



*Toy Australian Shepherd Association of America*  
**Toy Australian Shepherd**  
Standard Provided by ABIDS

**General Appearance:** The first impression of the Toy Australian Shepherd should be that of a standard sized Australian Shepherd. The size range is from ten to fourteen inches. The ideal size being twelve inches, but quality should not be sacrificed in favor of size. The general appearance should be that of a sturdy dog and must not appear to be either spindly or coarse. The bone and muscle must be in proportion to, and an enhancement of, the dog's weight and structure.

Toy Australian Shepherds should be slightly longer than they are tall and have a coat of moderate length and coarseness with coloring which offers variety and individuality. They have a natural or docked bobbed tail.

The alert, expressive eyes may be a verity of colors with unique combinations. The head is in proportion to the size of the dog and the expressions reflect a high intelligence. The width and length of the top skull should be equal. The muzzle should taper a little from base to nose and is rounded at the tip. The ears are triangular and at full attention break forward and over.

**Character:** The Toy Australian Shepherd will be shown in the Herding group, but as a household pet they might never cross paths with a farm animal. Nevertheless, instinct prompts many of these dogs to gently herd their owners. In general, these intelligent dogs make excellent companions and respond beautifully to training. They are good-natured and even-tempered; may initially be reserved with strangers yet make a very loyal companion.

The Toy Aussie is an active dog with a happy and even disposition, good-natured, seldom quarrelsome and responds with enthusiasm to the challenge and responsibility of having a job to perform.

**Size, Proportion, Substance:** The size range for the Toy Australian Shepherd is between **ten and fourteen inches** measured at the highest point of the withers. The ideal size being around twelve inches, dogs or bitches below ten inches will be disqualified; any dog or bitch that is fourteen inches will be considered a Miniature. Size consideration should never outweigh that of type, proportion, movement and temperament. General appearance should be that of a sturdy dog and must not appear to be either spindly or coarse. The Toy Aussie is slightly longer than tall. The length of the body from the point of the shoulder to the rear point of pelvis is longer than the height of the body from ground to top of the withers

**Disqualification:** - *Under ten inches*

**Head:** The head is in proportion to the size of the dog and the expressions reflect their high intelligence. The width and length of the top skull should be equal.

**Muzzle:** The length of the muzzle should be equal to, or slightly less than, the length of the top skull. The muzzle should taper a little from the base to a rounded tip.

**Top Skull:** The top skull should be flat to slightly round with a moderate, well-defined stop.

**Lower Jaw:** The lower jaw should be evident when viewed from the side and the flews should be tight.

**Severe Faults:** - *An extreme domed head*

**Faults:** - *Lacking bottom jaw, when viewed from the side*

**Ears:** The ears are triangular and, at full attention, break forward and over. The ears set high on the head, are of moderate size with the ideal length measured by bringing the tip of the ear around to the inside corner of the eye. Ears may tip forward and over from ¼ inch to ½ inch above the base with the forward edge slightly turning to the cheek or to the side as a rose ear. The tip of the ear leather should be rounded.

**Severe Faults:** - *Hound ears that have the absence of erectile power, lying close to the side of the head.*

- *Prick ears (straight up).*

**Eyes/Expression:** The eyes should show attentiveness and intelligence and be alert and eager. The gaze should be keen but friendly. Eyes may be brown, blue, amber or any variation or combination thereof, including flecks and marbling; almond shaped; neither protruding nor sunken. The blue merles and blacks must have black pigmentation on the eye rims. The red merles and reds must have liver (brown) pigmentation on the eye rims.

**Severe Faults:** - *Lack of eye pigment on the eye rim.*

- *Large and/or round eyes.*

**Nose:** Blue merles and blacks must have black pigmentation on the nose (and lips). Red merles and reds must have liver (brown) pigmentation on the nose (and lips). On the merles it is permissible to have small pink spots on the nose; however they should not exceed 25% of the nose on dogs over one year of age.

**Fault:** - *The butterfly nose is a fault, over one year of age.*

**Disqualification:** - *A Dudley nose (flesh colored/ lacking pigment).*

**Teeth:** A full complement of strong white teeth should meet in a scissors bite.

**Disqualifications:** - Undershot or overshot jaw greater than 1/16 inch.

- Teeth broken or missing by accident shall not be penalized.

**Fault:** - Level bite

**Neck and Throat:** The neck is strong, of moderate length, and is slightly arched at the crest. The shoulders are strong in substance yet not loaded. The throat is clear and free from folds of skin however a slight wrinkle below the angle of the jaw is allowable.

**Faults:** - Thick, short, stubby neck carried on a line with the top of the shoulders

- Throat showing excessive folds of skin (throatiness).

**Top-line:** The back is straight, strong, level and firm from withers to hip joints.

**Croup:** The croup is moderately sloped (Ideally being 30° from the horizontal).

**Chest:** Chest is not broad but is deep with the lowest point reaching the elbow.

**Ribs:** The ribs are well sprung and long, neither barrel chest nor slab-sided.

**Underline:** The underline shows a moderate tuck-up.

**Tail:** Tail is straight, docked or naturally bobbed, not to exceed two inches in length.

**Faults:** - Gaily carried tail.

**Serious Fault:** - Roach back, a sway back or slab sided.

### Forequarters

**Shoulders:** Slopping yet clean, muscular but not heavy or loaded. Shoulder blades are long, flat, fairly close set at the withers and well laid back.

