



Cane Corso Standard

Recognized by the AMA in 2015

Background: The Cane Corso is a descendant of the old Roman Molossian. The Cane Corso an ancient Italian breed use to be abundant all over Italy. During WWI and WWII the breed fell to an all-time low and almost went extinct by the 1970's. Due to the hard work of Cane Corso fanciers the breed was resurrected and thrives today. The Cane Corso's ancestors were used as Roman war dogs and after the fall of the Roman Empire they utilized their abilities and versatility by performing varying tasks mostly in Southern Italy. The primary task's where that of guardian, hunter and farm dog. The Cane Corso's versatility made it an ideal farmhand. The name Cane Corso is derived from the Latin "cohors" which means protector and guardian of the farmyard. The breed is used today as a guardian, protection, tracking and police dog.

General Appearance: The Cane Corso is a medium to large, robust, sturdy, and athletic dog that is somewhat elegant and can move with considerable ease. They are muscular, large boned dog that is rectangular in proportion. The length of the dog from the shoulder to the buttock, is approximately ten percent greater than the height of the dog at the withers. The overall conformation of the dog should be well balanced and proportionate.

Disqualifications: unilateral or bilateral cryptorchidism

Disposition: The Cane Corso is noble, majestic and powerful. Their presence is impressive. The Cane Corso is docile, and affectionate to their owners, loving with children and family. Their ability as a protector of property and owners is pronounced. Some aloofness with strangers is not a fault.

Disqualifications: viciousness or extreme shyness

Size: The weight is proportionate to the height.

Male: An ideal male should be 25 to 27.5 inches tall at the withers.

Female: An ideal female should be 23.5 to 26 inches tall at the withers.

Head: The Cane Corso head is large, broad and slightly curved. The total length of the head is approximately 1/3 of the height of the dog. The Circumference of the head is more than twice the total length of the head. The planes of the skull and muzzle converge slightly. The skin is firm and smooth. When viewed from the top the head has a square appearance due to the zygomatic arches and powerful muscles wrapping them. Convex in front, the skull becomes rather flat behind the forehead to the occiput. The frontal furrow is visible and the stop is marked.

Serious faults: parallel planes of the skull and muzzle, planes that converge too steeply
Disqualifications: divergent head planes

Eyes: Dark in color, medium in size, almond shaped, and are set to look directly forward and are slightly prominent. The eye rims have full pigmentation and the eyelids are close fitting. In lighter colored dogs, lighter colored eyes are acceptable.

Disqualifications: yellow bird of prey, blue eyes, crossed eyes, divergent strabismus (wall-eyed),

Muzzle/Bite: The muzzle is strong, square and flat. It is as wide as it is long, with a straight nasal bridge. There is no taper in the width of the muzzle from the stop to the tip. The muzzle is noticeably shorter than the skull with a ratio of 1:2. The upper lips hang and cover the lower jaw so that the lower profile of the muzzle is determined by the lips. The lips are rather firm and join under the nostrils to form an inverted "U". The bite is undershot up to 1/4 inch. A scissor bite is acceptable but not preferred. The Cane Corso has full dentition with 42-44 teeth. Serious faults: tapering of the muzzle, narrow or snipe muzzle, less than 42 teeth

Disqualifications: more than ¼ inch undershot, wry mouth

Nose: The nose is large with open nares, full pigmentation and is black or blue.
Serious fault: pinched nares, butterfly nose

Ears: Cropped or natural are accepted without preference. If cropped the ears should be an equilateral triangle. If natural the ears should be drooping, wide at set on, uniform, held tight to the cheeks, and not extending beyond the jaw bone.
Disqualifications: unilateral or bilateral deafness

Neck: The neck is slightly arched, flowing smoothly into the shoulders with a small amount of dewlap. The length of the neck is approximately one third of the height at the withers.
Cosmetic fault: excessive dewlap

Shoulders: Very muscular, long, oblique, and laid back. The upper arm is strong.
Serious faults: shoulders that are too steep without a lay back

Chest, Back, Loin and Body: The chest is well developed, broad, muscular, strong and reaches to the elbow. The elbows are held parallel to the ribcage, turning neither in nor out. The depth of the ribcage is equal to half the total height of the dog at the withers, descending slightly below the elbow. The ribs are long and well sprung. There is a moderate tuck up. The back is wide, strong, and muscular. The highest part of the shoulder blade slightly rising above the strong level back. The loin is well-muscled, and harmoniously joined to the back. The croup is long, wide, and slightly sloping.

Hindquarters: As a whole the hindquarters are powerful and strong, and in harmony with the front. The upper thighs are long and wide, and the back of the thigh is convex. The lower thigh is strong, and not fleshy.

Legs: The front legs are straight and very strong, with pasterns that are strong yet flexible. The rear legs have a strong bone and muscle structure. The stifle has moderate angulation and

the hocks are wide set, thick, clean, and parallel when viewed from behind. There is moderate angulation at the hock and the rear pasterns are thick and strong.

Serious faults: cow hocked, twisted hocked, bowed legs

Feet: The feet are round with well arched toes also known as “cat feet”. The rear feet are less compact than the front feet.
Serious faults: splayed feet, feet toeing in or out

Tail: Natural or docked allowed. The tail is set on high, and is very thick at the root. It is typically docked at the fourth vertebrae. It’s carried high but not curled or erect.
Serious faults: ring tail, tail carried vertically
Disqualifications: tailless

Coat: Short, shiny and very dense, with a light undercoat that becomes thicker in cold winter.
Disqualifications: semi-long coat, fringed coat

Color: The acceptable colors are black, lighter and darker shades of blue, lighter and darker shades of fawn, and red. Brindle is allowed on all of these colors. Solid fawn and red, including lighter and darker shades, have a black or gray mask. The mask does not go beyond the eyes. There may be a white patch on the chest, throat, chin, backs of the pasterns, and on the toes. Disqualifications: any color not specified in the standard, albinism

Movement: The movement is free flowing and powerful, yet effortless, with strong reach and drive. As the dog accelerates, the feet converge toward a center line of gravity in a near-single track. When viewed from the side, the topline remains level, with minimal roll or bounce.
Movement faults: any suggestion of clumsiness, tossing and/or rolling of the body, crossing or interference of front or rear legs, short or stilted steps, twisting joints, pacing, paddling, or weaving. Similar movement faults are to be penalized according to the degree to which they interfere with the ability of the dog to work.

Disqualifications:

- Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchidism
- Viciousness or extreme shyness

- Divergent head planes
- Yellow bird of prey
- Blue eyes
- Crossed eyes
- Divergent strabismus (Wall-Eyed)
- More than ¼ inch undershot
- Wry mouth
- Unilateral or bilateral deafness
- Tailless
- Semi-long coat
- Fringed coat
- Any color not specified in the standard
- Albinism

Fault Degrees:

A cosmetic fault is one of a minor nature. A fault not specified as cosmetic has to do with structure as it relates to a dog that is able to compete in performance/working venues. In a show or other evaluation, the dog is to be penalized in direct proportion to the degree of the fault. Any fault, which is extreme, should be considered a serious fault and should be penalized appropriately.