



GROUP IV: TERRIERS

SOFT-COATED WHEATEN TERRIER

RECOGNIZED: 1978

Effective: January 2017

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 Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier originated in Ireland. It was an all-purpose working farm dog used for destroying vermin, hunting small animals, herding and guarding against intruders.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier is a medium-sized, hardy, well-balanced sporting terrier, covered with a soft, silky, wavy coat of clear, warm, wheaten colour. The breed requires moderation in all points and any exaggerated features are to be avoided. The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier should present a square outline with the overall appearance of a steady, happy, well-coordinated animal that is alert to his environment and carries himself with a gentle dignity and self-confidence.

TEMPERAMENT

Good-tempered, spirited and game. Affectionate and loyal. Alert and intelligent. Defensive without aggression. He does not start a fight but should always stand his ground; exhibits less aggressiveness than is sometimes encouraged in other terriers.

SIZE

Height: Dogs, 45.75 to 48.25 cm (18 to 19 in), with the ideal height being 47 cm (18.5 in)

Bitches, 43.25 to 45.75 cm (17 to 18 in), with the ideal being 44.5 cm (17.5 in)

Weight: Dogs, 15.75 to 18.25 kg (35 to 40 lb); bitches, 13.5 to 15.75 kg (30 to 35 lb)

Deviations from the ideal should be penalized according to the amount of deviation from the ideal.

COAT

Abundant, single-coated, soft, silky textured, having a gentle wave that is apparent when standing. When the dog moves the coat has a free and flowing character to it. Neither woolly nor wiry, crispy nor cottony, frizzy (tight, crisp curl) nor straight.

COLOUR

Any shade of wheaten. Upon close examination occasional red, white or black guard hairs may be found. However, the overall colouring must clearly be wheaten with no evidence of any other colour except on ears and muzzle where blue-grey shading may be present. Puppies under one year may carry deeper colouring and some black tipping. The adolescent under two years may be quite light in colour, but must never be white nor carry grey, other than on ears and muzzle. In both puppies and adolescents, the mature, wavy coat is generally not yet seen. Coat colour and texture do not stabilize until about three years of age and some latitude should be given in young dogs. However, the softer and darker puppy coat should not be preferred over the lighter and slightly harsher adult coat. For show purposes, the coat should be trimmed to present a neat, square terrier outline. Over-styling is to be discouraged and severely penalized.

HEAD

Well balanced and moderately long with skull and foreface of equal length and in good proportion to the body. The **skull** is flat and not too wide. Cheeks are clean; moderate stop. The **muzzle** is square, powerful and strong with no suggestion of snipiness. The **nose** is black and large for the size of the dog. Lips are tight and black. **Teeth** are strong and white, meeting in a scissors or level bite with scissors preferred. The **eyes** are dark hazel or brown, medium sized and well protected under a strong brow. Eye rims are black. Coat should fall forward over the eyes. The **ears** are small to medium in size, breaking level with the skull, and dropping slightly forward, close to the cheeks, pointing to the ground rather than the eye.

NECK

Medium in length and set well upon the shoulders, gently sloping into the back.

FOREQUARTERS

The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier should have good reach in front. The **shoulders** should be well laid back with a clean, smooth appearance. The **upper arm** should be equal in length to the shoulder blade and elbows placed well under the body. The **forelegs** are straight when viewed from all angles and are well boned and muscled. Dewclaws may be removed. **Feet** are round and compact with good depth of pad. Dark nails are preferred but tortoiseshell is acceptable. Pads are black.

BODY

The body is compact; the **chest** is deep, but not round. The ribs are well sprung. The **back** is strong with relatively short coupling. **Topline** is level.

HINDQUARTERS

The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier requires good drive from behind, so requires well-muscled rear assembly. The **legs** should be well developed with powerful muscles, well-bent stifles, turning neither in nor out. The **hocks** are well let down and parallel when viewed from behind. Dewclaws on rear legs may be removed. Dark nails are preferred but tortoiseshell is acceptable.

TAIL

The tail is high set. The tail may be docked so that two-thirds of its original length remains. An undocked tail is also allowed. Whether docked or undocked, the tail is to be carried upright 90° from the back, either straight or with a slight curve forward.

GAIT

The gait is free, graceful and lively, having good reach in front and strong drive from behind, straight action fore and aft.

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.

Major Faults

- Yellow eyes
- Nose not solid black
- Overshot or undershot mouth
- Timid or overly aggressive