



*Pyrenean Shepherd Club of America*  
**Pyrenean Shepherd –Rough Faced  
Variety**  
Standard Provided by ABIDS

**GENERAL APPEARANCE:** A lean, lively dog of minimal height and weight with a great deal of energy and an intelligent, cunning, mischievous attitude and expression; always on alert, suspicious, ready for action. This attitude and great vivacity of movement gives this little dog a highly singular gait and appearance, characteristic of no other breed.

**FAULTS:** *Heaviness, thick musculature, lack of vivacity, common-looking expression, vicious appearance, poor movement, short or stilted stride.*

The following is a description of the ideal Pyrenean Shepherd. Departure from this standard must be penalized to the extent of the deviation. Although good structure is important in the Pyrenean Shepherd, the essence of the breed is to be found in its type. Excellence of type in expression, conformation and movement are to be valued much more highly than any structural perfections, no matter how important they may be. For it is type, not abstract soundness which makes the Pyrenean Shepherd what it is.

**SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE**

**SIZE:** Height: males: 15 1/2 to 19 inches at the withers, females: 15 to 18 inches.

**FAULTS:** *Individuals shorter or taller than these limits.*

**DISQUALIFICATION:** *Individuals exceeding the maximum height by more than one inch.*

**WEIGHT:** An absolute minimum of weight is required - just enough flesh to cover the bones; the ribs should be readily felt.

**FAULTS:** *Overweight, fat, or heavily muscled dogs.*

**PROPORTION:** The body is long in proportion to the height of the dog.

**SUBSTANCE:** The dog in good working condition is lightly boned and sinewy, correctly proportioned and well-balanced, and must never appear overdone.

**HEAD**

**HEAD:** The head is generally triangular in shape and calls to mind that of the Pyrenean brown bear.

**EXPRESSION:** Intelligent, alert, and cunning, even a little mischievous.

**FAULTS:** *Haggard or common-looking expression.*

**EYES:** The eyes are almond-shaped, well open, and very expressive. They are dark brown in color. All blue or partially blue eyes are acceptable only in merles and slate grays. Eyerims are black no matter what color the coat.

**FAULTS:** *Eyes too small or too round, light eyes, weak pigmentation of the eyerims.*

**DISQUALIFICATION:** *Missing pigment on the eyerims. Blue eyes in a dog of coat color other than merle or slate grey.*

**EARS:** The ears are rather short, moderately wide at the base, set on top of the head. Ears are traditionally cropped straight across. Natural ears are semi-prick with the top one-third to one-half of the leather falling straight forward or slightly to the side.

**FAULTS:** *Ears set on too low, poor ear carriage.*

**DISQUALIFICATION:** *Naturally erect ears.*

**SKULL:** The skull is of medium development, almost flat with only a slight central furrow, gently rounded on the sides, and with only a slight development of the occiput. The skull slopes gently to the muzzle without a marked stop.

**FAULTS:** *Ridge running up the center of the skull; rounded forehead; head too flat; head too short; too long; too narrow or too broad; too much stop; too much hair on the head -- the hair must never cover the eyes.*

**MUZZLE:** Straight, rather short, it lets the skull dominate the face; Narrow but not exaggeratedly so, it affects a wedge shape, well filled-in under the eyes. The hair on the end of the muzzle and chin must be naturally short and it lengthens as the muzzle widens toward the skull. This gives the characteristic windswept appearance so necessary for correct expression.

**FAULTS:** *Square or rectangular muzzle; muzzle too long or too short, weak pigment; too much hair -- especially if it hides the eyes.*

**NO RIBBON SHALL BE AWARDED TO A DOG WHOSE FACIAL HAIR HAS BEEN CUT, PLUCKED, OR OTHERWISE ALTERED IN ANY WAY FROM ITS NATURAL STATE.**

**NOSE:** The nose itself is pitch black.

**DISQUALIFICATION:** *Nose other than absolutely black.*

**LIPS:** The mouth is tight, the lips are not very thick and the upper lip falls only far enough to cover the lower jaw. The lips should never sag. This often gives the impression that the dog is smiling. The mucous membranes of lips and palate are black or strongly marked with black.

**FAULTS:** *Weak or missing pigmentation.*

**BITE:** The teeth are very sharp and all teeth should be present. A scissors bite is strongly preferred, an even bite is admissible.

**DISQUALIFICATION:** *Overshot, undershot, or wry mouth.*

## **NECK, TOPLINE, BODY**

**NECK:** Rather long and well muscled, well set-off from the shoulders.

**FAULTS:** *Neck poorly set-on, too thick, too short, too long, too weak, or ewe neck.*

**TOPLINE:** The topline is firm and strong. The tops of the shoulder blades are clearly visible above the line of the back. The backline itself is level. The loin is short and slightly arched. Towards the rear, the topline becomes rounded and is slightly higher there than at the shoulders.

**FAULTS:** *Level topline, roached back.*

**BODY:** Cleanly boned, the back is rather long and well supported, the kidney area is short and slightly arched, the croup is rather short and oblique, flank well tucked up, ribs slightly rounded and extending well to the rear. The chest is of medium development and descends only to the elbow. More heavily furnished on the croup and rear legs, cording in this area is entirely acceptable.

