



Extended Breed Standard of the

## **PETIT BASSET GRIFFON VENDÉEN**



Prepared by Linda Winchester Skerritt, 2010

Country of Origin: France  
Kennel Club – updated January 2011

## What is an Extended Breed Standard?

This Extended Breed Standard is designed to build on the concise description of the breed given in the official Kennel Club breed standard.

Giving extra information on each part of the standard is a valuable means of training judges. It augments the information already available on each part of the dog and is a helpful tool in deepening understanding of what the ideal of the breed should look like.

## The Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen Extended Breed Standard

In this Extended Breed Standard (EBS) the Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen is referred to as the PBGV, although the Kennel Club preferred name is

### **Basset Griffon Vendéen (Petit).**

The Grand Basset Griffon Vendéen (GBGV) is also mentioned. This is because at one time the breed was simply

### **BASSET GRIFFON VENDÉEN**

with two sizes recognised within the breed. It was only in the late 1970s that interbreeding was banned in France, allowing complete separation of the Petit and Grand.

Important features that differentiate the PBGV from the GBGV are referred to in this EBS.

**This Extended Breed Standard has been prepared for use by  
judges and anyone wishing to learn more about  
conformation of the PBGV.**

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Linda Winchester Skerritt – monkhams@aol.com.**

## Breed History

French hounds evolved into their present day form to fit the needs of their particular geographic area. The dense, thorny, vegetation and rocky region of the Vendée made hunting difficult. Leading into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a hardy dog was needed - one with physical and mental stamina, whose coat would resist the brambles and thorns. Several rough-coated hounds were developed specifically for hunting in this difficult terrain. The larger ones were:



**the Grand Griffon Vendéen**  
(60-68cm / 23.5-26.5ins)



**the Briquet Griffon Vendéen**  
(48-55cm / 19-21.5ins)

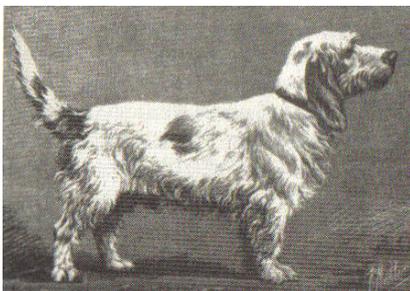
Deer and boar hunting had long been the sport of kings and noblemen, who could afford to ride on horseback using these large, swift, powerful hounds. Those not as wealthy followed smaller game on foot and for this they needed a slower hound - and the most practical way to restrict speed was to shorten length of leg.

Evolution and breeding strategy produced a practical “low-to-the-ground” hound ideal for this purpose.



**Basset Griffon Vendéen (BGV)**

**The Basset Griffon Vendéen** was around 38cm, with a long skull, a long and quite heavy body and either straight or semi-crooked forelegs. By the early 20th century, two types were recognised in France:



**Grand Basset Griffon Vendéen**  
(39-44cm / 15½-17½in)  
“with straight legs”



**Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen**  
(34-38cm / 13½-15in)  
“most often with half-crooked legs”.

Both with a height tolerance of 1cm (⅔in) above or below.

The name Dézamy (also Desamy) become virtually synonymous with the breed as, over three generations, this one family formed the Club du Griffon Vendéen, wrote the definitive standards and continuously served as Club President from 1907 until 1985. At that time M Renaud Buche took over the Presidency; and in 2010 he handed over to M Christian Oustrières.

The mid-20<sup>th</sup> century standard for the Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen pointed to a more compact type, with features less exaggerated than those of the Grand Basset. For the first time, the PBGV had its own distinct identity and could be registered as a separate breed. In 1972 the President-elect of the Club du Griffon Vendéen, Hubert Desamy, requested that inter-breeding between the GBGV and the PBGV be stopped. However only in 1977, when he became President, did he have the authority to completely ban the practice.



Following arrival of the breed in the UK, 1980's breeders realised there was a possibility of their PBGVs' pedigrees not being entirely Petit Basset, as some contained forebears identified as Grand Basset in them. Thus, for some generations, litters sometimes included PBGVs bearing Grand characteristics – such as

- longer muzzle
- longer heavier ears
- longer back
- longer limbs; and
- longer tail.

