GROUP I: SPORTING DOGS

BRACCO ITALIANO

RECOGNIZED: N/A

Effective: January 1, 2027

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

A hunting, pointing and retrieving gun dog, the Bracco Italiano is of an ancient and noble lineage, mentioned in writings of the 4th and 5th centuries. The Bracco has been accepted as a distinct breed in Italy since the Middle Ages and is one of the oldest pointing breeds. The Bracco has remained true to its heritage as a versatile gun dog.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Of strong and harmonious construction, powerful appearance. The preferred subjects are those with lean limbs, well-developed muscles, well-defined lines with a markedly sculpted head and a very obvious lower orbital chiselling, elements which all contribute to give distinction to this breed.

TEMPERAMENT

Tough and adapted to all types of hunting. Reliable, endowed with an excellent ability to understand. Docile and easy to train.

SIZE

Height at the withers: Dogs, 58.5 to 68.5 cm (23 to 27 in); bitches, 53.25 to 63.5 cm (21 to 25 in)

Weight: 25 to 40.75 kg (55 to 90 lb), depending on size

COAT

Hair: Short, dense and glossy; finer and shorter on the head, the ears, front part of the legs and feet. ***Skin:*** Tough but elastic; finer on the head, the throat, the armpits and on the lower parts of the body. The visible pigmentation must be of a corresponding colour with the coat and never show black spots.

COLOUR

White, white with orange markings, or white with brown markings. The markings are of varied sizes (patches, ticking or roan). The orange should range from a dark amber to rich orange. The brown should be a warm shade resembling the colour of a monk's frock. A metallic sheen is appreciated in brown and white dogs. A symmetrical facial mask is preferred, but the absence of a mask is tolerated.

HEAD

Length of head is equal to four-tenths of the height at the withers. Angular and narrow at the level of the zygomatic arches; the length of the skull equals the length of the muzzle. The upper longitudinal axes of the skull and muzzle are divergent – i.e., if extending the topline of the muzzle, the latter must emerge in front of the occipital protuberance, ideally at mid-length of the skull. ***Skull:*** Seen in profile, the skull is in the shape of a very open arch. Seen from above, lengthwise, it forms an elongated ellipse. The width of the skull, measured at the level of the zygomatic arches, should not exceed half of the length of the head. The bulge of the forehead and the supraorbital ridges are perceptible. The frontal groove is visible and ends at mid-length of the skull. The interparietal crest is

short and not very prominent. The occipital protuberance is pronounced. ***Stop:*** Not pronounced. ***Nose:*** Voluminous, with large well-opened nostrils, protruding slightly over the lips. Colour is pink to flesh-coloured or brown depending on the colour of the coat. ***Muzzle:*** Either slightly arched or straight. Its length is equal to half of the length of the head and its depth measures four-fifths of its length. Seen from the front, the lateral sides of the muzzle taper slightly, still presenting a foreface of good width. The chin is not very apparent. ***Lips:*** Upper lips well developed, thin and floppy without being flaccid, covering the jaw. Seen in profile, they overlap the lower jaw slightly. Seen from the front, they form an inverted "V" below the nose. The corner of the lips must be marked without being droopy. ***Teeth:*** Scissors bite. A pincer bite is also acceptable. ***Cheeks:*** Lean. ***Eyes:*** Semi-lateral position with a soft and submissive expression, neither deep set nor prominent. Eyes fairly large, eyelids oval-shaped and close-fitting (no entropion or ectropion). The iris is of a more or less dark ochre or brown colour depending on the coat colour. ***Ears:*** Long. They should reach the tip of the nose without being stretched. Their width is at least equal to half their length. Raised only very slightly; base rather narrow, set rather backwards at level of zygomatic arches. A supple ear with a front rim well turned inwards and really close to the cheek is appreciated. The tips are slightly rounded.

NECK

Powerful, in truncated cone shape, length not less than two-thirds of the length of the head, well detached from the nape. The throat shows a soft double dewlap.

FOREQUARTERS

Very free in movement. ***Shoulder:*** Strong, well muscled, long and sloping. ***Upper arm:*** Sloping, fitting to the rib cage. ***Elbow:*** The point of the elbow should be on a perpendicular line from the rear point of the shoulder blade to the ground. ***Forearm:*** Strong, straight, with strong and well-marked sinews. Pastern: Well proportioned, lean, of good length and slightly sloping. ***Forefeet:*** Strong, slightly oval-shaped; well arched with tight toes and strong nails well curved towards the ground. Colour of nails is white, yellow or brown, of a more or less dark shade depending on the colour of the coat; pads elastic and lean.

BODY

Length of the body is the same or a little more than the height at the withers. ***Topline:*** The topline presents two lines: one, almost straight, slopes from the withers to the 11th dorsal vertebra; the other is slightly arched, joining with the line of the rump. ***Withers:*** Well defined, with the points of the shoulder blades well separated. ***Loin:*** Wide lumbar region, muscled, short and slightly convex. ***Croup:*** Long (about one-third of the height at the withers), broad and well muscled; the ideal pelvic angulation (angle formed by the pelvic girdle with a horizontal line) is 30°. ***Chest:*** Broad, deep and well let down to the elbows, without forming a keel, with well-sprung ribs, particularly in the lower part. ***Underline/belly:*** Lower profile almost horizontal along the rib cage, rising slightly at the abdomen.

HINDQUARTERS

Thigh: Long, parallel, muscular, with a rear edge almost straight. ***Stifle:*** Well angulated. ***Lower thigh:*** Strong. ***Hock joint:*** Broad. ***Pastern:*** Relatively short and lean. ***Hind feet:*** With all the characteristics of the forefeet: they have dewclaws, the absence of which is not a fault. Double dewclaw is tolerated.

TAIL

Thick at the base, straight, with a slight tendency to taper; hair short. When the dog is in action and especially when questing, it is carried horizontally or nearly. The natural tail should not extend below the hock and have the above-mentioned features. If docked, for hunting purposes and in compliance with health and animal welfare, the tail must have a length of 15 to 25 cm (6 to 9.75 in) from the root.

GAIT

Extended and fast trot, with powerful propulsion from the hindquarters, head raised and nose held high in such a way that, when hunting, the nose is higher than the topline.

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 and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog and on its ability to perform its traditional work.

Severe Faults:

- Accentuated undershot or overshot mouth by over 3.25 mm (0.125 in)
- Excessive amount of skin causing an exaggerated dewlap or an undivided dewlap and too many wrinkles on the head
- Size: 2.5 cm (1 in) above or below the standard height at the withers
- An upturned tail is highly undesirable.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Split nose
- Dish-faced
- Walleye
- Coat any solid colour other than white, white and black, tricolour, tan markings
- Black pigment on coat or inside of mouth
- Absence of pigmentation (albinism)