

GRUNFELD GERMAN SHEPHERDS

The German Shepherd Dog Standard

Translated by Fred Lanting

FCI Standard #166; Adopted 1997; replaces 23 March, 1991 edition
(Dentition change added January 2002)
FCI Classification: Group 1 – Guardian and Driving dogs;
Section 1 – Shepherds’ dogs with working titles.
Versatile use: Guardian and Service (Working) Dog

Short historic overview:

Since the official establishment in Augsburg, within the German Canine Association known as the VDH (German “Kennel Club”), the parent club of the breed, the Club for German Shepherd Dogs (SV), is responsible for the breed Standard of the German Shepherd Dog. The Standard was set up in the first membership meeting in Frankfurt on 20 September 1899, upon the suggestions of A. Meyer and M. von Stephanitz, and then revised at the 6th membership gathering on 28 July 1901, the 23rd meeting in Köln on 17 September 1909, the conference of the executive committee and board in Wiesbaden on 5 September 1930, and the breed committee and board of directors meeting on 25 March 1961. As part of that one, the World Union of German Shepherd Dog Clubs (WUSV), was involved with the work. At the WUSV conference on 30 August 1976 they agreed on another revision, and on 23/24 March 1991 assumed full powers by way of resolution of the executive and advisory committees. [The current version was adopted in 1997.]

The German Shepherd Dog, whose systematic breeding was begun in the year 1899 with the founding of the Club, is from the former Central and Southern German stock then available. They were bred and descended from guardian dogs with the objective of creating a working dog predisposed to high performance. To reach this goal, the breed Standard of the German Shepherd Dog was determined, with reference both to the bodily construction as well as to the essential nature and character traits.

General appearance

The German Shepherd Dog is a medium-size, slightly stretched, strong, and well muscled, with the “bone” dry and firm in the over-all construction.

Important measurements and proportions

The withers height for males is 60 to 65cm; that of bitches is 55 to 60cm.* The length of torso exceeds the measure of the withers height by about 10 - 17 %.

Nature

The German Shepherd Dog must be, in its essential image, well-balanced, firm in nerves, self-confident, absolutely calm and impartial, and (except in tempting situations) amiable. He

must possess courage, willingness to fight, and hardiness, in order to be suitable as companion, watchdog, protector, service dog, and guardian.

Head

The head is to be wedge-shaped, large but in proportion to the body, with length about 40% of the dog's height at the withers, without being clumsy or overly long. It is dry in its general appearance, and moderately broad between the ears. The forehead is seen from in front and from the side to be only little arched, and without central furrow or with only a slightly implied one.

The proportion of backskull to foreface is 50:50. The breadth of backskull corresponds approximately to its length. The top of the head (seen from above) from the ears to the nose is a fairly continuous wedge-shaped taper, with a slanting but not too-sharply defined stop. Upper and lower jaws are definitely strong. The muzzle is straight, neither a saddle shape nor an arch being desired. The lips are tight, closing well, and of dark color.

The nose must be black.

The teeth must be strong, healthy and complete (42, conforming to the established rule). The German Shepherd Dog has a scissors bite; i.e., the incisors must mesh in a bite whereby the incisors of the upper jaw intersect like scissors with those of the lower jaw. Level (pincer), over-, and under-bites are faulty, as are large gaps between the teeth (interrupted arrangement). Likewise incorrect is a straight line of the incisors. The jawbones must be strongly developed, so that the teeth can be deeply embedded in their places.

The eyes are medium in size, almond-shaped, somewhat slanted, and not protruding. The color of the eyes should be as dark as possible; light, piercing eyes are not desired, as this detracts from the dog's expression.

Ears

The German Shepherd Dog has pricked ears of medium size, which are carried upright and neither pointing outward nor inward; they taper to a point and are held with the opening of the shell facing forward. Tipped over and hanging ears are faulty. Ears laid back during gaiting and/or relaxation are not faulted.

