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Swedish Native Breed

# Norrbottenspets

## *Norrbottenspitz*

FCI-group 5

**FCI-nr 276**

Date of publication of the official valid standard:  
28 July 2009



**Fédération  
Cynologique  
Internationale**

For Dogs Worldwide

*Presentation by Svenska Kennelklubben, October 2019.  
Supplement to the breed standard.*



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# Norrbottenspets / Norrbottenspitz (FCI-nr 276)



Male of excellent type



Female of excellent type



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# Origin and history

The Norrbottenspitz probably descends from smaller laika dogs who back in ancient times existed with hunting people within the Cap of the North.

All Spitz breeds registered in the Swedish kennel club prior to 1906 was registered as 'Nordic Spitzes'.

In the late 1800's when Finland started to refine the Finnish Spitz, they wanted to consolidate the solid red colour by eliminating the other existing colours. In the north of Finland and Sweden dogs with a variation of colour remained, and is probably the founding base of the Norrbottenspitz of today.

In 1907 Lieutenant Kantzov took an interest in the Swedish Norrbottenspitz and started keeping records of the dogs.

His work resulted in the first official breed standard, which was proposed in 1911.



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# Origin and history

This small spitz was used for hunting forest game birds, small predators, squirrels and sometimes even elk/moose.

Some of the game was for food for their families and others for their pelt as fur was highly valued for trade.

After the second world war fur lost in value and because of that the interest of the breed decreased. The number of the breed declined and the last individual was registered in 1936 which lead to the Swedish kennel club declaring the breed extinct in 1947.



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# Origin and history

But fortunately there were still dogs around in rural areas!

Hunters in the north of Sweden, with front figure Mr Stig Onnerfeldt, managed to find some individuals remaining on the farms and during the 1960's the breed was secured. In 1967 the breed was reintroduced in the Swedish kennel club and a breed standard was published.



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# Origin and history



Mr Onnerfeldt visited several dog shows with his bitch Blondie av Bjerkefall, born 1961, to raise interest for the breed.



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# Origin and history



Blondie's father Jocke från Erkheikki,  
born in the 1950's  
(parents unknown)



Blondie's mother Kajsa från Liviöjärvi,  
born in the 1950's  
(Blondie in the red circle)



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# Origin and history



Male from around the 1970's.



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# Function



Nowadays the breed is a hunting dog for mainly treeing birds but works also with other game such as small predators and elk/moose.



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# Function

- The dog searches for the prey independently with his keen sense of smell and hearing.
- The searching area can be quite large, but the dog often makes contact with the hunter every 5 – 15 minutes.
- The Norrbottenspitz marks the game by barking; it barks to control the bird when in the tree, so the hunter can take a shot.





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# Character

- The Norrbottenspitz is fearless, very agile, outgoing and friendly.
- It is never aggressive towards people.
- Should not be nervous or shy.
- At shows the judge should be able to check the bite and be able to measure the dog without too much difficulty.
- As it is a hunting dog it must not fear the sound of gunshots. Sensitivity in regards to noise is a heritable factor and often linked with nervousness and uncertainty.
- Likes lots of attention and enjoys being in the centre of his family!

# General appearance

- The impression of a Norrbottenspitz is that of a compact but light dog with well developed, moderately strong bone and good muscles.
- It must not give an appearance of being heavy or too light.
- Slightly rectangular.
- Well angulated with strong bones.
- White colour with clearly defined, large patches in all nuances of red and yellow.
- Ideal size;       males: 45 cm  
                          females: 42 cm  
*Tolerance of +/- 2 cm*



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# General appearance



An excellent male



An excellent female



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# General appearance - faults



Good looking male (left) and female (right), both showing many good points but loose the desirable proportions because of too deep rib cage and a little too short in leg.



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# General appearance - faults



Male (left) and female (right), both too high on legs,  
too light in bone and not enough rib cage.  
The female is also a bit short in coat.



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# Head

- The length of the muzzle should be the same or a little shorter than the skull.
- Muzzle and skull should be parallel.
- Stop is moderate, but distinct.
- Forehead is slightly arched, the skull rather flat.
- Eyes should be almond shaped and obliquely set.
- Ideally sized ears on an ideally sized head extend to the inner corner of the eye.



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# Excellent heads

Male



Female



# Head - faults



Skull and muzzle not parallel,  
gives the wrong expression.



Slightly too snipy muzzle.



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# Head - faults



Too round eyes and too round cheeks give the wrong expression.

In profile the too pronounced stop is clearly visible.



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## Ears - faults

- Low set ears, as well as soft and when in motion flapping ears, are faulty.
- Big and forward tilting ears are faults.
- Semi-pricked and drooping ears do not belong to this breed.



Big forward tilted ears.



Way too big ears.



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# Neck and body

- The Norrbottenspitz has moderate bone, well developed muscles and excellent posture. It shall not be fine or coarse and heavy.
- The construction of the body should serve the function of a small hunting spitz.
- The neck is well fitted to the withers.
- Males have a slightly stronger neck and distinct withers.
- They should not have loose dewlaps.





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# Body - faults

- Soft and roached back is faulty.
- Steep croup is a fault.



