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 Pointer’s history is an old one, traceable in writing
and in works of art back to the middle of the 17th
century. While the English Pointer was developed
primarily in England, most canine historians credit Spain
as the country of origin. The English Pointer resulted
from crosses between these Spanish pointers and
various breeds, most probably Foxhounds and
Bloodhounds for scenting, Greyhounds for speed, and
Bull Terriers for tenacity. Even before the advent of
wing shooting with guns, the English Pointer was used
to point game, which the hunters then netted or chased
with coursing hounds. Pointer breed type, temperament, and hunting ability stabilized around the
end of the 18th century and have changed very little
since then. Today the English Pointer is widely regarded
as one of the finest upland bird dogs in the world.

The English Pointer was recognized by United
Kennel Club in the early 1900’s.

GENERAL APPEARANCE
The English Pointer is a medium-sized, well-balanced
dog with a long, chiseled head; a distinctive “dish” face;
small drop ears; and a short, tapered “bee sting” tail
carried no higher than 20 degrees above the topline.
The length of body is roughly equal to the height at the
withers. The distance from the withers to the elbow is
roughly equal to the distance from the elbow to the
ground. The overall picture is that of an elegant, hard-
driving, intelligent hunter, with stamina and dash. The
English Pointer should be evaluated as a working gun
dog, and exaggerations or faults should be penalized in
proportion to how much they interfere with the dog’s
ability to work.

CHARACTERISTICS
The four most distinctive features of the English Pointer
are its long, chiseled head, the short “bee sting” tail,
strong hunting instincts, and effortless, hard-driving
movement. The Pointer can be somewhat aloof with
strangers but is an excellent family companion, eager to
please and particularly good with children.

HEAD
The head of the English Pointer is the hallmark of this
breed. Although the classic “dish face” has become a
staple of dog art, the features of the head are as
functional as they are beautiful. Viewed from the side,
the length of skull and muzzle are approximately equal
in length, and joined by a pronounced stop. The topline
of the muzzle may be higher at the nose than at the
stop or it may be parallel to the topline of the skull. All
other things being equal, the dish face is slightly
preferred. There is a slight median furrow between the
eyes at the forehead and the occipital bone is not
conspicuous.

Serious Fault: Downface.
SKULL - The skull is long and about half as wide as it is
long. The cheeks are flat and well chiseled.
Fault: Overly broad skull.
MUZZLE - The muzzle must be sufficiently long to allow
the dog to carry birds as large as pheasants and grouse.
In profile, the muzzle is rectangular. The bridge of the
muzzle may rise slightly from stop to nose or be level.
Viewed from above, the muzzle is moderately wide with
very little taper from stop to nose. Lips are slightly
pendent but not overly thick, with pigment to match
the nose. The top lip should fall naturally over the lower without folds or drooping, giving a squared appearance to the muzzle when viewed from the side.

Fault: Short muzzle.

TEETH - The English Pointer has a complete set of evenly spaced, white teeth meeting in a scissors or level bite.

Faults: Crooked teeth; overshot or undershot bite.

NOSE - The nose leather may be black or self-colored, depending on coat color. Nostrils must be large and open.

Serious Fault: Small or restricted nostrils.

EYES - The eyes are oval with tight eyelids and pigment to match the nose color. Dogs with black pigment have dark eyes, the darker the better. Lighter-colored eyes are acceptable in dogs with self-colored pigment, but liver-colored dogs should preferably have darker eyes than lemon-colored dogs. The bony arches over the eyes are defined but should not be so excessive as to make the skull appear coarse. Expression is alert and intelligent.

Faults: Slanted eyes; sagging eyelids making haw visible.

EARS - The English Pointer’s ear is another distinguishing mark of the breed. The ears are drop, short in length (reaching just below the lower jaw when hanging naturally) and set on just above eye level. They should be slightly pointed. The ear leather is thin enough that the veins in the ear are apparent. The outer side of the ear is covered with short, silky hair. At rest, the ears should hang nearly flat and close to the cheeks, with little or no fold.