**Such complete “throwbacks” are now unlikely to be evident. However it is important to be aware of these significant differences between the GBGV and PBGV as they still occasionally occur - and it is up to breeders and judges to recognise these features that do not form part of the PBGV breed standard.**



Throughout this Extended Breed Standard for the PBGV comparisons are therefore made with the GBGV to help the trainee judge appreciate the very important differences between the two breeds.

## The Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen

Pronounced Puh-tee.....Bah-say.....Gree-fohn.....Von-day-uhn

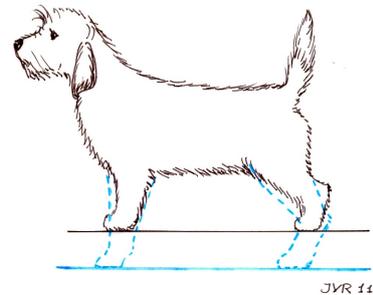
The descriptive French name gives an understanding of what the PBGV should look like - and its origins.

**Petit** Small in comparison with the larger hound breeds - but with strong bone in proportion to size.

**Basset** “Bas” is French for “low” - this is a hound that is low to the ground.

**Griffon** With a harsh, protective coat.

**Vendéen** From the Vendée region of France, where the breed originated.



The Basset Hound and Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen share the word ‘**basset**’ in their name - but they are very different.

Other than being low to the ground, the PBGV does **not** resemble, the Basset Hound in any other way.



**PBGV and Basset**



## ***THE BREED STANDARD***

The boxed words in italics are the official UK breed standard.  
Each clause is followed by an extended description.

### ***GENERAL APPEARANCE***



***Well balanced, short legged, rough coated, compact hound.  
Alert outlook and lively bearing.***

**Well balanced, )  
compact )**

The body should display a harmonious, pleasing and balanced outline.

**Short-legged**

This is not a large dog on shortened legs. It does not have the heavier bone of the larger hound.

Over generations in France, by constant selection of shorter-legged dogs and breeding from these, a hound needed for a specific purpose was developed by design.

The whole dog has now been reduced in size - both in bone and in length - in a number of areas, including the length of leg, without losing its substance in relation to size.

**Rough-coated**

The coat should be harsh to the touch. The French suggest it should feel like goat's hair.

**Alert and lively**

This is an active hound, one that is always vigilant and ready to act on command, especially when in the field.

## *CHARACTERISTICS*

***A strong, active hound capable of a day's hunting, with a good voice purposefully used.***

The PBGV was bred to be an effective hunter, keen to follow medium size game such as rabbit and hare but courageous enough to tackle boar. Even to this day, conformation remains secondary to the Frenchman's prime passion of hunting.



The PBGV's size makes him eminently suitable for ploughing through brambles and thick undergrowth. He has a good voice but does not "babble" or bark unnecessarily. The hound should be silent when not in contact with the scent.

Giving voice is reserved for when picking up the scent of the quarry and with all forward progress on the trail. This purposeful giving tongue is how scenthounds keep track of each other's work.



## *TEMPERAMENT*

***Happy, extrovert, independent, yet willing to please***



When first imported into the UK, the PBGV earned the soubriquet "The Happy Breed". This was in recognition of his happy and outgoing nature. One of his most endearing qualities is his constantly wagging tail. His confidence is evident at all times by his sociable demeanour, willingness to please and high tail carriage.

## HEAD AND SKULL

*Head carried proudly. Skull of moderate length, slightly domed, not too wide, oval when viewed from above. Well cut away under eyes. Occiput moderately well developed. Stop clearly defined. Muzzle square, length from nose to stop slightly less than from stop to occiput. Underjaw strong and well developed. Nose black, large and prominent, with wide nostrils. Lips covered with long hair forming beard and moustache.*

### *Head carried proudly*

The PBGV is a hound that courses game by scent. To do this, he drops his head with ease to detect the quarry's residual odour.



At all other times, unless distracted by lingering smells, his confident and happy nature will be conveyed by a head held proudly aloft when moving happily.

*Skull of moderate length, slightly domed, not too wide, oval when viewed from above*

The skull is neither large nor too long as it is in keeping with the compact body of the entire PBGV. It should be only *slightly domed* and, when viewed from above, it gives the appearance of an oval shape.



