

Welsh Corgi (Pembroke)

Origin and Purpose

Some dog historians theorize that the Pembroke Welsh Corgi originated from the Swedish Vallhund (brought into the country by the Vikings) and the Welsh Herd dog.

The fox-like head of the Pembroke, they claim, was accented by cross breeding to members of the Spitz family of dogs. Flemish weavers settled in the Welsh county of Pembrokeshire in the 12th century and brought the Schipperke and Pomeranian into the country. It is also thought that the Lancashire Heeler, a small black and tan cattle dog similar to the Corgi, could share in the breed's ancestry. It has been written that the small dogs with prick ears and pointed muzzles depicted on the famous statue of Anubis, the Egyptian God of the Setting Sun, were direct ancestors of the Welsh Corgi.

Whatever his background, the final product exerted enormous appeal. Welsh people say the sturdy little Corgi has watched over their cattle and guarded their homesteads for many centuries. It is reported that every farm in the country had at least two Pembroke Corgis.

It is believed that the name "Corgi" comes from the word "cur" meaning "to watch over" and, it is significant that the Welsh pronunciation of the word is Currgi.

Royal patronage brought the breed international fame. In 1933, King George VI, then Duke of York, purchased a Pembroke Corgi puppy from Thelma Gray, Rozavel Kennels, for his daughters. Queen Elizabeth's keen interest in the breed continues to this day.

General Appearance

Low-set, strong, sturdily built, alert and active, giving an impression of substance and stamina in a small space. Outlook bold but kindly, expression intelligent and workmanlike. "Dogs should appear masculine and bitches feminine."

Temperament

Never shy nor vicious.

Size

Moderately long and low; well balanced. The distance from the withers to the base of tail should be approximately 40 percent greater than the distance from the withers to the ground. Height (from ground to highest point on withers) should be 10-12 inches (25 – 30 cm). Weight, in show condition, the preferred size dog of correct bone and substance will weigh approximately 27 pounds, with bitches approximately 25 pounds.

Coat and Colour

The outer coat is to be of self-colours in red, sable, fawn, black and tan, all with or without white markings on legs, chest, neck (either in part or as a collar), muzzle, underparts or as a narrow blaze on the head or foreface. The coat should be of medium length; short, thick, weather resistant undercoat with a coarser, longer outer coat, with slightly thicker and longer ruff around the neck, chest and underparts, and somewhat fuller and long on rear hindquarters. The coat should be straight. The Corgi should be shown in its natural condition with no trimming permitted except to tidy the feet.

Head

Foxy in appearance, but not snipey. **Skull** to be fairly wide and flat between the ears. Moderate amount of stop. Length of foreface to be in proportion to the skull as 3 is to 5. The line of the muzzle should be parallel to the line of skull when viewed from the side. There should be chiseling below the eyes with no fullness or cheekiness. **Muzzle** slightly tapered. **Nose** black and fully pigmented. **Mouth** scissor bite. **Eyes** well set, oval, medium in size. Dark brown in harmony with the coat colour. Eye rims dark, black preferred. Yellow, bluish or black eyes are most undesirable. **Ears** erect, firm, of medium size, tapering to a rounded point. A line drawn from the tip of the nose through the eye to the ear tips and across, should form an appropriate equilateral triangle.

Neck

Fairly long and of sufficient length to provide overall balance.

Forequarters

Shoulders blades long and well laid back along the rib cage. **Upper arm** nearly equal in length to shoulder blades, and moulded around chest. The distance between the wrists should be less than between the shoulder joints, so that the front does not appear absolutely straight.

Elbows fitting closely to sides, neither loose nor tied. **Lower arm** – ample bone carried down into the feet, elbows parallel to the body, well set back to allow a line perpendicular to the ground to be drawn from the tip of the shoulder blade through the elbow. Legs short. **Pasterns** – firm and nearly straight when viewed from the side.

Feet

Oval with two centre toes slightly in advance of the two outer ones. Toes strong, well arched and tight, pads strong and thick, nails short.

Body

- (a) Top-line firm, level.
- (b) Chest-deep, well let down between forelegs, moderate forechest Rib cage should be well sprung, slightly egg-shaped and moderately long.

Hindquarters

- (a) Hipbone well fitting and strong.
- (b) Upper thigh well muscled.
- (c) Lower thigh, strong and flexible, slightly tapering.
- (d) Hocks – short, parallel, and when viewed from the side are perpendicular to the ground, ample bone carried right down to the feet.
- (e) Stifle bend – moderate.
- (f) Feet – as above for forequarters.

Tail

Short as possible.

Gait

Free and smooth, elbows fitting closely to the sides, neither loose nor tied. Forelegs should reach well forward, without too much lift, in unison with the driving action of the hind legs. Viewed from the front, legs do not move in exact parallel planes, but incline slightly inward to compensate for shortness of leg and width of chest. Hind legs should reach and drive, with no tendency to swing out, cross over or interfere with each other.

Major Faults

Oversized or undersized. Excessively shy or vicious. Overshot or undershot. Whitelies, body colour white with red or dark markings. Mismarks – self colours with any area of white on back between withers and tail, on sides above a line between elbows and stifle or on ears. Black and white markings with no tan present. Bluish-coloured portions of the coat have a distinct bluish or smokey cast. This colouring is associated with extremely light or blue eyes and liver or grey eye rims, nose and lip pigment.

Fluffies

A coat of extreme length and soft texture, with exaggerated feathering on ears, chest, legs and feet, under parts and hindquarters. No trimming acceptable.

The foregoing description is that of the ideal Pembroke Welsh Corgi. Any deviation from the above described dog must be penalized to the extent of the deviation, keeping in mind the original purpose of the breed.