

Maltese Standard: Class type Form

Overall Appearance: The Maltese pigeon is a radical departure from the common type of pigeon in that it stands high on straight legs, has a very long slender neck and a short tucked up body (cubiform). The bird should be very tall, with a short hard compact body and not so heavy as to mar the elegance or its figure nor its grace. It should carry its head high and when driving throw its head backward almost to its tail. An ideal specimen should stand fifteen or more inches in height.

HEAD: Long, carried high, very little arch, narrow forehead.

Eye: Somewhat deep set, whites to have bull eyes, the other colors to have orange eyes. Whites to have red eye ceres; blacks and blues damson cere; reds, yellows, duns, and silvers flesh colored cere.

Beak: Stout and of medium length, with the upper beak slightly bent. In blacks and blues the beak should be black. In all other colors the beak should be flesh colored, the wattle should be smooth and powder white.

Neck: Very long and carried erect, as nearly the same thickness as possible until approaching the shoulder.

Breast: Relatively wide in proportion to overall appearance and carried high showing good depth of keel. Belly to be short and round, rump to be well developed and feathered, the body should appear cubed not long and cylindrical.

Back: Short and moderately broad, horizontal and with slight elevation at rump.

Wings: at breast. Flights to meet at center of tail with slight crossing permitted.

Tail: Wider at the base and somewhat narrower at the tip, forming a slight sedge. Very short, giving the appearance of being cut off. Carried upright, forming a 90 degree angle with the back. Split or wry tails to be penalized.

Legs: Thighs to be powerful and long and should show as much as possible, very closely feathered. Legs below the hock to be straight, very long, free of feathers, joints must not be bent, toes to be long and set well apart.

Plumage: Short and closely fitting.

Colors: Black, white, red, yellow, blue, silver, dun, mottles, grizzles, and A.O.C. (to include reduced, opal, almonds recognized according to taste and preference of breeder) all colors must be clear and intense.

Major Faults: Long, too heavy or coarse body, stout, thick, short crouching neck, short, thick head, flat forehead, pinched beak, long, narrow, split wry or wedged shaped tail, tail carried low, wings carried below tail or extending over end of tail, short, close set or crooked legs, narrow or drooping breast.

Assessment: In order of importance. General impression, type and size, length of neck, length of leg, head and color.