**Comparison:** PBGV head - slightly domed  
GBGV head - domed



**PBVG head – slightly domed**



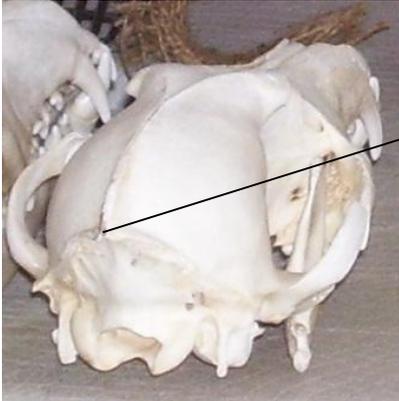
**GBGV head – domed**

***Well cut away under eyes***

The area under the eyes should be clean cut to show the bone structure of the foreface. This does not mean that the hair should be stripped away, giving a staring expression.



***Occiput moderately well developed***



The back point of the skull should be raised - not excessively so but sufficiently prominent to be clearly felt.

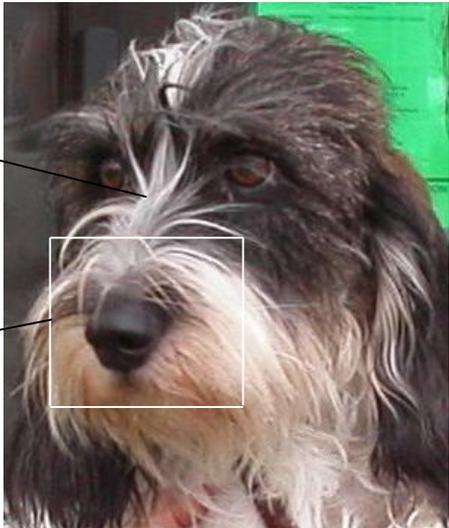


***Stop clearly defined***

The frontal indentation between the eyes - where the nasal-bone and skull meet - should be clearly defined.

***Muzzle square***

The muzzle has a square appearance when viewed from the front.



***Length from nose to stop slightly less than from stop to occiput***

The length of the muzzle (distance from the point between the eyes - the stop - to the end of the nose) should always be *slightly* shorter than the length of the skull (distance from the point between the eyes to occiput). It must not be too short - neither should it be longer.



**Comparison:** PBGV muzzle - slightly shorter (less) than from stop to occiput  
GBGV muzzle - noticeably longer than from stop to occiput



**PBGV – shorter muzzle**



**GBGV - noticeably longer muzzle**

**Comparison:** PBGV muzzle – Straight  
GBGV muzzle – Slightly roman



**PBGV – straight muzzle**



**GBGV – muzzle slightly roman**

***Underjaw strong and well developed***

The underjaw should not be weak.

Bear in mind that, if the beard has been incorrectly stripped away or there is no good beard, this will give the underjaw a weak appearance.

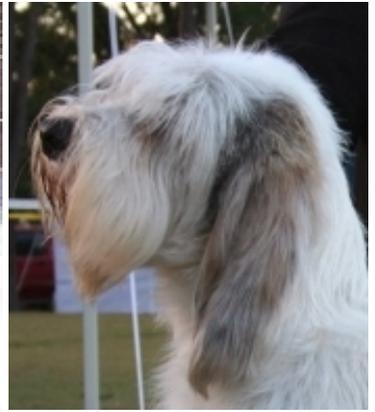
Neither should weakness be disguised by the hair of the beard.

× Weak underjaw



It should be possible to feel a good strong underjaw under the beard.

✓ Strong underjaw



***Nose black, large and prominent, with wide nostrils.  
Lips covered with long hair forming beard and moustache.***

The dominant feature of a scenthound is his sense of smell for hunting. Therefore the external architecture of the nose plays an important part. It must be large, protruding well and with big, open nostrils.

It should be solid black, ideally even in lemon/white or orange/white coated breeds.



× A lighter coloured nose is unacceptable



× A butterfly nose is unacceptable

In all coat colours, during months lacking daylight and sunshine “winter nose” (slight streaking of lighter pigmentation down the middle of the nose) should be recognised and may be forgiven but this is not to be confused with the poor pigmentation of a butterfly nose.



