

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL KENNEL COUNCIL



Extended Breed Standard of
**THE WELSH CORGI
(CARDIGAN)**

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in conjunction with
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HISTORY OF THE BREED

The Cardigan Welsh Corgi has been recorded by historians as being extraordinarily old in form dating the breed to Neolithic Man in the postglacial age. Ancient tombs do seem to depict a dog very much of similar type and shape as that of the Cardigan. However the origin is lost in the mists of time and it is better to admit we really know nothing of the breed as and if it existed a thousand years or so ago. Historians have recorded that the Cardigan appears to be the older of the two breeds of Welsh Corgi.

What has become generally accepted is that the Cardigan is descended from the short-legged TECKEL group of dogs, which roamed central and Eastern Europe and which were, brought to Wales by the ancient Celts. Photographs of the first known Cardigans show a heavy deep chested working dog with drop ears, very typical of their TECKEL ancestry. No doubt the fact that in those early years the two breeds of Corgi were not only exhibited together but also interbred, resulted in the prick eared Cardigan, which we know today.

Developed in the Cardiganshire area of Wales, the Cardigan was originally used to drive cattle and control their movement by nipping at their heels. The Cardigan was also used as a guard and companion dog. In the late 1880's many Welsh farmers gave up breeding cattle and took to sheep for which their favourite "heeler" was not suitable due to the trait of nipping the heels of the cattle. This action was rated a fault when applied to sheep with whom a biting dog is undesirable, so in the case of the Cardigan it is thought that some farmers crossed their Corgi with the old Welsh Collie to produce a dual purpose herder.

It is also thought that such crossing may have been responsible for the emergence of the blue merle colour in the breed.

In the mountainous area where the Cardigan was developed grass grew short so it was not necessary to have a dog with long legs, but it was necessary to have a dog with a good turn of speed, plenty of spring to get over the rocky terrain, deep chest to accommodate good lungs, slightly turned out feet to enable it to move freely over marshy areas and short thick legs so that he could duck out of the way of the flying hooves which went over his head and left him unscathed. Due to the all too frequent poor weather conditions, it was also necessary for the dog to have a good double coat to protect him from the cold and wet.

It is known that Cardigans were exhibited as far back as 1892, however classes under the jurisdiction of the English Kennel Club were not provided until 1925, both types being regarded as one breed, divided into two types. Challenge Certificates were first offered to Corgis at Cardiff in 1928, both types being exhibited together. The two types were recognised as two breeds in 1934 and from that time Challenge Certificates were issued for each breed.

The Cardigan Welsh Corgi is overall a slightly larger dog than the Pembroke Welsh Corgi. It is not as numerically strong as the Pembroke and its breeders are fewer in number. However its attractive appearance, calm temperament and kindly expression have endeared the breed to the general public with whom it is popular as a companion dog. The breed has loyal devotees in England, throughout the Scandinavian Countries, the United States of America, New Zealand and Australia.

The Cardigan Welsh Corgi was first brought to Australia in 1953 by an English migrating couple Mr. & Mrs. W Lewis. They were already well-established breeders under the LEWDUX prefix in England when they emigrated to live in Western Australia. They brought with them five Cardigans, two males and three females.

The 1954 Perth Royal Show was the first Royal Show at which Cardigans were exhibited. English Ch. Hannaford Rudie was awarded first in both the Limit and Open Dog classes and was also awarded the Dog CC and Best Non Sporting Dog in Show. English Ch Morfudd of Lewdux was awarded first in Limit and Open Bitch classes and was also awarded the Bitch CC and Limit Bitch in Show.

● GENERAL APPEARANCE

Sturdy, tough, mobile, capable of endurance. Long in proportion to height, terminating in fox-like brush, set in line with body.

