Extended Breed Standard of
THE AKITA (JAPANESE)
HISTORY OF THE BREED

The ancestral home of the Akita is Odate city and its surrounding country side in the Akita prefecture. Records of this can be found well back in history. Odate has long been known as the Dog town in the Tohoku district. In the 1800’s, domesticated dogs, which had increased in number because of the favourable socio-economic conditions, were gradually turned into fighting dogs. After the Meiji restoration in 1868, dog fighting was established as a public event and large numbers of dogs were to be found in the Dog town of Odate.

There were several names used in describing the breed. They were known as the Odate Inu and Kazuno Inu in their respective areas of northern Akita province. They were also known as Nambu Inu from the name of the district as it was known in the Han period. Collectively they were also known as the Regional dog. Of these regional dogs, those living in towns and used for fighting were known as Kuwae Inu or Kuriya Inu in the local dialect, while others that were used for hunting in the country side and mountains were known as Matagi Inu. Some names including Akita were taken from the locations where the dogs were to be found, while others such as the Kuwae Inu or the Matagi Inu were named according to the use they were put to. The dogs themselves were more or less all alike. They were all Japanese dogs, which had been bred in these areas since ancient times. These were the ancestors of todays Akitas.

Long ago when hunting was still the primary means of livelihood, dogs were workers as well as good companions that accompanied people whenever they moved from place to place. Remains and artifacts found in Akita, Tohoku district, show us that hunting and gathering continued to be the lifestyle of the area throughout the Jomon and Yayoi periods. The cultivation of rice began around the 3rd century A.D, but the productivity was low due to the climate and environment of the region. This caused a dependence on hunting and fishing as a means of obtaining food. Furthermore, even after the agricultural lifestyle became more dominant around Odate, hunting still remained a integral part of life well into the modern era. Some individuals made their living from hunting and there were villagers of hunters called Matagi villages.

During the Tokugawa period (1603-1867) more than 70 revolts occurred in Akita. There were two peak periods. One was against the new Satake administration and the land survey around the Keichou and Genna eras (1596-1623). The other was triggered by the famines experienced during the Tenmei (1783-1788) and Tenpou (1830s) eras. The worst famine claimed more than 7000 lives in Akita alone.
Unstable social conditions, due to the various factors mentioned above, caused much anxiety among the residents of the area and forced them to prepare for self-defence. The first step was to Acquire a guard dog. This meant using the Matagi Inu for a different purpose than previously.

The primary requirement for a good hunting dog is its ability to perform the required hunting tasks. For guard dogs however, an imposing appearance is probably more important. It is assumed that the preference for larger and more substantial dogs influenced breeding, thus resulting in a gradual increase in the size of the dogs. This laid the foundation for the development of a large sized dog Japanese dog called the Akita.

Since that time it has been traditional for people in this area to keep a dog. Matagis kept hunting dogs while wealthy farmers and old influential families kept guard dogs.

The use of Japanese dogs near Odate evolved from that of hunting to include both guarding and fighting. Accordingly, their conformation changed somewhat. But all had been bred within the regions social and environmental conditions since ancient days until the middle of the Meiji era (1890s).

Starting in the 1890's mixed breeding rapidly became wide spread. The primary reason for this was that dogfights were made into public events as opposed to being the hobby of a few devotees. The quest for large and fierce fighting dogs led to the emergence of new types of dogs, which lacked the proper prick and/or curled tails typical of the Japanese breeds.

Many different dogs were used for crossbreeding. This included an extra large dog with hanging ears thought to be a mastiff. Another was a very large dog thought to be a St Benard of mixed breeding.

As previously mentioned, at about this time dogfights were extremely popular and had been turned into organized public events. In 1899 an organization for dogfights was established in Odate. Its name was En' yukai which literally means ‘Garden party’. At the height of its popularity, some 100 dogs participated in each event and programs were handed out for the matches.

What made the dogfight fever of Odate even more intense was a competition with the Tosa fighting dogs. In 1901, a troupe of the Tosa fighting dog society toured through western Japan's Kansai and Kantou districts. Towards the end of the year they visited Odate and held matches against Odate Inus. Odate Inus, being larger and heavier were said to be superior.

Confident after the match with the Tosa fighting dogs, the organizers of dogfights in Odate encountered a sudden blow. Dogfights, bullfights and cockfights had all become very popular in many areas of Japan. The money bet was so enormous that strict government controls were enacted everywhere. In 1909, Masataka Mori, the governor of Akita prefecture, enacted an ordinance to prohibit dog fighting all together. Dog fighting devotees in Odate lost the purpose for keeping their dogs. To make matters worse, the following year a law for the taxation of dogs was also enacted. This combined with a movement for the extermination of feral dogs, which was triggered by an outbreak of rabies, resulted in a terrible setback for the Odate Inu and these dogs were at the verge of extinction. It was said that no dogs were to be found in Odate.
Though dogfights were discontinued in the Akita prefecture due to the large ordinances, around Kuroishi-machi in Aomori prefecture, they were held almost publicly. Before long the enforcement in Odate had become less strict and fanciers started to stage dogfights surreptitiously. These were held in shrines or in remote open areas at night. Within a short time dogfighting reverted to its former large scale and matches against Tosa fighting dogs were organized in 1915 and 1916.

The matches between the two breeds, though popular among dogfight fanciers, further complicated the issue in regard to the pure strains of Odate Inus. Even though the proponents of the Tosa fighting dogs praised their dogs and the Odate breeders boasted of the strength of theirs, they both recognized the merits of each others dogs. As a result, Tosa lovers acquired many Odate Inus and Odate fanciers willingly crossbred their dogs with the Tosa fighting dogs.

Crossbreeding was further intensified to produce dogs of a still different type that were called Kairyo-ken (Improved dog) or Shin-Akita (New Akita). The main point of difference from the Tosa fighting dogs was the carriage of the tail. The ideal tail carriage for an improved dog was a tail curled over the back. These new varieties were promoted and praised until the beginning of the Show era (late 1920s). And it seemed as though the pure Japanese dogs were no longer to be found around Odate. The truth of the matter is that regional dogs were in villages near Odate as guard dogs as well as in the mountains as Matagi Inus for hunting. So at the beginning of the Taisho era (around 1915) there were two types of Odate Inus. One type had prick ears and tail curled over the back, preserving the conformation and style of the Japanese dogs. The other type, which was also intentionally bred, often had a wrinkled forehead and semi erect or drop ears.

