

Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier

Origin and Purpose

The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier originated in Ireland. It was an all-purpose working farm dog used for destroying vermin, hunting small animals, herding, and guarding against intruders.

General Appearance

The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier is a medium-sized, hardy, well-balanced sporting terrier, covered with a soft, silky, wavy coat of clear, warm, wheaten colour. The breed requires moderation in all points and any exaggerated features are to be avoided. The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier should present a square outline with the overall appearance of a steady, happy, well-coordinated animal who is alert to his environment and carries himself with a gentle dignity and self-confidence.

Temperament

Good-tempered, spirited, and game. Affectionate and loyal. Alert and intelligent. Defensive without aggression. He does not start a fight, but should always stand his ground; exhibits less aggressiveness than is sometimes encouraged in other terriers.

Size

Males 18 - 19 inches (46 cm - 48 cm) with the ideal height being 18 1/2 inches (47 cm); for females 17 - 18 inches (43 cm - 46 cm) with the ideal being 17 1/2 inches (44 cm). Ideal weight for males is 35-40 lbs. (16-18 kg); for females 30-35 lbs. (14-16 kg). Deviations from the ideal should be penalized according to the amount of deviation from the ideal.

Coat and Colour

Abundant, single-coated, soft, silky textured, having a gentle wave that is apparent when standing. When the dog moves the coat has a free and flowing character to it. Neither woolly nor wiry, crispy nor cottony, frizzy (tight, crisp curl) nor straight. Colour is any shade of wheaten. Upon close examination occasional red, white or black guard hairs may be found. However, the overall colouring must clearly be wheaten with no evidence of any other colour except on ears and muzzle where blue-grey shading may be present. Puppies under one year may carry deeper colouring and some black tipping. The adolescent under two years may be quite light in colour, but must never be white nor carry grey, other than on ears and muzzle. In both puppies and adolescents, the mature,

wavy coat is generally not yet seen. Coat colour and texture do not stabilize until about three years of age and some latitude should be given in young dogs. However, the softer and darker puppy coat should not be preferred over the lighter and slightly harsher adult coat. For show purposes, the coat should be trimmed to present a neat, square terrier outline. Overstyling is to be discouraged and severely penalized.

Head

Well-balanced and moderately long with skull and foreface of equal length and in good proportion to the body. The skull is flat and not too wide. Cheeks are clean; moderate stop. The muzzle is square, powerful, and strong with no suggestion of snipiness. The nose is black and large for the size of the dog. Lips are tight and black. Teeth are strong and white, meeting in a scissor or level bite with scissors preferred. The eyes are dark hazel or brown, medium sized and well protected under a strong brow. Eye rims are black. Coat should fall forward over the eyes. The ears are small to medium in size, breaking level with the skull, and dropping slightly forward, close to the cheeks, pointing to the ground rather than the eye.

Neck

Medium in length and set well upon the shoulders, gently sloping into the back.

Forequarters

The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier should have good reach in front. The shoulders should be well laid back with a clean, smooth appearance. The upper arm should be equal in length to the shoulder blade and elbows placed well under the body. The forelegs are straight when viewed from all angles and are well boned and muscled. Dewclaws should be removed. Feet are round and compact with good depth of pad. Dark nails are preferred but tortoiseshell is acceptable. Pads are black.

Body

The body is compact; the chest is deep, but not round. The ribs are well sprung. The back is strong with relatively short coupling. Topline is level.

Hindquarters

The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier requires good drive from behind, so requires well-muscled rear assembly. The legs should be well developed with powerful muscles, well-bent stifles, turning neither in nor out. The hocks are well let down and parallel when viewed from behind. Dew claws on rear legs must be removed. Dark nails are preferred but tortoiseshell is acceptable.

Tail

The tail is high set, carried gaily but not over the back. The tail is usually docked so that two-thirds of its original length remains. An undocked tail is allowed.

Gait

The gait is free, graceful and lively, having good reach in front and strong drive from behind, straight action fore and aft.

Faults

The foregoing description is that of the ideal Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier. Any deviation from the above-described dog must be penalized to the extent of the deviation, keeping in mind the original purpose of the breed.

Major Faults

Yellow eyes; Nose not solid black

Disqualifications

Overshot or undershot mouth; over-aggression.