



GROUP III: WORKING DOGS

TIBETAN MASTIFF

RECOGNIZED: 2020

Effective: January 2021

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 Tibetan Mastiff (Do Khyi) is an ancient working breed of the nomad herders of the Himalaya and a traditional guardian of the Tibetan monasteries. It has been surrounded by great myth since its first discovery in antiquity. From the mentioning by Aristotle's (384-322 BC) to the famous writings of Marco Polo, who went to Asia in 1271, all historical reports praise the natural strength and impressiveness of the Tibetan Mastiff – both physically and mentally. Even its bark has been described as a unique and highly treasured feature of the breed. Leading European cynologists of the past, like Martin and Youatt, Megnin, Beckmann, Siber as well as Strelbel and Bylandt have intensively covered the Tibetan Mastiff, as they had been fascinated by its origin and function in the Tibetan culture. Some even considered the breed to be the very forefather of all large mountain and mastiff breeds.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Powerful, heavy, well built, with good bone. Impressive; of solemn and earnest appearance. Combines majestic strength, robustness and endurance; fit to work in all climate conditions. Slow to mature; only reaching its best at two to three years in bitches and at least four years in dogs.

Important proportions: Skull measured from occiput to stop equal to muzzle from stop to end of nose but muzzle may be a little shorter. Body slightly longer than height at withers.

TEMPERAMENT

Independent. Protective. Commands respect. Most loyal to his family and territory.

SIZE

Height at the withers: Dogs, minimum 66 cm (26 in); bitches, minimum 61 cm (24 in)

COAT

Hair: Quality of greater importance than quantity. Coat harsh, thick, topcoat not too long, with dense and rather woolly undercoat in cold weather, which becomes rather sparse in warmer months. Males carry noticeably more coat than bitches. Hair fine but harsh, straight and offstanding. Never silky, curly or wavy. Neck and shoulders heavily coated, giving mane-like appearance. Tail bushy and well feathered; hind legs well feathered on upper rear parts.

COLOUR

Rich black, with or without tan marking; blue, with or without tan markings; gold, from rich fawn to deep red, sable. All colours to be as pure as possible. Tan ranges from a rich chestnut to a lighter colour. White star on breast permissible. Minimal white markings on feet acceptable. Tan markings appear above eyes, on lower part of legs and underside of tail. Tan markings on muzzle; spectacle markings tolerated around eyes.

HEAD

Broad, heavy and strong. In adults a wrinkle may extend from above the eyes down to the corner of mouth. **Skull:** Large, very slightly rounded, with strongly pronounced occiput. **Stop:** Well defined. **Nose:** Broad, as dark as possible depending on coat colour, well opened nostrils. **Muzzle:** Fairly broad, well filled and deep. End of muzzle square. **Lips:** Well developed and covering the underjaw. **Jaws/teeth:** Jaws strong with perfect, regular and complete scissors bite – i.e., upper incisors closely overlapping the lower incisors and set square to the jaws. Level bite acceptable. Dentition fits tightly. **Eyes:** Medium size, any shade of brown and in accordance with coat colour, the darker the better. Set well apart, oval and slightly slanting. Eyelids tightly fitting the eyeball. Expression of dignity. **Ears:** Medium size, triangular, pendant, set between the level of the skull and the eye, dropping forward and hanging close to head; carried forward when alert. Ear leathers covered with soft, short hair.

NECK

Strong, well muscled, arched. Not too much dewlap. Covered by thick upstanding mane, not so pronounced in bitches.

FOREQUARTERS

Straight, well covered all over with strong hair. **Shoulders:** Well laid, muscular. **Elbows:** Neither turned in nor out. **Forearms:** Straight. Strong bone. **Metacarpus (pasterns):** Strong, slightly sloping.

BODY

Strong. **Back:** Straight, muscular. **Croup:** Almost imperceptible. **Chest:** Rather deep, of moderate breadth, with good spring of rib, to give heart-shaped rib cage. **Brisket** reaching to below elbows.

HINDQUARTERS

Powerful, muscular, with good angulation. Seen from behind, hind legs parallel. **Upper thigh:** Rather long; strong, with good hard muscles, but not bulging. **Stifle:** Well bent. **Hock:** Strong, low set. Dewclaws optional. **Feet:** Fairly large, strong, round and compact, with good feathering between well-arched toes.

TAIL

Medium length. Set high on line with top of back, carried high, loosely curled over back, when dog alert or in motion; well feathered.

GAIT

Powerful, but always light and elastic: with good reach and drive. When speed increases, tends to single-track. When walking appears very deliberate. Capable of functioning over a varied terrain with stamina and suppleness.

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.

Severe Faults:

- Lacking physical condition and fitness
- Head light or heavily wrinkled
- Pendulous flews
- Pronounced dewlap
- Large and/or low set ears
- Light eyes or staring expression
- Weak pigmentation, particularly of nose
- Barrelled ribs
- Tightly curled tail over hips

- Over angulated or straight hindquarters
- Heavy constrained movement
- Under minimum height, tolerance 2 cm (0.75 in)

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Aggressive or overly shy
- Undershot or overshot mouth
- All other colours than above mentioned – e.g., white, cream, grey, brown (liver), lilac, brindle, particolours

Note: Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

