

## GREAT DANE

*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 01/01/2018

### ORIGIN

Germany.

### UTILISATION

Companion, watchdog and guard dog.

### BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

[ed. from FCI Breed Standard No. 149]

As forerunners of the present day Great Dane, one must look at the old "Bullenbeisser" (Bulldog) as well as the "Hatz-and Saurüden" (Hunting and wild boar Hounds), which were midway between the strong Mastiff of English type and the fast, Houndy Greyhound. The term Dogge was at first understood to mean a large, powerful dog, not of any particular breed. Later, particular names such as Ulmer Dogge, English Dogge, Great Dane, Hatzrüde (Hunting Dog), Saupacker (boar-finder) and Grosse Dogge (Great Dogge), classified these dogs according to colour and size. In the year 1878, a committee of seven was formed in Berlin, consisting of active breeders and judges with Dr Bodinus in the chair, which made the decision to classify all the forenamed varieties as "Deutsche Doggen" (Great Danes). Thus the foundation was laid for the breeding of a separate German breed. In 1880, on the occasion of a show in Berlin, the first standard for the Deutsche Dogge was laid down.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

Very muscular; strongly, though elegantly built, with the look of dash and daring; of being ready to go anywhere and do anything. Head and neck carried high, tail in line with back, or slightly upwards, but never curled over hindquarters. Elegance of outline and grace of form most essential.

### CHARACTERISTICS

Alert expression, powerful, majestic action displaying dignity.

### TEMPERAMENT

Kindly without nervousness, friendly, and outgoing.

### HEAD

Head, taken altogether, gives idea of great length and strength of jaw. Muzzle broad, skull proportionately narrow, so that whole head, when viewed from above and in front, has the appearance of equal breadth throughout. Length of head in proportion to height of dog. Length from nose to point between eyes about equal or preferably of greater length than from this point to back of occiput. Skull flat, slight indentation running up centre, occipital peak not prominent. Decided rise, or brow, over the eyes but not an abrupt stop between them; face well-chiselled, well-filled below eyes with no appearance of being pinched: foreface long, of equal depth throughout. Cheeks showing as little lumpiness as possible, compatible with strength. Underline of head, viewed in profile, runs almost in a straight line from corner of lip to corner of jawbone, allowing for fold of lip, but with no loose skin hanging down. Bridge of nose very wide, with slight ridge where cartilage joins bone (this is a characteristic of breed). Nostrils large, wide and open, giving blunt look to nose. Lips hang squarely in front, forming right angle with upper line of foreface.

#### Eyes:

Fairly deep-set, not giving the appearance of being round; of medium size and preferably dark. Wall, or odd eyes permissible in harlequins.

#### Ears:

Triangular, medium size, set high on skull, and folded forward, not pendulous.

### Mouth:

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

### **NECK**

Neck long, well-arched, quite clean, and free from loose skin, held well up, well-set in shoulders, junction of head and neck well-defined.

### **FOREQUARTERS**

Shoulders muscular, not loaded, well-sloped back, with elbows well under body. Forelegs perfectly straight with big flat bone.

### **BODY**

Very deep, brisket reaching elbow, ribs well-sprung, belly well-drawn up. Back and loins strong, latter slightly arched.

### **HINDQUARTERS**

Extremely muscular, giving strength and galloping power. Second thigh long and well-developed, good turn of stifle, hocks set low, turning neither in nor out.

### **FEET**

Cat-like, turning neither in nor out. Toes well-arched and close, nails strong and curved. Nails preferably dark in all coat colours, except harlequins, where light nails are permissible.

### **TAIL**

Thick at the root, tapering towards end, reaching to or just below hocks. Carried in straight line level with back, when dog is moving, slightly curved towards end, but never curling or carried over back.

### **GAIT / MOVEMENT**

Action lithe, springy, and free, covering ground well. Hocks move freely with driving action, head carried high.

### **COAT**

Short, dense, and sleek-looking, never inclined to roughness.

### **COLOUR**

- **Brindles:** Must be striped, ground colour from lightest buff to deepest orange, stripes always black, eyes and nails preferably dark, dark shadings on head and ears acceptable.
- **Fawns:** Colour varies from lightest buff to deepest orange, dark shadings on head and ears acceptable, eyes and nails preferably dark.
- **Blues:** Colour varies from light grey to deep slate, the nose and eyes may be blue.
- **Blacks:** Black is black.

\* In all above colours, white is only permissible on chest and feet, but it is not desirable even there.

- **Mantle:** Black and white with a solid, black blanket extending over the body. Ideally: black skull with white muzzle, white blaze optional, whole white collar preferred, a white chest, white on part or whole of the forelegs and hind legs, white-tipped black tail. Nose always black, eyes and nails preferably dark
- **Harlequins:** Pure white underground with, preferably, all black patches or all blue patches, having appearance of being torn. Light nails permissible. In harlequins, wall eyes, pink noses, or butterfly noses permissible but not desirable.

\* Nose always black, except in blues and harlequins. Eyes and nails preferably dark.

### **SIZE**

#### Height at withers:

Minimum height of an adult dog over 18 months:

**Males:** 76cm (approx. 30").

**Females:** 71cm (approx. 28").

#### Weight:

Minimum weight of an adult dog over 18 months:

**Males:** 54kg.

**Females:** 46kg.

**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.

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**When judging this breed at FCI International Shows, use:**

**FCI Standard No. 235: DEUTSCHE DOGGE (GREAT DANE)**

**FCI Classification: Group 2: Pinscher and Schanuzer, Molossoid, and Swiss Mountain and Cattle dogs.**

Section 2.1. Molossian breeds: Mastiff type  
Without working trial.