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# HAVANESE OFFICIAL BREED STANDARD

## Approved by The American Kennel Club May 7, 2001

### Effective June 27, 2001

**General Appearance** – The Havanese is a small sturdy dog of immense charm. He is slightly longer than tall, and covered with a profuse mantle of untrimmed long, silky, wavy hair. His plumed tail is carried loosely curled over his rump. A native of Cuba, he has evolved over the centuries from the pampered lapdog of the aristocracy into what he is today — the quintessential family pet of a people living on a small tropical island. His duties traditionally have been those of companion, watchdog, child's playmate and herder of the family poultry flock. His presentation in the show ring should reflect his function — always in excellent condition but never so elaborately coifed as to preclude an impromptu romp in the leaves, as his character is essentially playful rather than decorative.

While historically always a toy dog and therefore never overly large or coarse, he does not appear so fragile as to make him unsuitable as a child's pet. His unique coat reflects centuries in the tropics, and protects against heat. It is remarkably soft and light in texture, profuse without being harsh or woolly. Likewise, the furnishings of the head are believed to protect the eyes from the harsh tropical sun, and have traditionally never been gathered in a topknot for this reason.

In both structure and gait, the Havanese is not easily mistaken for any other breed. His characteristic topline, rising slightly from withers to rump is a result of moderate angulation both fore and aft combined with a typically short upper arm. The resulting springy gait is flashy rather than far-reaching and unique to the breed. The overall impression of the dog on the move is one of agility rather than excessive ability to cover ground. These characteristics of temperament, structure and gait contribute in large part to the character of the breed, and are essential to type.

**Size, Proportion and Substance** - The height range is from 8-1/2 to 11-1/2 inches, with the ideal being between 9 and 10-1/2 inches, measured at the withers, and is slightly less than the length from point of shoulder to point of buttocks, creating a rectangular outline rather than a square one. The Havanese is a sturdy little dog, and should never appear fragile. A coarse dog with excessive bone is likewise contrary to type and therefore equally undesirable. The minimum height ranges set forth in the description above shall not apply to dogs and bitches under twelve months of age. Disqualification: Height at withers under 8-1/2 inches or over 11-1/2 inches, except that the minimum height ranges set forth in the description above shall not apply to dogs or bitches under twelve months of age.

**Head** – The 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 eye-rims 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 snipiness. 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. Disqualification: Complete absence of black (or chocolate in the chocolate dog) pigmentation on the eye-rims, nose or lips.

**Neck, Topline and Body** – 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.

**Forequarters** – Shoulder layback is moderate, lying not more than 40 degrees off vertical. Extreme shoulder layback will negatively affect proper gait, and should be faulted. The tops of the shoulder blades lie in at the withers, allowing the neck to merge smoothly into the back. 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. 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.

**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.

**Coat** – The coat is double, but without the harsh standoff guard hair and woolly undercoat usually associated with double coats. Rather, it is soft and light in texture throughout, though the outer coat carries slightly more weight. The long hair is abundant and ideally, wavy. An ideal coat will not be so profuse nor overly long as to obscure the natural lines of the dog. Puppies may have a shorter coat. A single, flat coat or an excessively curly coat are equally contrary to type and should be faulted. Disqualification: A coarse, wiry coat. An atypical short coat on an adult dog (atypical would be smooth, flat coat with, or without furnishings).

**Color** – All colors are acceptable, singly or in any combination. No preference is given to one color over another. The skin may be freckled or parti-colored.

**Gait** – 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.

**Temperament** – Playful and alert. The Havanese is both trainable and intelligent with a sweet, non-quarrelsome disposition.

**Presentation** – The dog should be shown as naturally as is consistent with good grooming. He may be shown either brushed or corded. His coat should be clean and well-conditioned. In mature specimens, the length of the coat may cause it to fall to either side down the back but it should not appear to be artificially parted. The long, untrimmed head furnishings may fall forward over the eyes, naturally and gracefully to either side of the skull, or be held in two small braids beginning above the outer corner of the eyes, secured with plain elastic bands. (No ribbons or bows are permitted.) Corded coats will naturally separate into wavy sections in young dogs and will in time develop into cords.

