

BEAGLE

A breed standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance including the correct colour 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. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure. However, if a dog possesses a feature, characteristic or colour described as unacceptable, it must not be rewarded in the show ring.

Most recent changes to this Standard have an effective date of 01/07/2025

ORIGIN

Great Britain.

UTILISATION

Scenthound.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

[ed. from FCI Breed Standard No. 161.]

The Beagle is said to have been bred down from the larger Foxhound to hunt with men on foot, preferably after the hare. He is still used in packs, very often organised by institutions, including colleges and schools. A bustling, eager little dog, full of enthusiasm and vigour, ever ready for any activity that involves him. Everything about the breed gives the impression of athleticism, and there is no better sight than a Beagle pack in full pursuit, their heads down to the scent, their sterns up in rigid order, as they concentrate on the chase. During the reigns of King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I, there were wire-haired Beagles, some of which were small enough to be carried in the pocket of a hunting jacket. Size has increased over the years but smaller versions of the breed, called "pocket Beagles", are sometimes born.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

A sturdy, compactly-built Hound, conveying the impression of quality without coarseness.

CHARACTERISTICS

A merry Hound, whose essential function is to hunt, primarily hare, by following a scent. Bold, with great activity, stamina, and determination. Alert, intelligent, and of even temperament.

TEMPERAMENT

Amiable and alert, showing no aggression or timidity.

HEAD

Fair length, powerful without being coarse, finer in the bitch, free from frown and wrinkle. Skull slightly domed, moderately wide, with slight peak. Stop well-defined and dividing length between occiput and tip of nose as equally as possible. Muzzle not snipey, lips reasonably well-flewed. Nose broad, preferably black, but less pigmentation permissible in lighter-coloured Hounds. Nostrils wide.

Eyes:

Dark brown or hazel, fairly large, not deep-set or prominent, set well apart with mild, appealing expression.

Ears:

Long, with rounded tip, reaching nearly to end of nose when drawn out. Set on low, fine in texture and hanging gracefully close to cheeks.

Mouth:

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

NECK

Sufficiently long to enable Hound to come down easily to scent, slightly arched, and showing little dewlap.

FOREQUARTERS

Shoulders well laid back, not loaded. Forelegs straight and upright, well under the Hound, good substance, and round in bone, not tapering off to feet. Pasterns short. Elbows firm, turning neither in nor out. Height to elbow about half height at withers.

BODY

Topline straight and level. Chest let down to below elbow. Ribs well-sprung and extending well back. Short in the couplings but well-balanced. Loins powerful and supple, without excessive tuck-up.

HINDQUARTERS

Muscular thighs. Stifles well-bent. Hocks firm, well let down and parallel to each other.

FEET

Tight and firm. Well-knuckled up and strongly padded. Not hare-footed. Nails short.

TAIL

Sturdy, moderately long. Set-on high, carried gaily but not curled over back or inclined forward from root. Well-covered with hair, especially on underside.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Back level, firm with no indication of roll. Stride free, long-reaching in front, and straight without high action; hind legs showing drive. Should not move close behind, nor paddle, nor plait in front.

COAT

Short, dense, and weatherproof.

COLOUR

- Tricolour (black, tan, and white); blue, white and tan; badger pied; hare pied; lemon pied; lemon and white; red and white; tan and white; black and white; all white.

* With the exception of all white, all the above-mentioned colours can be found as mottle.

* Tip of stern white.

Any other colour or combination of colours unacceptable.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Desirable minimum 33cm (approx. 13"). Desirable maximum 40cm (approx. 16").

N.B. Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum. Only functionally and clinically healthy dogs, with breed typical conformation should be used for breeding.

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

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When judging this breed at FCI International Shows, use:

FCI Standard No. 161: BEAGLE

FCI Classification: Group 6 – Scenthounds and related breeds.

Section 1.3 – Small-sized Hounds.

With working trial.