

ILLUSTRATED  
GUIDE TO THE  
STANDARD OF

# NORWICH TERRIERS



By: The Norwich Terrier Club of America, Inc.

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## ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO THE STANDARD OF NORWICH TERRIERS

The Official Standard for the Norwich Terrier, approved October 1981 and reformatted March 1990, is shown in ***ITALIC*** type.

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## PURPOSE

The breed of dog recognized in 1936 by the American Kennel Club as the Norwich Terrier has its roots firmly planted in the area of England known as East Anglia. Small red rough-haired dogs, short of leg and terrier in type, once worked in caravans of the Anglo-Roma gypsies, ridding the camps of destructive rodents. There is reason enough to believe these game little trackers later inspired the imagination of stockmen from the Eastern counties. In the late 19th century they began to develop a strain of terrier, primarily for use as a working dog, death to game, hardy of constitution and active for its size. This was a dog with both fortitude and the mental desire to dispatch small vermin, bolt fox and earn his keep as a loyal companion.

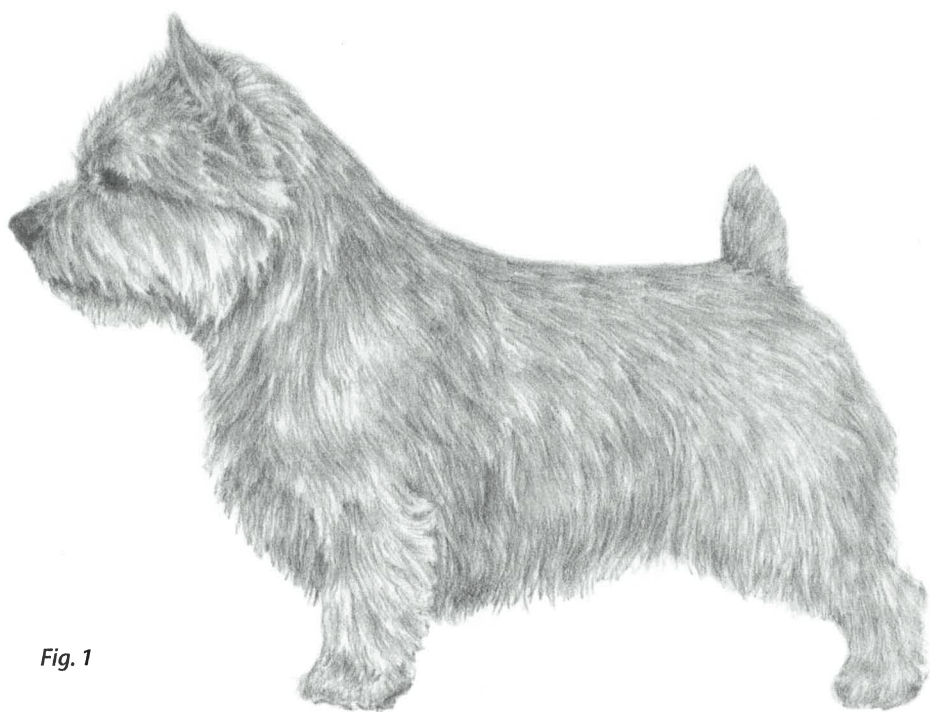
Breed standards by definition are word pictures meant to emphasize the positive qualities of a particular purebred dog. The Norwich Standard was devised to protect and preserve a working terrier, and its primary purpose must be kept in mind when making evaluations. Every effort has been made to perpetuate the unique Norwich personality and to guard against so-called improvements or exaggerations. It is a tribute to both breed and breeders that its bench standard has remained relatively unchanged since the first English Standard in 1932. The attributes that so endeared the Norwich to our founding breeders will forever be upheld.

The following pages illustrate the desired Norwich Terrier based on the Breed Standard as compiled by members of the Norwich Terrier Club of America. It is designed to impart something of value to Norwich breeders, owners, judges and exhibitors.

