The Jack Russell Terrier
prepared by
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HISTORY

The Jack Russell Terrier was developed over 100 years ago by a gentleman named Reverend John Russell in Devon UK, for going to ground in pursuit of the fox. Also, they were used to extinguish vermin such as badger and rats.

Two sizes evolved, the taller now known as the Parson Russell, who also, now has some structural difference, and the 10 to 12 inch dog now known as The Jack Russell Terrier.

As the main function of this dog was to bolt the fox from his underground lair, a heavy set dog with barrel ribs and loaded shoulders would soon meet his demise wedged in the underground, unable to turn, unable to flush out his quarry. Even today these dogs are still used by some fanciers for this purpose and “Earth dog Tests” are now an approved activity by the ANKC.

Herein lies the essence of the breed and the importance of the preservation of the, Slimly built lithe, flexible body.

TRUMP—Jack Russell’s first Terrier.
• **INTRODUCTION**

You would be aware that the evolution and history of a breed is intrinsically linked to the form and function of a Breed. This is no less true of the Jack Russell than any other breed that has been developed for a specific purpose.

When judging breed it will be of great assistance to you to always be keenly aware of the purpose of this breed. This will assist you to identify “correct type”.

Since being recognised by the ANKC in 1991 the Jack Russell Terrier has taken the world by storm.

Enthusiasts globally are looking to Australia for breeding stock, advice and direction. Always be aware that the title of Australian Champion indicates an exhibit of “Outstanding Quality” to the international market in search of foundation breed stock.

The dog, with the balance of a Norfolk Terrier with a few white markings, whilst may appear attractive, no doubt loveable and very often a game little dog, does not fulfil the requirements of the breed standard.

The ANKC with advice and assistance of the various breed clubs, have developed a Breed Standard and extension and one should NOT digress from it.
GENERAL APPEARANCE

A strong, active, lithe working terrier of great character with flexible body of medium length. His smart movement matches his keen expression. Tail docking optional and the coat may be smooth, rough to broken.

In this context “strong” is not meant to imply bulging bunched muscle, but long, flat muscle in hard condition.

“Active and Lithe” implies an agile, the exuberant dog.

“Lithe” indicating a supple, flexible, slimly built dog with the ability to turn on itself.

Movement—should not display any peculiarities.

NOTE: He may have any one of the three coats mentioned but all must be coarse, thick and weatherproof.
CHARACTERISTICS

A lively, alert and active Terrier with a keen, intelligent expression.

This is the essence of the Jack Russell Terrier and contributes largely to his charm and appeal. "Keen intelligent expression" which is an essential characteristic of all Terriers, is personified by the carriage and form of the ear and the shape and size of the eye.
• **TEMPERAMENT**

• *Bold and fearless, friendly but quietly confident.*

• The Jack Russell is a highly intelligent dog who is readily trainable. His character is such that his handler should be able to maintain his undivided attention.

• Whilst he should not back down from a challenge an overly aggressive temperament should not be tolerated nor should nervousness or timidity.

• He must be totally reliable both with children and adults alike.

• It has been said that the Reverend John Russell placed the temperament and courage of his terriers on par with conformation. A working terrier must have plenty of courage, but must be tempered with discretion. A hard dog which goes to ground and get’s hold of the fox is of little use to anybody. The fox cannot bolt, the dog cannot bark or give voice, and he will spend half of his time in hospital. Also, If another hard terrier manages to slip his lead and get to ground, the two will fight to the death. Russell liked his dogs to find their fox underground but scent and lie a little away and bay at him and keep on baying. Now and again the dog would dart in, nip his fox and get back out of danger. Thus the fox was not injured, only ever “worried” by the terrier until he was “bolted”.

• In the show ring, the Jack Russell is not a dog who will stand still for too long and should not be expected to do so. Even though he is essentially a “pack dog”, dogs who are unfamiliar to him, he does not recognize as a member of “his” pack and this can lead to the odd altercation, these should never be vicious or savage, just a warning to stay away.
• **HEAD AND SKULL**

  *The skull should be flat and of moderate width decreasing in width to the eyes and tapering to a wide muzzle with very strong jaws. There should be a well defined stop but not overly pronounced. The length from the stop to the nose should be slightly shorter than from the occiput with the cheek muscles well developed. The nose should be black.*

• The skull shoulder **not** appear domed in the mature dog, (whilst some puppies can display some doming this should disappear by maturity).

• The whole head should appear balanced, i.e. the skull and muzzle should complement each other. An overly “cheeky” head with a narrow foreface lacking strength presents a foreign appearance and lacks type.

