

The Five Hallmarks of the Old English Sheepdog

Balance & Proportion

Type in an OES comes from his proportions. The picture remains unchanged regardless of the size. The OES is balanced regardless of height, color or markings. He is compact and square with substantial bone. An OES is not low and long bodied or tall and short bodied. Square proportions measured from the withers to the ground, point of shoulder to the ischium. Neck is fairly long and gracefully arched. Shoulders well laid back and narrow at the points. Forelegs dead straight with plenty of bone. Hocks well let down, metatarsus are perpendicular to the ground from any angle. Broader at the rump than at the shoulder. The body is thickset, muscular, able-bodied.

Head

Strong, square truncated muzzle. The nose is always black and large. Definitive stop, well arched over eyes. Large squarely formed skull. Dark brown eyes, one or two blue, pearl, china or walleye is typical. Scissors or level bite. A long narrow head or snippy muzzle is a deformity.

Topline

The OES topline is a unique characteristic. It is gently arched over a very broad, stout loin. The topline is not to be mistaken for a roach back nor is it a sway back. The correct topline has a gentle rise with the highest point over the loin.

Coat

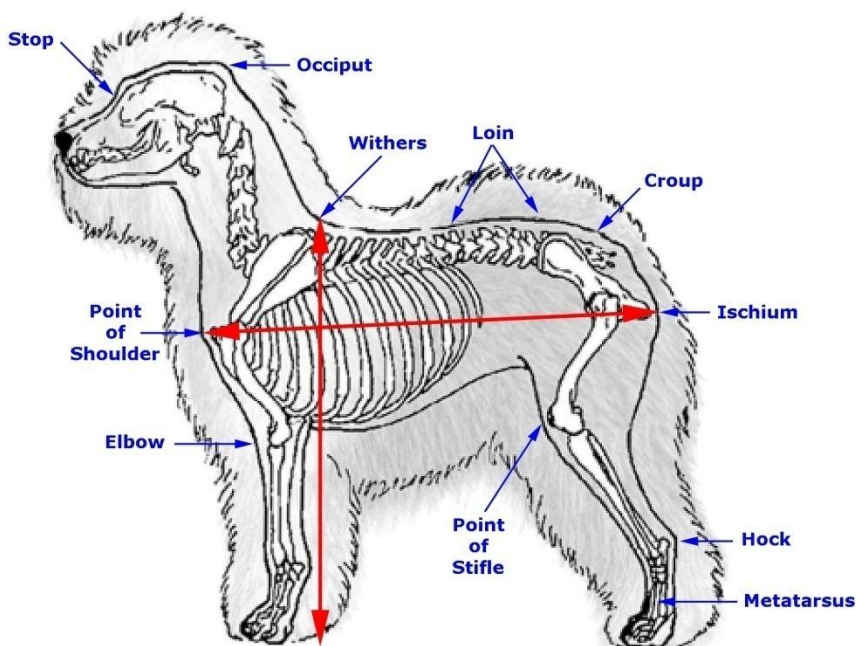
The OES has a thick soft undercoat next to his body and a crisp harsh shaggy coat on the outside. Quality of coat is more important than mere profuseness. Color is any shade of gray, grizzle, blue or blue merle with or without white markings or in reverse.

Movement

When trotting the movement is free and powerful seeming effortless, with good reach and drive and covers maximum ground with minimum steps. The OES must maintain balance, proportion and topline in motion as when it stands. An OES is to be judged at a trot. May pace or amble at slower speeds.

Examining the Old English Sheepdog

It is of utmost importance for judges to feel for the distinct characteristics that define the breed. The mental picture obtained from your hands, combined with the overall visual appearance should simplify the choice. Grooming can hide faults. It is imperative that judges look past the grooming and feel carefully for correct structure.



Height
Dogs: 22 in. (55.8 cm) and upward.
Bitches: 21 in. (53.3 cm) and upward.