Neck

The neck should be strong, well-muscled, and without loose skin at the throat (dewlap). The head is held such that the neck is at an angle of approximately 45 degrees from the (horizontal) torso.

Body

The overline proceeds from the neck, continuing over the high, long withers and over the straight back through the slightly sloping croup without abrupt change. The back is moderately long, firm, strong, and well muscled. The loin is broad, short, powerfully fashioned, and well muscled. The croup should be long and slightly sloping (approx. 23° from the horizontal) and without a break in the overline as it continues over the tailset.

The chest should be moderately broad, its underline as long as possible, and pronounced. The depth of chest should be about 45 % to 48 % of the dog's height at the withers. The ribs should widen out and curve moderately. Barrel-shaped chests or slab-sided appearance are equally faulty.

The tail extends at least up to the hock joint, but not beyond the middle of the metatarsus. Its hair is somewhat bushy on the underside. It is carried in a gentle hanging curve when relaxed, and is lifted more in excitement and in movement, though not over the horizontal. Surgical corrections are forbidden.

Limbs

Forehand

The front limbs are seen from all sides to be straight, and from the front view are perfectly parallel.

Shoulder blade and upper arm are of equal lengths accumulated and firmly attached to the torso with medium-strong muscling. The angle between shoulder blade and upper arm amounts to, in the ideal case 90° , but as a rule is 110° .

The elbows, either when standing or moving, may not be turned out; likewise not pinched together. The forearms in the standing dog are seen in all views to be straight and perfectly parallel to each other, dry, and firmly muscled. The pastern has a length of approximately $1/3$ that of the forearm and has an angle of approx. 20° to 22° to this. Both a slanting pastern (more than 22°) as well as a steep pastern (less than 20°) are harmful to working suitability, particularly endurance.

The paws are round, well closed and arched, the soles hard, but not inflexible. The nails are sturdy and of a dark color.

Hindquarters

The position of the hind legs is slightly toward the rear, and viewed from behind the hindlegs are parallel to each other. Upper thigh and lower thigh are roughly of equal length and form an angle of approximately 120° . The thighs are powerful and well muscled. The hock joints are sturdily built and firm; the metatarsus is vertical from the hock joint.

The paws are closed, slightly arched, the pads hard and of dark color, the nails sturdy and arched, and also dark.

Movement

The German Shepherd Dog is a trotter. The limbs must be so harmonious with each other in length and angulation, that without creating much undulation of the topline, the hindquarters can push the torso forward in such a manner that the stride matches that of the forequarters.

Every tendency toward over-angulation of the hind quarters decreases the firmness and the endurance, and with that the working ability. With correct structural proportions and angulation, a far-reaching, ground-covering, level gait results, which conveys the impression of effortless forward movement. With the head thrust forward and tail slightly lifted it presents, in a fairly level, balanced, and smooth trot, one uninterrupted, gently flowing overline from the tips of the ears over the nape and back, through to the end of the tail.

Skin

The skin is (loosely) contiguous without, however, forming folds.

Coat

Condition of the hair

The correct type of haircoat for the German Shepherd Dog is the *Stockhaar* (straight, harsh topcoat) with undercoat. The topcoat should be as tight as possible, straight, harsh, and lying closely and firmly. On the head between the ears, on the front side of the legs, and on paws and toes it is short; at the neck somewhat longer and more abundant. On the backs of the legs the hair grows longer as far down as the wrist, and correspondingly down to the hock. At the back side of the thighs it forms moderate trousers.

Colors

Black with reddish-brown, brown, tan, and/or light gray markings. Solid black. Sable with dark overcast. Black saddle and mask.

Inconspicuous, small white chest markings, likewise light color on the insides, are allowed but not desirable. The nose bulb must be black in all colors of the breed. Missing mask, light (piercing) eye color, as well as light to whitish markings at chest and under/inner sides, light claws, and red-tipped tail are to be considered as deficient pigment. The undercoat has a light gray color. The color white is not permitted.

