

CAUCASIAN SHEPHERD 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 01/02/2017

ORIGIN

Russia.

UTILISATION

Guard- and watchdog.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The Caucasian Shepherd Dog (CSD) is considered to be a breed taking its origin from ancient Caucasian dogs. The breed's expansion covers territories from the Caucasian Range and the steppe regions of Southern Russia. The evolution of the breed was not only a result of natural selection but also influenced by nations that inhabited the Caucasian Region.

Historically, Caucasian Shepherd dogs were used for guarding and safe-keeping of herds, flocks and dwellings from beasts of prey and predators.

The first mention of a large molossoid dogs used by the army of Armenian Tsar, Tigran II, dates from the 1st century BC. Selection work with the breed started in the USSR in the 1920s. Obligatory qualities such as physical power, self-confidence, fearlessness, sharply developed hearing, good sight, and a dense and waterproof coat, have been cultivated in the process of selection. All these qualities, as well as endurance, allows people to use the Caucasian Shepherd Dogs in all kinds of climatic conditions including the most severe ones.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Caucasian Shepherd Dog is a harmonious built, large, strong dog with plenty of bone and powerful muscular system; of a slight rectangular format. Sexual dimorphism is well-pronounced. Males are masculine, with well-developed withers and a bigger head in comparison with females. They are also more massive, bigger and often shorter in body than females. In dogs with longer coat variety, males have a distinctly pronounced mane.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

- The body length exceeds the height at withers by 3% – 8%.
- The length of the forelegs averages 50% – 52% of the height at the withers.
- The length of the skull correlates with the length of the muzzle as 3 : 2.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

Behaviour is steady, active, self-confident, fearless, and independent. The Caucasian Shepherd Dog shows a devoted attachment to its master; it is an excellent guard dog.

HEAD

Cranial Region:

General appearance: The head is large, massive, and broad in cheekbones; when viewed from above the head looks like a wedge with broad base.

Skull: Massive and broad; forehead is almost flat, with a marked, but not deep, furrow. Superciliary ridges are developed, but not protruding. Occipital bone inconspicuous.

Stop: Noticeable but not clearly marked.

Facial Region:

Nose: Black, large, with correct open nostrils, not exceeding the muzzle outline. A black nose in solid, spotted or piebald colours is desirable but not obligatory (but genetic blue or liver-brown nose is not allowed).

Muzzle: Broad and deep, gradually tapering towards the nose; with strong jaws and chin; great depth, and is well-filled under the eyes. The bridge of the nose is broad. The upper lines of the muzzle and skull run parallel.

Lips: Thick, close-fitting, well-pigmented.

Cheeks: Well-developed and emphasised by well-pronounced chewing muscles.

Jaws and teeth: Teeth should be healthy, white, strong; incisors are close to each other and in one line. Complete scissor or pincer bite: (i.e.42 teeth). Injured, broken, or knocked-out incisors or canines that do not affect the use of the bite is of no consequence, neither is absence of PM1s.

Eyes:

Moderate size, oval in shape, not too deep-set, wide and obliquely placed. The colour is different shades of brown from dark to hazelnut. Eyelids are black, dry, and close-fitting. Expression is serious, attentive and inquisitive.

Ears:

Moderate size, thick, triangular shape, naturally pendant, high, and wide-set. Inner part of ear is close-lying to the cheeks. Ears are traditionally cropped in country of origin. Natural ears are of equal value.

NECK

Of medium length, powerful, low-set; rounded in the cross-section. Crest is pronounced, especially in males.

BODY

Very well developed in all dimensions; broad, well-muscled and well-balanced.

Withers: Well-pronounced, moderately long. The height at the withers slightly exceeds the height over the rump.

Back: Straight, broad, firm.

Loin: Short, broad, slightly arched.

Croup: Moderately long, broad, rounded, slightly sloping to root of the tail.

Chest: Long, broad, well ribbed up, deep in general, as well as in its frontal part; in cross-section has broad, oval shape. Ribs well-sprung, false ribs are long. The forechest is marked.

Underline and belly: Belly moderately tucked-up towards rear.

TAIL

Set on high, sickle curve or curled. In repose, hanging down to reach the hocks; when the dog is alert, tail can be carried above the backline.

