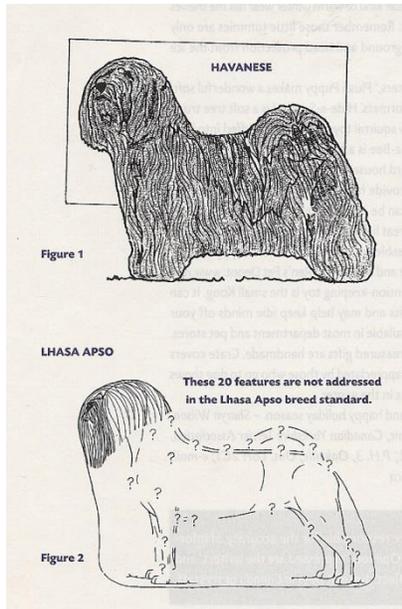


YOU BE THE JUDGE

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THE HAVANESE



HISTORY

The origin of the Havanese is somewhat clouded in mystery, but like the Bichon Frise it is thought to have originated in the Mediterranean, then been taken to Cuba by sailors. Considered a native of Cuba, it has evolved into a companion, watchdog, child's playmate and herder of the family poultry flock. The breed's character is essentially playful rather than decorative. The Havanese has been exhibited at most European shows, however, its modern development is said to centre in the U.S.

The Havanese is a sturdy toy dog (Figure 1) of immense charm. Its body parts are hidden under one of two kinds of long double coats, making the recognition of features difficult. However, the revised Havanese standard fully describes the important features hidden under the coats of long-haired breeds. Such description has not always been the case. The Lhasa Apso is a good example of a long-haired breed whose standard fails to tell the whole story. For example there are about 20 features it does not mention (Figure 2).

Unlike the brief Lhasa Apso standard, the AKC Havanese standard (2001) is a more informative guideline. The Havanese standard describes the features hidden under the coat in such a way that a see-through drawing depicting the breed's hidden features can be produced (Figure 4).

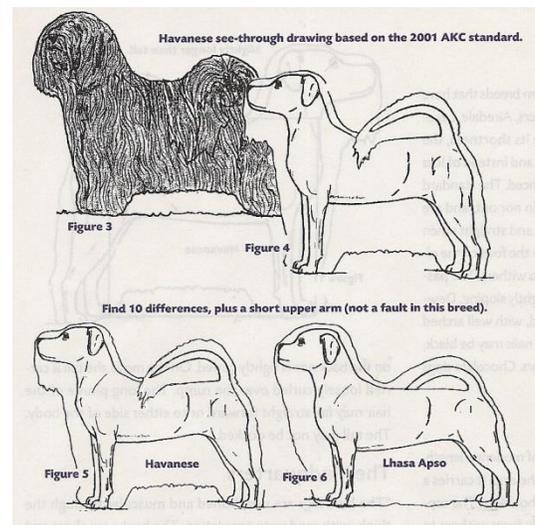
Rather than stand alone, a more immediate appreciation for the distinctive features of the Havanese can be gained by comparing a see-through drawing of a 10 inch Havanese (Figure 5) with a see-through drawing of a 10 inch Lhasa Apso (Figure 6).

FIGURES 5 AND 6

The Havanese has been compared to the Lhasa Apso with mixed results; the two breeds are in some ways similar and in other ways not. Compared in see-through outline, there are 11 differences – 10 are visible, the 11th is a shorter upper arm on the Havanese. Can you identify the 10 differences? Tail carriage is not one of them.

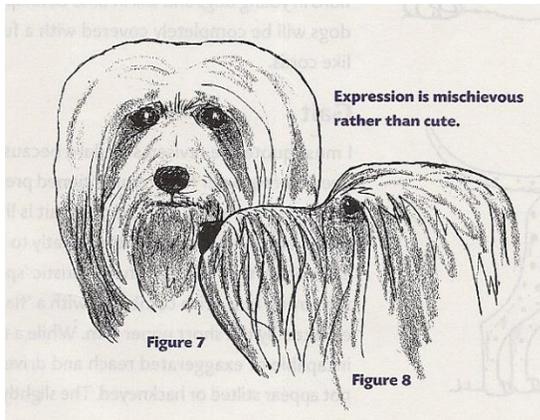
DIFFERENCES

- 1) The end of the muzzle is shaped differently because the Havanese has a scissors bite, and the Lhasa Apso has a level or reverse scissors bite.
- 2) The Havanese muzzle is longer.
- 3) The stop is not as pronounced.
- 4) Havanese ears are set on higher and further rearward.
- 5) The skull is flatter.
- 6) The forequarters position more forward (short upper arm) than those of the Lhasa Apso.
- 7) Havanese legs are longer.



