

Havanese Breed Standard AKC (American Kennel Club)

General Appearance

The Havanese is a small sturdy dog of immense charm. He is slightly longer than tall, and covered with a profuse mantle of untrimmed long, silky, wavy hair. His plumed tail is carried loosely curled over his rump. A native of Cuba, he has evolved over the centuries from the pampered lap-dog of the aristocracy into what he is today - the quintessential family pet of a people living on a small tropical island. His duties traditionally have been those of companion, watchdog, child's playmate and herder of the family poultry flock. His presentation in the show ring should reflect his function - always in excellent condition but never so elaborately coifed as to preclude an impromptu romp in the leaves, as his character is essentially playful rather than decorative.

While historically always a toy dog and therefore never overly large or coarse, he does not appear so fragile as to make him unsuitable as a child's pet. His unique coat reflects centuries in the tropics, and protects against heat. It is remarkably soft and light in texture, profuse without being harsh or woolly. Likewise, the furnishings of the head are believed to protect the eyes from the harsh tropical sun, and have traditionally never been gathered in a topknot for this reason.

In both structure and gait, the Havanese is not easily mistaken for any other breed. His characteristic topline, rising slightly from withers to rump is a result of moderate angulation both fore and aft combined with a typically short upper arm. The resulting springy gait is flashy rather than far-reaching and unique to the breed. The overall impression of the dog on the move is one of agility rather than excessive ability to cover ground. These characteristics of temperament, structure and gait contribute in large part to the character of the breed, and are essential to type.

Size, Proportion and Substance

The height range is from 8½ to 11½ inches, with the ideal being between 9 and 10½ inches, measured at the withers, and is slightly less than the length from point of shoulder to point of buttocks, creating a rectangular outline rather than a square one. The Havanese is a sturdy little dog, and should never appear fragile. A coarse dog with excessive bone is likewise contrary to type and therefore equally undesirable. The minimum height ranges set forth in the description above shall not apply to dogs and bitches under twelve months of age. **Disqualification:** Height at withers under 8½ inches or over 11½ inches, except that the minimum height ranges set forth in the description above shall not apply to dogs or bitches under twelve months of age.

Head

The expression is soft and intelligent, mischievous rather than cute. The eyes are dark brown, large, almond-shaped, and set rather widely apart. Dark eyes are preferred irrespective of coat color, although the chocolate colored dog may have somewhat lighter eyes. The pigment on the eyerims is complete, solid black for all colors except for the chocolate dog which has complete solid, dark chocolate pigment. No other dilution of pigment is acceptable. Ears are of medium length; the leather, when extended, reaches halfway to the nose. They are set high on the skull, slightly above the endpoint of the zygomatic arch, and are broad at the base, showing a distinct fold. When the dog is alert, the ears lift at the base, producing an unbroken shallow arc from the outer edge of each ear across the backskull. The backskull is broad and slightly rounded. The stop is moderate. Length of muzzle is slightly less than length of back skull measured from stop to point of occiput and the planes are level. The nose is broad and squarish, fitting a full and rectangular muzzle, with no indication of snipiness. The pigment on the nose and lips is complete, solid black for all colors except for the chocolate dog which has complete solid, dark chocolate brown pigment. No other dilution of pigment is acceptable. A scissors bite is ideal. Full complement of incisors preferred. **Disqualifications:** Complete absence of black (or chocolate in the chocolate dog) pigmentation on the eyerims, nose or lips.

Neck, Topline, and Body

The neck is of moderate length, in balance with the height and length of the dog. It carries a slight arch and blends smoothly into the shoulders. The topline is straight but not level, rising slightly from withers to rump. There is no indication of a roach back. The body, measured from point of shoulder to point of buttocks, is slightly longer than the height at the withers. This length comes from the ribcage and not from the short, well-muscled loin. The chest is deep, rather broad in front, and reaches the elbow. The ribs are well sprung. There is a moderate tuck-up. The tail is high-set and plumed with long, silky hair. It arcs forward over the back, but neither lies flat on the back nor is tightly curled. On the move the tail is carried loosely curled over the rump. The long plume of the hair may fall straight forward or to either side of the body. The tail may not be docked.

