

THE ABC'S OF THE STANDARD

BY: ACEL BROWN

Many of us are not really sure exactly what the standard says about our noble Saints. We might have a general idea but are not certain about specific things. For example, we might not know that although the teeth should meet in either an even or a scissors bite, the standard says that a scissors bite is preferable.

For some time now I have wanted an alphabetical listing of the specific terms used in the standard, so that it would be easier to look up what the standard says on specific points. The following is sort of a concordance. Although an attempt has been made to include all the main terms, only those words which are part of the official language in the standard were included. Some of the everyday dog terms we all use, such as stop, stifle, or croup, which are not actual words used in the standard, were omitted; but in any case, every subject covered by the standard is covered in the concordance. No specific interpretation of the standard is intended, rather this is an alphabetical listing of everything the standard says about each subject with the words taken straight from the standard and put into the concordance.

The standard is broken into numbered sections. The numbers that follow each entry in the concordance identify which numbered sections in the standard the information came from. Examples: (1) Refers to item #1, (2\11) Refers to item #2 paragraph 11, and so on.

It is hoped that this reference work will be useful as we all try to become more knowledgeable about what the standard describes as the ideal Saint Bernard.

BACK

(8) Very broad, perfectly straight as far as the haunches, from there gently sloping to the rump, and merging imperceptibly into the root of the tail.

(20) A sway-back is considered as a fault. A disproportionately long back is considered as a fault.

BELLY

(11) Distinctly set off from the powerful loin section, only a little drawn up.

BITE

(2\11) The teeth should be sound and strong and should meet in either a scissors or an even bite: The scissors bite being preferable. The undershot bite although sometimes found with good specimens is not desirable. The overshot bite is a fault.

BLAZE

(18) The blaze is very desirable.

BURR

(See Ear)

CHEEK BONES

(2\1) Very strongly developed high cheek bones.

CHEST DEPTH

(8) Moderately deep, not reaching below the elbows.

CHEST WIDTH

(8) The chest is very well arched.

CHEST COLOR

(18) A white chest is necessary.

COAT COLOR

(18) All shades of red, brindle, or brown yellow with white markings. Never of one color or without white. Faulty are all other colors.

COAT DENSITY

(17) The coat is very dense.

COAT LENGTH

(17) The shorthair coat is shorthaired. The thighs are slightly bushy.

(B) The Longhair coat is of medium length. The thighs are very bushy.

COAT TEXTURE

(17) Lying smooth, tough, without however, feeling rough to the touch.

COAT WAVE

(B) Longhair: Plain to the wavy, never rolled or curly and not shaggy either. Usually, on the back, especially in the region of the haunches to the rump, the hair is more wavy.

(B) Shorthair: This condition is slightly indicated in shorthaired dogs.

COLOR

(See coat color)

DEW CLAWS

(15) Dew claws are not desired; if present they must not obstruct the gait.

(16) The so-called dew claws which sometimes occur on the inside of the hind legs are imperfectly developed toes. They are of no use to the dog and are not to be taken into consideration in judging. They may be removed by surgery.

DEWLAP

(6) The dewlap of throat and neck is well pronounced; too strong development, however, is not desirable.

EAR FLAP

(4) The flap is tender.

EAR SET

(4) The ears are rather high set, with very strongly developed burr at the base. They stand slightly away from the head at the base, then drop with a sharp bend to the side and cling to the head without a turn. The front edge lying firmly to the head whereas the back edge may stand somewhat away from the head, especially when the dog is at attention. Lightly set ears, which at the base immediately cling to the head, give it an oval and too little marked exterior, whereas a strongly developed base gives the skull a squarer, broader and much more impressive appearance.

EAR SHAPE

(4) A rounded triangle, slightly elongated toward the point.

EAR SIZE

(4) The ears are of medium size.

EXPRESSION

(1) Most intelligent expression. In dogs with a dark mask the expression appears more stern, but never ill-natured.

(5) Intelligent, friendly expression.

EYE COLOR

(5) The eyes are dark brown. Eyes that are too light, are objectionable.

EYE DEPTH

(5) The eyes are moderately deep.

EYE HAW

(5) The lower eyelids, as a rule, do not close completely and, if that is the case, form an angular wrinkle toward the inner corner of the eye. Eyelids which are too deeply pendant and show conspicuously the lachrymal glands, or a very red, thick haw are objectionable.

EYE POSITION

(5) The eyes are set more to the front than the sides.

EYE SIZE

(5) The eyes are of medium size.

FEET TIGHTNESS

(16) Strong toes, moderately closed.

FEET, HAIR

(20) Upward growing hair in spaces between the toes is considered a fault.

FEET, KNUCKLES

(16) Rather high knuckles.

FEET SIZE

(16) Broad.

FEET COLOR

(18) White feet are necessary.

FEMALES

(19) Female animals, thruout, are of a more delicate and finer build.

FIGURE

(1) Powerful, proportionately tall figure, strong and muscular in every part, with powerful head.

FLEWS, LOWER

(2\10) The flews of the lower jaw must not be deeply pendant.

