

BREED STANDARD - THE DALMATIAN

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A Breed Standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function. Absolute soundness is essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed. From time to time certain conditions or exaggerations may be considered to have the potential to affect dogs in some breeds adversely, and judges and breeders are requested to refer to the Kennel Club website for details of any such current issues. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure.

GENERAL APPEARANCE A distinctively spotted dog, balanced, strong, muscular, active dog. Symmetrical in outline, free from coarseness and lumber.

CHARACTERISTICS A carriage dog of good demeanour, capable of great endurance and a fair turn of speed.

TEMPERAMENT Outgoing and friendly not shy or hesitant, free from nervousness and aggression.

HEAD AND SKULL Of fair length, skull flat, reasonably broad between ears, moderately well defined in front of ears. Entirely free from wrinkle. Moderate amount of stop. Muzzle powerful, never snipey. Distance from nose to stop equals that from stop to occiput. Lips clean, fitting jaws moderately closely. Nose in black spotted variety always black, in liver spotted variety always brown.

EYES Set moderately well apart, medium oval in shape, bright and sparkling, with intelligent expression. Colour dark brown in black spotted, amber in liver spotted, with uniformly pigmented irises. Fully pigmented eye rims, black in black spotted, and liver brown in liver spotted.

EARS Set on rather high, moderate size, rather wide at base, gradually tapering to rounded point. Fine in texture, carried close to head. Marking well broken up, preferably spotted.

MOUTH Jaws strong with a perfect, regular and complete scissor bite, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping the lower teeth and set square to the jaws.

NECK Fairly long, nicely arched, light and tapering. Entirely free from throatiness.

FOREQUARTERS Shoulders well laid back, clean and muscular with length of shoulder and upper arm approximately equal. Elbows set close to body. Forelegs perfectly straight with strong round bone down to feet with a slight spring at pastern joint.

BODY Length from point of shoulder to point of buttock slightly greater than height from withers to ground. Chest not too wide but deep and capacious with plenty of lung and heart room. Ribs well sprung and carried well back. Well defined withers, powerful level back. Loin strong, clean muscular and slightly arched.

HINDQUARTERS Rounded, muscles clean with well developed second thigh, good turn of stifle, hocks well defined.

FEET Round, compact, with well arched toes, cat-like, round, tough, elastic pads. Nails black or white in black spotted variety, brown or white in liver spotted variety.

TAIL Length reaching approximately to hock. Strong at insertion gradually tapering toward end, never inserted too low or too high, free from coarseness and carried with a slight upward curve, never curled. Preferably spotted.

GAIT/MOVEMENT Great freedom of movement. Smooth powerful, rhythmic action with long stride. Viewed from fore and aft, the legs should appear straight with a degree of convergence towards the centre line at the trot. The feet should move along straight lines with the rear feet tracking the fore. A short stride and paddling action incorrect.

COAT Short, hard, dense; sleek and glossy in appearance.

COLOUR Ground colour pure white. Black spotted having dense black spots; liver spotted liver brown spots; not running together but round and well defined. In size, 2cm-3cm in diameter as well distributed as possible. Spots on extremities smaller than those on the body. Tri-colours and spotting other than black or liver unacceptable. Bronzing on spots undesirable in adults. Some patching on ears or head not to be penalised.

SIZE Overall balance of prime importance. Ideal height: dogs 58-61 cms (23-24 ins); bitches 56-58 cms (22-23 ins)

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

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