

THE MINIATURE AMERICAN SHEPHERD



The Miniature American Shepherd is a small-sized herding breed, known for its versatility and enthusiasm for work and play. Descending from the Australian Shepherd, the breed maintains close similarities to its larger cousin, in both its working styles and characteristics.

The Miniature American Shepherd was first recorded into the AKC Foundation Stock Service (FSS) in 2011. The breed has excelled in the AKC performance venues, as well as in the Miscellaneous Classes while in the FSS. Granted full AKC Herding Group (conformation) status on July 1, 2015, the breed became eligible to additionally earn AKC conformation Championship points and titles.

The development of the breed was begun in California in the late 1970's and early 1980's by several breeders who wanted to improve upon an inbred line of small dogs that were thought to be of Australian Shepherd heritage. Several of these small "Aussies" were crossed back to registered Australian Shepherds and the breed first became known as the Miniature Australian Shepherd or Mini Aussie, and also as the North American Shepherd.

The breed quickly gained popularity, particularly among horse show enthusiasts who helped spread the breed throughout the United States. The "little Aussies" are truly an American breed and like its larger cousin, is not an Australian breed at all.

The Miniature American Shepherd Club of the USA (MASCUSA) was first formed in 1990 (as a Mini Aussie Club) and is now the parent breed club for the AKC Miniature American Shepherd, also referred to as the MAS.

Upon acceptance of the breed by the AKC in 2011, the breed was given a more appropriate (American) name by the membership of the breed club.

The Miniature American Shepherd is a small dog weighing, on average between 20 and 35 pounds. It is neither heavy boned nor light-boned, but rather a medium (moderately) boned dog with a sturdiness and stamina to perform a days' work on the farm.

The MAS is an upright (non-creeping) herder who works it's stock rather closely. He is considered a loose-eyed worker on stock, but may use a strong, glaring stare its bark as needed when working tough or challenging stock. When their bark does not get the desired effect, an occasional nip or grip, may be necessary, but is used sparingly.

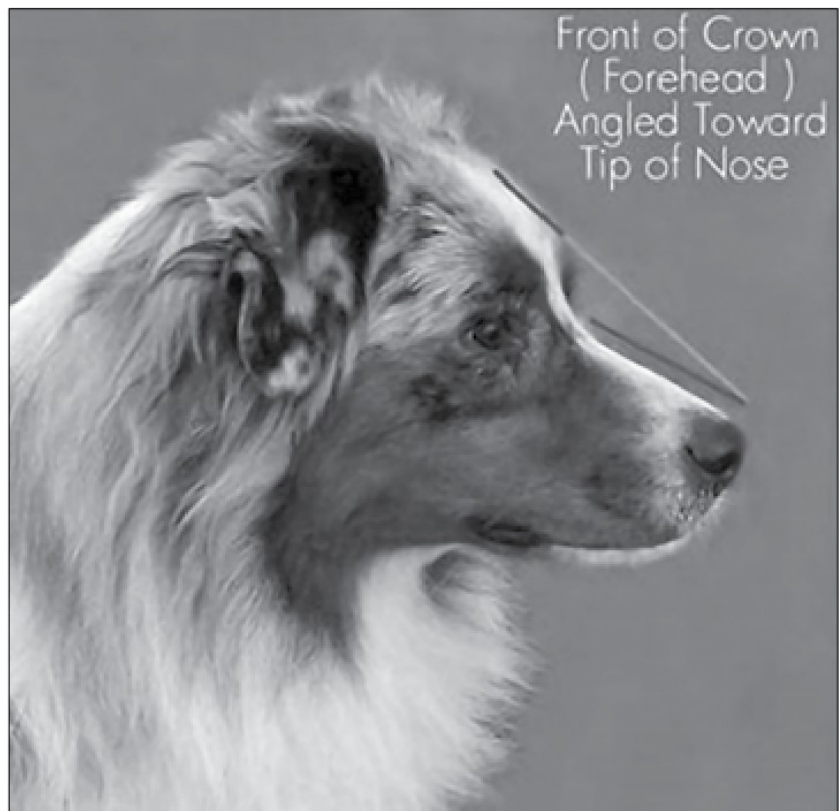
The MAS is slightly longer than tall, meaning he is SLIGHTLY rectangular and not a long-backed dog nor a square dog. The word moderate is a key word no matter what individual piece of the dog is being evaluated. The MAS is an athletic breed and should not appear bulky



or heavy muscled. Equally, he should not be spindly or weedy.

