

Breed Standard

German Shepherd Dog

(FCI standard nr. 166/30/08.1991./D

German Shepherd Dog. Country of origin Germany.

FCI classification: group 1 Herding dogs, section 1, Herding dogs with working test.

Utilisation: multi purpose, working, herding and service dog.



Short historical overview

This standard is officially laid down by the Organisation for German Shepherd Dogs (SV) domiciled in Augsburg. The SV is affiliated to the VDH (Organisation for German dogs) and are as founders of the breed responsible for Breed standard of the German Shepherd dog.

- This standard was first established during the first gathering of members in Frankfurt am Main on September 20, 1899 following the recommendations by A. Meyer and M. von Stephanitz
- Additions were made during the members gathering on July 28, 1901
- The XXII member meeting in Cologne/Rhine on September 17, 1909
- The council and advisory committee in Wiesbaden on September 5, 1930
- The meeting of the Breed council and the executive on March 25, 1961.
- The standard was revised by members of the WUSV (World Organisation of German Shepherd clubs) and accepted by the WUSV congress on August 30, 1976
- In terms of a decree by the management and the council the last revision cataloguing took place on March 23 and 24, 1991

General appearance

The German Shepherd Dog is of medium size, slightly long, strong and well muscled, the bone is dry and the overall construction is firm.

Important proportions

The height at the withers is for males 60cm-65cm, for bitches 55cm-60cm. The length of the body exceeds the height at the withers by approximately 10 to 17%.

Character

The German Shepherd dog must possess a balanced character, steady nerves, and must be self-assured, fearless without being sharp, good natured, alert and obedient. It must have courage, fighting spirit and hardiness to be suitable as a companion, watch, defense and service and herding dog. This makes them suitable to be a superior working dog in general, and in particular to be a guard, companion, protection and herding dog.



Head

The head is wedge shaped and should be in proportion to the body size (in length approximately 40% of the height at the withers) without being coarse, or overstretched. In general appearance, it should be dry with moderate breadth between the ears. The forehead when viewed from the front or side is only slightly arched. It should be without a center furrow or with only a slightly defined furrow. When viewed from above, the skull which is approximately 50% of the entire head length, tapers gradually and evenly from the ears to the tip of the nose, with a sloping rather than a sharply defined stop and into a long, dry wedge-shaped muzzle (the upper and lower jaws must be strongly developed.) The bridge of the nose is straight, a dip or rounding is not desirable. The lips are firm and dry and close tightly and are of dark colouring.

Nose

The nose must be black



Dentition

Dentition must be healthy, strong and complete (42 teeth and must be in accordance with the formula). The German Shepherd Dog has a scissors bite, e.g. the incisors must meet each other in a scissorslike fashion, with the outer surface of the incisors of the lower jaw sliding next to the inner surface of the incisors of the upper jaw. An undershot or overshot bite is faulty, as are large gaps between the teeth. A level bite is faulty, as the incisors close on a straight line. The jaws must be strongly developed so that the teeth may be deeply rooted.

Eyes

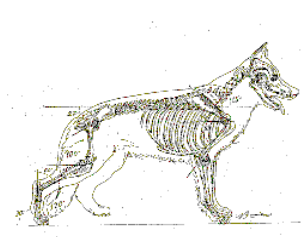
The eyes are of medium size, almond shaped, somewhat slanting and not protruding. The colour of the eyes should be as dark as possible. Light, piercing eyes are not desirable as they impair the expression of the dog.

Ears

The ears are of medium size, wide at the base and set high. They taper to a point and are carried facing forward and vertically (the tips not inclined toward each other). Tipped, cropped and hanging ears are rejected. Ears drawn back during motion are not faulty.

Neck

The neck should be strong with well-developed muscles and without looseness of the throat skin (dewlaps). The neck is carried at an angle of about 45 degrees to the horizontal.



Body

The topline starts at the base of the neck and continues over high and long withers and a straight back up to a slightly sloping croup without a clearly visible disruption.

The back is of moderate length, firm, strong and well muscled. The loin is broad, short, and well developed and muscled. The croup should be long and slightly sloping (appr. 23°) and flow without disruption of the topline into the tailset.

Chest

The chest should be reasonably broad, and the underchest should be as long as possible and pronounced. The depth of chest should be (approximately 45 to 48% of the height at the withers) The ribs should somewhat rounded, both barrel shaped and flat ribs are faulty.