LIMBS

Forequarters:

General appearance: Well-muscled. Viewed from the front, straight; parallel forelegs are set fairly wide apart.

Shoulder: Strongly muscled. Moderately long, broad, slanting to form an angle of approximately 100° with the upper arm. The shoulder blade lies close against the chest.

Upper arm: Strong and muscular, close-fitting.

Elbow: Placed strictly back in parallel axis [*ed. close-fitting*]; turning neither in nor out.

Forearm: Straight, massive, moderately long, well-muscled; rounded in cross-section.

Metacarpus (pastern): Short, massive; almost straight viewed from the front and the side.

Hindquarters:

General appearance: Viewed from the rear, straight, standing parallel, and moderately wide. The stifles and hocks sufficiently well-angulated, when viewed from the side. The hindquarters should not be set too far back.

Upper thigh: Broad, well-muscled, moderately long.

Stifle (knee): Sufficiently well-angulated.

Lower thigh: Broad, well-muscled, moderately long.

Hock joint: Broad and lean, sufficiently well-bent; firm, turning neither in nor out.

Metatarsus (rear pastern): Not long, massive; almost straight, as viewed from the front and the side.

FEET

Large, rounded in shape, well-arched, well-knit.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Free, elastic, unhurried movement, with good driving power in the hindquarters. Good stability in all joints and with good co-ordination. The trot tends to be the typical movement. The withers are on the same level as the rump, and the backline is relatively stable during movement.

SKIN

Thick, sufficiently elastic, without any folds and wrinkles.

COAT

Hair straight, coarse, stand-off coat with well-developed undercoat. The length of guard coat as well as the undercoat should not be less than 5cm. The coat on the head and forelegs is shorter and thicker. The tail is completely covered with dense coat and looks thick and furry. The longer outer coat forms “brushes” on the ears, a “mane” around the neck and “trousers” on the back sides of the thighs.

COLOUR

- Any solid colour, piebald, or spotted colour.

* Except for solid black, diluted black, or black in any combination, or genetic blue, or liver brown colour.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: Desirable: 72cm – 75cm (approx. 28” – 29½”). Minimum: 68cm (approx. 26½”)

Females: Desirable: 67cm – 70cm (approx. 26½” – 27½”). Minimum: 64cm (approx. 25”)

Larger stature is accepted, as long as conformation is harmonious.

Weight:

Males: Minimum: 50kg.

Females: Minimum: 45kg.

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.

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.

Severe faults:

- Too light or too coarse in build.
- Lack of self-confidence.
- Deviations in the sexual dimorphism.
- Head small in proportion to the body; light; narrow; long; coarse; blocky, or apple head.
- Abrupt stop.
- Muzzle: down-faced; dish-faced or snipey.
- Teeth too small; widely spaced; incisors not set in one line; any deviation from the dental formula (except for absence of the PM1s).
- Insufficiently marked cheekbones.
- Eyes large; bulging; very light; showing haw; slack eyelids.
- Ears large; thin, or set too low.
- Topline roached or sway-back; long, sagging or arched loin; rump higher than the withers.
- Body square; too cobby; too long; narrow in both front and rear; too leggy; chest very short, flat or shallow; croup short or steep.
- Stumped tail.
- Weak bone; muscles, and ligaments in joints.
- Lacking correct angulation.
- Bowed forearms.
- Unbalanced movement.
- Lack of driving power in the hindquarters.
- Coat that is very soft; curly; has very short guard coat or no undercoat.

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Any deviation from the required bite. Incomplete dental formula (absence of any tooth except the third molars (M3) or the first premolars (PM1s).

- Entropion. Wall eyes; deep blue, green-shaded, or eyes of different colour.
- Docked tail.
- Constant pacing or impossibility to assess the gate.
- Black colour in any variation; solid; diluted; piebald, spotted or as saddle (except for mask).
- Genetic blue colour in any variation or nuance.
- Bluish-grey pigmented nose, lips and eye rims.
- Genetic brown colour in any variation or nuance.
- Genetic brown nose, lips, and eye rims.
- Tan-marking in black, blue, or brown dogs.
- Height below minimum.
- Severe deviations in the sexual dimorphism in males.

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FCI Standard No 328: KAVKAZSKAIA OVTCHARKA (CAUCASIAN 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