

Breed Standard Supplement

INTRODUCTION

This supplement to the Official UKC Rat Terrier Breed Standard is written for clarification and assistance in the evaluation of the Rat Terrier. It is for judges' use in gaining a better understanding of the Breed Standard. This is not a revision to the existing Standard.

HISTORY AND GENERAL APPEARANCE

Rat Terriers are working terriers and emphasis should be placed on the ability to function as a working terrier. Overall appearance, balance, and movement relative to this purpose should be emphasized more than component parts. Exaggerations or faults should be penalized in proportion to how they interfere with the dog's ability to work.

CHARACTERISTICS

All Rat Terriers should stand for examination by judges without exhibiting or displaying fearful or aggressive behaviors. They may be exceptionally friendly or display indifference or reserve toward strangers. Due to their dual nature as both working dogs and playful companions, those who generally hunt silent quarry may ignore noise-making devices while others will show interest as a signal to play.

Breed Standard Highlights

HEAD

- Head is a clean and strong blunt wedge shape without exaggeration
- Cheeks are well-muscled
- Skull should be slightly rounded with a moderate stop
- Muzzle is well-chiseled of medium length and width
- Muzzle should not be long or pointed
- Head should not appear rounded like a Chihuahua, or narrow like a Fox Terrier
- Stop should not be abrupt like a Chihuahua, or shallow like a Fox Terrier

TEETH

- Scissors bite is preferred

- Level bite is acceptable

EARS

- Matching ear carriage is preferred in the mature dog with no preference given to erect, tipped, or button
- Ears are V-shaped and set a moderate distance apart
- Ears should not be sharply upright or pointing outward
- Mismatched ear carriage should not be penalized on puppies under one year

NECK

- Neck is moderately long, well-muscled and slightly arched
- Neck tapers slightly from shoulders to head and blends smoothly into shoulders that are well laid back
- Neck should not be short, thick, or overly muscled

FOREQUARTERS

- Shoulder should be sufficiently well laid back to allow for good reach
- Front and rear angulation should be balanced to allow for fluid, athletic movement
- Upper arm should be long enough so that the legs are set back under the dog
- Shoulder muscles should not appear loaded or bulky

BODY

- Rat Terrier topline is not flat
- Back is strong and level, loin is slightly arched and croup slopes slightly
- Rat Terriers are slightly longer than tall, neither leggy nor cobby
- Chest is of moderate width and depth, befitting the all-around athlete
- Rat Terriers should be shown in hard, muscular condition, no matter what the size
- Ribs are not barrel-shaped (oval in shape not round like a Bull Dog)

HINDQUARTERS

- Hindquarters should show strong, athletic musculature
- Balance in front and rear angulation is important; extremes are to be avoided
- Exaggerations such as overly long lower thighs, overangulated stifles and sickle hocks should be penalized

FEET

- Rat Terrier feet are oval
- This breed does not have round feet as commonly seen in other terriers, or hare feet as commonly seen in sighthounds

TAIL

- The Rat Terrier tail should be set at the end of a slightly sloping croup
- This breed does not have a flat croup or high tail set like the Toy Fox Terrier, Jack Russell and Smooth Fox Terrier
- Coated: Docked or natural bob tail is preferred; uncropped tail is not a fault

COAT

- Coat is short and smooth with a sheen

COLOR

- Rat Terriers come in a variety of acceptable colors and all colors should be judged equally
- All Rat Terriers must have some white
- Fawn with pale nose, Cream, and Silver are extreme dilutions and are faults
- Apricot and Lemon are acceptable colors
- Sabbling is common and acceptable
- Brindle and Merle are disqualified

GAIT

Rat Terriers should move like working dogs: effortlessly, and with good reach and drive. Their track converges toward a centerline as speed increases. The most common faults are:

- Hackney gait, caused by an imbalance in which the front is more angulated than the rear
- Daisy cutter gait, caused by a short upper arm
- Restricted or "stiff" gait, caused by a lack of angulation in both front and rear

Faults of movement should be penalized to the extent they interfere with the dog's ability to work

© May 14, 2003 American Rat Terrier Association