



THE TURKISH ANGORA CAT

The First Longhair

The Turkish Angora originated in the mountainous areas of western and central Turkey. The variations on temperature created a need for fur that would be cool enough for sultry summers, but warm enough to endure harsh winters. The original mutation for longhair allowed the TA to thrive in every variation in climate.

The TA is also the source of the original dominant white gene, allowing it to remain cooler in sunlight but have protection and concealment in snowy winter seasons.



A Historical Treasure

The Turkish Angora was known and revered in the areas of Western Turkey where legend has it the prophet Muhammad owned a very special cat named Muezza. Once at the call to prayer, rather than shoo Muezza from lying on the sleeve of his gown, he directed his attendants to cut the sleeve from the robe. Legend says he stroked Muezza three times, granting him both the ability to land on his feet and to have seven lives.



A 1761 oil painting by Jean-Jacques Bachelier

By the 18th Century, Turkish Angoras were documented in Europe, perhaps most notably by Louis XVI of France, who allowed the cat to play on the Royal Council Table. Cardinal Richelieu owned many of them, including a solid black named Lucifer. The TA actually became thought of in the UK as a French cat.

Almost Lost to History

As the Persian became more popular, particularly in the UK, the Angora fell out of favor, having been bred into the Persian gene pool to improve the coat quality. In the early 1900s the breed was all but lost in Europe. In response, in 1939 the Ankara Zoo requested that the Turkish public relinquish custody to white Turkish Angoras in order to begin their own breeding programs. Through controlled breeding with a rotating population, the breed was kept alive in their native country. Later, the legal status of National Treasure was bestowed on them, making the removal of any white longhaired cat from Turkey extremely difficult. Cats eligible for registration in CFA, would need export bills of sale, Turkish veterinary certification, pet passports and additional documentation to qualify for a registration number and be used in a breeding program. Today's breeders still honor and aim for a refined version of the original type.



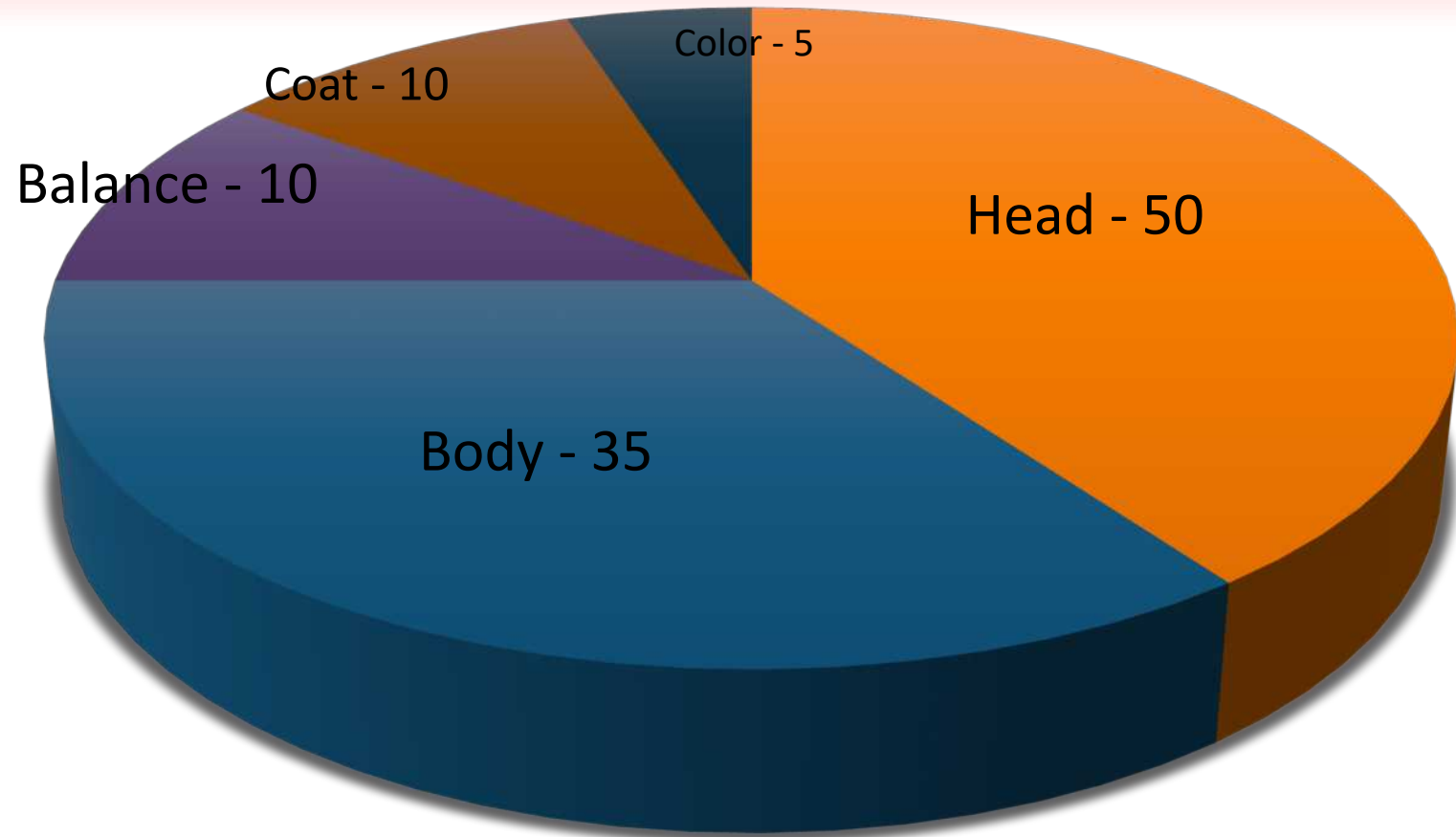
1925 painting by Norbertine Bresslern Roth



