

# Chesapeake Bay Retriever

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Kennel Club, London 1994

Group: Group 3 (Gundogs)

History:

Equally proficient on land and in the water, the Chesapeake Bay Retriever was developed along the Chesapeake Bay to hunt waterfowl under the most adverse weather and water conditions, often having to break ice during the course of many strenuous multiple retrieves. Frequently the Chesapeake must face wind, tide and long cold swims in its work. The breed's characteristics are specifically suited to enable the Chesapeake to function with ease, efficiency and endurance. In head, the Chesapeake's skull is broad and round with a medium stop. The jaws should be of sufficient length and strength to carry large game birds with an easy, tender hold. The double coat consists of a short, harsh, wavy outer coat and a dense, fine, woolly undercoat containing an abundance of natural oil and is ideally suited for the icy rugged conditions of weather the Chesapeake often works in. In body, the Chesapeake is a strong, well-balanced, powerfully built animal of moderate size and medium length in body and leg, deep and wide in chest, the shoulders built with full liberty of movement, and with no tendency to weakness in any feature, particularly the rear. The power though, should not be at the expense of agility or stamina. Size and substance should not be excessive as this is a working retriever of an active nature.

Distinctive features include eyes that are very clear, of yellowish or amber hue, hindquarters as high or a trifle higher than the shoulders, and a double coat which tends to wave on shoulders, neck, back and loins only.

The Chesapeake is valued for its bright and happy disposition, intelligence, quiet good sense, and affectionate protective nature. Extreme shyness or extreme aggressive tendencies are not desirable in the breed either as a gun dog or companion.

General Appearance:

Disqualifications: Specimens that are lacking in breed characteristics should be disqualified.

Important Proportion:

Height to Length Ratio: Height from the top of the shoulder blades to the ground should be slightly less than the body length from the breastbone to the point of buttocks.

Depth of Body: Depth of body should extend at least to the elbow.

Balance of Withes to Elbow and Elbow to Ground: Shoulder to elbow and elbow to ground should be equal.

