

The Manchester Terrier: Description and History:

Description:

The Manchester is a hardy and long-lived breed. They are very adaptable and make an excellent and devoted companion for most people. Equally at home in the country or city, the Manchester is intelligence, versatile, and naturally clean in his habits. This has prompted breed fanciers to conclude that "As a sagacious, intelligent house pet and companion, no breed is superior to the well-bred Manchester Terrier." (AKC's Complete Dog Book)

In America, the Manchester Terrier is considered to be one breed with two varieties: the Standard and the Toy. The Toy variety can weigh up to 12 pounds and has only naturally erect ears. The Standard variety weighs over 12 pounds but not over 22 pounds, and may have three ear types: cropped, button, or naturally erect like the Toys. (See pictures below).



Photograph and computer imagery by Carolyn Horowitz

In both varieties, the only allowable color is black and tan. This accounts for the breed's original name -- the Black and Tan Terrier. The placement and brilliant contrast of the tan markings against the black face and the black markings against the tan legs, while occurring naturally, are essential to the dog's work as a ratter. A cornered rat will always go for its attacker's eyes to disable it; the bright tan spots around the less visible black eyes of the Manchester Terrier draw the rat to leap for the spots and miss its intended target.

Following is a short history of the development of the Manchester Terrier in England and America. Knowing the origins of a breed and the purposes for which it was developed helps one to understand why the breed looks and behaves the way it does.

History and Development of the Manchester Terrier:

As with most of the Terrier breeds, the Manchester Terrier sprang from the British Isles; in his case, central England. The origins of the breed may well rest in one of the oldest of all identifiable terrier breeds: in 1570, Dr. Caius' Encyclopedia of Dogs mentions the 'Black and Tan Terrier,' though he referred to a rougher coated, shorter legged dog than we know today as the Manchester Terrier. Nevertheless, these little dogs plied their trade in the coal mines and around the ports and wharves of central and northern England even then as the indomitable vermin killers which they remain to this day.



Rack, painting by Ben Marshall (1809). An old-style Black and Tan Terrier.

The first time that the Black and Tan was recognized as an established breed was in the early 1800s, when J. A. Walsh devoted a chapter of his book, The Dog in Health and Disease, to the Black and Tan. Walsh's description of the breed was very close to the Manchester of today: "smooth haired, long tapering nose, narrow flat skull, eyes small and bright, chest rather deep than wide, only true color Black and Tan".

At that time in England, urban centers were developing quickly due to the Industrial Revolution. The factories, and the jobs they offered, drew people to live in much closer proximity to each other than they had when nearly everyone was a farmer of one kind or another. Sanitation was poor. Rats soon became a health menace and rat killing became a popular sport. John Hulme, enthusiastic devotee to the sports of rat killing and rabbit coursing, crossed a Whippet to a cross-bred terrier to produce a tenacious yet streamlined animal perfectly suited to both sports. This cross proved so successful that it was repeated, resulting in the establishment of a definite type -- thus the modern Manchester Terrier was born.



By 1827 the breed's vermin-killing prowess was notorious. The Manchester proved he could tackle, with silent determination, an opponent twice his size. Ears were cropped to save the risk of their being torn in frequent scraps. When rat-killing became illegal in England, the Manchester was welcomed by the owners of dining halls and public houses, all of which were infested by rats. Each inn kept a few Black and Tans. When the taprooms closed, the dogs were turned loose for the night to dispatch any rats and mice unfortunate enough to wander out of the cellars looking for food.

By mid-century, the Manchester district of England had evolved as the breed center for these "Ratting Terriers" and the name Manchester Terrier surfaced. By the end of the 1800's, the two sizes of Manchester Terrier in England were recognized as two different breeds. America's "Standard Manchester Terrier" was called, simply, the Manchester Terrier. The "Toy Manchester Terrier", in England, was named the English Toy Terrier. They remain two separate breeds in England to this day.