General Breed Characteristics

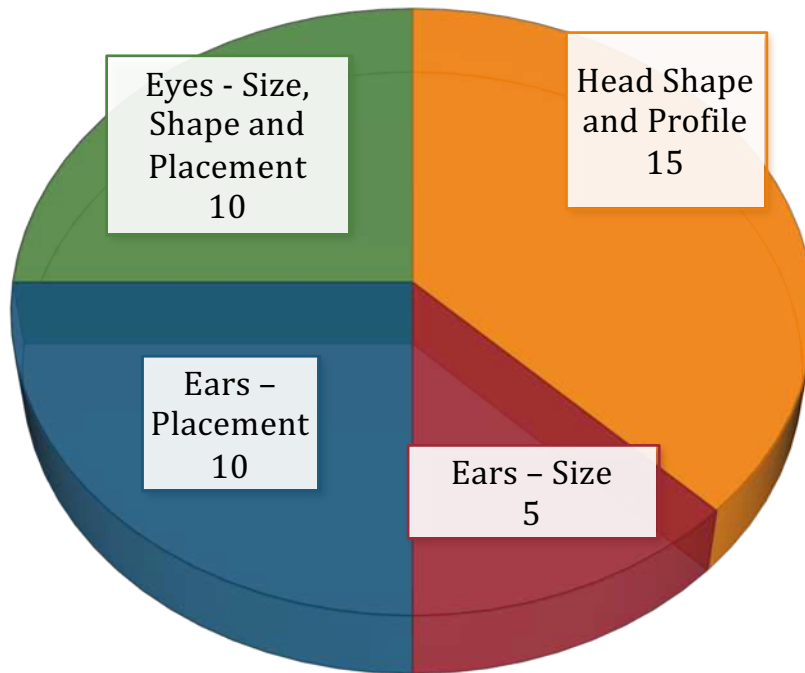
- Medium sized, but focused less on size than the balance of the entire cat
- Body is long and slender, with a greater depth than width
- Muscularity must be evident, but without taking away from the elegance of the cat – a ballerina, a steel bar wrapped in silk
- Coat should be always be present, a shiny, silky texture that lays flat on the body. Tail, ruff and britches should be full in all seasons
- Variations in size are acceptable so long as all physical aspects from nose to tail are proportionate, creating a lithe appearance of total harmony

