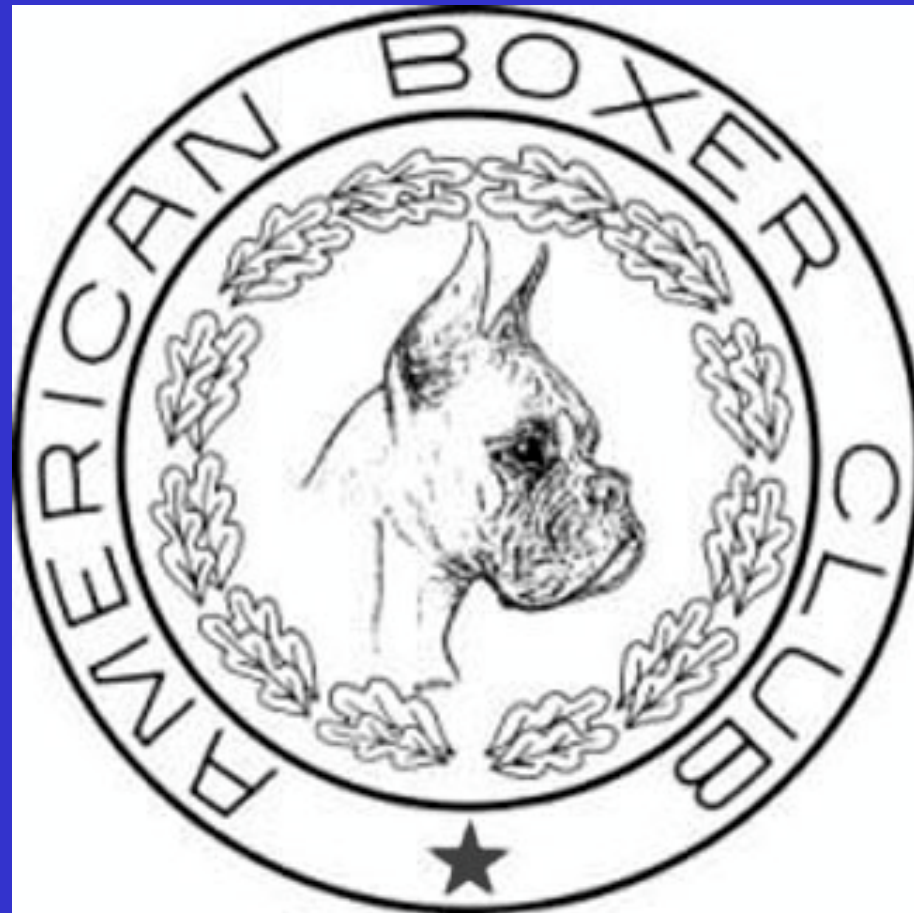


Judging the Boxer





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The following topics will be covered...

1. **History and Function**
2. **General Appearance**
3. **Profile**
4. **Unique Boxer Head**
5. **The Boxer Bite**
6. **Eyes**
7. **Ears -- Cropped and Uncropped**
8. **Structure**
9. **Movement**
10. **Boxer Temperament**

