

# THE BOSTON TERRIER



2011

A PICTORIAL AND ILLUSTRATED STANDARD

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PRODUCED BY  
THE BOSTON TERRIER CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.



*The Boston Terrier Club of America has produced THE BOSTON TERRIER - AN ILLUSTRATED AND PICTORIAL STANDARD in order to help the student of the breed to further understand the breed Standard.*



# THE BOSTON TERRIER

## A PICTORIAL AND ILLUSTRATED STANDARD



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Produced by

The Boston Terrier Club of America, Inc.

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# INTRODUCTION

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The Boston Terrier Standard was revised on February 28, 1990 to clarify and adapt the language so that everyone - novices, exhibitors, breeders, judges and potential judges - would understand it. There are many definitions for the word "standard", but when referring to the Boston Terrier Standard, this one is preferred: "A degree or level of requirement, excellence or attainment." When you read the breed Standard, the words paint a picture of excellence. In any breed Standard, there is very little leeway for interpretation. There is only one version. Not ours, not yours, but the right one.

The Boston Terrier Standard is divided into 12 sections. Each is an important part of the breed. Without excellence in all these parts, no Boston Terrier can be an outstanding specimen of the breed, no matter how many ribbons it wins.

**GENERAL APPEARANCE** describes a number of points. It gives us an outline of the dog, shows us the character of the breed and artistically requires that the dog not only be in balance, but must be well proportioned. It gives a synopsis of the breed and tells us without actually using these words, that the perfect Boston is a bright, sound, elegant, beautifully moving, typey dog, with prescribed color and markings.

General appearance is especially affected by all parts of the dog. For example, if the dog is faulted in hindquarters, it cannot move with determination and an easy and graceful carriage. Neither can a dog with too much white showing in his eyes look intelligent.

**SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE:** The most important point about the weight classifications is that each size be in proportion in bone and muscle. That does not mean that because a dog is 20 pounds, it should be coarse and bulky. Conversely, an under 15 pound dog must also be in proportion to its size. As owners or breeders, we can have a size preference in the dogs we own or breed; judges cannot. The Standard does not state that one size is preferred over another. However, this section does state that the length of leg must balance with the length in body to give the dog its striking square appearance. You will see that when other parts of the dog's conformation are correct, it will also help to make the dog appear square.

The influence of sex is really self-explanatory. It should not be interpreted to mean that a slight refinement in the bitch's conformation allows the muzzle to be snipey or the body long.

**HEAD:** It is difficult to imagine a square head on a dog, but when the skull is square, it will be determined by the set of the ears and eyes. The ears should be as close to the corners of the skull as possible, with the outside corners of the eyes in line with the cheeks. The eye placement and the muzzle should both form the lower square of the head.



# INTRODUCTION

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One would believe that the correct Boston Terrier expression comes from the eyes. This is only partially true. It also comes from his upright ears and that exceptional bearing that the Boston has that says "I'm something special!" The eyes should be round and large with a very minimum of white showing. The eyes should be as dark as the coat color, otherwise they will appear even lighter by contrast.

Not only should the ears be set properly at the corners of the skull, they must be in proportion to the size of the skull and the muscles that hold the ear erect must be strong so that the ears are held as tightly as possible. Ears like this make the dog appear alert and of course help to square the head. Ears that are set badly, are too large or too small, or without good muscles are still apparent to the experienced eye, even if they are cropped.

While the muzzle should be short, square, wide and deep, it cannot be correct unless the jaw is broad with an even or slightly undershot bite.

**THE NECK, TOPLINE AND BODY** should blend smoothly together, with the length of neck in balance with the body so that the head is carried gracefully.

The chest should be deep, and as a rule, in line with the elbows. Aside from aesthetics, the main reason for requiring a level back is that the power generated in the hindquarters is delivered forward by thrust, through the spinal column to the forequarters. A straight column of bones delivers thrust to a better advantage than one that is curved.

When the ribs are carried well back, the loins will be short. If you think of the loins as a bridge between the front and rear of the dog, you can understand that a short bridge will be stronger than a long one. It will also help to square the body.