• The length from the stop to the tip of the nose should be marginally shorter than from the stop to the occiput. A long foreface will usually indicate a down face, lacking in strength and fill under the eye, this presents an expression foreign to this breed. A foreface which is too short is reminiscent of the Border Terrier.

• The muzzle is described as wide, which indicates a muzzle with strength and power for biting ability. A WELL DEVELOPED UNDERJAW IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE.

• This is where the rough or broken coat can have an advantage over the smooth coat as additional beard can be left on the foreface giving the appearance of added strength. It takes a discerning eye to detect this fault in the rough and broken coated dogs. Feel for strength of under jaw and watch for cramped incisors and situations where an incisor has been extracted to alleviate cramping.

• Good fill under the eye should also be present for added strength, a foreface which falls away under the eye indicates a weak, narrow snipey muzzle.

• A well defined stop, should accompany parallel plains with strength of back skull, a receding skull being undesirable. The bridge of the nose should appear level presenting no roman nose or dish face characteristics.
EYES

- **Small dark and with keen expression. MUST not be prominent and eyelids should fit closely. The eyelid rims should be pigmented black. Almond shape.**

- Large protruding, full eyes spoil the expression and are of little use to a dog required to work underground. The eye should always appear dark as is preferred in all terriers, a light eye spoiling the expression. Eyelids fitting closely, are also vital, when the function of the dog is again considered.

- The pigmentation of the eyelid rim is important for cosmetic reasons and because of the effects of harsh sun, pigmentation eye rims should always be encouraged. However, it is in no way a fault for a dog to have a white face or a partially white face and unpigmented eye rims do occur occasionally.

- What is a judge to do - penalize an otherwise well constructed dog, only because it’s left eye is not pigmented? May I suggest, that as stated in the standard that any departure from the standard be considered a fault and the seriousness be regarded in exact proportion to it’s degree.

- Eyes should always be set into the skull and not protruding. Domed heads seem to go together with a round protruding eye, whilst a head lacking sufficient stop tend to create insufficient brow over the eye which causes the eye not to be set deeply. This expression can be likened to a crocodile and is totally foreign in his breed.

- The eye should always be an almond shape.
• **EARS**
  • *Button or dropped of good texture and great mobility.*

  • The ears should be set on the corners of the skull. They should not be set too high which gives a surprised expression or appear as a bow on the top of the skull.

  • A button ear has a slight lift with the fold breaking just above the level of the skull, whist a drop ear has a fold which breaks at the level of the skull. **Both are equally correct.** Although, we all seem to develop our own preference in this area, when judging you should always remember this point.

  • The fold of the ear should **never** break below the level of the skull, this will give a “hound like” appearance which is totally undesirable. Also, the tips of the ear should be V shaped and on no account rounded, as seen in the Norfolk and Sealyham Terriers.

  • Erect or semi pricked ears are totally undesirable and are to be penalised heavily. The leathers of the ears should **not** be thick, **falling in folds nor should they be fine and “fly away”**.

  • Some dogs have very mobile ears which can be thrown back in pleasure or fear. The ear should fall forward pointing toward the ground not toward the eye as is required in the Fox Terrier and The Lakeland Terrier. This is best assessed when the dog is alert.
Note the difference in facial expression on the sketches of the same dog below. The only change being the ear set.
• **MOUTH**

*Deep wide and powerful jaws with tight-lipped pigmented and strong teeth closing to a scissor bite.*

• The Jack Russell should always present with “full dentition” with no cramping of the teeth. Teeth broken or damaged or missing which is clearly due to an accident should not be penalised.

• The jaws should appear squarish, a pointed, weak jaw undesirable. As stated previously the strength of the under jaw and foreface is of vital importance.

• As with any working terrier, lips should be tight and clean. The lips completely pigmented black as is the nose.

![Mouth Diagrams]

- **SCISSOR BITE**
- **PINCER BITE**
- **OVERSHOT JAW**
- **UNDERSHOT JAW**
• **NECK**

*Strong and clean allowing head to be carried with poise.*

• As with other terrier breeds, if the shoulder is upright the neck will be shortened. Ideally, the length should be about 2/3 the length of the back.

• When the neck is set on correctly and the carriage of the head is correct there will an arch or crest of neck.

• A ewe, swan or stuffy neck are all faulty as is a heavy neck.

• The correct neck with allow the head to be carried with poise synonymous with his smart movement.

