



GROUP II: HOUNDS

BORZOI

RECOGNIZED: 1893

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 Borzoi is a hunting sighthound bred to course hare, fox and wolves on more or less open terrain, relying on sight rather than scent. To accomplish this purpose, the Borzoi must be courageous, powerful and capable of great speed. Special emphasis is placed on sound running structure, strong neck and jaws, keenness to game, and agility combined with proper condition.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

A well-balanced hound that is graceful, aristocratic and dignified. The Borzoi should always possess unmistakable elegance with flowing lines, graceful in motion or repose. Dogs masculine without coarseness; bitches feminine and refined.

TEMPERAMENT

Sensitive, alert to the environment with a quiet dignity. Aggressiveness or shyness undesirable.

SIZE

Height: Dogs, 71 to 81.25 cm (28 to 32 in); bitches, 68.5 to 76.25 cm (27 to 30 in)

Extra size is no disadvantage provided that it is not acquired at the expense of symmetry, soundness and efficiency.

COAT

Silky in texture, never harsh, wiry or coarse. Coat may be flat, wavy or rather curly. Short and smooth on head and ears as well as on forelegs and hind legs below the hock. Much longer on body with heavy feathering on backs of forelegs, hindquarters, tail and chest. On the neck, the frill is profuse and rather curly. Coats tend to be more profuse in males. Quantity of coat and undercoat is determined by maturity and seasonal changes. The undercoat is dense and soft.

COLOUR

Any colour or pattern acceptable.

HEAD

Skull and Muzzle: Head long and lean and in proportion to the dog's size and substance. Viewed from above, the skull should look narrow, converging very gradually to the tip of the nose. The occipital process is accentuated. Well filled between and below the eyes. Measurement equal from the occiput to the inner corner of the eye (canthus) and from there to the tip of the nose. Seen from the side, the profile of the skull and muzzle form a smooth line. The skull is slightly domed, stop almost imperceptible; from the end of the nasal bone, the nasal cartilage slopes slightly down to the nostrils. Head fine so that the direction of the bones and principal veins can be clearly seen. **Nose** large, black, nicely rounded and over-reaching. **Mouth:** Jaws deep, long and powerful, with proportionally large teeth. Scissors bite preferred; level bite acceptable. Full dentition preferred. The **lips** are black

rimmed, thin and well stretched. **Eyes:** Large, dark brown with rims black and slightly almond-shaped. Set somewhat obliquely with the inner corner midway between the tip of the nose and the occiput. Never bulbous, staring or sunken. Expression is kind, intelligent and alert. **Ears:** Small, pointed and fine-leathered. Set high, not too far apart; tips nearly touching behind the occiput; when in repose folded back along the neck. Should be active and responsive; may be erect when alert, the tips sometimes falling over.

NECK

The neck should be well set on, widening gradually into the shoulders; clean, free from throatiness, slightly arched, well muscled, flat on the sides. The length of the neck should be approximately equal to the length of the head.

FOREQUARTERS

Withers not accentuated. **Shoulders** clean, sloping back, flat muscled. **Forelegs**, when seen from the front, appear bladed, clean and straight, elbows neither in nor out. Seen from the side, width at the elbow narrowing down to the pastern; elbows directed to the rear in a vertical line to the withers. **Pasterns** slightly sloping, strong, flexible and springy. The length of the forearms is about half the total height at the withers.

BODY

Chest: Rib cage relatively long, of tapered oval shape, slightly sprung, great depth of brisket to the level of the elbows, allowing room for heart and lung play. The prosternum is slightly pronounced with adequate width of forechest. The abdomen is well tucked up. **Back:** Comparatively short. **Backline:** Rising in a graceful curve over the loins. The spines of the vertebrae are prominent and the pelvic bones palpable. The curve may be less pronounced in bitches. **Loin:** Broad, powerful and very muscular; not long. **Croup:** Long, wide and well muscled with a gradual fall away. The greatest width is at the hip joints.

HINDQUARTERS

Hindquarters wider than shoulders. Hind legs long and very muscular. **Thighs** long and well developed with good second thigh. **Stifles** well angulated, hock joints broad, clean, and set low. Posterior line of the **hock** is vertical. When seen from the side the legs are slightly set back where a line can be dropped from the end of the pelvis (tuber Ischii) through the knuckles of the foot. **Feet:** Hare-foot, well padded, never flat, neither turning in nor out. Toes close together and well arched. Hind feet longer. Removal of dewclaws optional.

TAIL

Long, rather low set, the tail bone reaching well below the hock joint. Well feathered, carried low in a graceful curve. In action may be used as a counterbalance but not rising above the level of the back except when galloping. From the level of the hocks the tail may be sickle-shaped but not ringed.

GAIT

A typical trot is a gait of moderate speed. At the trot, the front legs must reach well out with pasterns strong and springy. The rear legs are wider apart than the front while walking, but the feet tend to move closer to the midline as the dog accelerates. A flexible backline is observable. When viewed from the side, there should be a noticeable drive with a ground covering stride. The overall appearance in motion should be that of effortless power, agility, smoothness and grace. Hackney action or restricted gait is not desired. When in pursuit of prey, the dog moves at a very rapid gallop showing full extension and flexion of limbs and backline, exhibiting great speed and endurance.

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.

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