

## DUTCH 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

The Netherlands.

### UTILISATION

Companion dog and Sheepdog.

### BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Originally, the main function of the Dutch Shepherd Dog was that of a shepherd's dog in the countryside. From early times, the Dutch had an arable culture that was – among other things – maintained by flocks of sheep. The dogs had to keep the flock away from the crops, which they did by patrolling the borders of the road and the fields. They also accompanied the flocks on their way to the common meadows, markets, and ports. At the farm, they kept the hens away from the kitchen garden, they herded the cows together for milking, and pulled the milk carts. They also alerted the farmers if strangers entered the farmyard. Around 1900, sheep flocks had, for the greater part, disappeared in the Netherlands. The versatile skills of the Dutch Shepherd Dog made him suitable for dog training, which was then starting to become popular. Thus he started on a new career as a police dog, as a search- and tracking dog, and as a guide dog for the blind. He is, however, still capable of herding sheep. The breed's first standard dates from 12 June, 1898.



*Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library*

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

A medium-sized, middle-weighted, well-muscled dog of powerful and well-balanced structure. A dog with lots of endurance, a lively temperament, and an intelligent expression. Depending on the coat, the breed is distinguished in the following varieties: short-, long- and wire-haired.

### IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

- The length of the body (from point of shoulder to point of buttock) exceeds the height at the withers, approximately at a ratio of 10 : 9, as suits a trotting dog.
- The proportion of the length of the skull to the muzzle is 1 : 1.

### BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

Very loyal and reliable, always alert, watchful, active, independent, with persistence and intelligence; prepared to be obedient, and gifted with the true shepherding temperament. The Dutch Shepherd Dog works willingly together with his owner and he deals independently with any task which is assigned to him. When herding larger flocks, he must have the capacity to work together with several other dogs.

### HEAD

In good proportion to the body. Seen from above and in profile, it is wedge-shaped. Its shape is rather elongated, without wrinkles; dry, with flat cheeks, and no pronounced cheekbones. Because of the coat, the head of the wire-haired variety appears to look more square, but this is an illusion.

#### Cranial Region:

**Skull:** Flat.

**Stop:** Slight, though clearly present.

#### Facial Region:

**Nose:** Black.

**Muzzle:** Slightly longer than the flat forehead. Bridge of the muzzle straight and parallel to the topline of the cranial region.

**Lips:** Tight and well-pigmented.

**Jaws and teeth:** Scissor bite, strong, regular and complete.

#### **Eyes:**

Dark-coloured and medium-sized. The eyes are almond-shaped and slightly oblique. The eyes should not be set too wide and should not protrude.

#### **Ears:**

Medium-sized. When the dog is alert, the ears are carried high and erect.

### **NECK**

Not too short; dry, without folds and gradually flowing into the body.

### **BODY**

Firm, but not coarse.

**Topline:** There is a smooth, gentle transition from the neck to the topline of the body, in which head and neck are carried in a natural pose.

**Back:** Straight and firm.

**Loin:** Firm, neither long nor narrow.

**Croup:** Slightly sloping, not short.

**Chest:** Deep and long enough, not narrow, ribs slightly sprung.

**Forechest:** Fairly well-developed.

**Underline and belly:** Slight tuck-up.

### **TAIL**

At rest, hanging straight down or with a slight curve. Reaches to the hock. In action, carried gracefully upwards, never curled or carried sideways.

### **LIMBS**

The forelegs are powerful, of good length, well-muscled. The bone is solid but not heavy. Always generally showing a straight line, but with sufficient suppleness of pastern.

#### **Forequarters:**

**Shoulder:** Shoulder blades well-joined to the body and well-sloping.

**Upper arm:** Approximately equal length to the shoulder blades and well-angulated with the connecting bones.

**Elbow:** Well-attached.

#### **Hindquarters:**

**General appearance:** The hind legs are powerful and well-muscled. The bone is solid but never heavy. Not excessively angulated.

**Upper & lower thigh:** Of approximately equal length.

**Hock joint:** Perpendicular below the point of buttock.

**Dewclaws:** None present.

### **FEET**

Oval. Well-knit, toes arched. Black nails and elastic dark pads.

### **GAIT / MOVEMENT**

The Dutch Shepherd Dog is a trotter with free, smooth, and supple movement, without exaggerated drive or stride.

### **COAT**

**Short hair:** All over the body, quite hard, close-fitting, not too short a coat, with woolly undercoat. Ruff, breeches, and tail plume are clearly visible.

**Long hair:** All over the body, long, straight, well-fitting, harsh to the touch, without curls or waves and with a woolly undercoat. Distinct ruff and breeches. Tail abundantly coated. Head, ears, feet, and also the hind legs below the hocks, are short and densely coated. The back-sides of the forelegs show a strongly developed coat, shortening in length towards the feet, the so-called feathering. No fringes at the ears.

**Wire hair:** Dense, harsh, tousled coat and a woolly, dense undercoat all over the body except for the head. The coat should be close. Upper and lower lip should be well-covered with hair, the whiskers and beard, and two well-defined, coarse, rough eyebrows that are distinct but not exaggerated. Furnishings are not soft. The hair on the skull and on the cheeks is less strongly developed. In profile it seems as if the head has a more square appearance. Strongly developed breeches are desirable. Tail is covered all round with hair. The brindle colour may be less pronounced because of the tousled coat. The wire hair coat should be hand-plucked on average twice a year.

## COLOUR

- Brindle.
  - The basic colour is golden or silver. Golden can vary from light sand-coloured to chestnut red.
- \* The brindle is clearly present all over the body, in the ruff, breeches and tail.
- \* Too much black is undesirable.
- \* A black mask is preferable.
- \* Heavy white markings on chest or feet are not desirable.

## SIZE

### Height at withers:

**Males:** 57cm – 62cm (approx. 22½" – 24½").

**Females:** 55cm – 60cm (approx. 21½" – 23½").

***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.

### Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Lack of breed type.

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**FCI Standard No 223: HOLLANDSE HERDERSHOND (DUTCH SHEPHERD DOG)**

**FCI Classification: Group 1 – Sheepdogs & Cattle dogs (except Swiss Cattle dogs)**

Section 1. Sheepdogs

With Working Trial