

# Breed Standard for the Belgian Tervuren

Effective March 1, 2007

AKC Approval January, 2007

## General Appearance

The first impression of the Belgian Tervuren is that of a well-balanced, medium-size dog, elegant in appearance, standing squarely on all fours, with proud carriage of head and neck. He is strong, agile, well-muscled, alert and full of life. He gives the impression of depth and solidity without bulkiness. The male should appear unquestionably masculine; the female should have a distinctly feminine look and be judged equally with the male. The Belgian Tervuren is a natural dog and there is no need for excessive posing in the show ring.

The Belgian Tervuren reflects the qualities of intelligence, courage, alertness and devotion to master. In addition to his inherent ability as a herding dog, he protects his master's person and property without being overtly aggressive. He is watchful, attentive, and usually in motion when not under command.

The Belgian Tervuren is a herding dog and versatile worker. The highest value is to be placed on qualities that maintain these abilities, specifically, correct temperament, gait, bite and coat.

## Size, Proportion, Substance

The ideal male is 24 to 26 inches in height and female 22 to 24 inches in height measured at the withers. Dogs are to be penalized in accordance to the degree they deviate from the ideal. Males under 23 inches or over 26.5 inches or females under 21 inches or over 24.5 inches are to be disqualified. The body is square; the length measured from the point of shoulder to the point of the rump approximates the height. Females may be somewhat longer in body. Bone structure is medium in proportion to height, so that he is well-balanced throughout and neither spindly or leggy nor cumbersome and bulky.

## Head

Well-chiseled, skin taut, long without exaggeration. **Expression** intelligent and questioning, indicating alertness, attention and readiness for action. **Eyes** dark brown, medium-size, slightly almond shape, not protruding. Light, yellow or round eyes are a fault. **Ears** triangular in shape, well-cupped, stiff, erect; height equal to width at base. Set high, the base of the ear does not come below the center of the eye. Hanging ears, as on a hound, are a disqualification. **Skull and muzzle** measuring from the stop are of equal length. Overall size is in proportion to the body, top of skull flattened rather than rounded, the width approximately the same as, but not wider than the length. **Stop** moderate. The topline of the muzzle is parallel to the topline of the skull when viewed from the side. Muzzle moderately pointed, avoiding any tendency toward snipiness or cheekiness. **Jaws** strong and powerful. **Nose** black without spots or discolored areas. Nostrils well defined. **Lips** tight and black, no pink showing on the outside when mouth

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is closed. **Teeth** - Full complement of strong white teeth, evenly set, meeting in a scissors or a level bite. Overshot and undershot teeth are a fault. An undershot bite such that there is a complete loss of contact by all the incisors is a disqualification. Broken or discolored teeth should not be penalized. Missing teeth are a fault. Four or more missing teeth are a serious fault.

## Neck, Topline and Body

**Neck** round, muscular, rather long and elegant, slightly arched and tapered from head to body. Skin well-fitting with no loose folds. Withers accentuated. **Topline** level, straight and firm from withers to croup. Croup medium long, sloping gradually to the base of the tail. Chest not broad without being narrow, but deep; the lowest point of the brisket reaching the elbow, forming a smooth ascendant curve to the abdomen. **Abdomen** moderately developed, neither tucked up nor paunchy. Ribs well-sprung but flat on the sides. Loin section viewed from above is relatively short, broad and strong, but blending smoothly into the back. **Tail** strong at the base, the last vertebra to reach at least to the hock. At rest the dog holds it low, the tip bent back level with the hock. When in action, he may raise it to a point level with the topline giving it a slight curve, but not a hook. Tail is not carried above the backline nor turned to one side. A cropped or stump tail is a disqualification.

## Forequarters

**Shoulders** long, laid back 45 degrees, flat against the body, forming a right angle with the upper arm. Top of the shoulder blades roughly two thumbs width apart. Upper arms should move in a direction exactly parallel to the longitudinal axis of the body. **Forearms** long and well-muscled. Legs straight and parallel, perpendicular to the ground. Bone oval rather than round. Pasterns short and strong, slightly sloped. Dewclaws may be removed. **Feet** rounded, cat footed, turning neither in nor out, toes curved close together, well-padded, strong nails.

