

Kuvasz

Origin and Purpose

The Kuvasz is a long established, ancient Hungarian Shepherd Dog belonging to the Livestock Guardian Group of dogs. His ancestors probably came into the Carpathian Basin at the time of conquest by the Magyars. These dogs were needed to watch and guard their flocks against beasts of prey and thieves. Due to its well-developed hunting instincts and keen sense of smell, the Kuvasz was also utilized as a big game hunter, especially during the reign of King Matthias Corvinus. Since the decline in shepherding and the pastoral life in Hungary, and the end of the grey cattle trade, the Kuvasz has been less utilized for its ancient function as a livestock guardian dog (LGD) and has settled onto farms and into villages and later even into towns where it excels as a guardian of home and property and as a protection dog. Centuries of harsh living conditions and natural selection have evolved the Kuvasz into a very hardy and resilient breed that can live and work in and withstand severe weather conditions.

General Appearance

The dogs of this breed are strong and large and carry a dense, wavy, white coat. Their pleasing appearance radiates nobility and strength. The individual body parts fit together harmoniously, the limbs being neither too short nor too long and neither lanky nor cobby. The bone structure is strong but not coarse. The strong muscles are lean, the tight joints show clear outlines, without wrinkles. Seen from the side, the body forms a rectangle, almost a square. Well-muscled, he shows a strong build, a lively temperament and great agility. His appearance embodies a tireless working ability.

Temperament

The Kuvasz is brave and fearless. He defends the people and property entrusted to his care, even with his life. He is self-confident, loyal, dependable, devoted and loves his master and all that belong to him/her, but is very discriminating and aloof with strangers. He needs plenty of exercise and must be kept busy.

Size

Height at the withers:

Males: 71-76 cm (28-30 inches)

Females: 66-70 cm (26-27.5 inches)

Weight

Males: 48-62 kg (106-137lb.) Females: 37-50 kg (82-110lb.)

Important proportions expressed as percentage in relation to height at the withers:

- Length 104%
- Depth of chest: 48%
- Width of chest: 27%;
- Measurement of circumference at the withers: 120%;
- Length of head: 45%;
- Length of muzzle: 42% of the head length
- Length of ears: 50% of head length

Coat

Moderately harsh, wavy, slightly stiff, not tending to mat. Under the coarser topcoat, there is a finer downy undercoat. The head, ears and feet are covered by short (1-2 cm long; 1/3-3/4 inch), dense, smooth hair. The front and sides of the front legs as well as the hind legs below the stifles are covered by equally short (1-2 cm long; 1/3-3/4 inch) straight hair. There is feathering of 5-8 cm (2-3 inches) in length on the back of the legs; on the hind legs, they reach to the hocks. The neck has a ruff which extends to a mane reaching to the chest. This is particularly pronounced in male dogs. On body, upper thigh and upper arm, the coat is of medium length (4-12 cm long; 1½-5 inches), abundantly wavy and it forms crests, ridges and tassels. The tail is covered, along its entire length, by dense, wavy coat which can even reach a length of 10-15 cm (4-6 inches) at the tip of the tail. The coat should be presented in as natural a state as possible in order to allow for proper evaluation of type, density and texture and should not be altered by blowing out, sculpting, trimming, bleaching, powdering, etc. Moreover, in no case should grooming be given more weight than correct type, structure, movement and balance when evaluating the Kuvasz.

Colour

White, ivory colour is permitted. Skin is heavily pigmented, slate-gray in colour, and tight. Nose leather, rim of eyelids and lips are black. Preferred colour for pads of the feet and nails are black, but slate grey is acceptable. Preferred color for the roof of the mouth is black, but pink patches are permissible.

Head

The head is typically wedge-shaped, elongated but never pointed, in harmony with its body, pleasing, noble, and showing considerable strength. The Kuvasz can be distinguished from other similar breeds by his head shape. The head is characteristically lean and dry. In dogs the head is slightly more massive than in bitches. Skull is broad, forehead slightly protruding. In the middle of the forehead, there is a distinct furrow which continues to the muzzle. Stop is barely pronounced and gently sloping to the muzzle. The muzzle is well-developed, strong with a punishing bite. Top of muzzle (bridge of nose) is straight, tapered towards the nose but is never snipey or pointed. Facial region (cheeks) are broad, long and well-muscled. The nose is a good size, rounded and black, with well-developed nostrils. Lips are black, tightly fitting. The corner of the mouth has jagged rims. Ears are set on the same horizontal plane as the top of the head, bent at the base, close to the skull. The outer edge of the upper third stand away from the head, the inner edge lies close to the head. The ear leathers are V-shaped with rounded tips. When alert, the ears are slightly raised. Never pricked or twisted. The jaws/teeth are well-developed, powerful, regular and close in a scissor-like bite, with complete dentition. The eye set is slightly oblique, almond shaped, dark brown in colour. The rims of the eyelids are black and close-fitting to the eyeball.

Neck

Rather short as opposed to medium length and is very well-muscled. Forms an angle of 25 to 30 degrees to the horizontal. Crest of neck is short. Skin on throat taut, no dewlap.

