

PARSON RUSSELL 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 01/01/2017

ORIGIN

Great Britain.

UTILISATION

Working Terrier with ability to go to ground.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

[ed. from FCI Breed Standard No. 339]

For many years, great controversy existed in the ranks of the Terrier fanciers over a type of Terrier called somewhat vaguely, the "Jack Russell". Applications were received by the Kennel Club from a considerable number of devotees of a strain of Fox Terriers bred by a Victorian hunting parson, the Reverend John Russell. Eventually this robust and workmanlike type of Terrier was recognised and given the breed name – Parson Russell Terrier.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Workmanlike, active, and agile, without exaggeration. Built for stamina and endurance, overall picture of balance and flexibility. Honourable scars permissible.

CHARACTERISTICS

Originally a Terrier bred to work fox; a confident, energetic, and happy dog, that has the ability and conformation to go to ground.

TEMPERAMENT

Bold and friendly.

HEAD

Head wedge-shaped. Skull flat, moderately broad, gradually narrowing to the eyes. Cheeks not prominent. Stop shallow. From nose to stop slightly shorter than from stop to occiput. Nose black.

Eyes:

Dark, almond-shaped, never prominent. Keen, intelligent expression.

Ears:

Size in proportion with the head. V-shaped, dropping forward, tip of ear to be level with outer corner of eye. Fold not above top of skull. Leather of moderate thickness.

Mouth:

Jaws strong, muscular. Teeth of a good size and set square to the jaws, with a perfect, regular, and complete scissor bite, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws.

NECK

Clean, muscular, of good length, gradually widening and well set into the shoulders.

FOREQUARTERS

Shoulders long and sloping, well laid back, cleanly cut at withers. Upper arm of equal length to the shoulder and at such an angle that the legs are carried well back under the body, below the point of the withers. Legs strong and straight, turning neither in nor out; strong, flexible pasterns. Elbows close to body, working free of the sides. Moderate width between forelegs. Length of forelegs should be slightly greater than depth of body.

BODY

Overall length from point of shoulder to point of buttock slightly greater than height from withers to ground. Chest of moderate depth, not extending below point of elbow. Capable of being spanned behind the shoulders by average-sized hands. Ribs carried well back, not over-sprung nor slab-sided. Back strong, straight, and flexible. Loin strong and slightly arched. Well-balanced.

HINDQUARTERS

Strong, muscular, with well-developed second thigh. Good angulation and bend of stifle without exaggeration. Hocks set low and rear pasterns parallel, giving plenty of drive.

FEET

Compact with firm pads, toes moderately arched, never flat or open, turning neither in nor out.

TAIL

Previously customarily docked.

Docked: Length complementing the body. Strong, preferably straight, moderately high-set, carried well up on the move, may be carried lower when relaxed.

Undocked: Of moderate length, preferably straight, giving a general balance to the dog. Thick at the root and tapering towards the tip. Moderately high-set, carried well up on the move, may be carried lower when relaxed.

[*refer note below]

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Free-striding, ground-covering gait, without exaggeration. Strides should be of good length, never stilted or high-stepping. Hindquarters providing plenty of drive. Well-coordinated; straight action front and behind.

COAT

Whether rough, broken, or smooth, coat is naturally harsh, flat, straight, close, and dense, with good undercoat. Weather-resistant. Belly and undersides coated. Skin thick and loose. The prepared coat should appear natural, never clipped.

COLOUR

- White or predominantly white with tan, lemon, or black markings, or any combination of these colours.

* The colour preferably confined to the head and/or root of tail, but a little body colour is acceptable.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: 36cm (approx. 14").

Females: 33cm (approx. 13").

Most importantly soundness and balance should be maintained whilst taking into account that this Terrier, bred to work fox, should be capable of being spanned behind the shoulders by average-sized hands.

***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.

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When judging this breed at FCI International Shows, use:

FCI Standard No. 339: PARSON RUSSELL TERRIER

FCI Classification: Group 3 – Terriers.

Section 1 – Large- and medium-sized Terriers .
Working trial optional.