
Breed Standard for the Irish Wolfhound

The Standard of Excellence and List of Points of Merit

General Appearance

Of great size and commanding appearance, the Irish Wolfhound is remarkable in combining power and swiftness with keen sight. The largest and tallest of the galloping hounds, in general type he is a rough coated, Greyhound-like breed; very muscular, strong though gracefully built; movements easy and active; head and neck carried high. The tail carried with an upward sweep with a slight curve towards the extremity.

Size

The minimum height and weight of dogs should be 32 in. (81 cm) and 120 lbs. (54 kg); of bitches 30 in. (76 cm) and 105 lbs. (48 kg), these apply only to hounds over 18 months of age. Anything below this should be debarred from competition. Great size, including height at shoulder and proportionate length of body, is the desideratum to be aimed at, and it is desired to firmly establish a race that shall average from 32-34 inches, (81 - 86 cm) in dogs, showing the requisite power, activity, courage and symmetry.

Coat and Colour

Hair rough and hard on body, legs and head; especially wiry and long over eyes and under jaw. The recognized colours are grey, brindle, red, black, pure white, fawn, or any colour that appears in the Deerhound.

Head

Long, the frontal bones of the forehead very slightly raised and very little indentation between the eyes. Skull not too broad. Muzzle long and moderately pointed. Ears small and Greyhound-like in carriage.

Neck

Rather long, very strong and muscular, well arched, without dewlap or loose skin about the throat.

Forequarters

Shoulders muscular, giving breadth of chest, set sloping. Elbows well under, neither turned inwards nor outwards. Forearm muscular, and the whole leg strong and quite straight.

Body

Back rather long than short. Chest very deep. Breast wide. Loins arched. Belly well drawn up.

Hindquarters

Muscular thighs and second thigh long and strong as in the Greyhound, and hocks well let down and turning neither in nor out. Feet moderately large and round, neither turned inwards nor outwards. Toes well arched and closed. Nails very strong and curved.

Tail

Long and slightly curved of moderate thickness, and well covered with hair.

Faults

Too light or heavy a head, too highly arched frontal bone; large ears and hanging flat to the face; short neck; full dewlap; too narrow or too broad a chest; sunken or hollow or straight back; bent forelegs; overbent fetlock; twisted feet; spreading toes; too curly a tail; weak hindquarters and a general want of muscle; too short in body. Lips or nose liver-coloured or lacking pigmentation.

List of Points by Order of Merit

- 1) Typical — The Irish Wolfhound is a rough-coated Greyhound-like breed, the tallest of the coursing hounds and remarkable in combining power and swiftness.
- 2) Great size and commanding appearance.
- 3) Movements — easy and active.
- 4) Head — long and level, carried high.
- 5) Forelegs — heavily boned, quite straight; elbows well set under.
- 6) Thighs — long and muscular, second thighs, well muscled, stifles nicely bent.
- 7) Coat — rough and hard, especially wiry and long over the eyes and under jaw.
- 8) Body — long, well ribbed up, with ribs well sprung, and great breadth across hips.
- 9) Loins — arched, belly well drawn up.
- 10) Ears — small, with Greyhound-like carriage.
- 11) Feet — moderately large and round; toes, close, well arched.
- 12) Neck — long, well arched and very strong.
- 13) Chest — very deep, moderately broad.
- 14) Shoulders — muscular, set sloping.
- 15) Tail — long and slightly curved.
- 16) Eyes — dark.

Note: The above in no way alters the “Standard of Excellence” which must in all cases be rigidly adhere to; they simply give the various points by order of merit. If, in any case, they appear at variance with the Standard of Excellence, it is the latter which is correct.