History and Function of the Boxer

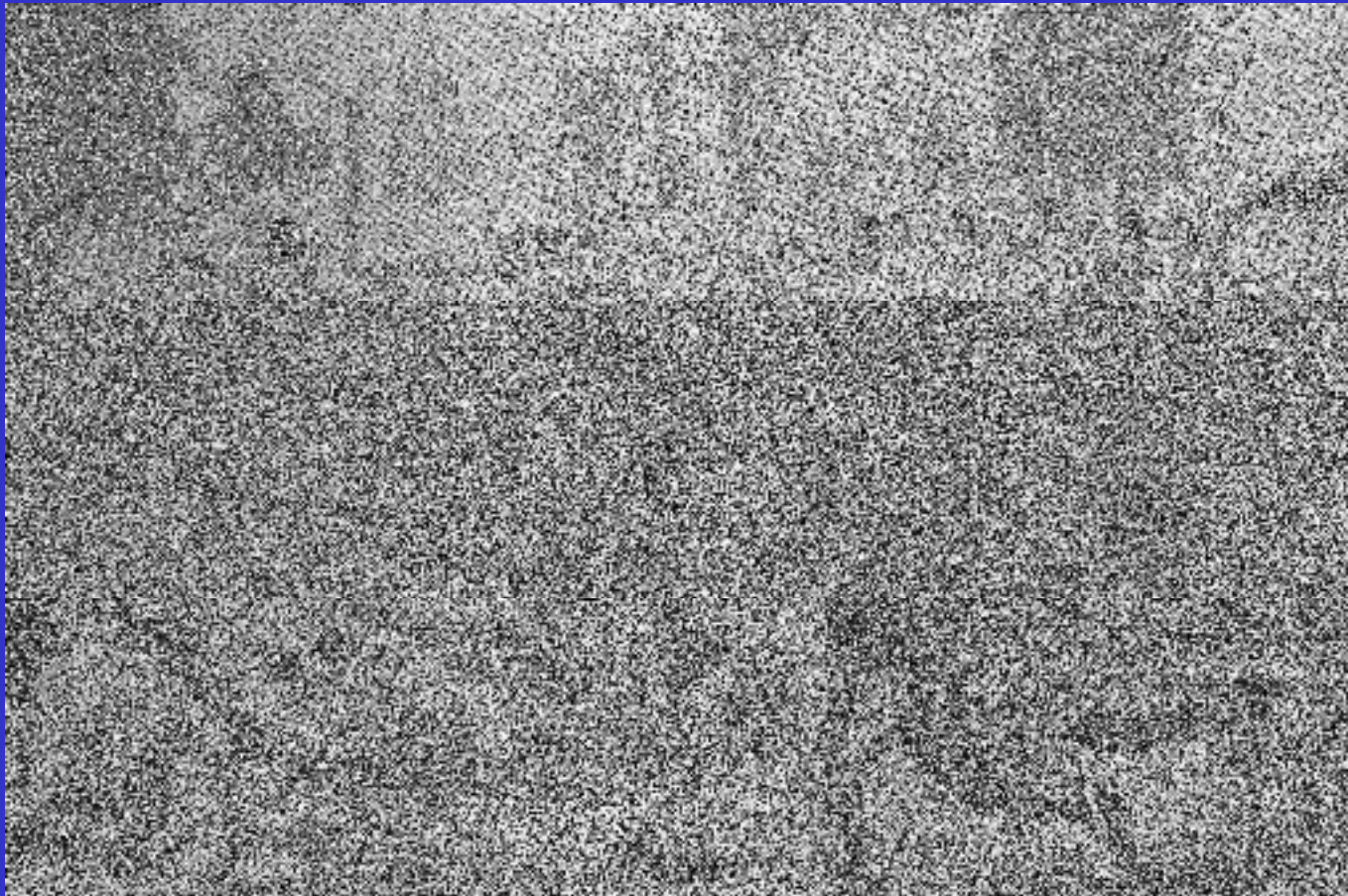
History

- **The Boxer originated in Germany in the late 1800's.**
- **Boxers are a man-made breed. They descend from the "Brabant Bullenbeisser," a Mastiff type dog.**
- **These dogs were later crossed with a smaller Mastiff type (originator of the English Bulldog)**
- **The original dogs had strong undershot jaw.**

Function

- **Strong teeth were needed in order for the Boxer to lock onto their prey and continue holding until the master arrived.**
- **The tip of the nose was set slightly higher than the root, allowing the Boxer to breathe while holding onto prey.**

The Bullenbeiser



Boxers have been used as...

- **Family dogs**
- **Assistance dogs**
- **Therapy dogs**
- **Seeing-eye dogs**
- **Search and rescue dogs**

Therapy Boxer



Assistance Boxer



Search and Rescue Boxer



Seeing-Eye Boxer



Judging the Boxer

From the Standard...

- **In judging the Boxer first consideration is given to general appearance and overall balance.**
- **Special attention is then devoted to the head. . .**
- **. . .the individual body components are examined for their correct construction, and. . .**
- **. . .the gait evaluated for efficiency.**

Points to Remember

- **Observe the general appearance.**
- **Have a mental vision of type.**
- **Look at the complete dog.**
- **Do the physical characteristics form a harmonious whole?**
- **Does the dog give the impression of nobility, alertness, strength, and grace?**

General Appearance

General Appearance -- Male



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Size

- **Adult males 23 to 25 inches; females 21½ to 23½ inches at the withers.**
- **Proper balance and quality in the individual should be of primary importance since there is no size disqualification.**

