

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL KENNEL COUNCIL



Extended Breed Standard of
**THE AMERICAN
STAFFORDSHIRE TERRIER**

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THOSE STUDYING THIS BREED STANDARD EXTENSION SHOULD NOTE:

Australian law prohibits the cropping of ears; this practice is also prohibited by ANKC Regulations. For these reasons all reference to cropped ears has been deleted from the text. Cropped eared illustrations have, however, been used in the Breed Standard Extension to demonstrate other characteristics of the breed.

HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN STAFFORDSHIRE TERRIER

The ancient ancestors of the Am Staffs are the mastiff type dogs who appear in many breed histories. Although much of this information is lost in antiquity, we know from early art of the large heavy-headed strong dogs who were used throughout history for their strength and guarding abilities. This early group of dogs has left genetic material for all the bulldog breeds and mastiff type dogs of today.

In earlier days in England, mastiff types were bred down to smaller size and some became bulldogs (actually bulldogs were named because they were used to hold on to bulls or cattle/oxen). Originally the dogs were butchers' dogs or farmers' dogs that helped move cattle around and held them still for their owners. They kept them still literally by holding on to them, usually by the nose. It became customary entertainment in England to watch as the butcher's dog caught the bull and held it while the butcher killed it. For some reason the common folk began to think that meat that had been harried by the dog before dying was tastier than meat that had died peacefully. There was for a time, an English law enacted by the Queen that reportedly, forbade other butchers from killing their stock on the same day her royal butchers did, in order that the commoners would watch her dogs work.

Eventually this sport gave way to some other type of meat tenderiser and the dogs were used on other "game". One of these uses was rat killing. The English seem to have had lots of rats and folks amused themselves by watching dogs put into "pits" (arenas) with hundreds of rats. Of course betting was done on how many could be dispatched how fast. This called for a smaller, faster dog so some of the now extinct English terriers were crossed with the bulldog. These early bulldogs and now bull-and-terriers were used to fight bears, stags, badgers and each other. Dogs were more easily come by than bears, which were probably getting kind of scarce in England, and dogs were probably easier to keep for a commoner than expensive cattle.

The bull-and-terrier evolved into three of our modern breeds, the Staffordshire Bull Terrier, the Bull Terrier, and the American Staffordshire Terrier.

The early bull-and-terriers came to America with immigrants from England and Ireland. Here some grew bigger and taller in response to their duties in a new and wider country. Some stayed in cities and were kept by the same type of “sporting” owner as in England and Ireland. These were fought against each other around the pubs of New York, Chicago, and Boston (and other cities of course). A product of some of these dogs is the very American breed of Boston Bulldog, or Boston Terrier, as it is known. These used to be 35-40 lb dogs, and were very similar to the early Am Staff (or Pit Bull, Bulldog, American Bulldog, Bull-and-Terrier, Yankee Terrier, some of the names these dogs were known under then), except for the shorter bulldog face and screw tail.

The larger bull-and-terrier was still a farm dog and stockman’s dog. He followed the wagons west with the settlers and helped work stock and guard the homestead. He was a general-purpose homestead dog, much as the dog described in the book and movie, Old Yeller. He ran with the hounds on hunting expeditions, exactly as depicted in the old movie, The Yearling, and although not as fleet or strong of nose as the hounds, he was still the “catch” dog who dispatched the animal when it turned at bay.

By the late 1800s a fighting dog registry was started in America to keep track of the prized pedigrees and publish the rules for dog fighting organisations in that country. The United Kennel Club registered the dogs as American Pit Bull Terriers. Sometimes this was written as American (Pit) Bull, or American Bull Terrier. Mostly they were known as Bulldogs, or Pit Bulls.

Although it is this dog’s fighting background that is mostly remembered, only a relatively small number of the dogs were fought. Most of them went on being farmers’ and general-purpose countrymen’s dogs and still worked stock, penning, guarding and helping, just as they had done in their earliest days.

In the early 1930s a group of fanciers petitioned the American Kennel Club to accept their dogs into the registry. These dogs were already registered with the United Kennel Club, but their owners had no interest in dog fighting. They wanted to promote their breed as family dogs and show dogs. They formed a national breed club and wrote a standard for the breed. Much agonizing was done over the proper name for the breed as the American Kennel Club was not inclined to register them with the same name as the United Kennel Club. Finally, in 1936, they were accepted with the name Staffordshire Terrier. This was just a year after the English bull-and-terriers under the name of Staffordshire Bull Terriers were recognised with the Kennel Club of England. The standards of both the English and American breeds were written similarly, and even contained some identical phrases. The authors of both kept in touch with each other working toward their common goal of acceptance by their kennel clubs. At that time the dogs described were more similar in size and structure than the breeds appear today.

In the early 1970s the name of Staffordshire Terrier was changed to American Staffordshire Terrier when the American Kennel Club recognised the Staffordshire Bull Terrier breed.

FIG.1



These drawings from the mid 1800s depict the dogs commonly believed to be the ancestors of the American Staffordshire Terrier.

- The Old English Bulldog
- The Black and Tan Terrier
- The English White Terrier



These are the type of dogs the Standard was written to describe.

Fig 2



2 dogs from the early 1940s



3 dogs from 1940 STCA Year Book



Best in Show Brace 1950s
Ch Sharevalpad Hellzapoppin



BOB 1941 National Specialty

Fig 3



Ch Doyle's Tacoma Flambeau
born in 1946



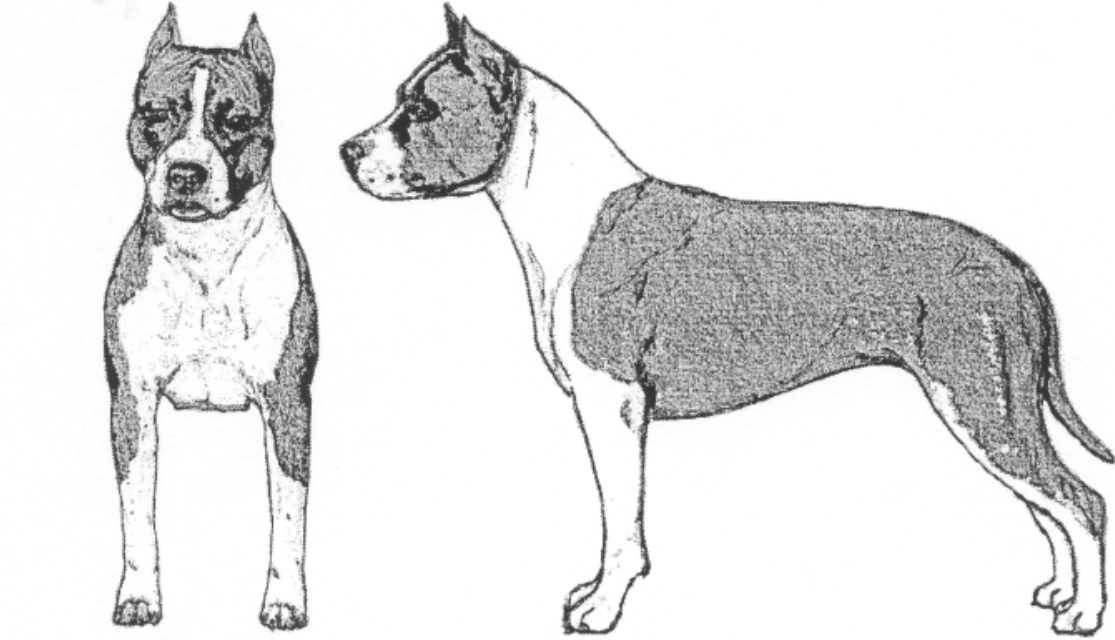
Ch X-Pert Pedro Escopeda
BOB 1957 National Specialty



Ch Sky King of Har-Wyn, 3 times BOB winner at the National Specialty in
the 1960s



Fig 4



American Staffordshire Terriers of today

These are idealised drawings done from photographs of real dogs



● GENERAL APPEARANCE

The American Staffordshire Terrier should give the impression of great strength for his size, a well put-together dog, muscular, but agile and graceful. He should be stocky, not long legged or racy in outline.