**FAULTS:** *Cobbiness, a square-bodied dog.*

**TAIL:** The tail is usually docked, often flush with the croup such that no remnant of the tail is left. Some individuals have naturally short tails. The naturally long tail is perfectly acceptable so long as it is carried correctly. It should be well fringed, rather short, set on rather low and forming a crook at the end. Even when the dog is alert, the tail must not rise above the level of the back but should continue along the slope of the croup.

**FAULTS:** *Poor tail carriage, lack of crook.*

## **FOREQUARTERS**

**SHOULDERS:** Rather long, of medium angulation.

**FAULT:** *Shoulders too straight, shoulder blades too short.*

**FORELEGS:** Cleanly boned, sinewy, rather finely made. Fringed with rather long hair in the long haired type, rather shorter hair in the semi-long haired dog.

**PASTERNS:** Strong, with marked bend of pastern.

**DEWCLAWS:** The front legs carry single dewclaws.

**FAULTS:** *Unsoundness, double dewclaws in front.*

**FEET:** The feet are cleanly boned, rather flat and oval shaped. The pads of the feet are dark.

**FAULTS:** *Thick feet, cat feet.*

**NAILS:** The nails are dark. The nails are small but are very hard and hidden by the hair growing out from between the toes.

**FAULTS:** *Nails too long, white nails.*

## **HINDQUARTERS**

**HIND LEGS:** The stifle is well rounded but not let down very much. The hocks are clean, well let down, well angulated, and often close together especially in individuals bred and raised in the mountains. The angulations are rather closed. Dogs with semi-long hair are generally not as heavily furnished in the rear as the long-haired dogs.

**FAULTS:** *Poor angulation, lack of suppleness in movement.*

**DEWCLAWS:** Double dewclaws, single dewclaws, or lack of dewclaws in the rear are all acceptable, however as the double dewclaws are an ancient breed characteristic, all else being equal, the dog possessing dewclaws must be preferred.

**FEET:** As described under forequarters. The hind feet characteristically toe out and this must not be faulted.

## **COAT**

**SKIN:** Fine, often mottled with light and dark patches depending on the coat color.

**COAT:** The coat can be of long or demi-long hair, almost flat or slightly wavy, more heavily furnished with woollier hair on the croup and thighs. The texture is harsh being halfway between the hair of a goat and the wool of a sheep. The hair on the end of the muzzle and the chin must be naturally short and it lengthens as the muzzle widens toward the skull. The longer hair on the sides of the muzzle and cheeks is swept back giving a windblown look. The eyes must be readily visible, not covered with hair.

**FAULTS:** *Excessively long coat, excessive furnishings. Too much hair on the head, especially if the hair covers the eyes or if the mustache and beard take on any similarity to those of a griffon. Hair of poor texture, it must not be too soft, or in any way curly, fluffy or stand-off.*

**NO RIBBON SHALL BE AWARDED TO A DOG WHOSE FACIAL HAIR HAS BEEN CUT, PLUCKED, OR OTHERWISE ALTERED IN ANY WAY FROM ITS NATURAL STATE. COLOR**

**COLORS:** Various shades of fawn with or without a mixture of black hairs; gray, ranging from charcoal to pearl gray; merles of diverse tones; brindle; slate gray; black; black with white markings not exceeding 49% of the body surface. A little white is acceptable on the chest, head, and feet but solid colored dogs are preferred (except in the case of the black dog with white markings).

**FAULTS:** *Too many white patches or white patches which are too big. Black and tan coat color (that is to say a black dog with tan or red on the feet or legs, or over the eyes, on the cheek or muzzle, inside the ears, under the tail, or on the chest).*

**DISQUALIFICATION:** *Predominantly white coat color.*

**DISQUALIFICATIONS FOR MALES:** *Monorchidism or cryptorchidism.*

**GAIT:** Due to size and conformation, the Pyrenean Shepherd has a somewhat reduced stride. The trot -- our little shepherd's favorite gait -- must be solid and vigorous. At the jog trot, the head is carried rather high. As the stride lengthens the head is lowered until it is on level with the topline. It is a very flowing gait. The feet barely leave the ground. He "shaves the earth";. The correct gait is very pleasant to the eye. It is a result of the harmony of the front and rear angulations. Pacing is not a fault however it is a gait employed by the dog at work in order to lengthen his stride to keep pace with the flock or at the end of the day when he is overcome by fatigue. Pacing has no place in the show ring.

**FAULTS:** *Stiff or stilted trot, feet rising too far off the ground.*

**TEMPERAMENT:** The Pyrenean Shepherd is not merely a header or a drover. Such a division of labor is unknown to him. He is a herder to his very soul and has the intelligent initiative to adapt to all manner of changing circumstances in order to fulfill the human shepherd's every need with unequal able prowess. The powerful herding instinct is so strong in him that from the very youngest age he knows how to manage the flock even without the example of an older dog. He is dominated by his love for his work. He has the tendency to become passionately attached to his owner to the complete exclusion of all others and is astonishingly sensitive to his owner's moods. As a companion, he is very active and enthusiastic and insists upon being involved in the day's activities whatever they may be. He is very affectionate with the members of his immediate family but is distrustful of strangers. Thus, shyness in the show ring is not to be penalized unless it interferes with the judging procedure.