Winter nose



✓ The ideal large, black nose – and lips well covered with long hair forming a good beard and moustache

## ***EYES***

***Large, dark and oval, showing no white, with a friendly, intelligent expression. Haw not visible. Long eyebrow hair, standing forward, but not obscuring eyes.***

Eyes are reasonably large, dark and somewhat oval.

Eye colour in wild canids is generally light. For example the wolf has eyes with pale irises, making its stare unnerving to humans. This may be the reason why standards invariably request a dark eye.

The PBGV standard calls for a friendly, intelligent expression and the dark eye complements this.



The canine eye has evolved so that it has a third eyelid - also known as the haw or nictitating membrane. This automatically moves up and down, sweeping the eye clean on a regular basis. It should not be visible.

The eyes are also surmounted by long, protective hair that stands forward – but not so profuse that the eye is not visible.

## *EARS*

*Supple, narrow and fine, covered with long hair, folding inwards, ending in an oval shape. Not reaching beyond the tip of the nose. Set on low, just below the line of the eye.*

This is not a heavy ear flap but narrow and fine with inward curl, ending in an oval shape.

It is covered with hair that is longer than on the rest of the body, as this serves to protect the ear flap.



✘ Wide, flat ears are unacceptable



✘ High ear set is unacceptable

The ear is set low, just below eye level. The flap (leather) should not reach beyond the end of the muzzle. Some judges will pull the ear flap forwards to gauge length but, to the trained eye, it can be seen easily whether or not the ear is the correct length.



Note: the ear length is measured to the end of the leather,

not to the end of any excess hair on the tip of the flap.



**Comparison:** PBGV - Ears not reaching beyond the tip of the nose  
GBGV - Ears reaching to just beyond the tip of the nose



PBGV – Ears not reaching beyond tip of nose



GBGV – Ears reaching just beyond tip of nose

## ***MOUTH***

***Jaws strong with a perfect, regular and complete scissor bite,  
ie upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws.***



PBGVs have a medium length and width muzzle. The upper incisors are located in front of the lower incisors when the mouth is closed, with a smooth curve from tooth to tooth.

The jaws should be strong and upper teeth can be seen to closely overlap the lower teeth.

When the upper and lower incisor teeth meet each other edge to edge this is actually an expression of under bite. Such level (pincer) bite is unacceptable.

## *NECK*

***Long and strong, thicker at the base, well set into shoulders; without dewlap.***

The neck needs to be long, well muscled and strong to allow the PBGV to alter angle of head carriage with ease when giving chase or when lowering his head to follow the scent of a trail. A strong, upper neck flows smoothly into the shoulders and line of the back. There should be no sign of excess loose or pendulous skin under or down the length of the throat.



## *FOREQUARTERS*

***Shoulders clean and well laid back. Upper arm approximately equal in length to the shoulder. Elbows close to body. Forearms straight when viewed from the front and well boned in proportion to size. Pasterns strong and slightly sloping. Knuckling over is unacceptable.***

***Shoulders clean and well laid back***

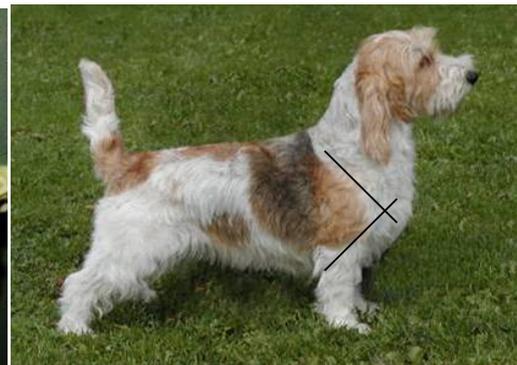
The forequarters should have well laid back shoulders. The forward reach of the front leg should be approximately the angle of the shoulder blade, therefore the more laid-back the shoulder, the better the reach.

Animals built for speed, such as the cheetah, have upright shoulder blades. Those built for endurance, such as wolves or hunting dogs that follow a trail, have well laid back shoulders. This increases reach and endurance. The dog with steep shoulders will lack reach of stride and stamina and will bounce up and down at the withers.

