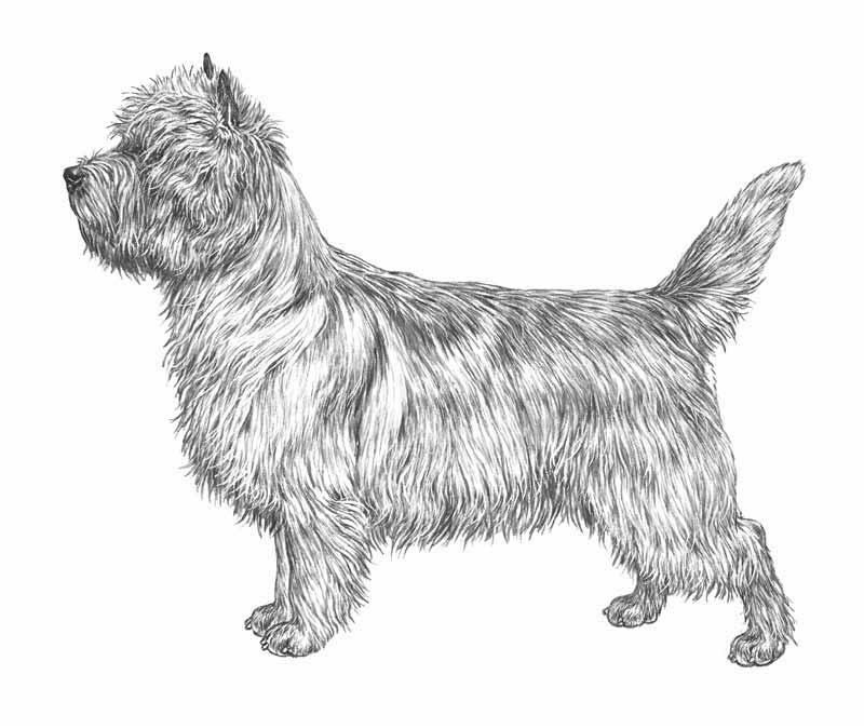
FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (AISBL)
SECRETARIAT GENERAL: 13, Place Albert 1er B – 6530 Thuin (Belgique)

06.10.2026 / EN

FCI-Standard N° 4

CAIRN TERRIER



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ORIGIN: Great Britain.

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICIAL VALID STANDARD: 08.09.2026.

UTILIZATION: Terrier.

FCI CLASSIFICATION: Group 3 Terriers
Section 2 Small-sized Terriers
Without working trial.

GENERAL APPEARANCE: Agile, alert, of workmanlike, natural appearance. Standing well forward on forepaws. Strong quarters. Deep in rib, very free in movement. Weather-resistant coat.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT: Should impress as being active, game and hardy. Fearless and gay disposition; assertive but not aggressive.

HEAD: Small, but in proportion to body. Well furnished.

CRANIAL REGION:
Skull: Broad; a decided indentation between the eyes.
Stop: Definite.

FACIAL REGION:
Nose: Black.
Muzzle: Powerful.
Jaws/Teeth: Teeth large. Jaw strong, but not long or heavy with perfect, regular and complete scissor bite, i.e. Upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws.

EYES: Wide apart, medium in size, dark hazel. Slightly sunk with shaggy eyebrows.

EARS: Small, pointed, well carried and erect, not too closely set nor heavily coated.

NECK: Well set on, not short.

BODY:
Back: Level, medium length.
Loin: Strong, supple
Chest: Well sprung deep ribs.

TAIL: Short, balanced, well furnished with hair but not feathery. Neither high nor low set, carried gaily but not turned down towards back.

LIMBS

FOREQUARTERS: Forelegs medium length, good but not too heavy bone. Covered with harsh hair.
Shoulders: Sloping.
Elbow: Never out at elbow.
Forefeet: Forefeet, larger than hind, may be slightly turned out. Pads thick and strong. Thin, narrow or spreading feet and long nails objectionable

HINDQUARTERS:
Thighs: Very strong and muscular.
Stifle: With good, but not excessive bend.
Hocks: Well let down, inclining neither in nor out when viewed from the rear.
Hind feet: Forefeet, larger than hind, may be slightly turned out. Pads thick and strong. Thin, narrow or spreading feet and long nails objectionable.

GAIT / MOVEMENT: Very free-flowing stride. Forelegs reaching well forward. Hindlegs giving strong propulsion. Hocks neither too close nor too wide.

COAT

Hair: Very important. Weather-resistant. Must be double-coated, with profuse, harsh, but not coarse, outer coat ; undercoat short, soft and close. Open coats objectionable. Slight wave permissible.

Colour: Cream, wheaten, red, grey or nearly black. Brindling in all these colours acceptable. Not solid black, or white, or black and tan. Dark points, such as ears and muzzle, very typical.

Any other colour or combination of colours, including solid black, white, or black and tan, unacceptable.

SIZE AND WEIGHT: Approximately 28-31 cm at withers, but in proportion to weight-ideally 6-7,5 kg.

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.

DISQUALIFYING FAULTS:

- Aggressive or overly shy dogs.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.

N.B:

- Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.
- Only functionally and clinically healthy dogs, with breed typical conformation, should be used for breeding.

The latest amendments are in bold characters.

Surface Anatomy