The rump curves slightly to a low tail set. A too flat rump usually gives a dog a higher tail set and consequently, straighter stifles.

**THE FOREQUARTERS** or front assembly, help to give the Boston Terrier its stylish movement. The shoulders are sloping and well laid back. This kind of shoulder requires an angle of degrees, which gives the dog the proper reach in front. When the shoulders are well laid back, the neck will be the proper length. A dog with straight shoulders will also have a neck that is too short, with a shorter reach of the front legs. When the front legs are suspended, they will drop perfectly straight without toeing in nor out. While we do not call the feet "cat's feet", they are cat-like; small, round, and compact.

**THE HINDQUARTERS** provide the power that is needed to give a dog the drive or push to propel the front. The stifle must be well angulated, with a long upper and lower thigh and the hocks should be well let down, or short in comparison, to give the dog endurance. When the hindquarters have the correct



# INTRODUCTION

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length of bone and angulation, they will be well muscled.

**THE GAIT** of the Boston Terrier is that "of a sure footed, straight gaited dog, forelegs and hind legs moving straight ahead in line with perfect rhythm, each step indicating grace and power." The key words in this description are "grace and power". From this, one can see that the Boston Terrier was not meant to move with dysplastic hindquarters or like a wind-up toy. If he does not move correctly, he cannot convey an "impression of determination, strength, and activity, with style of a high order, carriage easy and graceful".

**COAT** texture is often determined by the color of the coat. Brindle coats are usually finer than darker colors. Fortunately, even though some coats are not as fine as others, the quality of the coat is usually determined by the condition of the dog.

**COLOR AND MARKINGS** are very important. They make a Boston look like a Boston. Desired markings are like icing on the cake. It gives that extra bit of flashiness that sometimes is needed. However, it will not compensate for other things that they may be lacking.

**THE TEMPERAMENT** of the Boston Terrier is a most important requirement of the breed and one we must take care not to lose. Without their friendly disposition and intelligence, they wouldn't be Boston Terriers.

**THE SUMMARY** is an abridged version of the Standard..."The Boston Terrier in a Nutshell".

**THE SCALE OF POINTS** is a guide that can be used to determine the relative importance of parts of the whole dog. If it is used to critique a dog, remember that if the value of one area is lowered, it often affects another. There is also one area that has not been assigned a point value, without which a Boston would be without value and that is excellent temperament. Let us not forget it.

Boston Terrier breeder Joseph Balmer said it beautifully for us, many years ago....

**"WE ARE THE HEIRS OF THE PAST AND THE TRUSTEES OF THE FUTURE."**

The Standard helps us to safeguard and improve the breed; it is our responsibility to protect the Standard.

# THE BOSTON TERRIER

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## GENERAL APPEARANCE

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The Boston Terrier is a lively, highly intelligent, smooth coated, short headed, compactly built, short-tailed, well balanced dog, brindle, seal or black in color and evenly marked with white. The head is in proportion to the size of the dog and the expression indicates a high degree of intelligence.

The body is rather short and well knit, the limbs strong and neatly turned, the tail is short and no feature is so prominent that the dog appears badly proportioned. The dog conveys an impression of determination, strength and activity, with style of a high order; carriage easy and graceful. A proportionate combination of "Color and White Markings" is a particularly distinctive feature of a representative specimen.

"Balance, Expression, Color and White Markings" should be given particular consideration in determining the relative value of GENERAL APPEARANCE to other points.



# SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE

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Weight is divided by classes as follows: Under 15 pounds; 15 pounds and under 20 pounds; 20 pounds and not to exceed 25 pounds. The length of leg must balance with the length of body to give the Boston Terrier its striking square appearance. The Boston Terrier is a sturdy dog and must not appear to be either spindly or coarse. The bone and muscle must be in proportion as well as an enhancement to the dog's weight and structure. Fault: Blocky or chunky in appearance.

