

KUSA



Official Breed Standard



Irish Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier (Terrier Group)

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.

UTILIZATION:

Wheaten Terriers were always used by small farmers to kill vermin or help with the work about the farm. They were used for a long time in the difficult job of hunting badgers and otters.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY:

The history of the Irish Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier has been somewhat obscured by its closeness to the other Irish Terrier breeds. The Wheaten is probably the oldest of the four breeds. Its existence for at least 200 years can be inferred from textual references to "soft-coated" dogs. The relation of the modern Irish Terrier to the Wheaten, though less well documented, appears to have been the result of deliberate breeding experiments. So the humble Wheaten probably has a fairly mixed ancestry. Despite the long history of the Wheaten, it wasn't until the 1937, that the Soft Coated Wheaten was officially recognised by the Irish Kennel Club. The breed has grown steadily in popularity since and is now and well known world-wide.

GENERAL APPEARANCE:

A hardy, active, short coupled dog, well built, giving the idea of strength. Not too leggy nor too low to the ground.

BEHAVIOUR/TEMPERAMENT:

Spirited and game. Good tempered. Most affectionate and loyal to his owners. Most intelligent. A trusty, faithful friend, defensive without aggression.

HEAD:

In general, powerful without being coarse. Long in good proportion to the body. Hair same colour as on body.

CRANIAL REGION

Skull flat and clean between ears; not too wide.

Stop: Defined.

FACIAL REGION

Nose: Black and well developed.

Muzzle: Foreface not longer than skull.

Jaws: Strong and punishing.

Teeth: Teeth large, regular, scissors or level bite, (i.e. edge to edge) neither undershot nor overshot.

Cheeks: Bones not prominent.

Eyes: Dark, dark hazel, not too large, not prominent, well placed.

Ears: Small to medium, carried in front, level with skull. Dark shading on base of ear allowed, and not uncommon, accompanied by a light wheaten coloured overlay. This is the only area of the dog where under-coat is allowed. "Rose" or "Flying" ears are objectionable.

NECK:

Moderately long and strong but not throaty.

BODY:

Not too long. Length from withers to base of tail approximately the same as from ground to withers.

Back: Strong and level with even top line.

Loins: Short, powerful.

Chest: Deep. Ribs well sprung.

TAIL:

Well set, not too thick. Carried gaily but never over the back. The tail is docked so that two thirds of its original length remains assuming it is in proportion to the dog. An undocked tail is permitted.

LIMBS:**FOREQUARTERS:**

Shoulders: Well laid back, muscular.

Foreleg: Perfectly straight viewed from any angle. Good bone and muscle.

Forefeet: Small, not spreading. Toenails preferably black but varying dark colours allowed.

HINDQUARTERS:

Well developed with powerful muscle.

Thighs: Strong and muscular.

Stifle (Knee): Bent.

Hock joint: Well let down, turned neither in nor out. Hind dewclaws should be removed.

Hind Feet: Small, not spreading. Toenails preferably black but varying dark colours allowed.

GAIT/MOVEMENT:

Straight action fore and aft, going and coming. Elbows tucked in. Side view: free, light co-ordinated movement.

COAT

Hair: A single coated dog. Texture soft and silky to feel and not harsh. Young dogs excluded from this. Trimming permitted.

Trimmed dogs: Coat cut close to the body at neck, chest and skull, and left especially long over eyes and under jaw. Whiskers encouraged. Profuse feathering on legs. Body coat trimmed to follow the outline of the dog but not sculpted. Tail trimmed close and neatly tapered.

Untrimmed dogs: The coat at its longest not to exceed 12.7 cm (5 in). Soft, wavy or loosely curled with the sheen of silk. Under no circumstances should coat be "fluffed out" like a Poodle or an Old English Sheepdog. Dogs shown in this condition should be heavily penalised as they give a wrong impression of type and breed. Special attention is drawn to puppy coat development. Pups are seldom born with the correct coat of maturity, care must be taken when assessing this point.

They go through several changes of colour and texture before developing the adult coat. This usually occurs between 18 months and 2½ years.

Pups: Are seldom born with the correct colour or texture coat. They come reddish, greyish and sometimes clear wheaten. The masks are generally black. Sometimes there is a black streak down the centre back or black tips to the body coat. These dark markings clear away with growth.

COLOUR:

A good clear wheaten of shades from light wheaten to a golden reddish hue.

SIZE & WEIGHT

Height at the withers: Dogs 46 - 48 cm (18- 19 in) Bitches somewhat less.

Weight: Dogs 18 – 20.5kg (40 - 45lb.)

Bitches somewhat less

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.

Nervousness. Viciousness.

Nose any colour other than black.
Undershot mouth. Overshot mouth.
Overall mature coat not clear wheaten colour.

DISQUALIFYING FAULTS:

Aggressive or overly shy.
Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.
Yellow eyes.
Dull, thick, woolly or cottony textured hair.
White coat. Brown coat.
Dogs carrying any of the above eliminating faults should never be bred from.

NB:

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.



Copyright FCI 1/2001 Re-printed with permission

The publisher of this edition is the Kennel Union of Southern Africa. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without permission in writing from the publisher.

FCI Standard No. 40 (Group 3)

03/94 Fedco 12/95 Fedco 06/2016

Fedco 06/2018/DR/updated 14/09/2018

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

[Click here to download the PDF version of the official KUSA breed standard.](#)

Download