

# **KEESHOND CLUB OF NSW**

## **AN ILLUSTRATED EXTENDED BREED STANDARD**



*Based upon the standard approved by the  
Australian National Kennel Council*



## POINTS FOR AND AGAINST

A Keeshond must:

- Be bold, alert and confident
- Have no daylight visible in tail carriage (between tail and body) when forming a silhouette of the body
- Have ivy shaped ears
- Have dark almond eyes
- Have spectacles
- Have a black tip on the end of the tail
- Have cat-like feet
- Have cream pasterns

It is **desirable** to have:

- A double curl on tail
- A hook on end of tail

A Keeshond **must not**:

- Be black on rear pasterns (puppies permissible, pasterns must have cream as adults)
- Be black below the elbow (pencilling of feet and pencilling to elbow tolerated)
- Be aggressive in nature
- Be trimmed or coloured

## REFERENCE BOOKS

**The Keeshond**

**The Complete Keeshond**

**The New Complete Keeshond**

**My Life With Keeshonden**

**The Keeshond**

**Keeshond**

**Keeshonden**

*by Alice Gatacre*

*by Clementine Peterson*

*by Carol and Ron Cash*

*by Gwendolen Wingfield-Digby*

*by Anna Katherine Nicholas*

*by Martin Weil*

*by Joe Stahlkuppe*

## BREED STANDARD OF THE KEESHOND

### General Appearance

Short, compact body, confident carriage. Foxlike head with small, pointed ears, alert expression, large ruff, well feathered tail curled over back.

### Characteristics

Sturdy, intelligent and adaptable, ideal companion, good guard, shows boldly.

### Temperament

Bold, alert, friendly with marked guarding tendency.

### Head & Skull

Well proportioned, wedge shaped when seen from above; from side showing definite stop. Dark muzzle equal to length of flat skull. Neither coarse nor snipey. Nose black.

### Eyes

Dark, medium size, almond shaped, obliquely set. Well defined 'spectacles' shown as a delicately pencilled black line slanting from outer corner of eye to lower corner of ear, coupled with distinct marking and shading forming expressive short eye-brows.

### Ears

Dark, small, ivy-leaf in shape. Erect, velvety texture. Well set on head, neither too wide nor meeting.

### Mouth

Jaws strong, with a perfect, regular and complete scissor bite, ie: the upper teeth closely overlapping the lower teeth and set square to the jaws. Lips black.

### Neck

Moderately long and arched, covered with thick, profuse coat forming large ruff.

### Forequarters

Shoulders well sloped. Straight front of medium width with good bone.

### Body

Short, compact, length from withers to tail equal to height at withers. Well sprung in rib. Good depth of brisket.

### Hindquarters

Strong, muscled, hind legs straight when viewed from behind. Hock showing slight angulation when viewed from side, profuse light coloured trousers down to hocks.

### Feet

Well padded, round, cat-like, tight, cream in colour, black nails

### Tail

Moderately long, high set, tightly curled over back, double curl highly desirable. Light plume on top where curled, with black tip, carried closely at all times.

### Gait/movement

Clean, brisk, straight and sharp.

### Coat

Harsh off standing, straight, dense ruff, well feathered on forelegs and profuse trousers, not feathered below hock. Soft, thick light-coloured (not tawny) undercoat. Never silky, wavy or woolly, nor forming a parting on back.

### Colour

A mixture of grey and black. Undercoat very pale grey or cream (not tawny). All shades of grey acceptable, body hairs black tipped. Shoulder markings well defined and all markings definite. Forelegs and hocks cream with no black below wrist or hock. Pencilling accepted.

### Size

Ideal height dogs: 45.7 cm (18 inches); Bitches: 43.2 cm (17 inches)

### Faults

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness which with the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree.

*Note: male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.*

## ASPIRING TO JUDGE TO THE BREED STANDARD

The aim of anyone aspiring to judge the breed is to judge to the Breed Standard, in the pursuit of the ideal and most typical specimen of the breed.

It is widely acknowledged that it is highly unlikely that you will ever find one single dog that is correct in every point of the standard. The object of any good judge is to find the dog that has the most correct points according to the breed standard. Therefore, your judging will include priorities and compromises in decision making. All dogs, even the best, have faults. Your ultimate aim as a judge is to assess the exhibit presented to you and add up its virtues and its faults.

It is therefore incumbent upon every judge to know and understand the Breed Standard as approved by the ANKC and judge to it. It is essential to have an understanding of soundness, structure and correct breed type.

Hopefully this illustrated breed standard will assist you in understanding the essence of true Keeshond breed type, in the pursuit of that perfect specimen.

### SUGGESTED METHOD OF EVALUATING THE POINTS OF THE BREED STANDARD

#### ***Stand the dog in a four square position***

1. Visually assess the general appearance, overall balance and presentation of the dog. Qualities to look for at this initial assessment include: compactness of body, with correct length of leg giving a square outline. Good conformation, with a good reach of neck, short back and high tail set. Coat colour, definition of markings and texture.
2. View the dog from the front. Determine that the front legs are straight and that the elbows and feet turn neither in nor out.
3. View the dog from the rear. Determine that the rear pasterns are straight, hocks not inclined to turn either in or out.
4. The hock joint should show a slight angulation to the foot when viewed from the side.
5. Approach the dog from the front. Examine the head. The head should appear wedge shaped when viewed from above – hold the ears gently down to the skull to assess this. When viewed from the side, a clearly defined stop should be visible. The ears should be small and well set on the head. The eyes, dark, almond shaped and the essential 'spectacles' clearly defined. Check the mouth, ensure that the teeth are clean and healthy, and that there is a correct scissor bite with the top teeth neatly overlapping the lower teeth.

