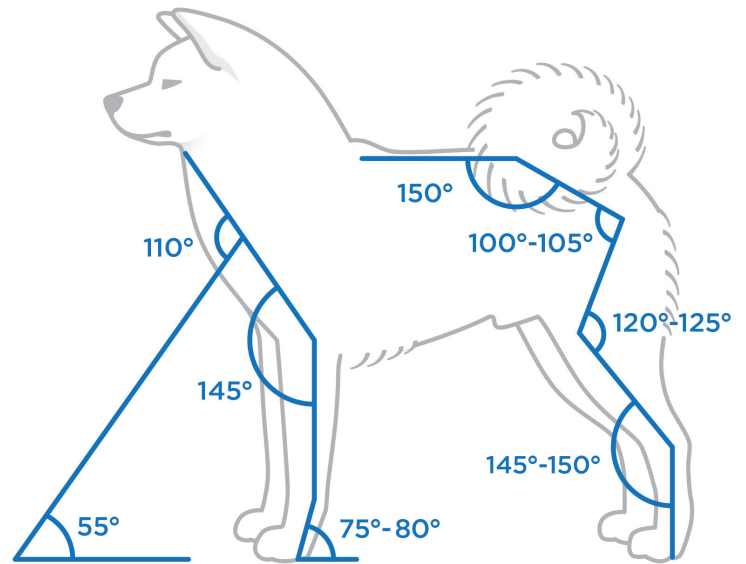


GENERAL

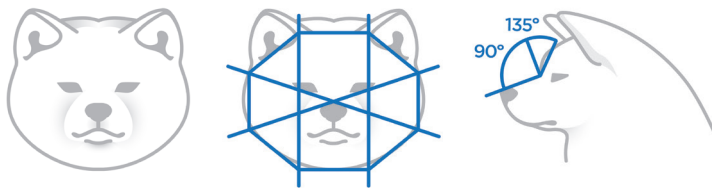
VISUAL QUICK GUIDE FOR AKC



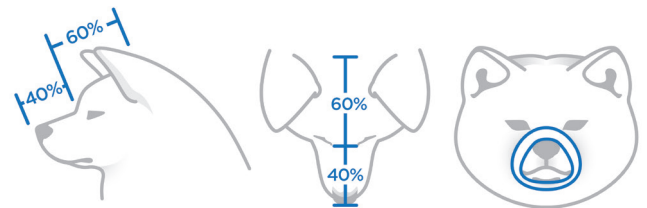
The **Japanese Akitainu** is the largest of the native dog breeds of Japan and was originally used for hunting game in the mountainous terrain of the Tōhoku region where Akita Prefecture is located. The Japanese Akitainu is a large, sturdily built, well balanced Spitz-type dog whose head, triple coat, and curled tail are defining physical features of this unique breed. Males and females are clearly distinguishable from each other with dogs possessing a more robust body structure and masculine facial features and bitches, a more refined body structure and feminine facial features. The moderately angulated Japanese Akitainu is exhibited naturally without trimming of whiskers, styling, or color enhancements.