A great deal of importance has been given to the description of

the head, not for aesthetics but for the safety and function of the MAS while performing farm and ranch chores. The head is gently wedged-shaped and is not



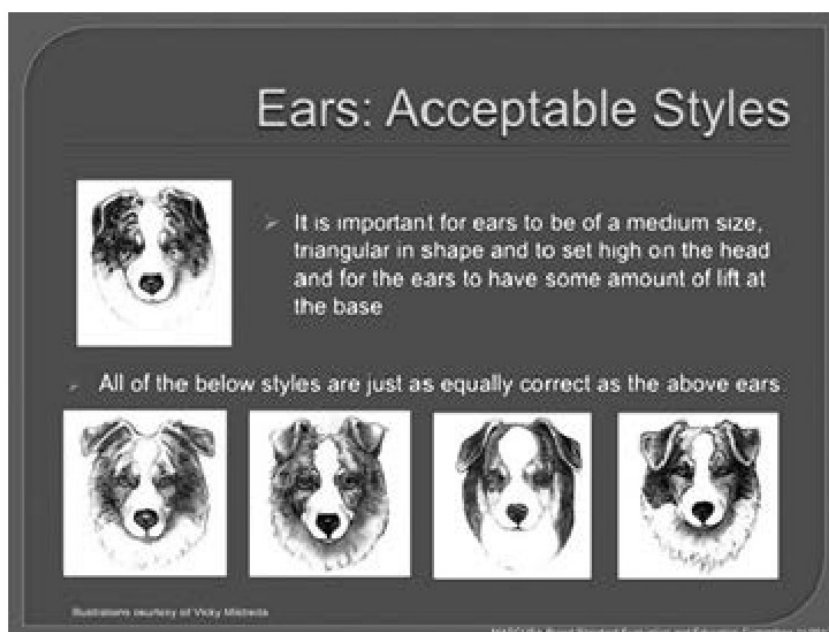
square, blocky or blunt. The stop is moderate (not abrupt) and the planes are nearly parallel, but are just slightly oblique to help a possible kick from stock glance off the head, should it occur.

The eyes are medium-sized and are not sunken nor do they protrude (bulge), allowing good vision range while reducing possible injury. Muzzle length is equal to top-skull length and the muzzle is neither heavy nor snipey and tapers gradually to a rounded tip.

Dogs in the field (pasture or pens) are subject to sunburn, so proper (full) pigmentation is best suited for the MAS who regularly works outdoors. Young dogs and merle-patterned dogs may have some unpigmented areas of the nose that may take up to a few years to fill in, so care should be taken when working these dogs outside.

The MAS is a smooth moving breed (not choppy) and has balanced front and rear movement (equal ratio). Exaggerated side gait (excess kickback, over-reaching) is not the correct movement for the MAS, as he needs to cover ground efficiently, without wasting energy. As he moves into a trot, his front feet and his rear feet converge toward the centerline of gravity, forming nearly a "V" appearance when viewed from the front (coming at) or from the rear (going away).

Although he may show some reserve with strangers, the MAS does not exhibit fearfulness. As a herding breed, it is natural for



the MAS to be watchful of their surroundings. He may need a minute to decide if a stranger is a threat to his property (territory or owner), but the MAS is generally accepting of people that the owner accepts. The MAS is a devoted breed and can become very focused on his handler and seemingly not interested in other people. The MAS should not be faulted in the conformation ring for being non-responsive to a judge who attempts to get his attention. However, the MAS is an energetic breed and should exhibit an enthusiastic attitude toward his handler.

The MAS has a medium coat, both in texture and in length. The MAS is a double-coated breed and the undercoats can vary in degree of quantity, depending upon climate and age of the MAS. Males may have more frill and heavier manes than bitches, but neither sex should have overly abundant or overly long hair as these are serious

faults. The MAS is to be shown in a natural coat with only light trimming to a few specific areas.

The coloring offers variety and individuality. With no order of preference, the recognized colors are black, blue merle, red (liver) and red merle. The merle patterns will exhibit in any amount some marbling, flecks or blotches. Each color may also have copper (tan) markings. Tan markings are not required but when present are acceptable ONLY in any or all of the following areas; around the eyes, on the feet, legs, chest, muzzle, underside of neck, face, underside of ear, underline of body, under the base of the tail and the breeches. Tan markings vary in shades from creamy beige to dark rust, with no preference. Blending with the base color or merle pattern may only occur on the face, legs, feet, and breeches. White on the head is limited to LESS than 50%, such

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that it does not predominate and the eyes are fully surrounded by color and pigment. White does not appear on the back of the torso behind the withers, nor on the sides of the body more than an inch higher than the elbows. White patches or spots on the body, in non-designated areas, is a disqualification. A non-recognized color is any color not covered in the standard as acceptable and is a disqualification, ie: blonde, brindle, sable, etc.

The versatility of this breed helps them to excel in many venues, including but not limited to:



Disc Dog



Obedience



Tracking



Agility



Herding

Disqualification

- * Under 14 inches and over 18 inches for dogs;
- * Under 13 inches and over 17 inches for bitches.
- * Over 50% un-pigmented nose leather.
- * Undershot or overshot bite*
- Other than recognized colors.
- * White body splashes, which means any conspicuous, isolated spot or patch of white on the area between withers and tail, on back, or sides between elbows and back of hindquarters