



Dalmatian

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 and Purpose

The Dalmatian is thought to be of Central European or Mediterranean origin and is known at least from the Middle Ages. Because of its affinity for horses, and capacity to travel great distances at a steady pace, it came to be used as a dog to run with and guard coaches and was known as a stable dog. Even later, the Dalmatian became popular as a dog to travel with and guard horse-drawn fire-fighting equipment especially in the United States.

General Appearance

The Dalmatian is a distinctively spotted dog; well balanced, strong, muscular and active, free from coarseness and lumber, capable of great endurance and speed compatible to its purpose. Clean movement and the ability to cover ground efficiently at a trot are most important in this breed.

Temperament

A lively, active dog of good demeanour.

Size

Overall balance is of prime importance and the height of dogs ideally is 56-61 cm (22-24 in), bitches 53-58 cm (21-23 in).

Coat and Colour

The coat should be short dense and fine, slightly glossy neither woolly nor silky. The colour and markings are most important. There are two acceptable colours: white with black spots and white with liver spots. The ground colour should be pure white. Black spots should be as deep and rich as possible. Liver spots should be of a colour closer to chocolate than to tan or yellow. The spots may touch, or overlap slightly, but are preferably as round and well defined as possible, the more distinct the better; in size they should be that of a dime to a two-dollar coin, approximately 1.8 - 3 cm. The spots on the face, head, ears, legs, tail and extremities should be smaller than those on the body. The tail should preferably be spotted. The ears should be spotted, the more profusely the better; solid black or liver is undesirable.

Head

Should be of a fair length, in balance with the rest of the dog, exhibiting a moderate amount of stop, and not in one straight line from the nose to occiput bone. The top skull and muzzle should be approximately equal in length.

Skull: should be flat, rather broad between the ears and moderately well defined at the temple. It should be entirely free from permanent wrinkle.

Muzzle: should be long and powerful, never snipey; the lips clean, fitting the jaws moderately close.

Nose: in the black spotted dogs, should always be black; in the liver spotted dogs always brown.

Mouth: The teeth should meet in a scissors bite. The incisors of the lower jaw touch very lightly the bottom of the inner surface of the upper incisors.



Eyes: Should be set moderately well apart and medium in size, round, bright, and sparkling, with an intelligent expression. The eyes should be as dark as possible. In the black-spotted dogs, they should be black or brown; in the liver-spotted dogs brown or amber. Blue or partly blue eyes are undesirable and should be penalized. The rim around the eyes in the black-spotted dogs should be black; brown in the liver-spotted dogs. No dog should have flesh-coloured eye rims.

Ears: Should be set on rather high, of moderate size, rather wide at the base and gradually tapering to a rounded point. They should be carried close to the head, and be thin and fine in texture.

Neck

The neck should be fairly long, nicely arched, light and tapering and entirely free from throatiness.

Forequarters

Shoulder should be well laid, not straight, and should be clean and muscular denoting speed. It should be laid flat against the body. Leg: The forelegs should be perfectly straight, strong and heavy in bone; elbows close to the body. Pastern showing a slight angle when viewed from the side and straight when viewed from the front, with a slight forward spring. Feet: Forefeet should be compact, with well-arched toes and tough elastic pads. Nails in the black-spotted dogs should be black and/or white; in the liver-spotted dogs, brown and/or white.

Body

Topline should be level and may arch slightly over the loin. Chest should not be too wide, but very deep and capacious, ribs moderately well sprung, never rounded like barrel hoops (which would indicate want of speed). Loin should be strong and muscular.

Hindquarters

Upper thigh and lower thigh muscles should be clean, powerful and well defined. Hocks should be well let down. Stifle should be moderately well bent. Feet: As for the forefeet.

Tail

The tail should reach the hock, being strong at the base and gradually tapering towards the end, free from coarseness. It should not be set on too low down and should be carried with a slight upward curve but never curled.

Gait

The Dalmatian should have great freedom of movement; a smooth, powerful, rhythmic stride and action with good reach and drive. Viewed from behind the hind legs should track the fore with no indication of the body moving at an angle to the point of direction. A short stride and/or a paddling action are incorrect.

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 purpose.

- Partly flesh-coloured nose.
- Cow-hocks.
- Flat feet.
- Incompletely coloured eye rims.
- Any eye colour other than black, brown or amber.



Disqualifications

- Patches are present at birth. A patch is a solid mass of black or liver hair. Patches are appreciably larger than normal-sized spots, they are dense, brilliant in colour and have sharply-defined, smooth edges. Large colour masses formed by intermingled or overlapping spots are not patches; such masses should indicate individual spots by uneven edges and/or white hair scattered throughout.
- Tricolours. Any colour other than liver and white and black and white.
- Undershot or more than 0.3 cm (1/8 in) overshot bite.

Scale of Points

General Appearance	10
Size, Symmetry & Substances	10
Head & Eyes	10
Ears	5
Neck & Shoulders	10
Body, Back, Chest & Loins	10
Legs & Feet	10
Gait	15
Tail	5
Coat, Colour & Markings.	15
TOTAL	100

Breed Name: Dalmatian
Year of Recognition: 1902
Effective Date: January 2009