**Forelegs and hocks cream with no black below wrist or hock. Pencilling acceptable**

The forelegs and the rear metatarsals must be a light cream in colour and free from noticeable blemishes. Black smudge marks, like thumb prints, sometimes seen on the front legs are unacceptable, as are black hairs on the rear metatarsals, which can sometimes be seen forming a black line down them. Black marks on the feet are also unacceptable. Light pencilling marks (a faint black line) sometimes found on the forelegs are not penalised.

## SIZE

### ***Ideal height***

***Dogs 45.7 centimetres (18 inches).***

***Bitches 43.2 centimetres (17 inches)***

This statement is very important. The sizes stated are the *ideal sizes given that all other factors are equal*. Clearly however, an exhibit should not be placed over another purely on size, especially so if one is more correct in breed type, regardless of being either a little smaller or larger than the ideal.

## COLOUR

***A mixture of grey and black. Undercoat very pale grey or cream (not tawny). All shades of grey acceptable. Body hairs black tipped. Shoulder markings well defined and all markings definite. Forelegs and hocks cream with no black below wrist or hock. Pencilling acceptable.***

### **A mixture of grey and black**

Correctly coloured and marked in accordance with the Breed Standard the Keeshond is a strikingly handsome creature. The Standard is quite explicit on the subject of colour. The correct outer-coat colour should be a mixture of grey and black: no cream, nor yellow or solid black but a mixture of black and grey contrasts.

### **Undercoat very pale grey or cream (not tawny)**

As stated in the previous section on coat, only a pale grey or a light cream coloured undercoat is acceptable. A tawny coloured (brownish-yellow or tan coloured) undercoat is totally incorrect.

### **All shades of grey acceptable, body hairs black tipped. Shoulder markings well defined and all markings definite**

It does not matter if the dog is light silver, medium grey or dark grey, that is up to individual preference, providing that the distinctive coat markings are clearly defined.

The outer hairs of the body are black tipped, the base of each hair being creamy at the root and the length of the black tips varying on each individual hair. It is this complex shading to the outercoat which gives the contrasts and depth of colour characteristic to the breed.

The dark head with its pretty markings is set off by the light coloured ruff which surrounds it. The body coat is dark, with a clearly defined shoulder marking breaking up the pattern of the coat, so that the main part of the body coat appears to have a very distinct saddle marking. The trousers and the tail are light in colour and the tail should have a black tip. All markings should be clearly defined and not blend into each other.

6. Feel the lay of shoulders and the angulation between the scapula and humerus, to determine that the dog is not upright in shoulder. Examine the neck, which should be well arched and strong. The front legs should have good bone and the feet 'cat-like' with black nails. Check that the pasterns are flexible but strong.
7. Examine the body using both hands and eyes. Feel that the chest is deep and comes down to the elbows. Placing a hand on either side of the rib cage, feel that the ribs are well sprung and that the chest is not narrow. The palm of your hand should be able to touch the brisket comfortably when inserted between the front legs.
8. Check that the back is short, strong and that the dog is not carrying too much weight.
9. Feel the loins to determine that they are strong and well muscled.
10. If a male, check that both testicles are fully descended.
11. Examine the tail. It should be moderately long, high set and tightly curled over the back with a black tip. The end of the tail should just catch around the fingers when run through the hand. Do not attempt to straighten the tail out.
12. Check that the dog has a wealth of undercoat, which should be pale grey or cream in colour. The outer coat should be harsh, straight and off standing. Any tendency to a curly coat, especially down the centre of the back being incorrect. Check the texture of the coat by running it through your fingers. The front legs should be well feathered and the hindquarters should carry profuse trousers down to the hocks. Ensure that the outer coat is of the correct colour and markings as defined in the Breed Standard.
13. To determine that the dog is moving with the correct brisk Keeshond gait, send him away from you in a straight line and to return on the same line. This will display both his front and rear movement and allow you to determine if he is moving straight and true in front, and whether he is strong or weak in rear movement. Also if he is displaying any incorrect crab-like action. Move the dog in a triangle in order to see side movement which should be clean, brisk and straight, without signs of any hackney-like front action due to excessive reach or drive.

## HISTORY OF THE KEESHOND

It is not known when the Keeshond first made its appearance in Holland, but it is generally supposed that his ancestors came in on the barges carrying timber and coal from various parts of Germany. The Keeshond had been a favourite dog of the Dutch for several hundred years, but it took a national political turnover in Holland in the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century to bring the breed to wide attention.

Never a hunter, and never used for any of the specialised forms of work that have characterised so many other breeds, the Keeshond had managed by the very force of his personality to win a high place in the affections of a nation.



The events leading up to the recognition of the Keeshond as the national dog of Holland were concerned with the social unrest that seemed to be spreading throughout the world in the years immediately preceding the French Revolution. Holland was divided into two great camps, the Prinsgezinden or partisans of the Prince of Orange, and the Patriotten or Patriots.

The Patriots, consisting principally of the people of the lower and upper middle classes, were led by a man named Cornelius de Gyselaer, who lived in Dordrecht (Cornelius is commonly shortened to Kees, pronounced Kayz or Case). Like most of his countrymen, de Gyselaer was a dog lover, and at the time he owned a little dog that he called Kees. This dog gave the breed its name, for it became the symbol of the Patriots. It appeared in countless pictures and cartoons made in those days of civil strife. The men who composed the party were firmly of the opinion that their own spirit was typified in the dog - He was a dog of the people.

History is rather vague as to what name the Keeshond bore prior to its adoption as a symbol by the Patriots, but it was known mainly as the "barge dog". The breed had



*A Keeshond Dog in full coat*

Note: Bitches carry a smaller coat than males. Trimming of dogs/bitches is not permitted.

