



The American Bullmastiff Association
Judges Education Program



Judges Education Committee

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Introduction

- Welcome to the wonderful world of the Bullmastiff.
- We as judges, breeders and owners of this wonderful breed appreciate the fact that you have chosen to become educated in the specifics of the breed to better judge and breed them.
- Please note that some of the content of this presentation and this material may seem to present information with which you are already familiar in terms of general anatomy and gait. The latter is because we chose to increase the education in our chosen breed and some may not have the background and expertise specifically required.
- **Mission Statement:** The mission of the Judge's Education Committee is to extend knowledge to active and aspiring judges, mentors, breeders, conformation and performance exhibitors, handlers, and the general fancy. Dedicated and knowledgeable ABA members will create an educational environment providing accurate and responsive materials at shows, seminars, and on the internet.
- Thank you for your interest.



Bullmastiff Breed Standard

General Appearance - *That of a symmetrical animal, showing great strength; powerfully built, but active. The foundation breeding was 60% Mastiff and 40% Bulldog. The breed was developed in England by gamekeepers for protection against poachers.*

Size, Proportion, Substance - *Size: Dogs, 25 to 27 inches at the withers, and 110 to 130 pounds weight. Bitches, 24 to 26 inches at the withers, and 100 to 120 pounds weight. All things being equal, the more substantial dog within these limits is favored. Proportion: The length from tip of breastbone to rear of thigh exceeds the height from withers to ground only slightly, resulting in a nearly square appearance.*

Head - **Expression:** *Keen, alert and intelligent. Eyes: dark and medium size. Ears: V-shaped and carried close to the cheeks, set on wide and high, level with the occiput and cheeks, giving a square appearance to the skull; darker in color than the body and medium in size. Skull: Large, with a fair amount of wrinkle when alert; broad, with cheeks well developed. Forehead flat. Stop: moderate. Muzzle: broad and deep; its length in comparison with that of the entire head, approximately as 1 is to 3. Lack of foreface with nostrils set on top of muzzle is a reversion to the Bulldog and is very undesirable. A dark muzzle is preferable. Nose: black with nostrils large and broad. Flews: not too pendulous. Bite: preferably level or slightly undershot. Canine teeth large and set wide apart.*

Neck, Topline, Body - **Neck:** *slightly arched, of moderate length, very muscular, and almost equal in circumference to the skull. Topline: Straight and level between withers and loin. Body: Compact. Chest wide and deep, with ribs well sprung and well set down between the forelegs. Back: short, giving the impression of a well-balanced dog. Loin: wide, muscular and slightly arched, with fair depth of flank. Tail: set on high, strong at the root and tapering to the hocks. It may be straight or curved, but never carried hound fashion. Forequarters: shoulders muscular but not loaded, and slightly sloping. Forelegs straight, well boned and set well apart; elbows turned neither in nor out. Pasterns straight, feet of medium size, with round toes well arched. Pads thick and tough, nails black. Hindquarters: broad and muscular and well-developed second thigh denoting power, but not cumbersome. Moderate angulation at hocks. Cowhocks and splay feet are serious faults.*

Coat - *Short and dense, giving good weather protection. Color: red, fawn or brindle. Except for a very small white spot on the chest, white marking is considered a fault.*

Gait - *Free, smooth, and powerful. When viewed from the side, reach and drive indicate maximum use of the dog's moderate angulation. Back remains level and firm. Coming and going, the dog moves in a straight line. Feet tend to converge under the body, without crossing over, as speed increases. There is no twisting in or out at the joints.*

Temperament - *Fearless and confident yet docile. The dog combines the reliability, intelligence, and willingness to please required in a dependable family companion and protector.*



Table of Contents

- *Introduction*
- *Bullmastiff Standard*
- *Bullmastiff History*
- *Early Bullmastiffs*
- *Order of Priority*
- *General Appearance*
- *Size, Proportion, Substance*
- *Bullmastiff Ideal Male*
- *Bullmastiff Typical Female*
 - *Head*
 - *Neck, Topline, Body*
 - *Coat*
 - *Color*
 - *Gait*
 - *Temperament*
 - *Serious Faults*
 - *Summary*
- *Maturity in a Bullmastiff – Body*
- *Maturity in a Bullmastiff – Head*
- *Bullmastiff / Mastiff Comparison*
 - *Recommended Reading*
 - *Photos*



Bullmastiff History

In the early 19th century, English gamekeepers created this noble breed by crossing the courageous Mastiff with the tenacious Bulldog to create fleet-footed, powerful dogs for protection against poachers. Originally called the "Gamekeepers Night Dog," these dogs combined tremendous strength and guarding instinct within affectionate disposition and devotion to their master. Originally 60% Mastiff and 40% Bulldog, the Bullmastiff was recognized in England in 1924, and by the American Kennel Club in 1933.

The Bullmastiff is an intelligent dog and has a definite mind of his own. His independence of spirit makes a relationship with him more of a working partnership than the conventional dog/master association which some people might expect.

A Bullmastiff will give a family boundless love and devotion, but will retain a part of himself as a free spirit, capable of making his own decisions and acting on them. Children will be his charges to protect and to love, but they must respect him and not be allowed to tease him.

He asks only to be as much of the family as possible. He will reward such treatment with devotion and friendship which is not exceeded in any breed.





Bullmastiff History




This child was a gamekeeper's daughter and the two dogs probably Bullmastiffs of the pre-recognition era.



A gamekeeper posing for a studio portrait with his night-dog and gun dog.

Bullmastiff Video



THE BULLMASTIFF
-the present of the past-

A 2006 production by Librrani

*The movie has been made with the costumes,
weapons etc. we had at our disposal.*



Early Bullmastiffs

Eng. Ch. Tiger Prince

Winner of the first challenge certificate offered to the breed at Crufts in 1928.



Eng. Ch. Roger of the Fenns

(Nov 1929 – Aug 1937)

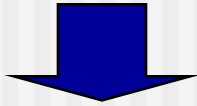
There is no Bullmastiff in the world today which does not have Ch. Roger of the Fenns as an ancestor. It is also highly probable that this same dog features in post-war Mastiff pedigrees.



Early Bullmastiffs

Ch. Twit-Lee Rajah

Bred by R. Lee Twitty and owned by Walter and Anita Weinstein, from 1953 to 1958, Rajah won 36 best of breeds out of 37 breeds entered. He won Westminster five straight years in a row and won his first group placement at Westminster in 1955.



Am. Can. Bermuda Ch. Ritter's Beau

Winner of the ABA National specialty in 1963 with a record entry of 51, Beau was one of the finest examples of the breed. He was bred by Ted Ritter and owned by Mr. and Mrs. Monge.



Early Bullmastiffs

Ch. Chit's Grandson

AKC's first Bullmastiff Best in Show was on April 27, 1974. Sonny was top Bullmastiff all systems in 1973 and 1974, owner handled.



Ch. Tauralan Vic Torious ROM

(1976–1986)

Vic had the distinct honor of all time top-producing sire from 1985 to 1992 until the title was taken over by his offspring.



