



Official Breed Standard

## Finnish Spitz (Hound 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.*

### FINNISH SPITZ (Suomenpystykorva) – Hound Group

(Effective 01.01.2016)

#### UTILIZATION:

A hunting dog mainly for forest game birds, also predatory small game, waterfowl and elk. Eager hunter; rather independent, yet works co-operatively to game, marking game by barking.

#### BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY:

The origin of the Finnish Spitz is unknown. However it is known that hundreds of years ago dogs of the same type as Finnish Spitz were already being used for all game hunting over the whole country. Originally the main goal was to develop a dog which barked well at game up in trees and was also beautiful. When acceptance to the breed register started in the 1890's, individuals similar in type and usage were found mainly in the eastern and northern parts of the country. The first standard was established in 1892. The first speciality show was held the same year and the first bird-hunting trial in 1897. Today the breed is very common in both Finland and Sweden. It has been developed from pure natural stock and is an essential part of the Finnish culture. The Finnish Spitz was named as the National Dog of Finland in 1979.

#### GENERAL APPEARANCE:

Smaller than medium-sized, almost square. In conformation lean, firm and carries itself well.

#### IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS:

The length of the body is the same as the height at the withers.

The depth of the chest is slightly less than half of the height at the withers. The ratio between the muzzle and skull is approximately 3:4. The skull is a little broader than long; its breadth is the same as its depth.

#### BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT:

Lively, vigorous, brave and determined. Possibly a little reserved towards strangers, but never vicious.

#### HEAD:

#### CRANIAL REGION:

Skull: Viewed from above egg-shaped broadening gradually towards the ears, broadest between the ears. Viewed from the front and in profile the skull is slightly convex. The upper axes of the skull and muzzle are almost parallel. The frontal furrow is very shallow. The superciliary ridges and the occiput are slightly visible.

Stop: Not very pronounced, the angle between the nasal bridge and the skull is clearly marked.

#### FACIAL REGION:

Nose: Rather small, jet-black.

Muzzle: Narrow, clean, viewed from above and in profile evenly tapering. The nasal bridge is straight. The lower jaw is clearly visible.

Lips: Tight, rather thin and close fitting. Good pigmentation.

Jaws/Teeth: The jaws are strong. The teeth are well developed and symmetrical; normal dentition. Tight scissor bite.

Cheeks: The zygomatic arches are slightly emphasized.

Eyes: Medium-sized, almond-shaped, slightly oblique and preferably dark. The expression is lively and alert.

Ears: Set rather high, always erect. Rather small sized, pointed, very mobile and covered with fine hair.

#### NECK:

Muscular; it appears to be rather short in males due to the thick ruff, of medium length in bitches. Throat without dewlap.

#### BODY:

Withers: Clearly defined, especially in males.

Back: Rather short, straight and muscular.

Loin: Short and muscular.

Croup: Of medium length, well developed and slightly sloping.

Chest: Deep, reaching almost the elbows, not very broad. The ribs are slightly arched; the forechest clearly visible, not very broad.

Lower line: Slightly tucked up.

#### TAIL:

Curved vigorously forward from the set-on tightly along the back, down-and slightly backwards pressed against the upper thigh, the tip of the tail reaches to the middle of the upper thigh. When straightened reaches approximately down to the hocks.

#### LIMBS:

##### FOREQUARTERS:

General appearance: Viewed from the front straight and parallel. The bone is of medium strength. The upper arm is a little shorter than the shoulder blade and the forearm.

Shoulders: Firm, very mobile and relatively straight.

Upper arm: A little shorter than the shoulder blade. Slightly sloping and strong.

Elbows: Placed in front of a vertical line drawn from the highest point of the shoulder blade; pointing straight backwards.

Forearm: Rather strong, vertical.

Metacarpus (Pastern): Of medium length, slightly sloping.

Forefeet: Roundish cat-feet. Toes tight and well arched. Pads elastic, always black, the sides covered with dense hair.

#### HINDQUARTERS:

General appearance: Strong, viewed from behind straight and parallel, medium angulation. The bone is of medium strength. The upper thigh is slightly longer than the second thigh.

Upper thigh: Of medium length, rather broad with well-developed muscles.

Stifle: Pointed forward, medium angulation.

Second thigh: Muscular.

Hock joints: Set moderately low, medium angulation.

Metatarsus (Hock): Rather short, strong and vertical.

Hindfeet: A little longer than the front feet, otherwise the same. The dewclaws should be removed.

#### GAIT/MOVEMENT:

Light, covering the ground effortlessly. Changes easily from trot to gallop, which is the most natural style of movement. The legs move parallel. When rushing after game, he bursts explosively into a fast gallop.

#### SKIN:

Tight overall without wrinkles.

#### COAT:

#### HAIR:

Rather long on the body, semi-erect or erect, stiffer on the neck and back. On the head and the legs, except at the back of the hindquarters, short and close-lying. The stiff hair on the shoulders, especially in males, is noticeably longer and coarser. On the back of the thighs (trousers) and on the tail the hair is long and dense. The undercoat is short, soft, dense and light in colour.

COLOUR: The hair on the back is red-or golden brown, preferably bright. A lighter shade inside the ears, on cheeks, throat, chest, belly, inside the legs, back of the thighs and on the tail. A white stripe on the chest and small white markings on the feet are permitted.

#### SIZE AND WEIGHT:

Height at withers:                   Ideal height for males 47 cm,

  Ideal height for females 42 cm.

With a tolerance of  $\pm$  3 cm.

Weight: Males 12 - 13 kg,

  Bitches 7 - 10 kg.

#### 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.

- Heavy head.
- Coarse muzzle.
- Weak underjaw.
- Ears pointing forward in a sharp angle, leaning sideways or close together at the tips, curving backwards or ears that are longhaired inside.
- Slack or too tightly curved tail.
- Too flexible in pasterns.
- Long, soft, too short or close-lying coat.
- Clearly defined diversity of colours.

**DISQUALIFYING FAULTS:**

- Aggressive or overly shy dogs.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.
- Flesh-coloured nose.
- Overshot or undershot mouth.
- Eyes bright yellow or wall eye.
- Ears with drooping tips.
- Kinky tail.
- Wavy or curly coat.
- Colour shades differing clearly from the basic colour.
- Large white markings on the chest and/or a white sock.

**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.

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