Adult corded dogs will be completely covered with a full coat of tassle-like cords. In either coat, minimal trimming of the hair at the inside corner of the eye is allowed for hygienic purposes only, not an attempt to resculpt the planes of the head. Minimal trimming around the anal and genital areas, for hygienic purposes only, is permissible but should not be noticeable on presentation. The hair on the feet and between the pads should be neatly trimmed for the express purpose of a tidy presentation. Any other trimming or sculpting of the coat is to be severely penalized as to preclude placement. Because correct gait is essential to breed type, the Havanese is presented at natural speed on a loose lead.

**Faults** – The foregoing description is that of the ideal Havanese. Any deviation from the above described dog must be penalized to the

## HAVANESE OFFICIAL BREED STANDARD

### Approved by The Canadian Kennel Club

#### Effective January 1, 2011

**ORIGIN AND PURPOSE** – Originating in the Western Mediterranean region, Havanese are descended from old world Bichon types. Early sea merchants brought these small dogs to Cuba where the breed was further developed and refined; for centuries prized by upper social classes as children's playmates and loving companions. Though numbers were severely decimated by the late 1950's Cuban revolution, the breed has regrown from surviving descendants. No longer a token of high society; the Havanese today is a companion dog to be enjoyed by all.

**GENERAL APPEARANCE:** Sturdy, well balanced, small drop-eared dog, rectangular in outline, slightly longer than tall, with long abundant, soft and wavy hair in a variety of colours and patterns. Casual and carefree, unaffected in both manner and appearance. Movement lively and elastic, plumed tail carried over the back.

**TEMPERAMENT:** Exceptionally bright and attentive, easily trained in many capacities. Affectionate, happy natured, amiable, a charmer, playful and even a bit of a clown. An eager, lively, devoted family companion, typically good with children.

**SIZE:** Ideal height at withers 23-27cm (9.0-10.6 inches). Tolerance from 21-29cm (8.3-11.4 inches). Proportion and Substance: Small dog with a sense of refinement yet also sturdy; weight proportionate to height and bone, maintaining a balanced moderate build without exaggeration towards either fragility or coarseness.

**COAT and COLOUR** – Hair: Well suited to a breed developed in the tropics, the abundant, silken double coat is fine, soft and light-weight throughout, with a subtle airiness, less substantial at the touch than appearance suggests. Undercoat light and may not be very developed. The topcoat, very long (12-18cm in adults) does not hang to the ground, allowing light under the dog when standing on a solid surface; it enhances and reflects the lines of the body. No preference given for extreme length or profuseness. Puppy coats shorter, softer, less full than adult's. Hair ideally wavy; any degree of wave permissible. Single, perfectly straight or tightly curled coats undesirable; woolly, harsh or wiry textures incorrect. Natural coat separation is acceptable, deliberate parting is not. Head furnishings simply brushed back or allowed to fall naturally. Scissoring and all trimming forbidden. Exceptions: tidying the base of the feet and minimal hygienic trimming unnoticeable on presentation. Thorough hands-on examination helps evaluate faults and qualities concealed by coat.

**COLOUR:** Wide colour diversity; all colours, markings and patterns equally acceptable

**HEAD:** Medium length, balanced in proportion to body. Skull: Flat to very slightly rounded, broad, forehead rising; seen from above, rounded at the back and almost straight and square on other three sides. Stop: moderate. Nose: Fully pigmented, colour undiluted. Black; Liver/Brown on chocolate dogs. Muzzle: level; narrowing slightly towards the nose but neither snipey nor truncated. Muzzle length equals skull length from stop to occiput. Lips: fine, lean, tight. Black; Liver/Brown on chocolate dogs. Jaws/Teeth: Scissors bite. Complete dentition desirable, absence of premolars (PM1) and molars (M3) tolerated. Cheeks: flat. Eyes: Bright, gentle, intelligent and expressive. Quite big, wide set, almond shaped. Dark brown; lighter brown on chocolate dogs. Eyerims: Fully pigmented. Dark brown/black; Liver/Brown on chocolate dogs. Ears: Well feathered, set relatively high;

extent of the deviation keeping in mind the importance of the contribution of the various features toward the "original purpose of the breed."