As early as 1905, Mrs Wingfield-Digby introduced the Keeshond to England. Mrs Wingfield-Digby had discovered the breed on Dutch barges during a visit there, but at the time she thought them just cross-breeds. It was not until she imported a pair and bred them that she realised they were too true-to-type to be mere mongrels. However they were first exhibited as "Overweight Pomeranians" up until 1916, at which time the Kennel Club withdrew Challenge Certificates for "Overweights". At that time an Overweight weighed between 7 & 13 Kg's (16-30 lbs.). The breed was not officially heard of again until 1920. It was 1925 when the breed was registered under the name "Dutch Barge Dog". The Dutch Barge Dog Club was formed in October of that year with Mrs Wingfield Digby as the President and Hon. Secretary. In 1926 the name was changed to The Keeshond Club, and enjoyed a strong membership of 206, with 45 registered breeders.

The breed was accepted for registration by the American Kennel Club in 1930, and early development in that country, with few exceptions, was based on imports from England.

The Keeshond made its way to Australia in 1949 when Mrs C. Bourne emigrated from England with four of her dogs in tow - *Ch Valies of Vorden*, *Ch Airking of Arnhem*, *Babette of Willoden* and *Airamber of Arnhem*. Keeshonden were first exhibited at Sydney Royal Show in 1952, and Melbourne Royal Show in 1954. The breed slipped into obscurity for a few years until Keeshond Club's in both NSW and Victoria (respectively) were founded in 1967. The Keeshond Club of South Australia was formed in 1990 (and affiliated with the South Australia Canine Association in 1997) and there are hopes for a National Breed Council some time in the near future..

Over the years many imports have been introduced to continue strengthening and widening Australia's relatively limited gene pool. Early imports included those from the Van Zaandam, Duroya, Gavimir, Vandaban, Waakzaam and Keesland lines. Recent times have seen new lines from the USA, England, Canada and New Zealand reaching our shores, and with AI technology we have also seen Frozen Semen come into use. Australian breeders have also successfully exported the Keeshonden to Canada, Sweden & New Zealand. Semen from Australia has been sent to the UK & Sweden.

## AGES & STAGES OF KEESHOND DEVELOPMENT

### Birth to 3 months

Keeshonds are generally born black, with smooth coats and straight tails. Within a few hours of birth, spectacles, flashings and other markings become apparent. Over the next three months, the Keeshond further develops its spectacles, shoulder markings, lighter ruff and other characteristically Keeshond markings. Undercoat begins to develop, ears begin to stand up, and the tail starts to form over the back of the puppy. At 8 weeks, the colour and conformation of the pup can point towards what it will have as an adult.

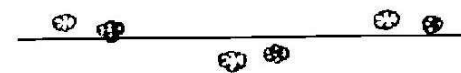
### 3 to 5 months

At three months, the Keeshond enters the show ring as a gorgeous, silver/grey silver/black puppy. Very soon afterwards, the change begins (commonly referred to as



*Correct Side Movement*

Keeshonds should double track, which means that their feet fall on either side of a centreline of travel. Because they have a barrel chest, the front and rear legs do not move on the same plane. Foot prints left by the front feet should be slightly wider than those left by the rear feet.



On the forward movement (coming towards you) you should see straight legs converging slightly towards a centre point. The faster the dog goes, the more the legs converge. Pasterns should be firm, showing a moderate amount of bend in motion, which helps prevent jarring to the rest of the front leg assembly. Elbows should be close to the body – the movement is straight and clean.

Viewed from behind, the rear legs, parallel at a stand, should converge to the same degree as the front legs in motion. The legs should be straight from the hip to the toes, not hocking or toeing in or out. Remember that the feet are landing on either side of a centre line of travel. The pad of the foot should be seen when the rear leg is extended backward. The front legs should be barely visible, staying directly in front of the rear legs. That is, the body should not be crabbing or moving in a sideways motion.

## COAT

***Harsh, off standing, straight. Dense ruff, well feathered on forelegs and profuse trousers, not feathered below hock. Soft, thick, light coloured (not tawny) undercoat. Never silky, wavy or woolly, nor forming a parting down the back.***

### **Harsh, off standing, straight**

The body should be covered by a profuse double coat, consisting of a thick, soft, downy undercoat through which grows an outercoat of long, straight, harsh hair, varying in length on the ruff, trousers and tail

### **Dense ruff, well feathered on forelegs and profuse trousers, not feathered below hock**

The body coat should develop into a luxuriant ruff around the neck, sweeping from under the jaw and covering the whole of the shoulders, as well as the front part of the chest.

The legs should be covered in short, smooth hair, except for feathering on the back of the front legs and the profuse trousers on the rear legs, reaching down to, but not past, the hock joints.

### **Soft, thick, light coloured (not tawny) undercoat**

An important characteristic of the breed is its double coat. The abundant undercoat should be either a very pale grey or the colour of fresh cream. Both being acceptable as long as they remain pale in colour and the cream tones do not verge on the undesirable tawny (brownish-yellow or tan coloured).

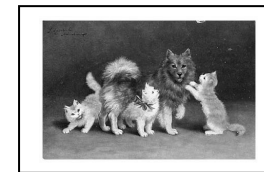
### **Never silky, wavy or woolly, nor forming a parting on the back**

As previously stated, the outercoat should consist of long, straight, harsh hair which grows out through the undercoat and stands away from the body. A coat which is either soft, silky or woolly in texture is incorrect. Likewise if it has a wave or a curl to it, then it is also wrong. A coat which forms a parting down the back of the dog can be caused by a number of factors, such as the dog being out of coat and lacking the depth of undercoat to support the outercoat hairs, or the outercoat being either too long or too soft in texture.

served for countless years on the Rijnaken, or small vessels that were found in great numbers on the Rhine River. These vessels seldom were larger than 200 tons at the time when the Keeshond enjoyed its greatest popularity in Holland, and thus consequently would not accommodate a very large dog. Although there were probably more of this breed of dog kept as pets and watchdogs in homes and on farms than there were dogs on the barges, it was only natural that the dogs of the barges became better known, for they were continually moving up and down the river, and came in contact with more people as a result.