“Should give the impression of great strength for his size”: This is a medium sized dog, not a large one, but should be possessed of great strength for his size. This does not mean that he should be large or heavy, just that his strength should be great for the size he is.

He is *“a well put-together dog, muscular, but agile and graceful”*: The proper specimen will appear graceful as well as agile. This is totally descriptive of a “normally” built dog, without excess or exaggeration in any way. He is a balance of power and agility. He must display both. Any specimen, who is exaggerated, to appear so muscular as to no longer display agility and grace is no longer balanced. This balance extends to the ratio of his bone size and general body weight. **He must never be exaggerated.** The balance of power and agility must always be kept in mind.

“He should be stocky not long legged or racy in outline”: This refers to the leg length of the dog in relation to his body. He is not a racing dog with long legs and a light body, but due to his strength of body, he is a stocky one. He should be stocky, that is solid and sturdy but must have enough leg to still maintain the required agility and grace. He is not ever a short-legged dog.

As an analogy, this is a tri-athlete or decathlete rather than a bodybuilder or power weight lifter. He must still retain the ability to perform a variety of physical challenges, rather than just show raw strength. The breed’s history created an animal with a balance of power, agility, total courage, and the intelligence to use it. The balance of power and agility inherent in the breed must always be kept in mind.

Am Staffs should be shown in top physical condition. This means well developed and well defined musculature. Their coat should reflect good health; appearing glossy, abundant and in good condition. This dog should be a consummate athlete. Grossly under or overweight dogs do not create the proper picture of the breed. Fat particularly does not improve the dog’s outline. There is a tendency to mistake fat for more desirable lean muscling on show dogs. A dog without proper muscular definition will not create the desired balance of strength and agility. However, the dog with the most muscle mass should not be considered to be the best dog. This is not a breed of extremes. The balance between raw strength and agility and grace must always be kept foremost in mind. Good condition or lack of it will also be reflected in the animal’s gait and general demeanour.

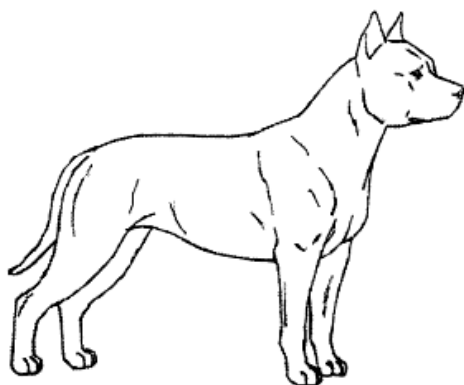
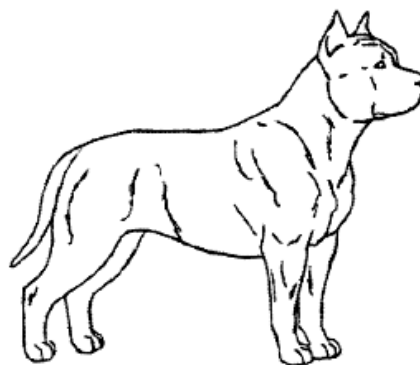
The American Staffordshire Terrier is a blending of bull and terrier; there are three basic types you will be presented with in the ring. Good representatives of the breed can be found in all three types. It is the job of the judge to select the best dog that represents the breed, without encouraging extreme individuals. If all things were otherwise equal, the moderate type would always be preferred as it represents the perfect balance of bull and terrier without exaggeration.

Fig 5

Bully Type

Characterised by heavier bone and more mass. This type falls more toward the bulldog ancestry. Somewhat shorter on leg and heavier moving, they also have more tendency toward looser, thicker skin

Although pictured as a bitch, both dogs and bitches can be of this type. The same rules of general soundness apply. This type should not be preferred over the others as it can be quickly exaggerated, losing the athleticism and grace of the terrier influence.

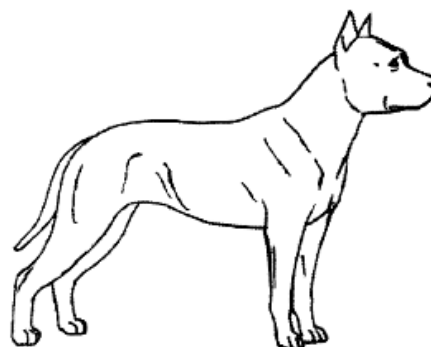


Moderate Type

The perfect blending of the bull and terrier background, with the strength and musculature of the bulldog, and the grace and agility of the terrier. If any type should be preferred, this would be the one.

Terrier Type

Showing a strong relationship to the terrier in the background, this body type is quick, agile, tight, sometimes leggier, lighter boned, carrying less muscle mass. This type is often very stylish and elegant. This type should not be preferred over the others, as it can be quickly exaggerated, losing the muscle mass that is desirable in the breed.



● **CHARACTERISTICS**

(Not specified.)

Although not specifically addressed by the Standard, this breed has been long domesticated, and as a farmer's and family dog and, even with the early fighting background, should absolutely never appear aggressive toward humans. They are not a guarding breed by nature, and trust most people to be their friends, confident in these relationships. They develop strong bonds with humans and are eager to please them, thanks to their working background. They are not a solitary dog, preferring the company of humans. They are not subservient or fawning, but confident and friendly in dealings with humans.

The ideal specimen must always appear confident and friendly with humans. Absolutely no consideration should be given to an exhibit that appears aggressive, threatening, or shy towards humans. These are completely incorrect for the breed and inexcusable.

● TEMPERAMENT

Keenly alive to his surroundings. His courage is proverbial.

The first and most important impression should be the dog's temperament. No matter what the dog looks like, it cannot be a proper Am Staff without the proper temperament. The official Standard is sparse and is often faulted for not giving enough information to the student of the breed. However, the words used are beautifully descriptive of the breed's temperament.

"Keenly alive to his surroundings": Describes a lively intelligent disposition that watches what is going on around him and misses nothing. Further, he not only watches, but also interacts; he is quite aware of and very responsive to his surroundings. He is ready for whatever comes his way in all the best sense of this term.

"His courage is proverbial" proverbial, according to Webster's dictionary is defined as follows: *"The embodiment or representation of some quality. The byword for it. A commonplace truth. A commonplace reference for some quality:"* This is perfectly apt to describe the correct temperament of this breed. They are nothing if not courageous. This courage is inherent to their history. These dogs have faced death in all its forms, and have long ago had fear bred down. They should appear supremely confident in all situations. No excuse can be made for a specimen that lacks this quality. Courage has no similarity to aggressiveness, which often masks insecurity. The ideal Am Staff should not display aggression toward other animals or humans. They should only appear confident and interested, prepared to deal with and take part in whatever situation develops. Many legends have grown surrounding this breed's courage.

