



FINNISH HOUND

Native breed of FINLAND - SUOMENAJOKOIRA

(FCI General Committee, Helsinki, October 2013)

Breed by Breed Education

(FCI Show Judges Commission, Cartagena, February 2013)



Breed

- *FINNISH HOUND – suomenajokoira*
- *FCI Group 6 Section 1.2*
- *Breed number 51*
- *Date of publication of the official valid standard 17/07/1997.*

Official breed club in Finland,

Finnish Hound Association – Suomen Ajokoirajärjestö - Finska Stövarklubben ry



History of the breed

In Finland in the beginning of 19th century there were in addition to the Finnish country dogs also many dogs resembling the European hound breeds. The systematic development of the Finnish Hound breed can be said to have begun when hunting enthusiasts established Suomen Kennelklubi, a precursor of the Finnish Kennel Club, in 1889. One of their first desires was the development of a hound-type breed for Finnish conditions. As the breeds introduced to our country from abroad, primarily Russia, Sweden and England, did not meet the requirements of the Finnish hunting community, a group of active hunters began to search the existing Finnish dog population for individuals with the best hunting traits. The aim was to breed a native hound-type dog from them. The first standard was written in 1932. The breeding associations in different parts of the country were very important to the development of the breed.



Three dogs were selected from the first dog show arranged by Suomen Kennelklubi and eight more were added the next year. The first breed characteristics were determined on the basis of these dogs in 1893. Reddish brown was confirmed as the approved colour. However, the colour did not fully stabilize as the black mantle tendency was so powerful. This forced the organisation to accept a three-coloured specification in the early 20th century. The crosses made in the beginning of the 20th century have helped to create the stock from which the Finnish Hound descends.

The present breed definition for the most part dates back to 1932.

The Finnish Hound is a native breed and one of the most popular dog breeds in Finland. It is used to hunt hares or foxes. It works independently, tracking either earth or airborne scent and will pursue game and bark passionately. The long hunting season for hares and foxes contributes the popularity of the breed. The Finnish Kennel Club registered 1,475 Finnish Hounds in 2012. In total, 20,030 Finnish Hounds were registered in 2003-2012.



The origin

Year 1893



Size 50-60 cm. Excellent strength of body and bone.
Should have more angulations.

Year 1932



Size between 51-61 cm. Lightly build, square and high on legs. White markings on chest, neck & head.
Wrong sex characteristic.



The breed specimen year 1982

The body is longer than height. The forechest is clear and the ribcage reaches to the elbows. Not too heavy construction.



Work and character

Finnish Hound is a true hunting dog. It is primarily used for hunting hare and fox by following the scent. It is also sometimes used for hunting bobcat. Finnish Hound is eager to hunt also in difficult circumstances for instance during winter time. It works independently, is a versatile tracker and will pursue game with passionate and resonant barking.

Finnish Hound is a calm, energetic and friendly dog, never aggressive towards people. At home, the Finnish Hound barks and guards only a little or not at all. It is more suited to serve as a hunting dog than a companion because of its very powerful hunting instinct. It makes also a nice family dog.



Hunting hare & fox (and bobcat) by scent



Breed standard

FINNISH HOUND

suomenajokoirra



General appearance Tricoloured, medium in size, evenly high; clearly longer in body than the height at the withers, strongly built but not heavy. The supporting area of standing is as long as the body or slightly longer, in front it is as broad as the chest and in rear at least as broad as in the front. The sex should be clearly stamped. The ratio between the length of the body and the height at the withers is of 1,1 to 1. The depth of the chest is a half of the height at the withers.

Height : males from 55-61 cm (ideal 57-59). Bitches 52-58 cm. (ideal 54-56)



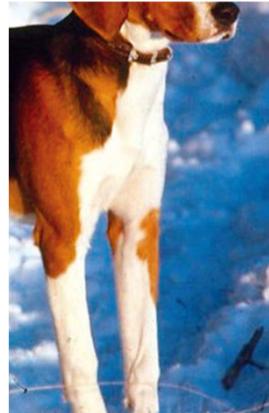
Temperament calm, energetic and friendly, never aggressive.