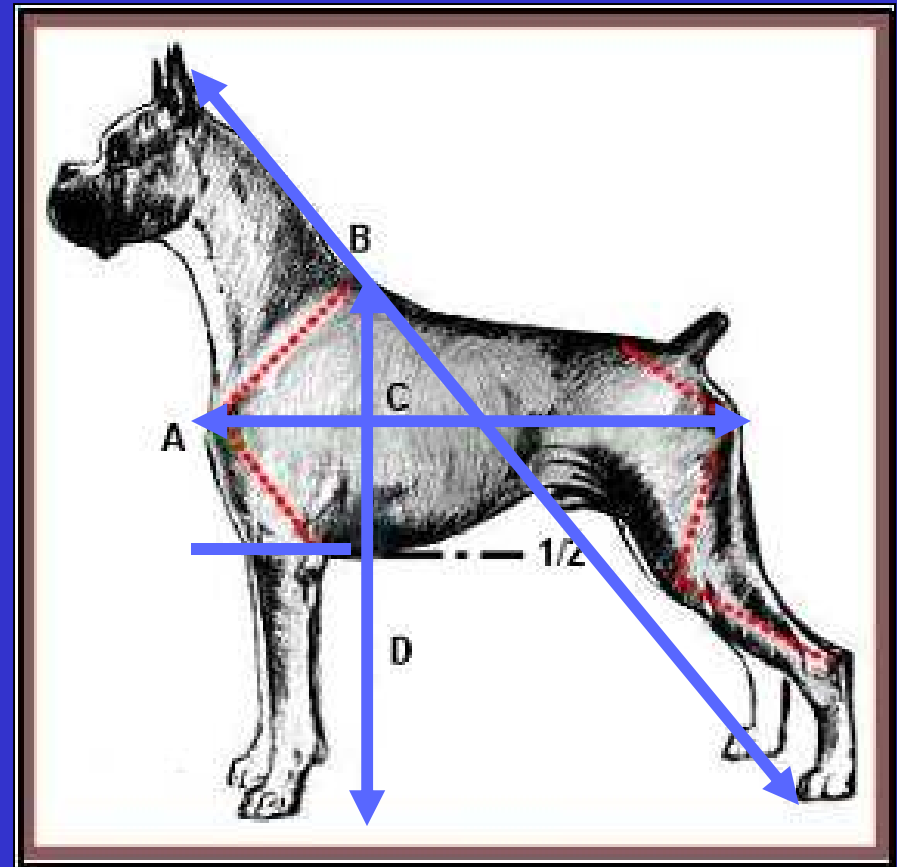
Balance

- Each individual part must appear in proportion to the rest of the dog.
- The front and rear angulation must be correct and in harmony. (Balanced)
- The Boxer should be a *medium size, square dog.*



Proportion

- The body in profile is square 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.



Proportion

- Each individual part must appear in proportion to the rest of the dog.
- The front and rear angulation must be correct and in harmony. (Balanced)
- The Boxer should be a *medium size, square* dog.



Square, Substantive, Sound

- **The ideal Boxer is:**
 - **a medium-sized, square built dog of good substance**
 - **with short back, strong limbs, and short, tight-fitting coat**
 - **well developed muscles are clean, hard and appear smooth under taut skin.**