FLEWS, UPPER

(2\9) The flews of the upper jaw are strongly developed, not sharply cut, but turning in a beautiful curve into the lower edge, and slightly overhanging.

FRONT LEGS

(See Legs)

FURROW

(2\3) Deeply imbedded between the eyes and starting at the root of the muzzle, a furrow runs over the whole skull. It is strongly marked in the first half, gradually disappearing toward the base of the occiput.

(2\8) A rather wide, well-marked, shallow furrow runs from the root of the muzzle over the entire bridge of the muzzle to the nose.

HAW

(See Eyes, Haw)

Head

(2\1) Like the whole body, very powerful and imposing.

HEIGHT

(1) Proportionately tall figure.

(19) The height at the shoulder of the dog ought to be 27.56 inches minimum, of the bitch, 25.59 inches.

HINDQUARTERS

(10) Well developed.

(20) Straight hindquarters are considered a fault.

HOCKS

(See Legs, hocks)

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LEGS, HOCK

- (15) Hocks of moderate angulation
- (29) Hocks too much bent are considered as a fault. Cowhocks are considered as a fault.

LEGS, MUSCLE

- (13) The forearm is very powerful and extraordinarily muscular.
- (10) The rear legs are very muscular.

LEGS, PASTERNS

- (20) Weak pasterns are considered as a fault.

LEGS, STRAIGHTNESS

- (14) The forelegs are straight and strong.
- (20) Out at elbows is considered as a fault. Cowhocks are considered as a fault.

LIPS

- (3) The lips are always black.

LOIN

- (11) A powerful loin section.

MARKINGS

- (18) Necessary markings are: White chest, feet and tip of tail, nose band, collar or spot on the nape; the latter and blaze are very desirable. Also favorite are dark shadings on the head (mask) and ears.

MASK

- (See Markings)

MOUTH

- (See Bite)

MUZZLE BRIDGE

- (2/7) The bridge of the muzzle is not arched, but straight; in some dogs occasionally, slightly broken.

MUZZLE DEPTH

- (2/6) The vertical depth at the root of the muzzle must be greater than the length of the muzzle.

MUZZLE LENGTH

- (2/6) The muzzle is short.

MUZZLE WIDTH

- (2/6) The muzzle does not taper.

NAPE

- (See Neck, Nape)

NECK CARRIAGE

- (6) The neck is set high, very strong and in action is carried erect, otherwise horizontally or slightly downward.

NECK IDENTIFICATION

(6) The junction of head and neck is distinctly marked by an indentation.

NECK-NAPE

(6) The nape is very muscular and round at the ideas which makes the neck appear rather short.

(18) A white collar or spot on the nape is necessary.

NOSE

(3) The nose is very substantial, broad, with wide open nostrils, and always black.

(18) A white nose band is necessary.

OCCIPUT

(2/1) The occiput is only moderately developed.

OVERSHOT BITE

(See bite)

PASTERNS

(See Legs, Pasterns)

REAR LEGS

(See Legs)

ROOF OF MOUTH

(2/12) A black roof of the mouth is desirable.

SHADINGS

(See Markings)

SHOULDERS

(7) The shoulders are sloping and broad, very muscular and powerful.

SKULL WIDTH

(2/1) The massive skull is wide.

SKULL SHAPE

(2/1) The skull is slightly arched and the sides slope in a gentle curve into the very strong developed, high cheek bone.

SUPRAORBITAL RIDGE

(2/2) The supra-orbital ridge is very strongly developed and forms nearly a right angle with the horizontal axis of the head.

(2/5) The slope from the skull to the muzzle is sudden and rather steep.

TAIL BREADTH

(12) The tail starting broad and powerful directly from the rump is long, very heavy, ending in a powerful tip.

TAIL CARRIAGE

(12) In repose it hangs straight down, turning gently upward in the lower third only, which is not to be considered a fault. In a great many specimens the tail is carried with the end slightly bent and therefore hangs down in the shape of an f.

(12) In action all dogs carry the tail more or less turned upward. However, it may not be carried too erect or by any means rolled over the back. A slight curling of the tip is sooner admissable.

TAIL HAIR

(17) Shorthaired - The tail at the root has longer and denser hair which gradually becomes shorter toward the tip. The tail appears bushy, not forming a flag.

(B) Longhaired - The tail is bushy with dense hair of moderate length. Rolled or curly hair on the tail is not desirable. A tail with parted hair or a flag tail is faulty.

TAIL LENGTH

(12) The tail is long.

TAIL TIP COLOR

(18) A white tip of tail is necessary.

TEETH

(See Bite)

TOES

(See Feet)

UNDERSHOT BITE

(See Bite)

WITHERS

(7) The withers are strongly pronounced.

WRINKLES

(2/3) The lines at the side of the head diverge considerably from the outer corner of the eyes toward the back of the head.

(2/4) The skin of the forehead, above the eyes, forms rather noticeable wrinkles, more or less pronounced, which converge toward the furrow. Especially when the dog is in action, the wrinkles are more visible without the least giving impression of morosity. Too strongly developed wrinkles are not desired.