



Presa Canario Breed Standard

Recognized by the AMA in 2019

Background: The ancestors of the Presa Canario were probably brought to the Canary Island by the Spanish Conquistadors and coexisted with indigenous cattle dogs from the beginning of the fifteenth century. Early Presa Canario's were of moderately large size, brindle or fawn with white marking, with a specific molossoid morphology but yet agile and powerful, having a strong temperament, robust and lively, loyal character. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the number of these dogs increased considerably and numerous references to them in preConquest historical texts, especially in the "Cedularios del Cabildo" (municipal registers), which explain their duties essentially as guard dogs and protectors of cattle. In the 1940s, the breed began to decline in numbers. It was revived again in the 1970s, when reputable breeders developed and bred Presa's true to their original size and character. They continued to serve many purposes. They guarded the farms, helped catch and hold cattle, and exterminated wild or stray dogs.

General Appearance: A moderately large sized Molosser, with a rectilinear profile and black or dark brown mask. Robust and well proportioned. The head is massive and cuboid. Ears are set just above the line of the eye and may be cropped, pendent or rose. The body of the Presa Canario is slightly longer than its height at the withers, with a broad, deep chest, but females may be slightly longer and possess somewhat less rib spring than the males. Skin is thick and elastic. The distance from the withers to the elbow is roughly equal to the distance from the elbow to the ground. The tail is very thick at the base, and tapers to a point. The tail is moderately high and

reaches to the hock. The overall impression is that of an imposing, solid guard dog.

Disqualifications: unilateral or bilateral cryptorchidism

Disposition: The Presa Canario is confident, noble and a little distant. When alert, the stance is firm with a vigilant attitude. The essential characteristics of the Presa are those which enable it to drive and hold cattle, and to guard its home and family. These tasks require a powerful, agile, courageous dog. Compliant and well behaved with its owner and family but is wary of strangers with a low and deep bark.

Disqualifications: viciousness or extreme shyness

Size:

Male: 23-26 Inches height at withers for mature males and a minimum weight of 100 pounds.

Female: 22-25 Inches height at wither of mature females and a minimum weight of 85 pounds.

Head: Massive, and compact in appearance, covered with thick skin. The shape tends towards a slightly elongated cube. When viewed from the side, the top lines of the skull and muzzle are roughly parallel to one another, and are joined by a well-defined, but not abrupt, stop. When the dog is alert, the skin forms several symmetrical wrinkles in the median furrow.

The skull is cube-shaped, broad and slightly domed, but without occipital protuberance. The width of the skull is about 3/5 of the length from occiput to nose. Zygomatic arch is very pronounced and there is a deep median furrow that diminishes in depth from the stop to the occiput. Cheek muscles are well developed without being pronounced.

The stop is pronounced, but not abrupt. The furrow between the frontal lobes is well defined and is about 2/3 the size of the skull.

Fault: Excessive wrinkling
Serious Faults: Skull and muzzle not in correct proportion, abrupt stop

Eyes: Eyes are slightly oval (Almond Shaped), set level and wide apart, and range in color from medium to dark brown, in accordance with coat color. Eyelids are close-fitting and black.

Serious Faults: Light eyes, droopy eyelids, eyes set close together or obliquely.

Disqualifications: Blue, gray, or yellow eyes, non-matching eyes, crossed eyes, divergent strabismus (wall-eyed)

Muzzle/Bite: The muzzle forms a smaller cube that tapers just slightly from stop to nose. The length of the muzzle is roughly $\frac{2}{5}$ of the length of the head, while the width is about $\frac{2}{3}$ as wide as the skull. The bridge of the muzzle is flat and straight. Lips are moderately thick and pendulous with black pigment. The top lip should fall naturally over the lower without excessive flews. Viewed from the front, the lips form an inverted "V" where they join.

The bite is a scissor bite with an even or slightly undershot bite acceptable.

The teeth are wide, evenly spaced set in a wide jaw. Large molars, small incisors, with well-developed canines.

Fault: Missing any tooth other than the first premolar.

Serious Fault: Excessively undershot bite

Disqualification: Overshot bite, wry mouth

Nose: Wide, strong black pigmentation. The nose does not protrude beyond the front plane of the muzzle, which would give a snipey look to the head. The nostrils are large to facilitate breathing.

