



GROUP VI: NON-SPORTING DOGS

LHASA APSO

RECOGNIZED: 1975

Effective: January 2004

The breed standard outlines the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance of a breed, and ensures that a dog can carry out its original purpose. Breeders and judges should be mindful to prioritize dogs that are healthy and sound in both mind and body.

ORIGIN & PURPOSE

Beyond the northern boundary of India, where Mt. Everest stands like a guardian sentinel, is the land of Tibet. A country of huge mountains, deep valleys, windswept plateaus, warm summers and cold winters, it is the home of the Lhasa Apso. It is an ancient breed and genealogical tables show them to be in existence as far back as 800 BC. Having been bred for centuries as a special indoor sentinel, the Lhasa Apso has never lost this characteristic of keen watchfulness.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Lhasa Apso is a medium small, exotic, very hardy breed with a well-developed body, strong loins, good quarters and thighs. The long, straight, hard, dense coat enhances the beauty of the breed and completely covers the dog.

TEMPERAMENT

Gay and assertive but chary of strangers.

SIZE

Ideal height: Dogs, 24.5 to 28 cm (10 to 11 in), with up to 29.25 cm (11.5 in) permissible; bitches slightly smaller. Lhasa Apsos over 29.25 cm (11.5 in) are to be disqualified. Body length from the point of the shoulder to the point of the buttocks should be slightly longer than the height at the withers. A well-balanced type is to be preferred.

COAT

The adult coat is heavy, straight, hard, not woolly or silky, of good length and dense. The coat should be parted from the nose to the root of the tail. The head should have heavy furnishings with a good fall over the eyes. Good whiskers and beard. In obedience, the hair may be tied back from the eyes. Ears should be heavily furnished. Legs should be well furnished. Tail should be well furnished. Feet should be surrounded with hair. The pads have hair between them which may be trimmed. Forequarters, hindquarters and neck are heavily furnished.

COLOUR

All colours and mixtures of colours considered equal.

HEAD

Skull narrow, falling away from behind the eyebrow ridges to a marked degree. Cranium almost flat, not domed or apple-shaped. Viewed from the front, the top of the cranium is narrower than the width at the level of the eyes. The foreface is straight. **Muzzle:** The length from the tip of the nose to the inside corner of the eye to be roughly 3.75 cm (1.5 in) or the length from the tip of the nose to the inside corner of the eye to be roughly one-third of the total length from the tip of the nose to the back of the skull. A square muzzle is objectionable. **Nose:** Black. The tip of the nose is level with or very slightly below the lower eye rim when viewed from the front. **Mouth:**

Bite: reverse scissors (upper incisors just touching the inner face of the lower incisors). Full dentition. Incisors (6) to be in a straight line. Acceptable bite: level (the front incisors of the upper and lower jaw meeting edge to edge). Undesirable bite: overshot. Excessively undershot (more than 3.25 mm [0.125 in]). The teeth must not show when the mouth is closed. Lips black. **Eyes:** Dark brown. Not large and full or small or sunken. The iris should be of reasonable size, no white showing at the base or top of the eye. The eyes are frontally placed in an oval-shaped black rim. **Ears:** Pendant. The ears should be well set back on the skull at eye level (not level with the topline of the skull). The leather should hang close to the head and in an adult dog should reach the level of the lower jaw.

NECK

Well set on the shoulders. Long enough to carry the head well, creating an impression of elegance. Slightly arched.

FOREQUARTERS

Shoulders: Strong, muscular, well laid back. The *upper arm* should not be “terrier straight,” allowing for the desired width and depth of the chest. **Lower arm:** The forelegs should not be bowed. From the front when the dog is standing, the legs should be straight parallel, elbows well under the body. The forelimbs support a good share of the body weight when the dog is standing or when moving at a slow pace. The *pasterns* should be straight and firm when viewed from the front. Slight deviation from the perpendicular when viewed from the side. **Feet:** Short, round and compact with good pads turning neither in nor out. Ideally, nails are black. In particoloured or light-coloured coats, light nails and pads are permitted. Dewclaws permissible.

BODY

Topline: Level. **Chest:** Well ribbed up – i.e., the ribs should extend well back along the body. The slightly curved ribs should not extend below the elbows. **Loin:** Too long a loin adds excess length to the back and results in a loss of strength to the forepart of the body. If the loin is too short there will be a loss of flexibility. The loin should be firmly muscled. **Croup:** The angle formed by the pelvis and the backbone should not be more than 30° from the horizontal. This angulation gives power for the forward propulsion. **Abdomen:** Tucked up to a shallower depth at the loin.

HINDQUARTERS

Strongly muscled and in balance with the forequarters. **Hocks:** When viewed from the rear at a stance, should be strong, straight, and parallel, turning neither in nor out. When viewed from the side, they should be perpendicular to the ground and not stretched out beyond the rump of the dog. **Stifle bend:** The stifle is moderately bent. **Feet:** Same as in forequarters.

TAIL

Set high. Carried forward close to the back with the tip draped on either side of the body. The tail should not rise vertically. A kink in the end is permissible. A low carriage of the tail is a serious fault.

GAIT

An easy-moving free-flowing trot is the normal pace of the Lhasa Apso. This trot shows the character of his movement at its best and is what should be aimed for. The pads should be seen as the dog moves away indicating a strong hind drive that is balanced by a good reach of the forelegs. Moving too quickly in the ring throws the dog off gait and should be avoided.

FAULTS

Any departure from the aforementioned ideals shall be considered faulty to the degree in which it interferes with the health and well-being of the dog and the breed’s traditional purpose.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Lhasa Apsos over 29.25 cm (11.5 in)