



## Interpretative Comments Japanese Chin Standard

by  
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**General Appearance** - *The Japanese Chin is a small, well balanced, lively, aristocratic toy dog with a distinctive Oriental expression. It is light and stylish in action. The plumed tail is carried over the back, curving to either side. The coat is profuse, silky, soft and straight. The dog's outline presents a square appearance.*

When first seeing a Japanese Chin, words which come immediately to mind are those describing a pretty, attractive toy dog with a balanced, square body; a dog that is well-coated and moves jauntily and proudly. The “distinctive Oriental expression” is a large, flat head with big, dark, lustrous eyes, which traditionally have a small amount of white showing in the inner corners. This dog is mischievous, sometimes stubborn and arrogant, and always a challenge.

**Size, Proportion, Substance** - *Size - Ideal size is 8 inches to 11 inches at the highest point of the withers. Proportion - Length between the sternum and the buttock is equal to the height at the withers. Substance - Solidly built, compact, yet refined. Carrying good weight in proportion to height and body build.*

There is a three-inch spread allowed in the ideal size. Traditionally, Chins are large, small, and inbetween. The key is substance – the bone is not heavy nor so light that the dog lacks a solid build. The dog should not look as though it would “blow away” with the first breeze. Squareness of body is one of the most overlooked attributes; yet the dog must be square to present the proper haughty, proud, compact appearance. An old-fashioned word often used to describe the balance between proportion and substance is cobby. This was deleted with the new standard in 1992. However, cobby in its traditional sense of representing a square-bodied animal with substance is an apt description. For the Chin, however, the bone is not heavy or thick as with a Cob horse but properly proportioned for the size of the dog. It is helpful to recall that the Chin is square-bodied; the Pap slightly longer than tall; the English Toy square, albeit heavier boned; and the Peke long-bodied, pear-shaped, and heavier boned. These are key breed features and helps keep all the relatives separate.

**Head - Expression** - *bright, inquisitive, alert, and intelligent. The distinctive Oriental expression is characterized by the large broad head, large wide-set eyes, short broad muzzle, ear feathering, and the evenly patterned facial markings. Eyes - set wide apart, large, round, dark in color, and lustrous. A small amount of white showing in the inner corners of the eyes is a breed characteristic that gives the dog a look of astonishment. Ears - hanging, small, V-shaped, wide apart, set slightly below the crown of the skull. When alert, the ears are carried forward and downward. The ears are well*

*feathered and fit into the rounded contour of the head. Skull - large, broad, slightly rounded between the ears but not domed. Forehead is prominent, rounding toward the nose. Wide across the level of the eyes. In profile, the forehead and muzzle touch on the same vertical plane of a right angle whose horizontal plane is the top of the skull. Stop - deep. Muzzle - short and broad with well-cushioned cheeks and rounded upper lips that cover the teeth. Nose - very short with wide, open nostrils. Set on a level with the middle of the eyes and upturned. Nose leather is black in the black and white and the black and white with tan points, and is self-colored or black in the red and white. Bite - the jaw is wide and slightly undershot. A dog with one or two missing or slightly misaligned teeth should not be severely penalized.*

The Chin is a head breed with about one-third of its standard devoted to describing the head. In simplifying some of this description, it is easiest to remember that the ideal head is large for the size of the dog. When viewed from profile, its shape resembles a “3” – the foreskull and muzzle meet on the same diagonal line with the nose set inside the middle; ideally, this nose is slightly tipped back; a rule of thumb to use is that if the nose ever looks like something can be hung from it, it is wrong. When viewed from the front, the Chin head is basically square-shaped with a slight rounding of its topskull caused by ears which are set just beneath the crown; the nose sets between large, round, dark, lustrous eyes. When looking straight ahead, a small amount of white may be seen in the inner corner of each eye; the eyes should never appear to be bulging or protruding; the muzzle is short and balances in width with the forehead; the cushions are broad and wide; the cheeks are sometimes referred to a bubble-gum cheeks; the teeth are covered by the cushions; and the bite is slightly undershot. It is vital to remember that the Chin head is not rectangular shaped as in a Peke, nor rounded as an English Toy, nor snippy as a Pap. Since these are all related breeds, each particular head shape is a key breed characteristic.

Additional comment – It is not necessary to count the teeth in a Chin, and some missing teeth are not considered a penalization factor in the breed standard. When examining bite, it is not necessary to pry open the jaw. Instead, running a thumb over the teeth should tell a judge what kind of a bite the dog has; if in doubt and not sure how to best open a flat-faced dog’s mouth, ask the exhibitor to do it. Also, beware of wry mouths, which can be detected when looking at a jaw line that appears to be crooked; a hint of a possible wry mouth is a tongue protruding out of the corner of the mouth – in such a case, always checks the bite. Note: Chins do have extremely long tongues – this is a breed characteristic – and when they pant, they will roll those tongues upward!

Nose color in a Chin is black for the black & white and black & white with tan points and black or self-colored for red & white. A pure lemon & white (which is what the lighter shade of red is called) with true color gene will have a pale self-colored nose. This is acceptable.