Fault: lack of pigmentation

Serious fault: pinched nares

Ears: Ears are of medium size, set just above the line of the eye and wide apart, and covered with short, fine hair. Ears may be natural or cropped. The natural ears may be pendent or rose. Pendent ears drop effortlessly to the sides

of the head, and rose ears are close fitting.
Cropped ears are erect.

Fault: High set ears

Disqualifications: unilateral or bilateral deafness

Neck: Shorter than the length of the head. Skin on the underside is slightly loose, forming a slight dewlap. Solid and straight, it tends to be cylindrical and muscular.

Serious Faults: Excessive dewlap, long or weak neck

Shoulders: Shoulders are muscular and well laid back. The upper arm is of good length and well-angled so that the front legs are set well behind the point of the shoulder. The elbows set slightly out from the body.

Serious faults: shoulders that are too steep without a lay back

Chest, Back and Croup: The chest is broad and deep with well-developed pectoral muscles. Ideally, the circumference of the deepest part of the chest should equal almost $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the dog's height at the withers. Seen from both the front and the side, the chest should be well let down to at least the elbow.

A properly proportioned Presa is about $\frac{1}{5}$ longer (measured from prosternum to point of buttocks) than tall (measured from the withers to the ground), and length of the front leg (measured from point of elbow to the ground) should approximately equal $\frac{1}{2}$ of the dog's height. Females may be slightly longer in body. The body is long, broad and deep. The back and loin are strong. The top line is Straight, without deformations and sustained by well-developed but barely visible muscles. Rising slightly from the withers to the croup. The ribs are well arched. The loin is moderately short, muscular and deep, with moderate tuck-up.

The croup is medium length, broad and slightly sloping. The croup should not be long as this would limit movement. Females normally have slightly wider croups.

Serious Faults: Shallow chest, croup and withers equal height, body too short, swayback, roach back.

Disqualification: Croup lower than withers

Hindquarters: Hindquarters are powerful with long and well-muscled thighs. The angulation of the hindquarters is moderate. When the dog is standing, the rear pasterns are short, perpendicular to the ground and, when observed from the rear, parallel to one another. The hind feet are slightly longer than the front feet, otherwise identical.

Serious Faults: Overangulation, sickle hocks, cow hocks

Legs: The legs are straight, well-muscled, and heavy boned. Pasterns are strong, short, and nearly vertical. The elbow must be neither too close to the ribs nor sticking out.

Feet: Cat feet with rounded toes, not too close together. Well-developed and black pads. Nails are dark, white nails should be avoided, although they can occur in function of coat color.

Fault: Splayed feet

Tail: Thick base, tapering to the tip, down to the hock but no longer. Moderately high set on. In action it rises like a sabre, but without curling nor leaning towards the back. At rest it hangs straight with a slight curve at the tip.

Serious Faults: Fine tail, curly or blunt tail, low tail set

Disqualification: Docked tail

Coat: The Presa Canario has a short, flat single coat that is harsh in texture. Very short and fine on the ears; slightly longer on the withers and on the back of thighs.

Serious Faults: Satiny, fine coat

Color: Any shade of fawn, black, and brindle in any combination of these colors. The face must have a black or dark brown mask that does not extend over the eyes, with or without a white

blaze or patch on the head. Minimal white markings may appear anywhere between the chest and the throat, or on the toes.

Serious Fault: Mask that extends over the eyes, white markings covering more than 20% of the dog

Disqualifications: Absence of dark mask, coat color or pattern other than described above, albinism

Movement: On the move, the Presa Canario is agile, well-coordinated and the movement is effortless. The Presa Canario should cover a lot of ground due to their long reach. The tail is carried low and the head is carried only a little above the level of the back. When alert, the head and tail are carried high.

Movement faults: Any suggestion of clumsiness

Similar movement faults are to be penalized according to the degree to which they interfere with the ability of the dog to perform in performance/working venues.

Disqualifications:

- Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchidism
- Viciousness or extreme shyness
- Blue, gray, or yellow eyes
- Non-matching eyes
- Crossed eyes
- Divergent strabismus (wall-eyed)
- Overshot bite
- Wry mouth
- Unilateral or bilateral deafness
- Croup lower than withers
- Docked tail
- Absence of dark mask
- Coat color or pattern other than described above
- Albinism