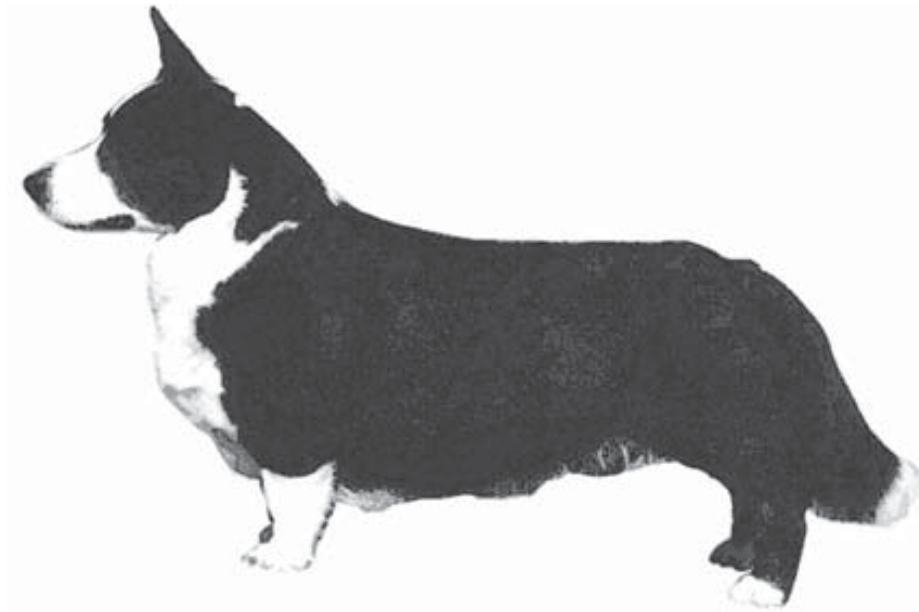


Fig. 1 – Cardigan – General Appearance

The Cardigan was bred to work over extremely rough and marshy terrain. He was therefore developed as a sturdy dog with strong bone able to work tirelessly. It should be noted that the body is required to be long in proportion to height. It is this length of body that permits added spring, giving the dog plenty of mobility.

The impression of a Cardigan is that of a well-balanced, low-slung, long bodied dog of quality with strong bone, keen of expression and free from any coarseness. The finishing touch being the low set tail with its fox like brush.

● CHARACTERISTICS

Alert, active and intelligent.

In his natural environment, the Cardigan was developed as a worker primarily of cattle and later of sheep. As such he had to work tirelessly and in all weathers. Like all true working dogs he had to be endowed with great intelligence, as well as being quick and alert, to perform the tasks required of him.

● TEMPERAMENT

Alert, intelligent, steady, not shy or aggressive.

The Cardigan has a natural steady temperament. With strangers he does not give of himself lightly and is often quite reserved. However, shyness must be penalised and any viciousness encountered must be eliminated altogether as it is not naturally found in the temperament of the Cardigan.

● HEAD AND SKULL

Head foxy in shape and appearance, skull wide and flat between ears tapering towards eyes above which it is slightly domed. Moderate stop. Length of foreface in proportion to head 3 to 5, muzzle tapering moderately towards nose which projects slightly and in no sense blunt. Underjaw clean cut. Strong but without prominence. Nose black.

It is important to note that the Standard requires the shape of the head to be foxy-NOT THE EXPRESSION. The head of the fox tapers gradually from skull to nose and that is what is required in the Cardigan head. The fox has in general a rather mean expression which is definitely NOT what is required in the Cardigan. Note should be taken of the importance of the length of foreface as to the skull and of the doming of the skull above the eyes. The doming gives an extra degree of definition to the stop without which the eyes would not be deep enough to give the watchfulness, which is characteristic of the expression of the Cardigan. It is also these points, that preclude the "Collie" appearance (straight through), that is quite foreign to the Cardigan head. The nose colour is required to be black thus disallowing any lack of pigmentation. The underjaw must be strong and clean cut.



Fig. 2 –Correct head proportions.

● EYES

Medium size, clear, giving kindly, alert but watchful expression. Rather widely set with corners clearly defined. Preferably dark, or to blend with coat, rims dark. One or both eyes pale blue, blue or blue flecked, permissible only in blue merles.

It is the combination of medium sized correctly placed eyes with natural kindness, which gives the Cardigan its clear, alert and watchful expression. The colour should be dark. Light eyes are not desirable. Small eyes and dull eyes are quite foreign to the breed and detract from its true kindly expression. One or both eyes can be pale blue, blue or blue flecked in the blue merle.

● EARS

Erect, proportionately rather large to size of dog. Tips slightly rounded, moderately wide at base and set about 9 cms (3½ ins) apart. Carried so that tips are slightly wide of straight line drawn from tip of nose through centre of eyes, and set well back so that they can be laid flat along neck.

The ears of the Cardigan are a distinctive feature of the head. They should be large and prominent for the size of the dog with slightly rounded tips, be carried erect and be set well back on the head. They should also be flexible and capable of being laid flat along the neck when at rest. Ears set too high or too low or soft ears are faulty.

● MOUTH

Teeth strong, with scissor bite, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping the lower teeth and set square to the jaws.

The Cardigan is required to have strong, evenly placed teeth. The bite must be scissor bite. Overshot or undershot bites are faulty.



Fig. 3 – Scissor bite.

● NECK

Muscular, well developed, in proportion to dog's build, fitting into well sloping shoulders.

Muscular, well arched and in proportion to the dog as a whole. Remember, this is a long bodied dog and the neck must be of sufficient length to give balance and agility as well as fit gracefully into the shoulders to facilitate freedom of front movement.