The genesis of the Keeshond is Arctic, or possibly Sub-Arctic, and it is of the same strain that produced the Samoyed, the Chow Chow, the Norwegian Elkhound, the Finnish Spitz, and the Pomeranian. It is believed to be most closely related to the Pomeranian. Some authorities believe that selective breeding of the Keeshond produced the Pomeranian.

The Keeshond has changed little in the past two centuries, for the earliest descriptions represent it as nearly identical with the dog of today. There are also a number of old paintings and drawings that prove how well the old Keeshond type has been preserved. A drawing, made in 1794, shows the children and the dog of a burgomaster mourning beside his tomb. The dog clearly resembles today's Keeshonden. Other evidence is found in the paintings of that famous Dutch artist, Jan Steen.



The nexus between the Keeshond and the Patriots in the latter part of the 18th century almost proved the dog's undoing. He was so much in the public eye as the symbol of the Patriots that when the Prince of Orange established his party as the dominant one, few people wanted the dog that stood for the opposition. Many who owned Keeshonden disposed of them quietly; and only the most loyal maintained the breed. At this time, the type of vessel used on the rivers gradually changed. Each year they seemed to get larger, until eventually, they were quite pretentious and had plenty of room for large dogs. This change affected the popularity of the Keeshond considerably.

The breed was at its lowest point of popularity until 1920, at which time the Baroness van Hardenbroek became so interested in the old breed that she undertook an investigation to see how much of the old stock still survived. The results of this search were very surprising. Whereas the breed had passed from public attention, it was still kept in its original form by certain captains of riverboats, by farmers, and by truckmen. There were many excellent specimens. Some owners had even maintained their own crude stud books. The Baroness began breeding Keeshonden and spread their story throughout Europe. Within ten years she brought the breed to such a solid position that the Dutch Keeshond Club was established, and in 1933, De Raad van Beheer op Kynologisch Gebeid in Nederland accepted the standard for judging the breed.



## GAIT/MOVEMENT

### ***Clean, brisk, straight and sharp***

The short, sharp, brisk and precise movement is very distinctive and typical of the breed. The sprightly action giving the impression that the dog is very light on its feet.

#### **Front Movement**

Coming towards you, a correctly moving Keeshond will move in a straight line with the front legs almost as parallel as when the dog is standing to attention. There should be no tendency for the dog to either toe-in, or throw its elbows or feet out



*Correct front movement*

#### **Rear Movement**

Travelling away from you, the correctly built Keeshond will again exhibit a clean straight action. There should be no sign of the hocks either turning outwards in a cow-hocked fashion, coming together, or crossing over each other when the dog is moving.



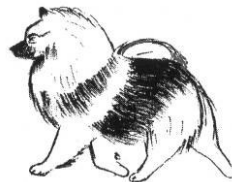
*Correct rear movement*

The rear pasterns should remain parallel to each other, similarly to when the dog is standing still, and because the movement should be sharp and brisk, excessive drive is not essential nor wanted.

#### **Side Movement**

When viewed in profile the short, brisk movement can be seen to full advantage.

The front movement is short and brisk, the front legs extending forwards enough to clear them from the rear legs. As one front leg extends forwards, the rear leg on the same side extends backwards. The opposite front and rear legs move inwards and under the dog, converging at its centre of gravity. There should be no signs of excessive reach or a hackney-like front action, nor excessive drive from the rear legs.



*Incorrect Side Movement*

the "monkeys" or "uglies") and the Keeshond becomes awkward looking - fronts loosen, backs sway, rears look too high, bodies lengthen. The coat goes soft and fuzzy all over and takes on a pale cream colour with no distinct markings. Coat can be quite short at this time, although some pups can maintain a longer coat during this stage. Facial markings can be diluted at this time, with spectacles often disappearing and the black muzzle becoming specked with grey.

During this stage, Keeshonds start to lose their baby teeth and the adult teeth begin to emerge. During this stage, mouths can be very sore, and the Keeshond may present as "shy" during this time. Mouthing of puppies must be done very carefully at this time.

#### **5 to 7 Months**

This is the period in which the Keeshond has a spurt in growth and development. The new coat begins to push through the soft undercoat, and the dark saddle takes shape over the back. Shoulder flashings re-appear and there is a profuse amount of coat on the neck (referred to as the 'mane'). Coat grows on the rear of hind legs ('trousers') and the tail.

The pup can still be teething at this stage, and can still maintain some of its awkwardness and cream colouring.

#### **8 to 10 months**

At this stage, the Keeshond has generally finished growing in height. The body of the Keeshond will have deepened a little, but full development can sometimes be slow, and it is not uncommon for a Keeshond to take 2 to 3 years to fully mature. The Keeshond will generally have tightened up by this age, and the majority of the adult coat will be through (often with baby coat still seen around the ears). The black muzzle and spectacles will have reappeared. Many pups at this age are essentially "themselves" by this age (although the head of the Keeshond is often still developing).

#### **Adult Keeshond**

The head of the Keeshond can still change after reaching the adult stage (it will thicken and grow more mature). Some Keeshonds mature at an early age and others may not reach full maturity (including weight) until 2 - 3 years of age.

The muzzle of an adult should be dark black, with grey sometimes appearing around the lips (milk mouth) depending on the breeding behind the dog. The eyes are dark and almond in shape, with the spectacles being the dark line from the corner of the eye to the outer corner of the ear, with lighter shading around the eye. As they grow older, the Keeshond coat tends to darken gradually. Lighter coloured tail, ruff, legs, shoulders and trousers make the Keeshond a showy dog.

