

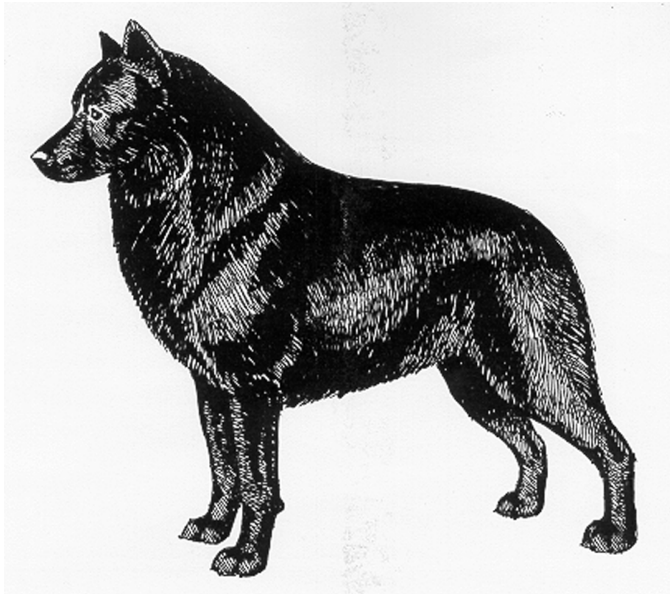
# SCHIPPERKE

## Official UKC Breed Standard

Revised January 1, 2025 *PREVIEW – updated 12/13/24*

Companion Dog Group

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The goals and purposes of this breed standard include: to furnish guidelines for breeders who wish to maintain the quality of their breed and to improve it; to advance this breed to a state of similarity throughout the world; and to act as a guide for judges.

Breeders and judges have the responsibility to avoid any conditions or exaggerations that are detrimental to the health, welfare, essence and soundness of this breed, and must take the responsibility to see that these are not perpetuated.

Any departure from the following 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 and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

### HISTORY

Schipperke means means "Little Boatman or "Little Captain in Flemish and is correctly pronounced "Skip-er-kee". Favored by working people and cobblers in 1690, the Schipperke was shown for the first time in 1882 in the town of Spa and became fashionable thanks to Queen Marie-Henriette of Belgium. Through genomic analysis it has been suggested that the Schipperke lineage came from the Papillion, Brussels Griffon, Pug, Pomeranian, American Eskimo Dog and Volpino. Schipperkes were used as boat dogs for many centuries and were found guarding barges and urban craft shops of shoemakers and butchers. They are renowned catchers of mice, rats, and other vermin. Schipperkes are a multipurpose dog. They are as comfortable

working as they are sitting on your lap but they prefer to have a job.

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Schipperke is a compact, solidly built dog. They should be square in proportion, with a wedge-shaped head and a distinctive coat that grows in a specific pattern. They should have a broad, stocky body with limbs that are moderate in bone. The Schipperke is a naturally tailed breed with the tail curling up over their back or carried down. A docked tail is allowed. Schipperkes must be judged by the Standard not by color or whether they are undocked or docked. There should be no preference given to any color or tail. As a breed that uses their whiskers, they should not have their whiskers removed.

### CHARACTERISTICS

The Schipperke is an excellent compact guard dog, good at giving alarm, and well adapted to boat life. They are active, agile and tirelessly interested in their surroundings. The breed is aloof with strangers, gentle with children, inquisitive and excellent hunters of vermin.

### HEAD

The head is fairly broad, wedge-shaped and narrowing at the eyes. The brows and the cheekbones are moderately arched. The toplines of the skull and muzzle lie in parallel planes, with a tapering muzzle not too elongated or too blunt, and with a moderate stop.

**SKULL** - The skull is wider between the ears, narrowing towards the eyes. In profile, it is slightly rounded.

*Fault:* Toy head, Narrow head, Dome skull.

**MUZZLE** - The muzzle tapers in width towards the nose and has tight-fitting black lips for the blacks and blondes. The browns have self-colored lips. The length of the muzzle is slightly less than one-half the length of the entire head. The whiskers should not be trimmed.

*Fault:* Pink lips or lacking color.

*Serious Fault:* Lips lacking in black pigment in the black and blondes. Elongated muzzle, Muzzle that is too short.

**TEETH** - A full complement of strong, white teeth meeting in a scissors bite; an even bite is acceptable.

*Serious Faults:* Undershot or overshot bite.

**EYES** - The small, almond-shaped eyes are dark brown, with black eye rims for the black and blonde. The brown has self-colored eye rims. The eyes should be neither

sunken nor prominent. The expression should be questioning, sharp, and lively but not mean or wild.

Serious Fault: Eye rims lacking in black pigmentation in black and blonde. Pink eye rims, Light eyes, Large, round, prominent eyes.

*Disqualification:* Pink eyes

NOSE - The nose is small and black for the black and blonde and self-colored on the brown dogs. This breed can develop "Snow Nose" in months where there is less exposure to the sun. Snow nose is not considered a fault.

*Serious Fault:* Nose lacking in black pigmentation for the black and blond,

*Disqualification:* Pink nose.

EARS - The small, very erect triangular shaped ears are set high but not too close together. They are very mobile.