Early Bullmastiffs

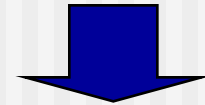


Ch. Trojan's Dusty Warrior

AKC's first and only brindle BIS Bullmastiff ,
Dusty was the top-winning brindle in the early
1980's.

Ch. Blackslate's Boston Brahmin GROM

A multiple Best in Show winner and all-time top-producing sire in the late 80's, Brahmin was a major type influence in his hey-day.

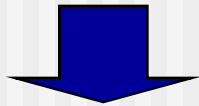




Early Bullmastiffs

Ch. Ladybug Lady Caitlin TD

Top-winning Bullmastiff bitch in the history of the breed with 7 BIS, two National Specialty wins and Best of Breed at the Garden, owner-handled.. Caitlin was shown only 124 times with 96 breed wins and was fourth of the breed to earn a tracking dog title.



Ch. Bandog's Crowdaddy Gumbo GROM

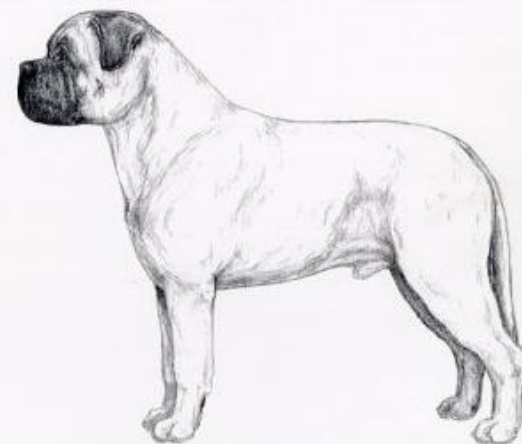
(1981 - 1993)

Top-winning Bullmastiff in the history of the breed with 37 all breed BIS, 11 specialty wins, including four National Specialty wins, last time as a veteran. "Waldo" was #1 Bullmastiff in 1984-1986 and #2 dog all breeds in 1985.



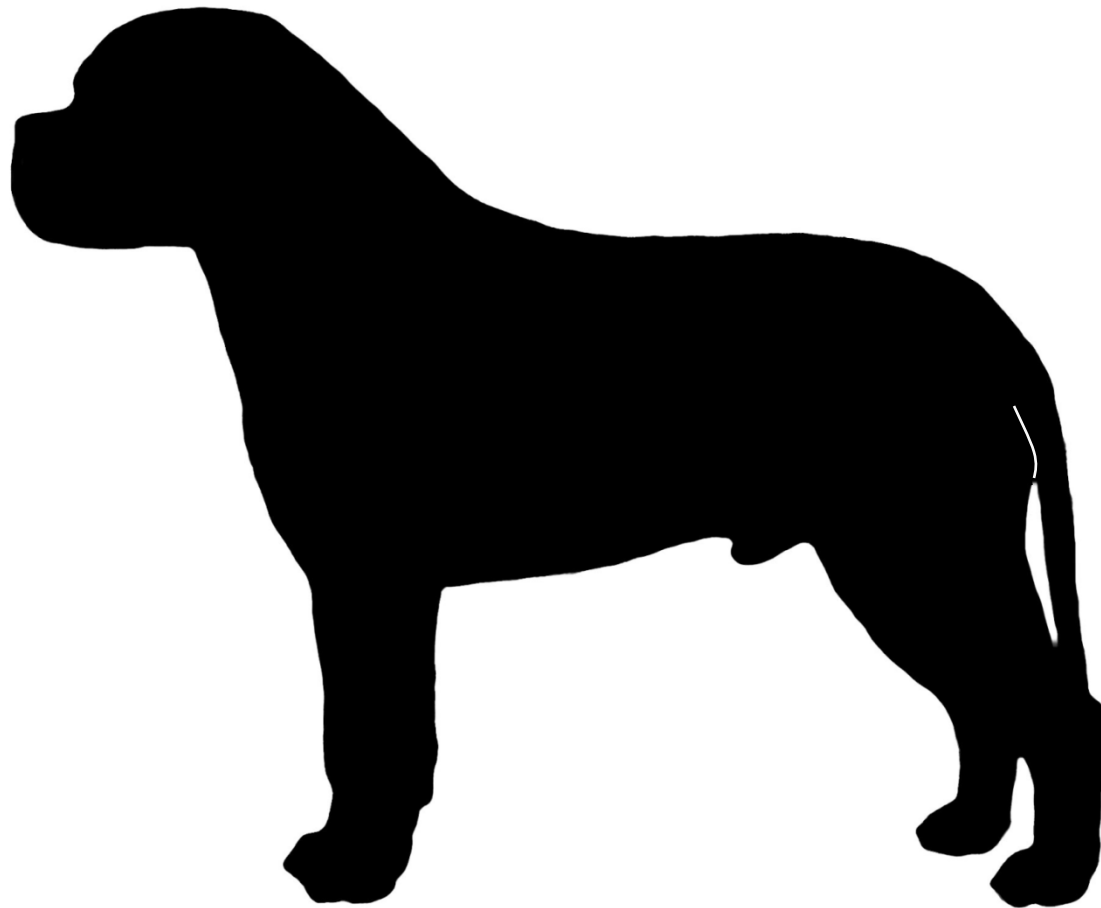
Order of Priority

- *Outline – It has to look like a Bullmastiff ... Nearly Square*
- *Head – Cube on a Cube*
- *Movement – Keep the Soundest Movers*
- *Temperament and Health*