8) The front pasterns have less slope. 9) The Havanese topline rises slightly from the withers to the rump. 10) Both dogs are 10 inches tall; however, the Lhasa Apso is about an inch or so longer in body when measured from the point of the breastbone to the buttock.

THE HEAD



The head in detail, complemented by Figures 7 and 8, is described in the standard as: “expression is soft and intelligent, mischievous rather than cute. The eyes are dark brown, large, almond-shaped, and set rather widely apart. Dark eyes are preferred irrespective of coat color, although the chocolate colored dog may have somewhat lighter eyes. The pigment on the eyerims is complete, solid black for all colors except for the chocolate dog which has complete solid, dark chocolate pigment. No other dilution of pigment is acceptable. Ears are of medium length; the leather, when extended, reaches halfway to the nose. They are set high on the skull, slightly above the endpoint of the zygomatic arch, and are broad at the base, showing a distinct fold.

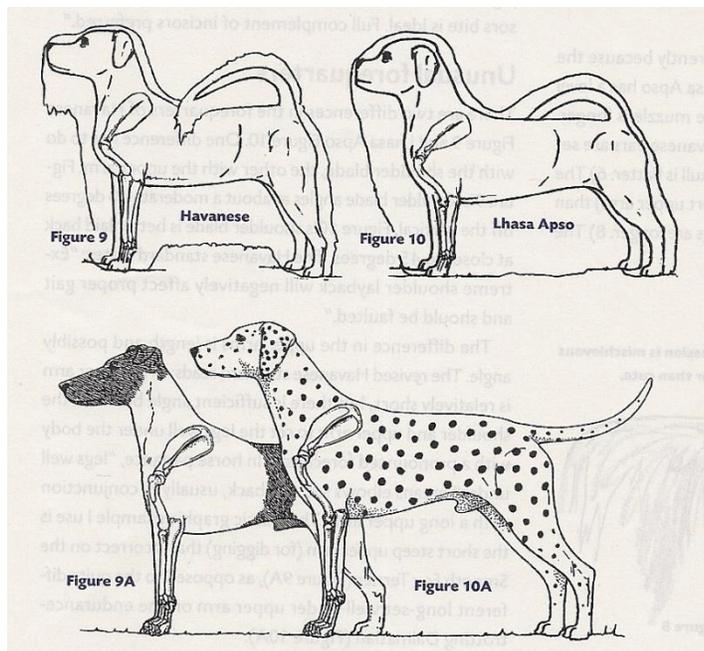
When the dog is alert, the ears lift at the base, producing an unbroken shallow arc from the outer edge of each ear across the backskull. The backskull is broad and slightly rounded. The stop is moderate. Length of muzzle is slightly less than length of backskull measured from stop to point of occiput and the planes are level. The nose is broad and squarish, fitting a full and rectangular muzzle, with no indication of snippiness. The pigment on the nose and lips is complete, solid black for all colors except for the chocolate dog which has complete solid, dark chocolate brown pigment. No other dilution of pigment is acceptable. A scissors bite is ideal. Full complement of incisors preferred.

UNUSUAL FOREQUARTERS

There Are two differences in the forequarters of Havanese Figure 9 and Lhasa Apso Figure 10. One difference has to do with the shoulder blade, the other with the upper arm. Figure 9’s should blade angles at about a moderate 40 degrees off the vertical. Figure 10’s shoulder blade is better laid back at closer to 45 degrees. The Havanese standard states: “Extreme shoulder layback will negatively affect proper gait and should be faulted.”

