

Color Patterns & Pigmentation

The color pattern is the only characteristics that allows for different standards for Dorpers and White Dorpers. When evaluating color patterns imagine a “cut-off line” that runs from the point of the hock along the underside of the animal to below the knee; dividing the animal into two sections. In ewes, the underline goes up the reproductive parts. The cut-off line is the same for Dorpers and White Dorpers.

Dorper

A white sheep with a black head and neck is ideal. A limited number of spots on the body and legs and larger dappling on pink skin is acceptable. Dorpers should have complete pigmentation on the anus, reproductive organs and hooves.

Color Faults

- Totally white sheep or sheep that are predominately black.
- Excessive brown or white hair around eyes or on the face.
- No Pigment on any part where required.
- Blue in one or both eyes.

White Dorper

A white sheep with full pigmentation on the eyelids, under the tail and on reproductive organs is ideal. Color may appear on the hooves.

Color Faults

- A sheep covered in total with any other color in its covering other than white.
- No pigment on any part where required.
- Blue in one or both eyes.

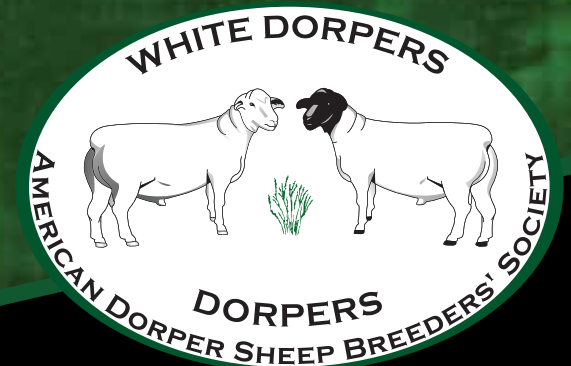
The information in this publication is sourced from *Dorpers Into The New Century* by Dolf Lategan, an official publication of the South African Dorper Breeders’ Society. Manuals are available in English and Spanish and may be purchased from the American Dorper Sheep Breeders’ Society. Please visit www.dorpersheep.org to order a manual.

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The American Dorper Sheep Breeders’ Society is the official registry for Dorper and White Dorper sheep in the United States. Founded in 1996, the nonprofit organization serves breeders and producers of the prominent meat-producing hair-sheep breed, which is the fastest-growing segment of the American Sheep Industry.

DORPER & WHITE DORPER SHEEP BREED STANDARDS



The Dorper & White Dorper Standard of Excellence was developed by the South African Dorper Breeders' Society to provide guidelines and consistency across both breeds.

General Appearance

An ideal Dorper and White Dorper sheep should be symmetrical and balanced where the height, width, length and depth of body are proportionate.

Dorper and White Dorper sheep should maintain a 60:40 ration of height to body and legs giving the sheep maximum carcass capacity.

Evaluation of Dorpers and White Dorpers

There are three key points to emphasize when evaluating Dorper and White Dorper sheep:

- Functional efficiency and structural soundness.
- Masculinity of rams and femininity of ewes.
- Muscling.

Conformation

The **HEAD** should be strong and long with eyes widely spaced and protectively placed. A strong nose with a well-shaped mouth and a well-fitted deep jaw is desirable. Rams should appear masculine and carry secondary

development, such as wrinkled skin, on a broad muzzle. Ewes should have well-defined feminine features.

The size of the ears should be in relation to the head.

Discriminate against heavy horns and a dewlap under the jaw. Scurs are acceptable. Cull faults include overshot or undershot jaws.



The **FOREQUARTER & NECK** should be of medium length, well-fleshed, wide, and well-coupled to the forequarter. Shoulders should be firm, broad and strong. A moderate protrusion of the brisket beyond the shoulders, moderate width and good depth are ideal. Strong forelegs, straight legs, and strong pasterns are vital to longevity. Hooves should be strong and not too widely split. Cull faults include weak pasterns and defaults in leg conformation, bull shoulders that inhibit free and natural front-leg movement, and a lack of brisket development.



The **BARREL** is measured from behind the shoulder blade to the front of the hip and should be long, deep and wide with well-sprung ribs. Sheep should have a long, straight back with a well-developed loin muscle. Ewes should have a defined wedge with front end refinement and a powerful barrel and rump. Rams should display a reverse wedge with deep chests and power.

The **HINDQUARTER** should be long and combined with a wide rump that is well-fleshed on the inner and outer twists where muscling extends down to hocks. The hind legs should be straight and strong. Cull faults include unsound feet, long or weak pasterns, and defaults in hock structure.



The **REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS** should be well-developed. Ewes should have developed udder free of masses with two teats. The scrotum of a ram should not drop below the point of hock, and the testicles should be equal size. A split of 1.5 cm (.6 in) deep is allowable on the scrotum. Cull faults include any abnormalities of the udder or scrotum, inadequately sized reproductive organ or prolapse of the anus or vagina.

Size & Growth Rate

Dorper and White Dorpers should be of good size and weight for their age. Mature rams average around 230 pounds. Mature ewes average 180-210 pounds. Mature ewes can be bred between 12-15 months.

Distribution of Fat

Fat should be evenly distributed as a thin layer over the carcass. Sheep should be firm and muscular when handled. Too much localization of fat on any part of the body is undesirable most especially on brisket, fore flank, rear flank and dock.

Covering

Dorpers and White Dorpers should have a short, loose, light mixture of hair and wool on their body with a natural clean underline. The head should be covered in short, clean hair. Sheep may naturally shed all their wool or have wool covering remain on their sides, hindquarters, and neck. Wool on underlines and belly is undesirable. Culling faults include sheep that have coarse hair, long and dense wool or a coarse, hairy mane.