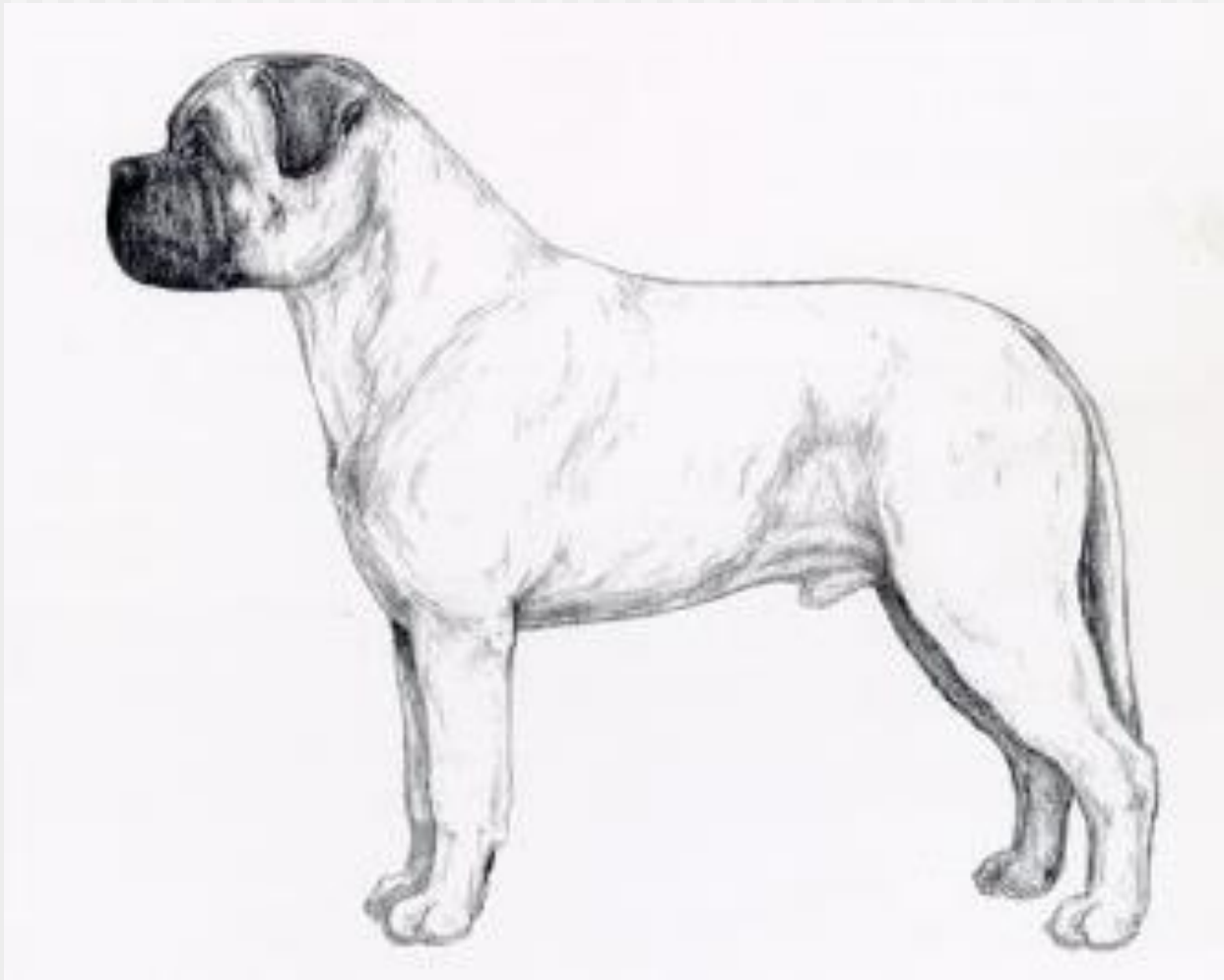


Silhouette





Silhouette



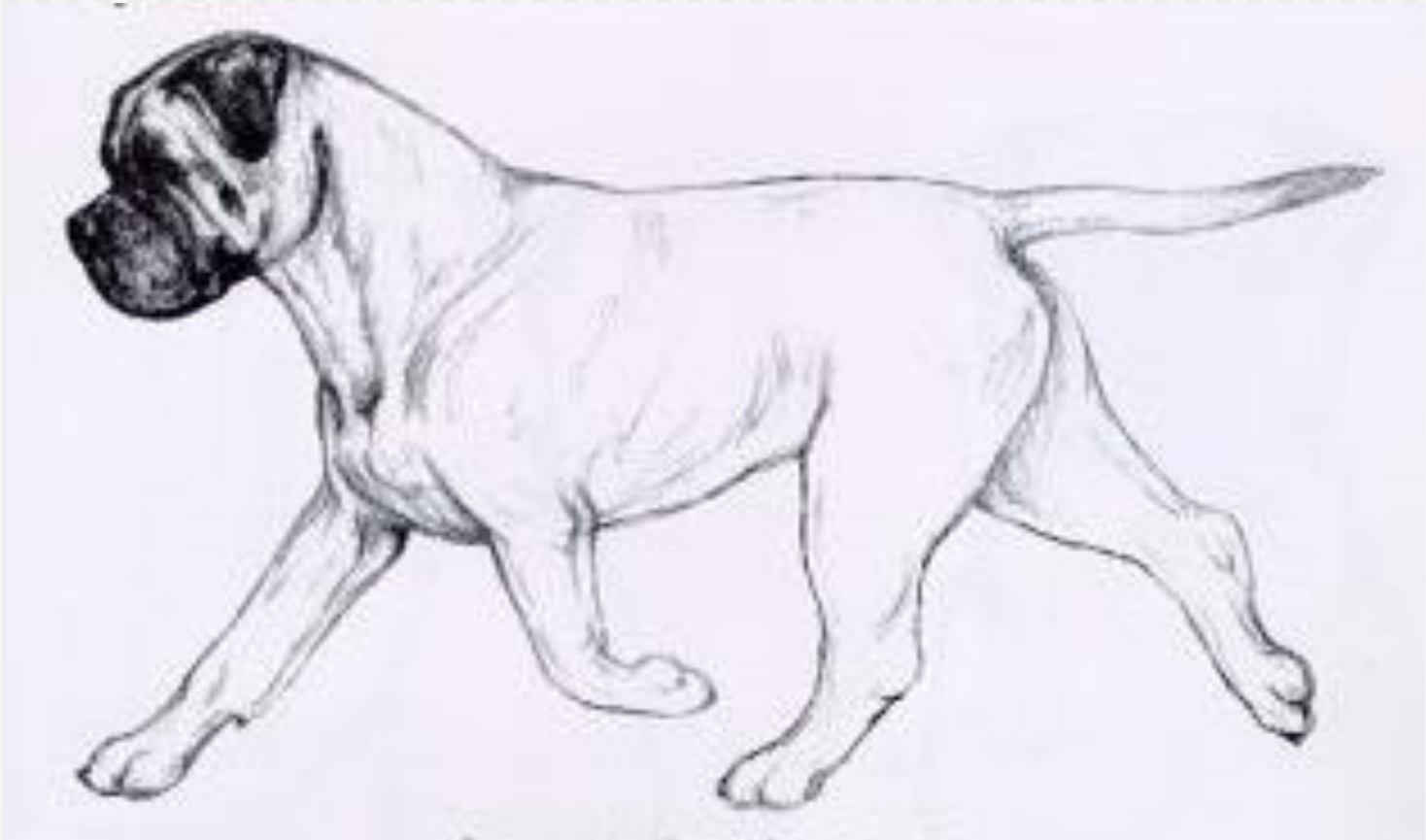


Head





Keep the Soundest Movers





General Appearance

- *Nearly square*
- *Showing great strength*
- *Powerfully built*
- *Active*
- *Athletic*





Size, Proportion & Substance

- *Dogs 25 to 27 inches
(110-130 lbs)*
- *Bitches 24 to 26 inches
(100-120 lbs)*
- *All things being equal,
the more substantial dog
within these limits is
favored.*
- *This does not mean
“bigger is better.”*





Bullmastiff Ideal Male

- *Nearly square appearance*
- *Should have equal depth of body to length of leg*
- *Powerfully built*
- *Showing great strength*
- *A “Look of Eagles”*







Bullmastiff Typical Female

- *The bitch should have equal qualities, but an allowance shall be made for the femininity that is characteristic of the bitch*
- *Substantial yet feminine*
- *Should be powerfully built*
- *Compact with equal depth of body to length of leg*







Bullmastiff Typical Female

In comparison of specimens of different sex, due consideration should be made not to favor males, as females do not bear the characteristics of the breed to the same degree of perfection and overall impression as do the males.