The ideal specimen must always display courage and confidence to a marked degree. Absolutely no consideration should be given to an exhibit that lacks this quality.

● HEAD AND SKULL

Head medium length, deep through, broad skull, very pronounced cheek muscles, distinct stop. Muzzle medium length, rounded on upper side to fall away abruptly below eyes. Jaws well defined. Underjaw to be strong and have biting power. Lips close and even, no looseness. Nose definitely black, dudley nose undesirable.

"Medium length, deep through, broad skull, very pronounced cheek muscles, distinct stop": The head should appear to be the correct size for the dog's body. It is not overly large nor is it small. It is of medium length in balance with the dog's medium sized body. The muzzle should appear to be about one half the total length of the head, the head is deep through, from the top down to the jaws. The depth is not achieved by a bulging forehead, but by deep strong jaws. The dog's mandible should be well developed far back to the skull. His skull is broad across, with a well-defined stop and distinct eyebrows. The head should not, however, be exaggerated.

The description of medium length must be maintained. If the skull is too broad, the head will appear short in length, which is incorrect. The head is deep through, for

strength, but the depth should extend to the lower jaw, not be achieved by an over deep stop with no lower jaw strength.

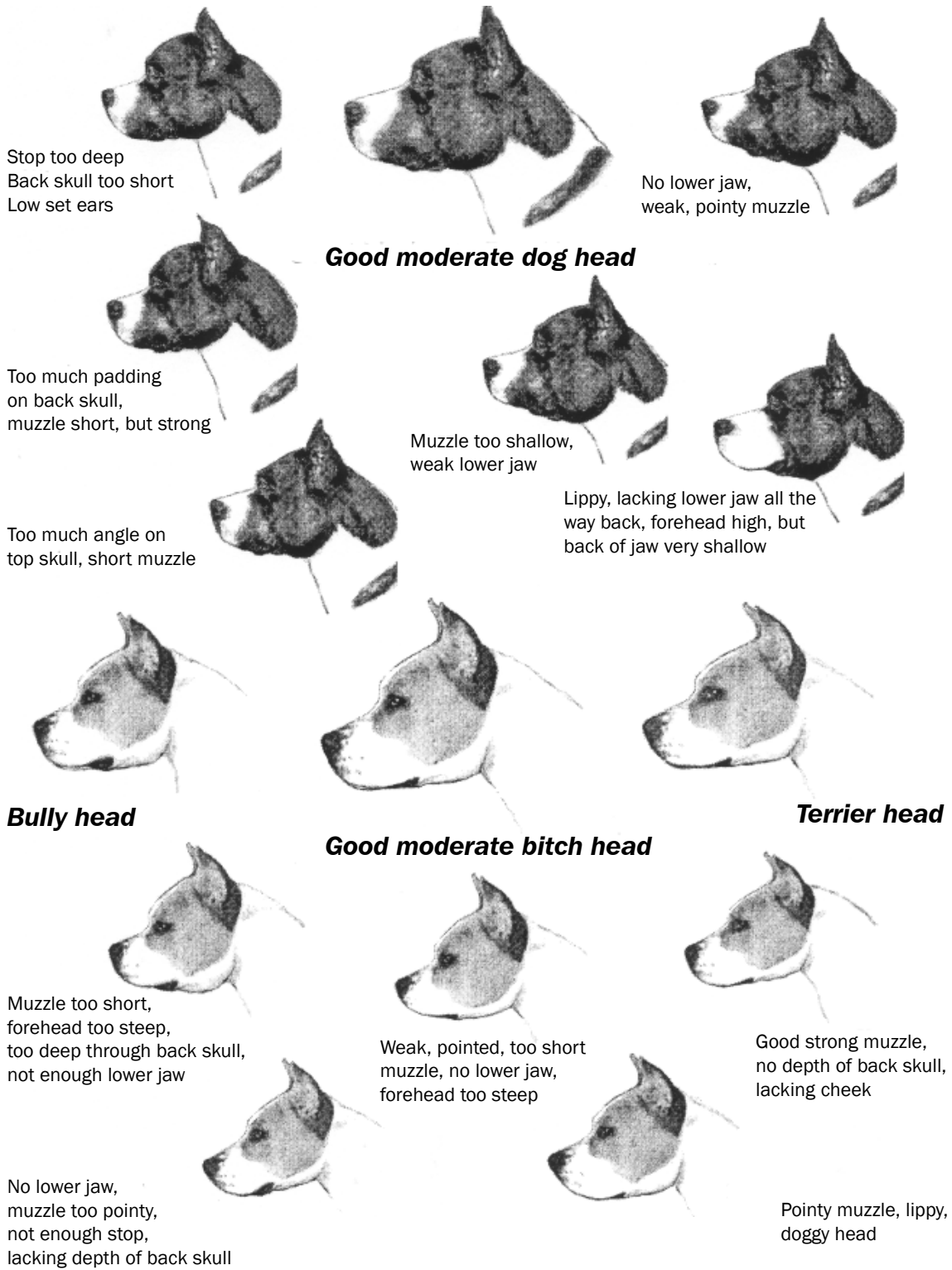
The cheek muscles are very pronounced. The planes of the forehead and muzzle should be parallel when viewed from the side. There should be no tendency for a down face, dish face, or frog face. In males, the muscle padding on the top skull may make the plane rise slightly (in bitches to a lesser degree), but it still should not differ greatly from the plane of the muzzle.

The shape of the top skull should show the underlying bone structure, not be so overly padded with flesh or muscle as to totally mask it, and appear lumpy. The most prominent muscle development of the breed should be the cheeks, which should be pronounced. The head should appear clean, with no loose skin. A slight quizzical wrinkling of the forehead when the ears are lifted should be the only wrinkles found anywhere on the head.

“Muzzle medium length, rounded on upper side to fall away abruptly below eyes. Jaws well defined. Under jaw to be strong and have biting power. Lips close and even, no looseness”: A proper muzzle is of medium length, neither short nor long, but approximately one half the length of the head. It is rounded and fairly broad on the top falling away abruptly below the eyes. It should be heavy enough to provide good attachment for the upper jaw teeth, but not filled like a fox terrier or bull terrier. It is narrower than the back skull and cheeks, and wedges toward the nose, but the wedge is truncated, and the end of the muzzle is still blunt. Jaws well defined, not hidden by padding flesh. A strong and deep under jaw, with a strong visible chin. The lips are close and even, with no looseness or thick padding. The muzzle is without extra flesh and definitely not wrinkled.

Nose *“definitely black”*: Before AKC registration, there were registered American Pit Bull Terriers with red noses. These dogs came from different root stock and had a different appearance- including liver colouration. The intention here was to prevent them from entering the AKC breeding pool of American Staffordshire Terriers. The nose should be black - not red or pink. We now know that it is genetically impossible for a blue dog to have a black nose, yet there were blue Am Staffs then, as now, and they were shown and finished championships. The nose should appear darkest charcoal on dogs with blue diluted colouration. Forgiveness can be made for dark charcoal on this colour, but the darker the better. The nose should still appear as black to the observer. A dudley nose (flesh coloured) is listed as a fault. For dogs without dilute colouration the nose must appear as written - definitely black.

