



**FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (AISBL)**

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**FCI-Standard N° 326**

## **YUZHNRUSSKAYA OVCHARKA**

(South Russian Shepherd Dog)



**TRANSLATION:** Dmitry Mamontov & Anna Samsonova. Edited by Dr. Eugene Yerusalimsky.

**ORIGIN:** Russia.

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**UTILIZATION:** Herding and guardian dog. This breed is used for protecting cattle; they successfully performed guard duties and protect premises.

**FCI-CLASSIFICATION:** Group 1 Sheepdogs and Cattle Dogs  
(except Swiss Cattle Dogs).  
Section 1 Sheepdogs.  
Without working trial.

**BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY:** The ancestry of the South Russian Shepherd Dog is historically thought to be from bearded coarse-haired dogs which were brought together with fine-wool sheeps to steppe regions of the South from Spain. This fact is mentioned in the XXVI volume (1830 y., St.-Petersburg) of complete collection of the Russian Empire laws.

These agile dogs of medium size, looking like modern Gos d'Atura Catala dogs, were able to round up the flocks of sheep and to protect them. These dogs brought from Spain spontaneously mated with local shepherd and sighthound -like dogs, who had being kept there sheep from ancient times.

Later these cross-breed dogs became widespread in the southern regions of Russia and even were known abroad, in Western countries or Europe as "Russian shepherd". In 1867, a golden medal was awarded to the Russian Shepherd Dog at the World's fair in Paris for the beauty.

However the real selection began in 1898, in the Crimea, in Askania – Nova, the demesne of Russian baron of a German origin Mr. Friedrich von Falz-Fein. He was the person to give the breed modern typical features and to call it "South-Russian Shepherd".

Numerous breeding with local sighthounds had led to increasing the height and dominance of the white colour, added some lightness of confirmation and a few flattened chest typical for fast running dogs, as well as tucked-up belly and more pronounced hindquarters angulations.

Last typical characteristics of conformation and the name “South-Russian Shepherd” were finally assigned to the breed in the USSR period in the early 1930s when the first official standard of the breed was approved.

The South Russian Shepherd Dogs are easy to keep and they can easily be adapted to various climatic conditions due to their endurance, and they are always ready to protect their owners and their property. These dogs are exceptionally loyal and dedicated to their owners but at the same time one should not expect that the South Russian Shepherd Dog will be friendly with the strangers.

**GENERAL APPEARANCE:** The South Russian Shepherd Dog is the dog of an above-medium to a large size, moderately long bodied, not stocky, with strong bones and dry powerful muscles.

The sexual dimorphism is well-defined, the males are more massive compared to the females and have larger heads. The topline is a characteristic feature of the breed; it forms a slight curve over the loin.

The body, head, limbs and tail are covered with coarse, long, thick and shaggy coat which creates a deceptive impression of clumsiness and heaviness but in fact the South Russian Shepherd Dog is a quick and agile dog.

**IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS:**

- The length of the body exceeds by 10-12% the height at the withers. Females are slightly longer than males.
- The length of the head is approximately 40 % of the height at the withers.
- The ratio between the length of the muzzle and the length of the skull is approximately 5:6;
- The height at elbows is slightly exceeds half of the height at the withers.

**BEHAVIOUR AND TEMPERAMENT:** Well-balanced, self-confident and independent. The South Russian Shepherd Dog is devoted to its owner but mistrustful and aloof towards the strangers. The South Russian Shepherd Dog is a perfect guard dog both when watching the cattle and when protecting the owner and his property.

**HEAD:** The head is elongated, wedge-shaped narrowing towards the nose.

**CRANIAL REGION:**

**Skull:** Moderately broad with flat forehead. The occiput and cheek bones are well-developed. Forehead and nasal bridge viewed from profile are parallel. The superciliary arches are slightly pronounced.  
**Stop:** Slightly defined.

**FACIAL REGION:**

**Muzzle:** Slightly shorter than the skull, well-filled under the eyes and slightly tapering towards the nose. The nasal bridge is straight.

**Nose:** Black and large. A seasonal lightening of the nose pigmentation in dogs of wheaten (biscuit) and pale ivory colors is permitted, but nevertheless the rim of the nose shall remain black.

**Lips:** Dry, tightly-fitting, and black.

**Jaws/Teeth:** The jaws are strong and powerful, scissor bite. The teeth are large, white and placed close to each other, complete according to dental formula (42 teeth). Double PM1 are permissible. The incisors at their base are set in one line. The dogs with the broken incisors, in case the bite may still be determined, to be considered not a fault.

**Eyes:** Almond-shaped, not large, looking forward and wide apart. The colour varies from dark to light-brown. The darker eyes are preferred. The eyelids are dry, close fitting, pigmented.

**Ears:** Low set, medium-sized, triangular, hanging close to the cheeks. Covered with thick hair.

**NECK:** Dry, muscular, of medium length, set at an approximately 40-degree angle to the horizon, oval-shaped in cross section.

## **BODY**

**Topline**: The topline forms a slight arch over the loin where the highest point of the topline is.

**Withers**: Hardly visible.

**Back**: Moderately broad and long, muscular, strong, straight.

**Loin**: Medium length, moderately broad, muscular, slightly arched, and flexible.

**Croup**: Moderately long and wide, muscular, slightly sloping. The height at the rump is the same or 1-2 cm more than the height at the withers. Moderately broad and rather deep. The ribs are slightly flattened. The forechest is placed slightly forward beyond the scapulo-humeral joint.

**Underline**: It extends at the level of the elbows and the belly has a moderate tuck-up.

**TAIL**: Moderately thick, not high set, it reaches at least the hock joint, and may have a hook or a semicircle on the end. The last 2-3 tail vertebrae often form a joint bone. The tail is carried down when the dog is at rest. Pendulous in repose; when alert and in movement carried not higher than the topline and is slightly curved upwards, but never curled or tilted over the back.