## GENERAL APPEARANCE

### The Official Standard

*The Norwich Terrier, spirited and stocky with sensitive prick ears and a slightly foxy expression, is one of the smallest working terriers. This sturdy descendent of ratting companions, eager to dispatch small vermin alone or in a pack, has good bone and substance and an almost weatherproof coat. A hardy hunt terrier—honorable scars from fair wear and tear are acceptable.*



**Fig. 1**

The Norwich Terrier should give the impression of a confident and substantial dog in a small package. A compact, rugged dog with good bone, he is surprisingly hefty for his size. The picture presented should be of a well-balanced dog with ample head, erect ears, and neck of sufficient length to flow smoothly into well laid back shoulders continuing into a short level back with a high set tail. Short strong legs carry a full ribbed, short coupled, compact dog for a day of sustained activity. His hard, dense double coat protects him from the environment. A Norwich is alert, inquisitive, and energetic. He should present a happy, confident demeanor and not be aggressive or quarrelsome with other dogs.

## SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE

### **The Official Standard**

*One of the smallest of the terriers, the ideal height should not exceed 10 inches at the withers. Distance from the top of the withers to the ground and from withers to base of tail are approximately equal. Good bone and substance. Weight approximately 12 pounds. It should be in proportion to the individual dog's structure and balance. Fit working condition is a prime consideration.*

A Norwich is short coupled with well-sprung ribs, strong loin, and short sturdy legs. Not quite square, he gives the appearance of a compact, sturdy, workmanlike terrier, never appearing weedy or long-cast. The size of the head and length of neck should be in proportion to the compact body. Norwich are the smallest of the terrier group. They should remain small enough to fulfill their original design as an agile dog, quick enough to chase rodents over any terrain. A high level of fitness is most important. Tradition has it that in times past the Norwich were carried in saddle bags during the hunt and used to bolt fox from their holes.

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## HEAD

### **The Official Standard**

*A slightly foxy expression. Eyes small, dark and oval shaped with black rims. Placed well apart with a bright and keen expression. Ears medium size and erect. Set well apart with pointed tips. Upright when alert. The skull is broad and slightly rounded with good width between the ears. The muzzle is wedge shaped and strong. Its length is about one-third less than the measurement from the occiput to the well-defined stop. The jaw is clean and strong. Nose and lip pigment black. Tight-lipped with large teeth. A scissor bite.*





**Fig. 2**

The eyes of a Norwich are wide set, small, oval, and dark in color. Typically there is dark pigment on their eye lids giving the look of mascara. Eyes that are light in color, too large, or too round are not desirable.

A hand placed on the skull of a Norwich should be filled. The skull is slightly domed with erect, pointed ears placed wide apart and not set close on the head or off to the side of the skull. A "slightly foxy expression" refers



to the keen, alert expression of dark eyes that are always aware of the surroundings. A Norwich muzzle must not be weak and pointed. The foreface should have fill under the eyes. The stop is distinct and deep enough to fit a thumb. Dark tight lips cover large teeth with a scissor bite. The under jaw should be strong and broad enough for full dentition. Missing teeth are to be guarded against in this ratting terrier.