Point Distribution

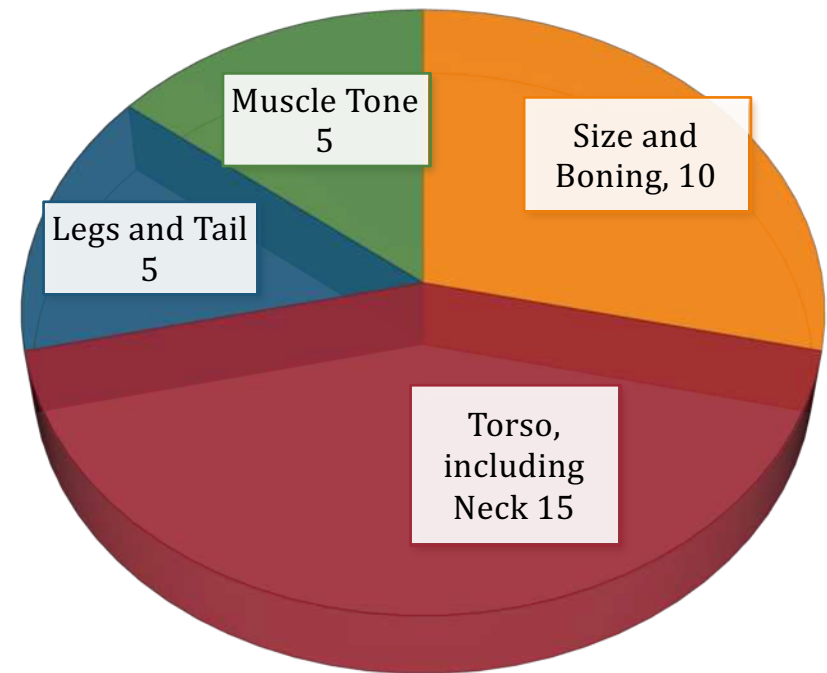


Point Distribution within Distribution

HEAD (40)

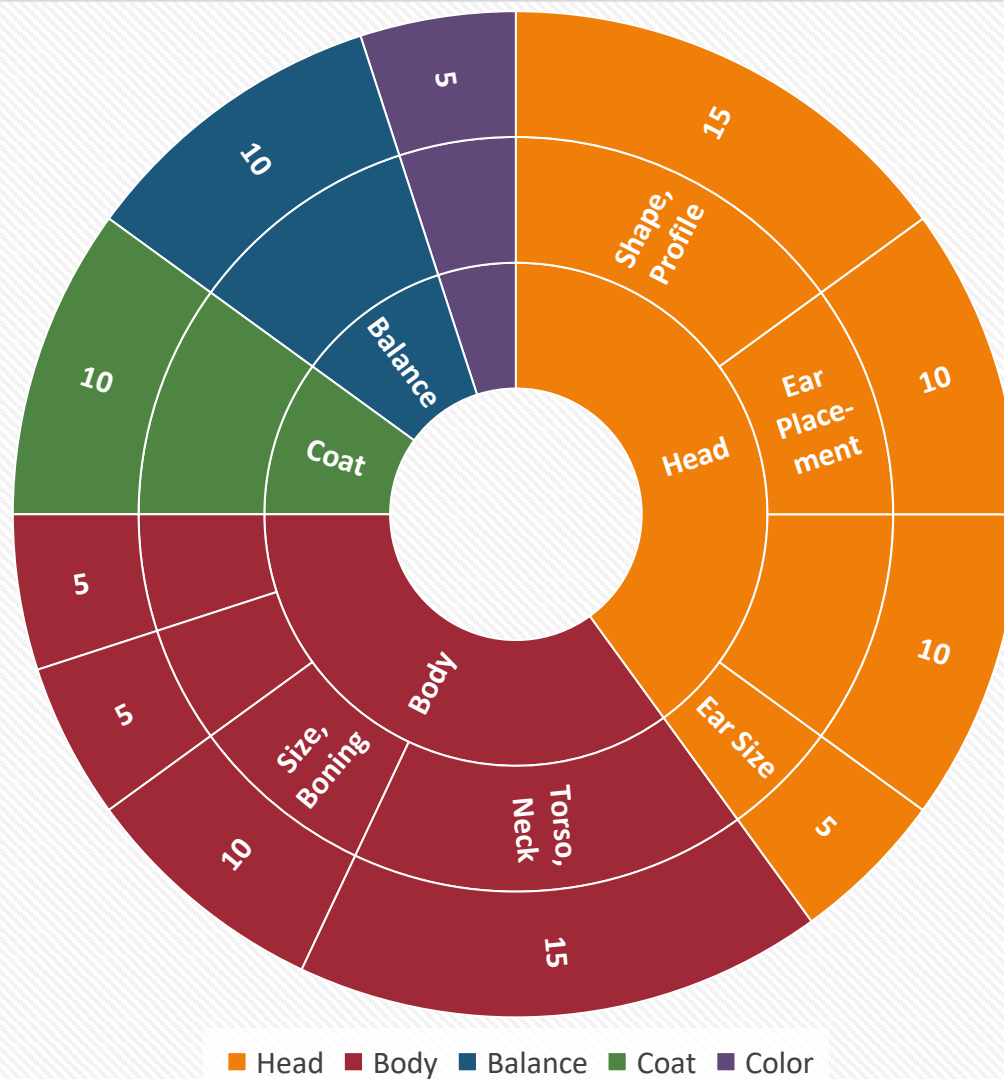


BODY (35)



The remainder of points distributed between balance (10), coat (10) and color (5).
A more meaningful way to look at all of these attributes and their importance may be...