Approximate Measurements Inches Centimetres

Length head, nose to occiput 9½ to 10 24.13 to 25.40

Girth at ears 20 to 21 50.80 to 53.34

Muzzle below eyes 10 to 10½ 25.40 to 26.67

Length of ears 4½ to 5 11.43 to 12.70

Width between eyes 2½ to 2¾ 6.35 to 6.99

Girth neck close to shoulder 20 to 22 50.80 to 55.88

Girth at flank 24 to 25 60.96 to 63.50

Length from occiput to tail base 34. to 35 86.36 to 88.90

Girth forearms at shoulders 10 to 10½ 25.40 to 26.67

Girth upper thigh 19 to 20 48.26 to 50.80

From root to root of ear, over skull 5 to 6 12.70 to 15.24

Occiput to top shoulder blades 9 to 9½ 22.86 to 24.13

From elbow to elbow over the shoulders 25 to 26 63.50 to 66.04

Characteristics:	Not detailed under this heading.
Temperament:	The Chesapeake Bay Retriever should show a bright and happy disposition with an intelligent expression. Courage, willingness to work, alertness, nose, intelligence, love of water, general quality and, most of all, disposition should be given primary consideration in the selection and breeding of the Chesapeake Bay Retriever.
Head And Skull:	The Chesapeake Bay Retriever should have an intelligent expression. Skull is broad and round with a medium stop. Muzzle is approximately the same length, as the skull, tapered, pointed but not sharp. Nose is medium short Lips are thin, not pendulous.
Eyes:	Eyes are to be medium large, very clear, of yellowish or amber colour and wide apart.
Ears:	Ears are to be small, set well up on the head, hanging loosely, and of medium leather.
Mouth:	Bite: Scissors is preferred, but a level bite is acceptable. Disqualifications: Either undershot or overshot bites are to be disqualified.
Neck:	Neck should be of medium length with a strong muscular appearance, tapering to the shoulders.
Forequarters:	There should be no tendency to weakness in the forequarters. Shoulders should be sloping with full liberty of action, plenty of power and without any restrictions of movement. Legs should be medium in length and straight, showing good bone and muscle. Pasterns slightly bent and of medium length. The front legs should appear straight when viewed from front or rear. Dewclaws on the forelegs may be removed.
Body:	Body is of medium length, neither cobby nor roached, but rather approaching hollowness from underneath as the flanks should be well tucked up. Topline should show the hindquarters to be as high as or a trifle higher than the shoulders. Back should be short, well coupled and powerful. Chest should be strong, deep and wide. Rib cage barrel round and deep
Hindquarters:	Good hindquarters are essential. They should show fully as much power as the forequarters. There should be no tendency to weakness in the hindquarters. Hindquarters should be especially powerful to supply the driving power for swimming. Legs should be medium length and straight, showing good bone and muscle. Stifles should be well angulated. The distance from hock to ground should be of medium length. The hind legs should look straight when viewed from the front or rear. Dewclaws, if any, must be removed from the hind legs. Disqualifications: Dewclaws on the hind legs are a disqualification.
Feet:	Well webbed hare feet should be of good size with toes well-rounded and close.
Tail:	Tail of medium length; medium heavy at the base. The tail should be straight or slightly curved and should not curl over back or side kink.
Gait/Movement:	The gait should be smooth, free and effortless, giving the impression of great power and strength. When viewed from the side, there should be good reach with no restrictions of movement in the front and plenty of drive in the rear, with good flexion of the stifle and hock joints. Coming at you, there should be no sign of elbows being out. When the Chesapeake is moving away from you, there should be no sign of cowhockness from the rear. As speed increases, the feet tend to converge toward a centre line of gravity.
Coat:	Coat should be thick and short, nowhere over 1½ inches long, with a dense fine woolly undercoat. Hair on the face and legs should be very short and straight with a tendency to wave on the shoulders, neck, back and loins only. Moderate feathering on rear of hindquarters and tail is permissible. The texture of the Chesapeake's coat is very important, as the Chesapeake is used for hunting under all sorts of adverse weather conditions, often working in ice and snow. The oil in the harsh outer coat and woolly undercoat is of extreme value in preventing the cold water from reaching the Chesapeake's skin and aids in quick drying. A

Chesapeake's coat should resist the water in the same way that a duck's feathers do. When the Chesapeake leaves the water and shakes, the coat should not hold water at all, being merely moist.

Disqualifications: A coat that is curly or has a tendency to curl all over the body must be disqualified.

Feathering on the tail or legs over 1¾ inches long must be disqualified.

Colour:

The colour of the Chesapeake Bay Retriever must be as nearly that of its working surroundings as possible. Any colour of brown, sedge or deadgrass is acceptable, self-coloured Chesapeakes being preferred. One colour is not to be preferred over another. A white spot on the breast, belly, toes, or back of the feet (immediately above the large pad) is permissible, but the smaller the spot the better, solid coloured preferred. The colour of the coat and its texture must be given every consideration when judging on the bench or in the ring. Honourable scars are not to be penalized.

Disqualifications: Black coloured; white on any part of the body except breast, belly, toes, or back of feet must be disqualified.

Sizes:

Proportion, Substance

Height--Males should measure 58.42 to 66.04 centimetres (23 to 26 inches); females should measure 53.34 to 60.96 centimetres (21 to 24 inches).

Oversized or undersized animals are to be severely penalized.

Weight--Males should weigh 29.51 to 36.32 Kilograms (65 to 80 lbs); females should weigh 24.97 to 31.78 Kilograms (55 to 70 lbs).

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, and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

Disqualifications:

1. Specimens lacking in breed characteristics.
2. Teeth overshot or undershot.
3. Dewclaws on the hind legs.
4. Coat curly or with a tendency to curl all over the body.
5. Feathering on the tail or legs over 1¾ inches long.
6. Black coloured.
7. White on any part of the body except breast, belly, toes, or back of feet.

Faults:

The question of coat and general type of balance takes precedence over any scoring table, which could be drawn up. The Chesapeake should be well proportioned, an animal with a good coat and well balanced in other points being preferable to one excelling in some but weak in others.

Positive Scale of Points (Should be only used for a reference and not used for judging)

Head, including lips, ears and eyes 16

Neck 4

Shoulders and body 12

Hindquarters and stifles 12

Elbows, legs and feet 12

Colour 4

Stern and tail 10

Coat and texture 18

General conformation 12

Total 100

Notes:

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.