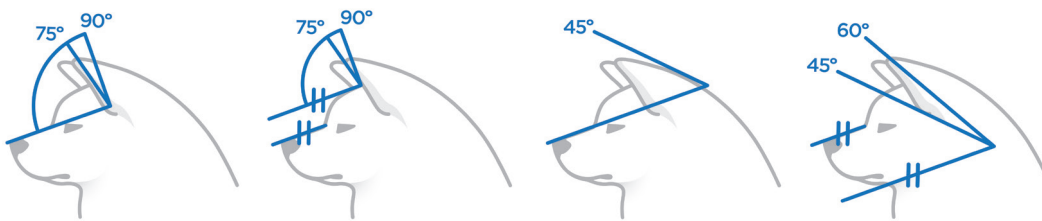
HEAD: Octagonal



MUZZLE



EARS



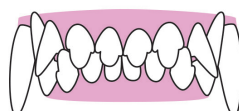
LIPS



EYES: Raised Outside Corners



TEETH: Scissor Bite



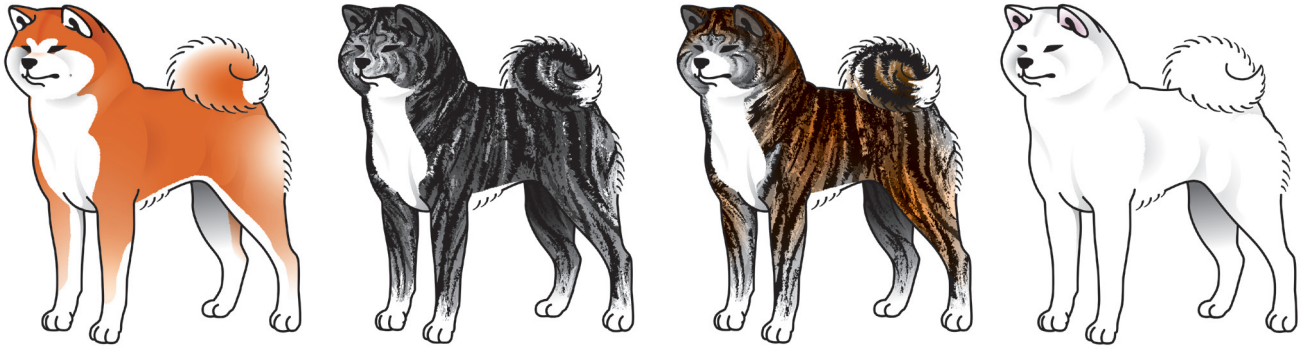
NOSE



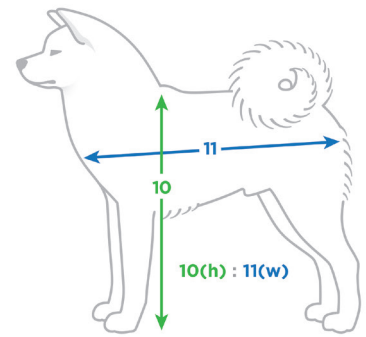
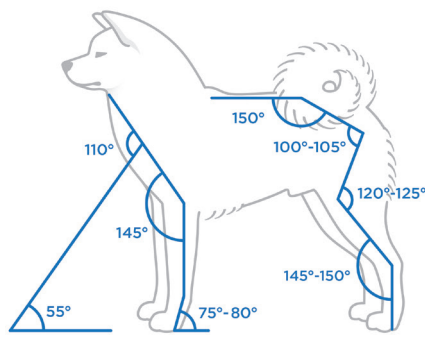
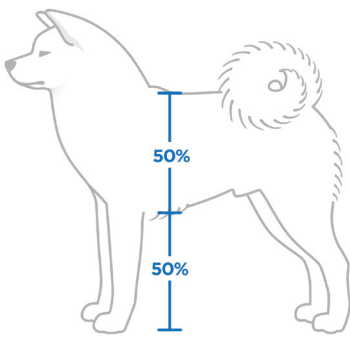
Faded black and snow nose acceptable for white dogs.

COLORS: Red, Brindle (*Black Brindle, Red Brindle*), White

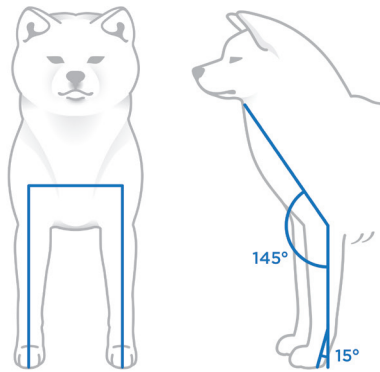
All colors are rich, clear, and bright. Red and brindle coats must possess urajiro (light cream or white underside shading).



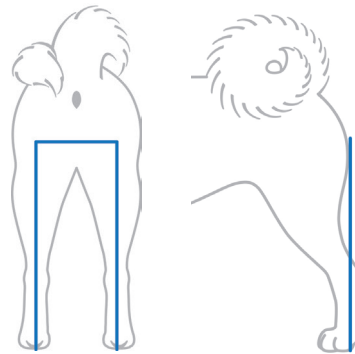
BODY: MODERATE Angulation **SIZE:** Males 25" - 27½", Females 22½" - 25"



