

BELGIAN MALINOIS

GROUP: Herding

GENERAL APPEARANCE:

Well-balanced, square outline, elegant in appearance; very proud carriage of head and neck; strong, agile, well-muscled, alert, and full of life; should stand squarely on all fours with the outline viewed from the side forming an approximate square. Conformation should give the impression of depth and solidity without bulkiness. Males are more impressive and grand than the female, which should have a decidedly feminine look.

SIZE:

Ideally, males are 24 to 26 inches; females 22 to 24 at the withers; **Grossly over or undersize dogs are to be severely penalized.** Length from point of breastbone to point of rump should be equal to height, with females slightly longer possibly. The square profile is preferred. Bone structure is moderately heavy in proportion to height so that the dog is well balanced throughout and neither spindly or leggy nor cumbersome and bulky.

COAT:

Comparatively short, straight, hard enough to be weather resistant with dense undercoat—very short on head, ears, and lower legs. Hair is a little longer around the neck, forming a collar of sorts, and on the tail and back of the thighs. Coat should conform to the body with no standing out or hanging down.

COLOR:

Rich fawn to mahogany, with black tips on the hairs, creating an overlay. Mask and ears are black. Under the body, tail and lower legs are a lighter fawn, but washed out fawn color on the body is a fault. **Color should not take precedence over structure or temperament, but is considered a finishing point.** Toe tips may be white, and a small spot of white on the breastbone is permitted but should not extend to the neck. **Other white markings are to be faulted.**

HEAD:

Clean cut and strong without heaviness, in proportion to the body. Skull and muzzle are approximately the same length with, at most, a very slight advantage for the muzzle; all this gives the whole head a finished impression. Skull is medium width in proportion to the length of the head; forehead is more flat than round; occiput is not accentuated; in profile, the upper line of the skull is parallel to an imaginary line drawn from the muzzle. Muzzle is approximately equal in length to length of skull, narrowing gradually toward nose; upper line of muzzle is straight and is parallel to that imaginary line; muzzle is moderately pointed, avoiding any tendency to snipiness; stop is moderate; cheeks are clean and flat, although very muscular. Expression should indicate alertness, attention, and readiness for activity; **Faults: Too broad or too heavy a head or a too pointed, foxy head; Excessive, or lack of, stop.**

Eyes: Medium in size, neither prominent nor deep set; almond shaped; brown, preferably dark; look is direct, lively, intelligent, and questioning; eyelids are edged in black. **Faults: Very light or round eyes.**

Ears: High set, triangular, stiff, erect, height equal to width at base; base of the ear does not come below the center of the eye. **Disqualification: Hanging ears, as on a hound.**

Nose: Black with well-opened nostrils, without spots or discolored areas.

Bite: Full complement of strong, white teeth, evenly set, meeting in a scissors or level bite. **Fault: Overshot and undershot teeth; missing teeth. Disqualification: Undershot to the point that contact with the upper incisors is lost by two or more of the lower incisors.**

Loss of contact caused by short center incisors in an otherwise correct bite is not considered undershot. Broken or discolored teeth should NOT be penalized.

BODY:

Powerful without heaviness; length, measured from point of shoulder to the end of the rump, is approximately equal to the height at the withers.; in bitches the length can go slightly beyond the height of the withers.

Chest: Not too broad, but in compensation, deep and inclined; thoracic cage is encircled by ribs which are arched in the upper part, but flat on the sides; lowest point of the brisket should reach the elbow, forming a smooth curve to the abdomen, which is moderately developed, neither tucked up nor paunchy. Loin section when viewed from above is relatively short, broad, and strong, but blending smoothly into the back.

Topline: Level, straight, and firm from withers to croup. Withers are slightly higher and slope into the level back. Croup is medium long, sloping gradually to the base of the tail.

NECK:

Round, muscular, rather long and elegant, slightly arched and tapered from head to body. Skin fits well with no loose folds; withers are accentuated

FOREQUARTERS:

Shoulders are long, laid back 45 degrees, flat against the body, forming a right angle with the upper arm. Top of shoulder blades are roughly two thumbs width apart; Upper arms should move in a direction exactly parallel to the longitudinal axis of the body; Forearms are long and well-muscled; legs straight and parallel, perpendicular to the ground; bone is oval rather than round; pasterns short and strong, slightly sloped. Dewclaws may be removed; feet are rounded, cat-like, turning neither in nor out; toes curved close together, well-padded; strong nails.

HINDQUARTERS:

Powerful but not heavy; legs perpendicular to the ground, moving in the same plane as the forequarters; dog single tracks as speed increases; thighs broad and well-muscled; stifle long, broad, well-muscled, and moderately angulated, without exaggeration; hocks should be short, broad, and muscled—seen from the rear, they will be perfectly parallel to each other; rear pasterns are solid and short; dewclaws should be removed; hind feet are slightly oval with toes curved and very compact; dense and elastic pads; nails are black and strong.

Tail: Well set and of medium length, extending to the hocks; at ease, the dog carries it at the level of the hock, with the tip slightly curved toward the rear. In action, the dog raises it higher and accentuates the curve towards the tip, without at any time forming a hook or a deviation; tail is held without deviating from the center line.

MOVEMENT:

Lively and graceful, covering the maximum ground with minimum effort; always in motion, capable of working livestock all day; seemingly never tiring; shows ease of movement rather than hard, driving action; single tracks at a fast gait, both front and rear legs converging toward the center line of gravity of the dog; because he was developed as a herding dog, and because of his exuberant temperament, the Belgian Malinois tends to move in circles around his owner rather than in a straight line, except when moved at a fast gait.

TEMPERAMENT:

In his relationship with humans he is observant and vigilant with strangers, but not apprehensive, showing no fear or shyness; neither does he show any viciousness by unwarranted or unprovoked attack; he must be approachable, standing his ground and showing confidence to meet overtures without himself making them. With those he knows well, he is very affectionate, eagerly desiring their attention and very possessive of it.

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:

Bilateral or unilateral cryptorchid

Extreme viciousness or shyness

Undershot or overshot bit so that contact with two incisors is lost (Note: loss of contact caused by short center incisors shall not be judged as undershot in an otherwise correct bite)

Hanging or drooping ears

Solid white markings elsewhere than on tips of toes, chest, or frosting on muzzle

Albinism

Absence of or docked tail