



English Bulldog Breed Standard

Recognized by the AMA in 2015

Background: Bulldogs were originally created in England with the specific purpose of bull holding, which was a legitimate purpose of the butcher's business. This eventually led to the grisly sport of bull baiting. The sport lasted more than 700 years but by the 1800's the bloody sport was made illegal and the bulldog's athletic build was no longer needed. Breeders began to selectively breed for appearance and type resulting in a less functional bulldog. The English Bulldog of today would not be recognized by fanciers of the earliest dogs of the breed. Today's English Bulldog is a shorter, squattier, thicker companion version of its working ancestors because that is what was desired in the show ring.

General Appearance: The English Bulldog is a medium size, short coated dog with a heavy, broad, thick-set, low-swung body. They have a broad substantial head with a short muzzle. The English Bulldog is a powerful and compact dog that when coupled with its attitude it suggest great stability, vigor, and strength. The English Bulldog should be well proportioned as to not allow any feature to be so prominent or so lacking that it makes the dog appear deformed or out of proportion. When comparing sexes the female should be given allowances as they do not bear the breed characters to the same degree as males.

Disqualifications: unilateral or bilateral cryptorchidism

Disposition: The English Bulldogs disposition should be equable and kind, resolute and courageous. Their demeanor is appeasing and dignified. These attributes are evident by the expression and behavior of the breed.

Disqualifications: viciousness or extreme shyness

Size: The English Bulldog is to be fit and without excess weight.

Males: 50-55lbs

Females: 45-50lbs

Serious faults: males over 55lbs, females over 50lbs

Head: The head viewed from the front is broad and square and from the side profile it appears high showing good layback and moderately short from nose to occiput. There substantial head is large in circumference and in front of the ears. The circumference of the head should measure the same as the height at the withers. The forehead is flat, never rounded or domed and should not be too prominent nor overhanging the face. The well-defined temples (frontal bones) are broad, square, defined and high, causing a groove between the eyes. The stop is broad and deep extending up the middle of the forehead, dividing the head vertically. The cheeks are well rounded, protruding sideways and outward beyond the eyes.

Eyes: The eyes are round, medium in size, and neither sunken or bulging. They are as wide set and sit low down on the skull as far from the ears as possible. Neither the haw nor the white of the eyes should be showing when the dog is looking forward. Any color eyes acceptable. Full pigmented eye rims preferred.

Cosmetic faults: lacking pigmentation

Serious faults: visible haw, white of eyes showing, excessive amounts of loose skin around eyes

Disqualifications: eyes that are two different colors, crossed eyes, divergent strabismus (wall-eyed)

Muzzle/Bite: The muzzle is short, broad, deep and well laid back. The muzzle is turned slightly upward and is very deep from the corner of the eye to the corner of the mouth. The distance from the bottom of the stop to the tip of the nose should not be less than the distance measured

from the tip of the nose to the edge of the underlip. The flews or “chops” are pendulous, thick and broad, hanging completely over the lower jaw at the sides, meeting the underlip in front covering the teeth. The teeth and tongue are never to be seen when the mouth is closed. The jaws are very broad, square and undershot. The underjaw should project considerably in front of the upper jaw and turn upward. The teeth are large and strong with the canine teeth wide apart with six small teeth in even, level row.

Serious faults: teeth or tongue showing when the mouth is closed

Disqualifications: wry mouth

Nose: All colors of pigmentation are acceptable without preference. The nose is large, broad and with well opened nares. There is a well-defined line between nostrils. The tip of the nose is set back deeply between the eyes. The nose roll should not protrude over the nostrils, constricting breathing.

Cosmetic faults: lacking pigmentation

Serious fault: Pinched nares, over-nose roll that covers any part of the nose

Ears: The rose ears are small, thin, wide and high set. The rose ear folds inward at its back lower edge, the upper front edge curving over, outward and backward, showing part of the inside of the burr. The front inner edge of each ear joins the outline of the skull at the top back corner of the skull, placing them wide apart and well away from the eyes.

Serious faults: erect ears, prick ears, button ears, cropped ears

Disqualifications: unilateral or bilateral deafness

Neck: The short, thick neck is deep, strong, and well-arched. The skin is moderately loose, thick and wrinkled, forming a dewlap on each side from the lower jaw to the chest.

Shoulders: The shoulders are very broad, very heavy and muscular. They are widespread providing stability and great power.

Chest, Back, Loin and Body: The chest should be very broad, deep, and full. The brisket and body are very abundant with the chest being

well let down between the front legs. The body is well ribbed up behind the forelegs, and the ribs are well rounded. The back is short and strong, wide behind the shoulders and comparatively narrower at the loin as to look pear shaped when viewing from over the top. There is a slight fall off behind the shoulders to the beginning of the back, which is the lowest part of the entire topline. It then rises to the loin, which is higher than the top of the shoulders. The croup then curves downward to the set on of the tail, creating the roach back or wheel back that is distinctive to the breed. The belly is tucked up and not rotund.

Serious faults: narrow or shallow chest, sway back, camel back, flat back, lack of tuck up

Hindquarters: Strong, muscular rear legs that are longer than the front legs, causing the loins to be elevated above the shoulders. The hind legs are long from hip to hock and short from hock to ground. The stifles are rounded and they turn very slightly outward, away from the body, which results in the hocks turning inward and the rear feet turning very slightly outward.

Legs: The forelegs are short, stout, muscular, set wide apart and straight with heavy bone. The legs themselves are not curved or bandy. The low elbows allow for free movement of the front assembly. The pasterns are short, straight, and strong.

Feet: The compact feet are round and moderate in size. The toes are well split up and have high knuckles. The nails are stubby. The front feet should be forward or slightly out. The rear feet should turn slightly outward.

Tail: The tail is either straight or screwed but never curly. It is short, set low, thick at the root and fine at the tip with a downward carriage. A straight tail is cylindrical and is tapered uniformly. A screw tail has well-defined bends or kinks that may be abrupt or even knotty, but no portion of the tail may be elevated above the base or root.

Serious faults: no tail, inverted tail, gay tail, high set

Disqualifications: docked tail, curly tail

Coat: The coat is short, close, smooth, glossy, and lies flat. There are no fringes, feathers or curls.

Color: Any color, except merle, is acceptable with no preference for one over another.

Disqualifications: merle, albinism

Movement: The movement and carriage are distinctive to the breed. There is a characteristic roll of the gait, which allows effortless movement without the pounding of the front assembly or having the rear assembly so turned in or out as to cause cow-hocked or spread-hocked rear movement. The English Bulldog moves with short, quick steps on the tip of the toes. The rear feet appear to skim the ground and should not be lifted high. The action must be unrestrained, free, and vigorous.

Disqualifications:

- Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchidism
- Viciousness or extreme shyness
- Eyes that are two different colors
- Crossed eyes
- Divergent strabismus (wall-eyed)
- Wry mouth
- Unilateral or bilateral deafness
- Docked tail
- Curly tail
- Merle
- Albinism

Fault Degrees:

A cosmetic fault is one of a minor nature. 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.