## INCORRECT EYES

*Fig. 3 Round, too large*



*Fig. 4 Too small*



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## INCORRECT EARS

*Fig. 5 Too high set*

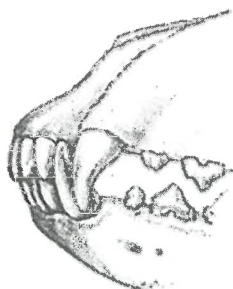


*Fig. 6 Too low*



## TEETH/BITES

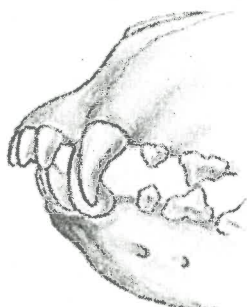
*Fig. 7 Correct: Scissors bite*



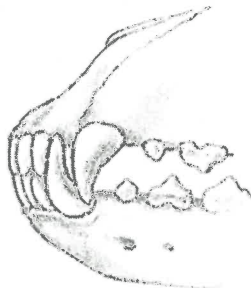
*Fig. 8 Incorrect: Undershot bite*



*Fig. 9 Incorrect: Overshot bite*



*Fig. 10 Incorrect: Level bite*



From *Canine Terminology*, Harold R. Spira © 1982,  
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## INCORRECT MUZZLE

*Fig. 11 Too short*



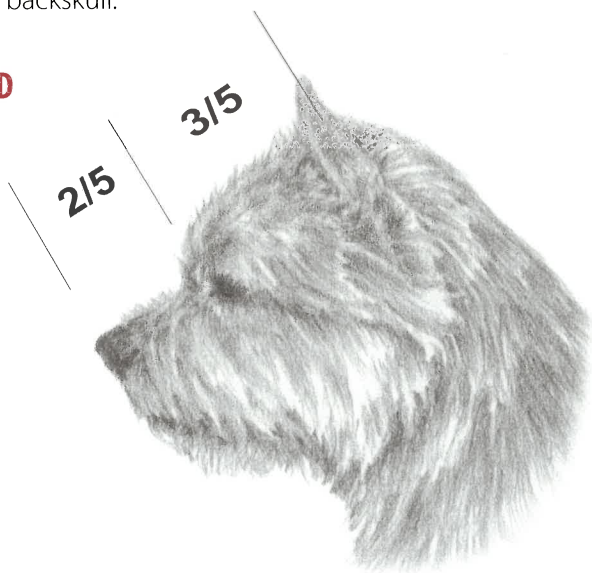
*Fig. 12 Too long*



The length of muzzle (measured from the tip of nose to stop) is approximately two-thirds the length of the backskull (measured from the stop to occiput). Another way to say this is that the proportion of the head is  $\frac{2}{5}$ <sup>th</sup>s muzzle and  $\frac{3}{5}$ <sup>th</sup>s backskull.

## CORRECT HEAD

Fig. 13



## NECK, TOPLINE, BODY

### The Official Standard

*Neck of medium length, strong and blending into well laid back shoulders. Level topline. Body moderately short. Compact and deep. Good width of chest. Well-sprung ribs and short loins. Tail medium docked. The terrier's working origin requires that the tail be of sufficient length to grasp. Base level with topline; carried erect.*

The transition from neck into withers and into the back should be smooth flowing. The neck is important to the overall balance of the dog. A neck too short gives the Norwich a stuffy look with the body then appearing out of proportion. Shoulders should not be loaded. The back is level and body relatively short with deep spring of ribs and a short strong loin.

The base of the tail should be level with the topline and the tail should be carried erect. It should not be gay or lying on the back; nor should it be tucked under the body. The tail set is high with a lot of dog behind the tail, giving a compact appearance. The docked tail should be long enough to grasp and should be in balance and proportion to the rest of the dog.

## INCORRECT TAIL

*Fig. 14 Low set*



*Fig. 15 Gay*



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## CORRECT TAIL

*Fig. 16  
Set on 12 o'clock*



## FOREQUARTERS



*Fig. 17*

### **The Official Standard**

*Well laid back shoulders. Elbows close to ribs. Short powerful legs, as straight as is consistent with the digging terrier. Pasterns firm. Feet round with thick pads. Nails black. The feet point forward when standing or moving.*

Well laid back shoulders should feel smooth with the shoulder blade and upper arm nearly equal in length. Because the Norwich has short legs and well-sprung ribs, extremely well-knit shoulder blades are rare when well laid back. Elbows should be close to the body. Legs are strong and straight. For correct assembly one can imagine a straight line from the top of the shoulder blade, through the elbow to the back of the foot. The pasterns should be strong and upright. The amount of bone should be substantial for the length of leg. As coat can be deceptive, legs should be felt for size of bone and deviations from the desired straight column. Feet are round and cat like with thick tight pads, arched toes and large black nails.

