

Shetland Sheepdog

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A Breed Standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function with soundness essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be mindful of features which could be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed.

GENERAL APPEARANCE:

Small, long-haired working dog of great beauty, free from cloddiness and coarseness, action lithe and graceful. Outline symmetrical so that no part appears out of proportion to whole. Abundant coat, mane and frill, shapeliness of head and sweetness of expression combine to present the ideal.

CHARACTERISTICS:

Alert, gentle, intelligent, strong and active.

TEMPERAMENT:

Affectionate and responsive to his owner, reserved towards strangers, never nervous.

Head refined and elegant with no exaggerations; when viewed from top or side a long, blunt wedge, tapering from ear to nose. Width and depth of skull in proportion to length of skull and muzzle. Whole to be considered in connection with size of dog. Skull flat, moderately wide between ears, with no prominence of occipital bone. Cheeks flat, merging smoothly into well rounded muzzle. Skull and muzzle of equal length, dividing point inner corner of eye. Topline of skull parallel to topline of muzzle, with slight but definite stop. Nose, lips and eye rims black. The characteristic expression is obtained by the perfect balance and combination of skull and foreface, shape, colour and placement of eyes, correct position and carriage of ears.

EYES:

Medium size obliquely set, almond-shape. Dark brown except in the case of merles, where one or both may be blue or blue flecked.

EARS:

Small, moderately wide at base, placed fairly close together on top of skull. In repose, thrown back; when alert brought forward and carried semi-erect with tips falling forward.

MOUTH:

Jaws level, clean, strong with well-developed underjaw. Lips tight. Teeth sound with a perfect, regular and complete scissor bite i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws. A full complement of 42 properly placed teeth highly desired.

NECK:

Muscular, well arched, of sufficient length to carry head proudly.

FOREQUARTERS:

Shoulders very well laid back. At withers, separated only by vertebrae, but blades sloping outwards to accommodate desired spring of ribs. Shoulder joint well angled. Upper arm and shoulder blade approximately equal in length. Elbow equidistant from ground and withers. Forelegs straight, when viewed from front, muscular and clean with strong, but not heavy, bone. Pasterns strong and flexible.

BODY:

Slightly longer from point of shoulder to bottom of croup than height at withers. Chest deep, reaching to point of elbow. Ribs well sprung, tapering at lower half to allow free play of forelegs and shoulders. Back level, with graceful sweep over loins, croup slopes gradually to rear.

HINDQUARTERS:

Thigh broad and muscular, thigh bones set into pelvis at right angles. Stifle joint has distinct angle, hock joint clean cut, angular, well let down with strong bone. Hocks straight when viewed from behind.

FEET:

Oval, soles well padded, toes arched and close together.

TAIL:

Set low; tapering bone reaches to at least hock; with abundant hair and slight upward sweep. Maybe slightly raised when moving but never over level of back. Never kinked.

GAIT/MOVEMENT:

Lithe, smooth and graceful with drive from hindquarters, covering the maximum amount of ground with the minimum of effort. Pacing, plaiting, rolling or stiff, stilted, up and down movement, highly undesirable.

COAT:

Double; outer coat of long hair, harsh-textured and straight. Undercoat soft, short and close. Mane and frill very abundant, forelegs well feathered. Hindlegs above hocks profusely covered with hair, below hocks fairly smooth. Face smooth. The coat should fit the body and not dominate or detract from the outline of the dog. Smooth-coated specimens highly undesirable.

COLOUR:

Sable: clear or shaded, any colour from pale gold to deep mahogany, in its shade, rich in tone. Wolf-sable and grey undesirable.

Tricolour: intense black on body, rich tan markings preferred.

Blue Merle: clear silvery blue, splashed and marbled with black. Rich tan marking preferred but absence not penalised.

Heavy black markings, slate or rusty tinge in either top of undercoat highly undesirable; general effect must be blue.

Black and White, and Black and Tan: also recognised colours.

White markings may appear (except on black and tan) in blaze, collar and chest, frill, legs and tip of tail. All or some white markings are preferred (except on black and tan) but absence of these markings not to be penalised. Patches of white on body highly undesirable.

SIZE:

Ideal height at withers: Dogs: 37 cms (14½ ins); Bitches: 35.5 cms (14 ins).

More than 2.5 cms (1in) above or below these heights highly undesirable.

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 on health and welfare of the dog and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

NOTE:

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.



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Most recent changes to this Standard has an effective date of 01.02.2017

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