

Rottweiler

Origin and Purpose

The Rottweiler was developed from the dogs used by the Roman legions to herd and guard the cattle brought by them to feed their legions. The butchers of Rottweil, Germany, developed the dogs to drive cattle to market and to protect their money bags which were tied around the dogs' necks. It was an arduous task to drive the cattle and a strong dog with staying power, full of self will and physical strength was needed. In the beginning of the 20th century, these dogs were found particularly well suited as a police dog, a function they still fulfill, especially in Europe.

General Appearance

The ideal Rottweiler is an above medium-sized, robust, and powerful dog, black with clearly defined rich tan markings. His compact build denotes great strength, agility, and endurance. Males are characteristically larger, heavier boned and more masculine in appearance.

Temperament

The Rottweiler should possess a fearless expression with a self-assured aloofness that does not lend itself to immediate and indiscriminate friendships. He has a strong willingness to work. In examining a Rottweiler, one should bear in mind that this dog reacts with alertness to his master and his surroundings, and in performing his function in life, the Rottweiler is not expected to submit to excessive handling by strangers. However, the judge shall dismiss from the ring any shy or vicious Rottweiler. A dog shall be judged fundamentally shy if, refusing to stand for examination it shrinks away from the judge; if it fears an unexpected approach from the rear; if it shies at sudden or unusual noises to a marked degree. A dog that attacks or attempts to attack, without provocation, either the judge, or its handler is definitely vicious. An aggressive or belligerent attitude towards other dogs shall not be deemed viciousness.

Size

Dogs 24-27 inches (60-68 cm). Bitches 22-25 inches (55-63 cm). Proportion should always be considered rather than height alone. The length of the body, from the breastbone (sternum) to the rear edge of the pelvis (ischium) is slightly longer than the height of the dog at the withers, the most desirable proportion being as 10 to 9. Depth of chest should be fifty per cent of the height.

Coat and Colour

Outer coat is straight, coarse, dense, medium length, lying flat. Undercoat must be present on neck and thighs. The Rottweiler should be exhibited in a natural condition without trimming, except to remove whiskers, if desired. The colour is always black with rich tan to mahogany markings. The borderline between the black and the colour should be clearly defined. The markings should be located as follows: a spot over each eye; on cheeks; as a strip around each side of the muzzle, but not on the bridge of the nose; on throat; a proportionate triangular mark on either side of the breastbone not to exceed 25 per cent of the forechest; on forelegs from carpus downward to toes; on inside of rear legs showing down the front of the stifle and broadening out to front of rear legs from hock to toes but not eliminating the black from the back of the legs; under tail. Black penciling markings on the toes. The undercoat is grey or black. Quantity and location of markings are important. Insufficient or excessive markings should be penalized.

Head

Of medium length, broad between the ears; forehead line seen in profile is moderately arched. The cheekbones and stop are well developed. The length of the **muzzle** should not exceed the distance between the stop and the occiput. The **skull** is preferred dry; however, some wrinkling may occur when the dog is alert. The bridge of the muzzle is straight. The muzzle is broad at the base with slight tapering towards the tip but not snipey. The **nose** is broad rather than round, with black nostrils. The lips are always black with the corners tightly closed. The flews should not be too pronounced. The inner mouth pigment is dark. A pink mouth is to be penalized. The teeth are 42 in number (20 upper and 22 lower). They are strong and should be correctly placed meeting in a scissors bite--lower incisors touching the inside of the upper incisors. **Eyes** should be of medium size, moderately deep set, almond shaped with well-fitting lids. The iris should be of uniform colour, from medium to dark brown, the darker shade always preferred. **Ears** should be pendant, proportionately small, triangular in shape, set well apart and placed on skull so as to make it appear broader when the dog is alert. The ear should terminate at approximately mid-cheek level. When correctly held, the inner edge will lie tightly against the cheek.

Neck

Powerful, well muscled, moderately long with slight arch and without loose skin

Forequarters

The shoulder blade should be long and well laid back at a 45 degree angle. The elbows are tight and under the body. The distance from the withers to the elbow and the elbow to the ground is equal. The legs are strongly developed with straight, heavy bone. They are not set close together. The pasterns are strong, springy and almost perpendicular to the ground. Feet are round, compact with well arched toes, turning neither in nor out. Pads are thick and hard. Nails are short, strong and black. Dewclaws may be removed.

Body

The topline is firm and level, extending in a straight line from the withers to the croup. The brisket should be deep, reaching to the elbow. The chest is roomy and broad with a well-developed forechest. The ribs are well sprung. The loins short, deep, and well muscled. The flank should not be tucked up. The croup is broad, of medium length and slightly sloping.

Hindquarters

The angulation of the hindquarters balances that of the forequarters. The slope of the pelvis from the horizontal is between 20-30 degrees. The bone of the upper thigh is fairly long and the thigh is broad and well muscled. The stifle joint is moderately angulated. The lower thigh is long, powerfully muscled, leading to a strong hock joint. The metatarsus is perpendicular to the ground. Viewed from the rear, the hind legs are straight and perpendicular to the ground. The feet are somewhat longer than the front feet, with well arched toes turning neither in nor out. Dewclaws must be removed.

Tail

The tail is normally carried in a horizontal position giving the appearance of an elongated topline. It is carried above the horizontal when the dog is excited. The tail is normally docked short close to the body. If left in natural condition, tail is level in extension of the topline; at ease may be hanging. A kinked tail or a ring is undesirable. The set of the tail is more important than length.

Gait

The Rottweiler is a trotter; the motion is harmonious, sure, powerful and unhindered, with a strong fore-reach and a powerful rear drive. Front and rear legs are not thrown either in or out, as the imprint of the hind feet should touch that of the forefeet. In a trot, the forequarters and hind-quarters are mutually coordinated while the back remains firm. As speed increases the legs will converge under the body towards the centre line.

Faults

The foregoing is a description of the ideal Rottweiler. Any structural fault that detracts from the ideal must be penalized to the extent of the deviation. Included as faults are: pink mouth, wavy coat, insufficient markings, undercoat showing through outercoat. Faults considered serious are: lack of proportion, undersize, oversize, level bite, yellow eyes, eyes not of same colour, eyes unequal in size or shape, hairless eyelids, excessively short coat, curly or open coat, lack of undercoat, white markings any place on dog (a few white hairs do not constitute a marking), excessive markings, light-coloured markings.

Disqualifications

Overshot, undershot or wry bite, missing tooth. Long coat, any base colour other than black, total absence of markings.