Meanwhile in Tokyo, many scholars and intellectuals were raising questions and giving opinions in regard to the preservation of fading Japanese traditions, historical sites, places of scenic beauty, fauna and flora, etc. In 1919 a law to designate these as Natural Monuments was enacted and immediately put into effect. In the eighth article on the law, fauna are dealt with as Animals unique to Japan.

For reference here are the criteria for an animals designation as a natural monument.

(1) A well known animal unique to Japan as well as its habitat
(2) An animal notable as Japanese, although not unique, requiring preservation, as well as its habitat
(3) A unique animal or population of animals in their natural environment
(4) A domesticated animal unique to Japan
(5) A well known non domesticated animal brought to Japan and presently living in the wild as well as its habitat
(6) A specimen of a highly valuable animal

After a year of the law, Dr Watase (drafter of the law) went in person to Odate to investigate the Akita. This being a period of decline for the Akita he found no dogs of sufficient excellence to designate as natural monuments.

For more than 10 years after his visits the Akitas designation as a natural monument was uncertain. His survey however contributed much towards the restoration of Japanese dogs in general and Akitas in particular.
Dr Watase’s survey gave rise to the restoration effort for pure Japanese dogs. Akiho was established in 1927 by Mr Shigeie Izumi who was then Mayor of Odate. Then with Dr Watase’s consent, Mr Hirokichi Saito who had been working on the preservation of Japanese dogs since the early 1920s established Nippo in June 1928.

The Akita became the first candidate for designation. And in July 1931 the Akita was named as a natural monument. Although the effort to restore the newly named Akita Inu had begun, dogfights were still popular in Odate. This made it very difficult to restore Akitas as pure Japanese dogs. A few informed individuals, worked very hard to preserve the breed. In order to restore the breed, they went or sent representatives into the countryside and Matagi villages to purchase regional dogs that were considered to be less affected by mixed breeding. However, no further development could be expected at this time because of the Manchurian incident (1931) and the subsequent 15 years of war.

In Akita as in all of Japan, material goods became more and more scarce as the war progressed. Everything was under military control and strict rationing was in effect. Food shortages were very severe. Akitas being among the largest of the Japanese dogs were drastically reduced in number as fewer fanciers were able to feed them. In addition the war expanded into cold northern areas of China, forcing the use of dogs and cats as a source of fur for military coats. Because of their large size, Akitas were in big demand and intently sought out. Police ordered the confiscation and capture of all dogs other than German Shepherds used for military use. Fanciers tried to escape the order and took their dogs to Matagis and farmers in the mountains. In any case this was an extremely unfortunate period for dogs as well as for their owners and admirers.

Prior to this period, in July 1937, Miss Helen Keller requested an Akita, when she came to Akita. Therefore, in August of that year, Mr. Ichiro Ogasawara (who later became vice-chairman of Akiho) of Akita City sent Miss Keller Kamikaze-so (born at the home of Mr. Takichi Takahashi of Odate). However, Kamikaze-go soon succumbed to distemper. In July 1939, Mr Ogasawara sent to Miss Keller another dog, Kenyan (an older brother of Kamikaze-go that was born at the home of Mr. Eijiro Kanazawa of Odate). While visiting Japan after the war in 1947, Miss Keller revisited Akita to express her deep appreciation for the Akita’s contribution toward peace.

The great food shortage during the war caused anyone seen feeding dogs to be often branded as traitors. Therefore, many Akitas were destroyed at that time since they were quite noticeable due to their huge appetites. Thus, barely a dozen Akitas survived the war, but much is owed to those whose great efforts have produced Akitas of today. Some well-known survivors were Goromaru’s sire, Tsubakigoma, Ichinosekitora, Futatsuigoma, Datenoryoku, Datamitsu (Kongo’s dam), Mr Okuro’s Kinpu, and Sakurame, Mr. Yozaburo Ito’s male, Taishu of the Dewa line, Arawashi (Akita born ancestor of the Tamaguro line) of Tokyo. There was also Peace-go of the Taihei line of Odate, which was later sent to Southern Akita. Others were Tachibana, which appeared on a postwar postage stamp Jungoro of the Ichinoseki line Shintora of Mr Yugoro Izumi, Mr Kaga’s Kisaragi or (Josetsu), and Hachiman (or Yahata) of Mr Tokutaro Yamamoto of Kazuno. During the severe food and clothing shortages during the immediate postwar period, some dogs became sources for these. However, the news of Miss Helen Keller’s and other American’s interests in Akitas led to a great popularity of Akitas, so that, according to rumors, even the mongrel types of Akitas were sold at high prices. The timing was also perfect for Kongo-go which won BIS at the JKC dog show at this time. Also the same type of dog, Kincho-go, won the Meiyosho Award at the Akiho show, resulting in the rapid increase in that type of Akita from the late 1940s to the mid 1950s. However, some fanciers became
quite alarmed at this trend and started a move to further improvement of the breed. This has resulted in the Akitas of today.

Many dogs of that period were of postwar Kongo type. They were large, stout and majestic in accordance with the standard. However, the face, coat colour and body were mostly of the German Shepherd type.

The Akitas have undergone a transition to become the magnificent Akitas of today as a natural monument. However, this does not mean that the image of Akitas has been completed. The Akitas are rarely used today as hunting dogs, guard dogs or as working dogs. In order to produce sound show dogs, one must set the high goal of following a standard and also considering the proper combination of genes. These studies should be continuous.

**Hachiko : The loyal Akita**

This true story is the most famous of all dog stories. It demonstrates the bond that can be formed between dogs and humans, and it shows the essence of the temperament of the Japanese dog: Loyalty and Devotion.

The story begins in the early 1920s when Mr Eisaburo Ueno a Professor at the Department of Agriculture at the Imperial University and resident of Shibuya, West central Tokyo, became the owner of an Akita Inu puppy. The puppy came from Odate in Akita prefecture. Born in late November 1923, the puppy was delivered to Professor Ueno on January 10 the following year. Professor Ueno named him Hachiko. Hachiko took to the professor extremely well, and when the professor set off for work at around 9am, either to go to the Department of Agriculture or to the Ministry of Agriculture laboratory in Nishigahara, Hachiko always went with him. After seeing his master off at the station, Hachiko would return home, and then in the evening at about 6pm he would again set off to Shibuya station and wait by the ticket gate for his master to appear. This became Hachikos daily routine. The sight of the two of them setting off for the station in the morning and coming home together at night made a deep impression on all who passed by.