Tail

The tail should reach at least to the hock joint but not beyond the middle of the hocks, the tail hair is longer on the inside and is carried in a gentle downward curve, but when the dog is excited or in motion, it is curved more and carried higher. The tail should never be raised past the vertical. Clinical corrections are inadmissible.

Limbs:

Forequarters

The front legs must be straight when viewed from all sides. The shoulder blade and the upper arm are of equal length and are attached to the body by strong muscles. The angle of the shoulder blade and the upper arm is ideally 90°, but is usually 110°. The elbows should neither be turned in or out in stance and in movement. The lower legs seen from all angles should be straight and absolutely parallel and be dry and well muscled. The length of pastern is approximately 1/3 of the leg and is at an angle of about 20 to 22°.in relation to the leg. Both a steep (more than 22°) and a weak pastern (less than 22°) influence the working ability of the dog and especially its stamina.

Hindquarters

The back legs are slightly placed backwards. The back legs when seen from behind should be parallel. The upper thigh bone joins the only slightly longer lower thigh bone at an angle of approximately 120 degrees and the thighs are well muscled. The hock joint is strong and firm and the hock stands perpendicular under the joint.

Feet

The feet are relatively round, short, tightly formed and arched. The pads are very hard, but not chapped. The nails are short, strong and of a dark colour.

Movement

The German Shepherd Dog is a trotter. The limbs, therefore, must be so similar in length and so proportioned to one another, i.e. angulated, that the action of the rear as it carries through to the middle of the body is matched by an equally far-reaching forehand causes no essential change in the top line. Every tendency toward over angulation of the rear quarters diminishes soundness and endurance. The correct proportions of height to length and corresponding length of the leg bones results in a ground-covering gait that is low to the ground and imparts an impression of effortless progression. With his head thrust forward and a slightly raised tail, a balanced and even trotter will have a top line that falls in moderate curves from the tip of the ears over the neck and level back through the tip of the tail.

Skin

The skin is loose without showing folds.

Coat

The correct coat for the German Shepherd dog is "stockhaar" with an undercoat. The outer coat should be as thick as possible, coarse and lying flat against the body. The coat is short on the head inclusive of the ears, the front of the legs, the feet and the toes but longer and thicker on the neck. The hair grows longer on the back of the fore- and hind legs as far down as the pastern and the hock joint, forming moderate breeching on the thighs.

Colour

Colour should be black with regular markings in tan, brown, yellow tan to light gray. Solid black, gray with dark spots, black saddles and mask. Small white markings on the forechest or a very light colour on the insides of the legs are permissible though not desired. The nose must be black with all coat colours. Dogs with little or no masks, yellow or strikingly light eyes, light markings on the chest and insides of the legs, white nails and a red tip of the tail or washed out weak colours are considered lacking in pigment. The undercoat is always light gray. White dogs are not accepted.

Height/ weight

Dogs: Height at withers 60cm to 65cm
Weight 30kg to 40kg

Bitches: Height at withers 55cm to 60cm
Weight 22kg to 32kg

Testicles

Dogs must have clearly normal developed testicles, which are fully descended.

Faults

All deviations from the above must be regarded as faults and should be evaluated in relation to the degree of deviation.

Serious faults

Serious faults include anything contained in the breed standard that impairs working versatility.

Faulty ears such as hanging ears, widely placed ears, soft ears, and permanently faulty ear carriage

Fading pigment; blues, albinos (with complete lack of pigmentation, e.g. pink nose, etc.) and whites (near to pure white with black nose)

Serious overall lack of overall firmness.

Teeth failures: all deviations from a scissor bite and formula other than those faults which exclude the dog from breeding.

Exclusion from breeding

- a) Weak temperament, nervous and snappy dogs.
- b) Dogs with proven "serious HD"
- c) Monorchids and cryptorchids and testicles too small;
- d) Dogs with serious ear and tail deviations
- e) Poorly constructed dogs
- f) Dogs with the following teeth failures:
 - one P3 and one further tooth, or
 - one Canine, or
 - one P4, or
 - one M1 or M2 or
 - a total of 3 missing teeth and more.
- g) Dogs with faulty jaws:
 - Undershot by 2mm or more.
 - Overshot.
 - Level bite of all Incisors
- h) Dogs that deviate more than 1cm above or under the height standard.
- i) Albinos
- j) With coats (even with dark eyes and nails)
- k) Long(stockhaar) (long, soft, not tight top coat with undercoat, tufts on the ears and legs, long tufts on the back legs and the tail and under the belly)
- l) Long coats (long, soft top coat without undercoat, often parted at the middle of the back, tufts on the ears and legs and the tail)