## **INCORRECT FRONT**

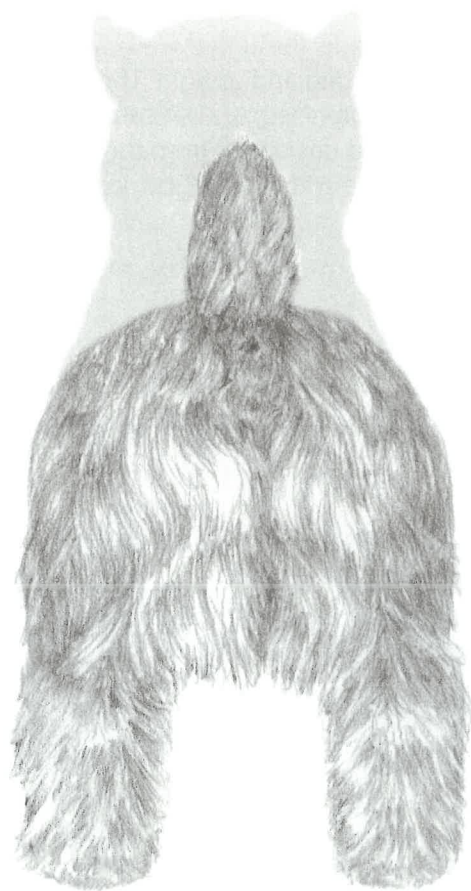
*Fig. 18 Fiddle front, out at elbows*



*Fig. 19 Too narrow*



## HINDQUARTERS



*Fig. 20*

### **The Official Standard**

*Broad, strong and muscular with well-turned stifles. Hocks low set and straight when viewed from the rear. Feet as in front.*



The hindquarters are broad and muscular. Hocks are low set and straight, perpendicular to the ground and neither open nor cow-hocked. The hind feet are the same as the front, however may be slightly smaller. Norwich hocks should be comfortably set behind the dog's buttocks.

## INCORRECT REAR

*Fig. 21 Cowhocked*



*Fig. 22 Toed-in*



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## COAT

### **The Official Standard**

*Hard, wiry and straight, lying close to the body with definite undercoat. The coat on neck and shoulders forms a protective mane. The hair on head, ears and muzzle except for slight eyebrows and whiskers is short and smooth. This breed should be shown with as natural a coat as possible. A minimum of tidying is permissible but shaping should be heavily penalized.*

The almost weatherproof coat should be straight, hard and wiry and have a soft undercoat. Hair on the head, ears and muzzle is shorter except for eyebrows and whiskers blending into a protective mane, often called ruff, on the neck shoulders and forechest. The Norwich should be shown as natural as possible, but the coat should never be curly, wavy, soft, or silky. Severe trimming should be penalized. Traditionally the Norwich coat is hand stripped.

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## COLOR

### **The Official Standard**

*All shades of red, wheaten, black and tan or grizzle. White marks are not desirable.*

Preference should not be given to one color or shade over another. A natural coat will almost always have color variations. Colors other than the aforementioned colors are not acceptable in the Norwich. Although white markings are not desirable, a small white mark on the chest is allowable. White anywhere else on the body should not be rewarded.

