

Boxer

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General Appearance: The *ideal* Boxer is a medium-sized, square built dog of good substance with short back, strong limbs, and short, tight-fitting coat. His well developed muscles are clean, hard and appear smooth under taut skin. His movements denote energy. The gait is firm, yet elastic, the stride free and ground-covering, the carriage proud. Developed to serve as guard, working and companion dog, he combines strength and agility with elegance and style. His expression is alert and temperament steadfast and tractable.

The chiseled head imparts to the Boxer a unique individual stamp. It must be in correct proportion to the body. The broad, blunt muzzle is the distinctive feature, and great value is placed upon its being of proper form and balance with the skull.

In judging the Boxer, first consideration is given to general appearance to which attractive color and arresting style contribute. Next is overall balance with special attention devoted to the head, after which the individual body components are examined for their correct construction, and efficiency of gait is evaluated.

Size, Proportion, Substance: *Height*--Adult males 22½ to 25 inches; females 21 to 23½ inches at the withers, preferably, males should not be under the minimum nor females over the maximum: however, proper balance and quality in the individual should be of primary importance since there is no size disqualification. *Proportion*--The body in profile is of square proportion in that a horizontal line from the front of the forechest to the rear projection of the upper thigh should equal the length of a vertical line dropped from the top of the withers to the ground. *Substance*--Sturdy with balanced musculature. Males larger boned than their female counterparts.

Head: The beauty of the head depends upon harmonious proportion of muzzle to skull. The blunt muzzle is 1/3 the length of the head from the occiput to the tip of the nose, and 2/3 the width of the skull. The head should be clean, not showing deep wrinkles (wet). Wrinkles typically appear upon the forehead when ears are erect, and folds are always present from the lower edge of the stop running downward on both sides of the muzzle. *Expression*--Intelligent and alert. *Eyes*--Dark brown in color, not too small, too protruding or too deep-set. Their mood-mirroring character combined with the wrinkling of the forehead, gives the Boxer head its unique quality of expressiveness. *Ears*--Set at the highest points of the sides of the skull are cropped, cut rather long and tapering, raised when alert. *Skull* The top of the skull is slightly arched, not rounded, flat nor noticeably broad, with the occiput not overly pronounced. The *forehead* shows a slight indentation between the eyes and forms a distinct stop with the topline of the muzzle. The *cheeks* should be relatively flat and not bulge (cheekiness), maintaining the clean lines of the skull and should taper into the muzzle in a slight, graceful curve. *Muzzle*--The muzzle, proportionately developed in length, width and depth, has a shape influenced first through the formation of both jawbones, second through the placement of the teeth, and third through the texture of the lips. *The top of the muzzle should not slant down (downfaced), nor should it be concave (dishfaced);* however, the tip of the nose should lie slightly higher than the root of the muzzle. The *nose* should be broad and black. The *upper jaw* is broad where attached to the skull and maintains this breadth except for a very slight tapering to the front. The *lips*, which complete the formation of the muzzle, should meet evenly in front. The upper lip is thick and padded, filling out the frontal space created by the projection of the lower jaw, and laterally is supported by the canines of the lower jaw. Therefore, these canines must stand far apart and be of good length so that the front surface of the muzzle is broad and squarish and, when viewed from the side, shows moderate layback. The *chin* should be perceptible from the side as well as from the front. *Bite*--The Boxer bite is undershot; the lower jaw protrudes beyond the upper and curves slightly upward. The incisor teeth of the lower jaw are in a straight line, with the canines preferably up front in the same line to give the jaw the greatest possible width. The upper line of incisors is slightly convex with the corner upper incisors fitting snugly back of the lower canine teeth on each side.

Faults-- Skull too broad. Cheekiness. Wrinkling too deep (wet) or lacking (dry). Excessive flews. Muzzle too light for skull. Too pointed a bite (snipy), too undershot, teeth or tongue showing when mouth closed. Eyes noticeably lighter than ground color of coat.