However, Hachikos happy life as a pet of Professor Ueno was cut short by a very sad event, just one year and four months later on 21 of May 1925, Professor Ueno suffered a sudden stroke during a faculty meeting and died. The story goes that on the night of the wake, Hachiko, who was in the garden broke through the glass doors into the house and made his way into the parlour where the body was laid out, and spent the night lying close beside his master refusing to budge. Another account tells how, when the time came to put various objects loved by the Professor into the coffin, Hachiko jumped inside the coffin and tried to resist all attempts to remove him.

Now this is where the really sad part of the story begins. After his masters death, Hachiko was sent to live with relatives of Professor Ueno who lived in Asakusa, in the eastern part of Tokyo. But he ran away repeatedly to the Professor’s house in Shibuya. And when a year had passed and he still kept running away, he was given to Professor Uenos former gardener, who had known him since he was a puppy. But Hachiko ran away from his home repeatedly too. On realising that his former master no longer lived in the old home in Shibuya, Hachiko went every day to Shibuya station in the same way as he always had, and waited for his master to come home. Everyday he would go back and look for the figure of Professor Ueno among the returning commuters, leaving only when hunger pains forced him to. And he did day after day, year in year out.
Hachiko started to get noticed by people as he turned up every day at Shibuya station. But what made him especially well known was a story that someone sent the Asahi Shinbun, one of the country’s major newspapers, which was published in September 1932. The writer had been interested in Hachiko for a long time, and had already sent photos and details about him to a journal that specialized in Japanese dogs.

On April 21, 1934, a bronze statue of Hachiko by the sculptor Teru Ando was erected in front of ticket gate of Shibuya station, with a poem engraved on a placard titled ‘Lines to a loyal dog’. The unveiling ceremony was a grand occasion, with the grandchild of Professor Ueno in attendance and throngs of people who caused quite a delay in the proceedings. Unfortunately the first statue was removed and melted for down for weaponry during world war 2. However in 1948 a replica was made by Takeshi Ando, son of the original sculptor, and reinstated in a ceremony on August 15. This is the statue that still stands today at Shibuya station.

Hachikos sudden fame made little difference to his life, however, which continued in exactly the same way as before. Every day he set out for Shibuya station and waited there for Professor Ueno to come home. In 1929 Hachiko contracted a serious case of mange, which nearly killed him. Due to his years spent on the streets, he was thin and battle scared from fights with other dogs. One of his ears no longer stood up straight, and he was altogether a wretched figure, nothing like the proud, strong dog he had once been.

As Hachiko grew old, he became very weak and suffered badly from heartworms. Eventually at the age of 13, in the early hours of March 8, 1935, he took his last breath in a Shibuya side street. The total length of time he had waited, pining for his master was 9 years and 10 months. Hachikos death made the front page of major Japanese newspapers, and many people were heart broken by the news. His bones were buried in a corner of Professor Uenos burial plot, so he was finally reunited with his master for whom he had pined for so many years. His coat was preserved, and a stuffed figure of Hachiko can be seen in the National Science museum in Ueno.

The story of Hachiko has become etched in Japanese peoples hearts, and it is certainly a most touching tale of the strong bond between a dog and his master and the boundless devotion of which the Akita are capable.
BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Originally Japanese dogs were small to medium in size and no large breeds existed. Since 1603 in the Akita region, Akita Matagis (medium-sized bear-hunting dogs) were used as fighting dogs. From 1868 Akita Matagis were crossed with Tosas and Mastiffs. Consequently, the size of this breed increased but characteristics associated with Spitz type were lost.

In 1908 dog fighting was prohibited, but this breed was nevertheless preserved and improved as a large Japanese breed. As a result, nine superior examples of this breed were designated as ‘Natural Monuments’ in 1931.

During World War II (1939-1945), it was common to use dogs as a source of fur for military garments. The police ordered the capture and confiscation of all dogs other than German Shepherd Dogs used for military purposes. Some fanciers tried to circumvent the order by crossbreeding their dogs with German Shepherd Dogs.

When World War II ended, Akitas had been drastically reduced in number and existed as three distinct types; 1) Matagi Akitas, 2) fighting Akitas, and 3) Shepherd Akitas. This created a very confusing situation in the breed.

During the restoration process of the pure breed after the war, Kongo-go, a dog of the Dewa line, which exhibited characteristics of the Mastiff and German Shepherd. However, sensible learned fanciers did not approve of this type as a proper Japanese breed, so they made efforts to eliminate the strain/old foreign breeds by crossbreeding with Matagi Akitas for the purpose of restoring the original pure breed. They succeeded in stabilizing the pure strain of large sized breed as known today.
GENERAL APPEARANCE
Large-sized dog, sturdily built, well balanced and with much substance; secondary sex characteristics strongly marked, with high nobility and dignity in modesty; constitution tough.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS
The ratio of height at withers to length of body (from the point of the shoulders to the point of the buttock) is 10:11, but the body is slightly longer in bitches than in dogs.

General Appearance refers to the overall shape and general form. There is a balance of structure with well-developed muscles, tendons and ligaments. The skin has no looseness. The sexual characteristics of the male are clearly distinguishable from the female. The various anatomical parts of the dog must be in balance to each other. The skeletal system is strong and solid. The muscles, tendons and blood vessels are well developed through disciplinary training. The male appears masculine, while the female appears feminine, resulting in a beautifully balanced Akita (Japanese). There is the beauty of vigorous health from proper training.

However, in reality, the appearance seems to be largely dependent on the coat quality such as the colour tone, the coat substance and the standing of the coat. A dog will not look magnificent no matter how great the construction, if the coat quality is poor. In order to have a good appearance, there must be good body construction, proper arrangement of the coat and a vigorous disposition. There must also be proper angulation of the neck, sturdy body, a properly curled tail with symmetrical powerful fore and hind limbs.

The ratio of height to length in the male is 10:11, while the female has a slightly longer length in relation to the height. It is important to have a proper ratio between the body length and the height, in order to have correct balance. The slightly longer length in relation to the height stipulated for the female is based on the physiological factor of reproduction and manifestation of the sexual characteristics.

The ratio of the height to the depth of the chest is 2:1.

Fig 1. Left to right — Male General Appearance and Female General Appearance
BEHAVIOUR AND TEMPERAMENT
The temperament is composed, faithful, docile and receptive.

An Akita (Japanese) is calm, stately and possesses the character of a strong will and courage. The characters of calmness and fearlessness are the essentials for this stateliness. He is loyal and obedient. The qualities of being obedient, faithful and not being gaudy are deemed as necessary characteristics in giving rise to the appearance of simplicity in the Akita. Within this lack of gaudiness is the dignity, keenness, substance and agility. This last sentence points to the deportment of the Akita (Japanese). Keenness refers to the sensitive senses of vision, hearing and smell. The proper functions of these senses aid the Akita (Japanese) dog to be agile as well as being bold in his movements.