Keeshonds keep their looks, agility and intelligence to an advanced age - often to mid teens and beyond. They are hardy and disease resistant.

# THE EXTENDED STANDARD

## GENERAL APPEARANCE

**Short, compact body, confident carriage. Foxlike head with small pointed ears, alert expression, large ruff, well feathered tail over back.**



### Short, compact body

A Keeshond should never be long in body. It should present a square, compact outline when standing.

### Confident carriage

Recognises that a keeshond should be alert and self assured. Never slinky, sulky or cowardly (as an adult).

### Foxlike head

This statement is somewhat misleading. The head of a Keeshond when viewed from above should be a clean wedge shape. Unlike that of a fox which narrows in front of the eyes, into the muzzle.

### Small pointed ears

Indicates that the ears must not be overly large or prominent and, if correctly shaped, will be pointed at the tips.

### Alert expression

One of the most endearing attributes of the breed is the alert and intelligent expression of a typical Keeshond face.

### Large ruff

The coat should be profuse around the neck, shoulders and forechest area, forming a distinctive ruff.

### Well feathered tail curled over back

Indicates a richly plumed tail with a double curl (highly desirable), which when correctly set, forms an integral part of the overall silhouette of a Keeshond.

## TAIL

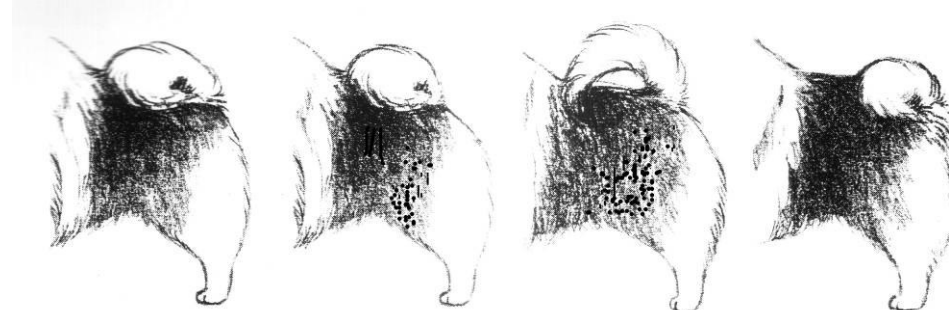
**Moderately long, high set, tightly curled over back, double curl highly desirable. Light plume on top where curled, with black tip, carried closely at all times.**

**Moderately long, high set, tightly curled over back, double curl highly desirable**

The set of the tail is very important. It must be right up on the back and not just above the anus. If the tail is correctly set so that it appears to be growing upwards from its base, it can curl freely over the back. In profile there should be little space showing between the ruff and the tail.

If incorrectly set so that the tail appears to grow out backwards from its base, it can never be carried correctly. The double curl refers to the fact that the tip is curled under, and the main part of the tail curled over the back.

Taken literally however, this could be misinterpreted to mean a double curl in the form of a very tight knot at the end of the back, which would not be compatible with the correct outline.



*Correct Tail Set - High, close to back*

*Correct but trimmed*

*Incorrect, loose curl not close to back*

*Low Tail Set*

**Light plume on top where curled, with black tip, carried closely at all times**

A rich, light almost cream coloured plume is essential, as is a black tip to the end of the tail. The tail should be carried curled tight to the back, and at all times appear to be part of the dog and not a separate appendage. The plume should form an integral part of the overall silhouette of the dog, fitting closely to the body.

## FEET

**Well padded, round, cat-like, tight, cream in colour, black nails.**

**Well padded, round, cat-like, tight**

The toes should be well arched with thick pads to cushion the feet. The individual toes should fit tightly together so that each foot is compact and similar in shape to the foot of a cat. Feet may be trimmed to tidy them up and emphasise the 'catlike' shape, for the show ring.

Splayed feet, where the toes do not fit tightly together, are incorrect, as are hare feet, where the two middle toes on each foot are longer and extend out past the other two.



Correct catlike foot



Incorrect Hare shaped foot



Incorrect splayed foot

**Cream in colour, black nails**

The feet should be cream in colour, not white, and without any black tick marks or smudging, although a little black around the outside of puppies feet is permissible. The nails should be black not white or cream.

All nails should be present, although some breeders do prefer to have the dew claw on the inside of each front leg removed on puppies, and this is acceptable practice. Occasionally dew-claws are also found on hind legs, these should also be removed.

## CHARACTERISTICS & TEMPERAMENT

*Note: both characteristics and temperament will be discussed together.*

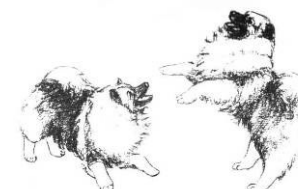
**Sturdy, intelligent and adaptable, ideal companion, good guard, shows boldly. Bold, alert, friendly with marked guarding tendency.**

For centuries the role of the Keeshond has traditionally been that of a companion dog, however at the same time making them an excellent watchdog. They are invariably extremely friendly to everyone they meet and most especially so to their immediate family, being particularly good with children. It is probably the wonderful character of the breed which endears them to their owners.

The Keeshond is a creature of fine spirits, and good even temperament, without tendency towards nervousness or timidity. Neither should they show any inclination of aggressiveness towards humans.

The Keeshond is the most adaptable dog, readily responding to training of all kinds, whether it be for obedience work, guide dogs, agility training or just as a companion.

Keeshonden make good ratters and are very fast over a short distance.