● FOREQUARTERS

Shoulders well laid, angulated at approximately 90 degrees to upper arm; muscular, elbows close to sides. Strong bone carried down to feet. Legs short but body well clear of the ground, forearms slightly bowed to mould round the chest. Feet turned slightly outwards.

The front of the Cardigan differs from all other working breeds in that the forearms are required to be slightly bowed and the feet to turn slightly outwards. This does not denote unsoundness in any way and it is not a crooked front. This front was developed to enable the dog to move over marshy ground with ease. The forearms bow slightly to fit snugly around the chest and the feet turn from the carpus slightly outwards to give balance of stance.

THIS IS A DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF THE BREED but the bow or crook must never be exaggerated. The shoulders should be well laid back to give a smooth far-reaching movement. Elbows should fit snugly to the sides and the strong bone should be carried right down to the feet.



Fig. 4 – Correct front.

● **BODY**

Chest moderately broad with prominent breastbone. Body fairly long and strong, with deep brisket, well sprung ribs, clearly defined waist. Topline level.

The Cardigan chest should be round, deep and broad allowing ample room for heart and lungs. The body should be long, but the length and balance comes from the angulation of the shoulder, length of ribbing, moderate coupling and angulation of the hindquarters. The topline should be level. An uneven topline denotes weakness and incorrect shoulders or hindquarters.



Fig. 5 Typical male.

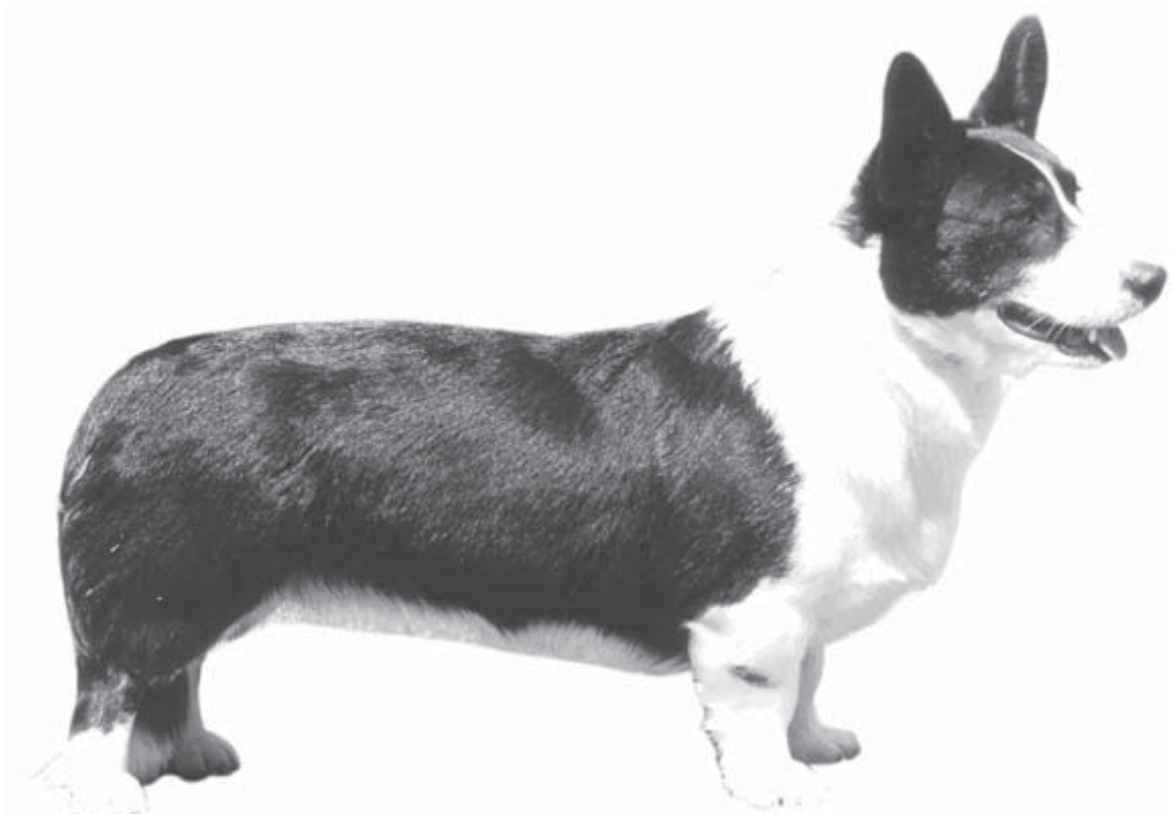


Fig. 6 Typical female

● HINDQUARTERS

Strong, well angulated and aligned with muscular thighs and second thighs, strong bone carried down to feet, legs short; when standing, hocks vertical, viewed from side and rear.