Heavy and too short legged male.



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# Tail

- The ideal tail should be long enough to be held in the beautiful high curve. This can never be obtained with too short tails!
- Note that too low set tails occur. These can sometimes be carried in an almost correct way though (highly curved and loosely curled).
- Too tightly curved, as well as a thin tail, are faults.
- The hair on the tail should be short (not too much feathering).
- Stumpy tail is disqualifying.



Very well set tail with correct carriage and of correct length!  
(not correctly distributed patches)



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# Incorrect tails



Open, upright tail with  
too much feathering.



Too short tail.



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# Forequarters - Hindquarters



Correct straight  
and parallel front.



Well angulated  
hind quarters.

- Long, flat feet are faulty as are sprawled toes. This is not functional for a working breed.

# Movement / gait

- The natural gait of the Norrbottenspitz when working is gallop, most often performed in uneven hilly terrain.
- The build of the breed gives a rather long step sequence when galloping.
- It's swift and lively way of working reflects in the movement.
- In the show ring the dog is judged at trot, which should be free, parallel and covering ground.





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# Coat

- Double coat is essential to be functional in all kinds of weather.
- The following faults does not work in all kinds of weather:
  - Lack of under coat.
  - Too short or wavy coat.
  - Too long guard hair which gives an open coat.

## Colour

- The Norrbottenspitz gives an impression of a piebald dog.
- The white ground colour is dominant.
- The breed club in Sweden asks the judges to give the highest awards to dogs with ideal colour and markings only.



Example of correct  
distribution of patches



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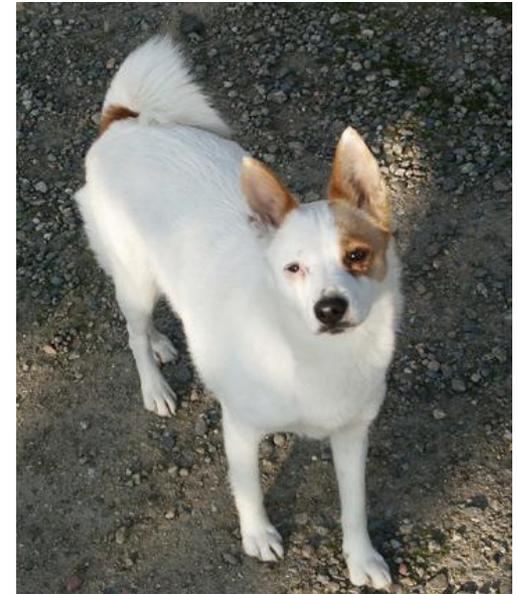
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# Example of incorrect colours

- Dogs with colour only on the head (all white body), or dogs who do not have colour on both sides of the head, are regarded as having insufficient colouring.



Colour on head only.



Colour on one side of the head only.



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- Another example of insufficient colouring (no patches on body).
- This dog is however otherwise of excellent breed type and conformation.



# Example of less desired colours

- Examples of dogs where the colour might be tolerated, but the markings are not:



Not correctly distributed patches. Agouti colour.



Not correctly distributed patches. Fawn colour.



Not correctly distributed patches, black colour and also tan markings (severe fault).

# Example of less desired colours

- Examples of dogs where the colour might be tolerated, but the markings are not:



This dog has correctly distributed patches, but black colour, tan markings and ticking (last two being severe faults).



Correct colour but no patches on body, only ticking (severe fault).



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# Excellent male





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# Excellent males





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# Excellent females





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Excellent breed type.

Very well balanced in head,  
proportions and angulations.

Could be more broken up in colour  
(better distributed patches).

Unfortunately not showing ears...



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Female of excellent breed type  
but a little straight in  
angulation front and rear.



Male of excellent breed type  
but a little straight in stifle.



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# Severe faults

- Flesh coloured or liver brown nose.
- Missing teeth, except P1.
- Tan markings.
- Roaning or ticking.



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# Disqualifying faults

- Stumpy tail.
- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.



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# Judging the Norrbottenspitz

- Particularly note breed type and proportions. The Norrbottenspitz should be slightly **rectangular**; if it is too short, too high on the legs or too thin/light you will lose type and balance.
- Head shape is important. Skull is relatively strong, forehead should not be too high, stop moderately distinct.
- Narrow as well as too round skulls occur, which are faults.
- Narrow/snipy muzzles occur - this should be paid attention to.
- Missing premolars should be noticed. The lower jaw is sometimes very weak when more than one tooth is missing.
- Differences between sexes should be seen also in the head.
- The Norrbottenspitz should be well angulated with strong bones.
- Too steep croups occur.
- Pay attention to colour and markings. Look for ideal colours with well distributed patches and colour on both sides of the head and ears.



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## Related breeds

- Most likely the Finnish Spitz and the Norrbottenspitz have similar background.
- A theory is that the Norrbottenspitz descends from smaller laika dogs who back in ancient times existed with hunting people within the Cap of the North.

# Problems to take into account

- The Norrbottenspitz is in general a healthy breed with minor health issues.
- What may occur is eye problems (cataracts), epilepsy and patella luxation.



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