## HEAD AND SKULL

***Well proportioned to the body, wedge shaped when seen from above, from side showing definite stop. Dark muzzle equal to length of flat skull. Neither coarse nor snihey. Nose black.***

**Well proportioned to the body, wedge shaped when seen from above**

The head must be well proportioned when viewed from above showing the correct balance of muzzle to skull length in a clean wedge shape.

When the ears are drawn back by covering both ears and the nape of the neck with one hand, the whole head – not just the muzzle, must give the impression of a wedge shape when viewed from above, being broadest at the base of the skull and tapering gradually to the nose. There should be no indication of obvious cheeks or hollows beneath the eyes.

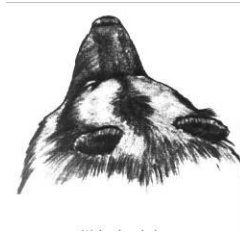
The wedge shape must not appear so heavy as to make the head look clumsy, nor so narrow as to appear fine or snihey. A finer head on bitches is acceptable.

### **From side showing definite stop**

When viewed in profile, the head should show a clearly defined stop. The stop (the bridge of the nose) should not be so weak as to be barely discernable and 'collie like' nor, however, does this statement indicate that it should be so acute as to be a 90° angle.

**Dark muzzle equal to length of flat skull. Neither coarse nor snihey. Nose black**

In order for the head to be correctly balanced, the length of the muzzle and that of the skull (the area from the stop to the occiput) must be equal. If the muzzle is too short the head will appear coarse, too long and it will look snihey. Therefore, the muzzle must be the same length as the skull, tapering out and widening gradually into the jaws, cleanly and smoothly to complete the desired wedge shape.



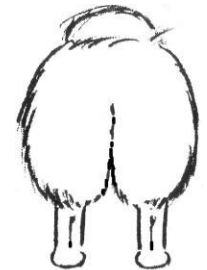
There should be a slight but definite 'tuck up' at the stomach area, giving the effect of a waistline and emphasising the depth of brisket. A Keeshond should always appear to be slightly heavier at the front than behind.

## HINDQUARTERS

***Strong muscled, hind legs straight when viewed from behind. Hock showing slight angulation when viewed from side, profuse light coloured trousers down to hocks.***

**Strong muscled, hind legs straight when viewed from behind**

As with the front legs, the hind legs should be sturdy, but in proportion with the overall dog. The hind legs should be straight when viewed from behind, with the rear pasterns (metatarsals) perfectly upright and parallel to each other. There should be no tendency for the rear feet to turn either in or out.



*Correct when viewed from rear*

### **Hock showing slight angulation when viewed from side**

A slight angulation of the hock joint to the foot is essential to ensure that the rear movement is not stiff or stilted such as that of a Chow Chow.

There is no mention in the standard of the correct length of rear pastern required. A long rear pastern can mean weak hind movement, a medium length rear pastern being preferable. As a general measure, the hock should be 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the height of the dog.

### **Profuse light coloured trousers down to the hocks**

The rear legs should be covered in profuse light coloured hair, forming the shape of 'breeches' or trousers. The trousers should reach down to the hock joints and not past them. For show purposes, the hair on the back of the rear pasterns is generally trimmed short and parallel to tidy up its appearance.

## BODY

**Short, compact, length from withers to tail equal to height at withers. Well sprung in rib. Good depth of brisket.**

**Short, compact, length from withers to tail equal to height at withers**

As breeders, we strive to breed Keeshonds with short and compact bodies. However, we must take care not to allow our desire for a short back to be achieved at the expense of correct shoulder angulation. All too often a very short back can be accompanied by upright shoulders.



*Correct square outline*

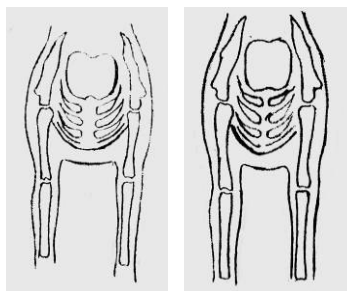
The Standard calls for 'length from withers to tail equal to height at withers' when it gives us a guide as to the correct body length to leg height ratio required for good overall balance.

The back should be firm without any tendency to a dipping topline. The topline should be level, although a slight slope downwards from withers to rump is considered MOST desirable. Highly undesirable is a slope in the opposite direction, upwards from withers to rump.

**Well sprung in rib. Good depth of brisket**

The compact body should be well rounded right through the full length of the ribcage from behind the shoulders. A broad chest deep enough to reach the elbows, with a good depth of brisket essential, giving plenty of heart and lung room.

A clearly defined sternum should be apparent when your hand is placed between both front legs. Otherwise there may be insufficient width between the front legs, which would be detrimental to front movement.



*Correct Ribcage, well rounded*

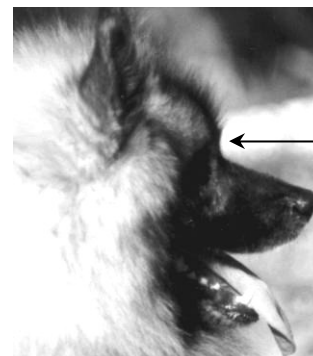
*Incorrect ribcage, too narrow*

The skull should be relatively flat. A round skull or 'apple head', particularly when combined with a very abrupt stop, is highly undesirable.

The full depth of the muzzle should be a balance of two thirds upper jaw, and one third lower jaw, with the two of the same length giving a definite chin, which helps to give the essential expression of a Keeshond.

The muzzle should be covered in dark, almost black hair, ending at the foreface in a semi-circle shape under each eye. The dark of the muzzle usually fades into a soft tapering line, up between the eyes and over the skull, between the ears.

The nose, like the eye-rims and the lips, should be fully pigmented black.



