

CANADIAN ESKIMO DOG

A breed standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance including the correct colour of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function. Absolute soundness is essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure. However, if a dog possesses a feature, characteristic or colour described as unacceptable, it must not be rewarded in the show ring.

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

ORIGIN

Canada.

UTILISATION

For centuries, this breed was used as a draught animal and was capable of pulling between 45kg and 80kg per dog, covering distances from 24km – 112km per day. He was also used as a hunting dog, to locate seal breathing holes for the Inuit hunters. As a hunting dog, he would also attack and hold at bay, musk ox and polar bear for the Inuit hunters. In the summer, the dog was used as a pack dog carrying up to 15kg.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The breed has an 1,100 to 2,000 year history of being interdependent with the Thule culture of Inuit (Eskimo people) who, following the Dorset culture occupied the coastal and archipelago area of what is now Arctic Canada., Although within the Spitz family of dogs, the Canadian Eskimo Dog's origin prior to this is lost in the Inuit pre-history, which includes the migration of the Mongolian race from the Asian continent to North America. The existing strain of Canadian Eskimo Dog originated from stock primarily bred by the Eskimo Dog Research Foundation in the Northwest Territories. The foundation's work over a six-year period was primarily funded by the Governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories, and involved the purchase of specimens from the remnant population of dogs kept by the Inuit of the Boothia Peninsula, Melville Peninsula, and parts of Baffin Island. The Canadian Eskimo Dog, as a primitive dog, is primarily a carnivorous breed, whose natural diet consisted of seal, walrus, fish, or caribou.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Canadian Eskimo Dog is a powerfully built, moderately sized dog, with a thick neck and chest, and medium-length legs. Typical of the Spitz family of dogs, he has a wedge-shaped head, held high, with thick erect ears. The eyes are obliquely set, giving a serious appearance. The dog has a bushy tail, carried up or curled over the back. Of almost equal height at the hips as at the withers, medium to large-boned and well-muscled, the dog displays a majestic and powerful physique, giving the impression that he is not built for speed but rather for hard work. Above all, the body should be muscled and not fat. Females will have a smaller, and less muscled, body than the males. During the winter, the body is thickly clothed with an outercoat of straight or erect hair; below is dense undercoat, which enables the animal to easily withstand the rigours of high latitudes. A mane-like growth of longer hair over the neck and shoulder will appear on male specimens. The whole conformation of the Canadian Eskimo Dog should be one of strength, power, and endurance, balanced with agility, alertness, and boldness. The female of the breed will usually have a shorter coat than the male and will always be significantly smaller than the male. As young bitches, they will be finer-boned, giving, among other things, a narrower head that tends to produce a friendlier-looking face than with males. Both males and females of the breed are known to have a rapid growth rate, reaching working size around seven months. However, the maturing process extends to at least three years of age giving them a very majestic appearance. Puppies have often been described as miniature adults, with erect ears and a curly tail, at the young ages between three to five weeks. There may be occasional periods during adolescent growth stages when the ears may not be fully erect but it is important to note that the ears of the Canadian Eskimo Dog do not have the same gradual growth of becoming erect around four months of age as is seen in some other breeds.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

- Width of the forehead between the ears on the males will be from 13cm – 15cm (approx. 5" – 6"). On the females the distance will be from 11cm – 14cm (approx. 4½" – 5½").

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

The temperament of the Canadian Eskimo Dog should reflect the tough, hard-working breed that he is. He is not to be viewed as a domestic pet, but rather as a primitive dog originally domesticated by Inuit for specific tasks in a harsh Arctic environment. In general disposition, the mature Canadian Eskimo Dog is gentle and affectionate with the average individual, enjoying attention. Even with total strangers, the dogs are rarely stand-offish. Usually, they will exhibit a rather quiet friendliness and harmless curiosity, or become completely distant. The dog is very pack-oriented and, if raised as a group, dominant and subordinate roles will be acted out under the leadership of a totally dominant or boss-dog. Behaviour within a group or pack is usually well-structured and controlled, but it is not uncommon to see battle scars or torn ears on dogs originating from kennel areas where the dogs are raised in groups or packs. Compared to modern domestic breeds, the Canadian Eskimo Dog has an almost over-response to any stimulus whether it be food, work, defense, or play. For this reason, the dog should be a companion for adults and is not to be considered a child's pet.

HEAD

Cranial Region:

Skull: Massive but well-proportioned, being broad and wedge-shaped. Although often described as wolf-like in appearance, the head of the Canadian Eskimo Dog has a more elevated forehead. Immature females will have a much narrower skull than the male.

Facial Region:

Nose: Pigmentation of the nose will vary from black to light brown (especially on lighter-coloured dogs with red, buff, or cinnamon on the body). Butterfly noses have, on occasion appeared with the light brown nose.

Muzzle: Tapered and of medium length.

Lips: Black or brown with pink.

Jaws and teeth: The jaws are heavy and powerful, possessing large teeth with well-developed canine teeth. The incisors meet in a scissor bite.