If we adhere to form following function, a petite bitch could not knock a man down and hold him. Bitches should proportionately have good bone and substance as their male counterparts (bitches 24-26", 100-120 pounds). They should also be compact, nearly square. Don't forgive a long-backed bitch.

Although there may be a place in a breeding program for a sound, typey small bitch, a truly petite bitch should not be rewarded in the show ring. "Other things being equal, the more substantial dog within these limits is favored." The reason for this statement should be clear -- a more substantial dog is better equipped to knock down and hold the poacher.



From the Bullmastiff Illustrated Standard



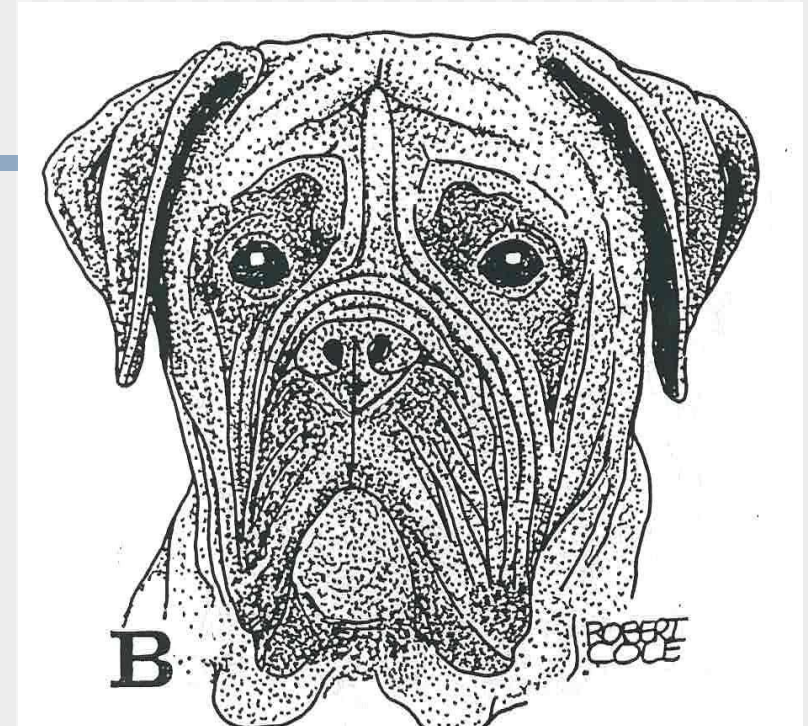
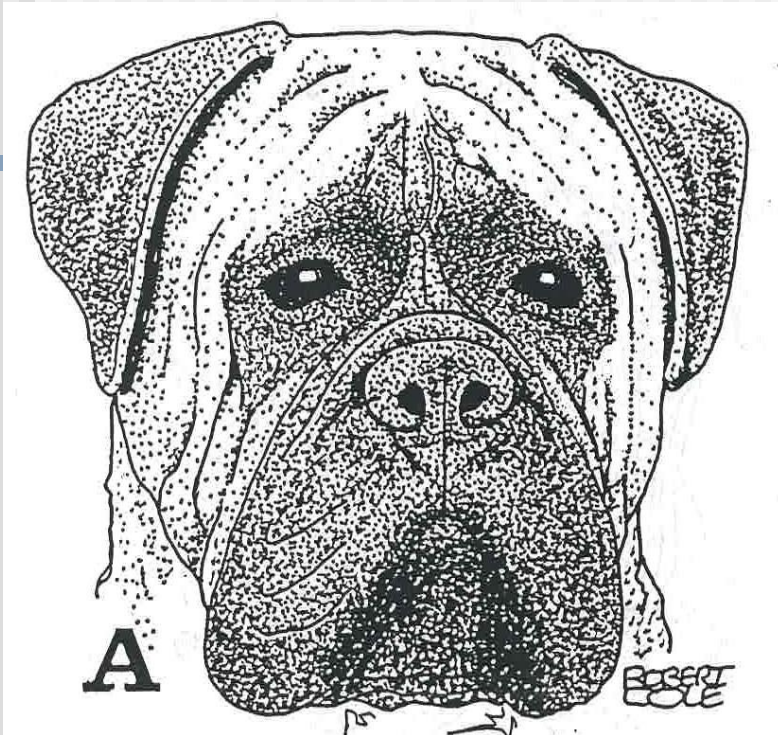
Ideal dog head



Ideal bitch head

The head of the Bullmastiff is the hallmark of the breed. Good head type is essential, not only for correct appearance, but when the headpiece is properly constructed it is entirely functional.