Fig 6



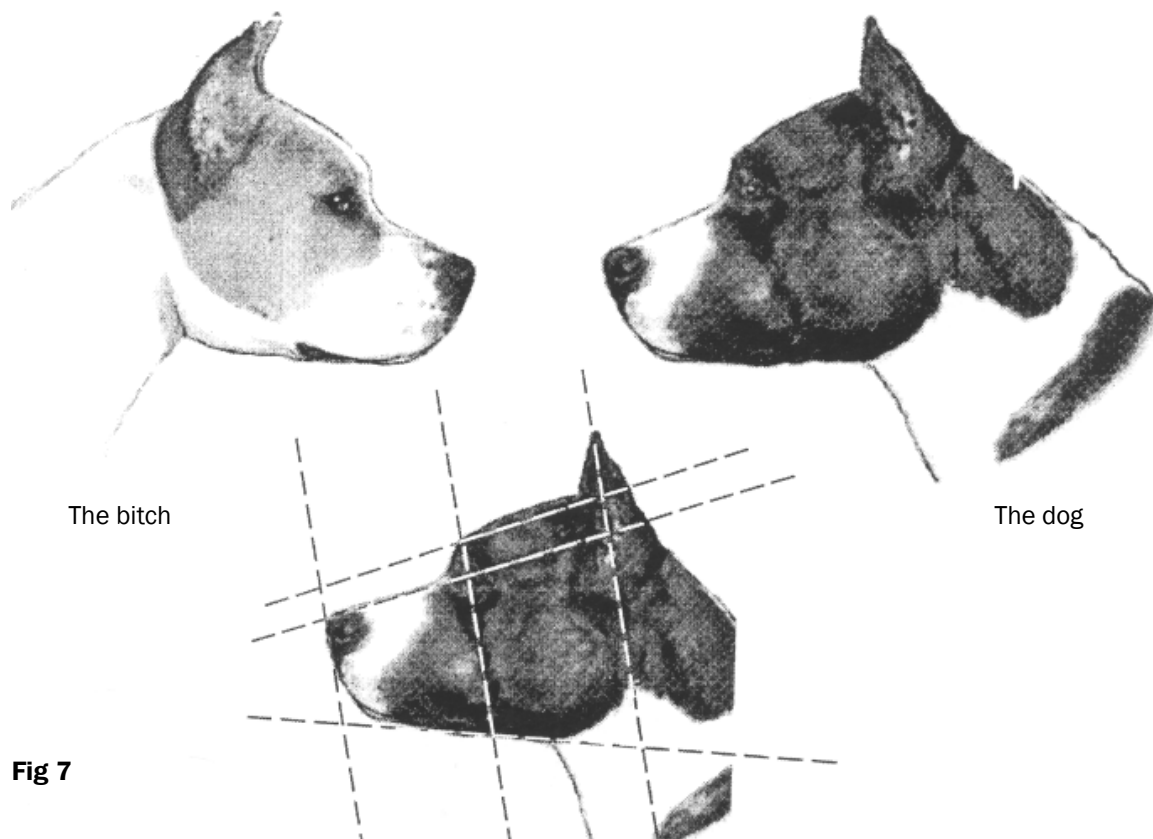


Fig 7

● EYES

Dark and round, low down in skull and set far apart. Light or pink eyes undesirable. No pink eyelids.

Dark eyes are essential to the proper expression. Light eyes are mentioned under “faults”. Eye colour should be brown, and as dark a shade as possible. The eyes are normal dog eyes, appearing fairly round, but not totally. They are not thin almond or triangular in appearance, but are set low down in the skull and deep. They should never protrude or bulge. They are of medium size-neither too small (piggy) nor over large. The expression is very direct, looking keen, confident, intelligent, courageous, never fearful, or evasive. “No pink eyelids” refers to the inner part of the eyelid. Although the author of the Standard was not perfectly clear in this regard, he stated later that he meant eye rims, without pink mucous membrane showing. We feel this to be a valid interpretation of this point. No haws showing or loose rims. If you choose to also consider this to mean fully pigmented eye rims rather than the pink ones, please treat pink eye rims as a cosmetic fault.

● EARS

Set high. Ears should be short and held rose or half pricked. Full drop to be penalised.

Ears are set high on the skull and are relatively short. The proper carriage is half prick or rose, with no preference mentioned. Full drop is to be penalised, but fully erect ears although possible are not mentioned to be penalised. Full drop, or hound ears are not the same as low set ears.

Fig 8

Natural ears – Half prick.
Good small ears, set high on head



Natural ears – Rose.
Good small ears, set nicely on head

• MOUTH

Upper teeth to meet tightly outside lower teeth in front. Undershot or overshot mouths undesirable.

A full complement of canine teeth, well developed, and large should be engaged in a well fitting scissor bite. As this was a breed developed to use its mouth in its work, missing teeth should be considered a fault, although not listed in the brief listing of faults in the Standard. The more teeth missing, the greater the fault. Undershot or overshot mouths are both specifically listed as faults. When checking teeth for fit the proper interleaving of the side teeth should be considered not just the small incisors across the front.

• NECK

Heavy, slightly arched, tapering from shoulders to back of skull. No looseness of skin. Medium length.

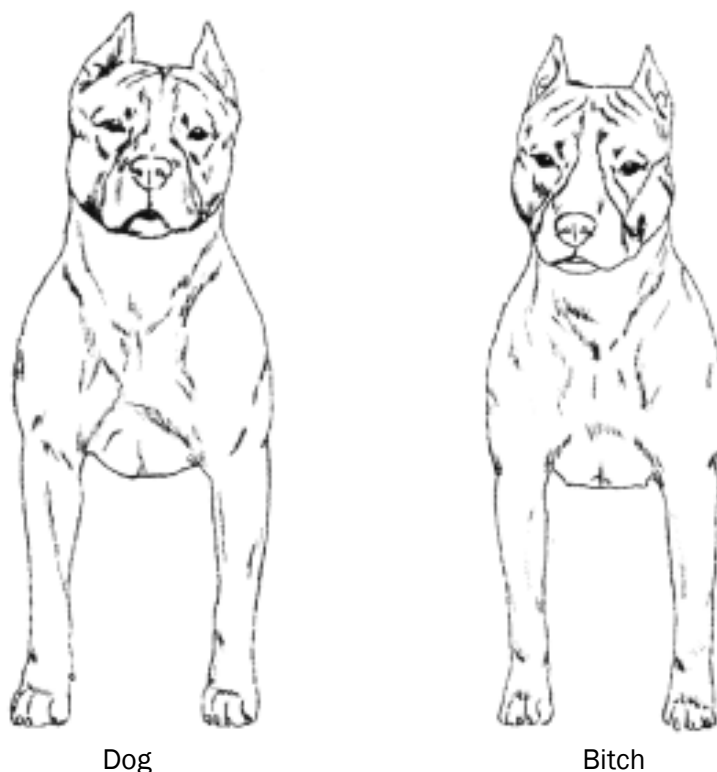
The neck should be heavy, slightly arched at the crest tapering from heaviest at shoulders to lighter at back of skull. No looseness of skin at the throat. Again a medium length is called for. A short neck will spoil the proportions of an otherwise good dog. An overly long neck or a long thin neck would also be wrong.

Fig 9



The angle of light over this bitch's face shows off very clearly the beautiful bony structure of the American Staffordshire Terrier head. The prominent ridge below the eye, the bulging cheek muscle, the abrupt fall of muzzle below the eye. Note the tight skin over the bones of the face, with the exception of the quizzical wrinkles on the forehead. She has nice close fitting lips and a muzzle that is only slightly light in lower jaw. Her eyes are quite dark, even in very direct sunlight, pigment is very dark, eyes are well shaped and set correctly in the skull.