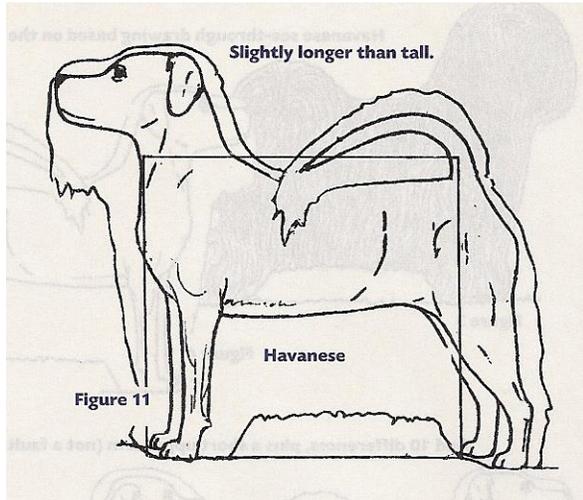
The difference in the upper arms is length and possible angle. The revised Havanese standard reads: “The upper arm is relatively short, but there is sufficient angle between the shoulder and upper arm to set the legs well under the body with a pronounced forechest.” In horse parlance, “legs well under” means elbows set well back, usually in conjunction with a long upper arm. The classic graphic example I use is the short steep upper arm (for digging) that is correct on the Smooth Fox Terrier (Figure 9A), as opposed to the quite different long-set well-under upper arm on the endurance trotting Dalmatian (Figure 10A)

The unusual Havanese front departs from breeds that have a short upper arm – e.g., the two Fox Terriers, Airedale, Lakeland and Welsh Terriers – in that despite its shortness, the Havanese upper arm still slopes rearward, and instead of loss of forechest, the forechest is to be pronounced. The standard goes on



the say: “The elbows turn neither in nor out, and are tight to the body. Forelegs are well-boned and straight when viewed from any angle. The distance from the foot to the elbow is equal to the distance from elbow to withers. The pasterns are short, strong and flexible, very slightly sloping. Dewclaws may be removed. The feet are round, with well arched toes, and turn neither in nor out. Pads and nails may be black, white, pink, or a combination of these colors. Chocolate dogs may also have brown pads and nails.”

NECK AND BODY



It can be seen in Figure 11 that “the neck is of moderate length, in balance with the height and length of the dog. It carries a slight arch and blends smoothly into the shoulders. The topline is straight but not level, rising slightly from withers to rump. There is no indication of a roach back.

“The body, measured from point of shoulder to point of buttocks, is slightly longer than the height at the withers. This length comes from the ribcage and not from the short, well-muscled loin. The chest is deep, rather broad in front, and reaches the elbow. The ribs are well sprung. There is a moderate tuck-up. The tail is high-set and plumed with long, silky hair. It arcs forward over the back, but neither lies flat on the back nor is tightly curled. On the move the tail is carried loosely curled over the rump. The long plume of the hair may fall

straight forward or to either side of the body. The tail may not be docked.”

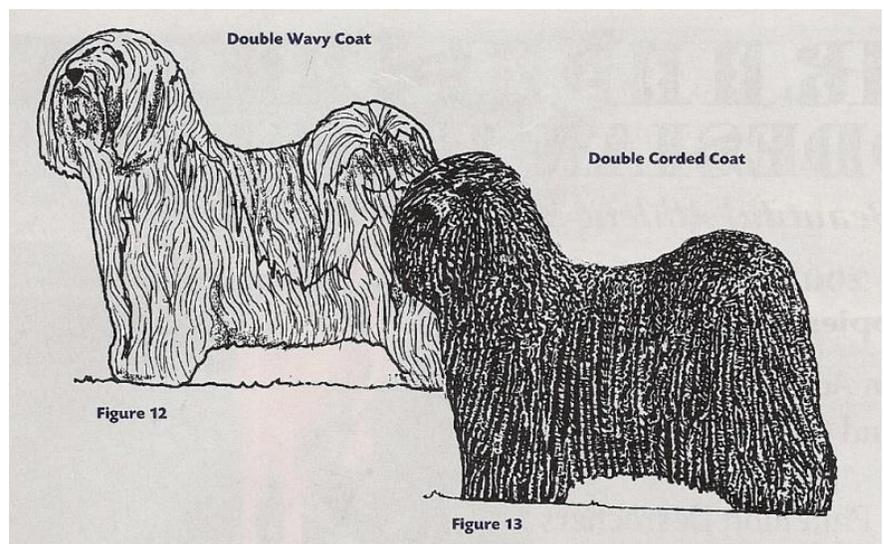
THE HINDQUARTERS

“The hind legs are well-boned and muscular through the thigh, with moderate angulation. The hocks are short and turn neither in nor out. In normal stance, the hind legs are parallel to each other from hock to heel and all the joints are in line when viewed from the rear. The rear assembly, in which the rump is slightly higher than the withers, contributes to the breed’s unique, springy gait. Dewclaws should be removed. The hind feet fall slightly behind a perpendicular line from point of buttock when viewed from the side. Hind feet have well arched toes and turn neither in nor out. Pads and nails may be black, white, pink or a combination of these colors. Chocolate dogs may also have brown pads and nails.”