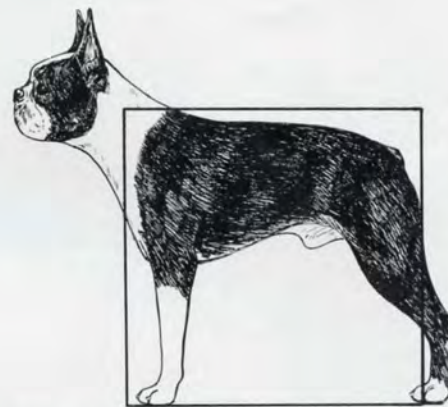
Influence of Sex in a comparison of specimens of each sex, the only evident difference is a slight refinement in the bitch's conformation.



(L. to R.) Under 15 pounds, 15 pounds and under 20 pounds, 20 to 25 pounds



A slight refinement in the bitch's conformation



The length of leg equals the length of body



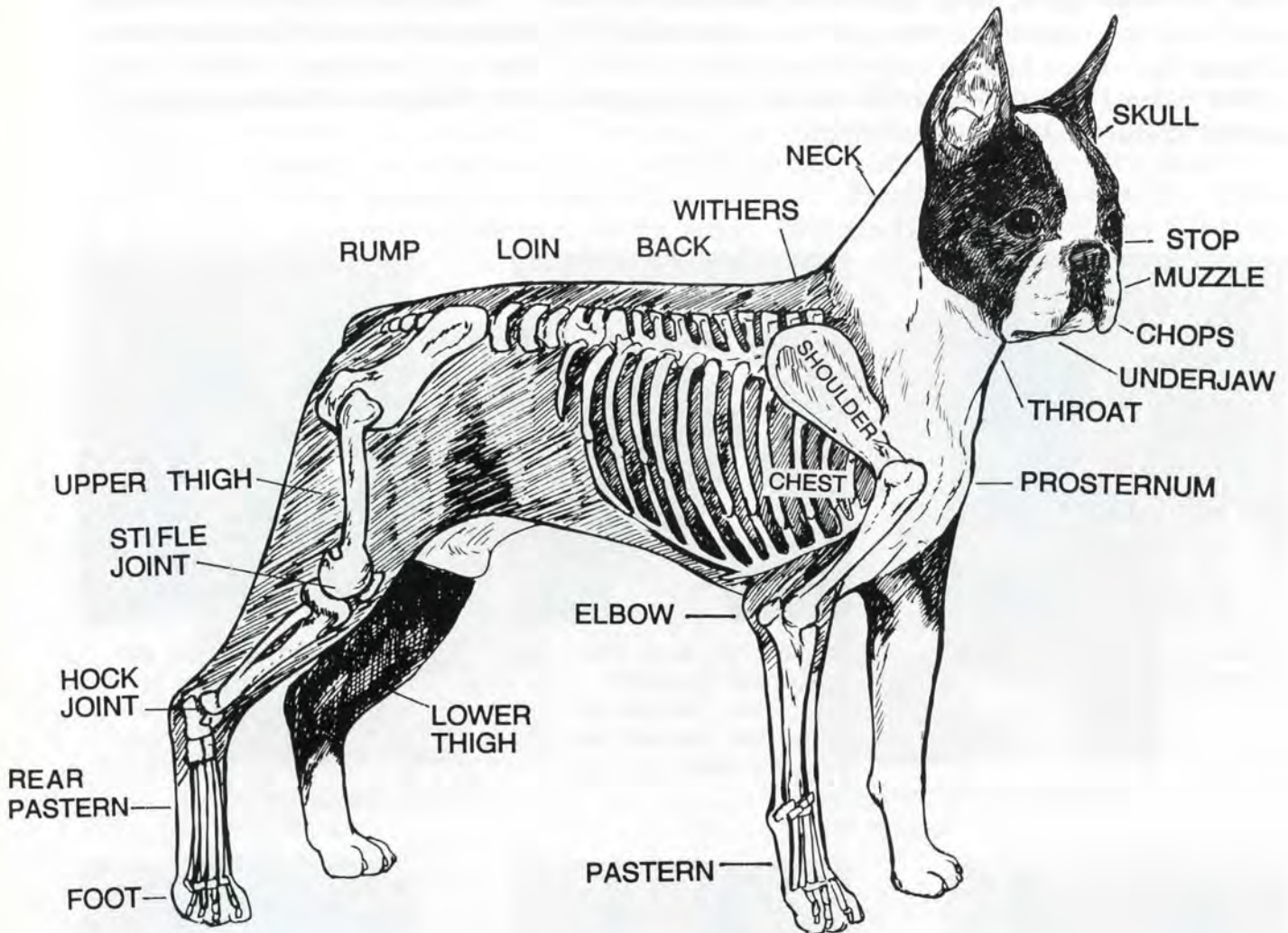
Too refined or spindly



Too coarse or bulky



# STRUCTURE





# HEAD

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The skull is square, flat on top, free from wrinkles, cheeks flat, brow abrupt and the stop well defined. The ideal Boston Terrier expression is alert and kind, indicating a high degree of intelligence. This is a most important characteristic of the breed. The eyes are wide apart, large and round and dark in color. The eyes are set square in the skull and the outside corners are on a line with the cheeks as viewed from the front. Disqualify: Eyes blue in color or any trace of blue. The ears are small, carried erect, either natural or cropped to conform to the shape of the head and situated as near to the corners of the skull as possible.



Cheeky; muzzle too narrow in comparison to skull.



Correct eye, large and round with excellent expression. Muzzle in proportion, but ears too large for head.



Ears set too far back; too much white showing in eyes, narrow muzzle.



Correct eye, ear set and muzzle. Uncropped ears are in proportion to head and held erect. Good expression.



Cropped ears held erect and set in skull correctly to form a square with the eyes. Good expression.



Ears set too low, eyes too small, skull too round.



