

Setter Comparison



Temperament

Without being politically incorrect, one can identify the temperament of these breeds with their stereotypes of their geographic origins.

The English gentleman who worked in more moderate climates, quieter, controlled, within the fields and hedgerows; then there is the rugged dour Scot, who needed the strength of will and of body, the determination to work in the colder, barren rocks of the highlands; the lively active Irishman who takes life on at full speed in the bogs, briars, always on the look out for fun and song; and the Red & White who is his quieter but still fun loving cousin, who does all the hard work while the Red dog is laughing.

At this point I would make a point about Setter temperament in general. These dogs are meant to work with people, to be trainable, but to also be companions. They went to the field and came home to the house. Please do not reward bad tempered Setters of any colour. Not shy ones, not timid ones, and certainly not vicious ones.

Heads

Common features

All four want:

1. **Ears** which are set on low,(no higher than eye level for R/W), lying close to the head and but of varying length and leather.
2. Scissors or level **bite**.
3. Well defined and distinct **stop**, whether it is caused by actual stop between eyes, or accentuated raised brow.
4. Black, dark **nose** of good size.
5. Equal in **muzzle and skull** with muzzle that is brick shaped, not pointed, and square. In a single word, brick in English, deep and heavy in Gordon, long & lean in Irish, broad in R & W.





English Setter

Eyes - dark, fully pigmented rims, bright, round.

Occiput – moderate.



Gordon Setter

Eyes - a fair size, wise, oval, neither deep set nor bulging.

Occiput – rounded skull.





Irish Setter

Eyes - almond shaped, not deep or bulging, medium size, dark, soft.

Occiput – well defined.



Irish Red & White

Eyes - dark, roundish, no haw.

Occiput – without showing strong protruberance as in the Irish.



Body



So what do the Setters share?

Actually, a whole lot!

- Long, arched neck into well laid back shoulders, straight forelegs, muscle, slightly sloping pastern, close feet, well feathered, long muscular rear with well bent stifle and let down hock.
- All want deep chest (to elbow) and sprung rib BUT not so wide as to interfere (English); not too broad (Gordon); narrow in front (Irish).
- Loin moderate – with arch and muscle
- Tail tapering to a point – length varies slightly



English Setter

Topline – level or slight

Size – males 25”, females 24”

Tail – carried level, extension of the back

Feet - close set, arched, and well cushioned





Gordon Setter

Topline – moderately sloped

Tail - carried horizontally

Feet - catlike, well cushioned,
with deep pads

Size – male 27", female 26"





Irish Setter

Topline - down without sharp drop at croup

Tail – carried straight or slightly up

Feet - small firm, arched

Size – male 27”, female 25”





Irish Red and White Setter

Topline - level to slight slope

Tail – carried level or below back

Feet - round, well feathered

Size – male 26”, female 24”



Trimming

All setters are trimmed. They do not grow as you will see them. How artfully and tastefully it is done will vary.

No Setter should LOOK trimmed. You should never see clipper or scissor marks - back coats should never be done with clippers but clippers will be used on Head - ears, cheeks, throat, Vee, trim the feet, under the tail, trim the tail feather, and neck and shoulder should be well blended. Sculpted underlines I find quite objectionable. A scalped look is not acceptable - how severely do you penalize it – well, that's up to you.

Coats are getting more and more profuse - It's up to you to interpret the standards where the English Setter says – adequate – of good length – not so excessive as to hide the true lines, appropriate to a sporting dog. The Gordon Setter states that longhair is on ears, under stomach, chest, legs, tail – don't forget black hair is more profuse. Irish Setter states that moderate-feathering on ears long, pleasing fringe on belly, brisket, chest, tail moderate. Red & White coat is not profuse but of moderate length with fair amount on belly (fringe).

Texture is important. – No woolly coats - again some Red & White folks prefer to only trim under the neck and the Vee - they fear exaggeration and loss of the natural look. I make a point of pointing it out - to me it ruins the look, the finish, the type.

Irish and English have gone through a period of excessive trimming – it was the fad and I found it ugly, but these dogs won so others imitated. Where do you draw the line is like hair spray in poodles. It's up to you when you are wearing the badge.

GAIT

English Setter

The standard calls for an effortless gait, showing reach and drive, with a proud head carriage, and a tendency to single track. Let's define single tracking as the tendency of two solid columns of support to converge in straight lines to a center line, without a bend or break in the line.



Gordon Setter

The gait is described as bold, strong, driving, smooth and free, with a high head carriage.



Irish Setter

The gait of the Irish is called big, lively, showing reach and drive, without hackney, head held high, with a tendency to single track.



Irish Red & White Setter

Should show a long effortless stride, efficient with head held high.



SO they are similar but different. Please try to look beyond a generic dog and reward specimens who have those traits which separate one breed from the other.