***Upper arm approximately equal in length to the shoulder blade***

The shoulder blade and upper arm should be well angled.

The upper arm plays an important role, as a short upper arm reduces effectiveness of front support and forward movement.



Equal length of shoulder blade and upper arm bone, and balanced angulation between the two, allows for good extension of the front legs. This will give a strong forward-reaching stride, with free movement.

***Elbows close to body***



Good front construction gives elbows set in close to the body.

They should be neither so close as to restrict movement, nor turned out from the body and loose.

✗ Loose elbows suggest a poorly constructed front

✓ Elbows close to the body



***Forearms straight when viewed from the front and well boned in proportion to size***



The forequarters should be well boned but not heavy. Being suitably strong, they will complement the size of the body.

This is not a low slung breed needing a crooked or half crooked front to support a heavy, low chest. The forearms should therefore be straight.

✓ Forearms straight and well boned in proportion to size

***Pasterns strong and slightly sloping.***

The pasterns should be strong and slightly sloping.

The angle the pastern makes with the vertical should be about 20 degrees. A greater slope indicates weak pasterns.



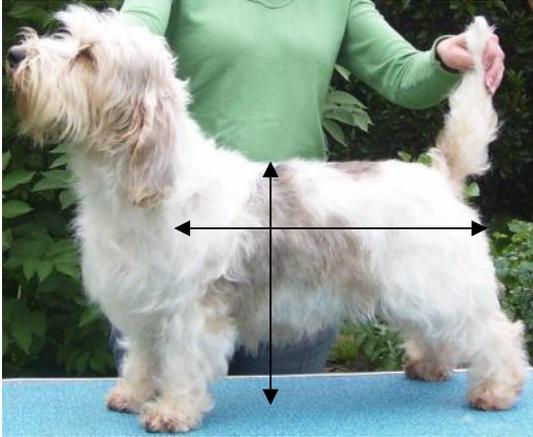
✗ Weak (down on) pasterns

✓ Pasterns slightly sloping



## *BODY*

***Back of medium length. Length of body measured from point of shoulder to point of buttock exceeds height at withers at a ratio of approximately 7 : 5. Chest deep with prominent sternum. Ribs moderately rounded, well let down to elbow and extending well back. Level topline. Strong, short, well muscled loins. Croup well muscled and of good width.***



The body should be somewhat longer than tall when measured from the point of shoulders to buttocks compared with height from withers to ground.

A ratio of 7 : 5, equating to the historically researched and more well known terminology of “1.4 : 1”, is the accepted norm.

***Back of medium length, level topline***



***Strong, short muscled loins***



A moderate length back complements the *General Appearance* description that this is a compact breed. There should be a pleasing transition from strong withers into a level topline that extends to the croup.

However the well muscled and strong loin can give the appearance of a very slight rise in this area, especially when on the move.

***Chest deep with prominent sternum***

The chest is not too wide but rather deep.

Although unexaggerated, a prominent breastbone should be felt on examination under the coat.



***Ribs moderately rounded, well let down to elbow and extending well back***

The ribcage should reach the level of the elbow. The ribs are well-sprung, neither barrel-shaped nor slab-sided, and should extend well back to protect the vital organs whilst working in harsh conditions. A pronounced tuck-up is undesirable and uncharacteristic of the breed.

***Croup well muscled and of good width***

The croup or rump, the back from the front of the pelvis to root of the tail, is well muscled. It should look quite wide when viewed from the top.



**BODY PROPORTIONS**



✗ Too square and high on leg, lacking body



✗ Too square and heavy all through



✗ Too long in body, not enough length of leg



✓ Correct body length and balance

**Comparison:** PBGV - Short-legged, compact body  
GBGV - Medium height, back of good length



**PBGV – shorter leg, shorter back**

**GBGV – relatively longer leg, longer back**

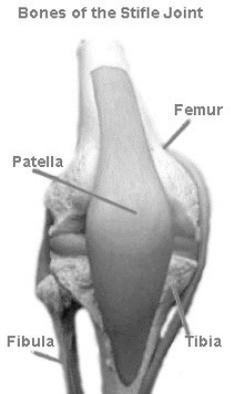
## *HINDQUARTERS*

***Strong and muscular with good bend of stifle. Well defined second thigh.  
Hocks well let down and turning neither in nor out.***

The PBGV needs muscular hindquarters to propel itself powerfully. It is the contraction and relaxation of these muscles that gives mechanical movement to the skeletal system, allowing the PBGV to walk and run freely. Like the forelegs, the hind legs are well boned, though not too heavy to make the PBGV look unbalanced.



