

# BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOGS

## (*Sennenhunde*)

The following is the standard description of the Bernese variety of Swiss Mountain Dogs, laid down and accepted by the Club for Bernese Mountain Dogs in Switzerland:—

- GENERAL APPEARANCE.** A well-balanced dog, active and alert; a combination of sagacity, fidelity and utility.
- HEIGHT . . .** Dogs 23 ins. to 27½ ins.; bitches 21 ins. to 26 ins. at shoulder.
- HEAD . . .** Skull flat, defined stop and strong muzzle. Dewlaps very slightly developed, flews not too pendulous, jaw strong with good, strong teeth. Eyes dark hazel-brown, full of fire. Ears V-shaped, set on high, not too pointed at tips and rather short. When in repose, hanging close to head; when alert, brought slightly forward and raised at base.
- BODY . . .** Rather short than too long in back, compact and well ribbed up. Chest broad with good depth of brisket. Loins strong and muscular.
- LEGS & FEET** Forelegs perfectly straight and muscular, thighs well developed and stifles well bent. Feet round and compact. Dewclaws should be removed.
- TAIL . . .** Of fair thickness and well covered with long hair, but not to form a flag; moderate length. When in repose, should be carried low, upward swirl permissible; when alert, may be carried gaily, but may never curl or be carried over back.
- COAT . . .** Soft and silky with bright, natural sheen; long and slightly wavy but may never curl.
- COLOUR AND MARKINGS .** Jet-black with russet-brown or deep tan markings on all four legs, a spot just above forelegs, each side of white chest markings and spots over eyes, which may never be missing. The brown on the forelegs must always be between the black and white.
- Preferable, but not a condition, are:—** White feet, tip of tail, pure white blaze up foreface, a few white hairs on back of neck, and white star-shaped markings on chest. When the latter markings are missing, it is *not* a disqualification.
- FAULTS . . .** Too massive in head, light or staring eyes, too heavy or long ears, too narrow or snipy muzzle, under or overshot mouth, pendulous dewlaps, too long or Setter-like body, splay or hare feet, tail curled or carried over back, cow-hocks and white legs.

### SCALE OF POINTS.

General Appearance	...	...	...	15
Size and Height	...	...	...	5
Head	...	...	...	15
Body	...	...	...	15
Legs and Feet	...	...	...	15
Tail	...	...	...	10
Coat	...	...	...	10
Colour and Markings	...	...	...	15
			Total	100

Accepted by:— **Klub für Berner Sennenhunde**

Translated by:—  
L. EGG-LEACH.

**ST. GALL & WINTERTHUR,**  
SWITZERLAND,  
1936.

## OFFICIAL AKC STANDARD FOR THE BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG (1980 version\*)

### BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG

**GENERAL APPEARANCE** - A sturdy, balanced, large, strong-boned dog. Intelligent and having an appearance of strength and agility suiting it to draft and droving work in mountainous regions. Dogs appear masculine, while bitches are distinctly feminine.

**HEAD** - Skull-flat and broad with a slight furrow and a well-defined, but not exaggerated stop. Muzzle-strong and straight. Dry mouthed. Teeth - strong; scissors bite; complete dentition. Serious fault: overshot or undershot bite. Ears - medium sized, triangular in shape, gently rounded at the tip, hanging close to the head when in repose, brought forward and raised at the base when alert. Eyes-dark brown, slightly oval in shape with close-fitting eyelids; expression intelligent, animated and gentle. Serious faults: inverted or everted eyelids. Disqualification: Blue eye.

**NECK AND BODY** - Neck-strong and muscular and of medium length. Back-broad and firm. Topline level from withers to croup. Chest-deep and capacious with well-sprung ribs and brisket reaching at least to the elbows. Body-nearly square with over-all body length measuring slightly greater than height at the withers. Loin-strong. Croup-broad and smoothly rounded to tail insertion.

**FOREQUARTERS** - Shoulders-moderately laid back, flatlying, well muscled, never loose. Forelegs-straight and strong with the elbows well under the shoulders. Pasterns slightly sloping without weakness. Feet round and compact with well-arched toes. Declaws may be removed from front legs.

**HINDQUARTERS** - Thighs-broad, strong and muscular. Stifles-moderately bent, tapering smoothly into hocks. Hocks-well let down and straight as viewed from the rear. Dewclaws should be removed from rear legs. Tail-Bushy. Bone reaching to the hock joint or below. When in repose, tail should be carried low, upward swirl permissible when alert. May be carried gaily, but may never curl or be carried over the back. Fault: Kink in tail. Coat - Thick, moderately long, slight wavy or straight, with a bright natural sheen.

**COLOR AND MARKINGS** - Tri-color: jet black ground color with rich rust and clear white markings. Nose always black. Markings (symmetry desired): Rust: over each eye; on cheeks, preferably reaching at least to the corner of the mouth; on each side of chest; on all four legs; under tail. White: blaze and muzzle-band; chest marking, typically forming an inverted cross; feet; tip of tail. Faults: Markings other than as described to be faulted in direct relationship to the extent of the deviation. Serious faults: White legs; white collars. Disqualifications: any ground color other than black.

**GAIT** - Natural working gait is slow trot, but capable of speed and agility in keeping with use in draft and droving work. Good reach in front. Powerful drive from the rear transmitted through a level back. No wasted action. Front and hind legs on each side follow through in the same plane. At increased speed, legs tend to converge toward the center line.

**HEIGHT** - Dogs: 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ " to 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ " at the withers. Bitches: 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ " to 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ " at the withers.

**TEMPERAMENT** - Self-confident, alert and good-natured. Never sharp or shy. A dog which will not stand for examination shall be dismissed from the ring.

### DISQUALIFICATIONS

Blue eye color.

Any ground color other than black.

Approved July 8, 1980

\*Please note the AKC breed standard for Bernese Mountain Dogs was updated in 1989. The 1980 version shown above is presented for historical documentation purposes.