Fig 10



● FOREQUARTERS

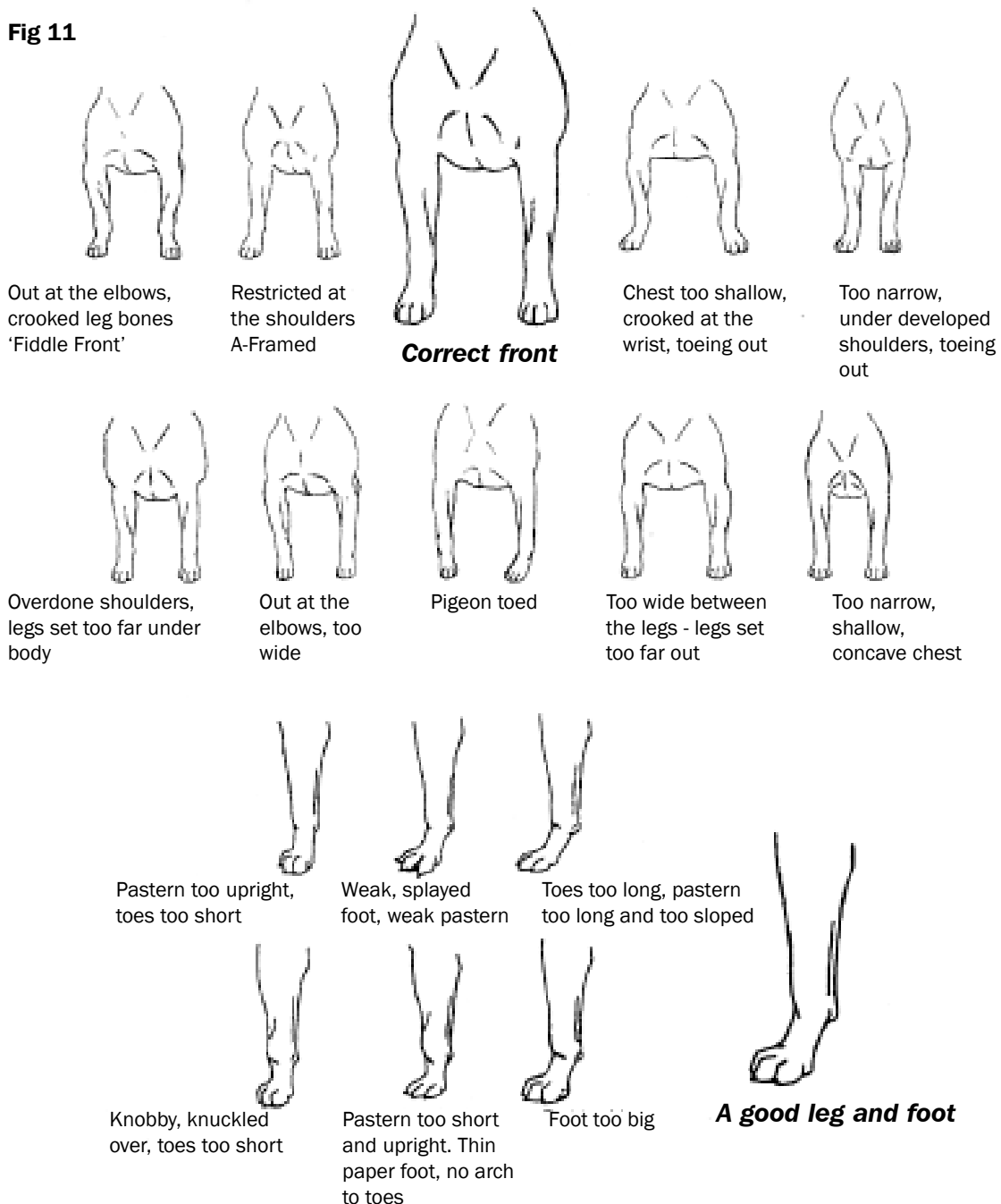
Shoulders strong and muscular with blades wide and sloping. The front legs should be straight, large or round bones, pasterns upright. No resemblance of bend in front. Forelegs set rather wide apart to permit chest development.

Strong and muscular shoulders that show good width and slope indicating a dog with moderate to good angulation, rather than a steep terrier front assembly. The upper arm should have good length, so that the legs do not appear put on too far forward on the body. Although muscular, the shoulders should not appear loaded or lumpy, and should be approximately as wide as the rear when viewed from above. The dog's neck should be set high on fairly well angulated shoulders to permit an alert head carriage, not stuck on the front of overly straight shoulders.

The Standard calls for the forelegs to be set "rather" wide apart, "rather", according to the dictionary, means "to a certain extent, somewhat, to a degree". The legs therefore should be moderately wide apart, not as wide as possible. As a rule of thumb, the shoulders and forelegs should be about the same width as the rear, when viewed from above. The dog should never look larger in the front than in the rear, but both ends should be in balance. The width of the chest has a direct bearing on the total agility and ease of movement of the dog. There should be good chest development, with strong muscle attachment, but not overdone for the sake of being the widest. The area of the chest between the forelegs should be rounded with muscle below the sternum. No hollow, concave or shallow look, the muscles of the lower chest should be round and flow smoothly into the brisket. The sternum should not appear prominent or bony.

“The front legs should be straight, large or round bones, pastern upright. No resemblance of bend in front”: The front legs should be straight, falling from elbows set close to the ribs. The bones should be of good size, never appearing spindly. Again as to size, a balance must be met to provide for agility. The legs should not appear overly heavy boned, either. The pastern is upright and strong. This does not necessarily mean a terrier front. There can and should be a slight slope to the pasterns but it is basically upright in appearance. No weakness to the pasterns. The reference to no bend in front is made to specifically forbid a fiddle or bulldog front, where the legs are actually crooked, and toe out at the end of curved pasterns. There should be no appearance of looseness or crookedness in the elbows or pasterns. The feet point forward not in or out.

Fig 11



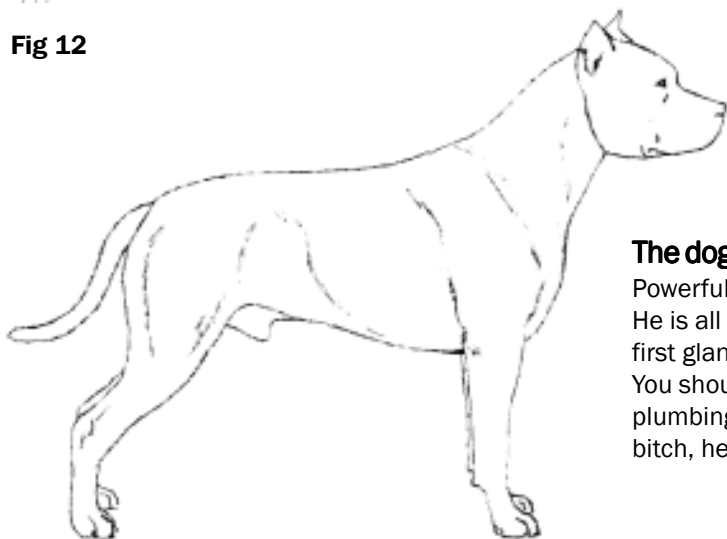
- **BODY**

Back fairly short. Slightly sloping from withers to rump with gentle short slope at rump to base of tail. Well sprung ribs, deep in rear. All ribs close together. Chest deep and broad. Loins slightly tucked.