Size/weight*

Males: Withers height 60 cm to 65 cm; weight 30 kg to 40 kg

Females: Withers height 55 cm to 60 cm; weight 22 kg to 32 kg

Testicles

Dogs should display two evidently normally developed testicles, situated in the scrotum.

Faults

All deviations from the above-mentioned points should be considered as errors, the severity of fault appraisal being strictly in proportion to the degree of the deviation.

Major Faults

- Anything that departs from the Standard and known characteristics of the breed in relation to the suitability for work;
- Ear faults: held out to the side; low-set; tipped over; overset (tipped toward each other); weak;
- Considerably lacking in pigment;
- Considerable deficiency in overall firmness.

Dentition faults:

All deviations from the scissors bite and the formation of the teeth that are not dealt with in the following list of specific faults.

Disqualifying Faults (also ineligible for breed survey):

- a) Weak character, biting, nervous;
- b) Demonstrated severe hip dysplasia
- c) Cryptorchidism (unilateral or bilateral), clearly unequal or stunted, atrophied testicles;
- d) Deformed ears or tails;
- e) Dogs with deformities;
- f) Dentition faults involving the absence of:
 - one P-3 and another tooth, or
 - one fang (canine), or
 - one P-4, or
 - one Molar-1 or Molar-2, or
 - any total of three or more teeth;
- g) Incisor (bite) irregularities: overshot by 2mm or more, undershot, or pincer bite (even or level in entire incisor area); (as of 2002, *any* non-scissors bite is a disqualification, apparently regardless of amount. *See notes below.*)
- h) Oversize or undersize by more than one centimeter;
- i) Albinism;
- j) White haircoat even if the dog has dark eyes and nails;
- k) Langstockhaar (topcoat long, straight, soft, not lying tightly; with undercoat present; flags (feathering) on ears and legs, bushy trousers, bushy tail with formation of flags on the underside);
- l) Langhaar (topcoat long, soft; without undercoat, generally parting in the middle of the back; flags at ears, legs, and tail).

*Dogs are 60-65 cm (23.6 to 25.6 inches) and 30-40 kg (66-88 lbs.);
bitches 55-60 cm (21.6 to 23.6 inches) and 22-32 kg (48½ to 70½ lbs.).

The Judging of Tooth Faults in Conformation Shows and Breed Surveys

Kkl-1, VA (Vorzüglich-Select):	Flawless bite, complete dentures, no broken* or defective teeth or large gaps, no extra (double) teeth.
Kkl-1, V (Vorzüglich, excellent):	Flawless bite, complete dentures, no large gaps; (double P-1s, tooth broken accidentally allowed).
Kkl-2, SG (Sehr-Gut, very good):	missing one P-1 premolar or an incisor;
Kkl-2, G (Gut, good):	missing: two P-1s 1 or one P-1 <i>and</i> an incisor or one P-2
Not eligible for a Kör classification, but still may get a “G”, (“Gut”) in the show ring:	an absence of: one P-3 or two incisors or one P-2 <i>plus</i> one incisor or one P-2 <i>plus</i> one P-1 or two P-2s;
“U” (Ungenügend, “Insufficient”) and blocked from the registry:	an absence of: one P-3 <i>and</i> any other tooth, or one fang (canine), or one P-4, or one M-1 (1 st molar), or one M-2, or a total of any three teeth.

*(See rule change of 1998, allowing for exceptions due to non-genetic causes)

Other tooth and jaw defects:

Over- and Under- bites:

Obviously undershot or overshot (the latter being the separation of top incisors standing in front of the bottom ones by the thickness of a matchstick or greater): the dog is not allowed to be listed in the registry. (*See note on 2002 change, below.*)

Imperfect bite (Aufbeißen)

A slight off-bite (level, even, pincer bite) of the center incisors can be allowed in Kkl-2.

Caries (tooth decay) disqualifies from the breed survey.

