



The Boykin Spaniel Breed Standard

General Appearance - The Boykin Spaniel was developed in South Carolina, USA as a medium-sized sporting dog with a docked tail. The breed is built to cover all types of ground conditions with agility and reasonable speed. Size and weight were essential in development of the breed as these hunting companions needed to be lighter and smaller than their larger sporting dog cousins to fit in the portable section boats of the time period. As a result, the Boykin Spaniel came to be known as “the little brown dog that doesn’t rock the boat”. Being a hunting dog, he should be exhibited in hard muscled working condition. His coat should not be so excessive as to hinder his work as an active flushing spaniel, but should be thick enough to protect him from heavy cover and weather. The Boykin Spaniel is primarily a working gun dog; structure and soundness are of great importance.

Size, Proportion, Substance - The Boykin Spaniel is solidly built, with moderate bone, and smooth firm muscles. The ideal height measured from the ground to the highest point of the shoulder blades for dogs is 15 ½ - 18 inches at the withers; for bitches is 14 - 16 ½ inches at the withers. Any variance greater than 1 inch above or below the ideal height is a major fault. The minimum height ranges shall not apply to dogs or bitches under 12 months of age. Proportion is slightly longer than tall, never square. However, exact proportion is not as important as the dog being well-balanced and sound, capable of performing the breed’s intended function.

Head - The head must be in proportion with the size of the dog. The expression is alert, eager, self-confident, attractive and intelligent. Eyes range from yellow to amber to varying shades of brown, set well apart, medium size and almond or oval shaped, and trusting. Protruding or bulging eyes is a major fault. Ears are pendulous and set slightly above or even with the line of the eye; ear set is higher when alert. The leather of the ear is thin and when pulled forward should almost reach the tip of the nose. The ears hang close to the cheeks and are flat. Skull is fairly broad, flat on top, and slightly rounded at the sides and back. The occiput bone is inconspicuous. The stop is moderate. When viewed from the side the nasal bone and the top of the skull form two parallel lines. Muzzle is approximately the same length as the skull, and is approximately 1/2 the width of the skull. The distance from the tip of the nose to the occiput is about the same length as occiput to the base of the neck. The nasal bone is straight with no inclination down or of snappiness. The nose is to be fully pigmented, dark liver in color with well opened nostrils. The Lips are close fitting and clean, without excess skin or flews. Scissors is the preferred bite, level is acceptable. Pronounced or extreme overshot or undershot bites are major faults. Broken teeth should not count against the dog.

Neck, Topline, Body - Neck is moderately long, muscular, slightly arched at the crest and gradually blends into sloping shoulders and never concave or ewe-necked. Back - The top line is straight, strong and essentially level and should remain solid and level in movement. Loins are short, strong with a slight tuck up. His Body is sturdily constructed but not too compact and never square. The Shoulders are sloping. The Brisket is well developed but not barreled, extending to the elbow and not too broad or narrow as to interfere with movement. A 2/3 to 1/3 ribs to loin ratio is preferred. The Croup slopes gently to the set of the tail, and the tail-set follows the natural line of the croup. The Tail is docked to a length of 3-5 inches when fully mature. The tails carriage should be carried horizontally or slightly elevated and displays a characteristic lively, merry action, particularly when the dog is on game.

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Forequarters - The Boykin Spaniels' shoulders are sloping, clean and muscular. His legs medium in length, straight and well boned but not too short as to handicap for field work or so heavy as to appear clumsy. Pasterns are strong with no suggestion of weakness. **Feet** are round, compact, well-arched, of medium size with thick pads. Dewclaws should be removed. The toes closely grouped, webbed and well padded.

Hindquarters - The Boykin Spaniel has well developed hips and thighs with moderate angulation at the stifle with the whole rear assembly showing strength and drive. Hindquarters are muscular and most importantly, in balance with the forequarters. Hocks well let down, pasterns relatively short, strong and parallel when viewed from the rear. **Feet** – see feet under forequarters.

Coat - The coat can range from flat to slightly wavy to curly, with medium length. The Boykin Spaniel is typically a single coat breed but may have undercoat. Boykin Spaniels are considered a “wash and wear” dog easily going from the field to the ring. The ears, chest, legs and belly are equipped with light fringe or feathering. His coat may be trimmed, never shaved, to have a well-groomed appearance and to enhance the dog's natural lines. It is legitimate to trim about the head, throat, ears, tail and feet to give a smart, functional but natural appearance. Honorable field scars are acceptable.

Color - The Boykin Spaniel color is a solid liver color - a deep reddish brown color that includes various shades of chocolate brown, from light to very dark. A small amount of white on the chest is permitted and no other white markings are allowed. Sun bleaching is acceptable.

Gait - Movement is effortless with good reach from well laidback shoulders at an angle that permits a long stride that is in balance with the rear quarters for strong driving power with no wasted movement. Viewed from the rear the hocks should drive well under the body following on a line with the forelegs neither too widely nor closely spaced. As speed increases it is natural for the legs to fall to a center line of travel. Seen from the side it should exhibit a good, long forward stride with no side winding. In gait the tail is carried level to or above the back.

Temperament - The Boykin Spaniel is friendly, a willing worker, intelligent and easy to train. The Boykin Spaniel thrives on human companionship and gets along well with other dogs and children. He shows great eagerness and energy for the hunt yet controllable in the field.

Faults - The foregoing description is that of the ideal Boykin Spaniel. Any deviation from the above described dog must be penalized to the extent of the deviation.