# HEAD

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The muzzle is short, square, wide and deep and in proportion to the skull. It is free from wrinkles, shorter in length than in depth; not exceeding in length approximately one-third of the length of the skull. The muzzle from stop to end of the nose is parallel to the top of the skull. The nose is black and wide, with a well defined line between the nostrils. Disqualify: Dudley nose.

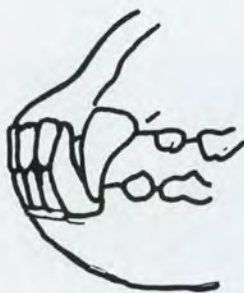
The jaw is broad and square with short, regular teeth. The bite is even or sufficiently undershot to square the muzzle. The chops are of good depth, but not pendulous, completely covering the teeth when the mouth is closed. Serious Fault: Wry mouth. Head Faults: Eyes showing too much white or haw. Pinched or wide nostrils. Size of ears out of proportion to the size of the head. Serious Head Faults: Any showing of the tongue or teeth when the mouth is closed.



Correct muzzle viewed from the side.



Incorrect terrier type head and muzzle.



An even bite



Incorrect overshot bite



Slightly undershot bite



# NECK, TOPLINE and BODY

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The length of neck must display an image of balance to the total dog. It is slightly arched, carrying the head gracefully and setting neatly into the shoulders. The back is just short enough to square the body. The topline is level and the rump curves slightly to the set-on of the tail. The chest is deep with good width, ribs well sprung and carried well back to the loins. The body should appear short. The tail is set on low, short, fine and tapering, straight or screw and must not be carried above the horizontal. (Note: The preferred tail does not exceed in length more than one-quarter the distance from set-on to hock.) Disqualify: Docked tail. Body Faults: Gaily carried tail. Serious Body Faults: Roach back, sway back, slab-sided.



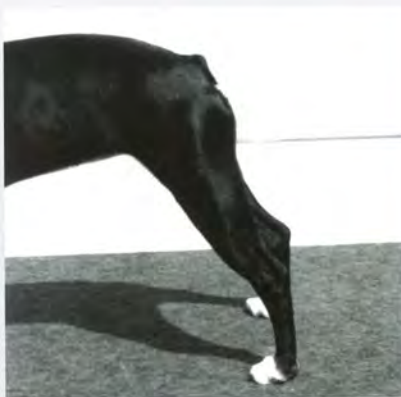
Good length of neck with well laid back shoulders



