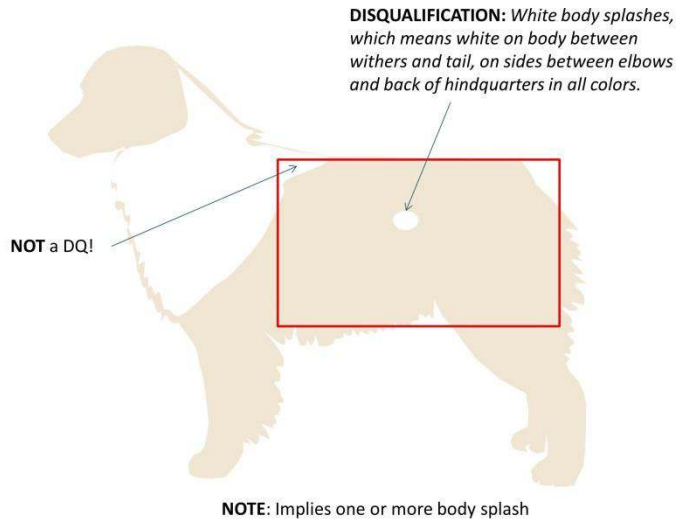
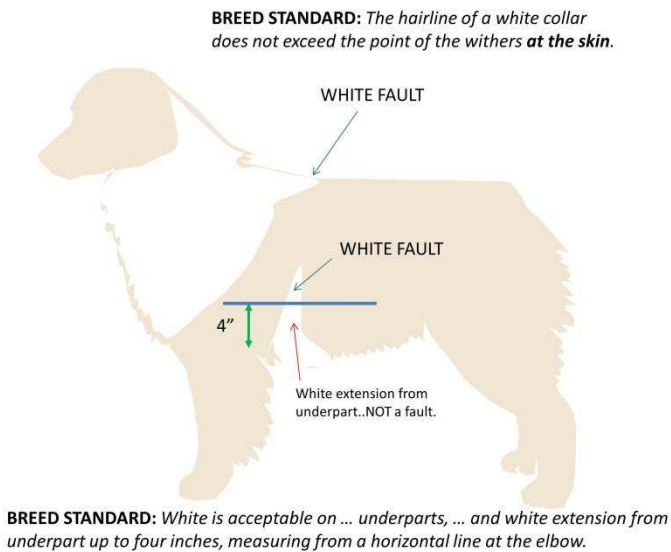


United States Australian Shepherd Association Clarification on White Faults and White Disqualification



The ONLY color disqualification is “white body splash(es)!”



