

IF I WERE A JUDGE

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It is one thing to be familiar with the standard for any particular breed and another thing to put it into practice and interpret it correctly in the ring. The following remarks should be of some value as they show what steps the writer would take while judging a dog to arrive at his decision. His twelve cardinal points, listed in order of their importance to the writer, are given below:

IN JUDGING A SAINT BERNARD DOG I would look him over in this manner:

1. Soundness in body and limbs would be the primary consideration. In general, the Saint Bernard should present a tall, powerful and erect appearance. Every part of him should be strong, powerful and muscular. His head should be powerful and large, well balanced, and he should have an intelligent and a good natured expression. He must show himself to be a sound and healthy dog before I would consider his other points according to his respective standard.
2. Next I would look at his head. This ought to be imposing. The skull should be massive and wide. The head should be somewhat arched with the occiput only slightly developed. There should be no tendency to what is known as APPLEHEADEDNESS. The supra-orbital ridge (upper ridge of the eye) should be very strongly developed and should form almost a right angle with the horizontal axis of the head. There should be a well defined furrow over the whole skull. It should be very deep just between the supra-orbital arches and the forehead and then gradually become shallow at the base of the occiput. The forehead should be formed into wrinkles that converge toward the furrow. This wrinkling of the skin on the forehead should be decidedly visible when the dog is at attention or in action. In well marked dogs the furrow is pure white and presents an even appearance. There should be a clear and well-defined stop from the skull to the muzzle. This slope should be steep and sudden.
3. I would next examine the muzzle. This ought to be short and must never be snipy. It should be deep and show its depth. A convenient method of measuring the depth of the muzzle, I find, is to say that the depth of the muzzle should always be slightly greater than the length of the muzzle. This makes the depth very apparent and adds to the striking appearance of the head. The bridge of the muzzle should be straight, never arched. Here again a shallow but well defined furrow should run over the bridge from the stop to the nose. The flews of the upper jaw should be rather strongly developed, turn into a graceful curve into the lower edge and always be overhanging. The flews of the lower jaw should never be pendant. The teeth should be in good, sound condition and should measure up to the conformation of the head. The mouth should close so that the dog has an even bite. The mouth should not be either over or under shot.

4. The nose, like the head, should be very broad and strong looking. The nostrils should be well-dilated and should add to the prominence of the nose. Without any exception the nose and the lips should be black. The lips should not have any brown or white marks on them.

5. The ears should be of moderate size, set on reasonably high. The ears should stand slightly outward at the base and lie closely to the head, always flat and definitely without fold. The ears should give the skull a square and broad appearance, and, in order to do this, they must have a strongly developed base. The hair on the ears of both the smooth and rough coated dogs are of a much finer texture, and, unlike the rest of the hair on the dog, it is short, never rolled, curly or shaggy.

6. From the ears I would then pass to the eyes. The eyes should always be dark brown or black in color, set moderately deep, and in front of the head. The lower eyelids should not fit closely to the eyeballs but should form a V wrinkle in the center or toward the inner corner, never toward the outer corner of the eye. Lower eyelids that hang away from the eyeballs and show a thick, red raw are very objectionable.

7. The neck, shoulders and chest must be in good keeping with the general conformation of the dog's body and should be strong and muscular. In action the neck should be carried erect; at other times, slightly downward. Clearly noticeable dewlaps on the neck should be given careful consideration. The chest should be very broad and powerful looking in the front with a spread in keeping with the body.

8. The back must be very broad and should slope slightly from the haunches to the rump. A good spring of the ribs, in proportion to the size of the back is desirable. A swayback or a disproportionately long back is decidedly objectionable. The dog should stand well up in front, he should have a definite slope from the shoulder to rump. The topline showing the dog higher at the shoulder than at the rump. The hind-quarters should be well developed with an especial muscular development in the thighs.

9. The tail should be long, broad, heavy and end in a blunt tip. In action the dog should carry the tail more or less upward, but it should never be carried rolled over the back. When the dog is not in action but at ease, the tail should hang straight downward turning gently upward or to the side in the lower part.

10. The forearms and the forelegs should be straight with the forearms being extraordinarily muscular.

11. The hindlegs should be those of a working dog. They should be bent at the hocks and allow the feet to turn slightly outward. This must not be understood to mean that the dog should be COWHOCKED. The feet, both in front and hind, should be broad with strong toes well closed up with high knuckles. The so called WOLFSKLAUEN (dewclaws) which sometimes appear in the hind legs are of no use to the dog and in some cases hinder his movement. In my opinion, they should be removed when the pup is four or five days of age, although according to the standard, no consideration of these should be made in judging; unless the dewclaws hinder the dog's gait or movement. The movement or gait, of the Saint Bernard should be a free and easy movement suggesting endurance. His forelegs should swing straight forward from the shoulders, throwing the foot well forward in an easy and free manner, not a paddle or with a choppy or terrier stride. In the rear his hocks should drive well under his body following on a line with the forelegs.

12. Now for the coat. This should be long or short, according to whether the dog is rough or smooth coated. In the smooth coated dog, it should be very dense, broken haired, lying smooth, and tough but without being rough. The rough coated dog should have moderately long flat hair, and it must never be rolled, curly or shaggy. The hair should be longer on the neck, producing an effect which makes the dog appear more massive in front. The hair on the tail should be bushy but never rolled, parted or feathered. The hair on the rear of the thighs should be very bushy. The color should be red with white or white with red. By red is meant the color in all its various shades, including the light and dark brindle. The following white markings are absolutely necessary; blaze, chest, legs, white muzzle, and tip of tail. Black shadings on the face and ears give the dog a very attractive appearance and are highly desirable.