#### DISQUALIFICATION

- Height at withers under 8-1/2 or over 11-1/2 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 eye-rims, nose or lips.
- Coarse, wiry coat.
- An atypical short coat on an adult. (Atypical refers to a smooth, flat coat with, or without furnishings.)

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falling along the cheeks forming a discreet fold which raises them slightly. Ear leathers extend halfway to the nose, ending with a lightly rounded point. Neither propeller ears (sticking sideways) nor stuck to the cheeks.

**NECK** – Medium length, proportionately balanced, blending smoothly into the shoulders.

**FOREQUARTERS:** Forelegs straight and parallel, lean; good bone structure; moderate angulations. Distance from ground to elbow equals that from elbow to withers. Elbows close to body. Feet: pointing straight forward; slightly elongated shape; small; tight toes. Dewclaws may be removed.

**BODY:** Slightly longer than tall, creating a rectangular outline, never square. Length measured point-of-shoulder to point-of-buttocks; height measured at withers. Topline is straight, slightly arched over the muscular loin, presenting a gentle, gradual rise from withers to rear with smooth transition to natural lines of the rump. Forefront prominent; ribs well sprung; chest reaching the elbow. Belly well tucked up.

**HINDQUARTERS:** Good bone structure; straight and parallel; moderate angulations in balance with forequarters. Rear and buttocks well developed. Feet: same as front.

**TAIL:** Plumed tail, moderately high set, furnished with long silky feathering falling over the back or to either side. Loosely curled over the back while gaing, may drop at rest.

**GAIT:** The Havanese has a strikingly light-footed and elastic gait which contributes greatly to breed type. Movement is lively and springy, forelegs free striding and pointing straight forward; hindlegs giving the impulsion and moving in a straight line. Topline steady in motion; head naturally carried high. Movement best evaluated at the trot with dog moving freely on loose lead. Show of pads permissible.

**FAULTS:** Any departure from foregoing points to be considered a fault and penalized in proportion to degree of deviation.

- General appearance lacking in type
- Excessive shyness or aggression
- Fragility or coarseness
- Muzzle truncated or snipey, shorter/longer than skull length
- Bird of Prey eyes, eyes too deep set or prominent
- Nose or eyerim(s) partially depigmented
- Body too long/short; roached back; exaggerated rise
- Straight or tightly curled tail; incorrect tail carriage
- French front; leg(s) bowed/curved; deformed feet
- Coat harsh, not abundant; hair short except on puppies, trimmed or sculpted coat
- Overgroomed or neglected coat

#### DISQUALIFICATIONS:

- Depigmented nose
- Overshot or undershot
- Ectropion, Entropion; one or both eyerims totally depigmented
- Height: under 21cm or over 29cm (minimum not applicable to puppies under 12 months)

N.B.: Males must have two apparently normal testicles fully descended

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# OFFICIAL FCI HAVANESE BREED STANDARD

## FCI – Standard N° 250 / 12.01.2009/ GB

**HAVANESE:** (Bichon Havanais)

**TRANSLATION:** Mrs. Peggy Davis, revised by R. Triquet.  
**ORIGIN:** Western Mediterranean Basin,  
Development : Cuba.

**PATRONAGE:** F.C.I.

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THE ORIGINAL VALID STANDARD :**  
04.11.2008.

**UTILIZATION:** Companion and toy dog.

**CLASSIFICATION:** F.C.I. : Group 9, Companion and Toy, Dogs. Section 1  
Bichons and related breeds. Without working trial.

**BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY:** The breed comes from the Western Mediterranean region and has developed along the Spanish and Italian coastal region. It would seem that these dogs were imported early in Cuba by ocean navigating Italian captains. Erroneously, the most frequent brown colour of these dogs (tobacco) gave birth to the legend which would mean it to be a breed originating from Havana, capital of Cuba. The political events however have led to the total disappearance of the old blood lines of the Havanese in Cuba; apparently a few dogs could be successfully smuggled out from Cuba; their descendants have survived in the U.S.A.