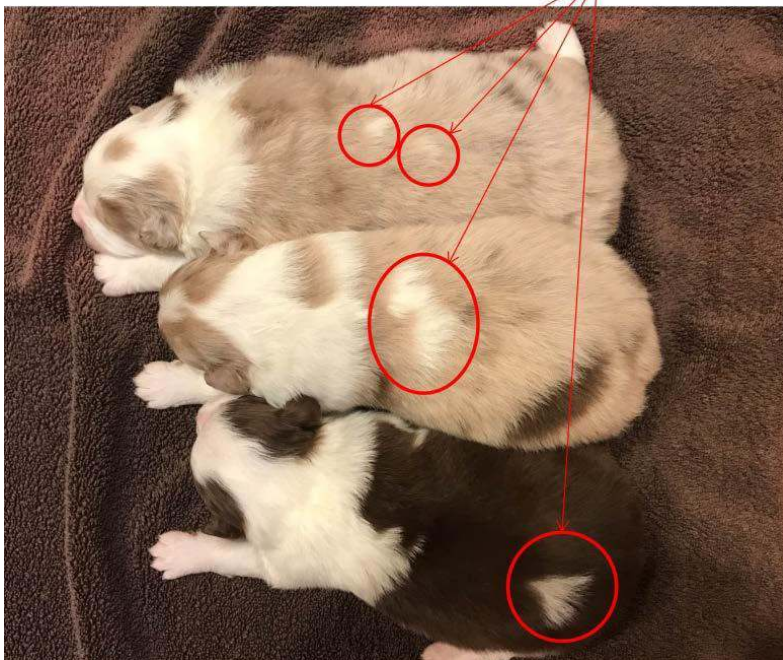


FAULT: White extends more than 4 inches above a horizontal line at the elbow



NO FAULT: White does not extend past the point of the withers at the skin

White Body Splash



DISQUALIFICATION

The AKC approved breed standard for the Australian Shepherd includes the following stated disqualification regarding color and markings: *“White body splashes, which means white on body between withers and tail, on sides between elbows and back of hindquarters in all colors.”* To properly comprehend and apply this aspect in judging our breed, one should consider the following:

1. The punctuation (the comma) is critical in this statement. It is indicating that the verbiage following the comma refers to what the verbiage states in front of the comma.

The correct way (and the intention of the founders) is to read the statement; “White body splashes, which means white **[body splashes]** on body between withers and tail, on sides between elbows and back of hindquarters in all colors.”

2. White collar extension and white underpart extensions are not mentioned in any disqualification in the Australian Shepherd AKC breed standard. The stated AKC Breed Standard Disqualifications are:

Disqualifications

Undershot. Overshot greater than 1/8 inch.

White body splashes, which means white on body between withers and tail, on sides between elbows and back of hindquarters in all colors.

3. *AKC The Complete Dog Book, 19th Edition: Glossary page 738:*
Splashed: Irregularly patched, color on white or white on color.
4. *Canine Terminology* by Harold R. Spira, page 124:
Spot...Occasionally the term ‘spot’ is employed to describe a distinct patch of color on other parts of the body. It is not unreasonable to liken the term “splash” with “spot.”
5. White body splashes are often referred to as “islands” of white fully surrounded by color. Extensions of white (belly and collar) are described as “peninsulas” of white extending into color.
6. The section on **Color** is specific in stating: *“The hairline of a white collar does not exceed the point of the withers at the skin.”* Comprehension of this statement would lead to the conclusion that the ends of the white hair on the collar can extend beyond the withers; it is the root of the white hairs that determine if it is consistent to or a deviation from the standard.

If one interprets a white-collar extension as a disqualifying fault, they correspondingly would have to interpret any belly white extension within the red box on the diagram provided as a disqualifying fault as well. However, a belly white extension is not a stated disqualification in the breed standard. As with the collar extending past the point of the withers AT THE SKIN, it would be “deviation from standard” and should be weighed appropriately in the determination of awards based on the severity of the deviation.

7. It is probable that the genes controlling the collar and belly extensions are related to the Irish Spotting Pattern and potentially the white body splashes could be due to the Piebald gene. Hence it would be normal in a breed standard to discuss the two genetic affects as separate items as is done in the Australian Shepherd breed standard.
8. Since the Australian Shepherd became fully recognized in 1991 few dogs have been disqualified for a white collar/white belly extension. The vast majority of AKC judges are reading the disqualification as it is written and intended, but questions do occasionally arise.

9. We recognize that the wording of the current breed standard disqualification could benefit from a minor change to the wording (see sample above) for ultimate clarity, but at this time the parent club has no scheduled breed standard revision. Thus, we ask you to consider this information to assist you in judging our breed based on the breed standard that our founders developed and intended.

The United States Australian Shepherd Association Judges Education Committee is committed to assisting current and prospective judges in the understanding of our breed's standard. We understand that judging does include a level of subjectivity and the fact it is the judge's duty to apply their interpretation of a breed's approved standard in the determination of awards.

As the guardian for our breed, and thus responsible for authoring the breed standard ultimately approved by the AKC; a goal of the USASA Judges Education Committee is to clarify the standard to both judges and breeders alike. Consistent BREED EDUCATION benefits everyone.

Please do not hesitate to contact the USASA Judges Education committee for additional information, or to arrange for a parent club approved mentor.