Worn down and discolored:

If due to age, it is considered in the judgment, but with no major downgrading. If teeth have turned slightly yellow or brown, but if the tooth substance is OK, Kkl-2 is possible.

Translated by Fred Lanting

Comments on Change in SV Breed Show Dentition Rules, effective 2002:

United Schutzhund Clubs of America (USA) has historically tried to use the SV regulations literally, and only change them as necessary for conditions in this country. Here is my translation of the Dentition Rules the SV announced in August 1998. My understanding is that the "dental notation" can be done anywhere, any time, by authorized people. For those who complain about dental notation fees, you aren't being forced to get the notation; you can take your chances on broken, lost teeth before Körschein (breed survey). Fred

The SV concluded this year's conference on changing the breed show rules concerning the Ahnentafel ("official pedigree"-registration paper) and regarding damaged (broken) or missing teeth. This is the new wording of section 4.3. of the breed show rules:

Environmental influences that lead to damage to a portion of the teeth, or to their entire absence, have no consequence for breed evaluation awards (such as show placings or Körung). However, it is required that the former presence of healthy, strong teeth and/or a flawless scissors bite be confirmed and noted on the Ahnentafel.

The proof to be given the studbook office can be as follows (check-list for establishing dentition registrations):

1. Submission of a dog show judgment (critique and results) and the scorebook, in which a conformation judge has described and confirmed the totality and (former) presence & sufficiency of healthy, robust teeth and a flawless scissors bite after personal examination. This is done after the dog has reached the age of 12 months.
2. Submission of the breed survey certificate (Körschein), in which were recorded the dentition and bite status at the time of the survey.

The submission of a radiograph accompanies a certificate by a SV-certified HD veterinarian, or a veterinarian-for-dentistry approved by the SV. On the radiograph, parts of the root or at least the tooth socket must be shown.

Veterinarian's certification for tooth faults, X-ray requirement for the entry in the Ahnentafeln:

Unfortunately it frequently occurs that veterinary certifications of damaged or missing teeth are inadequate in description. Until the necessary statements about the Ahnentafel registration exist, taking much time, this can be very vexing to the owners, who are not allowed to exhibit their dogs! We therefore had to put together the most important points for you to certify, in the form of a checklist:

- * Complete name of the dog on the pedigree: obvious and legible!
- * SZ - number (SV Zuchtbuch, studbook) number, on the pedigree!
- * Tattoo number: in the right ear, agreeing with that on the pedigree!
- * Give the status of the dentition problem:
 - Tooth is broken off, chipped, etc.
 - Tooth with root is missing completely (due to environmental, non-genetic) influence)
 - Tooth had to be extracted (give reason)
- * Cause of the tooth fault!
- * Position reference (right/left, top/bottom) please imagine yourself behind the dog, to determine which is right or left side!
- * Description of teeth: Please pay attention to the correct designation (for example, P1, P2, etc.)!
- * X-rays: Requirement for the entry in the Ahnentafel:

Tooth faults in the GSD occur often, even though it may be that dogs are completely free of tooth faults for many generations. Inheritance plays a role in the congenital tooth fault, but loss or damage acquired later in life through environmental influences plays no role in determining the breeding value of the GSD or for its descendants. Before the extraction of a tooth, a radiograph must be made in each case. It is a requirement for recording the missing tooth in the Ahnentafel of the dog. The breed (stud-)book office of the SV acknowledges radiographs only by certified HD veterinarians or from approved veterinarians specializing in dentistry.

Please note, at the establishing of the radiograph, the following:

* Do the X-ray before the extraction!

* Clearly mark: "right" or "left"!

Still another note: Teeth that do not emerge completely from the gum (or are not normally developed) generally have no designation in the Ahnentafel. Veterinary certifications and radiographs therefore are necessary only for damaged or extracted teeth, whose absence is a result of non-hereditary, outside influences. *Fred Lanting, www.MrGSD.com*

GRUNFELD GERMAN SHEPHERDS