![Correct neck proportions of a balanced animal](image)

![Incorrect neck](image)
• **FOREQUARTERS**
  • *Shoulders well sloped back and not heavily loaded with muscle. Forelegs straight in bone from the shoulder to the toes whether viewed from the front or the side and with sufficient length of upper arm to ensure elbows are set under the body with the sternum clearly in front of the shoulder blades.*

• The anatomy of the Jack Russell is straightforward and as with most breeds the same requirements apply.
• For sufficient reach he must have a well laid back shoulder. His front should not resemble a “Terrier Front” as demonstrated by the Fox Terrier. His upper arm should be as near to equal length to the shoulder blade as possible.
• The elbows set under the body, well attached and never loose.
• The whole frontal construction should not be forward placed, giving him a steeple or cathedral front, but should be set well back on the ribs so that he stands with his feet under his body and exhibits a degree of fore chest.
• Legs should always be straight from the elbows to the feet and he should stand “well up” on his pasterns. Rough coated dogs seem to grow extra hair on the joints of the legs, probably for natural protection. If this extra hair is not removed by the trimmer the leg can appear cabriole even though the legs may be straight.

• **Please note: that the shoulders should not be heavily loaded with muscle this also reminds us that the Jack Russell should appear to be a slim lithe dog.**
CORRECT  CORRECT  CABRIOLE  KNUCKLED  OUT AT  DOWN IN  TOES
   OVER    ELBOW    PASTERNs  OUT
• **BODY**

• *Chest deep rather than wide, with good clearance and the brisket located at the height midway between the ground and the withers.* The body should be proportioned marginally longer than tall, measuring slightly longer from the withers to the root of the tail than from the withers to the ground. Back level, ribs should be well sprung from the spine, flattening on the sides so that the girth behind the elbowed can be spanned by two hands—40 to 43 cms. The loins should be short, strong and deeply muscled.

• The Jack Russell should **always** be spanned when judging, **to be spannable is a hallmark of the breed** and is a handy tool detecting those who is off type and too deep.

• The chest should never extend beyond the elbow. On the rough coated dog, check carefully the depth, sometimes excess hair may have been left on this area by inexperienced trimmers.

• The chest is described as deep rather than wide, with the brisket is midway between the ground and the wither i.e. level with the point of the elbow.

• The area between the front legs and under the chest should appear rectangular and not a square.
• “measuring slightly longer from the withers to the root of the tail than from the withers to the ground.”
• I do NOT agree with this statement and believe that there have attempts made to have the standard rectified and this method of measurement deleted.
• I simply makes the dog way to long and does not result in a dog with a “marginally” longer body!
• In my opinion the “correct” measurement is that the dog measures the same from the wither to ground and the wither to point of buttock or the point of ischium.
• The back should always be level. A dip behind the withers usually indicates an upright shoulder, also there should be no visible rise over the loin meeting at a right angle to the set on of the tail.
• The ribs should be heart shaped, the top half always being well sprung to allow sufficient heart and lung space.
• The coupling should be short, strong and level.
• It is most important to remember that the length of the leg should always be half of the dogs overall height.
• HE IS NOT A SHORT LEGGED DOG.
• The angulation of the hindquarter should allow the dog to have the appearance of a shelf behind the tail. If this is not present then the dog is most likely straight in stifle and has a low tail set.
• 1. THE JACK RUSSELL TERRIER MUST BE SPANNABLE.
• 2. HE IS NOT A SQUARE DOG.
• 3. IS NOT PARTICULARLY DEEP NOR WIDE.,
• 4. HIS PROPORTIONS SHOULD ALWAYS BE 50% LEG TO 50% BODY.
• **HINDQUARTERS**

*Strong and muscular, balanced in proportion to the shoulder, hind legs parallel when viewed from behind while in free standing position. Stifles well angulated and hocks low set.*

- Strong and muscular means long flat muscle in hard condition. The angulation of the rear should be complimentary to the shoulder angulation so the movement will appear true. Angulation should be such, if a line was drawn from the back of the tail, it should run down the front of the hock.

- The stifles should appear well bent. Straight stifles often leading to “slipping patella's’ this being indicated by a hopping or skipping action during movement. There should be no hint of cow hocks or a bandy rear end with a “normal” rear construction. The hocks should be short and straight.

- The hocks should flex and the rear provide strong driving propulsion.
HOCKS TOO CLOSE

BOW OR OPEN HOCKS

COW HOCKED

CORRECT STRAIGHT HOCKS
• **FEET**
• *Round, hard, padded, not large, toes moderately arched, turned neither in nor out.*

As with any working terrier the correct feet are of vital importance to the dog if he is going to be able to fulfil his function.