Furthermore, the term “essential qualities” refers to the original temperament and character which have been passed down from generation to generation.

Thus, in referring to the Akita (Japanese), it may be proper to assume that the “essential qualities” were passed down from generation to generation from the hunting dog era. During the guard dog era, the Akita (Japanese) appeared stately to the stranger, and loyal to the owner. During the fighting dog era, the Akita (Japanese) dog acquired the large build and nimbleness of movement which was important in meeting the opponents. The temperament and physical constitution passed down from ancient times through the natural habitat and other environmental conditions became the Akita’s (Japanese) unique “essential qualities.”

The most important quality for all Japanese dogs is that it possess a spirited calm (in Japanese, Kan’i), good nature (Ryosei), and artlessness (Soboku). Spirited calm implies bravery matched with restraint, good nature implies loyalty and obedience and artlessness implies an uncomplicated forthrightness. All of these refer to the essence, the temperament, personality or nature that a Japanese dog should have. In small and medium sized dogs the expression of this essence is in their alertness, quick movement and nimble gait. In large dogs (Akita) it is in their composure.

Fig 2. This male Akita (Japanese) shows great Kan’i, Ryosei and Soboku in its overall composure.

HEAD AND SKULL

Skull: The size is in proportion to the body. The forehead is broad, with distinct furrow. No wrinkle. Stop: Defined. Muzzle: Moderately long and strong with broad base, tapering but not pointed. Nasal bridge straight. Lips: Tight. Cheeks: Moderately developed.

The skull is in proportion with the overall dog. The top of the head is almost flat. The top of the head between the ears is somewhat flat and must not be pointed up or rounded. There are several types of heads seen on the Akita (Japanese). There are those with round triangular-like appearance, those with a prominence in the occipital region and various other shapes at the top of the head probably due to the different locations of the ear base.

The cheeks are full and well-developed. The forehead is wide, without wrinkles, with a definite crease running from the forehead to the stop. The cheeks are full. There must be no wrinkles on the forehead or near the outside corners of the eyes.

One often sees many forms of forehead. There is the round forehead or the forehead with a marked rise in the centre. There is also the flat forehead like that of a cow. Ideally the head bone should be wide with a very slight bulge. The crease and stop are also very important parts of the Akita (Japanese) dog’s face. The stop must not be too shallow or too deep.

The bridge of the nose is straight, the muzzle is full. The base of the mouth is wide, and the nose is not snipy. This means that the line extending forward from the stop toward the nose must be straight from the side view. However, one also often sees the bridge of the nose that is either convex or concave. A line extending from the top of the head to the forehead should be parallel with the line extending from the stop to the nose. It is difficult to have a proper face if these lines either intersect or broaden out. The muzzle must taper gradually from the cheeks to the tip of the mouth. The base must be broad and the tip must not be snipy. The area between the cheeks and the muzzle must be broad and tight. It must not taper acutely with the tip of the face pointed excessively. In other words, the cheeks must be broad; the muzzle must also be full in order to have a suitable shape of the face.

There are three general classifications of muzzles. They are round, square, and triangular types. In the triangular type, even a slight looseness of the lips is easily noticeable. The square type, which is also known as the boxy type, is also frequently associated with droopiness of the lips. The round type is the most ideal and there is no looseness of the lips usually, owing to the shape, and one can often see the ideal straight line.

A very shallow stop is called “non-stop”, and does not harmonise with the majestic features, while a stop that is too deep causes the facial features to become narrow with precipitous features.

With further reference to wrinkle, if one were to exclude the young dogs whose foreheads have not yet fully developed, one rarely sees any wrinkles on the forehead of the Akita (Japanese). The Akita (Japanese) should not have any wrinkles on the head. In general, wrinkles indicate looseness of the skin, and are not permissible as a part of dignity and character of the Akita (Japanese)
Fig 3. (Left to right) Male and Female head examples

\begin{itemize}
  \item **NOSE**
  \textit{Large and black. Slight and diffuse lack of pigment accepted in white dogs only, but black is always preferred.}

  The nostrils are tight and the lips are tightly drawn. The term “tight” is difficult to explain, but is referring to the tenseness of the nose when the dog is sniffing. The nose must also be black, shiny, moist and active. However, a red nose is allowable on the white Akita dog. The lips must be tightly drawn, that is, the upper or the lower lips must not be hanging down or loose. The lips must be drawn in a straight line. The colour of the lips must also match the black colour of the nose.

  \item **EYES**
  \textit{Relatively small, almost triangular in shape due to the rising of the outer eye corner, set moderately apart, dark brown: the darker, the better.}

  It is said that the eyes are the windows of the heart, or that the eyes may speak as much as the mouth. They reveal not only the state of mind of the dog, but its proper shape and location may also add to the quality of the individual dog.

  The eyes are somewhat triangular shaped and deeply set. The somewhat triangular shape is probably due to the gathering of the inner canthi with the apices of the upper eyelids and the longer base of the scalene triangle being out on the side. However, in reality, there are arch-shaped upper and lower eyelids, resulting in circular eyes. The term “deep” infers that the eyes should not protrude because shallow eyes along with bulky ears detract from the dignity of a stately expression and do not contribute to the balance.

  The outer canthi are slightly raised; the irises are of dark brown colour. This means the outer canthi, in relation to the lower eyelids, are slightly higher than the inner canthi, resulting in a slanted shape. The raised outer margins of the eyes are referred to as slanting eyes. However, if the eyes are too slanted, the eyes assume a stern look, while the lack of slanting results in lack of power in the eyes, as well as departing from the true character of the dog. The dark brown irises may be similar to the reddish orange mixed with black.
\end{itemize}
There is a proper amount of space between the eyes. This refers to the location of the eyes on the head, which varies from individual to individual, but again, it is referring to the balance of the dog. Proper distance between the eyes enhances dignity, while those eyes which are too close give an impression of sternness or nervousness. Eyes which are too far apart give a loose expression.

Fig 4. Correct shape and placement of eyes

EARS
Relatively small, thick, triangular, slightly rounded at tips, set moderately apart, pricked and inclining forward.

