

GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG

GROUP: Herding

SIZE:

Desirable height at maturity for males, measured at the top of the highest point of the shoulder blade, is 24 to 26 inches; females 22 to 24 inches. Weight in proportion to height.

COAT:

Double-coated of medium length; outer coat is dense and straight with harsh texture and lies close to body; slightly wavy coat is acceptable in a particularly harsh coat; under coat is short, dense, and fine-textured; body coat is medium length, but not so long as to detract from dog's ability to withstand bad weather conditions; coat is shorter on head (including the inside of ears), the legs, and the feet; coat on neck is longer and thicker, forming a slight ruff, particularly on some males; hair on back of legs is longer and thicker, forming trousers on the hindquarters, and extending to the pasterns in front and the hock joint behind. **Faults: Soft, silky coat; too long outer coat; woolly, curly, and open coat; mole type coat; long coat that stands away from body; absence of undercoat.**

COLOR:

The GSD comes in many colors and white; strong, deep colors are preferred; nose, lips, and eye rims must have dark pigment, regardless of coat color; color faults are minor in comparison to defects of type and structure.

Serious faults: Pale, washed-out colors and blues or livers. Disqualification: Albinism.

HEAD:

Well proportioned to size of dog; noble, cleanly chiseled; strong; males should appear very masculine without coarseness, and females feminine without being overly fine; keen expression, intelligent and composed.

Skull: Broad and only very slightly domed; slightly wider than long in males; slightly narrower in females; viewed from front, skull tapers evenly from ears toward muzzle; cheeks just slightly rounded but do not protrude.

Eyes: Medium size, almond-shaped, as dark as possible; set slightly obliquely and not protruding; dark eye rims. **Fault: Protruding eyes.**

Ears: Erect; moderately pointed; of medium size, in proportion to the skull; broad at base, set high, and open toward the front; at alert, the center lines of ears, viewed from front, are perpendicular to the ground and parallel to each other.

Disqualifications: Cropped ears; drop or tipped ears.

Muzzle: Long and wedge-shaped without abrupt stop; strong, well-developed jaws; topline parallel to topline of skull; darkly pigmented, tight lips. **Faults: Muzzle too short, blunt, weak, pointed, or overlong.**

Nose: Black. **Disqualifications: Any other color or shading.**

Bite and teeth: Scissors bite with complete set of 42 evenly spaced teeth, 20 upper and 22 lower. **Faults: Overshot or level mouth; missing first premolars. Serious fault: Missing teeth other than first premolars. Disqualifications: Undershot; wry mouth.**

NECK:

Strong and muscular; clean-cut and relatively long, proportionate in size to head; tight skin without loose folds of skin; head carriage just a little higher than shoulders when dog is alert or excited; otherwise typical carriage of head is forward rather than up and but a little higher than the top of shoulders, particularly in motion.

BODY:

Whole structure of body gives impression of depth and solidity without bulkiness; properly proportioned GSD is longer (measured from prosternum to point of buttocks) than tall (measured from withers to ground) in a ratio of 10 to 9; length is derived from proper construction of forequarters and hindquarters and not from length of back. **Fault: Undue length between last rib and thigh when viewed from side.**

Topline: Withers are higher than and sloping into the level back; straight, relatively short back, very strongly developed without sag or roach.

Chest: Commencing at prosternum, well filled and carried well down between legs; deep and capacious, never shallow, with ample room for lungs and heart, carried well forward, with the prosternum showing ahead of shoulder in profile; well-sprung ribs and long, neither barrel-shaped nor too flat, carried down to sternum which reaches to the elbows; correct ribbing allows elbows to move back freely when dog is at a trot; too round causes interference and throws elbows out; too flat or short causes pinched elbows; ribbing is carried back so that the loin is relatively short; abdomen firm and not paunchy; bottom line is only moderately tucked up in the loin; viewed from top, loin is broad and strong; long and gradually sloping croup. **Faults: Barrel ribs; ribs too flat; long loin.**

FOREQUARTERS:

Long, well muscled shoulder blades, well laid back, and laid flat to the body; upper arms, also long and well muscled, join shoulder blade at nearly a right angle; forelegs, from pasterns to elbows, are straight and strong with oval-shaped bones; viewed from all sides, forelegs are straight; pasterns are strong and supple, sloping at about 25 degrees; elbows are neither close to body nor out, set on a plane parallel to body; length of forelegs just slightly more than half the height of the dog, measured at withers; dewclaws may be removed.

HINDQUARTERS:

Viewed from side, thigh assembly is broad with both upper and lower thigh well muscled, forming as nearly as possible a right angle; upper thigh bone parallels shoulder blade while lower thigh bone parallels upper arm; angulation is in balance with forequarters angulation; metatarsus (the unit between hock joint and foot) is short, strong, and tightly articulated; powerful hindquarters are necessary to enable the effortless movement that is an essential feature GSD; dewclaws, if any, should be removed.

Feet: All are short, compact with toes well arched, pads thick and firm, nails short and dark.

Tail: Set low in a natural extension of the sloping croup; extends at least to the hock joint; at rest, tail hangs in slight curve like a saber; curve is accentuated and tail raised when dog is excited or in motion, but should never be curled forward beyond a vertical line; coat on tail stands outward, giving a bushy appearance. **Faults: Slight hook in tail to extent it mars the dog's general appearance. Serious faults: Tails too short, or with clumpy ends due to ankylosis. Disqualification: Docked tail.**

MOVEMENT:

Correct gait is essential. Trotting, the dog moves with a long, efficient stride driven by powerful forward thrust from hindquarters, and back remains firm and level; as speed increases, a tendency to single track is exhibited, and correct movement must be evaluated from front and rear as well as side; gait is outreaching, elastic, seemingly without effort, smooth and rhythmic, covering the maximum amount of ground with minimum number of steps; at a walk, it covers a great deal of ground, with long stride of both hind legs and forelegs; the rear leg, moving forward, swings under the foreleg and couches down in front of the point where the foreleg strikes the ground; "overreaching" is a breed characteristic and should not be penalized as long as the body is straight

in relationship to the direction of movement. ***Serious faults:* Any faults of gait that affects correct movement is a serious fault.**

TEMPERAMENT:

A distant personality marked by direct and fearless, but not hostile, expression, self-confidence and a certain aloofness with strangers; must be approachable, quietly standing its ground and showing confidence and willingness to meet overtures without itself making them; eager and alert when demanded, but poised; neither timid nor descended. ***Serious faults:* Lack of confidence; nervousness; shyness. *Disqualification:* Attempting to bite the judge.**

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:

Extreme viciousness or shyness.

Cropped or hanging ears.

Dogs with noses not predominately black.

Undershot jaw.

Docked tail.

Attempting to bite the judge.

Albinism.