TWO COATS

There are two coats, both double (Figure 12 and 13). The basic coat lacks the harsh standoff guard hair and woolly undercoat. The long hair is abundant and ideally wavy.

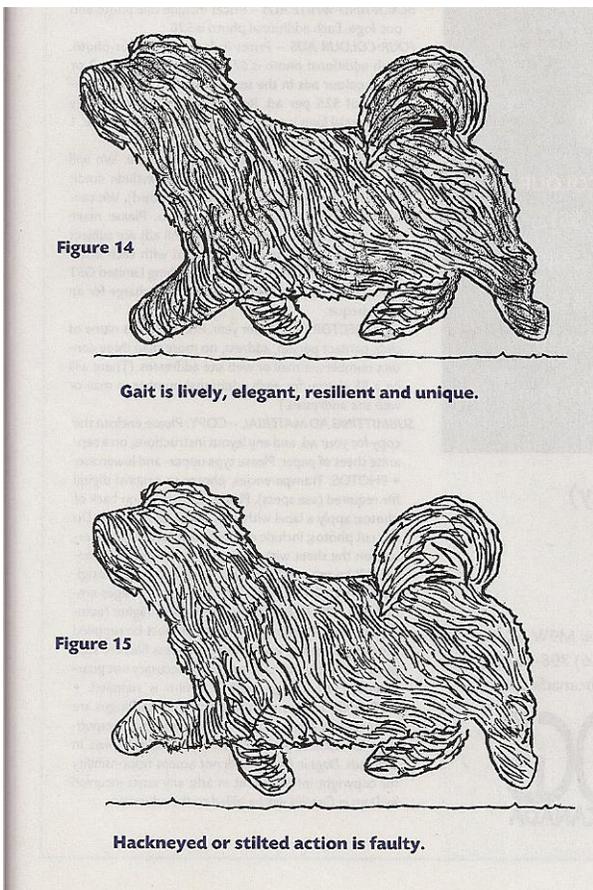
The corded coats will naturally separate into wavy sections in young dogs and will in time develop into cords. Adult dogs will be completely covered with a full coat of tassel-like cords.



GAIT

I must quote the revised standard because the Havanese, due to forequarter features mentioned previously, moves in a unique manner: “The Havanese gait is lively, elegant, resilient, and unique, contributing greatly to the breed’s overall essential typiness. The characteristic ‘spring’ is caused by the strong rear drive combined with a ‘flashy’ front action effected by the short upper arm. While a truly typey dog is incapable of exaggerated reach and drive, the action does not appear stilted or hackneyed. The slightly higher rear may cause a correctly built specimen to show a flash of pad coming and going. The front legs reach forward freely. There is good extension in the rear and no tendency toward sickle hocks. The topline holds under movement, neither flattening nor roaching. Head carriage is typically high, even on the move.”

It’s not the hocks that should be short, it’s the rear pasterns. The hock is the joint; from the hock to the foot is the rear pastern. The rump should be “slightly higher than the withers” – i.e., the characteristic topline, “rising slightly from wither to rump.” I believe it should read: As “high” as the withers, not higher than. What raises the Havanese rump up, I don’t know. When departures from the norm occur toward a higher rear, it is usually due to a flat or steep pelvis; however, the Havanese is not your normal kind of dog.



The Havanese in Figure 14 is moving at the trot with the standard’s “spring” caused in part by the short upper arm. The Havanese in Figure 15 hackneys in front and belly thumps under the body, and the rear pastern does not extend further rearward than the vertical.

The standard advises that “the overall impression of the dog on the move is one of agility rather than excessive ability to cover ground” and “The rear assembly in which the rump is slightly higher than the withers contributes to the breed’s unique springy gait ... Because correct gait is essential to breed type, the Havanese is presented at natural speed on a loose lead.”

COLOURS

“All colours are acceptable, singly or in any combination. No preference is given to one color over another.”

DISQUALIFICATIONS

“Height at withers under 8 ½ or over 11 ½ inches except that the minimum height range shall not apply to dogs or bitches under twelve months of age. Complete absence of black (or chocolate in the chocolate dog) pigmentation on the eyerims, nose or lips. Coarse, wiry coat. An atypical short coat on an adult. (Atypical refers to a smooth, flat coat with or without furnishings.)”