The ears are rather small, thick, and triangular shaped with the correct amount of forward angulation. They are erect with adequate distance between them. There is a reason for having relatively small ears in the mature dog. Since the ears of the puppy are usually proportionately large, a puppy with small ears may be of some concern because many of these ears do not attain the adequate height when they reach maturity. The thickness or thinness of the ears do not seem to be of any great significance from a functional standpoint, but as a show dog, the thick ears are more pleasing to the eye as well as being in balance with other parts of the body, providing that it does not impart, a feeling of dullness. Thin ears seem to impart, a nervous temperament and lacking the feeling of composure and dignity. There are many varieties of triangular shaped ears such as the “bamboo ears” which are thin and close together at the base, then there are “baggy ears” in which the outer edges fold toward the centre. There are also ears where the inner edges are vertical. Even the properly shaped ears can be too long with unequal sides.

They are erect with adequate distance between them. This refers to the setting of the ears which means that the ears are standing erect as if they were thrust into the head. Thus the ear lines must be straight. When referring to the proper forward angulation of the ear, there should be a slight forward angulation in relation to a line extended upward from the posterior neck line. Ears standing too high when seen from the side view lack the desirable sharpness, while ears that stand too low impart a feeling of heaviness.

The distance between the ears should be seen from the frontal view. The ears have tips that are pointed and a wide base. The proper distance between the ears may be determined by drawing a vertical line from the inner point of attachment of the ears. This line should pass through, the center of the dog’s eyes. This should result in a proper width of the ears. Ears that are too wide are called “ornamental ears”, while those ears with their inner point of attachment in line with the pointed ear tips are called “approaching ears.”
Ears of proper width have a vertical line from the ear tip pass through the middle of the base of the ear.

Thus, the ears of an Akita (Japanese) not only add to the beauty of its outward appearance, but its shape expresses the quality and strength of the dog’s mentality.

Fig 5. Correct ear placement

MOUTH
*Teeth strong with scissor bite.*

The teeth are powerful with proper scissor bite. Included in the foregoing stipulation is the correct number of teeth which is 42 altogether. There are 2 upper and 2 lower canine teeth, a total of 4 teeth; 6 upper and 6 lower incisors; 8 upper and 8 lower premolars; 4 upper molars and; 6 lower molars. The dog not only uses his teeth for chewing of food, but also as the only effective weapon for defensive purposes.

Missing or irregular teeth are regarded as minor faults. The quality of the teeth is also very important. Teeth with a polished appearance are desirable.

NECK
*Thick and muscular, without dewlap, in balance with head.*

The neck is thick and powerful, with no loose skin, and at the proper angle when in the standing position. The neck must be thick, full and powerful. It must not appear thin or have any looseness of the skin. The proper angle of the neck is approximately 45 degrees when the dog is in the normal standing position.

In order to capture any game or to swing the opponents when holding onto them during a battle, the neck must be thick and powerful. Also, as a show dog, the neck must be in balance with the head and the body. Otherwise the appearance of fullness and powerfulness of the neck will be lacking. The proper angulation of the neck adds to the balance of the body as a whole. If the angulation is too high, there is an unnatural appearance with the loss of keenness in relation to the body. If the angulation is too low, there is a lack of appeal and vigour.
FOREQUARTERS


The forelegs need to support the head, thick neck and sturdy chest as well as allow for stresses associated with quick movements in all directions. Their skeletal structure is comprised of the scapula (shoulder blade), humerus (upper arm), radius and ulna (lower arm), carpal bones (carpal or wrist joint), metacarpal (pastern) and phalanges (foot). The pastern must have good flexibility and have proper slope in order to effectively absorb the shock caused by the weight of the dog as its feet strike the ground.

The forelegs have moderate angulation with the shoulders and are well developed. The elbow joints are strong. The forelegs must support the head, thick neck and powerful chest. Furthermore, they aid in the vital function of agile movement. The parts of the frame from top to bottom consists of the shoulder blade (scapula), the humerus radius and ulna of the forearm, the carpus and the digits, each joined in succession to each other. The correct moderate joint angles of these bones are very important in that the quality of the frame is largely determined by them. The outward appearance of the forelegs is dependent on the humerus, radius, ulna, pasterns and the feet. A shallow angle between the scapula and the humerus results in “maeyori-kata” where there is frontward deviation of the shoulder blade. A faulty joint at the humerus and forearm bones results in a weak elbow joint.

“The forelegs are straight.” This refers to the dog’s forelegs as seen from the front. They must not be curved nor have the toes pointed outward. The forelegs should be straight and muscular through proper disciplinary training. The pastern bears the impact of the body weight and must be very resilient as well as having the moderate angle.
**BODY**


The chest is deep. The rib cage is full. The front chest is well developed. The abdomen is well tucked up. The chest depth refers to the side view, while the well developed front chest refers to the width of the chest as viewed from the front. Since the chest contains a portion of the body's vital organs, the shape is of much importance for the proper functioning of these organs.

The ribcage must be powerful, full and ideally be egg shaped in cross-section. However, if it is round from a cross-sectional view, the front chest may be too wide. This may effect the attachment of the front limbs and result in a clumsy gait. The opposite extreme of this is narrow ribs with inadequate spread that could result in a flat shape with narrow elbows, and a dog with an appearance lacking endurance. Thus the standard calls for a well-developed chest.

The abdomen is well tucked up. This refers to the belly’s tuck-up in relation to the chest when seen from the side. No matter how well the belly area may be tucked up, a shallow chest will not make this evident and will give the impression of a dog with a very thin body. The Akita’s (Japanese) overall appearance of a sturdy and impressive air is influenced to a great extent by the chest development and tuck up of the abdomen.

The backline is straight and the hips are powerful. The back and hips are very important for transmitting the driving force of the hind legs to the front legs. A convex (roach) or concave (sway) back affects the movement of the dog so that agility is lost. A roach back inevitably affects the angle of the neck and the tail coil, resulting in a poor posture. A sway back gives the appearance of a listless animal lacking proper exercise and training.

The hips are powerful refers to the powerful muscles that attach the pelvic bone to the adjacent bones. A weak hip causes instability of the back, resulting in weak hind legs with poor stance. Some of these faults may be hereditary, but others may be due to lack of proper conditioning.

![Correct body proportions.](image)
HINDQUARTERS
Well developed, strong and moderately angulated.

The hind legs provide the force and impulsion necessary for forward movement. The skeletal structure of the hind leg consists of the femur (upper thigh), tibia and fibula (lower thigh), tarsal bones (hock joint) metatarsals and phalanges (metatarsus and foot). Like those of the forequarters, the bones of the hind leg must be joined to each other by the required moderate angulation. Correct structure requires firm, powerful and well conditioned muscles.

