



Official Standard of the Old English Sheepdog

General Appearance: A strong, compact, square, balanced dog. Taking him all around, he is profusely, *but not excessively coated*, thickset, muscular and able-bodied. These qualities, combined with his agility, fit him for the demanding tasks required of a shepherd's or drover's dog. Therefore, *soundness is of the greatest importance*. His bark is loud with a distinctive "pot-casse" ring in it.

Size, Proportion, Substance: Type, character and balance are of greater importance and are on no account to be sacrificed to size alone. **Size** - Height (measured from top of withers to the ground), Dogs: 22 inches (55.8 centimeters) and upward. Bitches: 21 inches (53.3 centimeters) and upward. **Proportion** - Length (measured from point of shoulder to point of ischium (tuberosity) practically the same as the height. Absolutely free from legginess or weaseliness. **Substance** - Well muscled with plenty of bone.

Head - A most intelligent expression. **Eyes** - Brown, blue or one of each. If brown, very dark is preferred. If blue, a pearl, china or wall-eye is considered typical. An amber or yellow eye is most objectionable. **Ears** - Medium sized and carried flat to the side of the head. **Skull** - Capacious and rather squarely formed giving plenty of room for brain power. The parts over the eyes (supra-orbital ridges) are well arched. The whole well covered with hair. **Stop** - Well defined. **Jaw** - Fairly long, strong, square and truncated. *Attention is particularly called to the above properties as a long, narrow head or snipy muzzle is a deformity.* **Nose** - Always black, large and capacious. **Teeth** - Strong, large and evenly placed. The **bite** is level or tight scissors. **Neck, Topline, Body:** **Neck** - Fairly long and arched gracefully. **Topline** - Stands lower at the withers than at the loin with no indication of softness or weakness. *Attention is particularly called to this topline as it is a distinguishing characteristic of the breed.* **Body** - Rather short and very compact, broader at the rump than at the shoulders, ribs well sprung and brisket deep and capacious. Neither slab-sided nor barrel-chested. The loin is very stout and gently arched. **Tail** - Docked close to the body, when not naturally bob tailed.

Forequarters: Shoulders well laid back and narrow at the points. The forelegs dead straight with plenty of bone. The measurements from the withers to the elbow and from the elbow to the ground are practically the same.

Hindquarters: Round and muscular with well let down hocks. When standing, the metatarsus are perpendicular to the ground when viewed from any angle.

Feet: Small and round, toes well arched, pads thick and hard, feet pointing straight ahead.

Coat: Profuse, but not so excessive as to give the impression of the dog being overly fat, and of a good hard texture; not straight, but shaggy and free from curl. *Quality and texture of coat to be considered above mere profuseness.* Softness or flatness of coat to be considered a fault. The undercoat is a waterproof pile when not removed by grooming or season. Ears coated moderately. The whole skull well covered with hair. The neck well coated with hair. The forelegs well coated all around. The hams densely coated with a thick, long jacket in excess of any other part. Neither the natural outline nor the natural texture of the coat may be changed by any artificial means except that the feet and rear may be trimmed for cleanliness.

Color: Any shade of gray, grizzle, blue or blue merle with or without white markings or in reverse. *Any shade of brown or fawn to be considered distinctly objectionable and not to be encouraged.*



Gait: When trotting, movement is free and powerful, seemingly effortless, with good reach and drive, and covering maximum ground with minimum steps. Very elastic at a gallop. May amble or pace at slower speeds.

Temperament: An adaptable, intelligent dog of even disposition, with no sign of aggression, shyness or nervousness.

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