



Official Standard of the Spanish Water Dog

General Appearance: A rustic breed of the Iberian Peninsula, the Spanish Water Dog is a sturdy, medium sized, well proportioned, athletic dog that is suited to perform a variety of tasks including herding, hunting, and assisting fishermen. He is a loyal, vigilant, and intelligent working dog with strong herding instincts. His working ability is attributed to an intense desire to please. In profile, the Spanish Water Dog is slightly longer than tall. He has a distinctive curly coat, which is adapted to the variation of humidity and drought of his homeland. Traditionally, he has a docked tail.

Size, Proportion, Substance: *Size* - Height at the withers: Dogs, 17½ to 19¾ inches; Bitches, 15¾ to 18 inches. Weight - In proportion to height. *Proportions* - Measured from point of shoulder to buttocks and withers to the ground 9:8. *Substance* - Solidly built, robust, muscular with moderate bone but neither coarse nor refined.

Head: *Head* is in balance with the body. *Expression* is alert and attentive. *Eyes* are slightly oblique, very expressive and have a shade of brown from hazel to dark chestnut, with the color harmonizing with the coat. *Ears* are set at medium height at eye level. They are drooping and triangular in shape with slightly rounded tips. The tips should not reach past the inside corner of the eye. *Skull* is broad and flat. Occiput is not prominent. Ratio of cranium to muzzle is 3:2. Stop is apparent but not abrupt. *Muzzle* is wide at the base, tapering slightly to a rounded tip. Cheeks are well filled below the eyes. Planes of skull and muzzle are parallel. Nose is of the same color or slightly darker than the darkest color of the coat and has well defined nostrils. Beige or white dogs may have either black or brown pigment. Lips are well fitting, labial corners well defined and are pigmented as the nose. Flews are tight. Scissors *bite* preferred, level bite accepted. Teeth are strong with full dentition.

Neck, Topline and Body: *Neck* is in proportion to the length of the body; strong and slightly arched, blending smoothly into the shoulders. *Topline* is straight. *Body* is robust. The body is slightly longer than tall in an approximate ratio of nine to eight measured from the point of shoulder to the point of buttocks. The length of the back comes from the length of the ribcage, not from that of the loin. Chest is broad and well let down, reaching at least the elbows. Ratio of depth of chest to height at withers is 50 percent of the height. Ribs are well sprung. Tuck-up is slight. Back is straight and powerful. Loin is short. Croup is slightly sloping. *Tail* is set smoothly into the croup neither high nor low. Traditionally docked between the second and fourth vertebra, some are born with a naturally bobbed tail which can range from almost no tail to almost a full tail. Preference is not to be given to docked or undocked tails. Skin is supple, fine and adheres closely to the body.

Forequarters: Shoulders are well-muscled and well-laid back and approximately the same length as the upper arm. The upper arm and scapula form approximately a 90-degree angle. Elbows are close to the chest and turn neither in nor out. Legs are straight, and strong with moderate bone. Pasterns are strong and flexible. Front dewclaws may be removed. Feet are round and compact. Toes are tight and well arched

Hindquarters: The hindquarters give an impression of strength and energetic impulsion. Angulation is in balance with the front. Upper thigh is well muscled. Stifle is well bent. Second thigh is well developed. Hock joint is well let down. Rear pastern is short and perpendicular to the ground. Dewclaws if present are to be removed. Feet are as the front.



Color: The Spanish Water Dog may be solid (in its various shades of black, brown, beige, or white) or parti-color where the second color is white. Disqualification - Tricolor, tan-point, or parti-color where the second color is not white.

Coat: The hair is a single coat, always curly and of a wooly texture. It is never brushed or combed and is shown either in natural curls or in rustic cords with tapered tips. The ends of the cords usually show a curl. The entire body, including the head, should be well covered with hair. In full coat, the hair will cover the eyes. Clipped subjects are allowed, the clipping always complete and even, never to become an "aesthetic" grooming. Minimal hygienic trimming is allowed but should not be noticeable on presentation. For shows, the recommended extended length of the coat is between 1 inch and 5 inches to demonstrate the quality of the curl or cord. Any brushing, aesthetic trimming, or sculpting of the coat that alters natural appearance is to be severely penalized. Traditionally, the Spanish Water Dog was sheared one time per year (with the sheep), the same length all over. Disqualification - Smooth or wavy coat.

Gait: Movement is free, smooth, effortless, and ground covering. Balance combines good reach in forequarters with front foot reaching the nose, and strong drive in the rear. As speed increases, the feet converge toward the centerline of gravity of the dog while the back remains firm and level.

Temperament: The Spanish Water Dog is faithful, obedient, lively, hard working, and watchful. He is highly intelligent with an outstanding learning ability. His loyalty and protective instincts make him a self-appointed guardian to his owner, his family, and his property. He should be neither timid nor shy, but is naturally suspicious of strangers. Properly introduced, and given time, the Spanish Water Dog will accept strangers. He is very affectionate with his own people.

Disqualifications: *Parti-colored, where the second color is not white. Tri color, tan point. Smooth or wavy coat.*

Approved April 10, 2012

Effective June 27, 2012