



## GROUP IV: TERRIERS

# AMERICAN HAIRLESS TERRIER

RECOGNIZED: N/A

Effective: July 2025

*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 American Hairless Terrier originated in the South as a natural variation of the Rat Terrier. The breeding of the American Hairless Terriers (AHT) began in earnest in the early 1970s when a hairless puppy was born into a litter of mid-size Rat Terriers. This was not the first hairless puppy born to these parents, but it was the first to be given to a couple in Louisiana, Edwin and Willie Scott, who immediately fell in love with this female puppy and named her Josephine. Josephine became the foundation for the American Hairless Terrier breed.

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

The American Hairless Terrier is a small to medium-sized, smoothly muscled and active terrier. Ancestors of the breed were bred to hunt rats and other vermin. The lack of coat on the hairless variety of the American Hairless Terrier renders them unsuitable for most hunting activities. They have, however, retained a strong hunting instinct and excel in many other activities and sports.

### TEMPERAMENT

The breed is energetic, alert, curious and intelligent. Given early socialization and training they excel as companions, displaying great affection for their owners and family. American Hairless Terriers should not be spayed during conformation judging.

### SIZE

**Height:** Ideal height is from 30.5 to 40.75 cm (12 to 16 in) at the withers.

**Proportion:** Body is rectangular, being slightly longer than tall with a 10:9 ratio when measured from the prosternum to point of buttocks and from the withers to the ground.

**Substance:** Medium bone, not so heavy as to appear coarse or so light as to appear racy and blends with the proportion of the dog. The overall appearance is strong but moderate with firm, smooth, flat muscles. While correct size is very important, it should not outweigh that of type.

### COAT

The breed is hairless but has a coated counterpart. **Hairless:** Hairless puppies are born with a soft, vestigial “down” known as the “birth coat”. This generally covers the body but diminishes over time and puppies should be completely hairless by approximately eight to 10 weeks of age. A mature, hairless dog should be free of hair with the exception of whiskers and guard hairs on the eyebrows and muzzle. Short, very fine (vellus) hair may be present on the body of a mature dog. The skin is smooth and warm to the touch. **Coated:** The coated variety is covered with a short, smooth and dense coat that has a sheen. Whiskers are not removed.

## COLOUR

Any colour or combination of colours is allowed with the exception of albino or merle.

## HEAD

**Expression** is alert, curious and intelligent. Viewed from the front or side, the head forms a blunt wedge shape and is proportionate to the size of the body. The **skull** is broad, slightly domed and tapers slightly toward the muzzle. Skull and muzzle are of equal length with a moderate stop. **Muzzle** is well filled under the eyes, tapers slightly from the stop to the nose and is well-chiselled. Jaws are powerful with well-muscled cheeks. Lips are tight, dry, without flews. Pigmentation of the lips match the nose. **Nose:** The nose is solid coloured. **Eyes** are expressive, set obliquely, round, somewhat prominent but moderate in size, and of matching colour. Eye colour varies with body colour from darkest brown to amber and hazel. When eyes are brown, a darker brown is preferred. Amber eyes are permissible for a blue dog. Blue eyes are acceptable in blue or blue fawn dogs only, but grey is preferred. Eye-rim pigmentation corresponds with the nose colour. Incomplete eye-rim pigmentation is permitted only when the skin/coat colour around the eye area is white. **Bite:** The teeth are white and strongly developed meeting in a scissors bite. A level bite is acceptable. Missing pre-molars are not to be faulted. **Ears** are set at the outside edge of the skull and V-shaped. Erect ears are preferred; however, tipped or button ears are acceptable. Both ears should match in carriage.

## NECK

The neck is clean, moderately long, smoothly muscled, slightly arched and tapers slightly from the shoulders to the head, blending smoothly into well laid-back shoulders.

## FOREQUARTERS

**Shoulders blades** are well laid back with the upper tips fairly close together at the withers. The **upper arm** appears equal in length to the shoulder blade and joins at an apparent right angle. Shoulders are smoothly muscled and the elbows are close to the body. **Forelegs** are straight and strong when viewed from any angle and sturdy in bone. **Pasterns** are strong, short and nearly vertical. **Feet** are slightly oval in shape and compact. The two middle toes are slightly longer than the other toes. Toes may be well split up, but the foot is not flat or splayed. Removal of front or rear dewclaws is optional.

## BODY

The body is slightly longer than tall (10:9 ratio as measured from the prosternum to point of buttocks and from the withers to the ground). Length of the front leg (measured from point of elbow to the ground) should approximately equal one-half of the dog's height. The **loin** is moderately short, slightly arched and muscular, with moderate tuck-up and the croup is slightly sloping. **Ribs** extend well back and are well sprung out from the spine, forming a broad, strong back, then curving down and inward to form a deep body. **Brisket** extends to or just below the elbow. The **chest** between the forelegs is well filled and of moderate width when viewed from the front. The **forechest** extends in a shallow oval shape in front of the forelegs when viewed from the side. **Topline:** The line of the back is strong and level when the dog is standing or moving.

## HINDQUARTERS

The hindquarters are muscular. Upper and lower thighs being approximately equal in length. Angulation of the hindquarters and forequarters are in balance with each other. **Stifles** are well-bent, and the hocks are well let down. The short, strong **rear pasterns** are perpendicular to the ground and when viewed from the rear they are parallel to one another.

## **TAIL**

The tail comes off the end of the croup, almost reaches hock and is thick at the base, tapering toward the tip. The tail is held upward in a slight curve when the dog is alert and may be carried out behind the dog or up in a slight curve when the dog is in motion. The tail on the hairless variety should never be docked. Tail docking on the coated variety is permitted and optional.

## **GAIT**

Movement is smooth and effortless, showing good reach and drive. The forequarters move without any hint of being hackney and the rear drives with power and with the hocks fully extending. This breed moves smoothly but with a jaunty attitude that suggests a dog of agility, power and speed. The legs do not turn in or out and the feet do not cross or interfere with each other. As speed increases, feet tend to converge toward centre line but do not cross.

## **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.

- Aggressiveness or extreme shyness
- Too heavy or too light in bone and obesity
- Abrupt stop
- Snipey muzzle
- Dudley or butterfly nose
- Overshot or undershot bite
- Rose ears, flying ears, tulip ears and non-matching ear carriages
- Flat feet or splayed feet
- Bent tail, ring tail or curled tail

### **Serious Faults**

- A coated dog that lacks a full coat
- Apple head

## **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

- Hanging ears
- Bobtail or docked tail on the hairless variety
- In the coated variety: wire, broken or long coat
- Merle colour and albinism