• Weak, splayed feet being totally useless to a dog which is required to go over rough terrain and then go to ground and dig.
• Round indicating cat-like, feet which should be short and compact.
• Feet should point forward and he should stand well up on his pasterns.
• Nails should always be kept short and neat being vitally important to the ongoing care of the feet.
• Pads should be fairly thick and tough and should ideally be pigmented, pink feet tending to be more prone to irritation and damage, are generally softer and weaker.
• **TAIL**

• *May drop at rest. When moving should be erect and if docked the tip should be on the same level as ears.*

• On the move the tail should always appear erect, when it does not this usually indicates faulty rear construction, particularly when the tail appears late. This indicates a croup that is not flat. The tail should set on high and at a right angled to the top line, as is required in many other terrier breeds. The tail may drop at rest particularly in hot weather, however, on the move the tail should always appear erect.

• Now, that we no longer dock, breeders will need to work harder to develop the correct tail. Personally, I would be looking for a strong thick tail as straight as possible and not overly long.
• **GAIT**

  • *True, free and springy.*

    As in most breeds, movement is the crucial test of conformation and is best assessed when the dog is moved on a loose lead.

    • **True**—Straight for and aft, not crossing or paddling. The rear movement should not be too close or too wide. Hocks should always remain parallel during movement.

    • **Springy**—Indicates a buoyant, cocky movement best described as an extended trot, which has a period of suspension. Springy does not indicate a hackney or choppy movement. Movement should always demonstrate an effortless economy and fluidity.

    • The front should swing straight through from the shoulder with forward reaching low movement with no bending of the pasterns.

    • The propulsion comes from the rear, hocks supplying the drive, the hind legs coming well forward under the body.
**COAT**

*May be smooth, broken of rough. Must be weatherproof, preferably unaltered.*

As you can see there are three different coats which are typical of the Jack Russell. Although again we may have our own personal preferences, when judging these should set aside, the dogs conformation being our first priority.

1. Smooth—should be dense hard and weatherproof.
   A sparse, soft coat not being weatherproof.

2. Rough—harsh and dense not linty or fine and should resemble a tight fitting jacket to be weatherproof. In no way should it appear soft, linty, woolly or silky.

3. Broken—is similar to a smooth, but a little longer. Whiskers, eyebrows and sometimes a beard present.

The most important point is that the coat no matter what type should always be weatherproof. Some undercoat should always be present this assisting with the coat being weatherproof.

‘Preferably unaltered’ is stated to discourage the practice of over stripping the rough coat. The rough coated dog for the show ring will always require a degree of trimming. As in all hand stripped terriers the dead hair must be removed to encourage new growth. Also excess hair will need to be removed from various areas which can give the illusion of a fault which is not present.
• **COLOUR**

• *White must *predominate with black, tan or brown markings.*

• Originally the Parson Russell and the Jack Russell were one and the same breed the 10 to 12 inch dogs being known as the unders and the over 12 inch dogs known as the overs. In reading the standard of the Parson Russell regarding colour you will note that the standard allows for entirely white with colour preferably confined to head and root of tail. This is the origins of the breed.

• This is the reason that the word MUST is written in Capital letters.

• As you are already aware the Jack was breed to locate and bolt the fox. It is an important feature of the breed that in the field a dog which was not predominately white could be mistaken by the huntsman for a fox and a hunter could shoot his own dog. There will be those that tell you that the underside of the dog is completely white so he is predominately white. I have yet to see a dog run around on his hind legs showing everyone that he is white underneath.

• White must predominate, refers to the visible coat colour, particularly the area on the back which would be visible to the hound when the Jack Russell is emerging from the foxhole.

• Brown can vary from lemon to mahogany and tri colours are also correct. Liver with liver pigmentation is considered a serious fault.
BLACK PIGMENT ON NOSE, AROUND EYE RIMS TICKING NOT DESIRABLE FOR SOME, BUT QUITE CORRECT

"WHITE MUST PREDOMINATE" QUOTE ANKC STANDARD.

CLASSIC MARKINGS AS WAS 1ST JACK RUSSELL TERRIER "TRUMP"

POINT OF NO RETURN

WHITE NO LONGER PREDOMINATES

THE BEGINNINGS OF A SOLID COLOURED DOG. VERY HARD TO BREED OUT THIS FAULT.
• SIZE

• Ideal height 25cms (10ins) to 30cms (12ins). The weight in kg being equivalent of 1 kg to each 5cms in height, i.e. a 25 cm high dog should weigh approximately 5kg and a 30cm high dog should weigh 6kg.

• A 2 inch difference in size is quite significant and generous in a dog of this size. Therefore it is reasonable to say that any dog under 10 inches is not acceptable as is the dog over 12 inches. Under 10ins, the dog would be bordering on toyish whilst over 12 inches is bordering on the Parson Standard and totally untypical.

