



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

**GENERAL APPEARANCE:** The Toy Australian Shepherd is an intelligent dog of strong herding instinct and vigilant attitude. The first visual image is that of an Australian Shepherd; no other breed should come to mind when the dog is viewed as a whole. "Toy" refers solely to the dog's smaller stature and in no way implies toyish features. As a loyal companion, he is attentive and animated, demonstrating unusual agility combined with the strength and stamina to put in a day's work. He is well balanced, slightly longer than tall, with bone that is moderate and in proportion to body size, neither coarse nor spindly. Coat is of moderate length and coarseness, with coloring that offers variety and individuality. An identifying characteristic is his bobbed tail, natural or docked. *Dogs* appear masculine. *Bitches* appear feminine.

**SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE:** *Size:* The height for dogs and bitches is 10 inches up to 14 inches. Note: Height is determined by a line perpendicular to the ground from the top of the shoulder blades, the dog standing naturally, with forelegs parallel to line of measurement. Quality should not be sacrificed in favor of size within the guidelines of this breed standard. Dogs or bitches that are 14 inches and over will be shown as Miniature Australian Shepherds and not as Toy Australian Shepherds. *Proportion:* Measuring from the breastbone to rear of thigh and from top of the withers to the ground the Toy Australian Shepherd is slightly longer than tall as in 10 to 9. When viewed from the front or rear, he appears sturdy and balanced, neither racy, nor broad. *Substance:* Bone is moderate and in proportion to body size while maintaining a solid build. *Disqualification:* *Under 10 inches and 14 inches and over.*

**HEAD:** The head is clean-cut, strong, dry and in proportion to the body. *Expression:* The dog's eyes are very expressive showing attentiveness and intelligence. A suspicious look is normal as these dogs are naturally cautious of strangers. *Eyes* are almond-shaped and of moderate size, set a little obliquely, neither prominent nor sunken, with perfectly centered, dark pupils that are well defined. Color is brown, blue, amber or any variation thereof including flecks and marbling and may have two eyes of a different color. Eye rims of blacks and blue merles have black pigmentation; reds and red merles have liver pigmentation. *Ears* are set high at the side of the head. They are triangular and slightly rounded at the tip; of moderate size with length measured by bringing the tip of the ear around to the inside corner of the eye. The ears, at full attention, break slightly forward and over from one-quarter (1/4) to one-half (1/2) above the base. The ear may be carried back against the head when traveling (rose ear). *Prick ear or hound ear shall be severely faulted.* The ear should depict an attentive expression. *Skull:* The top skull is flat to slightly rounded, its length and width each equal to the length of the muzzle. *Stop:* The stop is moderate but well defined. *Muzzle:* A strong, deep muzzle of medium length, tapers slightly to a rounded tip and is in balance and proportioned to the rest of the head. The foreface should be well filled out under the eyes with a gradual taper to the nose. The under jaw should be clearly visible when viewed from the side. *Planes* of the muzzle and skull are parallel. *Nose:* The nose of blacks and blue merles has black pigmentation; reds and red merles has liver pigmentation. On the merles it is permissible to have small pink spots; however, *they should not exceed 25% of the nose on dogs over one year of age, which is a severe fault.* Butterfly nose should not be faulted under the age of one year. *Lips* are tight without any looseness. *Bite:* A full complement of strong white teeth meet in a scissor bite. An even bite is not a fault. Teeth broken or missing by accident are not penalized. *Disqualification:* *Undershot bites; overshot bites exceeding one-eighth (1/8th) inch, Dudley nose. Severe fault: hound ears, prick ears, bulging eyes, domed skull, dogs over one year with more than 25% pink spots on nose.*

**NECK, TOPLINE, BODY:** *Neck:* Firm, clean and in proportion to the body, the neck is of medium length and slightly arched at the crest, setting smoothly and well into the shoulders. *Topline:* The back is straight and firm, being level from withers to hip joints. *Body:* The chest is not broad but deep and strong with the lowest point reaching the elbows. The ribs are well sprung, neither barrel chested nor slab-sided. The bottom line carries well back with a moderate tuck-up. *Loin:* The loin is strong and broad when viewed from the top. The entire body is firm and muscular. *Croup:* The moderately sloping croup is an ideal of thirty (30) degrees from the horizontal. *Tail:* The tail is straight, not to exceed two (2) inches, natural bobtail or docked. It is low set and follows the line of the croup. If, however, the tail is left natural, it is of moderate length, well feathered, in balance with the rest of the dog and may have a slight upward swirl at the end like a Shepherd's crook.

