

American King Shepherd Club

Approved in March 2008

“A King Shepherd SHOULD NOT look like a long haired German Shepherd.”



Profile of a dog (male)



Profile of a dog (male)



Profile of a dog's head



Profile of a dog's head (ears relaxed)



Profile of a bitch (female)



Profile of a bitch (female)



Profile of a bitch's head

GENERAL APPEARANCE: The King Shepherd possesses size; thick, dense bone; a well-muscled torso and a strong impressive head. He is large, rugged, powerful and impressive, possessing great endurance and agility. Developed through a set of demanding circumstances for a purely utilitarian purpose, he is a working guard dog without equal, with a unique ability to protect livestock. He possesses a keen intelligence and a kindly, while regal, expression. Exhibiting a unique elegance of bearing and movement with purpose; his soundness and coordination embodies the unmistakable intent for which he has been bred.

SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE: *Size:* The height at the highest point of the withers should be a minimum of 27 inches for dogs, and a minimum of 25 inches for bitches. The minimum weight for a dog

is 110 pounds with the ideal weight being 120-145 pounds. The minimum weight for a bitch is 80 pounds with an ideal weight being 90-110 pounds. Weight is in proportion to the overall size and structure with preference given to the larger. ***A dog or bitch measuring under the minimum height and weight limits specified shall be disqualified.*** The dog's appearance is more massive throughout than the bitch's. Large size is desirable, but never at the expense of balance and structure.

Proportion--The King Shepherd is a balanced dog with the height measured at the withers being somewhat less than the length of the body measured from the point of the shoulder to the rearmost projection of the upper thigh (buttocks). The proportions of 10-11.5 create a slightly rectangular dog. Front and rear angulations are balanced.

Substance-- He is a dog of considerable substance which is determined by spring of rib, strong muscle, and heavy bone. ***Serious Faults:*** *Slight or weak bones, narrow or hollow chest, lacking in substance.*

HEAD:The King Shepherd is distinguished by his immense, square and well defined head. The large square head is a key essence of breed type. ***The head:*** is broad and deep, not coarse or clumsy, but in proportion to the size of the dog, planes of the skull and muzzle are parallel. The muzzle is square, blunt, with level and parallel planes, and is in equal proportion to the back skull; when measured from the tip of the nose to insertion of the stop. Demonstrating a strong well developed underjaw. The ***skull:*** is measured from the point of stop to the far most point of the occiput. The furrow is moderately defined with slightly arched frontal bones lending to a well defined stop. The ***skull:*** is broad and moderately rounded between the ears, gradually narrowing and flattening on top as it approaches the eyes, rounding off to cheeks that are moderately curved, and when viewed from the top should be much in the form of a trapezoid, and well filled in under the eyes. The ***expression:*** keen, intelligent and composed. ***Eyes:*** of medium size, almond shaped, set a little obliquely and not protruding. The color is as dark as possible ranging through shades of brown. On lighter colored dogs lighter eyes are permissible but not desired. ***Ears:*** are moderately pointed, in proportion to the skull, open toward the front, and carried erect when at attention, the ideal carriage being one in which the center lines of the ears, viewed from the front, are parallel to each other, high set, and perpendicular to the ground. ***A dog with cropped or hanging ears must be disqualified.*** ***Severe Faults:*** *Wide or Kite like ears set off to the side of the head; long snippy muzzle; extremely light eyes; small refined head; insufficient stop; domed skull; low set ears; weak underjaw. A dog with a nose that is not predominantly black must be disqualified.* The lighter-streaked "snow nose" is acceptable and may be present during winter months. The lips are firmly fitted. Jaws are strongly developed. ***Teeth*** --42 in numbers--20 upper and 22 lower--are strongly developed and meet in a scissors bite in which part of the inner surface of the upper incisors meet and engage part of the outer surface of the lower incisors. An overshot jaw or a level bite is undesirable. ***An undershot jaw is a disqualifying fault.*** Complete dentition is to be preferred. ***Serious fault:*** *Any missing teeth other than first premolars.*

NECK, TOPLINE, BODY: ***Neck--***Robust, strongly muscled, of medium length, well set on the shoulders and is long enough for proud head carriage with no evidence of dewlap or throatiness. The neck is carried erect when excited and typically above the horizontal aspect of the topline when gaiting.

Topline--The backline is level. The ***back*** is strong, broad, and muscular and is level from just behind the withers to the croup. The chest is full and deep with the brisket reaching at least down to the elbows. Ribs are well sprung, with the anterior third of the rib cage tapered to allow elbow clearance. ***Body--***The chest is moderately broad. The rib cage is well sprung, oval in shape, and of sufficient depth to reach the elbows. Back and loin are broad and strongly coupled with some tuck-up. The croup is gently sloping with the tail set on just below the level of the back.

Tail--The tail is well plumed, carried low in repose and may not be carried over the back. The tail is broad at the base and strong. It has no kinks, and the distal bone reaches to the hock. When standing relaxed, the tail hangs straight or with a slight curve at the end. In motion the tail is down and slightly curved or out when gaiting. If the dog becomes excited it may raise the tail, and it will become more curved without going beyond the vertical aspect of the back, but it does not curl or lie over the back.