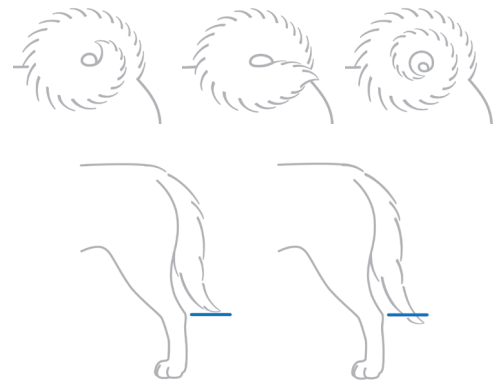
FOREQUARTERS



HINDQUARTERS



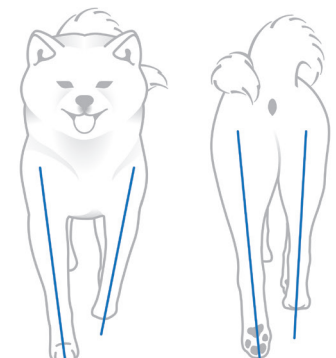
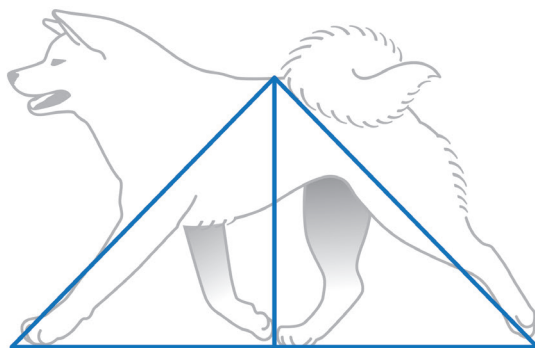
TAIL



GAIT: MODERATE

Conveys stamina through brisk, powerful, and agile movement. Dogs of this breed take efficient strides, with moderate reach and drive as the back remains level.

Convergence to the center as pace increases.



FAULTS

- Wrinkled or loose skin on the forehead.
- Overly narrow or heavy muzzle.
- Black or spotted tongue.
- Loose, saggy lips.
- Missing teeth, unhealthy dentition.
- Round eyes.
- Light colored irises.
- Droopy or loose eye rim.
- Light pigment eye rims.
- Dewlap, loose skin on neck.
- Cow or bow hocks.
- Flat or splayed feet.
- Short tail.
- Short, flat coat.
- White blaze on a red or brindle that extends from the muzzle to behind the ears (hachiware).
- Excessive ticking on legs or muzzle.
- Biscuit coloring on the ears, rear legs, back, shoulders and tail area on a white dog.
- **SERIOUS** Black saddle on red dog.
- **SERIOUS** Wide white collar marking extending completely around the neck.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Males under 25 inches (63.5 cm).
Females under 22½ inches (57.15 cm).
- Dropped ear or ears.
- Butterfly nose.
- Overshot or undershot bite.
- Sickle tail or uncurled tail (when in motion).
- Long coat.
- Extreme shyness or aggressiveness.
- For reds and brindles - Pinto markings.
- For red and brindles - Hachiware blaze that connects to a complete white collar.
- For all colors - Albinism. Black mask.

BRIEF HISTORY



Photo by Hyoemon Kyono



Photos provided by
Akitainu Hozonkai

During the Han period (Edo to Meiji eras, approximately 250 years), domesticated dogs in the Tōhoku region of Japan were known by several names based on the area they were from or purpose they performed. Some were used for hunting, some for guarding, and some for fighting.

In the early Taisho era (1912-1926), government encouragement to preserve the native land-race dogs were issued since their numbers were dwindling due to crossbreeding. However, a resurgence of dogfighting in Akita and Aomori ushered in yet another period, albeit a brief one, of mixing the local dogs with Tosa Fighting Dogs (a breed that developed when Shikokuken, originally known as Tosa, was crossed with Mastiff, possibly Great Dane, and other western breeds).

With the 1927 establishment of the Akitainu Hozonkai (AKIHO) in Odate, Akita Prefecture—considered the ancestral home of the breed—Japanese breeders began the effort to restore and preserve the breed to reflect the native regional Japanese hunting dog Matagiinu. Ushered in by rising nationalism, this practice also took place with several other Nihonken (native Japanese dog breeds) at

the request of the Japanese government. For the Akitainu, it is the Matagiinu of Tōhoku (the regional hunting dog of Northeast Japan) which would serve as the basis for restoration.

By 1931, largely due to guidance from AKIHO and Nihon Ken Hozonkai (NIPPO), the Akitainu was finally granted the government title of Tennen Kinenbutsu (Natural Monument of Japan) having been passed up for the title previously because of western breed influences. AKIHO breeders had a vision for the Akitainu of moving away from the appearance of foreign breeds, but efforts at restoration were often interrupted by political and socio-economic turns impacting the nation, so it was not until after WWII that we begin to see what the country of origin truly had in mind for the breed.

Although most Akitainu serve mainly as companion dogs today, their original function as a hunting dog in the mountains of Japan can be seen in the breed standard—moderate angulation, moderate bone, agile movement, triple coat, and confident temperament.