

DORKING

Large fowl

Origin: Great Britain

Classification: Heavy: Soft feather

Egg colour: White

Its purely British ancestry makes the Dorking one of the oldest of domesticated fowls in lineage. A Roman writer, who died in AD 47, described birds of Dorking type with five toes, and no doubt such birds were found in England by the Romans under Julius Caesar. By judicious crossings, and by careful selection, the Dorking or Dorking breed was established.

General characteristics: male

Carriage: Quiet and stately, with breast well forward.

Type: Body massive, long and deep, rectangular in shape when viewed sideways, and tightly feathered. Back broad and moderately long with full saddle inclined downward to the tail. Breast deep and well rounded with a long straight keel bone. Wings large and well tucked up. Tail full and sweeping carried well out (a squirrel tail being objectionable) with abundant side hangers and broad well-curved sickles.

Head: Large and broad. Beak stout, well proportioned and slightly curved. Eyes full. Comb single or rose. Either kind is allowed in darks, single only in reds and silver greys, and rose only in cuckoos and whites. The single comb is upright, moderately large, broad at base, evenly serrated, free from thumb marks or side spikes. The rose is moderately broad and square fronted, narrowing behind to a distinct and slightly upturned leader, the top covered with small coral-like points of even height, free from hollows. Face smooth. Earlobes moderately developed and hanging about one-third the depth of the wattles, which are large and long.

Neck: Rather short, covered with abundant hackle feathers falling well over the back, making it appear extremely broad at the base, and tapering rapidly at the head.

Legs and feet: Legs short and strong. Thighs large and well developed but almost hidden by the body feathering. Shanks short, moderately stout and round (square or sinewy bone being very objectionable), free from feathers, the spurs set on the inner side and pointing inwards. Toes, five, large, round and hard ('spongy' feet to be guarded against), the front toes (three) long, straight and well spread, the hind toe double and the extra toe well formed, viz. the normal toe as nearly as possible in the natural position, and the extra one placed above, starting from close to the other, but perfectly distinct and pointing upwards.

Female

The general characteristics are similar to those of the male, allowing for the natural sexual differences, except that the tail is carried rather closely. The single comb, too, falls over one side of the face.

Colour

The cuckoo

Male and female plumage: Dark grey or blue bands on light blue-grey ground, the markings uniform, the colours shading into each other so that no distinct line or separation of the colours is perceptible.

The dark

Male plumage: Hackles (neck and saddle) white or straw more or less striped with black. Back various shades of white, black and white or grey, mixed with maroon or red (bronze objectionable). Wing bows white, or white mixed with black or grey; coverts (or bar) black glossed with green; secondaries outer web white, inner black. Breast and underparts jet black; white mottling not permissible. Tail richly glossed black, and a little white on primary sickles is permissible, but white hangers decidedly objectionable.

Female plumage: Neck hackle white or pale straw, striped with black or grey-black. Breast salmon-red, each feather tipped with dark grey verging on black. Tail nearly black, the outer feathers slightly pencilled. Remainder of plumage nearly black, or approaching a rich dark brown, the shaft showing a cream-white, each feather slightly pale on the edges, except on the wings, where the centre of the feather is brown-grey covered with a small rich marking surrounded by a thick lacing of the black, and free from red. Another successful colour is every feather over the body pencilled a brown-grey in the centre, with lacing round, and the breast as described above.

The red

Male plumage: Hackles (neck and saddle) bright glossy red. Back and wing bows dark red. Remainder of plumage jet black glossed with green.

Female plumage: Hackle bright gold heavily striped with black. Tail and primaries black or very dark brown. Remainder of plumage red-brown, the redder the better, each feather more or less tipped or spangled with black, and having a bright yellow or orange shaft.

The silver grey

Male plumage: Hackles (neck and saddle) silver-white free from straw tinge or marking of any kind. Back, shoulder coverts and wing bow silver-white free from striping. Wing coverts lustrous black with green or blue gloss; primaries black with a white edge on outer web; secondaries white on outer and black on inner web, with a black spot at the end of each feather, the corner of the wing when closed appearing as a bar of white with a black upper edge. Remainder of plumage deep black, free from white mottling or grizzling, although in old males a slight grizzling of the thighs is not objectionable.

Female plumage: Hackle silver-white, striped with black. Breast robin red or salmon-red ranging to almost fawn, shading off to ash-grey on the thighs. Body clear silver-grey, finely pencilled with darker grey (the pencilling following the outer line of the feather), free from red or brown tinge or black dapplings.

Note: The effect may vary from soft dull grey to bright silver-grey, an old fashioned grey slate best describing the colour. Tail darker grey, inside feathers black. It is permissible for older hens to have small single spurs.

The white

Male and female plumage: Snow-white, free from straw tinge.

In both sexes and all colours

Beak white or horn, dark horn permissible in the dark. Eyes bright red. Comb, face, wattles and ear-lobes brilliant red. Legs and feet (including nails) a delicate white with a pink shade.

Weights

Cock 4.55-6.35kg (10-14lb); cockerel 3.60-5.00kg (8-11lb)

Hen 3.60-4.55kg (8-10lb)

Scale of points

	Dark	Silver Grey & Red	Cuckoo & White
Size	26	20	20
Type	22	22	22
Colour	16	22	20
Fifth toe	8	8	8
Condition	10	10	10
Head	10	10	12
Feet, condition of	8	8	8
	100	100	100

Serious defects

Total absence of fifth toe. Legs other than white or pink-white, or with any sign of feathers. Spurs outside the shank. Single comb in cuckoo or white. Rose comb in red or silver-grey. White in breast or tail of silver-grey male. Any coloured feathers in white. Very long legs. Crooked or much swollen toes. Bumble feet. Any deformity.

Bantam

Standards for large fowl to be used for Dorking bantams.

Weights

Male 1130-60g (40-48oz)

Female 910-1130g (32-40oz)



Silver Grey male, show winner



Silver Grey female, show winner



Dark male, show winner



Dark female, show winner



Young Red cockerel



Red female, show winner



Cuckoo female, show winner



Cuckoo male, show winner



White male



White females at large