



*CKC Breed Standard*  
**Setter (English)**  
*January 2004*  
Standard Provided by ABIDS

**Origin and Purpose:** Although even our oldest authorities are not entirely in agreement as to the origin of this breed, it is generally agreed that the earliest English Setter had its origins in some of the older of the land spaniels that originated in Spain, or were the product of careful crosses of the Spanish Pointer, the large water spaniel, and the Springer Spaniel. By careful cultivation, the English Setter attained a high degree of proficiency for finding and pointing game in open country. The major credit for the development of the modern English Setter goes to two men of the middle 1800's, Mr. Edward Laverack and Mr. R.L. Purcell Llewellyn.

**General Appearance:** An elegant, stylish and symmetrical gun dog of good substance that projects a heritage of well developed hunting instinct and bird sense. He suggests the ideal blend of strength and stamina combined with grace and style. Flat-coated with feathering of adequate length. Gaiting freely and smoothly with long forward reach and strong rear drive. Males should be decidedly masculine in appearance without coarseness. Females should be decidedly feminine in appearance without overrefinement.

**Temperament:** A true gentleman by nature, he has a kind and gentle expression and is constantly expressing a willingness to please with an affectionate, happy and friendly attitude. He has a lovable, mild disposition and is without fear or viciousness.

**Size:** Dogs about 25 inches (63 cm); bitches about 24 inches (61 cm) in height, when measured at the withers. Symmetry--the balance of all parts to be considered. Symmetrical dogs will have level toplines or will be slightly higher at the shoulders than at the hips. They will have wellangulated fore and rearquarters that work smoothly together. Balance, harmony of proportion, elegance, grace and an appearance of quality, substance, and endurance to be looked for.

**Coat:** The coat should be flat without curl or woolliness. The dog should be adequately feathered on the ears, the chest, the belly, the underside of the thighs, the back of all legs and on the tail. The feathering, however, should not be so excessive that it hides the true lines and movement of the dog, nor should it affect the dog's appearance or function as a sporting dog.

**Colour:** Black and white, orange and white, liver and white, lemon and white, white, black-white and tan, orange belton, liver belton, lemon belton, tricolour belton, blue belton. The belton markings may vary in degree from clear, distinctive flecking to roan shading. Dogs without heavy patches of colour on the body, but flecked all over preferred.

**Head & Skull:** The entire head should be in proportion to the body. It should be long and lean with a well-defined stop. **Skull:** when viewed from above, should be oval. The skull should be of medium width, without coarseness, and should be only slightly wider at the base than at the brows. The widest part of the oval should be at the ear set. There should be a moderately defined occipital protuberance. The length of the skull from the occiput to the stop should be equal in length to the muzzle. **Muzzle:** brick-shaped and the width to be in harmony with the skull. It should be level from the eyes to the tip of the nose. When viewed from the side, the line of the top of the muzzle should be parallel to the line of the top of the skull. A dish face or a Roman nose is objectionable. The flews should be square and pendant. The **nose** to be black or dark brown in colour except in white, orange and white, lemon and white or liver and white where it may be lighter. The nostrils should be wide apart and large in the openings. **Foreface:** the skeletal structure under the eyes should be well chiseled with no suggestion of fullness. The cheeks, like the sides of the muzzle, should present a smooth and clean-cut appearance. **Jaws:** The lower jaw should extend in length so that the lower teeth form a close scissors bite with the upper teeth. The inner surface of the upper teeth in contact with the outer surface of the lower teeth when the jaws are closed. An even bite is not objectionable. The **teeth** should be strongly developed with upright incisors. Full dentition is desirable. **Eyes** should be bright, and the expression mild and intelligent. The iris should be brown, the darker the better. The eyelid rims should be fully pigmented. **Ears** should be set low and well back. Preferably, the set should be even with the eye level. When relaxed, the ears should be carried close to the head. They should be of moderate length, slightly rounded at the ends, and covered with long silky hair.

**Neck:** The neck should be rather long, muscular, and lean. The neck should be slightly arched at the crest, and clean-cut where it joins the head at the base of the skull. The neck should be larger and very muscular toward the shoulders, and the base of the neck should flow smoothly into the shoulders. The neck should not be too throaty or pendulous and should be graceful in appearance.