Severe Faults: *Roached topline, steep croup, shallow chest not extending to elbow, tail that curls or lies over the back. Curled or hook tail.* **Disqualification:** *A docked tail.*

FOREQUARTERS: Shoulders--The shoulders are well laid back, well muscled, and lie close to the body. The upper arm meets the shoulder blade at approximately a right angle. The upper arm angles backward from the point of the shoulder to the elbow and is never perpendicular to the ground. The length of the shoulder blade and the upper arm is approximately equal. The height from the ground to the elbow appears approximately equal to the height from the elbow to the withers. **Forelegs--**The legs are of thick, dense bone and muscle to provide a balance with the frame. The elbows are close to the body and point directly to the rear when standing and gaiting. The forelegs, when viewed from the side, are located directly under the withers and are straight and vertical to the ground. The elbows, when viewed from the front, are set in a straight line from the point of shoulder to the wrist. Front pasterns are strong and flexible. Each foreleg may carry a single dewclaw. **Front Feet--**Rounded, close-cupped, well cushioned pads, toes well arched. . There is a protective growth of hair between the toes. The pads are thick and tough; toenails short and strong. **Serious Faults:** *Pinched elbows; feet pointed east or west; lacking bone density; appearing straight in shoulder; lacking proper forefront angulation; weak pasterns; paddling of the front feet.*

HINDQUARTERS: The rear assembly is powerful, muscular, and heavily boned. Viewed from the rear, the legs are straight and parallel. Viewed from the side, the thighs are broad and fairly long. Stifles and hocks are well bent and the line from hock to ground is perpendicular. Hocks are well let down. **Hind feet--** are similar to the front feet. **Rear legs--** are broad and heavily muscled through the thighs; when viewed from the rear, the legs stand and move true in line with the movement of the front legs, not too close or too wide. Dewclaws on the rear legs are undesirable and should be removed shortly after puppies are whelped. **Severe Faults:** *Any evidence of cow hocks, when standing or in motion; lack of heavy bone in tarsus or metatarsus; lack of rear angulation; straight stifles; sickle hock; long hocks.*

COAT: The ideal dog has a rough coat of moderate length, a smooth coated type of King Shepherds exist, and is equally acceptable. A slightly wavy outer coat should be as dense as possible, hair straight, harsh and lying close to the body. The head, including the inner ear and foreface, and the legs and paws are covered with short hair, and the neck with longer and thicker hair. The rear of the forelegs and hind legs has somewhat longer hair extending to the pastern and hock, respectively. **Serious Faults:** In coat include soft, silky, too long outer coat giving the appearance of a long haired Shepherd, woolly, curly, and open coat. **Color and Markings:** The King Shepherd Dog varies in color, and many colors are permissible. Strong rich colors are preferred. Colors are as follows: Sable (a brown/red with black markings or a tan/cream with black markings); bi-colored (predominantly black with red, tan or cream); black saddle with red, tan, gold or cream, and solid black. **Markings:** Small areas of white, the smaller the better, are permissible on the chest, toes, tail. **Serious Faults:** *Pale, washed-out colors, i.e. black and grey and black and silver; blues or livers.* **Disqualification:** *A predominantly or solid white dog must be disqualified.*

GAIT: The gait of the King Shepherd in motion has strong reach and drive, and gives the impression of effortless power. He moves with a purpose. He is a trotter; He is agile for his size and build. When viewed from the side, the hindquarters exhibit strong rear drive that is transmitted through a well-muscled loin to the forequarters. The forequarters receive the drive from the rear with a smooth reaching stride. When viewed from the front or from the rear, forelegs and hind legs travel straight forward, neither too close nor too wide. His gait is powerful, pronounced, demanding and rhythmic, covering the maximum amount of ground with the minimum number of steps. As the dog's speed increases, the legs tend toward single tracking. When moving, a slight roll may be present in the larger animals and should not be penalized. Essential to good movement is the balance of correct front and rear assemblies. **Serious Faults:** *A stilted gait, paddling, any interference front or rear (crossing over); or any gait that is not completely efficient and tireless, is to be penalized.*

TEMPERAMENT: The breed has a distinct personality marked by direct and fearless, but not hostile, expression, self-confidence and a certain aloofness that does not lend itself to immediate and

indiscriminate friendships. The dog must be approachable, quietly standing its ground and showing confidence and willingness to meet overtures without itself making them. It is poised, but when the occasion demands, eager and alert; both fit and willing to serve in its capacity as companion, watchdog, herding dog, or guardian, whichever the circumstances may demand. The dog must not be timid, shrinking behind its master or handler; it should not be nervous, looking about or upward with anxious expression or showing nervous reactions, to strange sounds or sights, such as tucking of tail. Lack of confidence under any surroundings is not typical of good character. *Any of the above deficiencies in character which indicate shyness must be penalized as very **serious faults** and any dog exhibiting pronounced indications of these must be excused from the ring. It must be possible for the judge to observe the teeth and to determine that both testicles are descended. Any dog that attempts to bite the judge must be **disqualified**. The ideal dog is a working animal with an incorruptible character combined with body and gait suitable for the arduous work that constitutes its primary purpose.*

DISQUALIFICATIONS:

Any dog measuring under the minimum specified height and weight

Cropped or hanging ears

Dogs with noses not predominantly black

Undershot jaw

Docked tail

Predominantly white ore solid white dogs

Any dog that attempts to bite the judge