In America, the Manchester Terrier gained quick acceptance as a recognized breed. In 1886, just two years after the American Kennel Club was organized, the first Black and Tan Terrier was registered in the stud book. The following year "Lever" (AKC #7585) became the first AKC recognized Manchester Terrier.

In 1923 the Manchester Terrier Club of America was recognized as the parent club of the [Standard] Manchester Terrier. In 1934, the name "Toy Black and Tan Terrier" was changed to "Toy Manchester Terrier", and in 1938 the American Toy Manchester Terrier Club was recognized.

As a result of the meat rationing which occurred during the second World War as well as the drafting of so many kennel owners and managers into service, many breeding kennels in both England and America were sadly disbanded. Never a breed of large numbers in

America, by 1952 the Manchester Terrier Club of America (Standards) was without organized breed representation. Britain had no dogs to spare for export, as their sacrifices during the war had been even more severe than America's. Therefore, the American Kennel Club authorized that the two breeds (and the two clubs) be combined into one, with two Varieties - Standard & Toy. The American Manchester Terrier Club was formed in 1958 and is the parent club which represents the breed to this day.

Following is the AKC Standard of Perfection for the Manchester Terrier. Each recognized breed has such a Standard, provided by the breed's parent club, which describes the ideal specimen of the breed. It is the Standard of the breed which guides the judge's choices in the show ring, and which provides the template to which breeders aspire.

Standard of Perfection for the Manchester Terrier:

General Appearance

A small, black, short-coated dog with distinctive rich mahogany markings and a taper style tail. In structure the Manchester presents a sleek, sturdy, yet elegant look, and has a wedge-shaped, long and clean head with a keen, bright, alert expression. The smooth, compact, muscular body expresses great power and agility, enabling the Manchester to kill vermin and course small game.

Except for size and ear options, there are no differences between the Standard and the Toy varieties of the Manchester Terrier. The Toy is a diminutive version of the Standard variety.



Size, Proportion, Substance

The *Toy variety* shall not exceed 12 pounds. It is suggested that clubs consider dividing the American-Bred and Open classes by weight as follows: 7 pounds and under, over 7 pounds and not exceeding 12 pounds.

The *Standard variety* shall be over 12 pounds and not exceeding 22 pounds. Dogs weighing over 22 pounds shall be disqualified. It is suggested that clubs consider dividing the American-bred and Open classes by weight as follows: over 12 pounds and not exceeding 16 pounds, over 16 pounds and not exceeding 22 pounds.



The Manchester Terrier, overall, is slightly longer than tall. The height, measured vertically from the ground to the highest point of the withers, is slightly less than the length, measured horizontally from the point of the shoulders to the rear projection of the upper thigh. The bone and muscle of the Manchester Terrier is of sufficient mass to ensure agility and endurance.

Head

The Manchester Terrier has a keen and alert ***expression***. The nearly black, almond shaped ***eyes*** are small, bright, and sparkling. They are set moderately close together, slanting upwards on the outside. The eyes neither protrude nor sink in the skull. Pigmentation must be black.

Correct ***ears*** for the *Standard variety* are either the naturally erect ear, the cropped ear, or the button ear. No preference is given to any of the ear types. The naturally erect ear and the button ear should be wider at the base, tapering to pointed tips, and carried well up on the skull. Wide, flaring, blunt tipped, or “bell” ears are a serious fault. Cropped ears should be long, pointed and carried erect.

The only correct *ear* for the *Toy variety* is the naturally erect ear. They should be wider at the base, tapering to pointed tips, and carried well up on the skull. Wide, flaring, blunt tipped, or “bell” ears are a serious fault. Cropped or cut ears are a disqualification in the Toy variety.



The *head* is long, narrow, tight skinned, and almost flat, with a slight indentation up the forehead. It resembles a blunted wedge in frontal and profile views. There is a visual effect of a slight *stop* as viewed in profile.

The *muzzle* and *skull* are equal in length. The *muzzle* is well filled under the eyes with no visible cheek muscles. The underjaw is full and well defined and the *nose* is black.