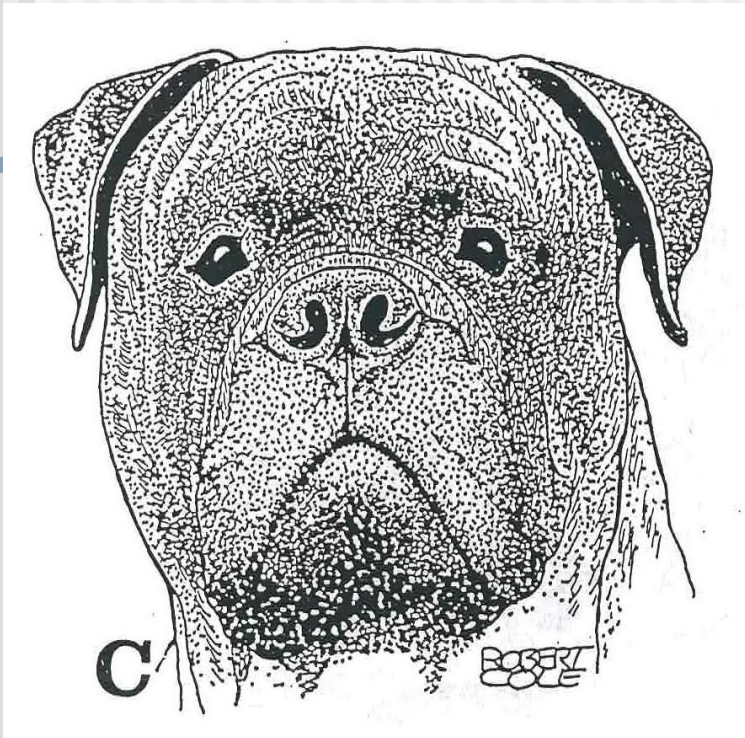
Head



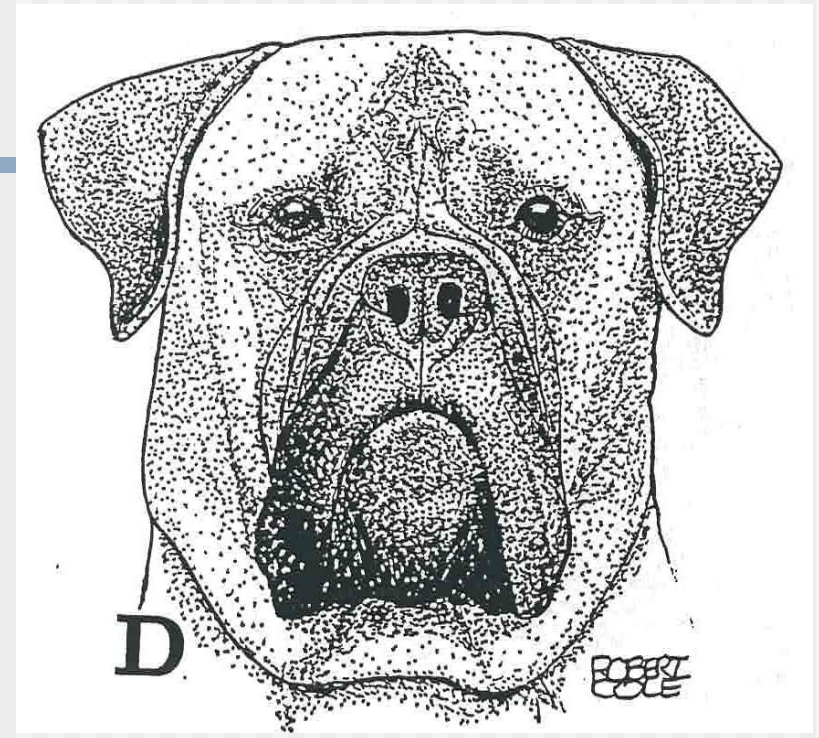
- *Overall good head*
- *Ears too large*
- *Cheeks should be better developed; more fill under eyes*
- *Eyes should be further apart and eyes rims tightened*
- *Loose cheeks*
- *Muzzle and underjaw should be broader*

- *Weak head*
- *Eyes too round*
- *Ears too large*
- *Flews too pendulous*
- *Too much skin on neck*
- *Very narrow underjaw*
- *Narrow, caved-in muzzle*

Head

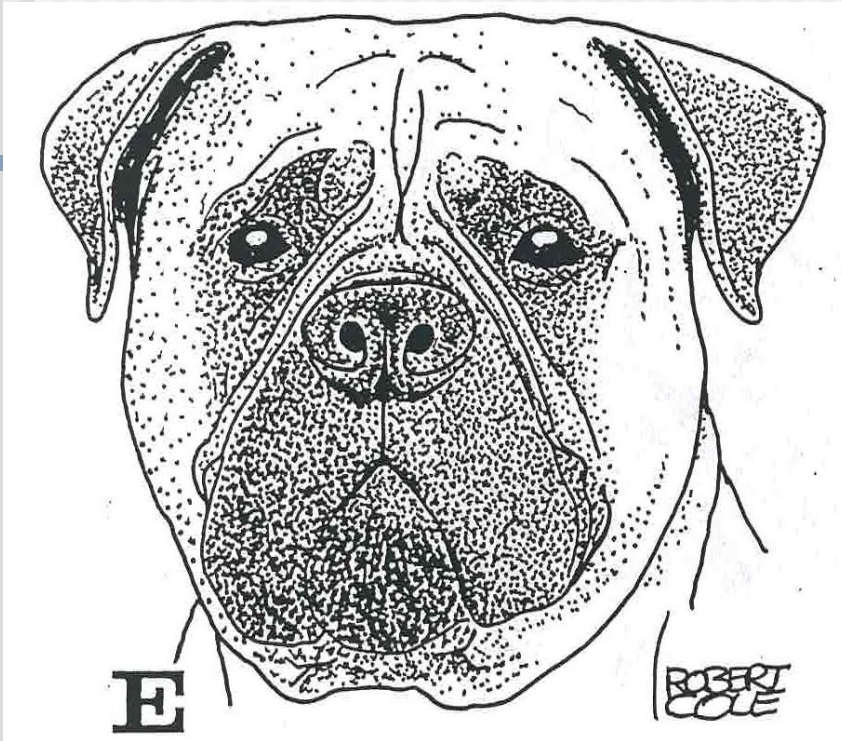


- *Overall good head*
- *Skull should be squarer (not round)*
- *Eye rims should be tightened*
- *Eyes should be less round*



- *Weak head*
- *Narrow muzzle*
- *Narrow underjaw*
- *Neck too loose*

Head

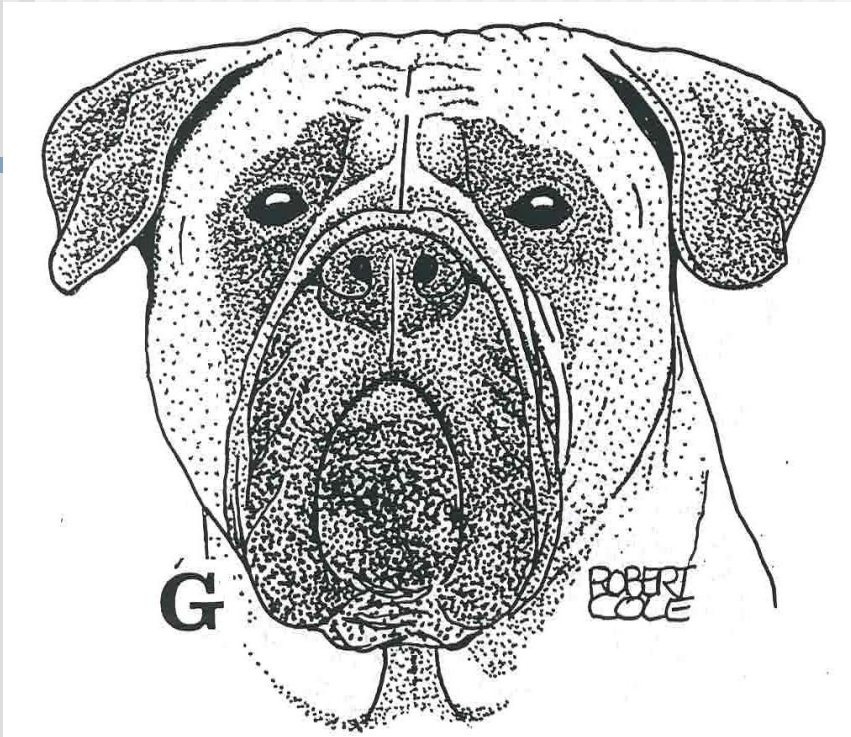


- *Poor head*
- *Piggish appearance (round head and nose)*
- *Needs a broader underjaw*
- *Too much skin on neck*



- *Good head*
- *Too much wrinkle on cheeks*
- *Too much flews and skin on neck*

Head



- *Weak head*
- *Incorrect ear shape and set*
- *Narrow muzzle*
- *Nostrils too small*
- *Too much flew*
- *Narrow, upturned underjaw*