## Hindquarters

**Legs** powerful without heaviness, moving in the same pattern as the limbs of the forequarters. Bone oval rather than round. Thighs broad and heavily muscled. **Stifles** clearly defined, with upper shank at right angles to hipbones. **Hocks** moderately bent. Metatarsi short, perpendicular to the ground, parallel to each other when viewed from the rear. Dewclaws are removed. **Feet** slightly elongated, toes curved close together, heavily padded, strong nails.

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## Coat

The Belgian Tervuren is particularly adaptable to extremes of temperature or climate. The guard hairs of the coat must be long, close-fitting, straight and abundant. The texture is of medium harshness, not silky or wiry. Wavy or curly hair is a fault. The undercoat is very dense, commensurate, however, with climatic conditions. The hair is short on the head, outside the ears, and on the front part of the legs. The opening of the ear is protected by tufts of hair. **Ornamentation** consists of especially long and abundant hair, like a collarette around the neck, particularly on males; fringe of long hair down the back of the forearm; especially long and abundant hair trimming the breeches; long, heavy and abundant hair on the tail. The female rarely has as long or as ornamented a coat as the male. This disparity must not be a consideration when the female is judged against the male.

## Color

Body rich fawn to russet mahogany with black overlay is ideal and preferred. Predominate color that is pale, washed out, cream or gray is a fault. The coat is characteristically double pigmented whereby the tips of fawn hairs are blackened. Belgian Tervuren characteristically become darker with age. On mature males, this blackening is especially pronounced on the shoulders, back and rib section. Blackening in patches is a fault. Although allowance should be made for females and young males, absence of blackening in mature dogs is a serious fault.

Chest is normally black, but may be a mixture of black and gray. White is permitted on the chest/sternum only, not to extend more than 3 inches above the prosternum, and not to reach either point of shoulder. Face has a black mask and the ears are mostly black. A face with a complete absence of black is a serious fault. Frost or white on chin or muzzle is normal. The underparts of the body, tail, and breeches are cream, gray, or light beige. The tail typically has a darker or black tip. Feet - The tips of the toes may be white. Nail color may vary from black to transparent. Solid black, solid liver or any area of white except as specified on the chest, tips of the toes, chin and muzzle are disqualifications.

## Gait

Lively and graceful, covering the maximum ground with minimum effort. Always in motion, seemingly never tiring, he shows ease of movement rather than hard driving action. He single tracks at a fast gait, the legs both front and rear converging toward the centerline of gravity of the dog. Viewed from the side he exhibits full extension of both fore and hindquarters. The backline should remain firm and level, parallel to the line of motion. His natural tendency is to move in a circle, rather than a straight line. Padding,

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hackneying, weaving, crabbing and similar movement faults are to be penalized according to the degree with which they interfere with the ability of the dog to work.

## Temperament

In his relationship with humans he is observant and vigilant with strangers, but not apprehensive. He does not show fear or shyness. He does not show viciousness by unwarranted or unprovoked attack. He must be approachable, standing his ground and showing confidence to meet overtures without himself making them. With those he knows well, he is most affectionate and friendly, zealous for their attention and very possessive.

## Faults

Any deviation from these specifications is a fault. In determining whether a fault is minor, serious, or major, these two factors should be used as a guide:

1. The extent to which it deviates from the standard.
2. The extent to which such deviation would actually affect the working ability of the dog.

## Disqualifications

*Males under 23 inches or over 26.5 inches or females under 21 inches or over 24.5 inches.*

*Hanging ears, as on a hound.*

*An undershot bite such that there is a complete loss of contact by all the incisors.*

*A cropped or stump tail.*

*Solid black, solid liver or any area of white except as specified on the chest, tips of the toes, chin, and muzzle.*