Note should be taken of the requirement of STRONG BONE. A light boned Cardigan should be penalised. This breed was developed as a mountain dog and must have strong hindquarters. The hind movement should be straight and the legs move with thrust. The movement must be smooth and effortless. Cow hocks, barrel hocks and sickle hocks are faults. The hind pastern should be short and straight.

● FEET

Round, tight, rather large and well padded. All dewclaws to be removed.

Another breed characteristic is the large, round, tight feet. The feet should be well padded and strong for in his natural habitat the dog worked long hours travelling many miles. Nails should be short and dewclaws removed because of the danger of being torn.



Fig. 7 – Large, round feet.

● TAIL

Like a fox's brush set in line with the body and moderately long (to touch or nearly touch ground). Carried low when standing but may be lifted a little above body when moving, not curled over back.

Ideally the tail should be carried low. The tail is the rudder of the dog and if you watch a Cardigan at play you will notice that the tail is continually brought into use for balance. The set-on is of great importance for whilst the Standard permits the tail to be lifted when moving, this does not mean it can be curled over the back, which is a bad fault. The tail should carry a brush such as found on the tail of the fox.

● GAIT/ MOVEMENT

Free and active, elbows fitting close to sides, neither loose nor tied. Forelegs reaching well forward without too much lift, in unison with thrusting action of hindlegs.

A well-constructed Cardigan should move with a long free stride at a steady gait, with good thrust from the hind legs. Moving too wide or too close either front or behind is faulty.



Fig. 8 The Cardigan in action.

● COAT

Short or medium of hard texture. Weatherproof, with good undercoat. Preferably straight.

The coat consists of two layers, an undercoat of short, thick hair and an outer coat of hard straight hair, the double coat being necessary to protect the dog in all weathers. Any wave or curl or softness of the coat should be avoided as such allows the weather to penetrate. The coat of the Cardigan carries slight feathering on the forelegs and under the body and a thicker profuse feathering on the neck to form a ruff, on the hindquarters to form a breeching or trousers, and on the tail to form the brush.

● COLOUR

Any colour, with or without white markings, but white should not predominate.

The Cardigan comes in many beautiful colours and shadings. The colours found in the show ring today are red/white, tricolour, brindle of various shadings, sable, black/white and the lovely blue merle with the marbled mixture of blue, grey and black hairs. White markings on chest, feet, tip of tail and sometimes a collar, add to the beauty of such colours.

● SIZE

Ideal Height. 30 cms (12 ins) at shoulders. Weight in proportion to size with overall balance the prime consideration.

THE KEY WORD HERE IS BALANCE. Overall balance should be of prime consideration with the height as near as possible to 30 cms (12 ins) at the shoulder. Better a dog which is balanced and yet a fraction over 30 cms (12 ins) at the shoulder, than one which is of correct height and devoid of balance. An undersized adult dog lacking in sturdiness is undesirable. The aim is for a medium sized dog with good strong bone and deep, well developed body, not carrying excess weight.

● **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.

● **NOTE**

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

The aim of any Standard is to formulate a document, which fully and accurately describes the ideal, and whilst the faultless dog has yet to emerge, the ideal should be the target of breeders and exhibitors alike. It is for JUDGES to study and determine to what degree the specimens presented conform to the ideal.

Above all, remember the Cardigan was bred to work in very rugged terrain. To be able to fulfil its duties, it must be robust, strong and have movement, which is purposeful and effortless.

THE MAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE WELSH CORGI CARDIGAN AND PEMBROKE

CHARACTERISTIC	CARDIGAN	PEMBROKE
SIZE/WEIGHT	As near as possible to 30 cms (12 inches) No weight restriction applicable	25 to 30 cms (10 to 12 inches) Dogs: 10 to 12 kgs (22 to 26 lbs) Bitches :10 to 11 kgs (20 to 24 lbs)
HEAD	Head is bigger and stronger and has dome above the eyes	Skull is flat between the ears
EARS	Ears are larger and more rounded	Medium size, tapering and slightly rounded at the tip
NOSE	Nose is larger and more prominent. Black	Black
EYES	Dark	Brown
BODY	Fairly long	Medium length
RIB CAGE	Pear shaped	Oval
FRONT	Distinct crook with larger round feet	Oval feet and no crook
COAT	Coat is shorter and harsher	Medium length, straight
TAIL	Long fox's brush tail	Short, preferably natural. Docked: Short. Undocked: Set in line with topline. Natural carriage above topline when moving or alert
COLOUR	May be any colour without white dominating	Self colours of red, sable, fawn, black with or without white on legs, chest, neck and muzzle
TEMPERAMENT	Steady temperament	Bold, outgoing and friendly
GAIT	Tend to move steadier	More active and free moving

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