Good topline



Good chest



Tail set correctly



Gay tail



Poor topline



# FOREQUARTERS

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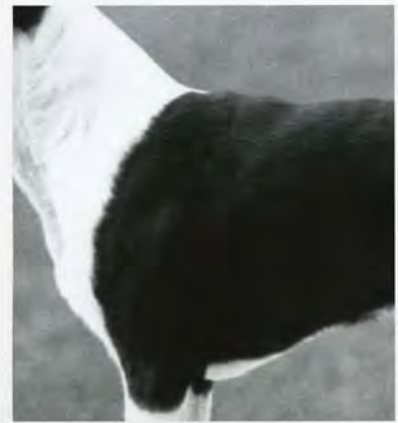
The shoulders are sloping and well laid back, which allows for the Boston Terrier's stylish movement. The elbows stand neither in nor out. The forelegs are set moderately wide apart and on a line with the upper tip of the shoulder blades. The forelegs are straight in bone with short, strong pasterns. The dewclaws may be removed. The feet are small, round and compact, turned neither in nor out, with well arched toes and short nails. Faults: Legs lacking in substance; splay feet.



Front too wide, shoulders loaded



Straight front



Correctly angulated shoulder



Good feet. Note: Strong pasterns.



Close-up of excellent round, small, compact feet, well arched toes.



A poor front; feet turn out, splayed feet, nails too long. Note: weak pasterns



# HINDQUARTERS

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The thighs are strong and well muscled, bent at the stifles and set true. The hocks are short to the feet, turning neither in nor out, with a well defined hock joint. The feet are small and compact with short nails. Fault: Straight in stifle.



Correct hindquarters with good proportions. Note well angulated stifle, short from hock joint to feet and strong well defined hock joint.



Hindquarters not in proportion. Note straight stifles, weak hock joint. This hindquarter does not have good muscle tone and will lack drive.



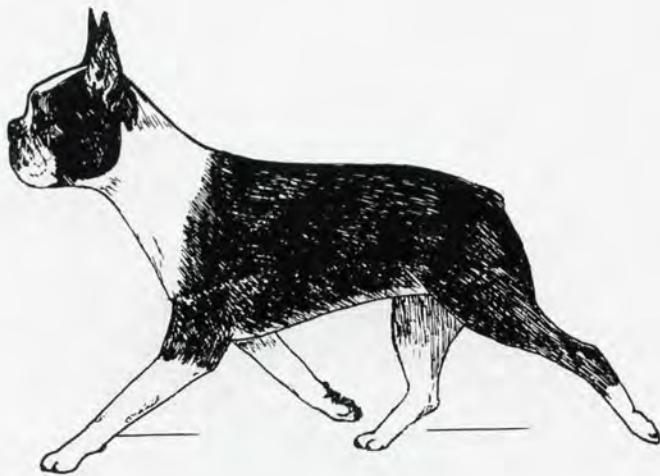
Correct hindquarters viewed from the rear.



Cowhocked hindquarters. Hocks turn in and feet turn out.

# GAIT

The gait of the Boston Terrier is that of a sure footed, straight gaited dog, forelegs and hind legs moving straight ahead in line with perfect rhythm, each step indicating grace and power. Gait Faults: There will be no rolling, paddling, or weaving when gaited. Hackney gait. Serious Gait Faults: Any crossing movement, either front or rear.



Level topline, good reach of front assembly



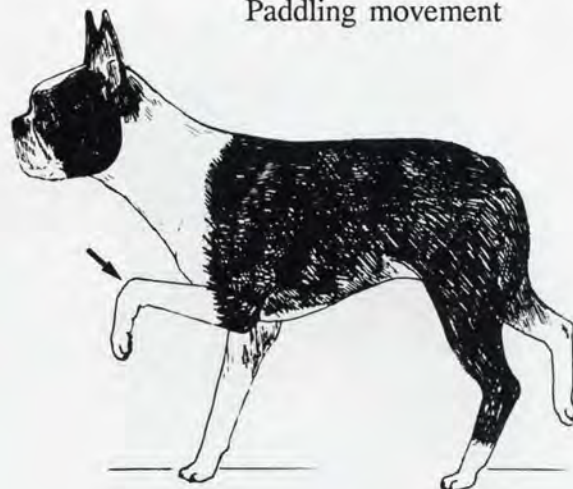
Good movement - head on



Crossing of front feet



Paddling movement



Hackney gait



# COAT

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The coat is short, smooth, bright and fine in texture.