Point Breakdown





Point Breakdown, Continued

When viewed as a sunburst chart, the points assessed to balance and coat become clearer. The breed's emphasis on balance in the standard is stronger than any other breed in CFA.

The ideal Turkish Angora balances all of these attributes without emphasis on any single trait. Ear placement is usually cited as the most prominent feature, along with ear size; however, coat is as important as ear placement, and the body and neck must be more in balance than any of them. The point distribution indicates how balanced breeders want their cats to be.

Balance is Key

While a variation in looks and general expression are acceptable and correct according to the standard, all parts of the cat must be in balance. No part of the cat should be discounted when evaluating balance on a Turkish Angora. Even though point allotment may differ, an incorrect or exaggerated part of the cat takes it out of balance.



More about Balance

Ideal balance is the idea that no one feature overwhelms the overall appearance.

A long body requires long legs, a long tail, and a larger head. Large ears, require a larger, longer head, and a larger body overall, with more coat.

Similarly, a shorter head, or smaller ears, require a proportionately smaller body.



Head (40 Overall Points)

With the majority of points focused on the head, a Turkish Angora should have a distinctive head-on look that leaves no doubt as to the breed

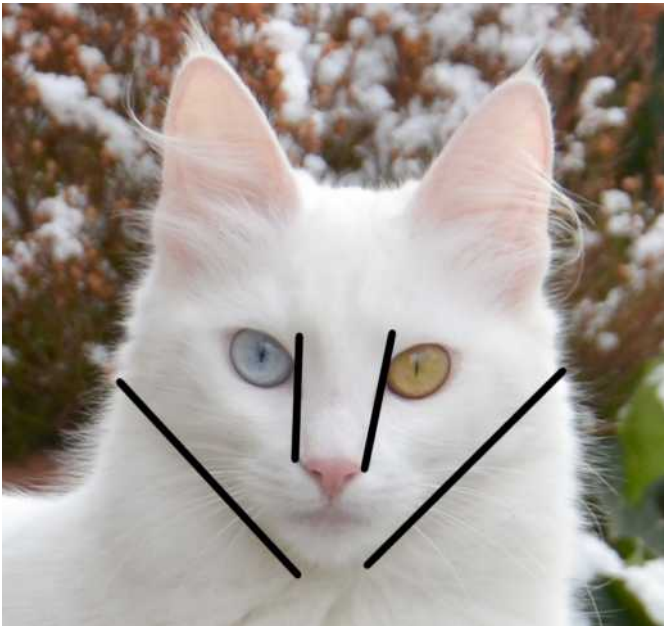
Head – **Shape** and Profile (15)

- ☛ The head is small to medium in size, with a visibly smooth wedge shape muzzle
- ☛ The size of the head should be in proportion to the size and length of the body and extremities
- ☛ The bridge of the nose should remain a constant width past the eyes
- ☛ Varieties of head length are acceptable so long as the head still shows balance with the entire cat



Head Size and Shape

Muzzle should be a smooth continuation of the wedge without a pronounced whisker pad or pinch



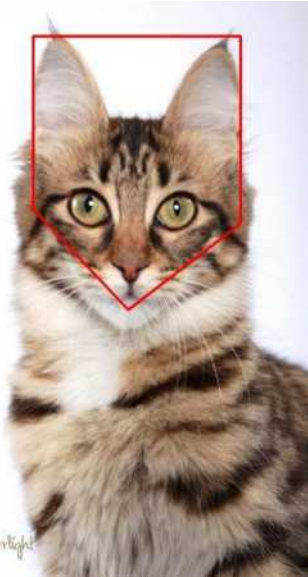
Smooth muzzle,
near parallel
nose bridge



Muzzle pinched



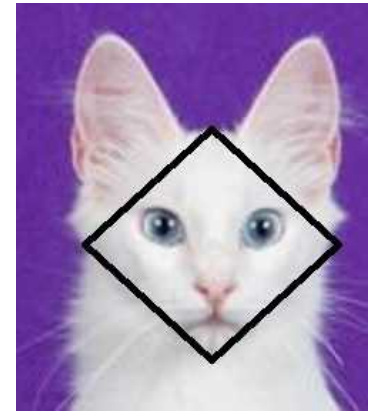
Head Shape and Length



Ideal head shape when viewed head on should have the general shape of “home plate” – the wedge will flow to the edge of the eyes, then the head goes generally upward into the ears set upright.



