

AKITA BREED STANDARD

Effective August 8, 2022

General Appearance

Large, powerful, alert, with much substance and heavy bone. The broad head, forming a blunt triangle, with deep muzzle, small eyes and erect ears carried forward in line with back of neck, is characteristic of the breed. The large, curled tail, balancing the broad head, is also characteristic of the breed.

Head

Massive but in balance with body; free of wrinkle when at ease. Skull flat between ears and broad; jaws square and powerful with minimal dewlap. Head forms a blunt triangle when viewed from above. *Fault*--Narrow or snipy head. *Muzzle*--Broad and full. Distance from nose to stop is to distance from stop to occiput as 2 is to 3. *Stop*--Well defined, but not too abrupt. A shallow furrow extends well up forehead. *Nose*--Broad and black. Black noses on white Akitas preferred, but a lighter colored nose with or without shading of black or gray tone is acceptable.

Disqualification --partial or total lack of pigmentation on the nose surface. Any nose color other than black, except on white Akitas. *Ears*--The ears of the Akita are characteristic of the breed. They are strongly erect and small in relation to rest of head. If ear is folded forward for measuring length, tip will touch upper eye rim. Ears are triangular, slightly rounded at tip, wide at base, set wide on head but not too low, and carried slightly forward over eyes in line with back of neck. *Disqualification*--Drop or broken ears. *Eyes*--Dark brown, small, deep-set and triangular in shape. Eye rims black and tight. *Lips and Tongue*--Lips black and not pendulous; tongue pink. *Teeth*--Strong with scissors bite preferred, but level bite acceptable. *Disqualification*--noticeably undershot or overshot.

Neck and Body

Neck--Thick and muscular; comparatively short, widening gradually toward shoulders. A pronounced crest blends in with base of skull.

Body--Longer than high, as 10 is to 9 in males; 11 to 9 in bitches. Chest wide and deep; depth of chest is one-half height of dog at shoulder. Ribs well sprung, brisket well developed. Level back with firmly muscled loin and moderate tuck-up. Skin pliant but not loose. *Serious Faults*--Light bone, rangy body.

Tail

Large and full, set high and carried over back or against flank in a three-quarter, full, or double curl, always dipping to or below level of back. On a three-quarter curl, tip drops well down flank. Root large and strong. Tail bone reaches hock when let down. Hair coarse, straight and full, with no appearance of a plume. *Disqualification*--Sickle or uncurled tail.

Forequarters and Hindquarters

Forequarters--Shoulders strong and powerful with moderate layback.

Forelegs heavy-boned and straight as viewed from front. Angle of pastern 15 degrees forward from vertical. *Faults*--Elbows in or out, loose shoulders. *Hindquarters*--Width, muscular development, and bone comparable to forequarters. Upper thighs well developed. Stifle moderately bent and hocks well let down, turning neither in nor out.

Dewclaws--On front legs generally not removed; dewclaws on hind legs generally removed. *Feet*--Cat feet, well knuckled up with thick pads. Feet straight ahead.

Coat

Double-coated. Undercoat thick, soft, dense and shorter than outer coat. Outer coat straight, harsh and standing somewhat off body. Hair on head, legs and ears short. Length of hair at withers and rump approximately two inches, which is slightly longer than on rest of body, except tail, where coat is longest and most profuse. *Fault*--Any indication of ruff or feathering.

Color and Marking Patterns

Any color including white; brindle; or pinto. Exceptions: Merle marking pattern. Liver color. Colors are rich, brilliant, and clear and markings are well balanced, with or without mask or blaze. White Akitas have no mask. Pinto has a white background with large, evenly placed patches covering head and more than one-third of body. Undercoat may be a different color from outer coat. *Disqualification*--Merle marking pattern. Liver color.

Gait

Brisk and powerful with strides of moderate length. Back remains strong, firm and level. Rear legs move in line with front legs.

Size

Males 26 to 28 inches at the withers; bitches 24 to 26 inches.

Disqualification--dogs under 25 inches; bitches under 23 inches.

Temperament

Alert and responsive, dignified and courageous. Akitas may be intolerant of other dogs, particularly of the same sex.

Disqualifications

Partial or total lack of pigmentation on nose.

Any nose color other than black except on white Akitas.

Drop or broken ears.

Noticeably undershot or overshot.

Sickle or uncurled tail.

Dogs under 25 inches; bitches under 23 inches.

Merle marking pattern

Liver color