Front and rear



Correct front and rear

Note. Trot and galop are both used when hunting.
The construction type must be both durable & fast.



Straight and hollow front



Shoulders too forward,
straight overarm



"Loose" front



Soft pasterns



Splayed feet

EXCELLENT BREED TYPE



GOOD TYPE / SUFFICIENT TYPE



FAULTS



Too short body.
Open angulations



Long body,
soft back,
steep croup.



Standing rear legs under the body,
short croup, open rear angulations.



Too light build for a male



Too heavy in body



FAULTS



Chestlump – developed by very deep and pronounced ribcage



Too level croup with too high set tail



Too steep croup



High on legs, short ribcage and too much tuck up

Sway back



HEAD

The topline of the skull is parallel to the bridge of the nose ; the furrow between the eyes is barely visible ; eyebrows and occiput are clearly visible. Stop slightly but clearly defined, accentuated by the eyebrows.

Nose well developed, black; nostrils large and mobile .

Muzzle : Equal in length to the skull, moderately deep, slightly tapering; the nose bridge is straight. The under jaw forms the lower line which is almost parallel with the topline of the muzzle.

Well developed lips with good pigmentation. The upper lip is beautifully curved. The lips and the corners of the mouth are close fitting.

The jaws are strong.

Teeth are well developed, symmetrically set in the jaws.

Complete normal dentition.

Tight and complete scissor bite.

Moderately clean cheeks.



Eyes : Medium in size, not protruding, slightly oval, of a dark brown colour, looking forward. Expression calm. The eyelids are black.

Ears : Hanging with the front edge close to the head. Turned so that the back edge points outwards, the tip nearly forward. Set on the line drawn from the nose to the eyes. Flat, reaching over half of the muzzle when drawn forward.



Nice head with clean cheeks and closed corner of mouth. Should have better turned ears.



Correct ears



Highplaced short ears which are not enough turned



The length of the muzzle is equal to the length of the skull. The length of the skull is equal to its width and depth.



Short and too strong head



Too much lack of pigment



Not parallel head plains, stop too low and long



Low skull and snipey muzzle

Note the eye lids, the lips and corner of mouth must be close fitting; too pronounced lips or open eye lids on a scent hound are easily damaged during hunting.

NECK : Of medium length, muscular, rather clean, the topline only slightly arched. When standing the tip of the nose is at the level of the topline or slightly higher.



Correct neck



Too thick neck, no elegance

Note the neck needs to be suitable long as it balances the fast moving hunting dog.



Body

Back : Of medium length, straight and muscular.

Loin : Rather short and powerful.

Croup : Well developed, long and strong, slightly oblique. In profile the topline continues to a beautifully arched croup.

Chest : Long and deep, reaching to the elbows. Ribs well sprung; the forechest clearly visible. Underline: Slightly rising.

TAIL : Low set, slightly arched, reaching the hocks. Strong at the base, tapering towards the end. In repose hanging close to the hindquarters, in action it may rise but not higher than the level of the topline. The hair on the tail is similar to that on the body.



LIMBS

Forequarters are well angulated. Straight and parallel when viewed from the front ; the forearms are vertical. The deepest point of the chest is at the level of the elbows. The upper arm and forearm are equal in length.

Shoulders : Rather long, oblique and powerful ; close to the body but very mobile.

Upper arms : Equal in length to the shoulders, clearly oblique and powerful.

Elbows : Set well behind parallel to the body ; tightly close to the body.

Forearm: Powerful and sinewy with strong oval bones. Pastern : Slightly oblique.

Forefeet: Slightly oval and high, with well arched tight toes. Nails strong, preferably black. Pads springy, preferably black and on the sides covered with dense hair.