## COLOR AND MARKINGS

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Brindle, seal, or black with white markings. Brindle is preferred **ONLY** if all other qualities are equal. (Note: SEAL DEFINED. Seal appears black except it has a red cast when viewed in the sun or bright light.) Disqualify: Solid black, solid brindle or solid seal without required white markings. Any color not described in the Standard.

**Required Markings:** White muzzle band, white blaze between the eyes, white forechest.

**Desired Markings:** White muzzle band, even white blaze between the eyes and over the head, white collar, white forechest, white on part or whole of forelegs and hind legs below the hocks. (Note: A representative specimen should not be penalized for not possessing "Desired Markings".)

A dog with a preponderance of white on the head or body must possess sufficient merit otherwise to counteract its deficiencies.



Required markings



Mis-marked head



Desired markings

# TEMPERAMENT

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The Boston Terrier is a friendly and lively dog. The breed has an excellent disposition and a high degree of intelligence, which makes the Boston Terrier an incomparable companion.



An incomparable companion

# SUMMARY

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The clean-cut, short backed body of the Boston Terrier, coupled with the unique characteristics of his square head and jaw, and his striking markings have resulted in a most dapper and charming American original: The Boston Terrier.





# SCALE OF POINTS

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General Appearance	10
Expression	10
Head (Muzzle, Jaw, Bite, Skull and Stop)	15
Eyes	5
Ears	5
Neck, Topline, Body and Tail	15
Forequarters	10
Hindquarters	10
Feet	5
Color, Coat and Markings	5
Gait	10
Total	100

# DISQUALIFICATIONS

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Eyes blue in color or any trace of blue.  
Dudley nose.  
Docked tail.  
Solid black, solid brindle, or solid seal without required markings.  
Any color not described in the Standard.

# GLOSSARY

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**BACK, ROACHED:** A convex curvature or arch along the back.

**BACK, SWAY:** A concave curvature between the withers and the hip bone.

**BALANCE:** Conformation that is symmetrical and in proportion, each part blending smoothly into the next. Front and rear assemblies equal to each other in quality of reach and drive.

**BITE, EVEN:** Meeting of the front teeth at the edges with no overlap of the upper or lower teeth.

**BITE, OVERSHOT:** The front teeth of the upper jaw overlaps or projects beyond the teeth of the lower jaw when the mouth is closed.

**BITE, UNDERSHOT:** The front teeth of the under jaw overlaps or projects beyond the teeth of the upper jaw when the mouth is closed.

**BLOCKY:** Excessive width in relation to length. For example, a blocky head is broader and coarser than it should be.

**CHUNKY:** A body that is too short for its length and it appears chopped off.

**COARSE:** Lacking in refinement, too large, too heavy.

**DUDLEY NOSE:** Flesh colored nose.

**GAIT, HACKNEY:** The high lifting of the front feet, at the pasterns, like the Hackney horse. This is an abnormal movement that requires steep shoulder angulation. It wastes energy and lessens endurance.

**GAIT, PADDLING:** Named for its similarity to a canoeist's paddle. Pinching in at the elbow and shoulder joints causes the front legs to swing forward on a stiff outward arc.

**GAIT, ROLLING:** Swaying action of the hindquarters when moving.

**GAIT, WEAVING:** An unsound gait when either the front or rear quarters or both cross over in front of one another.

**HAW:** A membrane in the inside corner of the eye.

**SLAB SIDED:** Flat ribs with too little spring from the spinal column.

**SLOPING, WELL LAID BACK SHOULDERS:** An approximate 90 degree angle of the shoulder with the upper arm.

**SPINDLY:** Gangly, lanky, too thin.

**WELL KNIT:** A short coupled body with strong, well developed muscles.

**WRY MOUTH:** The lower jaw does not line up with the upper jaw.