

SCOTTISH TERRIER

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

Terrier.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

[ed. from FCI Breed Standard No. 73]

The Scottish Terrier Club was formed in 1882, a year after the first standard for the breed was drawn up, and just three years after the start of the breed as we know it today, by Capt. Gordon Murray. He was strongly supported by the founder and first chairman of the Kennel Club, Mr Sewallis, and Evelyn Shirley. The public image of this short-legged Terrier from the Highlands is often that of a dour Scot, but to his family and friends, he is affectionate and cheerful, while arousing himself at the slightest sound in protection of house and home.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Thick-set, of suitable size to go to ground, which would preclude dogs of excessive body weight. Short-legged, alert in carriage, and suggestive of great power and activity in small compass. Head gives impression of being long for size of dog. Very agile and active in spite of short legs.

CHARACTERISTICS

Loyal and faithful. Dignified, independent, and reserved, but courageous and highly intelligent.

TEMPERAMENT

Bold, but never aggressive.

HEAD

Long without being out of proportion to size of dog. Length of skull enabling it to be fairly wide and yet retain narrow appearance. Skull nearly flat and cheek bones not protruding. Foreface strongly constructed and deep throughout. Skull and foreface of equal length. Slight, but distinct, stop between skull and foreface just in front of eye. Nose large, black and, in profile, the line from nose towards chin appears to slope backwards.

Eyes:

Almond-shaped, dark brown, fairly wide apart, well-set under eyebrows with keen, intelligent expression.

Ears:

Neat, fine texture, pointed, erect, and set on top of skull but not too close together. Large, wide-based ears undesirable.

Mouth:

Teeth large with perfect, regular, scissor bite, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws.

NECK

Muscular and of moderate length.

FOREQUARTERS

Head carried on muscular neck of moderate length showing quality; set into long, sloping shoulders; brisket well in front of straight, well-boned forelegs to straight pasterns. Chest fairly broad and hung between forelegs, which must not be out at the elbow, or placed under body.

BODY

Well-rounded ribs flattening to deep chest and carried well back. Back proportionately short and very muscular. Topline of body straight and level, loin muscular and deep, powerfully coupling the ribs to hindquarters.

HINDQUARTERS

Remarkably powerful for size of dog. Big, wide buttocks, deep thighs, and well-bent stifles. Hocks short, strong, turning neither in nor out.

FEET

Good size, well-padded, toes well-arched and close-knit, forefeet slightly larger than hind feet.

TAIL

Moderate length giving general balance to dog, thick at root and tapering towards tip. Set on with upright carriage or slight bend.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Smooth and free, straight both back and front with drive from behind and level gait throughout.

COAT

Close-lying, double coat; undercoat short, dense and soft; outercoat harsh, dense and wiry, together making a weather-resisting covering.

COLOUR

- Black, wheaten, or brindle of any shade.
- Any other colour or combination of colours unacceptable.

SIZE

Height at withers:

25cm – 28cm (approx. 10" – 11")

Weight:

8.5kg – 10.5kg.

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. 73: SCOTTISH TERRIER

FCI Classification: Group 3 – Terriers.

Section 2 – Small-sized Terriers .

Without working trial.