

FCI-Standard N° 166 / 07. 08. 1996 / GB

GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG

(Deutscher Schäferhund)

TRANSLATION : Mrs. C. Seidler and Mrs. I. Kincaid.

ORIGIN : Germany.

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THE ORIGINAL VALID STANDARD : 23. 03. 1991.

UTILIZATION : Versatile Utility, Herding, Guard and Service Dog.

CLASSIFICATION F.C.I. : Group 1 Sheepdogs and Cattle Dogs
(except Swiss Mountain and
Cattle Dogs).

Section 1 Sheepdogs.

With working trial.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY : According to official resolution, the Association for German Shepherd Dogs (Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde) with seat in Augsburg, as a member of the German Kennel Club (Verband für das Deutsche Hundewesen e.V., VDH) and as founding association of the breed, is responsible for the standard of the German Shepherd Dog. This standard was originally drawn up at the first membership meeting of the Association in Frankfurt/Main, on the 20th September 1899, based on proposals made by A. Meyer and von Stephanitz. Amendments were made to the standard during the 6th membership meeting on the 28th July 1901, during the 23rd membership meeting in Cologne/Rhine on the 17th September 1909, at the Board of Directors and Advisory Committee meeting in Wiesbaden, Germany, on the 5th September 1930, and at the Board of Directors and Breed Committee meeting on the 25th March 1961. The standard was revised and adopted by the World Union of German Shepherd Dogs (Weltunion für Deutsche Schäferhunde, WUSV) on the 30th August 1976 and reviewed and catalogued following a resolution of the Board of Directors and Advisory Committee on the 23rd and 24th March 1991.

The German Shepherd Dog, whose planned breeding was begun in the year 1899 after the founding of the Association for German Shepherd Dogs, was originally developed on breeding from then available Central and South German herding dogs with the final aim to create a dog highly suitable for the most demanding utility work. To achieve this aim, the breed standard of the German Shepherd Dog was developed, emphasizing correct physical structure and particularly a sound temperament and good character.

GENERAL APPEARANCE : The German Shepherd Dog is of medium size, slightly elongated, strong and well muscled, with dry bone and of firm overall structure.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT : The German Shepherd Dog must be even tempered, well balanced (with strong nerves), self assured, totally at ease (except when provoked) and good natured, as well as attentive and easy to train. He must possess courage, combativity and toughness in order to be suitable as a companion, guard, service, Herding-dog and « Schutzhund ».

HEAD : The head is wedge shaped and in proportion to body size (length approximately 40% of height at withers) without being coarse or too elongated. Clean and dry in general appearance, moderately broad between the ears. The forehead seen from the front and side is only slightly rounded and without any or with only a slightly indicated middle furrow.

The proportion of the cranial region to the facial region is 50 % to 50 %. The width of the cranial region corresponds approximately to the length. Seen from above, the skull is tapering evenly from the ears to the nasal bridge and gradually sloping into the wedge-shaped foreface, with a slanting not too abrupt stop. Upper and lower jaw are strongly developed. Bridge of nose is straight, any indentation or arch is undesirable. Lips tight, firmly fitted and dark in colour.

Nose : Must be black.

Teeth : Must be strong and healthy; complete dentition (42 teeth according to the teeth formula).

The German Shepherd Dog has a scissor bite, i.e. the incisors must fit scissor-like to each other so that the incisors of the upper jaw overlap those of the lower jaw in scissor fashion. Level bite, over- or undershot bite are faults as well as larger spaces between the teeth (gaps). Equally faulty is straight alignment of the incisors. The jaw bones must be strongly developed so that the teeth are strongly embedded in the dental arch.

Eyes : Of medium size, almond shaped, set slightly slanting, not protruding. The eye colour should be as dark as possible. Light piercing eyes are undesirable since it affects the dog's expression.

Ears : The German Shepherd Dog has erect ears of medium size which are carried upright, pointing in the same parallel direction (not inwardly constricted). They taper to a point and the auricle is open toward the front. Semi-drop ears or hanging ears are faulty. Ears carried laid back in movement or in repose are not faulty.

NECK : The neck should be strong, well muscled and not throaty (no dewlap). Its angulation towards the body (horizontally) is approximately 45°.

BODY : The upper line runs, without any visible break, from the set-on of the neck over the well defined withers and over the back very slightly sloping to the horizontal line, onto the gradually slanting rump. The back is firm, strong and well muscled. The loin is broad, strongly developed and well muscled. The rump should be long, sloping slightly (about 23° to the horizontal) and, without any break in the topline, merge with the tail set-on.

CHEST : Moderately broad, lower chest as long as possible and well developed. Depth of chest should be 45 to 48% of the height at withers. Ribs should have moderate spring. Ribs which are barrel-shaped or too flat are faulty.