This is not a square dog. This is not a short backed dog. The Standard says fairly short back, which indicates a moderately short back. The topline is not level, rather it slopes slightly from the withers to the rump (croup) and then shows a gentle short slope from the rump to the base of tail. This is also not a steep croup - but a gentle short slope. The loins are slightly tucked.

The dog should show well-sprung ribs, that continue back to the loins without tightening up. Viewed from above, the ribs, loins, and hips should show an “hourglass” shape, with a definite narrowing at the loins and more width at the ribs and hips. The ribs are not barrel shaped, nor are they slab-sided. Viewed from the front, the ribs should describe an oval with the longest distance from top to bottom, not from side to side. The lower line of the dog’s body should show good depth, with the brisket dropping approximately to the elbows or slightly below. The depth in rear ribs should continue back from the brisket to form a good cage for the heart and lungs.

Fig 12



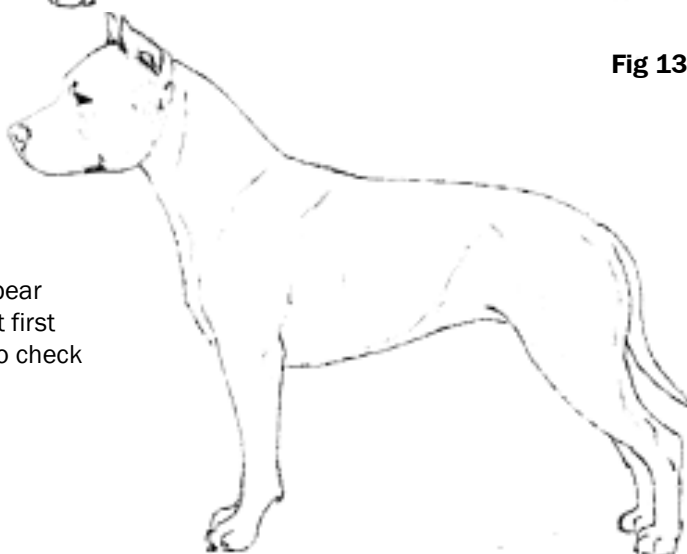
The dog

Powerful, confident, alert, alive, vigorous. He is all male dog. It should be obvious at first glance that he is definitely masculine. You should never have to look for plumbing to tell. If he looks at all like a bitch, he is incorrect.

Fig 13

The bitch

Although very powerful, she should appear totally feminine. It should be obvious at first glance that she is a bitch. If you have to check for plumbing, she is too doggy.



● **HINDQUARTERS**

Well muscled, let down at hocks, turning neither in nor out.

The hindquarters show well developed muscles at the buttocks, and upper and lower thigh. The upper thigh particularly, should be well developed on the inside, between the legs. The hocks are well let down, and parallel to each other, turning neither in nor out. There should be no suggestion of cowhocks, bowlegs or stifles turning out. The stifle should show good angulation, and be set low. The stifle and hock should both have good bend, but the bones of the lower thigh are not particularly long. The hindlegs, when hocks are perpendicular to the ground, should not be set very far behind the dog's buttocks and should appear of moderate length. The angulation of the shoulders and hips should be in balance.

Fig 14

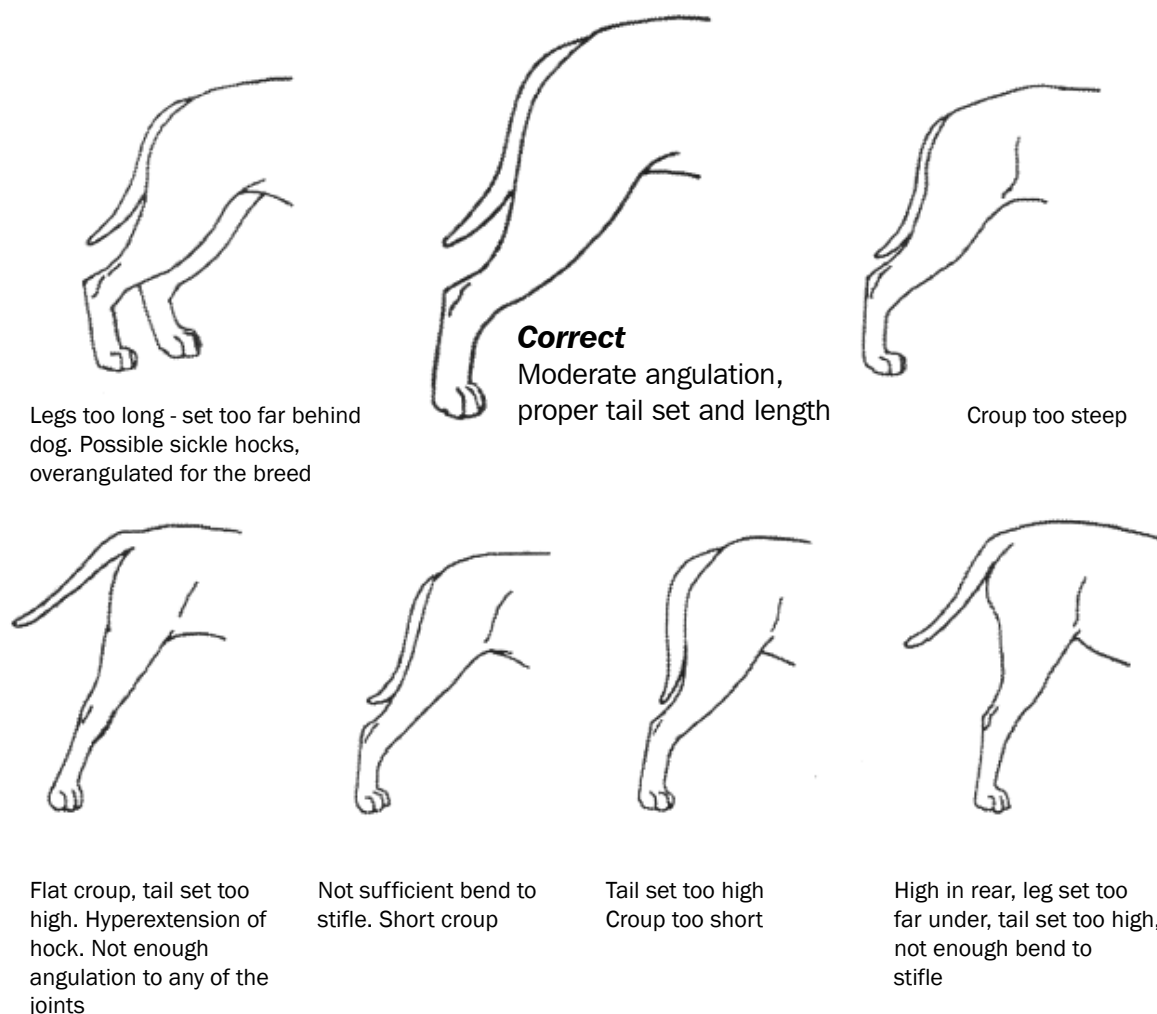
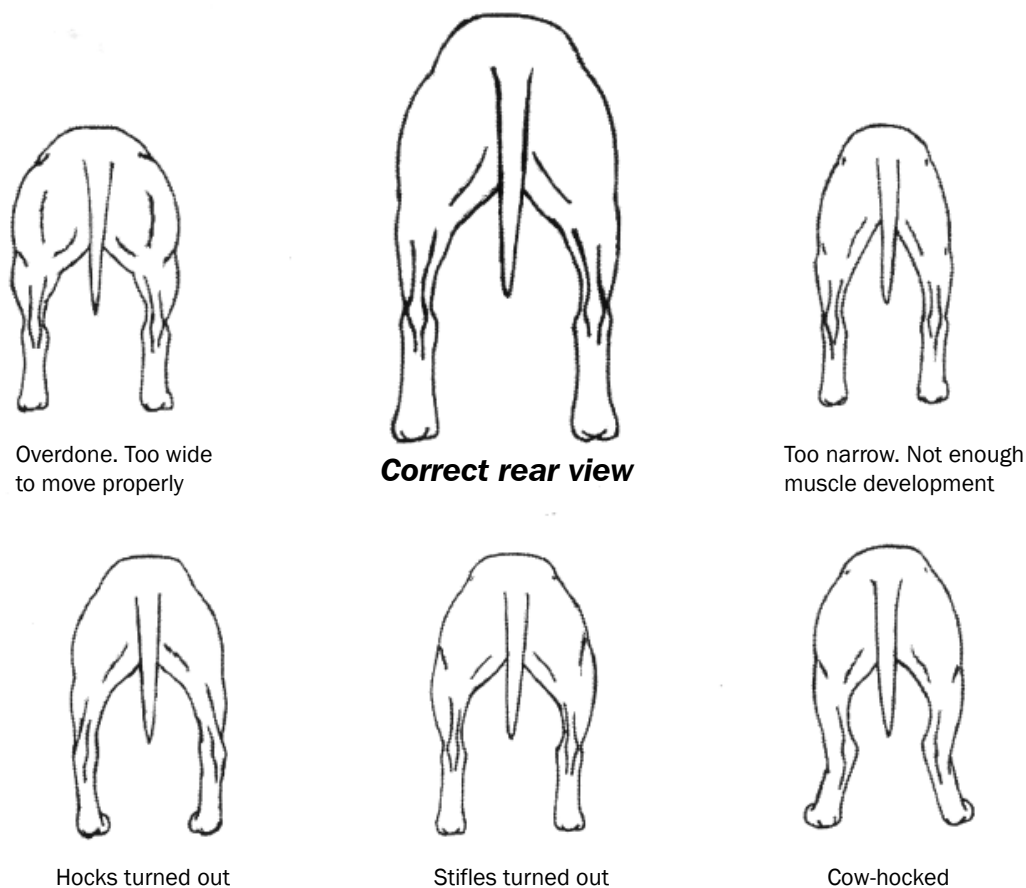