**Shoulder:** The shoulder blade (scapula) should be laid back to approach the ideal angle of 45 degrees from the vertical. The upper foreleg (humerus) should be equal in length to the shoulder blade (scapula) and form an angle of 90 degrees with the shoulder blade. This enables the elbow to be placed directly under the back edge of the shoulder blade and bring the heel pad directly under the pivot point of the shoulder thus giving a maximum length of stride. The shoulders should be fairly close together at the tips, but with sufficient width between the blades to allow the dog to easily lower its head to the ground. The shoulder blades should lie flat and meld smoothly with the contours of the body. This structure permits perfect freedom of action for the forelegs. **Forelegs:** When seen standing from the front or side, the forelegs or arms (radius and ulna) should be straight and parallel. The elbows should have no tendency to turn either in or out when standing or gaiting. The upper arm (humerus) should be flat and muscular. The bone should be fully developed and muscles hard and devoid of flabbiness. The pastern should be short, strong, and nearly round with the slope from the pastern joint to the foot deviating very slightly forward from the perpendicular. **Feet:** The feet should be closely set and strong, pads well developed and tough; toes well arched and protected with short, thick hair. **Forechest:** The forechest should be well developed, and the point of the sternum (prosternum) should project about 3/4 - 1 inch (2 - 3 cm) in front of the point of the shoulders. **Rib Cage:** The chest should be deep, but not so wide or round as to interfere with the action of the forelegs. The keel should be deep enough to reach the level of the elbow. The ribs should be long, springing gradually to the middle of the body, then tapering as they approach the end of the thoracic cavity. **Topline:** The topline of the body of the dog in motion or standing should appear to be level or to slope very slightly from the withers to the tail forming a graceful outline of medium length without sway or drop. The tail should continue as a smooth, level extension of the topline. **Back:** The back, the area between the withers and the loin, should be straight and strong at its junction with the loin area. The loins should be strong, moderate in length, slightly arched, but not to the extent of being roached or wheel-backed, and only discernible to the touch. **Hips:** The slope and length of the croup determines the tail-set, and the degree of slope should not be more than 15 degrees from the horizontal for an ideal tail-set. The hip bones should be wide apart with the hips nicely rounded and blending smoothly into the hindlegs. The pelvis should slope at an angle of 30 degrees from the horizontal. The pelvis governs the forward reach and the backward follow-through of the hind legs, and this angle permits a maximum length of stride. Again for efficiency and balance, the length of the pelvis and the upper thigh (femur) should be equal, and they in turn should be equal in length to the shoulder blade (scapula) and upper arm (humerus). **Hind Legs:** The upper thigh (femur) should be well developed and muscular. The well-developed lower thigh (tibia/fibula) in a well-balanced setter should be slightly longer than the upper thigh (femur) and should become wide and flat as it approaches the hock joint. The knee joint (stifle) should be well bent and strong. The pastern from the hock joint to the foot, should be short, strong, and nearly round and perpendicular when viewed from the side. The hind legs, when seen from the rear, should be straight and parallel to each other and the hock joints should have no tendency to turn in or out either at rest or when the dog is in motion.

**Tail:** The tail should be straight and taper to a fine point with only sufficient length to reach the hock joint or less. The feather must be straight and silky, hanging loosely in a fringe and tapering to a point when the tail is raised. There must be no bushiness. The tail should not curl sideways or curl above the level of the back (sickle tail).

**Gait:** An effortless graceful movement demonstrating rapidity and endurance while covering the ground efficiently. There must be a long forward reach and strong rear drive with a lively tail and a proud head carriage. Head may be carried slightly lower when moving to allow for greater reach of the forelegs. The back of the dog should remain strong, firm, and level when in motion. When moving at a trot, the properly balanced dog will have a tendency to converge toward a line representing the centre of gravity of the dog.

**Faults:** 1. Any deviation from the affectionate, happy, friendly attitude which makes the English Setter the true gentleman of the dog world.

2. Undershot or overshot bite.

3. Any dog over 27 inches (69 cm) or under 24 inches (61 cm). Any bitch over 26 inches (66 cm) or under 23 inches (58 cm).

4. Incorrect tail set or a tail carriage such as a steep drop from the hips to the tail set or a tail which curls sideways or curls above the level of the back (sickle tails).

5. Incorrect soft and woolly coat texture that will not protect the dog while working in the field.

6. Light eyes. Loose eyes.

7. A lack of long forward reach and strong rear drive.

8. A hackneyed, paddling gait and a rolling, stilted, or lumbering motion.

9. Flat, splayed, or long feet or feet that turn in or out.

10. Too narrow or too wide a front.

11. Barrel-like or slab-sided rib cage.

12. A down-faced or snipey muzzle.

13. Flews in excess of that required to present a square muzzle.

14. A lack of back skull.

15. Cow-hocks.

16. Any deviation from a topline that is level or very slightly sloping.