



Doberman Pinscher Breed Standard

Recognized by the AMA in 2024

Background: Since the invention of money, one thing has been certain at all times and in all places: The tax collector is never a welcome visitor. In certain precincts of 19th century Germany, the reception was downright hostile. All too aware of this was taxman and dog breeder Louis Dobermann, from the town of Apolda. He hoped to breed an imposing but dependable protector to accompany him on his rounds. Dobermann's handiwork was a larger, less refined version of the pinscher that today bears his name (minus an "n," which was dropped somewhere along the way). Historians mention the Black and Tan Terrier (forerunner of the Manchester Terrier), German Pinscher, Rottweiler, and smooth-coated herding dogs among the components of Dobermann's new breed. The 'Tax Collector's Dog' quickly gained an international reputation as a working dog supreme. Dobes have excelled at police and military K-9 duty, as therapy dogs and service dogs for the disabled, as searchers and rescuers, and in competitive dog sports. During World War II, the U.S. Marine Corps Dobermans of the Pacific won the breed great fame. Twenty-five of these loyal "Devil Dogs" died during the battle for Guam.

The breed was recognized by the German Kennel Club in 1899. Dobermans began to appear in large numbers in the United States after World War I. The breed has been a successful working dog and a popular companion, excelling in police and military work.

General Appearance: The appearance is that of a dog of medium size, with a body that is square. Compactly built, muscular and powerful, appearance, of proud carriage, reflecting great nobility and temperament.

Energetic, watchful, determined, alert, fearless, loyal and obedient.

Disposition: Energetic, watchful, determined, alert, fearless, loyal and obedient.

Disqualifications: viciousness or extreme shyness

Size: Height at the withers: 24 to 28 inches. The height, measured vertically from the ground to the highest point of the withers, equaling the length measured horizontally from the forechest to the rear projection of the upper thigh. Length of head, neck and legs in proportion to length and depth of body.

Head: Long and dry, resembling a blunt wedge in both frontal and profile views. When seen from the front, the head widens gradually toward the base of the ears in a practically unbroken line.

Eyes: Eyes are almond shaped, and moderately deep set. Eye colors range from medium to dark brown in black dogs. In blue, red and fawn dogs, the color of the iris should blend with that of the markings. Darker shades are always preferred. Faults: Light, round or prominent eyes.

Muzzle/Bite: In profile, the muzzle should not slant back too suddenly from under the nose. Jaws are full, powerful and well filled under the eyes. Lips are tight and dry. A full complement (42) of correctly placed, strongly developed teeth (22 in the lower jaw and 20 in the upper jaw) meet in a true scissors bite, lower incisors upright and touching inside of upper incisors. Disqualifications: Overshot more than 3/16 of an inch; undershot more than 1/8 of an inch; three or more missing teeth.

Nose: Solid colored. The nose is black in black dogs, dark brown in red dogs, dark gray in blue dogs and dark tan in fawn dogs.

Ears: Cropped or uncropped equally acceptable. The cropped ear stands erect, set high enough on the head so that the inner attachment of the ear is level with the top of the skull. The uncropped ear is medium sized, triangular in shape and set high on the skull. The ear flap lays flat against the sides of the head.

Faults: Uncropped ears that fold improperly and stand out to the sides; erect uncropped ears.

Neck: The neck is smoothly muscled and well arched, widening gradually from the nape to the shoulders. Skin of throat is tight, free of dewlap. When the dog is standing, the neck is carried proudly with the head held high.

Forequarters: Shoulder Blade-sloping forward and downward at a 45-degree angle to the ground meets the upper arm at an angle of 90 degrees. Length of shoulder blade and upper arm are equal. Height from elbow to withers approximately equals height from ground to elbow. Legs seen from front and side, perfectly straight and parallel to each other from elbow to pastern; muscled and sinewy, with heavy bone. In normal pose and when gaiting, the elbows lie close to the brisket. Pasterns firm and almost perpendicular to the ground.

Chest, Back, Loin, and Body: Withers pronounced and forming the highest point of the body. Back short, firm, of sufficient width, and muscular at the loins, extending in a straight line from withers to the slightly rounded croup. Chest broad with forechest well defined. Ribs well sprung from the spine, but flattened in lower end to permit elbow clearance. Brisket reaching deep to the elbow. Belly well tucked up, extending in a curved line from the brisket. Loins wide and muscled. Hips broad and in proportion to body, breadth of hips being approximately equal to breadth of body at rib cage and shoulders.

Faults: Exaggerated "ski slope" topline; exaggerated tuck-up.

Hindquarters: The angulation of the hindquarters balances that of the forequarters. Hip bone falls away from spinal column at an angle of about 30 degrees, producing a slightly rounded, well filled-out croup. Upper shanks at right angles to the hip bones, are long, wide, and well muscled on both sides of thigh, with clearly defined stifles. Upper and lower shanks are of equal length. While the dog is at rest, hock to heel is perpendicular to the ground. Viewed from the rear, the legs are straight, parallel to each other, and wide enough apart to fit in with a properly built body.

Feet: The feet are well arched, compact and catlike turning neither in nor out.

Tail: Tail is generally docked at approximately the second joint, and appears to be a continuation of the spine. The tail is carried only slightly above the horizontal when the dog is alert. The natural tail is ideally carried high in a slight curve.

Fault: Gay tail or terrier tail.

Coat: The coat is short, hard and thick. It is smooth and close lying.

Fault: Thin, sparse coat.

Color: : Allowed Colors-Black, red, blue, and fawn (Isabella). Markings-Rust, sharply defined, appearing above each eye and on muzzle, throat and forechest, on all legs and feet, and below tail. White patch on chest, not exceeding 1 square inch, permissible.

Disqualification - Dogs not of an allowed color

Movement: Free, balanced, and vigorous, with good reach in the forequarters and good driving power in the hindquarters. When trotting, there is strong rear-action drive. Each rear leg moves in line with the foreleg on the same side. Rear and front legs are thrown neither in nor out. Back remains strong and firm. When moving at a fast trot, a properly built dog will single-track

Disqualifications:

- Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchidism
- Viciousness or extreme shyness
- Overshot more than 3/16 of an inch.
- Undershot more than 1/8 of an inch.
- Three or more missing teeth.
- Any color other black, red, blue or fawn (Isabella).
- Albinism.

Fault Degrees:

A cosmetic fault is one of a minor nature. In a show or other evaluation, the dog is to be penalized in direct proportion to the degree of the fault. Any fault, which is extreme, should be considered a serious fault and should be penalized appropriately.