Fig 15



- **FEET**

Of moderate size, well arched and compact.

Feet that appear too large, too small or too flat probably are, as a good rule of thumb the feet should not be particularly larger or smaller than the dog's leg bone. No splayed toes.

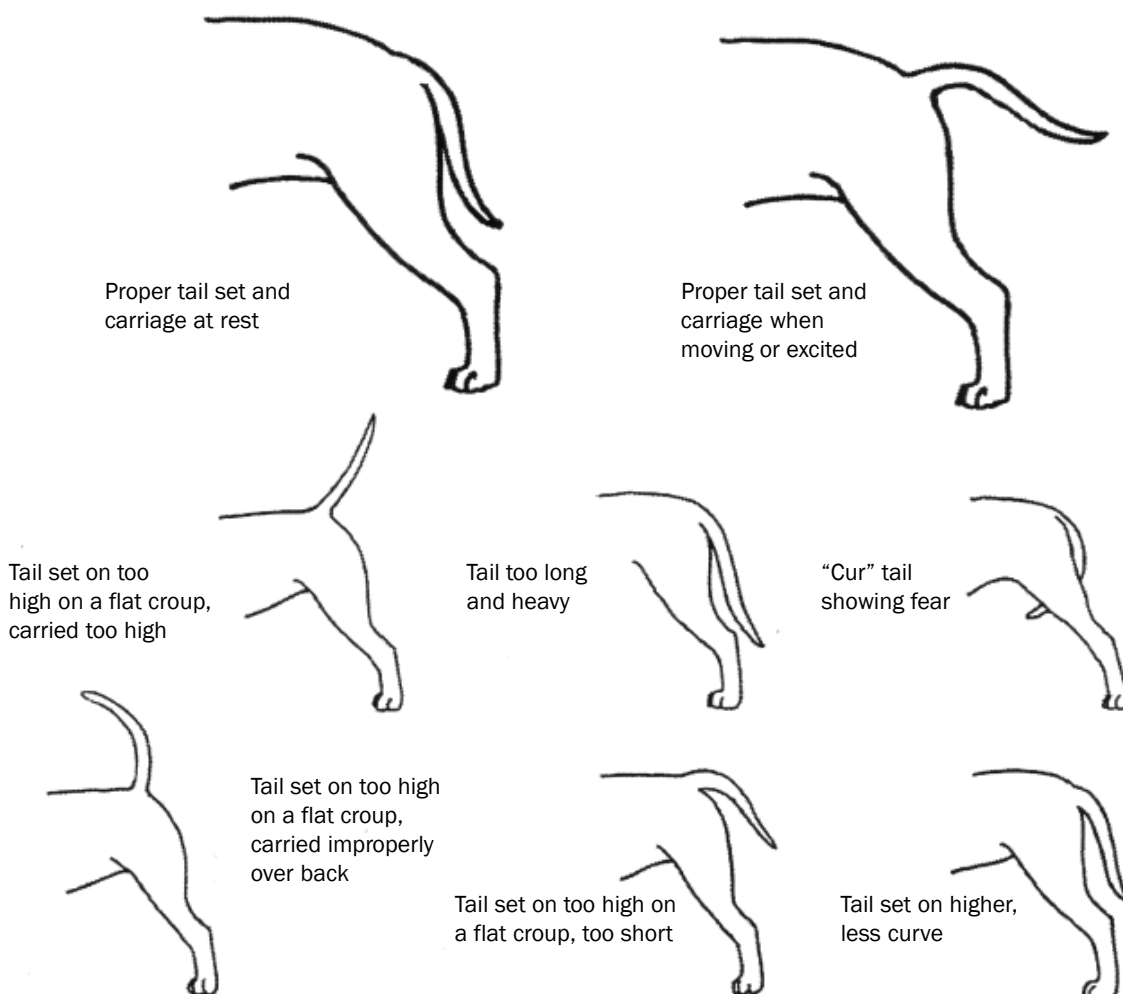
- **TAIL**

Short in comparison to size, low set, tapering to a fine point; not curled or held over back. Not docked. Tail too long or badly carried undesirable.

The tail is set low on the rump after a "gentle short slope" as described above under "BODY". It should not reach past the hocks, and may be somewhat shorter. It is traditionally described as an old-fashioned pump handle in carriage. It should not be curled or held over the back. The pump handle is gently "S" curved. A straighter tail, held in correct low position should not be faulted. Many dogs carry their tail higher when excited, but the tail should be low set, and not be held above the level of the back. "tail too long or badly carried" is listed under Faults. A too long tail is one extending past the hock and a badly carried tail would be one either curled or held over the back as described in the Standard. A tail held between the dog's hindlegs should be considered a sign of improper temperament. The ideal specimen must always display courage and confidence to a marked degree. Absolutely no consideration should be given to an exhibit that lacks this quality.