The hind legs are well-developed, powerful and sturdy. The hind legs are the propulsive force in the movement of the dog. The anatomical parts of the hind leg are the hip bone, which is attached to the femur, which is attached to the tibia, and then the fibula and the tarsus. Naturally, these must also have proper angulations at the joints as in the forelegs. Externally, one would like to see a strong muscular build of these structures as a result of disciplinary training. Although the Akita (Japanese) dogs of today have markedly improved along this line, many Akitas (Japanese) of the past had improper angulation or weak joints in the hind legs. Some of the faults were cowhocks, open hocks and weak hind legs moving close to each other. Also, a side view revealing a curved lower leg with excessive angulation detracts from the appearance of sturdiness.

The hocks have the proper angulation and springiness. The hocks play an important part in producing the propulsive power of the hind legs, and must be structurally, sound to produce a strong and quick driving force. Excessive angulation, shallow angulation and “reverse hock” are not normal from the standpoint of mechanics. The hind legs must also appear as large and powerful as the forelegs. The hind legs are important parts of the anatomy and contribute greatly to the overall appearance of the dog. The hind legs should be parallel with the forelegs when viewed from the rear. The side view should reveal a powerful stance, which adds to the overall appeal of the dog.

TAIL
Set on high, thick, carried vigorously curled over back; the tip nearly reaching hocks when let down.

The tail of the Akita (Japanese) is indicative of both its dignity and beauty and must be large and well curled. A tail of proper length will roughly reach the hock when let down. Short tails usually do not have sufficient curl while long tails tend to be loose at the end. Various types of curls are found including left curl, right curl and double curl. But even tails of the same type are not always uniform. Some are small with too tight a curl; others are rolled low to the side and against the loin. There are also tails that have insufficient curl. The Akita (Japanese) tail is set high and forms an ellipse (curve). An ellipse that is parallel to the angles of other body parts, particularly the neck, is especially pleasing aesthetically. A high set, large and well-curved tail, along with the forward angled and prick ears are very important components of the body.
The tail is thick and tightly curled. The tip of the tail almost touches the hock. It is said that the tail of the dog functions as a rudder. It also expresses the character and beauty of the dog aesthetically. The tail must be curled in a majestic manner. Unless the tail nearly reaches the hock, an adequate curl will not be formed, while a longer tail often leads to a loose curl which will detract from the stylish appearance.

In essence, the tail should be in balance with the angle of the neck and in harmony with the rest of the body to reveal its beauty and powerful appearance. The tail curl is considered as one of the symbols of the Akita (Japanese) dog along with its standing ears, so that an uncurled tail is considered a point of disqualification.

Fig 10. Tails of correct curl

**FEET**

*Thick, round, arched and tight.*

Correct well made feet are extremely important. Both front and hind feet need to be round compact, tight and flexible, as well as thickly padded. Splayed or rabbit feet are not desirable.

Fig 11. Correct feet

**GAIT**

*Resilient and powerful movement.*

The Akita’s (Japanese) driving movement combines great power with a precision and smoothness which makes the dog seem as natural to be moving as to standing still. Every step is a purposeful expression of the dogs own will.

Powerful, covering ground with moderate reach and drive. Movement parallel when viewed from front and behind. Back remaining strong, firm, and level.
COAT

Outer coat harsh and straight, undercoat soft and dense; the withers and the rump are covered with slightly longer hair; the hair on tail is longer than on the rest of the body.

The outer coat is harsh while the undercoat is soft and dense. The coat of the Akita (Japanese) is considered as being unique with three grades of coat. The long heavy straight coat is called the bristle coat; the coat covering the entire body is called the regular or outer coat. Beneath the outer coat is the soft luxuriant undercoat, also called the fluffy coat. A coat of good quality will reveal all three layers. The luxuriant growth of the undercoat causes the other layers to stand out, especially with the bristle coat. The coat at the withers and rump are slightly longer than in other areas. The tail coat is notably much longer and must be standing adequately. In contrast, if the undercoat is inadequate, the outer coat will not be as erect. This condition is seen temporarily with the change of coat in dogs with a coat of good quality. Lack of either outer or undercoat can result in a coat of a uniform layer. Then there is another coat of poor quality called the soft downy hair.

The characteristic coat of the Akita (Japanese) is probably due to their origin in the northern regions of Japan where the winters are very severe. A simple way to evaluate an Akita (Japanese) dog’s coat is to look for the clumping of the coat seen immediately after a dog shakes off the rain from his drenched coat.

COLOUR

Red fawn, sesame (red fawn hairs with black tips), brindle and white. All the above mentioned colours except white must have “urajiro”.

(Urajiro = whitish coat on the sides of the muzzle, on the cheeks, on the underside of jaw, neck, chest, body and tail and on the inside of the legs).

The aim is to produce a colouration that matches the scenery of the Japanese countryside. To make an analogy with painting, what is desirable is the effect of a watercolour or a charcoal sketch, not an oil painting. The colours should be matte, rather than smooth or glossy.

The foregoing colours of the Akita (Japanese) are not as simple to visualize as written in the Standard, and in reality it becomes very difficult to evaluate the various colours. Attempts
to explain or interpret are further complicated by different views held by the enthusiasts. However, the coat colour holds much sway in placing the Akita (Japanese) dog at the shows. A dog lacking a vivid coat colour may not be placed as high in the show ring, no matter how great the head features, beautifully balanced the body, or excellent the coat quality.

With the exception of the white coat, the Akita’s (Japanese) coat colour under goes changes with growth and development. This also adds to the difficulty of judging the true coat colour. In the final analysis, one should become capable of judging to be the appropriate colour for each stage of growth. Needless to say, one should consider the colour hue admired by the Japanese in the Akita (Japanese) that inhabited the Tohoku region from ancient times. That is, colour hues that blend with the elegantly pure Japanese paintings, pristine and refined Japanese antique art objects and the simple but sturdy and strong Japanese architecture should be considered otherwise. One could not possibly come to appreciate the feeling for that simplicity without adornment called “shibusu” or “soboku” so often expressed by the Japanese.

RED. In general, the term red includes red, crimson, scarlet, red lead, orange, etc. depending on the shade. In the Akita (Japanese), tea coloured varieties are also considered red, including fox red, light red, yellow red, etc. There are many more names denoting red which are difficult to express in written terms. The colour tone also varies with the colour of the soft undercoat. A white undercoat makes a coat look lighter, while a black undercoat makes a coat look darker. Furthermore, various parts of a dog’s body have different shades of light and dark which further adds to the varieties. As to the colour tones which are preferable, my opinion is that one should exclude the faded and the dark heavy tones, as well as those that remind one of red rust.

![Fig 13. Red](image1)

Fig 13. Red

![Fig 14. Sesame](image2)

Fig 14. Sesame

SESAME - RED FAWN HAIRS WITH BLACK TIPS. The red goma coat usually consists of red with some black tips.