As a personal preference, I would rather not see the whiskers trimmed. The standard does not address the question, but dogs with their whiskers in place are in keeping with the cat-like characteristics of the breed. Furthermore, whiskers enhance the necessary broadness of the cushions.

**Neck, Topline, Body - Neck - moderate in length and thickness. Well set on the shoulders enabling the dog to carry its head up proudly. Topline - level. Body - square, moderately wide in the chest with rounded ribs. Depth of rib extends to the elbow. Tail - set on high, carried arched up over the back and flowing to either side of the body.**

Again, a proud dog must have good carriage. The neck needs some length to carry the head proudly. Topline is level; body, compact and square, with a moderate chest. The tail is set high and proudly carried up arched over the back and flowing down on either side. Chins should not have tails carried at “half-mast,” nor should they be tucked between the legs. When stacked, the tail should be arched over the back and downward on either side of the dog and not placed level across the backline as in a Pekingese.

**Forequarters - Legs - straight and fine boned, with the elbows set close to the body. Removal of dewclaws is optional. Feet - hare-shaped with feathering on the ends of the toes in the mature dog. Point straight ahead of very slightly outward.**

Chins are fine-boned dogs compared with a Peke or English Toy; however, they are not fine-boned when compared with a Papillon. A Chin has more bone and substance than a Pap and less than a Peke or English Toy. Its legs are straight – they should not bow nor be fiddle-fronted. When standing, it is proper for a Chin's front feet to point ahead or slightly east/west. They must not, however, move with their feet heading in an east and west direction! Long feathering on the toes is a breed characteristic and adds to the illusion of daintiness; such hair should never be trimmed. In gaiting, care must be taken to be sure that the front feet feathering does not give an illusion of east/west action. It is important to look at the feet themselves, not the feathering, to ascertain proper movement.

**Hindquarters - Legs - straight as viewed from the rear and fine boned. Moderate bend of stifle. Removal of dewclaws is optional. Feet - hare-shaped with feathering on the ends of the toes in the mature dog. Point straight ahead.**

Chins are not over-angulated, and their rear legs balance with the front. Again, trimming on the ends of toes is against a breed standard which specifically calls for feathering on the toes of mature dogs.

**Coat - Abundant, straight, single, and silky. Has a resilient texture and a tendency to stand out from the body, especially on neck, shoulders, chest areas where the hair forms a thick mane or ruff. The tail is profusely coated and forms a plume. The rump area is heavily coated and forms culottes or pants. The head and muzzle are covered with short hair except for the heavily feathered ears. The forelegs have short hair blending into profuse feathering on the back of the legs. The rear legs have the previously described culottes, and in mature dogs, light feathering from hock joint to the foot.**

A Chin is a wash-and-wear dog – one of the beauties of owning a Chin is its care-free coat. Therefore, it should be single-coated with a texture providing enough substance to avoid matting. The hair should be straight, not curly, kinky, or wooly. In the sunlight, the hairs will glimmer like silk. The standard uses the word profuse, but this should not be confused with a mop-like coat. A shape must be distinguishable, which is why there is emphasis on fringes, manes, feathering, and culottes. The feathering which appears from the hock to foot on back of the rear legs should not be trimmed. It is important to note that bitches (unless spayed) do not carry as much coat as males, and judges should not penalize a bitch if she does not have the profuse coat of her male counterpart.

**Color - Either black and white, red and white, or black and white with tan points. The term tan points shall include tan or red spots over each eye, inside the ears, on both cheeks, and at the anal vent area if displaying any black. The term red shall include all shades of red, orange, and lemon, and sable, which includes any aforementioned shade intermingled or overlaid with black. Among the allowed colors there shall be no preference when judging. A clearly defined white muzzle and blaze are preferable to a solidly marked head. Symmetry of facial markings is preferable. The size, shape, placement or number of body patches is not of great importance. The white is clear of excessive ticking.**

This section of the standard is basically self-explanatory. Black & white and red & white (in all shades) are the breed's historical colors. The Black & white with tan points is the traditional tri-patterned color. It is preferred that facial markings be harmonious and there be no excessive ticking anywhere on the dog.

**Gait - *Stylish and lively in movement. Moves straight with front and rear legs following in the same plane.***

Here the standard is simply calling for a dog that is sound in movement with no crossing or weakness detected. The words stylish and lively denote a proud, mischievous, regal dog.

**Temperament - *A sensitive and intelligent dog whose only purpose is to serve man as a companion. Responsive and affectionate with those it knows and loves but reserved with strangers or in new situations.***

The Chin is a precious breed which has no function other than to be a lap-dog. It was not born to hunt, guard, or carry things. It was born to be a particular object of beauty and love. Chins are not always showdogs. They can be a bit apprehensive and require a gentle touch. Once they are acclimated to a person or situation, they quickly respond and take charge. They are extremely catlike in deportment and like nothing better than to rule their household and those whom they let share that home. They are more comfortable on a sofa or a bed than a crate and do not do well in a kennel environment. They can be a handful of stubbornness and need a quick mind to outwit them. They are a delight to live with and a beauty to behold. When judging Chins, it is good to keep in mind their particular quirks and idiosyncrasies as well as those special key breed characteristics which separate them from their cousins.

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