Fig 16

Tail carriage and set



● GAIT/MOVEMENT

Must be springy but without roll or pace.

This is the only reference to movement that the Standard makes and has become an area that is poorly understood. However this is a rather "normally" structured moderate dog, it should show "normal" dog movement. In other words the dog should move like an athlete. At slower speeds his footfalls will tend to be farther apart and as speed increases his feet will tend to converge towards a centreline under his body. This is the only way the dog could move as the Standard describes without rolling his body. He should trot not pace. He should show moderate good reach and his rear legs should drive him powerfully. His well arched feet, moderate angulation, powerful muscles, and generally good physical condition should provide him with a springy gait. All normal dog movement criteria should apply. He should not paddle, toe out, cross, weave, etc. etc. The front and hind feet should strike approximately the same distance apart leaving tracks in two lines rather than 3 or 4. The reference to springy gait denotes not only athleticism but also a state of mind. The dog should appear light on its feet and ready for whatever happens. It should never plod, or move in a listless or dull way.

- **COAT**

Short, close, stiff to the touch, and glossy.

- **COLOUR**

Any colour, solid, parti, or patched is permissible, but all white, more than 80% white, black and tan, and liver not to be encouraged.

Colour is another area that confuses some who read this Standard. The Standard clearly states: Any colour solid, parti or patched is permissible. This is a breed that comes in a great variety of colours and markings. All are clearly permissible-period. In the original *draft of the Standard* this section read simply that sentence. However when returned approved by the AKC the rest of the above had been added. At the time the club chose to accept the version that the AKC approved. As a historical note the author of the Standard thought that the “*all white, more than 80% white, not to be encouraged*” was added at the request of The Bull Terrier Club of America, which was worried that there would be recognition problems between the two breeds. “*The black and tan liver not to be encouraged*”, is worded exactly like the original English version of the Staffordshire Bull Terrier Standard that was written about the same time in England. Whatever the reason for the last part, this is a breed that does come in all colours and all are acceptable. No colour appears in the list of faults. The wording of “*not to be encouraged*”, is not very strong and colour should not be detrimental to an otherwise good specimen. At the most it is only a cosmetic consideration and has very little to do with the conformation or temperament of the dog in question - both of which are much more important.

- **SIZE**

Height and weight should be in proportion.

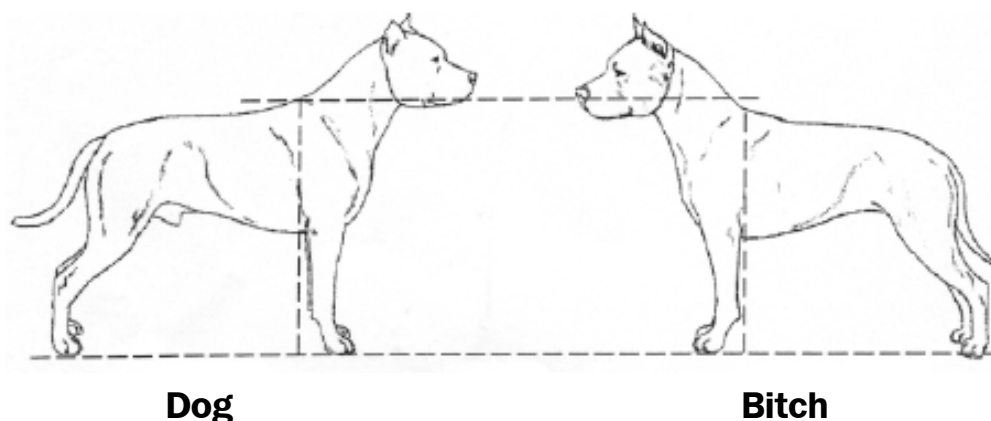
Height:

Dogs approx 46-48 cms (18-19 ins) at shoulders

Bitches approx 43-46 cms (17-18 ins) at shoulders is considered preferable.

The historical dog the Standard was written to describe averaged approximately 46-48 cms (18 to 19 inches) and 21.75-27.2 kgs (48-60 lbs), with bitches 43-46 cms (17 to 18 inches) and 19.0-25.0 kgs (42-55 lbs). These are approximately the proportions that should be considered preferable. There will always be some variation in sizes and weight, but many of today's dogs are indeed larger than intended by the original Standard. Unfortunately, the weight and bone size has increased even faster than the height, resulting in specimens that have a completely skewed weight to height ratio. This increase in size is encouraged by judges who wrongly reward dogs based on larger size / greater weight equating better specimens. This is not the proper way to judge this breed. **All other considerations being equal the moderate size dog should be preferred and the sizes given above should be considered preferable as stated in the Standard.** The dog of moderate size is a balance between power and agility. To increase the weight decreases agility to the detriment of this balance.

Fig 17



● FAULTS

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog.

NOTE:

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

A dudley nose is an unpigmented flesh coloured nose. Light eyes are eyes other than dark brown. Pink eyes would be like an albino (not generally seen). Tail length reaching below the hocks would be too long. Badly carried would be a tail carried too high above the level of the back, curved over the back, curled, or carried tucked under the belly. Undershot or overshot mouths – upper teeth not meeting closely in front of lower teeth.

Any deviation from the Standard should be considered faulty. The degree of fault would depend upon the degree of deviation. Although not specifically mentioned as a fault by the Standard, an improper temperament is the most undesirable quality possible and should never be rewarded. The ideal specimen must always display courage and confidence to a marked degree. Absolutely no consideration should be given to an exhibit that lacks this quality. No consideration should be given to an exhibit that appears aggressive, threatening or shy towards humans. **These are completely incorrect for the breed and are inexcusable.**

In addition a dog whose physical characteristics or lack of soundness make him unsuitable according to the general description should not be considered for placement. In general proper temperament is the most important quality, followed by proper physical structure and the soundness that must accompany it.

Such faults as light eyes, long tail, improper nose colour; less favoured coat colours are considered rather cosmetic in nature and do not interfere with the animals suitability for work. Although these qualities are the only ones listed under faults **they should not carry as much weight as the proper temperament and the structure for the breed – essential qualities that are well described in the Standard.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This publication is from the document originally prepared by the Staffordshire Terrier Club of America, Inc under the title “Looking at the American Staffordshire Terrier”.

It is intended as an aid to breeders, exhibitors, owners and fanciers of the American Staffordshire Terrier, but particularly as a guide for judges of the breed.

To achieve the above objectives, appropriate illustrations and discussions on the Official Standard, covering both the virtues and faults of the breed, have been included.

In the Australian edition the American Staffordshire Terrier Standard used is the ANKC Breed Standard for the American Staffordshire Terrier, adopted in Australia on 01/01/87.

This was reformatted, in keeping with ANKC policy, from The American Kennel Club Breed Standard for the American Staffordshire Terrier, adopted 10/06/1936, with the following change — because Australian law prohibits the cropping of ears, all reference to cropped ears has been deleted. Cropped eared illustrations have, however, been used in the Breed Standard Extension to demonstrate other characteristics of the breed.

The Australian National Kennel Council appreciates the help, cooperation and advice of the President and members of the Staffordshire Terrier Club of America Inc in the production of this Breed Standard Extension.