



## GROUP IV: TERRIERS

# IRISH TERRIER

RECOGNIZED: 1889

Effective: January 2004

*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

This terrier must be active, lithe and wiry in movement, with great animation; sturdy and strong in substance and bone structure, but at the same time free from clumsiness, for speed, power and endurance are most essential. The Irish Terrier must be neither cobby nor cloddy, but should be built on lines of speed, with a graceful, racing outline.

### TEMPERAMENT

The Irish Terrier is game and asks no quarter. He is of good temper, most affectionate, and absolutely loyal to mankind. Tender and forbearing with those he loves, this rugged, stout-hearted terrier will guard his master, his mistress, children in his charge, or their possessions, with unflinching courage and with utter contempt of danger or hurt. His life is one continuous and eager offering of loyal and faithful companionship and devoted, loving service. He is ever on guard and stands between his house and all that threatens.

### SIZE

**Height at the withers:** Approximately 45.75 cm (18 in)

**Weight:** Desirable weight for dogs in show condition is 12.25 kg (27 lb); bitches, 11.25 kg (25 lb)

The weights herein mentioned are ideal and serve as a guide to both breeder and judge. In the show ring, however, the informed judge readily identifies the oversized or undersized Irish Terrier by its conformation and general appearance. The weights named should be regarded as limit weights, as a rule, but it must be considered that a comparatively small, heavily built and cloddy dog – which is most undesirable and not at all typical – may easily be of standard weight, or over it; whereas another terrier that is long in leg, lacking in substance and built somewhat upon the lines of a Whippet – also undesirable and not at all typical – may be of the exact weight, or under it; therefore, although the standard weights must be borne well in mind, weight is not the last word in judgment. It is of the greatest importance to select, in so far as possible, terrier of moderate and generally accepted size, possessing the other various necessary characteristics.

### COAT

Coat should be dense and wiry in texture, rich in quality, having a broken appearance, but still lying fairly close to the body, the hairs growing so closely and strongly together that when parted with the fingers the skin is hardly visible; free of softness or silkiness, and not so long as to alter the outline of the body, particularly on the hindquarters. At the base of the stiff outercoat, there should be a growth of finer and softer hair, differing in colour, termed the undercoat. Single coats, which are without any undercoat, and wavy coats, are undesirable; the curly coat is most objectionable. On the sides of the body, the coat is never as harsh as on the back and the quarters, but it should be plentiful and of good texture.

## COLOUR

Should be whole-coloured; the bright red, red wheaten or golden red colours are preferable. A small patch of white on the chest, frequently encountered in all whole-coloured breeds, is permissible but not desirable. White on any other part of the body is most objectionable.

## HEAD

Long, but nice proportion to the rest of the body. The **skull** flat, rather narrow between the ears, and narrowing slightly towards the eyes; free from wrinkle, with stop hardly noticeable except in profile. The **jaws** must be strong and muscular, but not too full in the cheek, and of good punishing length. The foreface must not fall away appreciably between or below the eyes; instead, the modelling should be delicate and in contradistinction, for example, to the fullness of foreface of the Greyhound. An exaggerated foreface, which is out of proportion to the length of the skull from the occiput to the stop, disturbs the proper balance of the head, and is not desirable. Also, the head of exaggerated length usually accompanies oversize or disproportionate length of body, or both, and such conformation is not typical. On the other hand, the foreface should not be noticeably shorter than is the skull from occiput to stop. Excessive muscular development of the cheeks, or bone development of the temples, conditions that are described by the fanciers as “cheeky,” “strong in head” or “thick in skull” are objectionable. The “bumpy” or “alligator” head, sometimes described as the “taneous” head, in which the skull presents two lumps of bony structure with or without indentations above the eyes, is unsightly and to be faulted. The hair on the upper and lower jaws should be similar in quality and texture to that on the body, and only of sufficient length to present an appearance of additional strength and finish to the foreface. The profuse, goat-like beard is unsightly and undesirable, and almost invariably it betokens the objectionable linty and silken hair in the coat. **Nose** must be black. **Lips** should be close and well-fitting, almost black in colour. **Teeth** should be strong and even, white and sound; and neither overshot nor undershot. **Eyes** dark hazel in colour; small, not prominent; full of life, fire and intelligence. The light or yellow eye is most objectionable. **Ears** small and V-shaped, of moderate thickness, set well on the head and dropping forward closely to the cheek. The ear must be free of fringe, and the hair much shorter and somewhat darker in colour than on the body. A “dead” ear, hound-like in appearance, must be severely penalized. It is not characteristic of the Irish Terrier. An ear that is too slightly erect is undesirable.