Definite "Stop"

## EYES

**Dark, medium size, almond shaped, obliquely set. Well defined "spectacles" shown as a delicately pencilled black line slanting from outer corner of eye to lower corner of ear, coupled with distinct marking and shading forming expressive short eyebrows.**



Almond Eye



Round Eye

### **Dark, medium size, almond shaped, obliquely set**

The eyes should be dark in colour; ideally almost black. Light, amber coloured eyes are both unattractive and undesirable.

The statement 'medium size' recognises that the eyes should be neither too large and round, nor too small and beady, both of which are untypical and deter from the attractive expression of the breed.

Almond shaped and obliquely set means exactly that. The eyes should be oval in shape rather like an almond and slightly tilting upwards at the outermost corners. They should not be prominent or round. Round eyes or any inclination towards a rounder or fuller eye shape is undesirable. Eyes should not be set too close together as this gives a mean expression.

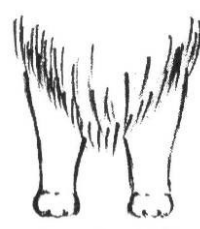
Eye rims, like the nose and lips should be black. Light eye rims are unattractive and deter from the overall expression.

### **Straight front of medium width with good bone.**

Forelegs must be straight when viewed from any angle when standing. The forelegs should come down in a perfectly straight column to the pasterns. Pasterns should be firm and slightly sloping to accommodate the typical Keeshond 'spring and bounce'. Feet should point forwards at all times, turning neither in nor out.

As the standard stipulates, the front should be of 'medium width'. Ideally, the width between the forelegs should be such that one could comfortably fit ones hand into the space and feel the brisket with the palm of one hand.

'Good bone' means exactly that. This statement does not mean that you should expect to find bone which would not look out of place on a Chow Chow, nor are fine, spindly legs acceptable. Preferably the bone should be good, round and **in proportion with the overall dog**.



*Good Front of medium width*



*Incorrect, too narrow in front*



*Incorrect, "fiddle front" not feet turn outwards*



*Incorrect, feet turn inwards*

## FOREQUARTERS

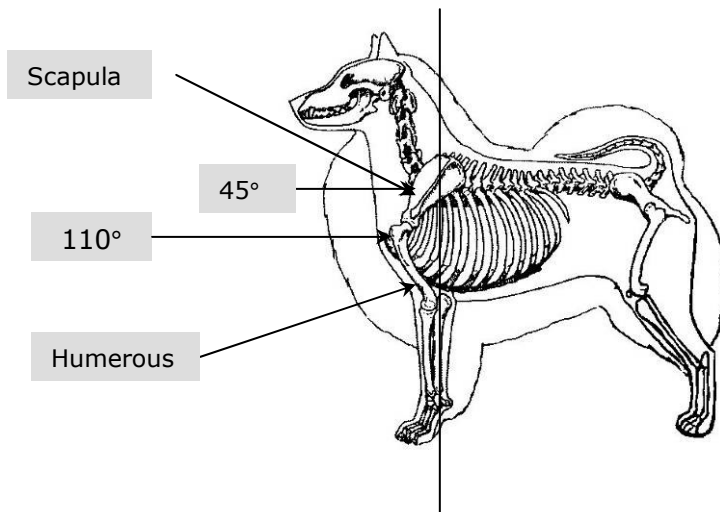
***Shoulders well sloped. Straight front of medium width with good bone.***

### **Shoulders well sloped**

Ideally, the shoulders of a Keeshond should be well sloped. The angle of the Scapula (shoulder blade) being approximately 45° to the vertical and 110° to the humerus (upper arm).

The length of the scapula and humerus should be approximately equal. Too short a humerus would alter the angle between it and the scapula, causing the dog to be too upright in shoulder. Often upright shoulders, will also result in the dog having the appearance of too little neck.

The shoulder, upper arm, and foreleg should be the same length; as are hip bone and upper thigh. While standing the Keeshond should not have totally upright pasterns, nor should they have a great slant to them. A perpendicular line dropped from the top of the withers to the floor, should touch the back of the elbow. This shows that the dog not only has proper bone length, but also has the proper layback of shoulder.

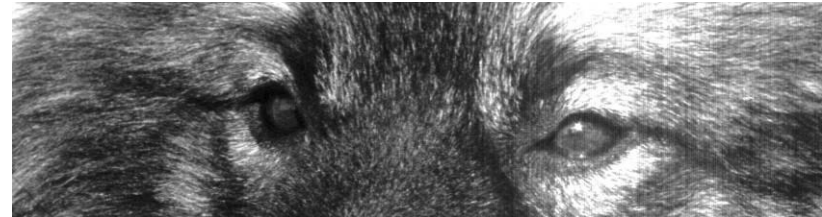


**Well defined "spectacles" shown as a delicately pencilled black line slanting from outer corner of eye to lower corner of ear, coupled with distinct marking and shading forming expressive short eyebrows**

The essential "spectacle" markings are a most attractive and unique feature of the breed.

There is a common misconception that the spectacles are the round, lighter shaded areas, which surround the eyes. The desired expression is, in fact, achieved by correct spectacles, a delicately pencilled line, running from the outer corner of the eye, travelling slightly upward, to the outer corner of the ear.

This is combined with distinct dark markings, forming short but expressive eyebrows just above the eyes, and paler shading under the eye.



The expression of a Keeshond is largely dependant upon correct eye shape, size, colour, placement, and the distinctive 'spectacle' markings. It cannot be overstressed how important a feature of the breed correct 'spectacles' are. They must be clearly defined on both light and dark coloured dogs alike.

The "spectacle" line



## EARS

**Dark, Small, ivy-leaf in shape, erect, velvety texture. Well set on head, neither too wide nor meeting.**

**Dark, small, ivy-leaf in shape, erect, velvety texture**

The shape of the ears, their size, placement and colour all play an important part in obtaining the correct, alert expression of the breed.

