



GROUP I: SPORTING DOGS

SPANIEL (FRENCH)

RECOGNIZED: 1985

Effective: July 2023

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

The French Spaniel is one of the oldest pointing dogs, a renowned setting dog used in the Middle Ages for hunting. The breed originated in France in the 17th century. A good retriever, he works methodically on land or in water. icy water or bramble does not deter him. His ancestors are more than likely at the origin of the diverse varieties of sporting Spaniels. Through selection, he developed into the elegant and athletic dog, pointing very firmly, which today excels in working trials. He is a versatile pointing dog. The French Spaniel is a good hunting dog with his intelligent search, short range, accurate and quick location, pointing, style and intensity.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The French Spaniel suggests strength, stamina and elegance. He is a strongly built well-balanced, medium sized hunting dog, with great endurance, not coarse in any way, very active, with a mild disposition, and is never vicious.

TEMPERAMENT

An intelligent, gentle, calm, willing dog that is an enthusiastic hunter and retriever. He is sociable with other dogs and an ideal companion. A true gentleman by nature, he has a kind, noble and dignified expression and friendly attitude. Highly intelligent and a born hunter, his enthusiasm and willingness to work hard are his heritage. He is very easy to train. His calm nature makes him an excellent hunting companion.

SIZE

Height at the withers: Dogs, 56 to 61 cm (22 to 24 in); bitches, 53 to 59 cm (20.75 to 23.25 in)

With a tolerance of +2 cm (0.75 in) or -1 cm (0.4 in)

Important Proportions: The length of the body (from the point of the shoulders to the point of the buttock) is slightly longer by 2 to 3 cm (0.75 to 1.25 in) to the height at the withers.

COAT

The hair is short on the head, front of forelegs, below the hocks, and front of hind legs. The body coat is flat (straight) or slightly wavy, of medium length, and sufficiently dense to be waterproof and weatherproof. The texture is fine, and the hair should have a clean, glossy appearance. Long and wavy on the ears, falling beyond the cartilage as well as on the back of the legs and the tail. The back of the foreleg is furnished with wavy silky feathering of medium length. The feathering is distinctly longer at level of the forearm and falls to the level of the pastern. Feathering at back of rear limbs particularly profuse behind the upper thighs.

COLOUR

Always white with brown markings, with or without ticking. Too much ticking is not to be encouraged. White and brown coat with medium spotting, sometimes becoming predominant, with irregular patches, slightly or moderately flecked and roan without excess. The brown varies from cinnamon to dark liver. A white blaze and

white on the head is desirable, if the marking is not too wide. The absence of white on the head is perfectly acceptable. The edges of the lips, the eye rims and the nose are brown, without any unpigmented areas.

HEAD

The head is carried proudly, without heaviness, without excessive leanness and showing well-defined outlines. It is of medium length and width with a kind and intelligent expression. **Skull:** The skull is fairly long and of medium width, not quite flat. The occipital protuberance should be evident, but only to a slight degree. Cheek bones should not be prominent. **Stop:** Midway between nose and occiput, should be well marked, but not too exaggerated. **Muzzle:** Muzzle is fairly long, broad and deep. Lips or jowls of average thickness, slight curved, not square. A slightly convex nasal bridge is preferable to a straight one; it is a little shorter than the skull. The upper lip fits well. Seen in profile, it falls almost vertically at the front and curves progressively up to the only slightly visible but well closed corner of the lips. The upper lip must not cover the lower lip excessively. Complete dentition. **Teeth** meet in a scissors bite or an even bite, neither undershot nor overshot. **Nose:** Nose is well developed, brown in colour with no pale spots. The nostrils large and wide open. **Eyes:** Eyes are medium in size and not showing any haw. The eyes are of oval shape, cinnamon to dark brown in colour, as close as possible to that of the patches. The brown eyelids are well fitted to the eyeball. The upper eyelid is well-furnished with eyelashes. **Ears:** Ears are long, framing the head, attached low, at the level of the outer corner of the eye, or lower, hanging slightly at the back of the head and not showing the inside face of the ear (burr). The ears are covered with a lot of wavy, silky hair. The tip is rounded. The hair on the ears should be brown. The ears are well set back at eye level, carried close to the cheeks. Pulled gently towards the front, the end of the cartilage must just reach the base of the nose. The fringes are long and wavy.

