



## GROUP VII: HERDING DOGS

# MINIATURE AMERICAN SHEPHERD

RECOGNIZED: 2024

Effective: July 2018

*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 Miniature American Shepherd is a small size herding dog that originated in the United States. Exceptional agility combined with strength and stamina allows for working over a variety of terrain. This highly versatile, energetic dog makes an excellent athlete with superior intelligence and a willingness to please those to whom he is devoted. He is both a loyal companion and a biddable worker, which is evident in his watchful expression.

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

He is slightly longer than tall with bone that is moderated and in proportion to body size and height without extremes. Movement is smooth, easy and balanced. The double coat of medium length and coarseness may be solid in colour or merled, with or without white and/or tan (copper) markings. He traditionally has a docked or natural bobtail.

### TEMPERAMENT

The Miniature American Shepherd is intelligent, primarily a working dog of strong herding and guardian instincts. An exceptional companion, he is versatile and easily trained, performing his assigned tasks with great style and enthusiasm. Although reserved with strangers, he does not exhibit shyness. He is a resilient and persistent worker, who adjusts his demeanour and arousal appropriately to the task at hand. With his family he is protective, good natured, devoted and loyal.

### SIZE

Height for dogs is 35.5 cm (14 in) up to and including 45.75 cm (18 in) at the top of the withers. Height for bitches is 33 cm (13 in) up to and including 43.25 cm (17 in) at the top of the withers. The minimum heights set forth in this breed standard shall not apply to dogs or bitches under six months of age.

*Proportion:* Measuring from the point of the shoulder to the point of the buttocks and from the highest point of the shoulder blade to the ground, he is slightly longer than tall. *Substance:* Solidly built with moderate bone in proportion to body height and size. *Structure* in the dog reflects masculinity without coarseness. Bitches appear feminine without being slight of bone.

### COAT

Moderation is the overall impression of the coat. Hair is of medium texture, straight to wavy, weather-resistant, and of medium length. The undercoat varies in quantity with variations in climate. Hair is short and smooth on the head and front of the legs. The backs of forelegs and breeches are moderately feathered. There is a moderate mane and frill, more pronounced in dogs than in bitches. Hair may be trimmed on the ears, feet, back of hocks, pasterns, and tail, otherwise he is to be shown in a natural coat. Untrimmed whiskers are preferred.

## COLOUR

The colouring offers variety and individuality. With no order of preference, the recognized colours are black, blue merle, red (liver) and red merle. The merle will exhibit in any amount, marbling, flecks or blotches. Undercoats may be somewhat lighter in colour than the topcoat. Asymmetrical markings are not to be faulted. Tan markings are not required but when present are acceptable in any or all of the following areas: around the eyes, on the feet, legs, chest, muzzle, underside of neck, face, underside of ear, underline of body, under the base of the tail and the breeches. Tan markings vary in shades from creamy beige to dark rust, with no preference. Blending with the base colour or merle pattern may be present on the face, legs, feet and breeches.

**White markings** are not required but when present do not dominate. Ticking may be present in white markings. White on the head does not predominate, and the eyes are fully surrounded by colour and pigment. Red merles and reds have red (liver) pigmentation on the eye rims. Blue merles and blacks have black pigmentation on the eye rims. Ears fully covered by colour are preferred. White markings may be in any combination and are restricted to the muzzle, cheeks, crown, blaze on head, the neck in a partial or full collar, chest, belly, front legs, hind legs up to the hock and may extend in a thin outline of the stifle. A small amount of white extending from the underline may be visible from the side, not to exceed 2.5 cm (1 in) above the elbow. The hairline of a white collar does not exceed the withers at the skin. If a natural undocked tail is present, the tip of the tail may have white.