Eyes:

Generally dark-coloured, but hazel or yellow-coloured eyes will appear in the breed. They are small, wide-spaced, and placed obliquely in the head, which tends to impart much more of a wild and deceitful appearance than the dog deserves.

Ears:

Short, thick, and have slightly rounded ends. They are carried erect, turned forwards, and covered with dense, short hair.

NECK

Short, straight, thick, and very muscular.

BODY

Of almost equal height at the hips as at the withers.

Back: The spinal column, when felt through the furred body, is well-pronounced.

Loin: Well-developed.

Chest: Deep, wide, and well-muscled.

Underline and belly: There is very little curve to the flank.

TAIL

Large and bushy, and generally carried up or curled over the back. Mature bitches may, on occasion, carry their tails down.

LIMBS

Forequarters:

Shoulder: Broad, obliquely set, with moderate muscling.

Forearm: Straight, but may give the appearance of being bowed, because of the well-developed triceps muscle above and behind the elbow, and the pronounced muscle on the forearm itself.

Hindquarters:

General appearance: The hips may appear as pronounced and bony as the spine, and are about the same height as the withers.

Upper thigh: The legs will be very muscular, with the width of the thigh being carried well down towards the hock.

Stifle (knee): Well-bent.

FEET

Forefeet:

Large, nearly round, well-arched, with thick pads being well-furred between; however, under extremely cold winter conditions, this fur will grow to be very long so as to cover the bottom of the pads.

Hind feet:

Similar in design to the front but slightly longer. From the rear, the legs will appear straight, with the hocks turning neither in nor out.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

The working gait of this dog is a powerful and brisk trot, with the rear legs moving in line with the front legs in the force motion, but showing some abduction [*ed. movement away from the midline of the body*] during the forward movement of the stride. This may be especially pronounced in mature male dogs with many miles in harness. This gait may appear awkward to the untrained eye but is a result of a wide stance caused by well-developed thighs. This particular gait is a well-balanced, efficient stride for heavy-pulling day after day. The movement of the dog should, in no way, appear as a choppy or paddling motion. The females are much faster and freer in movement than the heavier males, and are capable of breaking stride from the natural trot and running or galloping for much longer distances than the males.

SKIN

Should feel thick and tough.

COAT

Hair is subject to an annual moult, usually in August or September, [*ed. autumn*] the coat is thick and dense with guard hairs being hard and stiff. This outercoat will vary from 7cm – 15cm (approx. 3" – 6") in length. In males, it [*ed. the outercoat*] will occur in a mane-like growth over the shoulder and neck, making the male appear much larger in size and taller at the withers than he actually is. The undercoat is very dense to give excellent protection during the most extreme winter conditions. During the moult, this underfur will come loose in clumps over a period of a few days. Females will usually have a shorter coat overall, partially because of the additional moult that will occur following the birth of pups.

COLOUR

No one colour or colour pattern should dominate the breed. The colour and colour patterns of the Canadian Eskimo Dog range from:

- An all white body with pigmentation around the eyes, nose, and lips (e.g. not albino).
- White body with only the smallest amount of red, buff (including cinnamon shades), grey, or black around the ears or eyes.
- White body with red, buff, cinnamon, grey, or black head marks around ears and eyes, or the entire head, and the occasional small patch of the same colour on the body – usually around the hip or flank.
- Red and white, or buff and white, or cinnamon and white, or black and white, with about 50/50 distribution of the two colours on various parts of the body.
- Red body, or buff body, or cinnamon body, with white on chest and/or legs, and underside of body.
- Sable or black body, or dark grey body, with white on chest and/or legs, and underside of body occasionally extending around part of the neck in a collar-like fashion.
- Silver grey or greyish white body.
- Buff to brown undercoat with black guard hairs.

* Very common for dogs with solid colour that most of the head is a mask-like shading of white around the eyes and/or muzzle, with or without white spots over the eyes. On very rare occasions, the spots over the eyes, as well as cheek-marks, will be buff-coloured, thus adding a third colour to a normally two-coloured animal.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: 58cm – 70cm (approx. 23" – 27½").

Females: 50cm – 60cm (approx. 19½" – 23½").

Weight:

Males: 30kg – 40kg

Females: 18kg – 30kg

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.

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:

- Head: Square muzzle or loose lips, round or bulging eyes.
- Neck: Long and thin.
- Body: Narrow chest, overall lack of muscle, excess fat, sloping back, coarseness or lack of finer bones in bitches.
- Legs: thin, fine boned, or cow-hocked.
- Feet: Flat or open.
- Coat: Short, off-prime.

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Blue eyes.
- Floppy ears, the exception being battle-torn ears.
- Clipping or altering the coat by scissoring.
- No evidence at all of a curled or upright tail in male dogs (recognising that a tail may occasionally be kept down as a sign of subordination or stress).
- Excessive undershot or overshot jaw.

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FCI Standard No 211: CANADIAN ESKIMO DOG

FCI Classification: Group 5: Spitz and Primitive types.

Section 1. Nordic Sledge Dogs

Without Working Trial