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## GAIT

### **The Official Standard**

*The legs moving parallel, extending forward, showing great powers of propulsion. Good rear angulation with a true, yet driving movement. The forelegs move freely with feet and elbows the same distance apart, converging slightly with increased pace. Hind legs follow in the track of the forelegs, flexing well at the stifle and hock. The topline remains level.*

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**Fig. 23**

Movement should appear effortless with good reach in front and strong rear propulsion with flexing hocks. The dogs' rear pads should be visible as the dog moves away. A dog's front must move true—not swinging and without exaggerated lift. The rear legs should follow in the tracks of the front feet, not toeing in or out and not moving close behind. The front and rear feet should move in harmony with balanced angulation. From the side, the movement should be fluid with the dog's topline holding strong and level. Dogs that take short paddling steps in the front or stilted steps in the rear are incorrectly built and lack balanced angulation. A Norwich must be able to chase vermin efficiently and he should have the stamina for a day's hunt.

## INCORRECT MOVEMENT

*Fig. 24 Moving too wide*



*Fig. 25 Moving too narrow*



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## CORRECT MOVEMENT

*Fig. 26*



*Fig. 27*





## TEMPERAMENT

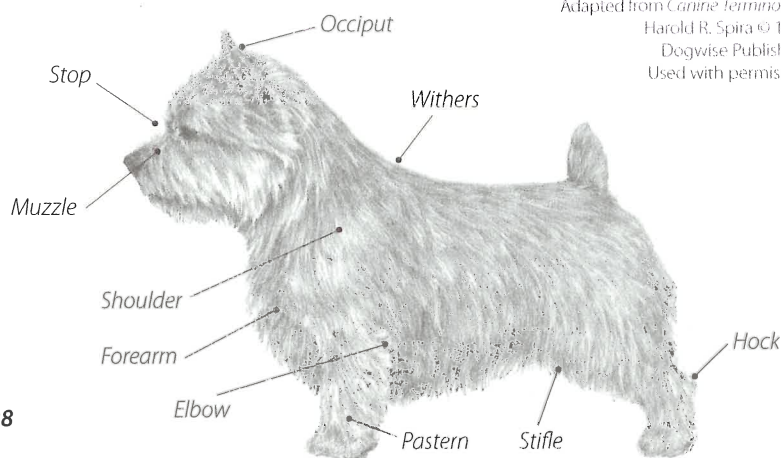
### **The Official Standard**

*Gay, fearless, loyal and affectionate. Adaptable and sporting, they make ideal companions.*

Norwich are courageous happy, inquisitive creatures, ready to take on all challenges. They can be highly energetic or quiet and peaceful depending upon their environment and the mood of the moment. Their delightful personality makes them charming, loving members of the household. Norwich should be able to live together in a pack as they are not quarrelsome, but they desire human companionship even more than the canine pack. They are alert watch dogs, and no action goes unnoticed. Norwich desire to please and are easily trained as they are very smart, but they have their own agenda and can be just as easily distracted.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>ELBOW</b>	The forelimb joint located where the arm (humerus) and forearm (tibia/fibula) come together.
<b>HOCK</b>	The hind limb joint located between the lower thigh and the rear pastern.
<b>MUZZLE</b>	The part of the skull comprising the upper and lower jaws. A wedge-shaped muzzle has a greater diameter at the base of stop than at its apex.
<b>OCCIPUT</b>	The highest and rearmost part of the occipital crest.
<b>PASTERN</b>	The metacarpus or region between the carpus (wrist) above and digits (foot) below.
<b>SCISSORS BITE</b>	Bite where outer surfaces of the lower incisor teeth engage with the inner surfaces of the upper incisors when the mouth is closed. Teeth should be strong, set square from jaws, of normal size, and uncrowded.
<b>SHOULDER</b>	The top section of foreleg. The shoulder blade is the scapula.
<b>STIFLE</b>	The knee joint where the upper and lower thighs of the hind leg come together.
<b>STOP</b>	The depression or step down in the topline of the head; located between the eyes.
<b>TOPLINE</b>	The upper outline seen in profile, generally to mean from behind point of shoulder to the base of tail.
<b>WITHERS</b>	The junction of the neck and back, where the upper part of the shoulder blade meets the first and second thoracic vertebrae.



**Fig. 28**