The stifle (or knee) joint is made up of four bones, which are connected by muscles, ligaments, and tendons.



Angulation of stifle is important. Too much or too little bend of stifle (that is, straight) and the PBGV cannot move correctly. Adequate rear angulation allows good drive and true movement.

The hocks should be short and when, viewed from behind, turning neither in nor out and quite wide apart, in keeping with the croup that is of good width.



**Comparison:** PBGV - Good bend of stifle  
GBGV - Moderate bend of stifle



**PBVG – Good bend of stifle**



**GBGV – Moderate bend of stifle**

## ***FEET***

***Hard, tight padded, not too long. Nails strong and short.***



The feet are neither too large nor too long but slightly rounded and tight with tough, hard pads designed to protect the hunter going through harsh undergrowth.

Flat, splayed feet would not withstand such difficult conditions. As with other parts of the body, good pigmentation of the pads is desirable, though not called for in the standard.



× Feet too large

× Flat, splayed feet



## ***TAIL***

***Of medium length, reaching no further than the hock when lowered. Set on high, thick at the base, tapering gradually, well furnished with hair. Carried proudly sabre-like when moving.***



A good indication of correct, short tail is to hold it up, slightly curved, and the tip should be just about level with the skull. Alternatively, when held downwards, the tip should reach approximately hock level. Excess hair on the end will make the tail look longer.



The tail is set high - flowing through from the back line - thick and strong at the base, tapering towards the tip and well furnished with harsh hair.

When moving, it is carried gaily like a slightly curved sword. With the head to the left, tail carriage is ideally at approximately 1 or 2 o'clock.



× Low tail carriage



✓ Tail carried proudly

**Comparison:** PBGV - Tail reaching no further than the hock when lowered  
GBGV - Tail rather long



**PBGV – tail not reaching past hock joint when lowered**



**GBGV – tail rather long**

### ***GAIT / MOVEMENT***

***Free at all paces, with good drive. Front action straight and reaching well forward; hocks turning neither in nor out.***

Every breed of dog tries to move forward with the least amount of effort. Effortless and efficient movement is good movement and anything that detracts from this may well be a result of poor structure.



Sound movement in the PBGV is demonstrated by good, straight reach in front and good drive from behind.



The thighs should be well muscled, with sufficient width to match the forequarters; and adequate rear angulation to facilitate the good drive and true movement.

Stiff hocks and stifles prevent the hound from doing the job for which it was bred. Adequate angulation at the hock joint will give plenty of flexibility in this area, enabling effortless forward propulsion of the whole body.

To summarise, the PBGV uses its powerful hindquarters to move freely and effortlessly. Like the forelegs, the hind legs are well boned - but not unduly so. They should be in balanced harmony with the PBGV's body.

## COAT

***Rough, not too long and without exaggeration; harsh to the touch, with thick undercoat, never silky or woolly. For show purposes the coat may be tidied but a natural appearance must be retained. Trimming or styling should be penalised.***

The PBGV has a double coat consisting of a thick undercoat with a topcoat that is coarse to the touch. The right texture, harsh coat is important as it protects this rustic and hardy breed when hunting through dense undergrowth - therefore silky or woolly coats are incorrect.



✘ A silky coat is incorrect



✔ A harsh coat will protect

The body coat is not too long but long enough - about 5cms (2in) - to give the characteristic rough, tousled appearance. The legs are covered in similar length and quality coat but tail hair is shorter and harsher. The head has longer, protective hair over the eyes - but not so heavy as to completely cover them. Longer hair forms a beard and moustache on the muzzle.