Contrast with the head shape that is more diamond shape, where the outside edge of the ear is in line with the eye. While not penalized, the taller head would be preferred.



Head Shape - Profile

Head – Shape and **Profile** (15 points)

- ✦ The two plane profile should be distinct and obvious
- ✦ Flat top head meeting the line of the nose slightly above the eye at the brow line
- ✦ The two flat planes should be equivalent in length from nose to brow, and brow to ear
- ✦ No curvature, break or direction change from nose to brow
- ✦ The profile is best used by using a finger perpendicular to the nose, in order to gently push back hair along the brow line that might create the illusion of a curved profile
- ✦ Chin firm, gently rounded, in perpendicular line with nose



HEAD SHAPE - PROFILE



The head size and length can vary, but the profile remains correct so long as the length of the plane is in proportion. Imported cats will tend to have shorter heads. Shorter heads will have a sharper angle at the brow line, generally making a range of angles from 130-150 degrees correct, depending on head length.



Brow to nose line off balance



Lack of angle at brow



A slightly concave nose on a young cat may straighten with age



Profile defect

Head Shape - Eyes

Head – Eye size, shape and placement (10 points)

- ✦ Large, almond shaped, rather than round or walnut, slanting slightly upward with an open expression
- ✦ The eye may appear rounded during play and stimulation
- ✦ Placement along a straight line drawn from the corners of the nose



Head Shape - Eyes



Eyes too small,
wide set

While there are many ways the eye shape can not meet the ideal, it should be remembered it is only one part of the 10 points allotted to eye size, shape and placement. None of the cats on this page would be penalized for a small deviation.



Eyes slightly
hooded, rounded
on bottom



Eyes too small for
head



Eyes too small,
drifting apart along
nose line



Eyes slightly
rounded, slightly
hooded

Eye Colors

Eye color is not related to coat color. A wide variety of colors are acceptable, with deeper tones being preferred. This should not imply that lighter color eyes should be penalized.

Blue, from ice blue to sapphire



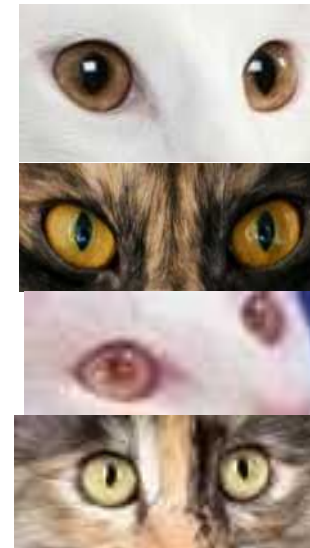
Green, from gooseberry to emerald



Odd, with blue and amber, green, or green gold



Amber, from gold to copper



And an eye color unique to our breed, green gold, which is described as a gold or amber eye with a greenish cat or ring.



Head – Ear Size

Head – Ear size (5 points)

- ☛ Ears are large
- ☛ Wide at base
- ☛ Pointed and ideally tufted



Head – Ear Placement

Head – Ear placement (10 points)

- ☛ Ears placed “closely together” while remembering overall balance
- ☛ High on the head, in a vertical rather than outward turned set
- ☛ Upright, with the best set starting with an erect line from the head along the inner ear



Ear Set/Placement

Ear set is more important than ear size. “Set closely together” should always keep in mind the balance of the cat. Extremely upright, close ears will require a larger cat, longer head, more refined leg and full coat.