TAIL : Reaches at least to the hock joint, yet not further than the middle of the metatarsus. It has slightly longer hair on its underside and is carried hanging in a gentle curve. When the dog is excited or in motion, the tail is raised and carried higher, but not above the horizontal line. Corrective surgery is forbidden.

LIMBS

FOREQUARTERS : Seen from all sides, the forelegs are straight and, seen from the front, absolutely parallel. Shoulder blade and upper arm are equal in length, well muscled and firmly attached to the body. The angle between the shoulder-blade and the upper arm is ideally 90°, but generally up to 110°.

The elbows must turn neither in nor out, while in repose or moving. Viewed from all sides, the forearms are straight and absolutely parallel to each other, dry and firmly muscled. The pastern has a length of approximately 1/3 of the forearm; the angle between them is 20° to 22°. A weak pastern (angle more than 22°) or a steep pastern (angle less than 20°) affect the dog's working suitability, especially his endurance.

Forefeet : Rounded, tight with toes well arched; pads firm, but not brittle; nails strong and dark in colour.

HINDQUARTERS : The hindlegs are placed slightly backwards; seen from the rear, they are parallel to each other. Upper and lower thigh are approximately of equal length and form an angle of about 120°. The thighs are strong and well muscled. The hock joints are strong and firm. The metatarsus stands vertically under the hock joint.

Hind feet : Compact, slightly arched; the pads are hard and dark in colour; the nails are strong, arched and also dark in colour.

GAIT / MOVEMENT : The German Shepherd Dog is a trotting dog. The limbs must be so coordinated in length and angulation that, without noticeable alteration of the topline, the rear legs can propel to the body while the forelegs extend to an equal distance. Any tendency to overangulation of the hindquarters reduces the firmness and endurance, and consequently the working ability. Correct body proportions and angulations result in a flat over the ground, far reaching, ground covering gait giving the impression of an effortless propulsion. The head pushed forward and the tail slightly raised result in an even, effortless trot showing a gently curved, uninterrupted upper line from the tips of the ears, over neck and back to the tip of the tail.

SKIN : The skin is (loosely) fitting, but without any folds.

COAT

MAKE UP OF THE COAT : The correct coat for the German Shepherd Dog is double coat (Stockhaar) with outercoat and undercoat. The outercoat should be as dense as possible, straight, harsh and lying close to the body. On the head, inside ears, on the front side of the legs and on feet and toes, the hair is short; it is slightly longer and more dense on the neck. On the rear side of the legs, the hair is longer extending to the pasterns and the hocks. It forms moderate « trousers » at the rear of the thighs.

COLOUR : Black with reddish-brown, brown, yellow to light grey markings. Solid black or solid grey. Greys with darker shading show a black saddle and mask. Unobtrusive, small white marks on chest as well as very light colour on insides permissible, but not desirable. Nose must be black in all colours. Dogs with lack of mask, light to piercing eye colour, as well as with light to wishy markings on the chest and the insides, pale nails and red tip of tail are considered to be lacking in pigmentation. The undercoat shows a light greyish tone. The colour white is not accepted.

SIZE AND WEIGHT :

Dogs : Height at the withers : 60 to 65 cm.

Weight : 30 to 40 kg.

Bitches : Height at the withers : 55 to 60 cm.

Weight : 22 to 32 kg.

The length of the body is approximately 10-17 % longer than the height at the withers.

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.

SERIOUS FAULTS :

- Any departure from the above described breed characteristics which affects the working capability of the dog.
- Faulty ears : Laterally too low set ears, tipped ears, inward constricted ears. Ears not firm.
- Severe lack of pigmentation.
- Severe lack in general firmness.
- Dental faults : All departures from a scissor bite and the correct teeth formula, if not included in eliminating faults listed below.

ELIMINATING FAULTS :

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Weak temperament and nerves, biters.
- Dogs with deformed ears or tail.
- Dogs with malformations.
- Dogs with missing teeth as follows :
 - 1 premolar 3 plus one additional tooth; or
 - 1 canine, or
 - 1 premolar 4, or
 - 1 molar 1 or 2, or
 - a total of 3 or more missing teeth.
- Dogs with faulty jaws, overshot by more than 2 mm, undershot; pincer bite formed by all 12 incisors.
- Oversized or undersized dogs by more than 1 cm.
- Albinos
- White coat colour (even with dark eyes and nails).
- Long outercoat (long, soft, not flat lying top coat with undercoat, feathers on ears and legs, bushy « trousers » and bushy tail with plume underneath (Langstockhaar).
- Long coat (long, soft top coat without undercoat, mostly parted in middle of back, feathers on ears, legs and tail (Langhaar).

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

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