*Faults:* Ears too long, ears too rounded, hooded ears, bat ears.

*Disqualification:* Any carriage other than erect.

## **NECK**

Medium length and strongly muscled, the neck is slightly arched at the crest and appears larger due to the abundant ruff of hair.

## **FOREQUARTERS**

The shoulder blades and upper arms are long and sloping, which places the front legs well under the body.

*Faults:* Stright shoulders, Narrow fronts, Wide fronts.

FORELEGS - The forelegs are straight, and under the body with moderate bone in proportion to the body, but not course. The legs are muscular and sloping and set directly down from the shoulders. Pasterns are short and nearly vertical. The distance from the elbow to the ground is half the height at the withers. Front dewclaws are optional.

*Faults:* Bowed legs. Legs not straight when viewed from the front.

## **BODY**

The body should appear square. The length from point of shoulder to point of buttocks is roughly equal to the height at the withers. From the front they should have a deep brisket, reaching to the elbows, broad behind the shoulders and a prominent fore-chest with ribs well sprung. The withers are pronounced and the topline appears to slope gently to the croup due to the appearance of the ruff and cape. The tail sits high on the rump, and when present curls up over the back or carried down. Docked or natural tails are equally acceptable. The underline rises gently from the deep chest to the belly, which is only moderately tucked up.

*Faults:* Sway back, roach back, appearance of broken topline.

## **HINDQUARTERS**

The hindquarters are well under the body and are somewhat lighter than the forequarters. They are muscular and powerful. The loin is well drawn up from the brisket but not to such an extent as to cause weakness and leggy appearance of the hindquarters. The hindquarters should appear parallel when viewed from behind. The rump should appear rounded.

HIND LEGS - Perfectly straight when viewed from behind, with fine moderate bone. Hocks are well let down and stifles well bent. Extreme angulation is to be penalized. Short rear pasterns. Rear Dewclaws should be removed.

*Faults:* Stright hocks.

*Serious Faults:* Cow hocked, Sickle hocked, extreme rear angulation.

## **FEET**

Small, round, catlike feet proportional to the body with tight with well-arched toes. Short black nails for the black and brown dogs and blondes can have a combination of black or clear toenails. Trimming of hair on the feet is acceptable.

*Serious Fault:* Flat feet, Splayed feet, hare feet

## **TAIL**

The Schipperke is naturally a tailed breed. Some dogs are born completely tailless or with a stumpy or short tail. but The tail can also be docked. The tail is set high and if docked, the tail is customarily docked to no more than one inch in length. If natural, the tail will be broad at the base, tapering to the end, and of various lengths and carriages. The tail may be straight or curled and carried over the back. All tail types are to be judged equally.

## **COAT**

The coat should be abundant and slightly harsh to the touch. The adult coat has several distinct lengths and is highly characteristic. The Schipperke is double coated, with a firm, harsh, straight outer coat, and a soft, thick undercoat. The hair on the face, ears, head, front of the front legs, and rear legs from the hock to the ground is short. On the body, the coat is moderate in length and close lying. Longer hair starts around the neck beginning at the back of the ears, forming the ruff, cape and jabot extending down between the front legs. Hair down the middle of the back starting just behind the cape and over the rump lies flat. This hair is slightly shorter than the cape but longer than the hair on the sides of the body. On the back of the thighs, the hair is long and abundant, forming culottes. The culottes should be equal to the length of the ruff. The undercoat is dense and short on the body and is very dense around the neck making the ruff stand out. If tailed, the tail should be well furnished.

*Serious Faults:* Coat that is overly long, soft or silky. Lack of the characteristic coat pattern. Fringes of hair on the ears. Total lack of undercoat.

## **COLOR**

The Schipperke is a solid black, blonde (platinum to strawberry) or brown (light mocha to dark chocolate) dog and all colors should be judged equally. The color should be secondary to structure. Note: variations of the blonde color at the ruff, cape and tail feathers are normal in the blonde and brown dogs. Small white areas from scarring or natural aging are not a fault.

*Disqualifications:* Bi-colored dogs such as black and tan, Dilute colors such as grey, blue, or blue-cream, Any white markings. Albinism.

## **SIZE** (updated 12.13.24)

The ideal height at the highest point of the withers should be: Males between 11-13 inches and females 10-12 inches. Structure should take precedence over size.

*Fault:* Males and females under the size limits by 2 inches and over the size limits by 3 inches.

## **GAIT**

Characteristic gait is firm and supple, with reasonable reach and drive. The topline remains straight. At a slower speed, the legs move parallel to one another. As speed increases, the legs tend to converge.

## **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

*(A dog with a Disqualification must not be considered for placement in a conformation event, and must be reported to UKC.)*

Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchid.

Viciousness or extreme shyness.

Ear carriage other than erect

Bi-colored dogs such as black and tan

Dilute colors such as blue, gray, or blue-cream.

Any white markings.

Albinism.

*The docking of tails and cropping of ears in America is legal and remains a personal choice. However, as an international registry, the United Kennel Club is aware that the practices of cropping and docking have been forbidden in some countries. In light of these developments, the United Kennel Club feels that no dog in any UKC event, including conformation, shall be penalized for a full tail or natural ears.*