination of speed, power, and endurance necessary to pull down a stag, but general bearing is one of gentle dignity.

TEMPERAMENT

Gentle and friendly. Obedient and easy to train, because eager to please. Docile and good-tempered, never suspicious, aggressive, or nervous. Carries himself with quiet dignity.

HEAD

Broadest at ears, tapering slightly to eyes, muzzle tapering more decidedly to nose; lips level. Head long, skull flat rather than round, with very slight rise over eyes, with no stop. Skull coated with moderately long hair, softer than rest of coat. Nose slightly aquiline and black. In lighter-coloured dogs, black muzzle preferred. Good moustache of rather silky hair and some beard.

Eyes:

Dark. Generally dark brown or hazel. Light eyes undesirable. Moderately full with a soft look in repose, but keen, far-away look when dog is roused. Rims black.

Ears:

Set-on high and, in repose, folded back. In excitement, raised above head without losing the fold and, in some cases, semi-erect. A big thick ear hanging flat to the head or a prick ear undesirable. Ear soft, glossy, and like a mouse's coat to the touch; the smaller the better, no long coat or fringe. Ears black or dark-coloured.

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

Very strong with good reach, sometimes disguised by mane. Nape of neck very prominent where head is set on; no throatiness.

FOREQUARTERS

Shoulders well-laid, not too far apart. Loaded and straight shoulders undesirable. Forelegs straight, broad, and flat; a good, broad forearm and elbow being desirable.

BODY

Body and general formation that of a Greyhound of larger size and bone. Chest deep rather than broad, not too narrow or flat-sided. Loin well-arched and drooping to tail. Flat topline undesirable.

HINDQUARTERS

Drooping, broad, and powerful, hips set wide apart. Hind legs well-bent at stifle with great length from hip to hock. Bone broad and flat.

FEET

Compact and well-knuckled. Nails strong.

TAIL

Long, thick at root, tapering, and reaching almost to ground. When standing, dropped perfectly straight down or curved. Curved when moving; never lifted above line of back. Well-covered with hair; on upper side thick and wiry, on under side longer, and towards end a slight fringe acceptable. A curl or ring tail undesirable.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Easy, active, and true, with a long stride.

COAT

Shaggy, but not over-coated. Woolly coat highly undesirable. The correct coat is thick, close-lying, ragged; harsh or crisp to the touch. Hair on body, neck, and quarters, harsh and wiry about 8cm (approx. 3") to 10cm (approx. 4") long; that on head, breast, and belly much softer. A slight hairy fringe on inside of forelegs and hind legs.

COLOUR

- Dark blue-grey, darker and lighter greys, or brindles, and yellows, sandy-red or red fawns with black points.
- * A white chest, white toes, and a slight white tip to stern are permissible but the less white the better, since it is a self-coloured dog.
- * A white blaze on head or white collar unacceptable. Any other colour or combination of colours unacceptable.

SIZE

Height:

Males: minimum desirable height at the withers 76cm (approx. 30").

Females: minimum desirable height at the withers 71cm (approx. 28").

Weight:

Males: approx. 45.5kg.

Females: approx. 36.5kg.

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. 164: DEERHOUND

FCI Classification: Group 10 – Sighthounds.

Section 2 – Rough-haired Sighthounds.

Without working trial.