

# Basenji

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.

## General Appearance

The Basenji is a small, lightly built, short-backed dog, giving the impression of being high on the leg compared to its length. The wrinkled head must be proudly carried, and the whole demeanor should be one of poise and alertness. The Basenji should not bark, but is not mute. The wrinkled forehead and the swift, tireless running gait (resembling a race horse trotting full out) are typical of the breed.

## Size

**Height:** Bitches 41 cm (16 in) and dogs 43 cm (17 in) from the ground to the top of the shoulder. Bitches 41 cm (16 in) and dogs 43 cm (17 in) from the front of the chest to the farthest point of the hindquarters. **Weight:** Bitches 10 kg (22 lb). Dogs 11kg (24 lb).

## Coat and Colour

Coat short and silky. Skin very pliant. Colour chestnut red; pure black; tricolor (pure black and chestnut red); or brindle (black stripes on a background of chestnut red); all with white feet, chest and tail tip. White legs, blaze and collar optional. The amount of white should never predominate over primary color. Color and markings should be rich, clear and well-defined, with a distinct line of demarcation between the black and red of tricolors and the stripes of brindles.

## Head

The skull is flat, well chiseled and of medium width, tapering towards the eyes. The foreface should taper from eye to muzzle and should be shorter than the skull. The muzzle neither coarse nor snipey but with rounded cushions. Wrinkles should appear upon the forehead, and be fine and profuse. Side wrinkles are desirable, but should never be exaggerated into dewlap. Black nose greatly desired. A pinkish tinge should not penalize an otherwise first-class specimen, but it should be discouraged in breeding. Teeth must be level with scissors bite. Eyes dark hazel, almond shaped, obliquely set and far seeing. Ears small, pointed and erect of fine texture, set well forward on top of head.

## Neck

Of good length, well crested and slightly full at base of throat. It should be well set into shoulders.

## Forequarters

Shoulders flat, laid back. The legs straight with clean fine bone, long forearm and well-defined sinews. Pasterns should be of good length, straight and flexible.

## Body

The body should be short and the back level. The chest should be deep and of medium width. The ribs well sprung, with plenty of heart room, deep brisket, short-coupled, and ending in a definite waist.

## Hindquarters

Should be strong and muscular, with hocks well let down, turned neither in nor out, with long second thighs. Feet small, narrow, and compact, with well-arched toes.



### **Tail**

Should be set on top and curled tightly over to either side.

### **Faults**

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- Coarse skull or muzzle.
- Domed or peaked skull.
- Dewlap.
- Round eyes.
- Low set ears.
- Overshot or undershot mouths.
- Wide chest.
- Wide behind.
- Heavy bone.
- Creams, shaded or off-colours, other than those defined above, should be heavily penalized.

Breed Name: Basenji  
Year of Recognition: 1939  
Effective Date: January 2004