Neck, Topline, Body: *Neck*--Round, of ample length, muscular and clean without excessive hanging skin (dewlap). The neck has a distinctly marked nape with an elegant arch blending smoothly into the withers. *Topline*--Smooth, firm and slightly sloping. *Body*--The *chest* is of fair width, and the *forechest* well defined and visible from the side. The *brisket* is deep, reaching down to the elbows; the depth of the body at the lowest point of the brisket equals half the height of the dog at the withers. The *ribs*, extending far to the rear, are well arched but not barrel shaped. The *back* is short, straight and muscular and firmly connects the withers to the hindquarters. The *loins* are short and muscular. The *lower stomach line* is slightly tucked up,

blending into a graceful curve to the rear. The **croup** is slightly sloped, flat and broad. **Tail** is set high, docked and carried upward. **Pelvis** long and in females especially broad. **Faults**--*Short heavy neck. Chest too broad, too narrow or hanging between shoulders. Lack of forechest. Hanging stomach. Slab-sided rib cage. Long or narrow loin, weak union with croup. Falling off of croup. Higher in rear than in front.*

Forequarters: The **shoulders** are long and sloping, close-lying, and not excessively covered with muscle (loaded). The **upper arm** is long, approaching a right angle to the shoulder blade. The **elbows** should not press too closely to the chest wall nor stand off visibly from it. The **forelegs** are long, straight and firmly muscled and when viewed from the front, stand parallel to each other. The **pastern** is strong and distinct, slightly slanting, but standing almost perpendicular to the ground. The dewclaws may be removed. **Feet** should be compact, turning neither in nor out, with well arched toes. **Faults**--*Loose or loaded shoulders. Tied in or bowed out elbows.*

Hindquarters: The hindquarters are strongly muscled with angulation in balance with that of the forequarters. The **thighs** are broad and curved, the breech musculature hard and strongly developed. **Upper and lower thigh** long. **Leg** well angulated at the stifle with a clearly defined, well "let down" hock joint. Viewed from behind, the hind legs should be straight with hock joints leaning neither in nor out. From the side, the leg below the hock (metatarsus) should be almost perpendicular to the ground, with a slight slope to the rear permissible. The **metatarsus** should be short, clean and strong. The Boxer has no rear dewclaws. **Faults**--*Steep or over-angulated hindquarters. Light thighs or overdeveloped hams. Over-angulated (sickle) hocks. Hindquarters too far under or too far behind.*

Coat: Short, shiny, lying smooth and tight to the body.

Color: The colors are fawn and brindle. Fawn shades vary from light tan to mahogany. The brindle ranges from sparse, but clearly defined black stripes on a fawn background, to such a heavy concentration of black striping that the essential fawn background color barely, although clearly, shows through (which may create the appearance of "reverse brindling"). White markings should be of such distribution as to enhance the dog's appearance, but may not exceed one-third of the entire coat. *They are not desirable on the flanks or on the back of the torso proper.* On the face, white may replace part of the otherwise essential black mask and may extend in an upward path between the eyes, but it must not be excessive, so as to detract from true Boxer expression. **Faults**--*Unattractive or misplaced white markings. Disqualifications*--*Boxers that are any color other than fawn or brindle. Boxers with a total of white markings exceeding one-third of the entire coat.*

Gait: Viewed from the side, proper front and rear angulation is manifested in a smoothly efficient, level-backed, ground covering stride with powerful drive emanating from a freely operating rear. Although the front legs do not contribute impelling power, adequate "reach" should be evident to prevent interference, overlap or "sidewinding" (crabbing). Viewed from the front, the shoulders should remain trim and the elbows not flare out. The legs are parallel until gaiting narrows the track in proportion to increasing speed, then the legs come in under the body but should never cross. The line from the shoulder down through the leg should remain straight although not necessarily perpendicular to the ground. Viewed from the rear, a Boxer's rump should not roll. The hind feet should "dig in" and track relatively true with the front. Again, as speed increases, the normally broad rear track will become narrower. **Faults**--*Stilted or inefficient gait. Lack of smoothness.*

Character and Temperament: These are of paramount importance in the Boxer. Instinctively a "hearing" guard dog, his bearing is alert, dignified and self-assured. In the show ring, his behavior should exhibit constrained animation. With family and friends, his temperament is fundamentally playful, yet patient and stoical with children. Deliberate and wary with strangers, he will exhibit curiosity but, most importantly, fearless courage if threatened. However, he responds promptly to friendly overtures honestly rendered. His intelligence, loyal affection and tractability to discipline make him a highly desirable companion. **Faults**--*Lack of dignity and alertness. Shyness.*

The foregoing description is that of the ideal Boxer. Any deviations from the above described dog must be penalized to the extent of the deviation.

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