Hindquarters: Strong, well angulated, straight and parallel when viewed from behind. Upper thigh: Long and broad with strong muscles. Stifle: Pointing forward. The front line of the hind leg is smoothly curved. Lower thigh: Moderately long and oblique, sinewy. Hock: Strong, rather low. Metatarsus: Rather short and powerful, vertical. Hind feet: Construction equal to the forefeet, pointing straight forward.



Correct rear



Too short and steep croup, narrow thigh and too open knee angulation



Hind legs turning outwards, slightly cowhocked

GAIT : Trots lightly and effectively with a long-reaching stride. The topline remains level and firm on the move. The legs move parallel.



COAT

Undercoat short, dense and soft in texture. Outer coat medium in length, close-lying, straight, dense and rather harsh. Black mantle, rich tan colour on the head, lower parts of the body, shoulders, upper thighs and also elsewhere on the legs. White markings usually on head, neck, forechest, lower parts of the legs and on the tip of the tail.



Faulty coats



Broken mantle



Mottled colour



Too much black at temple and lip corners



Too much pricking in white. Not desired but allowed.



The tan colour is not yet cleaned – common among young dogs

Major and disqualifying faults

Considered as major faults:

- Too light or too heavy in construction.
 - Wrong sex characteristics.
 - Head shape obviously triangular or muzzle snipey or short.
 - Loose skin on the head.
 - Level or slightly overshot mouth.
 - Square or too long body.
 - Short and at the same time steep croup.
 - Long, splayed or flat feet.
 - Short and obviously soft hair.
 - Mottled colour.
 - Clearly broken mantle colours or lot of grey hairs (s c. wolf hair).
 - Height at the withers 1 cm more or less than given in the standard.
 - Slightly timid or excessively rough with other dogs.
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Disqualifying faults

- Aggressive or overly shy dogs.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Total lack of pigmentation in the nose.
- Undershot or clearly overshot bite, wry mouth.
- Kinky tail.
- Height at the withers more than 1 cm more or less than given in the standard.
- Blue eye or haw eye.
- White markings are only allowed where the standard describes.

Temperament is extremely important. It is specially evaluated in show critiques from scale 1-4.



Judging the breed

The basic structure of the Finnish Hound is quite natural for a middle size hunting dog and the breed is thus free of problems associated with structural peculiarities. Finnish Hound is still fit for its original function as it is more suited to serve as a scent hunting dog than a companion. It has very powerful hunting instinct and its basic construction supports this idea.

The Finnish Hound is usually measured (height at the withers) and the temperament is also evaluated/scaled.



Related breeds

The early hound breeds introduced to Finland from abroad were very mixed. They were primarily brought by military people from east and west. Some of the early breeds were English foxhound and Harrier, Kerrybeagle, Swisshounds, Russian Harlequin- and Kostroma hounds as well as many different hounds from Germany & Poland.

The development started for a three-colored double coated hound-type breed for Finnish conditions. The structure is of even height, with length clearly exceeding height. The dog is strong, but not heavily built. Nowadays many hunters consider the Finnish Hound to be the best game-pursuing breed in the world.



Health problems

As said the basic structure of the Finnish Hound is quite natural for a hunting dog and the breed is thus free of problems associated with structural peculiarities. One illness that afflicts the breed is cerebellar ataxia. A genetic test has been developed for this condition and it is used to prevent the birth of sick pups by avoiding the mating of two individuals that carry the ataxia gene. A carrier can be mated with a dog that has an ataxia-normal genetic makeup.

The breed suffers from heart disease (cardiomyopathy), lymphoma, black hair follicular dysplasia and atopic dermatitis. These diseases are the subject of university research, which is conducted in cooperation with the breed association. There is also some occurrence of hip dysplasia, which can be monitored with the aid of a hip index. The aim is that the hip index average of the dam and sire exceeds 100 in the majority of matings.

