

## Breed Standard for the Pomeranian

**Learn the requirements of a well-bred Pomeranian by studying the description of the breed set forth in the American Kennel Club standard**

*by Juliette Cunliffe*

**Head:** The head is in balance with the body. The muzzle is rather short, straight, fine, free of lippiness and never snipey. His expression is alert and may be referred to as fox-like. The skull is closed. The top of the skull is slightly rounded, but not domed. When viewed from the front and side, one sees small ears which are mounted high and carried erect. To form a wedge, visualize a line from the tip of the nose ascending through the center of the eyes and the tip of the ears. The eyes are dark, bright, medium in size and almond-shaped. They are set well into the skull on either side of a well-pronounced stop. The pigmentation is black on the nose and eye rims except self-colored in brown, beaver, and blue dogs. The teeth meet in a scissors bite. One tooth out of alignment is acceptable. Major Faults: Round, domed skull; undershot mouth; overshot mouth.

### Meeting the Ideal

The American Kennel Club (AKC) defines a standard as: "A description of the ideal dog of each recognized breed, to serve as an ideal against which dogs are judged at shows." This "blueprint" is drawn up by the breed's recognized parent club, approved by a majority of its membership and then submitted to the AKC for approval. This is a complete departure from the way standards are handled in England, where all standards and changes are controlled by The Kennel Club.

The AKC states that "An understanding of any breed must begin with its standard. This applies to all dogs, not just those intended for showing." The picture that the standard draws of the dog's type, gait, temperament and structure is the guiding image used by breeders as they plan their programs.

**Neck, Topline, Body:** The neck is short with its base set well into the shoulders to allow the head to be carried high. The back is short with a level topline. The body is compact and well-ribbed with brisket reaching the elbow. The plumed tail is one of the characteristics of the breed, and lies flat and straight on the back.

**Forequarters:** The Pomeranian has sufficient layback of shoulders to carry the neck and head proud and high. The shoulders and legs are moderately muscled. The length of the shoulder blade and upper arm are equal. The forelegs are straight and parallel to each other. Height from elbows to withers approximately equals height from ground to elbow. The pasterns are straight and strong. The feet are well-arched, compact, and turn neither in nor out. He stands well up on his toes. Dewclaws may be removed. Major Faults: Down in pasterns.

**Hindquarters:** The angulation of the hindquarters balances that of the forequarters. The buttocks are well behind the set of the tail. The thighs are moderately muscled with stifles that are moderately bent and clearly defined. The hocks are perpendicular to the ground and the legs are straight and parallel to each other. The feet are well-arched, compact, and turn neither in nor out. He stands well up on his toes. Dewclaws, if any, on the hind legs may be removed. Major Faults: Cowhocks or lack of soundness in hind legs or stifles.

**Gait:** The Pomeranian's gait is smooth, free, balanced and vigorous. He has good reach in his forequarters and strong drive with his hindquarters. Each rear leg moves in line with the foreleg on the same side. To achieve balance, his legs converge slightly inward toward a center line beneath his body. The rear and front legs are thrown neither in nor out. The topline remains level, and his overall balance and outline are maintained.

**Coat:** A Pomeranian is noted for his double coat. The undercoat is soft and dense. The outer coat is long, straight, glistening and harsh in texture. A thick undercoat will hold up and permit the guard hair to stand off from the Pomeranian's body. The coat is abundant from the neck and fore part of shoulders and chest, forming a frill which extends over the shoulders and chest. The head and leg coat is tightly packed and shorter in length than that of the body. The forequarters are well-feathered to the hock. The tail is profusely covered with long, harsh, spreading straight hair. Trimming for neatness and a clean outline is permissible. Major Faults: Soft, flat or open coat.

**Color:** All colors, patterns, and variations there-of are allowed and must be judged on an equal basis. Patterns: Black and Tan—tan or rust sharply defined, appearing above each eye and on muzzle, throat, and forechest, on all legs and feet and below the tail. The richer the tan the more desirable; Brindle—the base color is gold, red, or orange-brindled with strong black cross stripes; Parti-color—is white with any other color distributed in patches with a white blaze preferred on the

head. Classifications: The Open Classes at specialty shows may be divided by color as follows: Open Red, Orange, Cream, and Sable; Open Black, Brown, and Blue; Open Any Other Color, Pattern, or Variation.

Temperament: The Pomeranian is an extrovert, exhibiting great intelligence and a vivacious spirit, making him a great companion dog as well as a competitive show dog. Even though a toy dog, the Pomeranian must be subject to the same requirements of soundness and structure prescribed for all breeds, and any deviation from the ideal described in the standard should be penalized to the extent of the deviation. Breed Standard of the Pomeranian

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