## NECK

Should be of fair length and gradually widening towards the shoulders, well and proudly carried, and free from throatiness. Generally, there is a slight frill in the hair at each side of the neck, extending almost to the corner of the ear.

## FOREQUARTERS

**Shoulders** must be fine, long and sloping well into the back. **Legs** moderately long, well set from the shoulders, perfectly straight, with plenty of bone and muscle; the **elbows** working clear of the sides; **pasterns** short, straight, and hardly noticeable. The **feet** should be strong, tolerably round, and moderately small; toes arched and turned neither out nor in, with black toenails. The pads should be deep, not hard, but with a pleasing velvety quality and perfectly sound; they must be entirely free from cracks or horny excrescence. Corny feet, so-called, are to be regarded as an abominable blemish, as a taint that must be shunned. Cracked pads frequently accompany corny growths, and these conditions are more pronounced in hot and dry weather. In damp weather and in winter, such pads may improve temporarily, but these imperfections inevitably reappear and the result is unsound feet, a deplorable fault that must be heavily penalized. There seems to be no permanent cure for this condition, and even if a temporary cure were possible, the disease is seldom, if ever, eradicated, and undoubtedly it is transmitted in breeding. The one sure way to avoid corny and otherwise unsound feet is to avoid breeding from dogs or bitches that are not entirely free from this taint.

## BODY

The body should be moderately long, neither too long nor too short. The short back, so coveted and so appealing in the Fox Terrier, is *not* characteristic of the Irish Terrier; it is objectionable. The **back** must be symmetrical, strong and straight, and free from an appearance of slackness or “dip” behind the shoulders. The **chest** should be deep

and muscular, but neither full nor wide. The *ribs* fairly sprung, deep rather than round, with a well-ribbed back. The *loin* strong and muscular, and slightly arched. The bitch may be slightly longer in appearance than the dog.

#### **HINDQUARTERS**

Should be strong and muscular; powerful thighs; *hocks* near the ground; *stifles* moderately bent. Cow hocks – where the hocks are turned in and the stifles and feet turned out – are intolerable. The legs should be free from feather, and covered, like the head, with hair of similar texture to that on the body, but not so long.

#### **TAIL**

May be docked, and set on rather high, but not curled. It should be of good strength and substance, of fair length and well covered with harsh, rough hair, and free from fringe or feather. The three-quarter dock is about right.

#### **GAIT**

Both forelegs and hind legs should move straight forward when travelling; the stifles should not turn outwards.

#### **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.

#### **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

- Nose any other colour than black
- Mouth much undershot or overshot
- Ears cropped
- Any other colour than red, golden red or red wheaten
- A small patch of white on the chest is permissible; otherwise, particoloured coats disqualify.

#### **SCALE OF POINTS**

Head, ears and expression .....	20
Legs and feet.....	15
Neck.....	5
Shoulders and chest.....	10
Back and loin.....	5
Hindquarters and stern .....	10
Coat.....	15
Colour .....	10
Size and symmetry.....	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

#### **Negative Points (-MINUS):**

White nails, toes and feet.....	-10
Much white on chest.....	-10
Dark shadings on face .....	-5
Mouth undershot or cankered.....	-10
Coat shaggy, curly or soft.....	-10
Uneven in colour .....	-5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-50</b>