BRINDLE. As in the red coat, there are also many shades of brindle. They may be classified into the brindle, black brindle, red brindle and the grey brindle coats. The most desirable brindle colours for the Akita are probably the black or the grey brindles. The black brindles tend to lack the white on the muzzle, at the tips of the limbs and the tail, resulting in a heavier than desirable black colour tone. The brindle has a lighter shade of black, with the muzzle and limbs having a hue as if some frost had descended upon the earth. The colour quality of the red brindled coat depends upon the amount of red present, whereby a strong red colour is undesirable.
WHITE. Pure white with some tinge of blue is considered as being the most ideal. However, some consideration is also given to those with a faint tinge of red or yellow. Although a pink nose is permitted on the white dog, the dark pigmentation that borders the eyes and lips should be darker than the pigment of the nose. The quality of the white coat which gives rise to a feeling of purity and mysticism may be brought out only by having the various parts of the body pigment in a darker hue.
SIZE

Height at the withers:  Dogs: 67 cm,  
Bitches: 61 cm.  
There is a tolerance of 3 cm more or less.

Taking the tolerance of 3cm into account.  
Dogs may vary in height between 64cm and 70cm. Bitches between 58cm and 64cm. However always remember the ideal height is 67cm for a Dog and 61cm for a Bitch.

FAULTS

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog.

Bitchy dogs / doggy bitches.
Undershot or overshot mouth.
Missing teeth.
Blue or black spotted tongue.
Iris light in colour.
Short tail.
Shyness.

ELIMINATING FAULTS

Aggressive or overly shy.
Ears not pricked.
Hanging tail.
Long hair (shaggy).
Black mask.
Markings on white ground.
Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.

NOTE: Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.
GENERAL APPEARANCE

The coat and condition of the coat generally influence what we call “general appearance”. More important however, is the Akita’s (Japanese) structure and conformation. Its size and proportions must be within the parameters of the standard. For excellence in both conformation and temperament, the Akita (Japanese) must possess other qualities as well. The Akita’s (Japanese) ears must be set at the proper angle when viewed from either the front or the side. The position of the neck needs to express power. The back should be level with a strong loin. The Akita (Japanese) has to have a magnificent and well curled tail. The proper tail contributes much to the dogs dignified appearance. The legs are well balanced with proper angulation and correct position. The stance must indicate self-assurance as well as dignity. It is however, desirable for puppies and young dogs to have a happy and innocent attitude. Bitches are required to show grace and femininity.
HEAD

Figure 1 shows the head from front. The shape of each part of the head contributes to an expression of majesty, dignity and esthetic simplicity, etc. The position and balance of the head are a vital part of the total picture.

The Akita’s (Japanese) ears are shaped like a scalene triangle (a triangle with unequal sides) with slightly rounded tips. If the set of the ears is too high, the distance between the ears would be too narrow. If the set is too low the tendency is toward so called Kanzashi Mimi*1 (ornamental hair pin ears). These are ears whose openings face toward the side rather than the front and may be carried outward (airplane ears). The correct ear is one where a perpendicular line from the tip of the ear passes through the midpoint of the base of the triangle. (Figure 1)

The shape and expression of the eyes is an indication of the dog’s temperament and has a decided influence over the total look of dignity and majesty. The shape of the eye is one of a scalene triangle which is longer horizontally. The inner corner is deep and the line of the lower lid extends upwards with the outer corner directly below the ear. If the distance between the eyes is too small, it gives the Akita (Japanese) a very severe, close eyed and suspicious expression. If the eyes are set too wide, the expression lacks intelligence. The eyes must be dark in colour. Light eyes in an Akita (Japanese) lacks dignity.

Figure 2 shows the head in profile. The lines and angles in the view are quite important. The angle of the ear is acute relative to a horizontal line. The ideal angle is roughly parallel to the angle of the neck (Figure 2). If the angle is too wide, meaning the ears are too upright, the expression lacks concentration. On the other hand, if the angle is too acute the expression is one of dullness and lack of spirit.
The lines along the nasal bridge should be almost parallel to the skull (Figure 2). The angle of the stop needs to be moderate as seen in the illustration. The depth of the stop along with the construction of the forehead is a critical element of the Akita’s (Japanese) head. There should be a furrow running between the eyes toward the back of the skull with no wrinkling of the forehead. If the lips extend back too far, the dog lacks the dignity as well as one of the important characteristics of the Japanese dogs.

Figure 3 illustrates the structure of the muzzle as seen from the front. The official standard describes it as “powerful and of medium length; the base is thick and the tip is not pointed; lips tight”. The upper lips should be tight and strong without drooping or loose flews. If the upper lips are even slightly loose, the muzzle cannot be of proper shape. The shape of the muzzle can be roughly described as one of three types: circular, rectangular and triangular. As the illustration shows, the triangle muzzle lacks fullness. The bridge of the nose is narrow and gives the impression that something is lacking. The upper lips are also somewhat loose. The rectangular muzzle is also called Hakoguchi*² (box mouth). A dog with rectangular muzzle often lacks nicely defined cheeks and tends to have loose flews, giving the muzzle a very slack appearance.

The ideal muzzle is circular in shape, imparting to the face the classic fullness and desired expression without any looseness or droopiness of its features.

![Muzzle Types](image)

**BODY, PROPORTION AND POSTURE**

Figure 4 shows a side view of the Akita’s (Japanese) body shape and proportions.

![Body Proportion](image)

**Figure A** illustrates the normal and natural stance while being shown. The lines and angles of each part are in harmony with each other and are correct. This stance accurately shows the angles for the head and neck, the level back, the proper position of the legs as well as the set of the well-curled tail. The preferred ratio of height at withers to depth of
The chest is ten to five (10:5), while that for height at withers to body length is ten to eleven (10:11). The feet should be planted on lines parallel to each other in both directions, i.e., from both front and side views.

The stance shown in Figure B is called an assembled or gathered posture. The forelegs are placed too far back while, at the same time, the rear legs are positioned forward under the body. This posture is often the result of sickle hocks. Dogs that stand in this fashion tend to have a carp or roached back with the parts of the body not flowing smoothly into each other. The whole visual picture is one lacking in strength and boldness as well as dignity.

The stance in Figure C is dispersed, or saw horse posture, the opposite of the gathered posture. Dogs lacking in condition, without a well drawn up bell and a weak topline will often appear this way. The visual picture is one of softness, general looseness and lack of strength.