• However, the most important thing should always be BREED TYPE and marginal differences should never take precedence over balance and breed type.

• Note: The weights of 5-6kg make for a rather light dog and definitely to NOT indicate a heavy one!
PICK THE MOST CORRECT
Excellent, 18 month rough coated bitch
Correct balance and proportions

- Flexible body of medium length. Skull flat, well defined stop. Strong neck, head carried with poise. Shoulders well sloped. Sternum clearly in front. Spannable chest. Marginally longer than tall
Excellent smooth coated bitch

Excellent rough coated bitch

- Correct angulation front and rear. Balanced.
- Correct keen expression
Same bitch from different angle.

- Note:
  - Excellent hindquarter angulation and low set hocks. Also length of neck and excellent topline. Forelegs beautifully straight.
Excellent tri coloured rough bitch

- Excellent body and legs.
- Correct length of leg and depth of chest.
- Correct angulations
- Slimly built, spannable.
- Lacking a little in strength of muzzle.
Excellent broken coat bitch

• Note:
• straight front with no excess musculature over the shoulder.
• Elbows set under body and well attached
• dark keen eye and correct ear carriage.
Excellent rough coated bitch

- Excellent angulations front and rear and Head proportions are very good.
- Slightly more length of leg would be desirable, otherwise overall excellent.
Excellent rough coated dog.

- Head carried with poise.
- Excelling in topline and tail set.
- Excellent angulations
- Again, would like a little more length of leg.
- Would not like much more colour than this.
• Great character and personality
• Keen expression with correct button ears.
• Excellent head and expression.
• flat skull, small V shaped ears, correct proportions, defined stop with strong jaws and large black nose.
• Another excellent example of a Jack Russell head.
• V Shaped correctly set ears.
• Small dark triangular eyes.
• Good fill under the eye.
Clown face bitch

• Despite having a clown faced marking this is an excellent head in every way exuding Jack Russell type.
• Note: Flat skull
• Correct V shape ears.
• Small almond eye.
• Keen expression
• Cheek muscles well developed.
Excellent rough coated dog.

- Correct head topline and tail set.
- “Classical markings”
- Just a little over sprung in rib and a little deep.
- Overall an excellent type
Excellent rough bitch

• Litter sister to previous dog.
• Bitch excelling in breed type.
• Very difficult to fault. Maybe just a little heavy in the forequarter.
Broken coated dog

- Lacking in stop.
- Not spannable.
- Heavily coloured.
- Needs to be ribbed further back.
- Faulty tail set and carriage.
- Incorrect proportions.
Litter brother to previous dog.

- Too wide and too deep in chest.
- Insufficient length of leg. For correct balance
- Prefer less colour
- Otherwise correct topline and tail set.
Roughed coated dog.

- Shoulders heavily loaded with muscle.
- Chest far too deep.
- Exaggerated prosternum
- Back not level
- 13 inches tall.
- Prefer less colour
Rough coated bitch

• Incorrect proportions.
• Too deep in chest lacking in leg.
• Faulty topline.
• Large ears.
Parson like broken coat

- This dog is has too much leg.
- Tail also appears a little low set.
• Also parson like in appearance
• Note square outline.
- Again parson like in appearance.
- Head in lacking in strength
- Faulty ear carriage
- and definitely too much colour.
• Lacking in angulation in front and rear
• Insufficient length of upper arm. Legs are not under the body
• Legs not well attached.
• Lacking balance.
• Insufficient length of leg.
• Faulty coat appears too profuse and soft not “weatherproof”
• Head lacking strength.
• Faulty topline owing to lack of angulation in the rear.
• Prefer less colour
Smooth coated dog.

- Semi prick ears
- Large round eye, lacks keen expression.
- Shoulders heavily loaded in muscle.
- Very bent cabriole front legs.
• Faulty head
• Bridge of nose should appear level.
• long in foreface.
• Ears are a little large
• Skull appears a little domed.
• Weak head
• Semi prick ear
Tri coloured smooth dog

- Overall good topline and angulation.
- Little deep in chest and lacking in length of leg.
- Bridge of nosed should be level.
- A “roman nose” is undesirable.
Smooth coated bitch

- Head is completely lacking in type.
- Skull is very domed.
- The foreface is weak.
- Insufficient stop.
- Long in foreface
- Heavy hound like ears
Smooth coated puppy

- Note domed skull
- Low set tail
- Topline is not straight.
- Over angulated hind quarter.
• Head lacking strength.
• Falling away too quickly under the eyes.
• Muzzle a little long nose small.
Excellent rough coated bitch

- Correct balance and proportions
- Outstanding overall outline, showing lively and alert Terrier character.