



Portuguese Sheepdog (Cão da Serra de Aires)

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

Some experts believe that today's Portuguese Sheepdog is descended from a pair of Briards imported by the Count de Castro Cuimoraes in the early 20th century.

No reliable evidence can be found to suggest a relevant descent. He appears similar to the Berger des Pyrenees of France and the Calatan Sheepdog of Spain.

An all-purpose dog of herding and droving abilities, the breed doubles as a guardian as it works its clutches. These dogs are reliable and clever and make great working dogs.

General Appearance

Medium size dog, fairly long body, shaggy herder. He has monkey-like attitudes and looks, which is why in his native region, he is called "monkey dog". Efficiently built herder known for its quickness and cleverness.

Temperament

Intelligent and very lively, hardy and prudent, very devoted to the shepherd and flock entrusted to him, avoids strangers and guards at night.

Size

Height at withers: Males: 45 to 55 cm (17 ½ to 21 ½ in); Bitches: 42 to 52 cm (16 ½ to 20 ½ in)

Weight: 12 to 18 kg (26.5 to 40 lb)

Coat & Colour

Skin: The internal and external mucous membranes preferably pigmented; skin does not fit too tightly.

Hair: Very long, smooth or slightly wavy, forming long beards, moustache and eyebrows, but not covering the eyes.

Colour: The colours are yellow, chestnut, grey, fawn and wolf grey, with shadings from light to ordinary and dark, and black, more or less marked with tan with or without mixed white hairs, but never with white patches, except a small patch on the chest; hair very long on the head, body and legs, including between the toes. Hair of medium thickness and of goat like texture; dense and evenly distributed all over the body; there is no undercoat or wool.

Head

Strong, broad, neither long nor globular.

Skull: Slightly longer than wide; convex on the two axes, but more so laterally; the superciliary ridges are not prominent; the medial furrow is pronounced up to the half of the forehead; skull between set-on of ears almost flat, occipital protuberance visible. **Stop:** Well defined; the upper longitudinal cranial-facial axes are divergent. **Nose:** Well detached, slightly raised, with large nostrils; cylindrical and almost vertically truncated; black is preferable or otherwise darker than the coat. **Muzzle:** Almost cylindrical, straight in profile or slightly hollowed; short, measuring about two thirds of the length of the skull; width in proportion to length and shape. **Lips:** Tight, not overlapping; thin, firm, almost straight. **Teeth:** Normally developed; in perfect opposition with white and solid teeth.



Eyes: Lively expression, intelligent and docile; set level with the head; preferably of a dark colour; rounded, medium size and horizontal; eyelids black pigmented or always darker than the coat colour.
Ears: Set high; hanging and without folds, when they are not cropped, and straight when they are cropped; triangular, medium length, fine and smooth.

Neck

Harmoniously attached to head and body, straight and slightly rising; of regular size; without dewlap.

Forequarters

Strong, evenly separated; vertical seen from the front and sides.

Shoulder and upperarm: Strong, medium length; well muscled; angle of the shoulder straight.

Forearm: Vertical and well muscled. **Pastern joint:** Lean and no prominent. **Pastern:** Of even size; medium length, not very sloping from top to bottom and back to front. **Feet:** Round, not flat, toes long and tight, very well knuckled up; nails long, strong and black or darker than the colour of the coat; pads thick and tough.

Body

Topline: Not much sloping, underline of the body tucked up. **Back:** Straight or slightly hollow and long. **Loins:** Short and rounded; wide and curved, well muscled and well joined to the back and the croup. **Croup:** Of medium length and width; slightly slanting. **Forechest:** Prominent, descending backward and downwards; ample. **Chest:** Well let down; of medium width and depth. **Ribs:** Lightly sprung, with oval ribcage; sloping front to back. **Underline and Belly:** Regularly voluminous; slightly rising.

Hindquarters

Strong, regularly separated; in vertical position from the back in profile.

Upper thigh: Of medium length and width; well muscled. **Lower thigh:** Slightly inclined, long, well muscled. **Hock joint:** Set rather lower than high; of normal width, strong and lean, angle of the hock well open. **Metatarsal:** Of even thickness, but strong; medium length, not very sloping from top to bottom and front to back; single or double dewclaws are allowed. **Feet:** Round, not flat; toes long and tight, well knuckled up; nails long, strong and black or darker than the colour of the coat; the pads are thick and tough.

Tail

High set, pointed, tapering towards the base, touching the hocks; when relaxed carried between the legs, more or less arched or curved at the tip; in action spreads out a little curved and fans out or rolls up.

Gait

Light and flowing, predominantly the trot; the gallop when work demands it, energetic.



Faults

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree.

- Nose pointed.
- Lips overlapping or pendulous.
- Stop poorly defined.
- Eyes light, small, not round or slanting.
- Ears folded.
- Body : Hollow back or too sloping, underline too much tucked up.
- Croup : Horizontal or too sloping.
- Tail : Low set, short or rolled over on the back when in repose.
- Nails white.
- Coat soft or white patch on the chest.

Disqualification

- Head: Narrow and long.
- Muzzle: convex
- Jaws: bad fit
- Skull: flat, globular or narrow.
- Ears: low set.
- Tail: docked or naturally tailless.
- Hair: Not long enough, curled and looped, white on the extremities of the legs or pied.
- Size: Dwarfism.

Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.

Scale of Points

General appearance	20
Head	15
Eyes	10
Ears	5
Body	10
Legs	10
Tail	10
Coat	10
Gait	5
TOTAL	100

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

Breed Name: Portuguese Sheepdog
Year of Recognition: 2020
Effective Date: January 2021