## **LIMBS**

### **FOREQUARTERS**:

**General appearance**: Muscular and straight when seen from the front, parallel and set moderately wide apart.

**Shoulder and upper arm**: Shoulder blades and upper arms are long, obliquely set and approximately of equal length; form a shoulder-blade angle of 100 degrees.

**Forearm**: Straight, oval in cross-section, set vertically.

**Elbow**: Pointed backwards.

**Carpus (carpal joint)**: Strong and dry.

**Metacarpus**: Strong, moderately long and slightly inclined when viewed from the side.

**Forefeet:** Oval-shaped, firm and well-knit. Any colour of pads and nails is allowed.

**HINDQUARTERS:**

**General appearance:** Muscular, straight, parallel when seen from behind and set slightly wider than forequarters. The hind legs should not be placed far behind the body.

**Upper thigh:** Long, wide, well-muscled.

**Lower thigh:** Long, its length is approximately equal to the length of upper thigh, oblique.

**Stifle:** The stifle is well bent.

**Hocks:** Well-angulated, lean, flat and wide.

**Metatarsus:** Strong, lean, moderately long, set slightly under the body, without dewclaws unless their removal is prohibited in specific countries.

**Hind feet:** Oval-shaped, firm and well-knit. Any colour of pads and nails is allowed.

**GAIT/MOVEMENT:** Free and balanced. The typical gait is the easy and well extended with good reach in the forequarters and good drive from the hind legs. At the trot, the forelegs move in a straight line with a tendency of slight convergence to longitudinal axes of the body, the head lowers to the level of the topline.

In movements, the rump is at same level with the withers or slightly higher. The joints of limbs freely bend and unbend when in motion.

**SKIN:** Taut, supple, without any folds and saggings.

Any pigmentation of the skin is allowed, except for the nose, eye and lip rims which must be pigmented black.

**COAT**

**Hair:** Abundant. The coat on the head, body, limbs and tail is of almost the same length. Thick and long coat on the head forms a eyebrows, moustache and beard. The nasal bridge shall be also well-covered with hair. It is desirable for males to have a mane.

The quality of the coat: long (not less than 10 cm), harsh, thick, coarse and shaggy, slightly wavy or broken. The outer coat on the

head and limbs is thinner and less coarse. The undercoat is soft, long, thick and lighter coloured.

The coat with completely combed undercoat or matted either elf-locked is undesirable.

Colour: White, white with yellowish shading, white with grey, wheaten (biscuit) or pale ivory patches. Grey, pale ivory. grey and pale ivory dogs may have a white blaze on the head and muzzle, as well as white markings on the neck.

With the spotted colour, the patches should be of light shades and should not have distinct borders. The final coat colour appears by the age of 18-24 months and due to this puppies and young dogs have somewhat more intense colour.

### **SIZE AND WEIGHT:**

#### Height at the withers:

Males: not less than 66 cm.

Females: not less than 62 cm.

Larger size is preferable, if general conformation is well proportioned.

#### Weight:

Males: not less than 35 kg.

Females: not less than 30 kg.

**FAULTS:** Any departure from the foregoing points 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.

- The height at the withers less than 66 cm for males and less than 62 cm for females.
- Neither sufficient nor excessive long body.
- Masculine bitches.
- A seasonal lightening of the pigment of the nose.
- Partial (not more than 10%) eyelids depigmentation.

- Excessive or insufficient curve of the topline over the loin.
- Insufficiently developed forechest.
- Insufficient angulation of the forequarters and hindquarters.
- Insufficient balance in movement.

### **SEVERE FAULTS:**

- The height at the withers less than 64 cm for males and less than 59 cm for females.
- Light, coarse or loose constitution, short legs.
- Feminine males.
- The withers noticeably higher than croup.
- High-set neck.
- Yellow (“bird”) eyes.
- Loose flews and/or eyelids.
- Partially unpigmented eyelids.
- Small teeth. Large diastemas between the teeth. The incisors are not set in one line.
- The absence of two or more PM1 (M3 is not taken into consideration). To consult RKF attaching our recommendation.
- The ears hanging on the cartilages.
- Narrow, shallow chest.
- Roach back.
- Short, horizontal or abruptly sloping croup.
- The tail directed from the root towards the head and resting on the back and/or the tail curled over the back. The tail motionlessly hanging down.
- Straightened angulation in front and/or rear.
- Over-angulation in the rear.
- Sparse hair on the nasal bridge, short and/or sparse furnishing coat on the muzzle, poor moustache and beard. Absence of the undercoat.
- Straight, soft top coat. Silky coat parting on the back.
- Intense spotting, incompletely matured coat colour after the age of 2 years.



**DISQUALIFYING FAULTS:**

- Aggressive or overly shy dogs.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.
- Any surgical or cosmetic changes.
- Lack of desirable breed type.
- Square built.
- Rounded skull.
- Blue, green, bleached whitish eyes or the eyes of different colour. The entropion.
- All the deviations from the normal scissor bite. The absence of any tooth (except for PM1 and M3).
- Short hair. Tight curls or cords on any part of the body. The coat lying close to the head or limbs.
- Black, red, greyish brown, blue, brown or tricolor. Intensely represented mask or saddle.
- Totally unpigmented eyelids, pink or spotted nose, pink lips.
- Naturally short (bobtail) or straight docked tail.
- Side gating, pacing.

**N.B.:**

- Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.
- Only functionally and clinically healthy dogs, with breed typical conformation, should be used for breeding.

# ANATOMICAL FEATURES