Any fringing over the eyes should be pronounced but not so heavy as to completely cover them. Lack of natural coat stripping by hunting through dense undergrowth necessitates some tidying up - by hand stripping - to make the PBGV look its best. Superfluous hair may be thinned away from over the eyes, untidy fringing from the ends of ear flaps removed to reveal correct length of leather and some neatening up around the feet helps display tightness.

An ungroomed PBGV may be sound underneath all its coat but will be at a disadvantage to one that has been tidied up to show its good points – eg shape of skull, front, topline, rear angulation.



✘



✔



✘



✔

However structural faults should be weighed up against artificial failings, such as clear, inappropriate use of scissors or over-presentation which alters the essential characteristics of the breed.



✘



✔

Legs presented giving extreme fullness to the coat remove the rustic and tousled appearance that the breed is noted for and may disguise lack of bone. Strong bone in proportion to size should be clearly and naturally visible.



✘



✔

PBGV coat grows at a different rate. For example white hair may be more profuse and slightly softer than shorter, harsh, coloured hair shafts.

Recognise that some PBGVs come from lines where the coat is very slow to come through. It should also be taken into account that a puppy or young, maturing PBGV, and even an older dog stemming from such a line, may not have much coat.



Puppy with little coat yet



Mature bitch with naturally little coat

Be aware of what kind of grooming and presentation is acceptable – and how to treat those PBGVs that, in your view, are not presented “au naturel” in accordance with the breed standard.

## COLOUR

**White, with any combination of lemon, orange, sable, grizzle or black markings. Tricolour.**

The colours are many and varied but, typically, traditional hound colours of white plus one or two other colours (bi- or tri-colour) is the norm. A single hair shaft may contain two or three different colours and muting of some colours often occurs as a PBGV gets older.

The huntsman in France has always preferred a reasonable amount of white on the PBGV, giving easy visibility in the field. However, under the FCI standard, good specimens there with little or even no white are also acceptable.

## SIZE

**Height at withers: 34-38cms (13½-15 ins). A tolerance of 1cm (¾in) more or less is permissible.**

With the 1cm (¾in) tolerance, the absolute minimum height is 33cm (13ins)  
maximum height is 39cm (15½ins).

The height range of a GBGV is 39-44cm. It can therefore be seen that a PBGV at the 39cm (15½in) top end of the height range may be the same height as a GBGV at the lower end of its height range (excluding tolerance allowed in that breed). Take the GBGV tolerance of 1cm (¾in) into account – and you could have a GBGV that is smaller than a PBGV.

The importance of knowing the distinct differences between the two breeds can therefore be seen. A good specimen PBGV should not be discounted merely because it is on the top or lower end of the height range. What matters most is an overall harmonious, pleasing and balanced outline.



PBGV at top end of height range



GBGV at lower end of height range



## ***FAULTS***

***Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog and on its ability to fulfil its original purpose.***

The following points, including any anatomical malformation, detract from the ideal as depicted in the breed standard:

### Head:

- Too short
- Flat skull
- Depigmentation of nose
- Muzzle too long or too short
- Level bite, overshot or undershot
- Light eye
- Ears set high, too long, flat or lacking hair

### Body:

- Size outside the standard
- Too long or too short, lacking harmony or balanced outline
- Topline insufficiently firm
- Slanting croup

### Tail

- Kinked

### Limbs

- Lacking bone
- Crooked or half-crooked forelegs
- Lack of angulation
- Slack in pasterns

### Coat

- Not dense enough, fine hair
- Silky or woolly
- Non-standard colour

### Temperament

- Timid or aggressive

Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities should be discounted.

## ***NOTE***

***Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.***

## Comparisons between the PBGV & GBGV



PBGV & GBGV sitting together. In both photos the differences are obvious. Also, standing and moving together - once again notice the differences:



## Quick Reference - Comparison



**PBGV**



**GBGV**

Remember the five main differences that distinguish the two breeds.

### **The PBGV is –**

Shorter in muzzle (*Slightly shorter than distance from stop to occiput*)

Shorter in ear length (*Not reaching beyond the tip of the nose*)

Shorter in body length (*More compact, though maintaining the ratio of 7 : 5 or 1.4 : 1*)

Shorter in tail length (*Reaching no further than the hock joint when lowered*)

Shorter in leg (*Generally proportionally lower on leg*)

### *~ The Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen ~*