Faults: Long, low or rounded ears; thick ear leather.

NECK

The neck is long, slightly arched, and muscular. The circumference of the neck widens from the nape to where the neck blends smoothly into well-laid-back shoulders. The skin is tight.

FOREQUARTERS

The shoulders are smoothly muscled. The shoulder blades are long and well laid back. The upper arm is roughly equal in length to the shoulder blade and joins it at an apparent right angle. The elbows are close to the body. The forelegs are strong, straight and sturdy, with bone that is oval in shape and proportionate to the overall substance of the dog. Pasterns are slightly finer in bone but strong, short, and slightly sloping.

Faults: Straight shoulders; short upper arm; heavy, round bone; fine bone.

BODY

A properly proportioned English Pointer is roughly square in shape. The length of the front legs (measured from point of elbow to the ground) is slightly longer than the deepest part of the body.

The topline is mostly level, never exaggerated or overly sloped, with only a slight rise from the croup to the withers. The back is short, strong, and straight. The loin is strong, of moderate length, and slightly arched. The croup is slightly sloping. The ribs extend well back and are well sprung out from the spine, then curving down and inward. The forechest extends in a shallow oval shape in front of the forelegs. The chest is deep, reaching to the elbows, and of moderate width. Tuck-up is apparent but not exaggerated.

Faults: Steeply sloping topline; croup too flat or too steep; tuck-up too exaggerated or absence of tuck-up; excessive skin or “skirting” in the tuck-up; short rib cage with long loin.

HINDQUARTERS

The hindquarters are strong and well muscled. The angulation of the hindquarters is in balance with the angulation of the forequarters. The stifles are well bent, and the hocks are well let down. When the dog is standing, the short, strong rear pasterns are perpendicular to the ground and, viewed from the rear, parallel to one another.

Faults: Tilted pelvis resulting in tucked-under hindquarters; straight stifles; thin or poorly-developed second thigh.

FEET

Good feet are essential for a working gun dog. Feet are compact, well knit, and oval in shape. Toes are long and well arched. Pads are thick and hard. Nails are strong. Front dewclaws may be removed.

Faults: Large, round feet; exaggerated hare feet; splayed feet.

TAIL

A correct tail is an essential element of English Pointer breed type. The tail is short, reaching no longer than the top of the hock and preferably somewhat shorter. The tail is straight, thicker at the base, and tapering to a point. The tail is set on as a natural extension of the topline and should not be carried more than 20 degrees above the topline. When the dog is trotting, the tail moves rhythmically from side to side.

Faults: Fat, non-tapering tail; tail carried with curl over the back; long tail.

Disqualification: Docked tail.

COAT

The coat is short, dense, close fitting, with a sheen.

Faults: Coat too thick and coarse or too thin and sleek; feathering; brushy tail.

COLOR

Any of the following three coat colors, solid or in combination with white: black, liver, and any shade of
yellow. Tri-color is also acceptable but is a hound trait and should be faulted accordingly. Dogs with yellow or yellow and white coats that have black noses and eye rims are traditionally referred to as “orange colored.” Yellow or yellow and white dogs with liver noses and eye rims are referred to as “lemon colored.”

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT
Desirable height at maturity for males is 25-27 inches and for females, 23-25 inches.

Desirable weight for a male in working condition is between 55 and 75 pounds, and between 44 and 65 pounds for a female.

Balance and symmetry are more important than size, but great variations in size are undesirable.

GAIT
When trotting, the gait is effortless, smooth, powerful and well coordinated, showing good but not exaggerated reach in front and powerful drive behind. The head is carried high and the tail moves from side to side in rhythm with the dog’s gait. The backline remains level with only a slight flexing to indicate suppleness. Viewed from any position, legs turn neither in nor out, nor do feet cross or interfere with each other. As speed increases, feet tend to converge toward center line of balance. Poor movement should be penalized to the degree to which it reduces the English Pointer’s ability to perform the tasks it was bred to do.

Serious Fault: Hackney gait.

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.
Docked tail.
Albinism.