- *Cheeks lack fill*
- *Flews too pendulous*
- *Muzzle too short*



Examples of Bite



Level mouth



Slightly Undershot



Wry mouth



Head

- *Cube-on-cube*
- *Forehead flat*
- *Cheeks well developed*
- *Fair amount of wrinkle when alert*
- *V-shaped ears, lying close to the skull*
- *Bite level or slightly undershot*
- *Eyes dark and medium in size*
- *They should not resemble Boxers, Am Staffs, Shar Pei, Bulldogs, Rhodesian Ridgebacks or Mastiffs.*





Ideal Male Head





Ideal Female Head





Head

- *Well-developed cheeks*
- *Moderate stop, forehead flat*
- *Flews not too pendulous*
- *Reversion to Bulldog very undesirable*
- *Nose black with large, open nostrils*
- *Head: 1 as to 3 proportion*
- *Unnecessary to count teeth*





Examples of Typical Male Heads





Examples of Typical Female Heads



Maturity in a Bullmastiff - Head





Maturity in a Male



3 months



14 months



9 months



2 years



Neck, Topline, Body

- *Back short, topline straight & level between withers and loin*
- *Body compact*
- *When viewed from top, width at shoulder and rear should essentially be equal*
- *Well balanced – front matching rear in bone and substance*
- *High tail set, but never carried over the back*
- *Ribs well sprung*





Neck, Topline, Body

- *Muscular but clean*
- *Round, well-arched toes*
- *Straight pasterns*
- *Muscular hindquarters, well-developed second thigh*
- *Short hock*
- *Moderate angulation*
- *Short leg / long back is incorrect*





Neck, Topline, Body





Neck, Topline, Body

- *Neck slightly arched, almost equal in circumference to skull*
- *Well balanced*
- *Shoulders muscular but not loaded*
- *Straight, stuffy shoulders faulted*
- *Good bone*
- *Well-developed second thigh*
- *Forelegs straight*
- *Topline straight and level between withers and loin*



Fronts / Pro sternum / Shoulders



The Bullmastiff is wide across the shoulder area but with no exaggerated bulk. He must never appear loaded or bulgy but should have large well defined muscles that are also smooth and powerful both to the touch and sight. The front legs are straight with round and heavy bone right to the feet. The chest is to be well down between the forelegs. There should be no indication of a gothic or ill defined forechest. A big broad front with plenty of depth between the forelegs is essential. The chest should fill between the forelegs when viewed from the front and the chest should not have a gothic appearance between the front legs. The scapula should measure an angle of 45 degrees. The humerus or upper arm forms a right angle with the scapula. This is the point of the shoulder. The scapula and upper arm (humerus) should be of equal length. The foreleg (radius and ulna) from ground to point of elbow should measure about 52% of the height with the rest (about 48%) being from the elbow to the withers. In other words the Bullmastiff is not a short legged dog but rather has just a slight bit more leg under him. The shoulders and upper arms are heavily muscled and powerful looking but should never have a loaded appearance. The bone of the forelegs is round and heavy, the forelegs are set well apart and the elbows are tucked in close to the chest wall. The standard calls for straight pasterns. I prefer a bit of give with a slight slope as in most working dogs.