Vertical, close set
Most correct



Ears tilt outward,
but still erect
Still correct



Less desirable earsets



Wider set, still erect
Near the limit of correct



A cat with ears this large and
closely set would require an
entire body equally as extreme
to remain in balance

Body (35 Points)

Body – Torso, including Neck (15 points)

- Medium size
- Body should be long and graceful
- More important than size are balance, grace, and fineness of bone
- Body long, and slender, with more depth than width – oval in shape. Hips same width as shoulders
- The body is not Oriental in any way
- Rump slightly above shoulders
- Neck is slim and rather long, conveying a graceful pose



Long and Slender Body



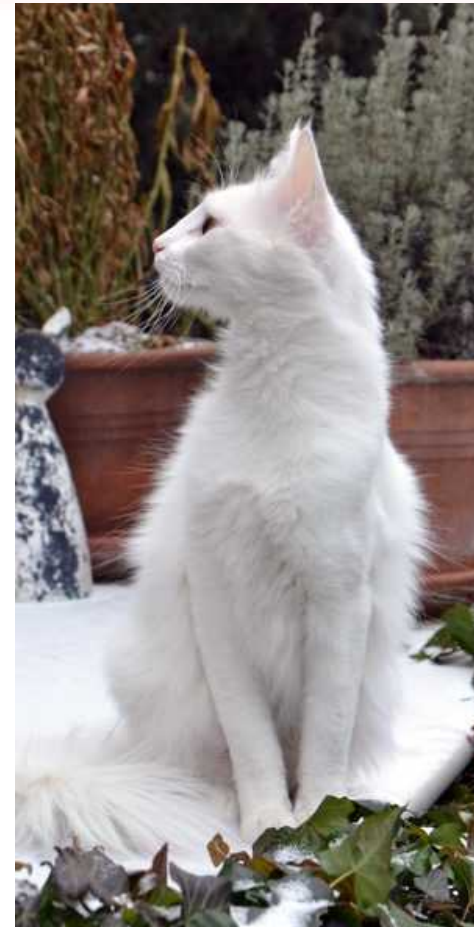
The body is medium size, long and slender, with females typically smaller than males. It has greater depth than width, and is foreign in type.



Body – Size and Boning

Body – Size and Boning (10 points)

- Body generally medium in size, balanced to the entirety of the cat
- Boning should be refined, but not so refined and small as to be out of balance. It is a medium sized cat and the boning should be in balance accordingly.
- Females typically smaller than males; a male who ideally meets the standard, with all other things being equal, is superior to the same size female



Size and Refinement

It is important to note that refinement may be hidden under a full coat. At certain times the trend has been to “overtypes” refinement to produce legs more suited to an Oriental or Cornish Rex breed. The boning should be in balance with a medium sized body with depth.



Body – Legs and Tail

Body – Legs and Tail (5 points)

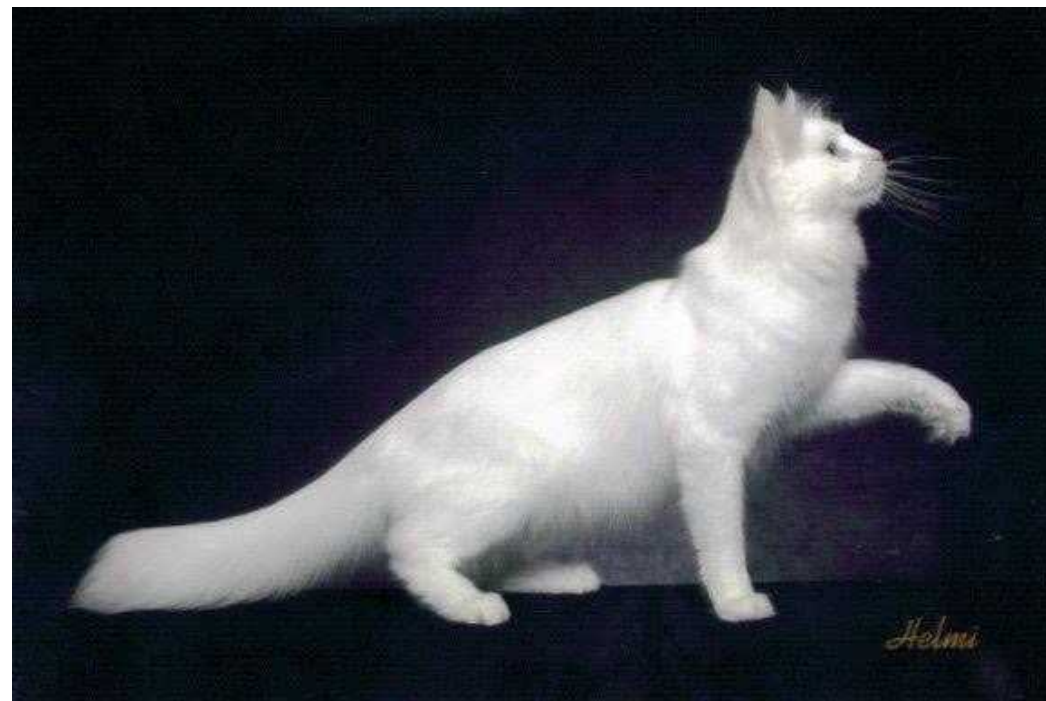
Body – Muscularity (5 points)