Forequarters

The front legs, supporting the body, are vertical down to the carpal joints. They are parallel and moderately far apart. Seen from the front, the position of the front legs is correct if a vertical line drawn from the shoulder joint runs along the axis of the front legs and meets the feet between the 3rd and 4th toes. Seen from the side, the position is correct if a vertical line drawn from the elbow joint to the ground, runs through the centre of the legs down to the carpal joints. **Shoulders:** Shoulder blade long, sloping, muscled. Close-fitting and tight to the ribcage, but flexible. **Upper Arm:** Of medium length, well-muscled. The upper arm and the shoulder blade form an angle of 100 to 110 degrees. **Elbows:** Tight, close-fitting to the ribcage, turning neither in nor out. Upper and lower arm form an angle of 120 to 130 degrees. **Forearm:** Relatively long, straight, compact with lean muscles. With

strong sinews reaching down to the carpal joint. **Carpal joint:** Well developed, taut, with sinews of steel. **Pastern:** Relatively short, lean, sloping slightly (angle to vertical 10 to 15 degrees). **Forefeet:** Round or slightly oval (cat-like feet), tight. Toes are short and highly arched. Elastic, well knit. Pads are deep and resilient, black. Nails are hard, strong, black or slate grey in colour.

Body

Seen from the side, the body forms a rectangle, only slightly deviating from a square. **Withers:** long, rising markedly above level of back. **Back:** of medium length, straight, broad, well-muscled and tight. **Loins:** short, in tight continuation of the back. **Croup:** slightly sloping, well-muscled, broad. The very abundance of coat on the rear may give the appearance of being higher than the front. **Forechest:** because of the strongly developed muscles, the forechest is rounded, the point of the sternum only slightly protruding. **Chest:** deep, long and slightly arched. **Underline and Belly:** In continuation of the ribcage, tucked up towards the rear.

Hindquarters

The position of the hind legs seen from the side is correct if the stifle joint is positioned vertically below the iliac crest and the foot under the hip joint. A vertical line from the ischiatic tuberosity touches the heel bone. Seen from the rear, the position of the hind legs is correct if a vertical line from the ischiatic tuberosity runs along the axis of the limbs, being parallel to both sides and meeting the ground moderately wide apart. **Upper thigh:** with long, broad, massive muscles closely connected to the pelvis. Pelvis and upper thigh form an angle of 100 to 110 degrees. **Stifle:** Broad and muscular. The angle between upper thigh and lower thigh is 110 to 120 degrees. **Lower thigh:** The long massive muscles extend to the hock with strong sinews. Seen from the rear, vertical and parallel on both sides, also to the axis of the body. **Hocks:** Broad, dry, sinewy. Angle of hock 130 to 140 degrees. **Rear pastern:** Long, vertical. **Hind feet:** Oval, otherwise like the forefeet. Pads are thick, nails well developed, black or slate-gray in colour.

Tail

The tail is set low, a natural continuation of the sloping croup. It is carried low with the last vertebra reaching to the hock joint. In repose it hangs down, the end slightly lifted, not curling. In a state of excitement, the tail may be elevated to the level of the topline but should not curl above the back.

Gait

When trotting, the movement is light footed, smooth, springy, ground covering, lively, constant and tireless. Elbows turning neither in nor out. The Kuvasz is able to trot 25-30 km without tiring.

Faults

Since the Kuvasz is a working breed any faults of soundness should be considered serious.

Faults in type which should be guarded against are:

- Too short or too long muzzle
- Forehead more rounded
- Domed head or bulging skull
- Coarse head
- Incorrect ear set or position in relation to horizontal plane of head
- Twisted or incorrectly folded ears (banana ear)
- Loose eyelids and flews
- Light coloured eyes, round eyes
- Roman nose
- Light or pink pigmentation of the skin
- White nails
- Long neck
- Loose shoulders
- Roach back, swayback, or cast back
- Loose body structure
- Incorrect front or rear stance and angulation.
- Long body
- Flat or barrel chest
- Light bone and overly refined appearance
- Crooked or uneven teeth,
- Coat with little undercoat.
- Any dog showing evidence of alterations to the natural appearance or texture of the coat by blowing out, sculpting, trimming, powdering, bleaching, chalking, etc., should be excused from the ring.

Disqualifications

- Aggressive or overly shy. (not to be confused with reserved or aloof), extreme nervousness or fearfulness.
 - Overly pronounced stop, very uncharacteristic head.
 - Lack of pigment on nose leather, lips, rims of eyelids.
 - Entropion, Ectropion
 - Missing teeth
 - o Any missing canines.
 - o Any missing incisors.
 - o Any missing from molars 1 (M1) and 2 (M2).
 - o Any missing from premolar 2 (PM2) to 4 (PM4).
 - o More than 2 premolar 1s (PM1) missing
 - o Molars 3 (M3) are disregarded
 - Anything other than a scissors bite
 - Pricked ears.
 - Tail which is raised above topline in repose or curled over back.
 - Any departure from the permitted colours (white and/or ivory).
 - Legs, feet and ears covered by long hair.
 - Body coat that is straight-haired (flat), open, short, or wire-haired, stiff, splintery, or coats tending to be shaggy and matting.
 - Males smaller than 68cm (26.8 inches), females smaller than 63cm (24.8 inches).
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