

AUSTRALIAN TERRIER

A Breed Standard is the guideline that 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 that could be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare, or soundness of this breed.

Most recent changes to this Standard have an effective date of 01/01/2019

ORIGIN

Australia.

UTILISATION

One of the smallest of the working Terriers, was bred to be both a helper and companion in rough times and terrain.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Although produced from British ancestors, the Australian Terrier is one of the few breeds in the Terrier group to have been developed outside the United Kingdom. It can also rightly claim to be the first breed developed in Australia. It appears reasonably certain that both the Australian Terrier and Australian Silky Terrier had a common ancestry from stock in Tasmania, New South Wales, and Victoria, namely the Broken-coated Terriers. It is assumed this type of dog originated from a mixture of British breeds, namely: the Skye Terrier, Scottish Terrier (Aberdeen), and the Dandie Dinmont Terrier. At intervals, the Yorkshire Terrier was introduced. It is reported that in the early 1800s, Free Settlers around Campbelltown and Ross in Tasmania were breeding broken-coated dogs of a blue-sheen body colour with tan markings. They were renowned for their prowess as watchdogs and weighed about ten pounds.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

A sturdy low-set dog, rather long in proportion to height with strong Terrier character, alertness, activity, and soundness. Its untrimmed, harsh, coat with definite ruff around the neck extending to the breast-bone, and its long strong head, assist in developing its hard-bitten, rugged appearance.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

Essentially a working Terrier, but its loyalty and even disposition make it equally suitable as a companion dog.

HEAD

Cranial Region:

Skull: Long, flat, of moderate width, full between the eyes. Covered with a soft topknot.

Stop: Slight, but definite.

Facial Region:

Nose: Black, of moderate size, the leather extending to the bridge of muzzle.

Muzzle: Strong and powerful, equal in length to that of the skull; the muzzle must be strong and not fall away under the eyes. The length and strength of the muzzle are essential to give the strong, punishing jaw.

Lips: Black, tight, and clean.

Jaws and teeth: Jaws strong and punishing, teeth large and evenly spaced, the upper incisors fitting closely over the lower (scissor bite).

Eyes:

The eyes shall be small, oval, with keen expression, and of dark brown colour, set well apart and not prominent.

Ears:

The ears are small, erect, pointed, well-carried, set on moderately wide, free from long hair, and sensitive in their use (puppies under six months excepted).

NECK

The neck is of good length, slightly arched, strong, and flowing into the well-angulated (well-laid) shoulders.

BODY

Long in proportion to height, strongly constructed. In considering the body, attention must be paid to the opening description, "a sturdy low-set dog, rather long in proportion to height"

Back: Level topline.

Loin: Strong.

Chest: Of moderate depth and width, with well-sprung ribs. Forechest well-developed, brisket relatively deep.

TAIL

Traditionally docked.

Whether docked or natural, the tail should be set on high; well-carried, but not over the back.

[*refer note below]

LIMBS

Forequarters:

General appearance: Well-boned, straight, and parallel, when viewed from the front. The legs are slightly feathered towards the wrist.

Metacarpus (pastern): Strong, without slope.

Hindquarters:

General appearance: Moderate length of quarters, broad. Viewed from behind, they should be parallel from hock to feet, neither too wide nor too close.

Upper thigh: Strong and muscular

Stifle (knee): Well-turned

Hock joint: Well-bent and let down

FEET

Small, round, compact, well-padded, toes closely knit, and moderately arched. Turned neither in nor out, with strong black or dark toenails.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

The action to be free, true, springy, and forceful. When viewed from the front, the forelegs should move truly without looseness of shoulder, elbows, or pasterns. The hindquarters to have drive and power, with free movement of stifles and hocks. Viewed from the rear, the legs from the hocks to the ground to be parallel, neither too close nor too wide.

COAT

The body coat consists of a harsh straight dense topcoat approximately 6cm (approx. 2") long with short, soft-textured undercoat. The muzzle, lower legs, and feet to be free from long hair.

COLOUR

- Blue, steel blue, or dark grey-blue, with rich tan (not sandy) on face, ears, under body, lower legs, feet, and around vent (puppies excepted). The richer the colour and more clearly defined the better. Smuttiness is objectionable. Topknot blue, silver, or a lighter shade than head colour.

* Clear sandy or red, any smuttiness or dark shadings objectionable.

* A topknot of a lighter shade is acceptable.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: 25cm (approx. 10").

Females: slightly less.

Weight:

Males: approx. 6.5kg.

Females: slightly less.

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.

*Regardless of the provisions of the current KUSA-adopted standard, docked or formerly docked breeds may be shown at all FCI- and KUSA-licensed shows in South Africa, whether their tails are docked or natural. Under no circumstances are Judges permitted to discriminate against exhibits on the grounds of docked or natural tails, and equal consideration for awards must be given to either.

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.

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.

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FCI Standard No 8: Australian Terrier

FCI Classification: Group 3: Terriers

Section 1 – Small-sized Terriers.

Without Working Trial