

CENTRAL ASIA SHEPHERD DOG

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 01/02/2017

ORIGIN

Russia.

UTILISATION

Guard and watch dog.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Central Asia Shepherd Dog (CASD) is one of the most ancient breeds of dog. They were formed as a breed from natural selection during more than four thousand years in the vast territory, which spreads, nowadays, from the Caspian Sea to China and from Southern Ural to Afghanistan. Its heritage is from the most ancient dogs of Tibet, cattle dogs from various nomad tribes' dogs that are closely related to the Mongolian Shepherd Dog, and the Tibetan Mastiff. The CASD were mainly used to protect cattle, caravans, and the owners' dwellings, and being exposed to rigid natural selection. Hard living conditions and constant struggle against predators have had influence on the shape as well as the dog's character and it has made it strong, fearless, and taught it to save its energy. In the places of primordial habitation, the CASD were used mainly to protect herds from predators and also as guard dogs. The work with the breed started in the USSR in the 1930s.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Central Asian Shepherd Dog is of harmonious build and large stature, moderately long (neither long nor short in body). Robust, muscular body, voluminous, but not with visible muscles. Sexual dimorphism is clearly defined. The males are more massive and courageous than females with more pronounced withers and a larger head. Full maturity is reached by the age of 3 years.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

- The length of body only slightly exceeds the height at withers.
- Larger stature is desirable, but proportional constitution must remain.
- Length of forelegs up to the elbow is 50% – 52% of the height at the withers.
- The length of muzzle is less than half the length of head, but more than one-third.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

Self-assured, balanced, quiet, proud, and independent. The dogs are very courageous and have high working capacity, endurance, and a natural instinct of territory. Fearlessness towards large predators is a characteristic feature.

HEAD

Massive and balanced in general appearance. Head shape is close to rectangular, seen from above and side.

Cranial Region:

Skull: Deep in skull. The forehead is flat and the skull part is flat and long. Occiput is well-defined but hardly visible, because of well-developed muscles. Supra-orbital ridges are moderately defined.

Stop: Stop is moderately defined.

Facial Region:

Nose: Large, well-developed but not exceeding the general contour of the muzzle. Colour of the nose is black but in white and fawn coloured dogs the nose can be lighter.

Muzzle: The muzzle is blunt and of moderate length, it is almost rectangular viewed from above and sides, narrowing very slightly towards the nose. Muzzle is voluminous, deep, and well-filled under the eyes. Bridge of muzzle is broad, straight, and sometimes with a slight down face. Chin is well-developed.

Lips: Thick, upper lips tightly covering the lower lips when the mouth is closed. Full black pigmentation is preferable.

Cheeks: The cheekbones are long and well-developed, without interfering with the rectangular shape of head.

Jaws and teeth: The jaws are strong and broad. Teeth are large, white, and close to each other, 42 in total.

Incisors are set in a line. Scissor bite, pincer bite, and also reverse-scissor bite is accepted. Canines are set well apart. An injury to the teeth that does not affect the use of the bite is of no consequence.

Eyes:

Medium-sized, with oval form, set well apart, looking straight ahead, and moderately deep set. The colour of the eyes from dark brown to hazel. The darker colour is preferable. The eyelids are thick and, preferably, with lower eyelid not too loose. No visible third eyelid. Fully pigmented eye-rims are preferred. Whatever the colour of coat, eye-rims should be black. Expression is confident and dignified.

Ears:

Medium-sized, triangular-shaped, thick, low-set, and hanging. Lower part of ear base is level with, or slightly below, the eyes. Traditional ear-cropping is still practised in the country of origin and in countries where it is not prohibited by law.

[*refer note below]

NECK

The neck is of medium length, very powerful, oval at cross-section, well-muscled, and set low. Dewlap is a specific breed feature.

BODY

Topline: Well-proportioned and well-sustained, and must keep typical topline in stance.

Withers: Well-defined, especially in males, muscular, long and high, with well-defined transition to the back.

Back: Straight, broad, well-muscled, the actual length is about half the length from the withers to tail-set.

Loin: Short, broad, muscled, slightly arched.

Croup: Moderately long, broad, well-muscled, slightly sloping to tail-set. The height at the withers exceeds the height over rump by 1cm – 2cm.

Chest: Deep, long, broad, distinctly developed, ribcage broadening towards the back. False ribs are long. Lower part of the chest is level with the elbow or slightly below. Forechest extends slightly in front of the humero/scapula joint.

Underline and belly: Belly is moderately tucked up.