**GENERAL APPEARANCE:** The Havanese is a sturdy little dog, low on his legs, with long abundant hair, soft and preferably wavy. His movement is lively and elastic.

**IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS:** The length of the muzzle (tip of nose to stop) is equal to the distance between the stop and the occipital protuberance. The relation between the length of the body (measured from the point of the shoulder to the point of the buttock) and the height at the withers is of 4/3.

**BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT:** Exceptionally bright he is easy to train as alarm dog. Affectionate, of a happy nature, he is amiable, a charmer, playful and even a bit of a clown. He loves children and plays endlessly with them.

**HEAD:** Of medium length, the relation between the length of the head and that of the trunk (measured from the withers to the base of the tail) is of 3/7.

**CRANIAL REGION:** Skull : Flat to very slightly rounded, broad; forehead hardly rising; seen from above it is rounded at the back and almost straight and square on the other three sides.  
Stop : Moderately marked.

### **FACIAL REGION:**

Nose : Black or brown.

Muzzle : Narrowing progressively and slightly towards the nose but neither snipey nor truncated.

Lips : Fine, lean, tight.

Jaws/Teeth : Scissor bite. A complete dentition is desirable. The absence of premolars 1 (PM1) and molars 3 (M3) is tolerated.

Cheeks : Very flat, not prominent.

Eyes : Quite big, almond shape, of brown colour as dark as possible.

Kind expression. The eye rims must be dark brown to black.

Ears : Set relatively high; they fall along the cheeks forming a discreet fold which raises them slightly. Their extremity is in a lightly rounded point. They are covered with hair in long fringes. Neither propeller ears (sticking sideways), nor stuck to the cheeks.

**NECK:** Of medium length.

### **BODY:**

The length of the body is slightly superior to that of the height at the withers.

Back: Topline straight, slightly arched over the loin.

Croup: Noticeably inclined.

Ribs: Well sprung.

Belly (abdomen): Well tucked up.

**TAIL:** Carried high, either in shape of a crozier or preferably rolled over the back; it is furnished with feathering of long silky hair.

**LIMBS:** Forequarters: Forelegs straight and parallel, lean; good bone structure. The distance from the ground to the elbow must not be greater than that between the elbow and the withers.  
Hindquarters: Good bone structure; moderate angulations.  
Feet: Of slightly elongated shape; small; tight toes.

**GAIT / MOVEMENT:** According to his happy nature, the Havanese has a strikingly light-footed and elastic gait; forelegs with free stride and pointing straight forward, the hindlegs giving them the impulsion and moving in a straight line.

### **COAT:**

Hair: Undercoat woolly and not very developed; it is often totally absent. The topcoat is very long (12-18 cm in an adult dog), soft, flat or wavy and may form curly strands. All grooming, the usage of scissors to even out the length of the coat and all trimming is forbidden. Exception : tidying up the hair on the feet is permitted, the hair on the forehead may be slightly shortened so that it does not cover the eyes and the hair on the muzzle may be slightly tidied up, but it is preferable to leave it in natural length.

Colour: Rarely completely pure white, fawn in its different shades (slight blackened overlay admitted), black, havana-brown, tobacco colour, reddish-brown. Patches in mentioned colours allowed. Tan markings in all nuances permitted.

### **SIZE:**

Height at the withers: From 23 to 27 cm.

Tolerance : from 21 to 29 cm.

**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.

### **IMPORTANT FAULTS:**

- General appearance lacking in type.
- Truncated or snipey muzzle, length not identical to that of the skull.
- Bird of prey eyes; eyes too deep set or prominent; rims of eyelids partially depigmented.
- Body too long or too short.
- Straight tail, not carried high.
- « French » front (pasterns too close, feet turned outwards).
- Deformed hind feet.
- Coat harsh, not abundant; hair short except on puppies; groomed coat.

### **ELIMINATING FAULTS:**

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Depigmented nose.
- Upper or lower prognathism.
- Ectropion, entropion; rim of eyelids of one or both eyes depigmented.
- Size over or under the indicated norms of the standard.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.
- N.B.: Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.