



Official Standard of the Icelandic Sheepdog

General Appearance: The Icelandic Sheepdog is a Nordic herding Spitz, slightly under medium sized with prick ears and a curled tail. Seen from the side the dog is rectangular. The expression is gentle, intelligent and happy. A confident and lively bearing is typical for this dog. There are two types of coat, long and short, both thick and extremely weatherproof. There is a marked difference in appearance between the sexes.

Size, Proportion, Substance: *Ideal height* - Dogs 18 inches; Bitches 16½ inches. Rectangular and strong. Seen from the side, the dog is rectangular, the length of the body measured from the point of shoulder to point of buttock is greater than the height at the withers. The depth of the chest is equal to the length of the foreleg.

Head: Strongly built with close fitting skin. Triangular when seen from above or the side. **Skull** - Slightly longer than muzzle and somewhat domed. Stop - clearly defined though neither steep nor high. Nose - Black. Dark brown in chocolate brown and some cream dogs. The nasal bridge is well-developed and straight. **Muzzle** slightly shorter than skull, tapering evenly towards the nose to form a blunt triangle when seen from both above and from the side. Lips - Black, close fitting. Dark brown in chocolate brown and some cream dogs. **Bite** - Scissor bite. Teeth - Complete dentition. Cheeks - Flat. **Eyes** - Medium size and almond shaped. Dark brown. Slightly lighter in chocolate brown and some cream dogs. Eye rims are black. Dark brown in chocolate brown and some cream dogs. **Ears** - Erect and of medium size. Triangular with firm edges and slightly rounded tips. Very mobile, reacting sensitively to sounds and showing the dog's mood. Faults - yellow or round protruding eyes.

Neck, Topline, Body: **Neck** - Moderately long and muscular with no loose skin. The neck is slightly arched and the head is carried high. **Body** - rectangular and strong. The length is in proportion to the height and in harmony with general appearance. Back - level, muscular and strong. Loins - broad and muscular. Croup - moderately short and broad, very slightly sloping and well-muscled. Chest - long, deep and well-sprung. Belly - Slight tuck up. **Tail** - high set, curled over and touching the back.

Forequarters: When seen from the front the forelegs are straight, parallel and strong. Angulation - Shoulders are well laid back, oblique and muscular. Dewclaws - Required and may be double. Forefeet - slightly oval, toes well-arched and tight with well-developed pads. Faults - No dewclaws.

Hindquarters: When seen from behind the hind legs are straight, parallel and strong. Thighs - Broad and well-muscled. Dewclaws - Required. Well-developed double dewclaws desirable. Hind feet - Same as forefeet. Faults - No dewclaws.

Coat: Double coat, thick and weatherproof. There are two types: **Short-haired** - The outer coat of medium length, fairly coarse, with a thick, soft undercoat. The tail is bushy and the hair length is in proportion to the coat. **Long-haired** - The outer coat is longer than the above, fairly coarse, with a thick, soft undercoat. The tail is very bushy and the hair length is in proportion to the coat. In both lengths, the hair is shorter on the face, top of the head, ears and front of the legs; and longer on the neck, chest and back of the thighs. In the show ring, presentation is to be in a natural, unaltered condition. Specimens where the coat or whiskers have been altered by trimming or clipping shall be so severely faulted as to be effectively eliminated from competition.



Color: Several colors are permitted but a single color should always be predominant. The predominant colors are: various shades of tan, ranging from cream to reddish brown; chocolate brown, grey, and black. White always accompanies the predominant color. The most common white markings, which are often irregular, are a blaze or a part of the face, collar, chest, socks of varying lengths and tip of tail. Lighter shading often occurs on the underside of the dog from throat to tip of tail. On tan and grey dogs, a black mask, black tips to the outer hairs and even occasional black hairs often occur. Black (tri-color) dogs have a black coat, white markings as mentioned above and traditional markings in any of the various tan colors on the cheeks, over the eyes (eyebrows) and on the legs. Patches of the above colors on a white background (pied) are permitted. White should not be totally predominant. Fault - a solid black mantle or saddle on any of the tan colored dogs.

Gait: Displays agility and endurance with good driving action covering the ground effortlessly.

Temperament: The Icelandic Sheepdog is a hardy and agile herding dog which barks, making it extremely useful for herding or driving livestock in the pastures, in the mountains or finding lost sheep. The Icelandic Sheepdog is by nature very alert and will always give visitors an enthusiastic welcome without being aggressive. Hunting instincts are not strong. The Icelandic Sheepdog is cheerful, friendly, inquisitive, playful and unafraid. A confident and lively bearing is typical for this dog.

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 proportion to its degree.

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