

Canadian Kennel Club
Irish Setter Breed Standard

General Appearance

The Irish Setter is an active, aristocratic bird-dog, rich red in colour, substantial yet elegant in build. Standing over two feet tall at the shoulder, the dog has a straight, fine, glossy coat, longer on ears, chest, tail and back of legs. Afield, he is a swift-moving hunter; at home, a sweet-natured, trainable companion. He is a rollicking personality. At his best the lines of the Irish Setter satisfy in over-all balance that artists have termed him the most beautiful of all dogs. The correct specimen always exhibits balance whether standing or in motion. Each part of the dog flows and fits smoothly into its neighbouring parts without calling attention to itself.

Size

There is no disqualification as to size. The make and fit of all parts and their over-all balance in the animal are rated more important. A height of 27 inches (69 cm) at the withers with a show weight of about 70 lb. (32 kg) is considered ideal for a dog; the bitch, 25 inches (64 cm), 60 lb. (27 kg). Variance beyond 1 inch (3 cm) up or down to be discouraged.

Coat and Colour

Short and fine on head, forelegs and tips of ears; on all other parts, of moderate length and flat. Feathering long and silky on ears; on back of forelegs and thighs long and fine, with a pleasing fringe of hair on belly and brisket extending onto the chest. Feet well feathered between the toes. Fringe on tail moderately long and tapering. All coat and feathering as straight and free as possible from curl or wave. Colour: mahogany or rich chestnut red, with no trace of black. A small amount of white on chest, throat, or toes, or a narrow-centred streak on skull, is not to be penalized.

Head

Long and lean, its length at least double the width between the ears. The brow is raised, showing a distinct stop midway between the tip of the nose and well-defined occiput (rear point of skull). Thus the nearly level line from occiput to brow is set a little above, and parallel to, the straight and equal line from eye to nose. Skull is oval when viewed from above or front; very slightly domed when viewed in profile. Beauty of head is emphasized by delicate chiseling along the muzzle, around and below the eyes, and along the cheeks. Muzzle moderately deep, nostrils wide, jaws, of nearly equal length. Upper lips fairly square but not pendulous, the underline of the jaws being almost parallel with the topline of the muzzle. Nose black or chocolate. The teeth meet in a scissors bite in which the upper incisors fit closely over the lower, or they may meet evenly. Eyes somewhat almond-shaped, of medium size, placed rather well apart; neither deep-set nor bulging. Colour: dark to medium brown. Expression soft yet alert. Ears set well back and low, not above level of eye. Leather thin, hanging in a neat fold close to the head, and nearly long enough to reach the nose.

Neck

Moderately long, strong but not thick, and slightly arched; free from throatiness, and fitting smoothly into the shoulders.

Forequarters

Shoulder blades long, wide, sloping well back, fairly close together at the top and joined in front to long upper arms angled to bring the elbows slightly rearward along the brisket. Forelegs straight and sinewy, the elbows moving freely. All legs sturdy, with plenty of bone, and strong, nearly straight pasterns.

Body

Sufficiently long to permit a straight and free stride. Topline of body from withers to tail slopes downward without sharp drop at the croup. Chest deep, reaching approximately to the elbows; rather narrow in front. Ribs well sprung. Loins of moderate length, muscular, and slightly arched.

Hindquarters

Hindquarters should be wide and powerful with broad, well-developed thighs. Hind legs long and muscular from hip to hock, short and nearly perpendicular from hock to ground; well angulated at stifle and hock joints, which, like the elbows, incline neither in nor out. Feet rather small, very firm, toes arched and close.

Tail

Strong at root, tapering to fine point, about long enough to reach the hock. Carriage straight or curving slightly upward, nearly level with the back.

Gait

At the trot the gait is big, very lively, graceful and efficient. The head is held high. The hindquarters drive smoothly and with great power. The forelegs reach well ahead as if to pull in the ground, without giving the appearance of a hackney gait. The dog runs as he stands--straight. Seen from the front or rear, the forelegs, as well as the hind legs below the hock joint, move perpendicularly to the ground, with some tendency towards a single track as speed increases. But a crossing or weaving of the legs, front or back, is objectionable.