Forequarters

Shoulder layback is moderate, lying not more than 40 degrees off vertical. Extreme shoulder layback will negatively affect proper gait, and should be faulted. The tops of the shoulder blades lie in at the withers, allowing the neck to merge smoothly into the back. The upper arm is relatively short, but there is sufficient angle between the shoulder and upper arm to set the legs well under the body with a pronounced forechest. The elbows turn neither in nor out, and are tight to the body. Forelegs

are well-boned and straight when viewed from any angle. The distance from the foot to the elbow is equal to the distance from elbow to withers. The pasterns are short, strong and flexible, very slightly sloping. Dewclaws may be removed. The feet are round, with well arched toes, and turn neither in nor out. Pads and nails may be black, white, pink, or a combination of these colors. Chocolate dogs may also have brown pads and nails.

Hindquarters

The hind legs are well-boned and muscular through the thigh, with moderate angulation. The hocks are short and turn neither in nor out. In normal stance, the hind legs are parallel to each other from hock to heel and all the joints are in line when viewed from the rear. The rear assembly, in which the rump is slightly higher than the withers, contributes to the breed's unique, springy gait. Dewclaws should be removed. The hind feet fall slightly behind a perpendicular line from point of buttock when viewed from the side. Hind feet have well arched toes and turn neither in nor out. Pads and nails may be black, white, pink or a combination of these colors. Chocolate dogs may also have brown pads and nails.

Coat

The coat is double, but without the harsh standoff guard hair and woolly undercoat usually associated with double coats. Rather, it is soft and light in texture throughout, though the outer coat carries slightly more weight. The long hair is abundant and, ideally, wavy. An ideal coat will not be so profuse nor overly long as to obscure the natural lines of the dog. Puppies may have a shorter coat. A single, flat coat or an excessively curly coat are equally contrary to type and should be faulted. **Disqualifications:** A coarse, wiry coat. An atypical short coat on an adult dog (atypical would be smooth, flat coat with, or without furnishings.)

Color

All colors are acceptable, singly or in any combination. No preference is given to one color over another. The skin may be freckled or parti-colored.

Gait

The Havanese gait is lively, elegant, resilient, and unique, contributing greatly to the breed's overall essential typiness. The characteristic "spring" is caused by the strong rear drive combined with a "flashy" front action effected by the short upper arm. While a truly typey dog is incapable of exaggerated reach and drive, the action does not appear stilted or hackneyed. The slightly higher rear may cause a correctly built specimen to show a flash of pad coming and going. The front legs reach forward freely. There is good extension in the rear and no tendency toward sickle hocks. The topline holds under movement, neither flattening nor roaching. Head carriage is typically high, even on the move.

Temperament

Playful and alert. The Havanese is both trainable and intelligent with a sweet, non-quarrelsome disposition.

Presentation

The dog should be shown as naturally as is consistent with good grooming. He may be shown either brushed or corded. His coat should be clean and well conditioned. In mature specimens, the length of the coat may cause it to fall to either side down the back but it should not appear to be artificially parted. The long, untrimmed head furnishings may fall forward over the eyes, naturally and gracefully to either side of the skull, or be held in two small braids beginning above the outer corner of the eyes, secured with plain elastic bands. (No ribbons or bows are permitted.) Corded coats will naturally separate into wavy sections in young dogs and will in time develop into cords. Adult corded dogs will be completely covered with a full coat of tassel-like cords. In either coat, minimal trimming of the hair at the inside corner of the eye is allowed for hygienic purposes only, not an attempt to resculpt the planes of the head. Minimal trimming around the anal and genital areas, for hygienic purposes only, is permissible but should not be noticeable on presentation. The hair on the feet and between the pads should be neatly trimmed for the express purpose of a tidy presentation. Any other trimming or sculpting of the coat is to be severely penalized as to preclude placement. Because correct gait is essential to breed type, the Havanese is presented at natural speed on a loose lead.

Faults

The foregoing description is that of the ideal Havanese. Any deviation from the above described dog must be penalized to the extent of the deviation keeping in mind the importance of the contribution of the various features toward the "original purpose of the breed."

Disqualification

Height at withers under 8½ or over 11½ inches except that the minimum height range shall not apply to dogs or bitches under twelve months of age.

Complete absence of black (or chocolate in the chocolate dog) pigmentation on the eyerims, nose or lips.

Coarse, wiry coat.

An atypical short coat on an adult. (Atypical refers to a smooth, flat coat with, or without furnishings.)

Effective: June 27, 2001