

AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD

NOTE: The Miniature Australian Shepherd and the Toy should be judged as if they were an Australian Shepherd in all respects other than size. **Pay particular attention to disqualifications peculiar to the Miniature and the Toy varieties**

GROUP: Herding

SIZE:

Preferred height for standard males at withers is 20 to 23 inches; that for females is 18 to 21 inches. Preferred height for miniature males and females at withers is 14 to 18 inches; quality is not to be sacrificed in favor of size. The newer toy sizes (under 14 inches) will be smaller in all respects, but should be judged equally in all other points of conformation. **Quality, again, is not to be sacrificed in favor of size. Those dogs designated Toy must not exhibit typically “toy” characteristics such as domed heads or bulging eyes, but must be judged in all respects except overall size exactly as would be a standard Australian Shepherd.** Weight should be in proportion to height.

COAT:

Straight to slightly wavy of medium texture and length, weather resistant, with undercoat varying in thickness with variations in climate; hair on head, ears, front of forelegs, and below the hocks is short and smooth; moderately feathered on backs of forelegs and britches; moderate mane and frill, more pronounced in males than in females. **Serious fault: Non-typical coat.**

COLOR:

Blue merle, red merle, solid black, red (liver), all with or without white and/or tan (copper) markings; on all colors, areas surrounding ears and eyes dominated by color other than white; white is acceptable on neck (either in part or as a full collar), chest legs, muzzle underparts, blaze on head and white extension from underpart up to four inches, measuring from a horizontal line at the elbow; white on head should not predominate, and eyes must be fully surrounded by color and pigment; hairline of white collar should not exceed the point of the withers. The blue merle and black have pigmentation on nose, lips and eye rims; red merle and red do not; red merles and reds have liver (brown) pigmentation of the nose and lips; **butterfly nose is not faulted under one year of age; small pink spots are permissible on merles' noses, but should not exceed 25% of nose on dogs over one year of age. Faults: Other than recognized colors; white body splashes, (should be penalized to the extent of deviation from the standard) Disqualification: Dudley nose.**

HEAD:

Top skull flat to slightly rounded, length and width each equal to length of muzzle; moderate but well-defined stop.

Eyes: Clear, almond-shaped and of moderate size, set slightly obliquely, neither prominent nor sunken with dark, well-defined, perfectly positioned pupils; brown, blue, amber, or any variation or combination including flecks and marbling of eyes accepted; eyes must be very expressive, showing attentiveness and intelligence.

Ears: Set high on side of the head, of moderate size, triangular with slightly rounded tip, and leather; at full attention, break forward and over from one-quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) to one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) above the base, or to the side as a rose ear. **Serious faults: Prick ears and hound type ears.**

Muzzle: Balanced and proportioned to rest of head; tapers slightly to rounded tip; see lip color under *Colors*, above.

Nose: Black and self-colored according to coat; see nose color under *Colors*, above.

Teeth and Bite: Full complement of strong white teeth meeting in a scissors or level bite; teeth broken or missing by accident are not penalized. **Disqualifications: Undershot; overshot greater than 1/8 inch.**

NECK:

Strong, firm, clean, and in proportion to the body; moderate length; slightly arched at the crest, setting well into the shoulders.

BODY:

Firm and muscular; strong and broad loin when viewed from top; bottom line carried well back with a moderate tuck-up; moderately sloping croup, the ideal being thirty (30) degrees from the horizontal.

Topline: Appears level at a natural four-square stance.

Chest: Deep and strong, with well-sprung ribs.

FOREQUARTERS:

Shoulder blades are long, flat, fairly close set at the withers and well laid back; upper arms are relatively the same length as the shoulder blade, and attach at an approximate right angle to the shoulder line with forelegs dropping straight, perpendicular to the ground; straight and strong legs with strong oval, rather than round, bone; medium length and very slightly sloped pastern; **dewclaws should be removed, but are not penalized.**

HINDQUARTERS:

Width of hindquarters approximately equal to width of forequarters at the shoulders; angulation of the pelvis and upper thigh (femur) corresponds to the angulation of the shoulder blade and upper arm forming an approximate right angle; clearly defined stifles, moderately bent hock joints; metatarsi (pasterns) are short, perpendicular to ground, and parallel to each other when viewed from rear; dewclaws must be removed.

Feet: All feet are oval shaped and compact, with well-arched toes and thick, resilient pads.

Tail: Straight, not to exceed 4 inches in length; natural bobtail or docked.

MOVEMENT:

Smooth, free and easy; swift and very agile, with well-balanced, flowing gait with ground covering stride; fore and hind legs move straight and parallel with the center line of the body; as speed increases, the feet, both front and rear, converge toward the center line of gravity of the dog, while the topline remains firm and level.

TEMPERAMENT:

Attentive and animated; good-natured, but may be somewhat reserved in initial meetings; high-spirited, aggressive and authoritative worker, but not vicious toward people or animals; reserved with strangers but not shy.

Any departure from this standard should be considered a fault, and the final score should reflect the seriousness of the deviation from the standard

Disqualifications:

Viciousness or extreme shyness.

Toy-like characteristics (domed head, bulging eyes, fine bone).

Undershot bite.

Overshot bite greater than 1/8 inch.

Dudley nose.

Wet flews (pendulous lateral part of the upper lip).

Albinism.