

## BASENJI

*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 01/07/2026

### ORIGIN

Central Africa. (Patronage: Great Britain).

### UTILISATION

Hunting dog, companion.

### BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

*[ed. For interest, from Wikipedia: The Basenji:]*

The Basenji was bred from stock that originated in central Africa. These local dogs, which Europeans identified as a distinct breed and called "basenji", were prized by locals for their intelligence, courage, speed, and silence. Several attempts were made to introduce the breed into England, but the earliest imports succumbed to disease. It was not until the 1930s that foundation stock was successfully established in England. It is likely that nearly all the Basenjies in the Western world are descended from these few original imports.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

Lightly built, finely boned aristocratic-looking animal, high on leg compared with its length, always poised, alert, and intelligent. Wrinkled head, with pricked ears, proudly carried on a well-arched neck. Deep brisket runs up into a definite waist, tail tightly curled presenting a picture of a well-balanced dog of gazelle-like grace.

### IMPORTANT PROPORTION

Distance from top of head to stop slightly more than from stop to tip of nose.

### BEHAVIOUR/TEMPERAMENT

Barkless but not mute, its own special noise a mixture of a chortle and a yodel. Remarkable for its cleanliness in every way. An intelligent, independent, but affectionate and alert breed. Can be aloof with strangers.

### HEAD

Fine and profuse wrinkles appearing on forehead when ears pricked; side wrinkles desirable but not exaggerated into dewlap; wrinkles more noticeable in puppies, but because of lack of shadowing, not as noticeable in tricolours.

#### Cranial Region:

**Skull:** Flat, well-chiselled and medium width, tapering towards the nose. Side lines of skull taper gradually towards mouth, giving a clean-cheeked appearance.

**Stop:** Slight.

#### Facial Region:

**Nose:** Black nose desirable.

**Muzzle:** End of smooth, well rounded muzzle blunt, never square. Muzzle not pinched.

**Jaws/teeth:** Jaws strong with a perfect, regular and complete scissor bite, i.e. the upper teeth closely overlapping the lower teeth and set square in the jaws.

#### Eyes:

Dark, almond-shaped, obliquely set, far-seeing, and rather inscrutable in expression.

#### Ears:

Small, pointed, erect, and slightly hooded, of fine texture, set well-forward on top of head, tip of ear nearer centre of skull than outside base.

## NECK

Strong and of good length, without thickness, well-crested and slightly full at base of throat with a graceful curve accentuating crest. Well set into shoulders giving head a 'lofty' carriage.

## BODY

Balanced.

**Back:** short, level.

**Loins:** short-coupled.

**Chest:** Deep brisket. Ribs well sprung, deep and oval.

**Underline and belly:** Running up into a definite waist.

## TAIL

High set, with posterior curve of buttock extending beyond root of tail, giving a reachy appearance to hindquarters. Curls tightly over spine and lies closely to thigh with a single or double curl.

## LIMBS

### Forequarters:

**General appearance:** Forelegs straight with fine bone. Legs in a straight line to ground giving a medium front.

**Shoulder:** Well laid back, muscular, not loaded.

**Elbows:** Tucked in against brisket. When viewed from front, elbows in line with ribs.

**Forearm:** Very long.

**Pasterns:** Good length, straight and flexible.

### Hindquarters:

**General appearance:** Strong and muscular.

**Stifle:** Moderately bent.

**Second thigh:** Long.

**Hock:** Well let down, turned neither in nor out.

## FEET

Small, narrow, and compact, with deep pads, well-arched toes, and short nails.

## GAIT / MOVEMENT

Legs carried straight forward with a swift, long, tireless, swinging stride.

## SKIN

Very pliant.

## COAT

### **Hair:**

Short, sleek and close, very fine.

### **Colour:**

Pure black and white; red and white; black and tan, and white with melon pips and tan markings on muzzle and cheeks; black; tan and white; brindle: red background with black stripes, the more clearly defined the stripes the better.

\* The white should be on the feet, chest and tail tip. White legs, blaze and white collar optional.

## SIZE

### Ideal height at withers:

**Males:** 43cm (approx. 17").

**Females:** 40cm (approx. 16").

### Ideal weight:

**Males:** 11kg.

**Females:** 9.5kg.

**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.

### Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy dogs.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.

©Copyright FCI – Reprinted with permission

The publisher of this edition is the Kennel Union of Southern Africa. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without permission in writing from the publisher.



### **FCI Standard No. 43: BASENJI**

**FCI Classification: Group 5 – Spitz and primitive types.**

Section 6. Primitive types.

Without working trial.