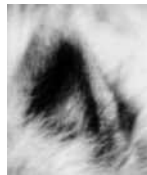
The ears should be dark in colour, almost black and covered in short, soft hair, feeling almost like velvet to the touch. Light coloured ears and thickly coated ears are undesirable.

The ears should be small, but still a prominent part of the outline and in complete proportion to the head. They must not be so small as to be lost and barely visible in the ruff which surrounds the head, nor should they be so large as to be the most noticeable feature of the head.

Apart from size, correct ear shape is also important. The ears should resemble the shape of an ivy-leaf in outline with the tips of the ear almost pointed. A tall sharply edged ear like a German Shepherd for instance, would be totally incorrect.



Correctly shaped ear



Incorrectly shaped Ear

Ears should be carried erect. However, one should always be aware of the fact that a Keeshond uses his ears to communicate his feelings. He may therefore 'drop' his ears momentarily if distracted or distressed by something. Some dogs will also naturally tend to fold their ears back when moving. In general though a happy Keeshond will tend to hold its ears erect.

## NECK

**Moderately long and arched, covered with thick, profuse coat forming a large ruff.**

**Moderately long and arched**

Correct length of neck is essential to create overall balance. Too short a neck, and an unattractive impression of stuffiness will be created. A moderately long and arched neck will usually indicate good lay of shoulder.

**Covered with thick, profuse coat forming a large ruff**

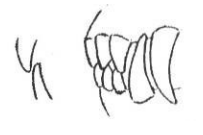

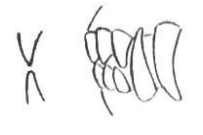

As previously discussed under the section headed "General Appearance". The Keeshond should exhibit a good ruff around the neck and shoulders when in full coat.





## MOUTH

**Jaws strong, with perfect, regular and complete scissor bite, i.e.: the upper teeth closely overlapping the lower teeth and set square to the jaws.**

<p><b>CORRECT: Scissor Bite</b>  <i>The upper incisors fit closely over the lower incisors and the upper canines behind the lower canines.</i></p>	
<p><b>FAULT: Overshot Bite</b>  <i>The top jaw protrudes over the lower jaw. In a badly overshot mouth the upper and lower canines may even be reversed.</i></p>	
<p><b>FAULT: Level Bite</b>  <i>The teeth of the upper jaw meet the teeth of the lower jaw.</i></p>	
<p><b>FAULT: Undershot Bite</b>  <i>The lower incisors protrude beyond the upper jaw. There may be a space between the upper and lower canines</i></p>	

Teeth should be white and sound. There should also be forty two teeth.

### Lips Black

The lips should never be pink or liver coloured as this indicates a lack of pigment.

### Well set on head, neither too wide nor meeting

The placement of the ears is crucial. Too wide an earset where the ears are low on the head is very unattractive and untypical. However, too high an earset where the ears are so close together as to be almost touching is also equally incorrect. For correct earset, imagine a clock face and visualise the ears as being set at 5 to 1. Correct placement of the ears dictates that the outer corner of the eye should be level with the lower corner of the ear.



Ears set too wide apart

Ears set correctly (5 to 1)

Ears too closely set

Perhaps a final point whilst on the subject of ears, is a reminder that while the ears should be carried erect, they should not be set on the head in such a manner as to point forwards, as for example, a Japanese Akita or Japanese Shiba Inu would exhibit.

## PICTORIAL STANDARD

### HEAD and SKULL

Wedge shaped when seen from above

**STOP** – Well defined when viewed from the side

**MOUTH:** Scissor bite, lips black

### NECK

Moderately long and arched

### RUFF

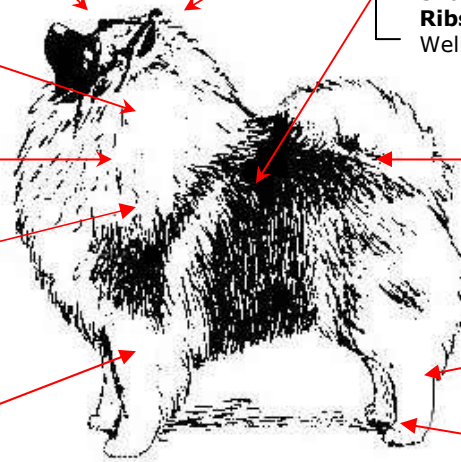
Large profuse coat, cream in colour, which frames the head

### SHOULDERS

Well sloped. The angle of the scapula being approximately 45 degrees to the vertical

### LEGS

Good bone



### BODY

Short, compact, with length of leg giving a square outline

### Ribs

Well sprung with a good depth of brisket

### TAIL

Moderately long, high set, tightly curled over back, double curl highly desirable

### HOCK JOINT

Showing slight angulation to the foot when viewed from the side

### FEET

Well padded, round, catlike with black nails. Pencilling around toes acceptable

### EARS

Dark, small, ivy leaf in shape, of velvety texture and well set on head.

### EYES

Almond shaped, dark, of medium size and obliquely set. Well defined spectacles

### COAT

Harsh, off standing, straight. Dense ruff, well feathered on forelegs and profuse trowsers, not feathered below hock. Soft, thick, light-coloured (not tawny) undercoat. Never silky, wavy or woolly, not forming a parting on the back.

### SIZE

Dogs: 18 inches  
(45.7 cm)

Bitches: 17 Inches  
(43.2 cm)

### COLOUR

A mixture of grey and black. Undercoat very pale grey or cream (not tawny). All shades of grey acceptable, body hairs black tipped. Shoulder markings well defined and all markings definite. Forelegs and hocks cream with no black below wrist or hock. Pencilling acceptable around toes