Figure 5 is a view looking at the front of the dog. In this view the proportions, shape and structure of the head, neck, forechest, elbows, forelegs and front feet are important. The harmony and balance between the thick and muscular neck, the well built head, well developed forechest as well as strong forelegs to support the whole, needs to be evaluated. Elbow joints must be properly set and the front feet need to be rounded, thickly padded and strongly knuckled. The distance between the two forelegs must be correct (A). If the stance is too wide (B) or too narrow (C), the resulting of body conformation is unsound. Lower legs either too heavy or too light in bone, or feet that are flat are indicative of a lack of strength.

Figure 6 is a view from the rear. The distance between the hind feet as well as the structure of the hind legs in relation to the width of the hindquarters is very important. The muscles of the hindquarters is very important. The muscles of the hindquarters need to be well conditioned in order to show fitness and power. The hind legs should be straight when viewed from behind (A), with the hocks turning neither in (cow hocks)(C) nor out (bandy legged)(B). Hind legs that are straight but too close together are also not desirable. Cow hocks, bandy legs and legs too close together are all an indication of weakness.

Figure 7 shows a side view of the forequarters. The forelegs need to support the massive head, thick neck and sturdy chest as well as allow for stresses associated with quick movements in all directions.

FOREQUARTERS
Their skeletal structure is comprised of the scapula (shoulder blade), humerus (upper arm), radius and ulna (lower arm), carpal bones (carpal or wrist joint), metacarpal (pastern) and phalanges (foot). The illustration on the left shows the proper slope of the pastern, while the one in the middle shows a very upright pastern lacking flexibility. The illustration on the right shows a pastern that is too sloping and lacks strength. The pastern must have good flexibility and have proper slope in order to effectively absorb the shock caused by the weight of the dog as its feet strike the ground.

Figure 7

Figure 8

HINDQUARTERS

Figure 8 is a side view of the hindquarters. The hind legs provide the force and impulsion necessary for forward movement. The skeletal structure of the hind leg consists of the femur (upper thigh), the tibia and fibula (lower thigh), tarsal bones (hock joint) metatarsals and phalanges (metatarsus and foot). Like those of the forequarters, the bones of the hind leg must be joined to each other at the proper angles. Correct structure requires firm, powerful and well-conditioned muscles. The illustration on the left shows a well bent and correct hock. The one in the middle shows too much angulation at the hock and is commonly called a sickle hock. A dog with a sickle hock lacks endurance. The picture on the right illustrates a lack of angulation with forward bending hock, commonly called a popping hock. This type of hock is weak and lacks sufficient power for proper movement and impulsion. Lastly, both front and hind feet need to be compact, tight and flexible, as well as thickly padded.

TAIL

The tail of the Akita (Japanese) is indicative of both its dignity and beauty and must be large and well curled. Figure 9 illustrates the types and sets of the tail as seen in this breed. A tail of proper length and well roughly reach the hock when let down. Short tails usually do not have sufficient curl while long tails tend to be loose at the end. Various types of curls are found including left curl, right curl, Taiko Maki (drum curl or full curl) and double curl. But even tails of the same type are not always uniform. Some are small with too tight a curl, others are rolled low to the side and against the loin. There are also tails that have insufficient curl and are known as Nage-o.* As I believe that the ideal Akita (Japanese) tail is set high and forms and ellipse. An ellipse that is parallel to the angles of other body parts, particularly the neck, is especially pleasing aesthetically. A high set, large tail and well-curled tail, along with the forward angled and prick ears are very important components of Akita (Japanese) type. Uncurled tails are a disqualification.
COAT AND COLOUR

The first thing that strikes one’s eye when looking at the figure of a handsome dog posing in the show ring, is its overall appearance and the colour of its coat. The texture of that coat contributes a great deal to the overall impressions and image. The Akita’s (Japanese) coat must be consisting of three layers. The harsh outer coat has the longest hair. In addition, there is a harsh but shorter coat, as well as a soft undercoat. All three layers must be present for the coat to be correct.

Coat colours include red, brindle, sesame and white. The most common colours observed in the show ring today are red, brindle and white. Other colours are rarely seen. Except for white, all other colours must be shaded with an appropriate amount of Urajiro,*4 (The white, or near white shading that is present on the sides of the muzzle, on the cheeks, the underside of the jaw, neck, chest, body and tail as well as the insides of the legs). The preferred colour has elegance and purity as well as clarity. The coat, in addition to its quality and colour, must be in good condition as regards its density and standoff characteristics. Furthermore, the condition of the coat may alter the colour itself as well as affect the evaluation of the dog as a whole.

*1 Kanzashi Mimi: Literally “ornamental hairpin ears”. Ears facing to the side or out rather than forward. Airplane ears
*2 Hakoguchi: A blunt of square muzzle
*3 Nage-o: A tail with insufficient curl
*4 Urajiro: White or whitish coat colour on the sides of the muzzle, on the cheeks, on the underside of the jaw, neck, chest, body and tail as well as the inside of the legs.
## COMPARISON OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AKITA (JAPANESE) AND AMERICAN AKITA

### History
Pure Akita — Mastiff and German Shepherd Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Akita (Japanese)</th>
<th>American Akita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ratio Height to Length</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs 10 to 11</td>
<td>Dogs 9 to 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitches slightly longer</td>
<td>Bitches 9 to 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ratio Muzzle to Skull</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Long Muzzle</td>
<td>2 Muzzle to 3 Skull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dewlap</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without Dewlap</td>
<td>Minimal Dewlap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belly</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well Drawn Up</td>
<td>Moderate Tuck Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colour</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Fawn, Sesame, Brindle, White</td>
<td>Any colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black Mask</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminating Fault</td>
<td>With or Without Mask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Height at Withers</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs 64 to 70cm</td>
<td>Dogs 66 to 71cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitches 58 to 64cm</td>
<td>Bitches 61 to 66cm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above allows tolerance 3cm from ideal
Ideal Dog 67 cm
Ideal Bitch 61 cm

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
The Australian National Kennel Council Limited appreciates and sincerely thanks International All Breeds Judge - Mr Hiroshi Kamisato of Japan for his help, cooperation and advice in the production of this Breed Standard Extension

Japan Kennel Club for permission to use text, drawings and pictures from their publication “Akita”.

Hiroshi Kamisato, Shigeru Shimada, Keiichiro Kozaki. Interpreter: Izumi Awashima, the article “Judging the Akita”.

Naoto Kajiwara and interpreter Tatsuo Kimura
Silvia Exposito of Shun’You Kensha and Kazuo Mori.
Information edited and obtained by Justin and Clare Tartaglia with the help of breed enthusiasts around the World.