## HEAD

The head is clean-cut, dry, and in proportion to the body. **Expression:** Alert, attentive and intelligent. May express a reserved look and/or be watchful of strangers. **Eyes** are set obliquely, almond-shaped, neither protruding nor sunken and in proportion to the head. Acceptable in all coat colours, one or both eyes may be brown, blue, hazel, amber or any colour combination thereof, including flecks and marbling. The eye rims of the reds and red merles have full red (liver) pigmentation. The eye rims of the blacks and blue merles have full black pigmentation. **Ears** are triangular, of moderate size, set high on the head. At full attention they break forward and over, or to the side as a rose ear. **Skull:** The crown is flat to slightly round and may show a slight occipital protuberance. The width and the length of the crown are equal. **Stop** is moderate but defined. **Muzzle** is of medium width and depth and tapers gradually to a rounded tip without appearing heavy, square, snipey or loose. Length is equal to the length of the crown. Planes viewed from the side, the muzzle and the top line of the crown are slightly oblique to each other, with the front of the crown on a slight angle downward toward the nose. **Nose:** Red merles and reds have red (liver) pigmentation on the nose leather. Blue merles and blacks have black pigmentation on the nose leather. Fully pigmented noses are preferred. **Bite:** A full complement of teeth meet in a scissors bite. Teeth broken, missing or discoloured by accident are not penalized.

## NECK

The neck is firm, clean and in proportion to the body. It is of medium length and slightly arched at the crest, fitting well into the shoulders.

## FOREQUARTERS

The forequarters are well conditioned and balanced with the hindquarters. **Shoulders:** Shoulder blades (scapula) are long, flat, fairly close set at the withers, and well laid back. **Upper arm (humerus)** is equal in length to the shoulder blade and meets the shoulder blade at an approximate right angle. The **forelegs** drop straight and perpendicular to the ground. The elbow joint is equidistant from the ground to the withers. Viewed from the side, the elbow should be directly under the withers. The **elbows** should be close to the ribs without looseness. **Legs** are straight and strong. The bone is oval rather than round. **Pasterns:** Short, thick and strong, but still flexible, showing a slight angle when viewed from the side. **Feet:** Oval-shaped, compact, with close-knit, well-arched toes. Pads are thick and resilient; nails are short and strong. The nails may be any colour combination.

## BODY

The overall structure gives an impression of depth and strength without bulkiness. **Topline:** The back is firm and level from the withers to the hip joint when standing or moving. **Loin** is strong and broad when viewed from the

top. **Croup** is moderately sloped. Body is firm and well conditioned. **Chest/ribs:** The chest is full and deep, reaching to the elbow, with well sprung ribs. **Underline:** Shows a moderate tuck-up.

## HINDQUARTERS

Width of hindquarters is approximately equal to the width of the forequarters at the shoulders. **Angulation:** The angulation of the pelvis and upper thigh (femur) mirrors the angulation of the shoulder blade and upper arm, forming an approximate right angle. **Stifles** are clearly defined. **Hocks** are short, perpendicular to the ground and parallel to each other when viewed from the rear. **Feet** are oval, compact, with close knit, well arched toes. Pads are thick and resilient; nails are short and strong. The nails may be any colour combination.

## TAIL

A docked tail is straight, not to exceed 7.5 cm (3 in). The undocked tail when at rest may hang in a slight curve. A natural bobtail also permitted. When excited or in motion the tail may be carried raised with the curved accentuated.

## GAIT

Smooth, free and easy; exhibiting agility of movement with a well-balanced, ground-covering stride. Fore and hind legs move straight and parallel with the centre line of the body; as speed increases, the feet, both front and rear, converge toward the centre line of gravity of the dog, while the back remains firm and level. When travelling at a trot the head is carried in a natural position with neck, extended forward and head nearly level or slightly above the topline. He must be agile and able to turn direction or alter gait instantly.

## 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.

- Noses that are less than fully pigmented

### Severe Faults

- Prick ears and ears that hang with no lift
- 25% to 50% unpigmented nose leather
- Atypical coats
- White markings covering 25% of an ear

## DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Under 35.5 cm (14 in) and over 45.75 cm (18 in) for dogs. Under 33 cm (13 in) and over 43.25 cm (17 in) for bitches. *Minimum heights set forth in this standard shall not apply to dogs or bitches under six months of age.*
- Over 50% unpigmented nose leather
- Undershot or overshot
- Other than recognized colours
- White body splashes, which means any conspicuous, isolated spot or patch of white on the area between withers and tail, on back, or sides between elbows and back of hindquarters