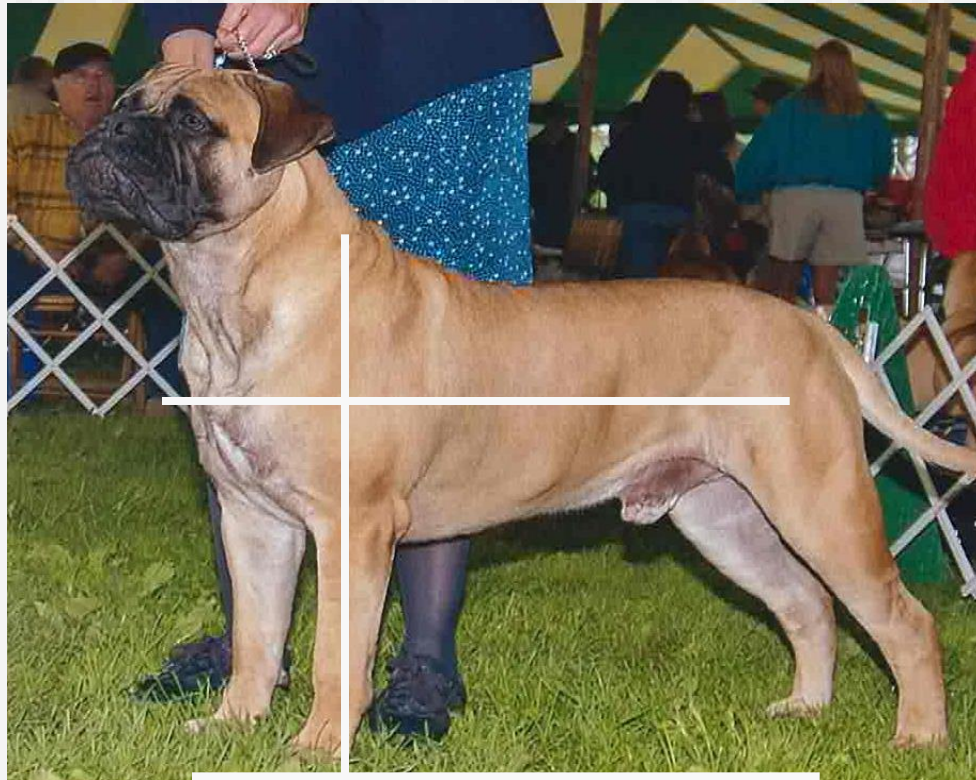
Neck, Topline, Body



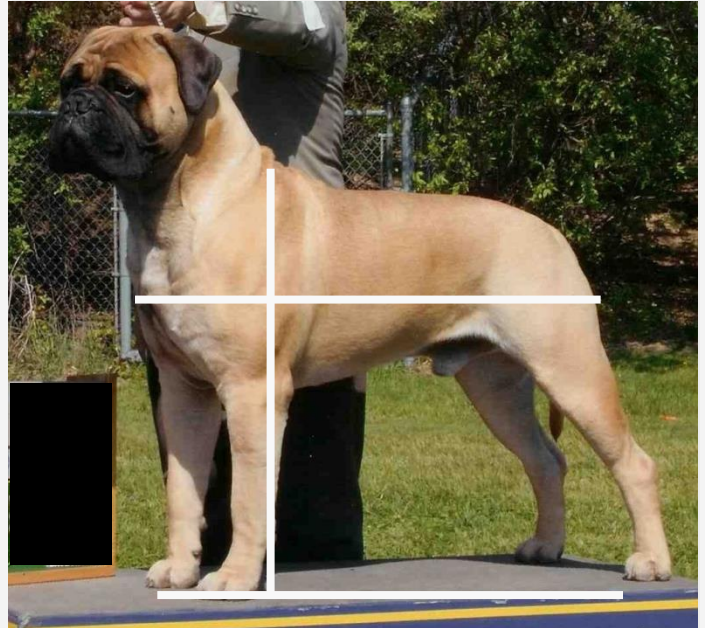
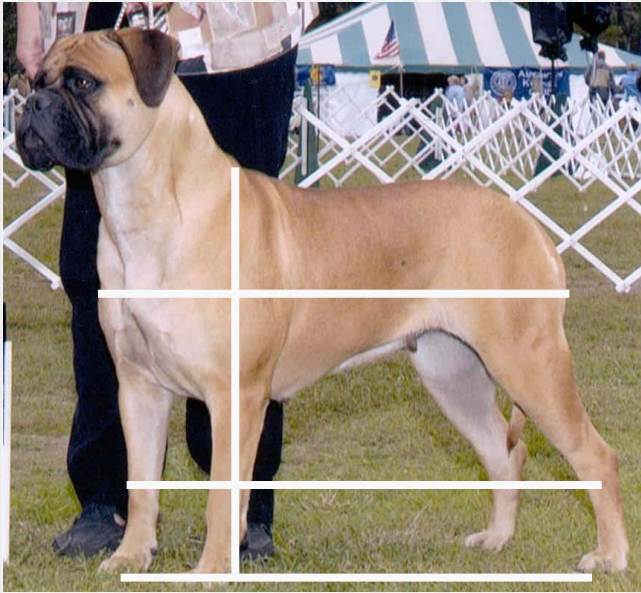
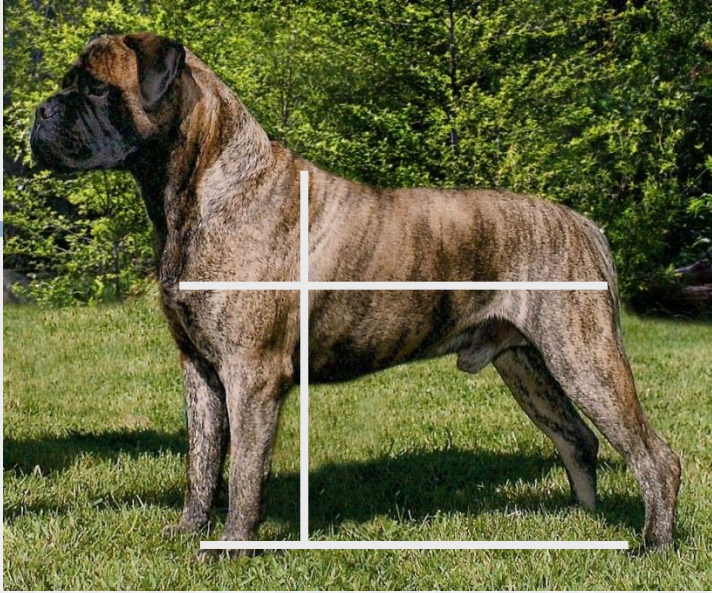


Neck, Topline, Body

Length of back. "Body--compact. Back – short."



This is incorrect!





Maturity in a Male



6 months



13 months



2 years



3 1/2 years



Maturity in a Male



8 weeks

5 months



3-1/2 years



Maturity in a Female Bullmastiff - Body





Coat



Red



Fawn



Brindle

- *Small white patch on chest allowed*
- *Excessive white undesirable*
- *Short, dense, flat-laying top coat with undercoat for weather protection*
- *Dark muzzle preferred, blacker the better*
- *Ears darker than body color*



Coat



Red



Fawn



Brindle

- *Red color ranges from honey to dark mahogany*
- *Small white patch on chest acceptable, white anywhere else on body very undesirable (throat, feet, underbelly, hindquarters)*
- *Preferred healthy coat, free from allergies*
- *There is no color preference*



Coat





Judging the Brindle Bullmastiff



It is the brindle gene that is considered to be the key to the coloring of the Bullmastiff. We must bear in mind that the original Gamekeeper's Night Dog was appropriately brindle and therefore assume that brindle was the original color of choice for obvious reasons. Brindle dogs could blend well with the vegetation, with the dark muzzle and ears further providing camouflage even when its head was lifted up to sense, smell or sight the poacher.

There is much diversity in patterning to the brindle Bullmastiff, with no preference, allowing for correct clear coat and proper masking and ear color. Ideally coat color should be clear with even distribution of color, with desirable dark mask and ears. Any pattern of brindle can produce all colors, ie fawn, red, red fawn, lightest to darkest of brindles. There should be no preference regarding color of the Bullmastiff .

There are however certain prejudices toward the brindle Bullmastiff, since the pattern can cause optical illusions in wrinkle pattern in the head and structure in the body. There must be particular attention paid to these illusions to provide unbiased and adequate attention to the brindle Bullmastiff.



Mask / Pigment

- The only mention of color in mask/pigment from the AKC Standard is “ears darker in color than the body,” “a dark muzzle is preferable” and “nose black.”*
- There is actually no mention of “mask” in our standard. What mask, however, would imply technically would be the “spectacles” around the eyes, which should be dark/black. Mention of muzzle/mask is actually interchanged to describe the pigment of the head.*
- When evaluating the head and expression of the Bullmastiff, one must consider pigment and masking. The AKC standard asks for a “dark muzzle” and a variable degree of pigment can be seen on the Bullmastiffs of today. Masking and pigment are desired to complete the expression of the Bullmastiff and a completely black mask extending up to the eyes or ears is not any more desirable than a dark mask that covers the muzzle and eye rims. Because dark pigment is so important to maintain Bullmastiff expression, a gray, liver or diluted mask, otherwise known as Dudley pigment (part of an undesirable mutation), should never be rewarded in the ring or used for breeding.*
- Be wary of how pigment can change the overall look of the head and rely on manual exam to conclude on correct structure not visual. And that while a full black mask may be striking, there will always be a natural blend between body color and the mask/muzzle and start of the ear color. Be suspect of masks that appear dyed or artificial.*

Examples of Acceptable Masking



- There is always a natural blending of coat color and pigment color in the head. Young dogs carry more pigment and as the dog matures, the mask lessens as the head grows. Be suspect of masks that appear dyed or artificial or have a “dunked in a bucket of black paint” look. Masking is obviously an inheritable trait and as breeding stock the color of the mask should not be artificially enhanced as it is against AKC rules and obviously would not produce the mask that is enhanced.*

AKC Rule

- Please be aware there has been an increase in the use of artificial means to darken or enhance the mask and muzzle of the Bullmastiff. Judges should be aware of this disturbing and unnecessary practice and should not reward dogs that have been artificially enhanced as a Bullmastiff should always be shown in their natural state. While a beautiful black mask on a clear coat can be initially impressive, over pigmentation, or lack of pigment can change the appearance of the head on first impression and visual exam.*
- From AKC Rules: A change of appearance is if the dog has been subjected to any type of procedure that has the effect of obscuring, disguising or eliminating any congenital or hereditary abnormality or any undesirable characteristic, or anything that improves a dog's natural appearance, temperament, bite or gait. The procedure is the same as with the DQ for attack. The superintendent and AKC Field Representative should be called to the ring and the judge must complete the "DQ for Change of Appearance" form and clearly explain to the exhibitor that their entry has been disqualified and that it cannot compete at any future AKC event until the dog has been reinstated BEFORE the dog leaves the ring.*



