

ITALIAN POINTING DOG

[BRACCO ITALIANO]

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 has an effective date of 01/02/2021

ORIGIN

Italy.

UTILISATION

Pointing dog.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

This dog of ancient Italian origin, used for bird hunting, has modelled itself, and developed over the ages, from the hunting of yesteryear by means of hunt and shooting. Frescoes from the 14th century are proof of the indisputable timelessness of the Italian Pointer over the centuries, regarding his morphology and his hunting aptitudes as a pointing dog. Selected for great ability in fast and wide trot and, by nature, an excellent retriever.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Of strong and harmonious construction, and powerful appearance. The preferred subjects are those with lean limbs, well-developed muscles, well-defined lines, a markedly sculpted head, and very obvious lower orbital chiselling: elements that all contribute to give distinction to this breed.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

- Length of the body is the same, or a little more than, the height at the withers.
- Length of head is equal to four-tenths of the height at the withers; its width – measured at the level of the zygomatic arches – is less than half its length.
- Skull and muzzle are of equal length.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

Tough and adapted to all types of hunting; reliable; endowed with an excellent ability to understand; docile, and easy to train.

HEAD

Angular and narrow at the level of the zygomatic arches; the length of the skull equals the length of the muzzle. The upper longitudinal axes [*ed. planes*] of the skull and muzzle are divergent, i.e. if extending the top line of the muzzle, the latter must emerge in front of the occipital protuberance, ideally at mid-length of the skull.

Cranial Region:

Skull: Seen in profile, the skull is in the shape of a very open arch. Seen from above, it forms, lengthwise, an elongated ellipse. The width of the skull – measured at the level of the zygomatic arches – should not exceed half of the length of the head. The bulge of the forehead and the supra-orbital ridges [*ed. frontal bones above the eyes*] are perceptible. The frontal groove is visible and ends at mid-length of the skull. The interparietal crest [*ed. immediately forward of the occipital protuberance*] is short and not very prominent. The occipital protuberance is pronounced.

Stop: Not pronounced.

Facial Region:

Nose: Voluminous, with large well-opened nostrils, protruding slightly over the lips, with which it forms an angle. Colour is more-or-less pink to flesh-coloured or brown, depending on the colour of the coat.

Muzzle: Either slightly arched or straight. Its length is equal to half of the length of the head and its depth measures four-fifths of its length. Seen from the front, the lateral sides of the muzzle converge slightly, still presenting a foreface of good width. The chin is not very apparent.

Lips: Upper lips well-developed, thin, and floppy without being flaccid, covering the jaw; seen in profile, they overlap the lower jaw slightly. Seen from the front, they form an inverted "V" below the nose; the corner of the lips must be marked without being droopy.

Jaws and teeth: Dental arches well-adapted, with the teeth set square to the jaw; scissor bite. A pincer bite is also acceptable.

Cheeks: Lean

Eyes:

Semi-lateral [*ed. slightly outward*] position with a soft and submissive expression, neither deep-set nor prominent. Eyes fairly large, eyelids oval-shaped and close-fitting (no entropion or ectropion). The iris is of a more or less dark ochre or brown colour depending on the coat colour.

Ears:

Long, they should reach the tip of the nose without being stretched. Their width is at least equal to half their length; raised only very slightly; base rather narrow, set rather backward at level of zygomatic arches; a supple ear with a front rim well turned inwards and really close to the cheek is appreciated; the tips are slightly rounded.

NECK

Powerful, in truncated cone shape, length not less than two-thirds of the length of the head, well-detached from the nape. The throat shows a soft double dewlap.

BODY

Topline: The topline presents two lines: one, almost straight, slopes from the withers to the 11th dorsal vertebra; the other is slightly arched, joining with the line of the rump.

Withers: Well-defined, with the points of the shoulder blades well-separated.

Loin: Wide lumbar region, muscled, short, and slightly convex.

Croup: Long (about one-third of the height at the withers), broad and well-muscled; the ideal pelvic angulation (angle formed by the pelvic girdle with a horizontal line) is 30°.

Chest: Broad, deep and well let down to the elbows, without forming a keel, with well-sprung ribs, particularly in the lower part.

Underline and belly: Lower profile almost horizontal along the ribcage rising slightly at the abdomen.

TAIL

Thick at the base, straight, with a slight tendency to taper; hair short. When the dog is in action, and especially when questing, it is carried horizontally or nearly. The natural tail should not extend below the hock and have the above-mentioned features.

If docked, for hunting purposes and in compliance with health and animal welfare, the tail must have a length of 15cm – 25cm from the root.

[*refer note below]

LIMBS

Forequarters:

General appearance: Very free in movement.

Shoulders: Strong, well-muscled, long, and sloping.

Upper arm: Sloping, fitting to the ribcage.

Elbows: The point of the elbow should be on perpendicular line from the rear point of the shoulder blade to the ground.

Forearm: Strong, straight, with strong and well-marked sinews.

Metacarpus (pastern): Well-proportioned, lean, of good length, and slightly sloping.

Hindquarters:

Upper thigh: Long, parallel, muscular, with a rear edge almost straight.

Stifle (knee): Well-angulated.

Lower thigh: Strong.

Hock joint: Broad.

Metatarsus (rear pastern): Relatively short and lean.

FEET

Forefeet: Strong, slightly oval-shaped; well-arched with tight toes and strong nails, well-curved towards the ground. Colour of nails is white, yellow, or brown, of a more or less dark shade depending on the colour of the coat; pads elastic and lean.

Hind feet: With all the characteristics of the forefeet: they have dewclaws, the absence of which is not a fault. Double dewclaw is tolerated.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Extended and fast trot, with powerful propulsion from the hindquarters, head raised and nose held high in such a way that, when hunting, the nose is higher than the topline.

SKIN

Tough, but elastic; finer on the head, the throat, the armpits, and on the lower parts of the body. The visible pigmentation must be of a corresponding colour with the coat, and never show black spots. The pigmentation of the mouth is pink; in the roans or white and chestnut-coloured dogs they sometimes show brown or pale chestnut spotting.

COAT

Hair is short, dense, and glossy, finer and shorter on the head, the ears, front part of the legs and feet.

COLOUR

- White.
- White with patches of varied size of an orange, or more-or-less dark amber colour.
- White with more-or-less large brown patches.
- White speckled with pale orange, i.e. orange roan.
- White speckled with brown, i.e. liver roan.

* In this last combination, a metallic sheen is appreciated, and a warm shade of brown is preferred, recalling the colour of a monk's frock.

* A symmetrical facial mask is preferred, but the absence of a mask is tolerated.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: preferred size: 55cm – 67cm (approx. 21½" – 26½")

Females: preferred size: 55cm – 62cm (approx. 21½" – 24½")

Weight:

Between 25kg and 40kg depending on size.

***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.

Severe faults:

- Accentuated undershot mouth.
- Excessive amount of skin causing an exaggerated dewlap or an undivided dewlap and too many wrinkles on the head.
- Size 2cm above or below the standard height at the withers.
- An upturned tail is highly undesirable.

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy dogs.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Split nose.
- Convergence of cranio-facial axes.
- Overshot mouth.

- Wall eye.
- Coat black, white and black, tricolour, fawn, hazel, unicolour and tan markings.
- Absence of pigmentation (Albinism).
- Pigmentation of skin and annexes with traces of black.

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FCI Standard No 202: BRACCO ITALIANO (ITALIAN POINTING DOG)

FCI Classification: Group 7 - Pointing Dogs

Section 1.1. Continental Pointing Dogs – Braque type

With Working Trial