**Upper Arm:** The upper arm, which should be approximately the same length as the shoulder blade, attaches at an approximate right angle to the shoulder line with forelegs dropping straight, perpendicular to the ground.

**Front Legs:** Legs should be straight and strong. Bone is strong and oval rather than round.

**Pastern:** Pastern is medium length and very slightly sloped.

**Front Feet:** Front dewclaws may be removed. Feet are oval, compact close knit, with well-arched toes. Pads are thick and resilient.

**Faults:** - Straight upright shoulders.

- Chest disproportionately wide or narrow with lack of depth.

- Legs lacking in substance.

- Splay feet.

**Hindquarters:** The width of the hindquarters is equal to the width of the forequarters at the shoulders.

**Upper Thigh:** The angulation of the pelvis and upper thigh corresponds to the angulation of the shoulder blade and upper arm, forming an approximate right angle.

**Stifles:** Stifles are clearly defined.

**Hock:** Hock joints moderately bent. The hocks are short, perpendicular to the ground and parallel to each other when viewed from the rear.

**Rear Feet:** Rear dewclaws must be removed. Feet are oval, compact with close knit, well-arched toes. Pads are thick and resilient.

**Fault:** - Straight in the stifle.

- Long toes or open feet.

- Cow hocks, straight hocks, sickle hocks, or lack of muscling.

- Standing wide.

### Coat

**Hair:** Is of medium texture, straight to wavy, weather resistant and of medium length. The undercoat varies in quantity with variations in climate. Hair is short and smooth on the head, ears, front of forelegs and below the hocks. Backs of the forelegs and britches are moderately feathered. There is a moderate mane and frill, more pronounced in dogs than in bitches. Ticking can occur on any color of dog, usually appearing on the white

**Severe Faults:** Long flowing coat or a very short coat.

- Any coat texture, which detracts from the overall impression of the Australian Shepherd Breed (i.e. very long, very short, very curly, etc.).

**Colors:** Blue merle, black, red merle and red - all with or without white markings and/or tan (copper) points, with no order of preference. The hairline of a white collar should not exceed the point of the withers at the skin. White is acceptable on the neck (either in a partial or full collar), chest, legs, belly, muzzle and blaze. White on the belly may not extend more than two inches above a horizontal line at the elbow and behind the point of the withers. White on the head should not predominate, and the eyes and ears must be fully surrounded by color. Merles characteristically become darker with increasing age.

**Disqualifications:** - White body splashes in all colors

- Lack of color around the eyes or ears.

- Other than recognized coat colors (Pattern whites, yellows, sables, etc.)

**Gait:** The Toy Australian Shepherd has a smooth, free, easy gait and exhibits great agility of movement with a well balanced, ground covering stride. Fore and hind legs move straight and parallel with the centerline of the body. The Toy Australian Shepherd must be agile and able to change direction or alter gait instantly. As the dog moves into a trot, and speed increases, the head lowers and becomes almost level with the back. The back remains level and firm while moving freely throughout the sequence of the two beat diagonal gait. The feet converge inward as speed increases until the edges of the pads (front and rear) touch the lateral centerline at a fast trot.

**Severe Fault:** - *Pacing (legs on the same side moving in unison, like a locomotive).*

- *Rolling across the shoulders, back or hips (often caused by long coupling)*

- *Crabbing (not tracking straight, often caused by short coupling).*

**Temperament:** The Toy Australian Shepherd is an intelligent, active dog with an even disposition; he is good-natured, seldom quarrelsome. He may be somewhat reserved in initial meetings and many have a tendency to grin, usually accompanied with a body wiggle and squinting of the eyes.

**Faults:** *Any display of shyness, fear or aggression is to be severely penalized.*

#### **IMPORTANT JUDGING CONSIDERATIONS:**

Toy Aussies' heritage is as a herding dog (although they may never have herding opportunities) and should be considered as such above all else.

The degree to which a dog is penalized should depend upon the extent to which the dog deviates from the description of the standard sized Australian Shepherd.

The diminutive size should not detract from the type and structure of its ancestors.

General appearance should be that of a sturdy dog and must not appear to be either spindly or coarse.

The legs of the Toy Aussie should indicate strength and propelling power. Any indication of unsoundness in the legs and feet, front or rear, standing or moving, is to be considered a severe fault.

#### **Disqualifications:**

- *Undershot or overshot jaw greater than 1/16 inch.*

- *White body splashes, which means white on body between withers and tail, on sides between elbows and back of hindquarters in all colors.*

- *Monorchidism and Cryptorchidism.*

- *Viciousness.*

- *Lack of coat color around the eyes or ears. Any color other than recognized (Yellow / Sable /pattern whites)*

- *Under ten inches*

#### **Severe Faults:**

- *Unsoundness*

- *Overly timid or fearfulness*

- *Extreme domed head / Round protruding eyes*

- *Any coat texture that detracts from the impression of the Australian shepherd*

- *Round protruding eyes*

- *Hound ears*

- *Pacing / Crabbing*

- *Rolling across shoulders, back or hips*

**Faults:** - *Shallowness of the body, ranginess, lightness of bone, poor overall proportion*

- *Roach back, /soft top line - Lack of pigment around the eye rim*

- *Cow hocks /sickle hocks - Weak pasterns*

- *Straight shoulders - Chest disproportionately wide or narrow / lacking depth*

- *Lack of angulations - Gaily carried tail or tail exceeding 2 inches in length.*

- *Stilted gait - Lacking bottom jaw*

- *Hackney gait - Level bite*

- *Splay footedness / long toes*

- *Barrel hocks*