Gait

- *Reach and drive indicate maximum use of the dog's moderate angulation with balanced front to back angulation.*
- *Equal emphasis on correct side, down and back movement*
- *They are not herding dogs, and should not be flying around the ring – slow them down on the go-around!*
- *With short back and moderate angles, the gait is powerful and efficient*
- *It is difficult to breed a balanced dog that is short backed. Many breeders compensate by producing dogs that are long in body. These long-backed dogs may appear to move well, but it is at the expense of proper breed type. Judges should not reward nor should breeders condone a long-backed dog just because it moves well.*
- *Showmanship should not override breed correctness*



Gait



- *Equal lift and propulsion through the shoulders gives a full and complete stride. At a brisk trot this same push and reach is repeated quickly enabling the dog to cover the most amount of ground, in the fewest number of strides, expending the least amount of energy, a true working dog trot.*



Gait

- *A true appraisal of gait is when the dog is moving at a working pace on a loose lead. The dog should move freely and with confidence. When moving, the tail should show confidence but not curled or carried over the back. Movement should demonstrate mental, muscular and skeletal coordination with balance and structural integrity. The efficient Bullmastiff will cover maximum ground with fewer, effortless strides.*



- *Correct movement from front and rear*



Temperament

- *Confident*
- *Fearless*
- *Docile*
- *Reliable*
- *Willing to please*
- *Stubborn*
- *Protective*





Temperament

There should be no allowances made for unprovoked aggression by this breed. There is no place for an unreliable or dangerous dog. This behavior is not acceptable at any time. Timid behavior should be penalized, giving some leeway for very young pups new to a show ring. The Bullmastiff should have an interested, open, alert and accepting attitude, necessary to the reliability required of the breed.



Temperament

- *Loyal*
- *Dedicated*
- *Affectionate*
- *Tactile*





Temperament

- *Examining a Bullmastiff should not be unlike any working breed*
- *Approach confidently*
- *Respect his space*
- *Don't count teeth*
- *Don't tolerate dog aggression in your ring – move an aggressive dog to the back of the line or excuse*
- *Do not tolerate inappropriate barking in the ring as it tends to agitate the other exhibits*
- *Do not sneak up behind or startle a Bullmastiff*
- *Do not slap a Bullmastiff in fun*
- *Do not grab the dog by the face and talk “cutesy”*
- *Do not stare a Bullmastiff in the eye*
- *Don't reward a dog with its tail between its legs*
- *But don't be surprised if you get a “schlurp” hello!*





Temperament

- *A Bullmastiff with its tail between its legs is afraid, whether or not temporary, it should not be rewarded in the show ring on that day.*
- *Please do not confuse a gay tail with attitude. “Set on high. It may be straight or curved, but never carried hound fashion.” A tail carried over the back is incorrect.*
- *“Gentle Giant” is a misnomer. The Bullmastiff is a guard dog. It will tolerate a lot, but only up to a point. A Bullmastiff must always be treated with respect.*



Serious Faults

- *Cow-hocks*
- *Splayed feet*
- *Lack of foreface (reversion to Bulldog)*
- *Lacking bone, substance, rib spring*
- *Wry bite / grossly undershot bite / overshot bite*
- *Obvious structural faults common to all breeds are as undesirable in the Bullmastiff as in any other breed, even though they are not specifically mentioned in the standard.*
- *Any imbalance in the specimen, whether it is over-angulation, short legs, fine bone, long back, wasted hindquarters, narrow front assembly, lack of rib spring, a dog too big or too small, a dog with no neck or a neck too weedy, would negate the concept of the well-balanced dog.*
- *The tail should never be carried hound fashion*
- *The tail should never be between the back legs*
- *Do not reward a shy dog. A dog shall be judged fundamentally shy if, refusing to stand for examination, it shrinks away from the judge, if it fears an approach from the rear; if it shies at sudden and unusual noises to a marked degree.*



Summary

- *Remember it is the whole dog that counts, and we should be striving for head type plus soundness, substance plus quality*
- *Substance over superficiality.*
- *By definition, a Bullmastiff can't be typey if he can't move soundly. He would have been of no use to a gamekeeper patrolling on foot on a large estate.*
- *Also, a Bullmastiff can't be typey if he is scared, shy, timid or not sound of mind.*
- *Nor can he be typey if he has trouble breathing freely through restricted nostrils, suffers from inverted eyelids or weak structure.*
- *He can't be typey if he's long-backed.*
- *Showmanship should not override breed correctness.*



Summary

Any deviation from this ideal should be penalized to the extent of the deviation.

Deviations that impact performance and function
should be considered more serious than those
that affect only appearance.



Bullmastiff / Mastiff Comparison



Mastiffs are:

- *A much bigger dog, Mastiff standard calls for massive head and body. A Bullmastiff should not be 160 pounds!!!*
- *Longer in body – Mastiffs are rectangular, Bullmastiffs are nearly square*
- *The antithesis of a compact bodied-Bullmastiff*
- *Mastiff standard calls for preferred scissors bite, Bullmastiff level or slightly undershot*
- *Proportion and size is what defines the major difference in the breeds*



Recommended Bullmastiff Specific Reading

- *The Bullmastiff - Peerless Protector, Jack Shastid & Geraldine Roach c. 1999*
- *The Bullmastiff Manual, Bill Walkey c.1999 2nd edition*
- *The Bullmastiff, L.B.Hubbard c. 1986*
- *The Bullmastiff Fancier's Manual, Bill Walkey c. 1992*
- *Everyone's Guide to the Bullmastiff, Carol Beans c. 1997*
- *Bullmastiffs Today, Lyn Pratt c. 1996*
- *The Bullmastiff - A Breeder's Guide, Vol. I David Hancock c. 1996*
- *The Mastiff and Bullmastiff Handbook, Douglas Oliff c. 1988*
- *Raising a Bullmastiff Puppy, Mona Lindau-Webb c. 1997 (Available from Ms. Webb at tikiwiki@mindspring.com)*
- *The Millenium Book of Bullmastiff Champions, Published in England c. 1999*



Recommended Reading

- *Canine Terminology (Spira)*
- *The Dog in Action (McDowell)*
- *Dog Steps (Elliot)*
- *Born to Win (Trotter)*
- *Tricks of the Trade (Hastings)*
- *The Winning Edge (Alston)*
- *New Secrets of Successful Show Dog Handling (Green)*
- *The Joy of Breeding Your Own Show Dog (Serance, Sammet, Gasow, Morden)*
- *Solving the Mysteries of Breed Type (Beauchamp)*
- *Breeding Better Dogs (Battaglia)*
- *K-9 Structure and Terminology (Gilbert)*



Therapy Dog





Agility Dog







Bullmastiff Puppies



Brindle, Red and Fawn Bitches





Juniors Dog





The End