Tight black *lips* lie close to the jaw. The jaws should be full and powerful with proper *dentition*. The teeth are white and strongly developed with a true scissors *bite*. A level bite is acceptable.

Neck, Topline, Body

The slightly arched *neck* should be slim and graceful, and of moderate length. It gradually becomes larger as it approaches, and blends smoothly with, the sloping shoulders. Throatiness is undesirable.

The *topline* shows a slight arch over the robust loins, falling slightly away to the tail set. A flat back or roached back is to be severely penalized. The *chest* is narrow between the legs and deep in the brisket. The forechest is moderately defined. The *ribs* are well spring, but flattened in the lower end to permit clearance of the forelegs. The *abdomen* should be tucked up, extending in an arched line from the deep brisket. The taper style *tail* is moderately short, reaching no further than the hock joint. It is set on at the end of the croup. Being thicker where it joins the body, the tail tapers to a point. The tail is carried in a slight upward curve, but never over the back.



Forequarters

The *shoulder blades* and the *upper arm* should be relatively the same length. The distance from the elbow to the withers should be approximately the same as the distance from the elbow to the ground. The *elbows* should lie close to the brisket. The *shoulders* are well laid back.

The *forelegs* are straight, of proportionate length, and placed well under the brisket. The pasterns should be almost perpendicular.

The *front feet* are compact and well arched. The two middle toes should be slightly longer than the others. The pads should be thick and the toenails should be jet black.

Hindquarters

The *thigh* should be muscular with the length of the upper and lower thighs being approximately equal. The stifle is well turned. The well let down hocks should not turn in nor out, as viewed from the rear. The hind legs are carried well back. The *hind feet* are shaped like those of a cat, with thick pads and jet black nails.

Coat

The coat should be smooth, short, dense, tight, and glossy; not soft.

Color

The coat color should be jet black and rich mahogany tan, which should not run or blend into each other but abruptly form clear, well defined lines of color. There shall be a very small tan spot over each eye and a very small tan spot on each cheek. On the head, the muzzle is tanned to the nose. The nose and nasal bone are jet black. The tan extends

under the throat, ending in the shape of the letter “V”. The inside of the ears are partly tan. There shall be tan spots, called “rosettes”, on each side of the chest above the front legs. These are more pronounced in puppies than in adults. There should be a black “thumbprint” patch on the front of each foreleg at the pastern. The remainder of the foreleg shall be tan to the carpus joint. There should be a distinct black “pencil mark” line running lengthwise on the top of each toe on all four feet. Tan on the hind leg should continue from the pencilling on the toes, up the inside of the legs to a little below the stifle joint. The outside of the hind legs should be black. There should be tan under the tail and on the vent, but only of such size as to be covered by the tail.

White on any part of the coat is a serious fault and shall disqualify whenever the white shall form a patch or stripe measuring as much as one-half inch at its longest dimension.

Any color other than black and tan shall be disqualified. Color and/or markings should never take precedence over soundness and type.

Gait



The gait should be free and effortless with good reach of the forequarters, showing no indication of hackney gait. Rear quarters should have strong, driving power to match the front reach. Hocks should fully extend. Each rear leg should move in line with the foreleg of the same side, neither thrown in nor out. When moving at a trot, the legs tend to converge towards the center of gravity line beneath the dog.



Temperament

The Manchester Terrier is neither aggressive nor shy. He is keenly observant, devoted, but discerning. Not being a sparring breed, the Manchester is generally friendly with other dogs. Excessive shyness or aggressiveness should be considered a serious fault.

Disqualifications:

Standard variety – weight over 22 pounds

Toy variety – cropped or cut ears

Both varieties – white on any part of the coat whenever the white shall form a patch or stripe measuring as much as one-half inch at its longest dimension.

Any color other than black and tan.

Approved June 10, 1991

Effective July 31, 1991

Note: All photographs included in the above Standard are for illustrative purposes only and should not be interpreted as official or authorized pictures of the American Kennel Club.