

Murray River Retriever

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Australian National Kennel Council

Effective from 1 January 2022

Country of Origin: Australia

Group: Group 3 (Gundogs)

History: The Murray is the only Gundog whose country of development is Australia. Murrays have remained true to type since the 1800s and have been identified by DNA as not related to any other modern breed of dog. Initially used for duck hunting, they were versatile for, flushing and pointing for birds and tracking other game. They have been trained for hunting, bomb detection, assistance and search and rescue. A "Jack of all Trades".

General Appearance: The Murray is stocky in build with a solid liver-coloured curled coat. His size and build create a rectangular outline. He has a strong moderately broad head with a distinctive stop. His ears hang loosely and frame the face. Distinctive webbed feet are a hallmark of the breed.

Characteristics: The breed has a natural ability to find, flush and retrieve game with a soft mouth and track large game. Expression shows alertness and intelligent focus.

Temperament: Friendly, self-confident, highly intelligent and inquisitive.

The head should balance with the rest of the body. It is a blocky wedge shape with a moderately broad, flat or slightly concave parted skull and a distinctive stop when viewed from the front or side. Females have a more feminine head.

Foreface and skull: Of equal length. Planes of skull and muzzle parallel.

Head And Skull:

Muzzle: Medium length with strong jaws, not snipey enabling the dog to carry game. The upper plane is level. The flews cover the mouth and may extend to cover the lower jaw; lip taper ends mildly and rather blunt but not square.

Nose: Wide and fully pigmented with full nostrils, appearing blunt or slightly upturned.

Eyes: Moderately large almond shaped eyes, obliquely set. Not protruding. Amber to light brown in colour. May change in different light settings.

Ears: High set, teardrop-shaped with medium length leather, measuring to the bottom of the jaw. Covered with loose curls which frame the face. Curls may extend below the leather. Always quite mobile when the dog is attentive or in action.

Mouth: *Jaws:* Strong with perfect, regular and complete scissor bite, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws.

Neck: Medium length, free from throatiness and flowing into well laid-back shoulders. Of sufficient length to enable the dog to pick up game on the move when retrieving. Strong and carried high when alert.

Forequarters: *Shoulders:* Well laid back and muscular, blades of near equal length to upper arm.
Forelegs: Set well under body, medium in length and straight, showing strong, round bone and muscle. Pasterns flexible and of medium length.
Front dewclaws: present.

Body: The dog is longer in body, measured from point of shoulder to point of buttock, than in height from withers to ground. The coupling is short.
Ribs: Well sprung, extending into a deep, powerful loin with a slight tuck-up of flank.
Chest: Moderately-deep, round in cross section with the brisket level with the elbow
Topline: Strong and level

Hindquarters: The deep, muscular loins and strong hindquarters should balance the overall structure of the dog. The thighs are powerful with muscling down to the moderately long and well-developed second thighs. Well-turned stifles and strong hocks are also essential for the dog's extension and drive when moving either on land or in water. Dogs should never be cow-hocked, sickle-hocked or bow-hocked.

Feet: Round, with tight well arched toes, thick tough pads which are not small compared to leg bone. Webbing and feathering present between toes for swimming.
Nails: Black or dark brown

Tail: Strong and thick at the root tapering gradually to the tip. Reaching past the bend of hock; carried straight or sabre like on the move. Natural feathering which if trimmed reveals short curls.

Gait/Movement: Quick movement with good extension and drive. Well-balanced on the trot. Front reach is free flowing, and in balance with the rear action. Should not be stilted or hackneyed. Pasterns should be strong but flexible on the move.

Coat: *Body coat:* Medium to tight curls lying close to the skin, extending from occiput to tip of tail and behind the legs. Slight feathering on back of forelegs.

The forehead and face are smooth with the curls commencing at the back of the skull, where the ears begin. The front of forelegs, hocks, pasterns and feet have a short, smooth and straight coat.
Texture: The coat is naturally oily but not harsh to the touch. It is sufficiently thick to protect the skin from cold water and punishing cover while retrieving.

Colour: The Coat is Solid liver. Not Shiny. It should be dull to reduce reflection when waiting to retrieve game along the river bank.
Some dogs show a few white hairs or a white spot on the chest. Liver dogs' colour shades may vary.

Sizes: Ideal height at withers: 46-53cm (or 18 – 21 inches). There are no size parameters set for dogs or bitches

Any physical abnormalities that will affect the Murray performing his original function should be considered a fault, such as structural abnormalities, eye disease or a thin, poor coat.

Muzzle: The lips should not be snipey, nor have excessive flews that extend below the jawline.

Faults:

Eyes: Prominent (bugged) eyes, loose haws, entropion.

Ears: Ear leather is longer than the lower jaw.

Colour: Any colour other than liver. No other marks except as stated in colour.

Notes:

Note: Entire male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.