TAIL

[ed. Previously customarily docked.]

Thick at the base and set fairly high. The natural tail is carried in a sickle curve or curled in a loose ring that begins at the last third of the tail. When alert, the tail rises to the line of back or slightly above; at rest, hanging. Traditional tail docking is still practised in country of origin and in countries where it is not prohibited by law. Natural tail is of equal value to a docked tail.

[*refer note below]

LIMBS

Forequarters:

General appearance: Forelegs are straight with strong bone, seen from the front parallel and not close together. Seen from the side, the forearms are straight.

Shoulder: Shoulder blade long, well laid back, forming an angle with the upper arm about 100°. Well-muscled.

Upper arm: Oblique, long, and strong.

Elbow: Correctly fitting, turning neither in nor out.

Forearm: Straight, very strong bone, long, oval cross-section.

Metacarpus (pastern): Moderate length, broad, strong, upright pasterns.

Hindquarters:

General appearance: Viewed from the rear, straight and parallel, set a little wider than forequarters.

Upper thigh: Broad, moderately long, and strongly muscled.

Stifle (knee): Turning neither in nor out. The knee angulation is moderate.

Lower thigh: Of almost the same length as upper thigh.

Hock joint: Moderate angle.

Metatarsus (rear pastern): Very strong, of moderate length, perpendicular. No dewclaws.

FEET

Large, rounded, arching toes, pads are voluminous and thick; nails may be of any colour.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Well-balanced and elastic. Trot with free reach in the forequarters and with powerful drive from the hindquarters. Topline is steady while moving. All joints to bend without effort. The angulation in hindquarters is more distinct when moving than in standing pose.

SKIN

Thick, sufficiently elastic, loose-lying to prevent injuries if in combat with predators.

COAT

Hair abundant, straight, coarse, and with well-developed undercoat. Hair on the head and on the front part of limbs is short and dense. Coat on withers is often longer. The guard coat can be short or slightly longer. Depending on the length of the outer coat there can be either shorter hair (3cm – 5cm), covering the whole body or with longer hair (7cm – 10cm), which forms a mane on the neck, feathers behind the ears, on the back parts of the limbs, and on the tail.

COLOUR

- Any colour.

* Except genetic blue and genetic brown in any combination, and black mantle on tan.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: minimum 70cm (approx. 27½").

Females: minimum 65cm (approx. 25½").

Large size desirable, but proportional constitution must remain.

Weight:

Males: minimum 50kg

Females: minimum 40kg

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.

Note: Cropped ears – KUSA Schedule 2 Regulation 7:

"Any dog with cropped ears born within the jurisdiction of the KUSA, imported into it and cropped within it, shall not be registered or recorded by the Kennel Union, and if any such dog is registered or recorded in contravention of this Regulation, upon discovery, its registration or recording shall be cancelled.

7.1. Any dog with ears cropped before importation into the KUSA area of jurisdiction is not eligible for competition at any Kennel Union event."

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.

- Slight deviations from the breed type.
- Female tending male type.
- Rounded skull, narrow muzzle and narrow lower jaw, small nose.
- Eyes obliquely or close set, loose eyelids.
- Ears high-set.
- Thin or loose-hanging lips.
- High over the croup. Slightly short croup.
- Narrow front.
- Exaggerated angulation in hindquarters.
- Splayed feet and long toes.
- Hackney gait, slightly unbalanced movement.
- Very short coat

Severe faults:

- Highly strung.
- Significant deviation from required type and constitution.
- Leggy appearance; light in bone, soft muscles.
- Eyes too light or bulging eyes.
- Topline falling away.

- Croup much higher than the withers.
- Narrow, short, and steep croup.
- Natural stubbed tail, kinked tail.
- Pasterns too high, down in pastern.
- Hindquarters set too far under body.
- Height at withers 2cm less than stated minimum.

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Timid, overexcited.
- Male of female type.
- Overshot or distinctly undershot bite.
- Eyes of different colour, blue or green eyes; squint.
- Loose joints.
- Coat of any combination of genetic brown or genetic blue colour.
- Colour that is tan with distinctive black mantle.
- Coat that is curly or soft.
- Unbalanced movement

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FCI Standard No 335: SREDNEASIATSKAYA OVTCHARKA (CENTRAL ASIA SHEPHERD DOG)

FCI Classification: Group 2: Pinscher and Schnauzer, Molossoid type dogs, and Swiss Mountain and Cattle dogs

Section 2.2. Molossian breeds; Mountain type

Without Working Trial