NECK

The neck should be of moderate length, muscular, slightly arched at the crest, without dewlap.

FOREQUARTERS

Shoulders well laid back, shoulder blades long and well slanted; well attached to the chest and quite oblique (50° to the horizontal). **Forelegs** are straight, well-boned and muscular. **Forefeet** are oval, with tight, well-arched toes and strong, dark-coloured nails. Furnished with hair between the toes. The pads are firm and dark. Carpus/Metacarpus (Pastern joint/Pastern), well defined and lean. Seen from the side, the pastern is very slightly oblique.

BODY

The **chest** should be deep and fairly broad, its depth reaching the elbows, with good length, depth and breadth of rib cage. Underline gradually rises towards the belly without excessive tuck-up. **Withers:** Lean, well-defined, and broad. **Ribs:** Well proportioned, not too flat or too round. The back is of moderate length, topline slopes very slightly from the withers to the set on of tail. **Topline:** Straight, well sustained in both action and standing. The loin must be strong, short, with well-developed muscles, the buttocks slightly prominent. The length of the rib cage is equal or superior to six-tenths of the length of the body. **Croup:** Broad, rounded, gradually sloping from the loin without visible bony structure.

HINDQUARTERS

General appearance: Seen from behind, the hind legs are straight. The upper and lower thighs are large, muscled, strong and quite long. Its angle on the horizontal is between 65° and 70°. Lower thigh is of almost equal length to the upper thigh with broad and quite long muscles. **Pasterns** are solid and sinewy. **Hind legs:** Thighs broad, muscular, well curved stifles, hocks well bent. Hind legs must not be cow hocked. **Hind feet:** Oval and slightly longer than the front foot, but otherwise with the same characteristics. Feet are thick and well padded.

TAIL

Tail is attached slightly low and somewhat curved in the shape of an "S," reaching the point of the hock, set below the topline. Not docked.

Curving downwards at the root and curving more or less upwards at the tip. Strong at its root, tapering progressively towards the tip. Furnished with long, wavy, silky fringes starting at a few centimetres from the root, lengthening to the middle, and then getting progressively shorter towards the tip.

GAIT

Easy, supple, even and energetic while remaining elegant. The legs move well in the axis of the body. In movement, the topline remains horizontal without too much up and down movement and without rolling.

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.

Serious Faults

- Temperament: Excessive timidity, or aggressiveness towards people or other dogs
- Head: Coarse, too short a muzzle, too much or too little stop, lips too thick or too square
- Nose with pale spots, small or dry nostrils
- Eyes not of the prescribed colour, too light, too deep set, or too prominent
- Yellow, light-eyed "bird of prey" eyes
- Ears too short, set on too high
- Elbows turning in or out
- Chest too shallow
- Ribs too flat or too barreled
- Flat or long feet
- Tail set too high or carried between the legs
- Coat incorrect texture and density, hair too short, or too wavy or too curly
- Insufficient feathering on neck, chest, legs and tail
- Colour brown too light or too dark
- Body all brown

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Aggressive or overly shy
- Overshot or undershot by more than 1.5 mm (0.0625 in)
- Wry mouth
- Any teeth missing (except PM1)
- Eyes of a different colour (bi-eyed)
- Eye surrounded by white hair
- Ear entirely or partially covered with white feathering, or triangular
- Head entirely white
- Any other colour than white and brown
- Depigmentation (severely flesh-coloured nose and/or eyelids)
- Size outside the limits of the standard: Dogs over 63 cm (24.75 in) or under 55 cm (21.75 in); bitches over 61 cm (24 in) or under 52 cm (20.5 in)

