

Neapolitan Mastiff Breed Standard

© The Kennel Club - Unauthorised Reproduction of Text and Images Prohibited.

A Breed Standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance 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. From time to time certain conditions or exaggerations may be considered to have the potential to affect dogs in some breeds adversely, and judges and breeders are requested to refer to the Kennel Club website for details of any such current issues. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure.

To view photos of this breed please visit [the Kennel Club Picture Library](#)

General Appearance

Well boned, large, muscular and strongly built. Body slightly longer than height at withers. Majestic bearing with noble expression.

Characteristics

Some loose fitting skin over body and head permitted, not to be excessive.

Temperament

Steady, loyal, devoted and vigilant. Slightly aloof.

Head and Skull

Head fairly large with broad short skull, broad across cheeks. Head proportion: skull length two thirds, to muzzle one third. Skull flat and parallel to topline of muzzle. Definite stop, nose should not protrude beyond vertical line of muzzle. Nose large with well open nostrils. Lips fleshy and thick. The upper lips form an inverted 'v' when viewed from the front. Muzzle deep and square when viewed from the front. Head has loose skin permitted but without excess.

Eyes

Clean eyes, set forward, well apart, rather rounded. Rims tight without haw. Rim pigmentation to tone with nose colour. Free from obvious eye problems.

Ears

Small for size of head, set forward, high and well apart. Triangular, hanging flat towards cheeks, but not reaching beyond line of throat.

Mouth

Scissor bite, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws. Or level bite. Teeth white and regular. Strong well developed jaws.

Neck

Fairly short, stocky, very muscular.

Forequarters

Shoulder long, slightly sloping with well developed and definite muscle. Elbows not too close to body to allow very free action. Pasterns slightly sloping, legs vertical when viewed from front.

Body

Longer than height at withers. Broad, well muscled chest, ribcage reaching at least to elbow. Ribs long and well sprung. Topline straight, sloping slightly from the withers, line of belly parallel to topline.

Hindquarters

Broad loin, well let into backline, slightly rounded with well developed muscle. Croup broad, muscular, with slight slope. Thighs long, broad, moderate stifle, powerful hocks.

Feet

Oval; close, arched toes. Pads thick, hard and dark coloured. Nails curved, strong and dark. Hindfeet slightly smaller than front.

Tail

Previously customarily docked.

Docked: Customarily docked by 1/3 of length. Thick at root, set on slightly lower than topline. Tapering towards the tip. Never carried up or over back, but may be carried level with topline when moving.

Undocked: Thick at root, set on slightly lower than topline. Tapering towards the tip. Never carried up or over back but may be carried level with topline when moving. In overall balance with the rest of the dog.

Gait/Movement

Slow, free, bear-like. Slow trot, long steps covering ground well. Rarely gallops.

Coat

Short, dense, even, fine, hard texture, with good sheen. No fringe.

Colour

Preferred black, blue, all shades of grey, brown varying from fawn to red. Brindling on either of the latter colours. Small star on chest and white on toes permissible. Pigmentation to tone with coat colours.

Size

Height: 65-75 cms (25½-29½ ins); Weight: 50-70 kgs (110-154 lbs). Some tolerance allowed. Bitches somewhat less.

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.

Note

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

Last Updated - October 2009

Reproduced with the kind permission of The Kennel Club ©