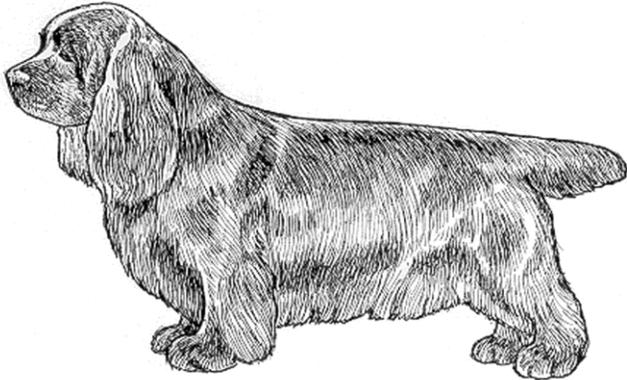


# SUSSEX SPANIEL

## Official UKC Breed Standard

Revised May 1, 2017



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

The Sussex Spaniel has been recognized as a distinct breed since at least the 18th century. It originated in the county of Sussex in England, where it was used as a field dog. The breed gained the reputation of being an excellent hunting dog. The breed exists today virtually unchanged in character and general appearance from the 19th century sporting dogs.

The Sussex Spaniel was recognized by the United Kennel Club on January 1, 1993.

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Sussex Spaniel presents a long, low rectangular outline. It is muscular and rather massive. It is an active dog with a characteristic rolling movement and lively tail action. Its short legs and habit of giving tongue when on scent make the Sussex Spaniel an ideal gun dog for flushing game in dense undergrowth.

### Gun Dog Group

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### CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics are ranked in order of importance. The most important breed features are proper color and general appearance. Of secondary importance are the head, ears, back, back ribs, legs and feet. Of least importance are the eyes, nose, neck, chest and shoulders, tail and coat.

The Sussex Spaniel is friendly, with a cheerful and tractable disposition, despite its somber, serious expression. Its rich, golden liver color is unique to the breed.

### HEAD

Correct head and expression are important features of the breed. In expression, it is somber and serious, with the fairly heavy brows producing a frowning expression.

**SKULL** - The whole of the skull gives an appearance of heaviness. It is broad, slightly rounded, and has an indentation in the middle. The occiput is full but not pointed. The brows are fairly heavy. The stop is pronounced. The distance from the stop to the occiput is greater than the distance from the stop to the nose.

**MUZZLE** - Is approximately three inches in length and has a square profile. The lips are somewhat pendulous.  
*Serious Faults:* Narrow head. Weak muzzle.

**TEETH** - A full complement of strong, white teeth meet in a scissors bite, which is preferred.

*Minor Fault:* Any deviation from a scissors bite.

**EYES** - The fairly large eyes are hazel in color, with a soft, languishing expression. Very little haw is visible.

*Minor Fault:* Light eyes.

**NOSE** - Nose leather is liver-colored. The nostrils are well-developed.

**EARS** - The thick, fairly large ears are lobe-shaped. They are set moderately low on the head, slightly above the outside corner of the eye.

### NECK

The rather short, strong neck is slightly arched. It is relatively free from throatiness, and does not carry the head much above the level of the back.

### FOREQUARTERS

The muscular shoulders are well laid back.

**FORELEGS** - The short, strong forelegs are heavily-boned and may be straight or have a slight bow - both being acceptable. They are set well under the dog. The very short pasterns are heavily-boned.

## **BODY**

The low, long body has a level topline. The chest has a good girth, being deep and wide, and is round, especially behind the shoulders. The long back and loin are very muscular both in width and depth. In conjunction, the back ribs are deep.

*Minor Faults:* Shortness of body. Flat-sided.

## **HINDQUARTERS**

The full, well-rounded hindquarters are strong and heavily boned. They correspond in angulation to the forequarters.

**HIND LEGS** - The hind legs are parallel and set wide apart, about the same width as the dog is at the shoulders. They are short and strong, with great bone, but not shorter than the forelegs. The hocks are set low, with a minimum of angulation, turning neither in nor out.

## **FEET**

The large, round and well padded feet have short hair between the toes.

## **TAIL**

The low-set tail may be either docked or natural. While gaiting, the dog exhibits nice tail action, but does not carry the tail above the level of the back.

## **COAT**

The abundant body coat is flat or slightly waved, with no tendency to curl. The ears have soft, wavy hair. The neck has a well marked frill. The forelegs are moderately well-feathered. The moderately well-feathered hind legs are clean below the hocks. The tail is thickly covered with moderately long feathers.

Minimal trimming is preferred. It is acceptable to shape the foot feathers or to remove excess hair from between the pads or from the rear pastern. The hair between the toes is to be left long enough to cover the nails.

*Very Serious Fault:* Curly coat.

*Serious Fault:* The presence of a topknot.

## **COLOR**

The only acceptable color, and a sure sign of breed purity, is a rich, golden liver.

*Very Serious Faults:* Dark liver or puce colored. White on any part of the body other than the chest.

*Serious Faults:* Too light or too dark in color.

*Minor Fault:* White on the chest.

## **HEIGHT AND WEIGHT**

The height range, for both sexes, as measured at the withers, is from thirteen (13) up to, and including, fifteen (15) inches.

The weight range for both sexes is from thirty-five (35) to forty-five (45) pounds.

*Minor Fault:* Any deviation from the proper height range.

## **GAIT**

The Sussex Spaniel has a characteristic rolling gait, produced by the combination of a round, deep, wide chest, short legs, and a long body. Movement is powerful and true, with perfect coordination between the fore and hind legs; never appearing clumsy. The head is held low. It is recommended that the Sussex Spaniel be exhibited on a loose lead to best see the breed's natural gait.

*Faults:* Paddling. Weaving.

## **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.

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.*