

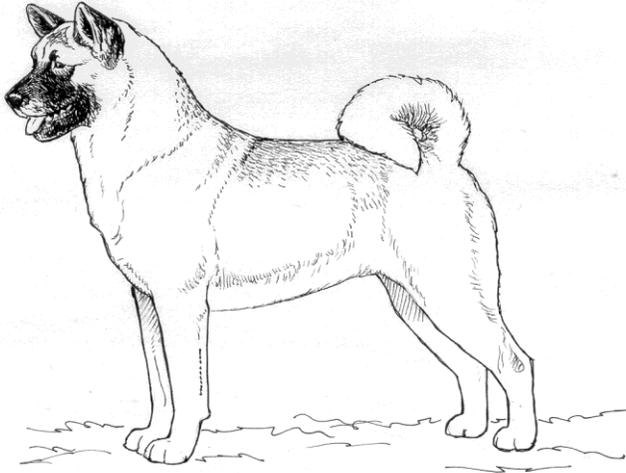
AKITA

Official UKC Breed Standard

Revised July 1, 2009

Northern Breed Group

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The goals and purposes of this breed standard include: to furnish guidelines for breeders who wish to maintain the quality of their breed and to improve it; to advance this breed to a state of similarity throughout the world; and to act as a guide for judges.

Breeders and judges have the responsibility to avoid any conditions or exaggerations that are detrimental to the health, welfare, essence and soundness of this breed, and must take the responsibility to see that these are not perpetuated.

Any departure from the following 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.

HISTORY

The Akita is the largest of Japan's native breeds. It is a member of the spitz family, originally used for bear hunting, but at one point in history it was crossed with Tosas and Mastiffs to increase its size and value as a fighting dog. When dog fighting was prohibited in 1908, the breed was preserved and improved as a large Japanese breed. During World War II, the breed was nearly lost, and following the war, due to crossbreeding, the Akitas that remained were of three distinct types. Akitas of the Dewa lines, which had characteristics from Mastiff and German Shepherd crosses, were brought to the United States by members of the Military Forces. These dogs fascinated American dog fanciers and the breed rose quickly in popularity. Akitas in the United States developed as a type unique to this country and they are now quite different than the breed in its country of origin.

The Akita was recognized by United Kennel Club in 1980.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Akita is a large, heavily boned spitz type dog that is sturdily built and well balanced. Its broad, triangular shaped head, which has small eyes and erect ears that are carried forward almost in line with the back of the neck, is a distinctive characteristic of the breed.

CHARACTERISTICS

The Akita is friendly, alert and responsive, with a dignified and courageous demeanor.

HEAD

The head is in the shape of a blunt triangle. It is massive, but in proportion to the size of the body. When the dog is relaxed, the head is free of wrinkles.

SKULL - The skull is flat and broad between the ears. There is a shallow furrow between the eyes that runs well up the forehead. The stop is well defined but not abrupt.

MUZZLE - The muzzle is broad, deep and full. It is two-thirds the length of the skull. The lips are clean and black in color. The tongue is pink.

TEETH - A full complement of strong white teeth meeting in a scissors bite is preferred, but level bite is acceptable.

Disqualifications: Overshot or undershot bite.

EYES - Dark brown, relatively small, deep set and nearly triangular in shape. The eye rims are black and tight.

Disqualifications: Excessive entropion or ectropion.

NOSE - Black and broad. Liver color is permitted on white Akitas, but black is preferred.

Disqualifications: Pink noses, eyelids, or rims, butterfly nose.

EARS - Strongly erect and small in relation to the rest of the head. If folded forward to measure for length, the tip should reach to the upper eye rim. Triangular shaped, slightly rounded at the tip and wide at the base, the ears are set wide on the head but not too low. Viewed from the side, the ears are angled forward over the eyes, following the line of the neck.

Disqualifications: Drop or broken ears.

NECK

The neck is muscular and thick, comparatively short, and widens gradually toward the shoulders. There is a pronounced crest that blends in with the base of the skull. There should be no excess of dewlap.

FOREQUARTERS

The shoulders are strong and powerful, with moderate layback.

FORELEGS - The forelegs are heavily boned, and straight when viewed from the front. The angle of the pasterns is 15 degrees forward from vertical.

Faults: Elbows in or out. Loose shoulders.

BODY

In proportion, the Akita is slightly longer than tall, with females being slightly longer in body than males (a height to length ratio of 9 to 10 in males and 9 to 11 in females.) The chest is wide and deep, and the ribs are well sprung. The back is level and the loin is firmly muscled. There is moderate tuck up. The skin is pliant but not loose.

Serious Faults: Light bone. Rangy body.

HINDQUARTERS

The hindquarters are strongly muscled, with width and bone that is comparable to the forequarters.

HIND LEGS - The upper thighs are well developed. There is moderate angulation at the stifle. The hocks are well let down. Dewclaws on the rear legs are generally removed.

FEET

Cat-like, well knuckled up, with thick pads.

TAIL

Large and full, set high, and carried over the back or against the flank in a three-quarter, full or double curl, the tail always dips to or below the level of the back. On a three-quarter curl, the tip drops well down on the flank. The tail is strong at the root and reaches the hock when let down. The coat on the tail is coarse, straight and dense with no appearance of a plume.

Disqualifications: Uncurled or sickle tail.

COAT

The Akita has a double coat, with a thick, short undercoat and a straight, harsh outer coat that stands somewhat off the body. The hair on the head, lower legs and ears is short. The coat over the withers and croup is slightly longer than on the rest of the body, and on the tail it is longest and most profuse.

Disqualification: Altering of coat or general appearance by clipping or scissoring.

COLOR

Any color including white. Colors are brilliant and clear, and markings are well balanced, with or without a mask or blaze. White Akitas have no mask. Pintos have a white background with large, evenly-placed patches covering the head and more than one-third of the body. Undercoat may be a different color than outer coat.

HEIGHT

Males, 26 to 28 inches at withers. Females, 24 to 26 inches.

GAIT

Brisk and powerful. with strides of moderate length. Back remains firm, strong and level. Rear legs move in line with front legs.

ELIMINATING FAULTS

(An Eliminating Fault is a Fault serious enough that it eliminates the dog from obtaining any awards in a conformation event.)

Adult males under 25 inches, or females under 23 inches.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

(A dog with a Disqualification must not be considered for placement in a conformation event, and must be reported to UKC.)

Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchid.

Viciousness or extreme shyness.

Overshot or undershot bite.

Pink noses, eyelids, or rims, butterfly nose.

Excessive entropion or ectropion.

Drop or broken ears.

Uncurled or sickle tail.

Altering of coat or general appearance by clipping or scissoring.

Albinism.