**FOREQUARTERS:** *Angulation:* The shoulders are well laid back at an angle of fortyfive (45) degrees to the ground. *Shoulders:* The shoulder blades (scapula) are long and flat, close set at the withers, ideally one (1) to one and one half (1 1/2) fingers in width, in accordance with the size of the dog at a natural stance. The *upper arm* (humerus) is attached at a right angle to the shoulder line with forelegs dropping straight, perpendicular to the ground. It is equal in length to the shoulder blade. *Elbow:* The elbow joint is

equal distance from the ground to the withers. **Legs** are straight and powerful showing strong bone. Pasterns are short, thick and strong but still flexible, showing a slight angle when viewed from the side. **Feet** are oval shaped, compact, with close-knit, well-arched toes. Pads are thick and resilient; nails short and strong. Dewclaws may be removed.

**HINDQUARTERS:** The width of the hindquarters is equal to the width of the forequarters at the shoulders. **Angulation** of the pelvis and upper thigh (femur) corresponds to the angulation of the shoulder blade and upper arm and forms a right angle. **Stifles** are clearly defined, hock joints moderately bent. **Hock:** The metatarsi are short, perpendicular to the ground and parallel to each other when viewed from the rear. **Feet** are oval shaped, compact, with close-knit, well-arched toes. Pads are thick and resilient; nails short and strong. Rear dewclaws are removed.

**COAT:** The coat is of medium texture, straight to slightly wavy, weather resistant, of moderate length with an undercoat. The quality of undercoat varies with climate. Hair is short and smooth on the head, outside of ears, front of forelegs and below the hocks. Backs of forelegs are moderately feathered; breeches are moderately full. There is a moderate mane and frill more pronounced in dogs than in bitches. **Severe fault:** *Non-typical coat texture and amount.*

**COLOR:** All colors are strong, clear and rich with no order of preference. Blue merle, black, red merle, red - all with or without white markings and/or tan (copper) points, are the only recognized colors. The hairline of a white collar does not exceed the point of the withers at the skin. White is acceptable on the neck (either in part or as a full collar), chest, legs including stifle, muzzle, blaze on head and white extension from under part of the body measuring up to no more than 1 inch above a horizontal line at the elbow. White on the head does not predominate and the areas surrounding the ears and eyes are dominated by color other than white. Merles characteristically become darker with increasing age. **Disqualifications:** *White body splashes on the back, on the sides above the elbow and behind the point of the withers at the skin.*

**GAIT:** Smooth, free and easy; exhibiting agility of movement with a well-balanced, ground-covering stride. He is able to change direction or alter gait instantly. Fore and hind legs move straight and parallel with the center line of the body. As the speed increases, the feet, both front and rear, converge toward the center line of the dog while the top line remains firm and level. When traveling at a trot the head is carried in a natural position level with its top line.

**TEMPERAMENT:** The Toy Australian Shepherd is intelligent and energetic. He is an exceptional companion exhibiting strong herding and guardian instincts. He is versatile and easily trained, performing his assigned tasks with style and enthusiasm. While often cautious or reserved with strangers he is an assertive, authoritative worker. Viciousness towards people or animals is intolerable. **Fault:** *Undue Shyness*

**Disqualifications:**

*Under 10 inches/14 inches and over*

*Undershot bites, overshot bites exceeding one eighth (1/8th inch)*

*Dudley nose*

*White body splashes on the back, on the sides above the elbow and behind the point of the withers at the skin.*