- ☞ Legs are long, slender and refined – but refined is not the equivalent of small. The boning should be slender but in balance with the body size
- ☞ Hind legs slightly longer than front
- ☞ Tail is long, matching length of body
- ☞ Tail tapers, with no kink or deformity of any kind
- ☞ Tail should have a full brush of fur year round
- ☞ Cat should have firm muscularity



Balance (10 Points)

Size will vary, particularly in maturity, but remains correct if in balance to the entire body. Balance is our hallmark – all parts measuring to the whole to create a cat in harmony.



Coat (10 Points)

The Turkish Angora is a single coated breed, with long hairs that lie down on the body. The texture should be soft and silky, distinct from any other breed.

The length of coat will vary, but the tail should show a full brush. The tail, ruff and britches should be long, and finely textured, regardless of season.



Coat (10 Points)

A single coated, close lying coat may appear to forgive a cat lacking in coat, either amount or texture. But as the original longhair, our coat should never be left behind when evaluating a cat's overall balance. A cat lacking the qualities of a longhair breed, including ruff, britches, and tail, should be faulted.



Harrison Weir's original drawing from 1889. Note the ruff, body hair, britches and tail, along with the upright, pointed ears, with refined legs that match the body size

Color (5 Points)

While white is known as the traditional color of the breed, that does not mean it should be valued in the show ring over a cat of another color who conforms more to the written standard.

Comparatively speaking, breeders tend to repeat the phrase, “color is only five points.” However, five points is also allotted to ear size, which is often considered a hallmark of the breed. A color or pattern should conform to the standard as described.

That said, we do not breed for color. Our colors now reflect that penalties do not apply to minor color issues such as lockets or buttons.



Color (5 Points)

Barring on young shaded and smoke cats should not be penalized, as the color develops slowly in the breed, and the single coat causes the bars to be more obvious until the cat is more mature. Lockets or buttons on solid cats are not penalized, but sound colors are preferred.



Import Lines

From time to time, judges may encounter cats of the opposite extreme type they expect. Some breeders make it a priority to import lines from Turkey, to keep our bloodlines strong and vital, and our coats full. It also reinforces the head type with sharp profile lines. These cats will have smaller ears that are wider set while still upright, shorter heads and bodies and very full coats. Rather than an IM, so long as they are balanced under the standard, these cats deserve Champion titles in our pedigrees, and also may use these rings to qualify for registration. It might be shocking to learn how quickly an import will produce show type.



Imported cats



F1 offspring (from import)



Handling

Turkish Angoras are energetic and intelligent cats that may be highly stimulated, seeking out your toys. Recently, a trend has emerged to feel the cat, pass the hands over the body, down the tail, and then hold the end of the tail pinned between two or three fingers to make sure the cat doesn't leave the table. This only sets up to make a bad situation worse, if the only "handle" is the end of the tail. The tail can be seriously damaged when this happens. Breeders prefer that the free hand remain over the hip area, so that if a cat does try to bolt, judges are positioned to safely grasp the body without risking injury to the cat.

Some Turkish Angoras will stand and pose on a judge's table and will not react to toys. As with any breed, cats have breed traits as well as individual personalities, and so long as you are able to judge the cat as you need to, the cat should not be penalized or discounted for one behavioral trait over another.



Penalize and Disqualify

Penalties in the breed are for obviously oversized or course appearance. Course appearance is now clarified as a broad chest or hips, and we have also added verging on miniaturization to our penalize section.

Also new to our penalize is to emphasize the straight profile in our breed. A noticeable or palpable curve in the profile is now penalized.

Cobby bodies, those that are stocky, wide and low to the ground, are not acceptable to a graceful, lithe breed standard. Tail faults are described as kinked or malformed vertebrae, as well as crossed eyes, are similarly disqualified.

Colors that indicate hybridization (color/pattern of the Himalayan) are not eligible for registration or show.

HAYIRLI OLSUN!