Square, Substantive, Sound



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Male and Female



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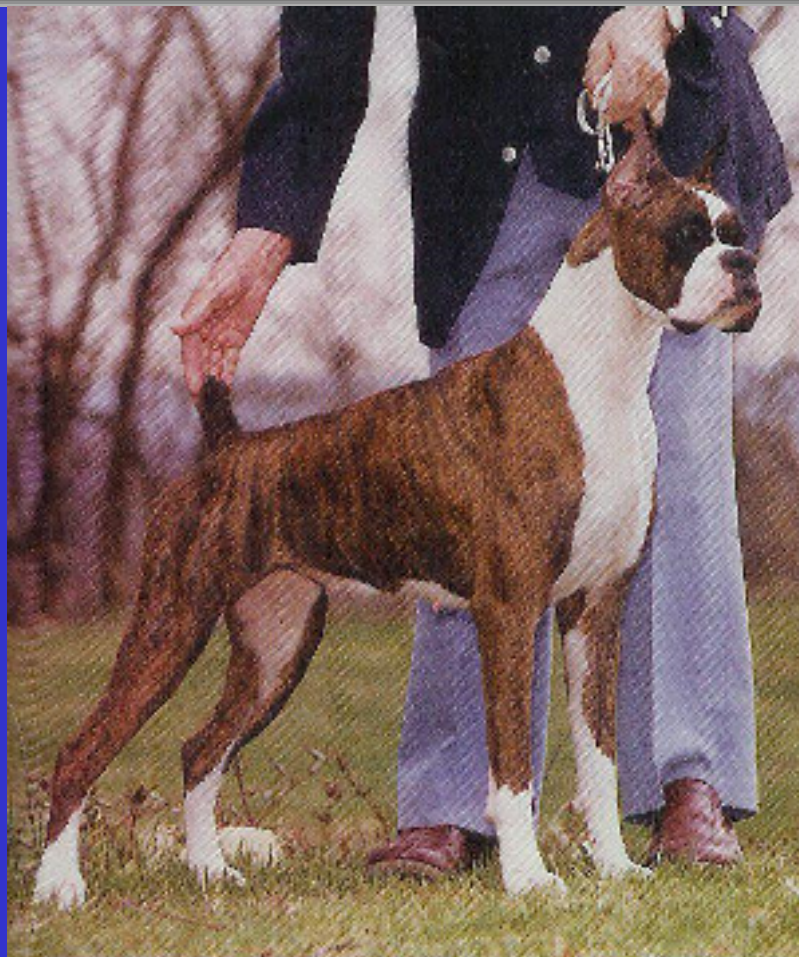
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Gait, Carriage, Style

- **The gait is firm yet elastic, the stride free and ground-covering.**
- **The carriage of the Boxer is proud.**
- **The Boxer combines strength and agility with elegance and style.**
- **His expression is alert and his temperament steadfast and tractable.**

Carriage and Style



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Profile

Neck

- **Round**
- **Ample length, muscular**
- **Clean without excessive hanging skin (dewlap).**
- **Distinctly arched and elegant nape**
- **Blending smoothly into the withers.**



Topline

- The back is short, straight, muscular, firm, and smooth.
- The topline is slightly sloping when the Boxer is at attention, leveling out when in motion.

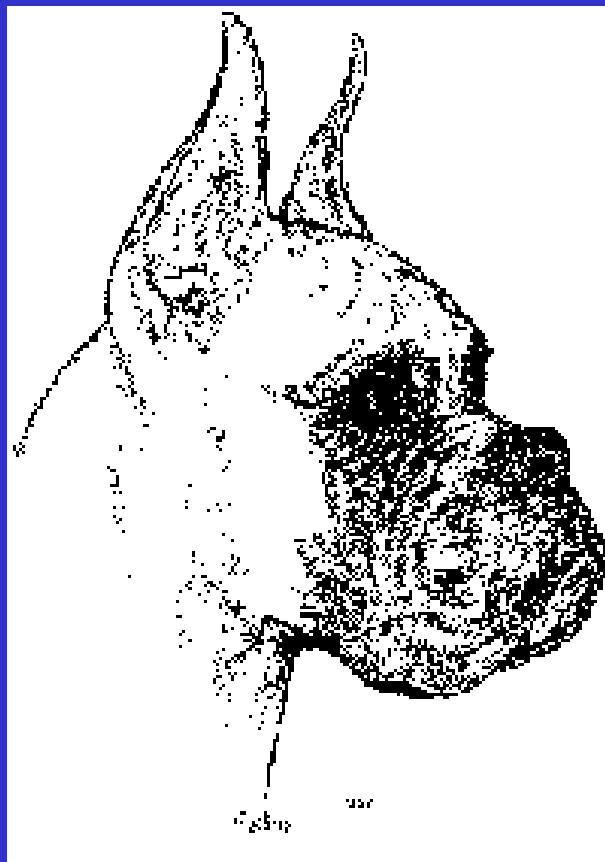


Head -- the Boxer's Unique Feature

Head

- **The chiseled head imparts to the Boxer a unique individual stamp.**
- **The head 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.**

The Boxer Head



Male



Female

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Muzzle to Skull

- The beauty of the head depends upon the harmonious proportion of muzzle to skull. The blunt muzzle is $\frac{1}{3}$ the length of the head from the occiput to the tip of the nose, and $\frac{2}{3}$ the width of the skull.

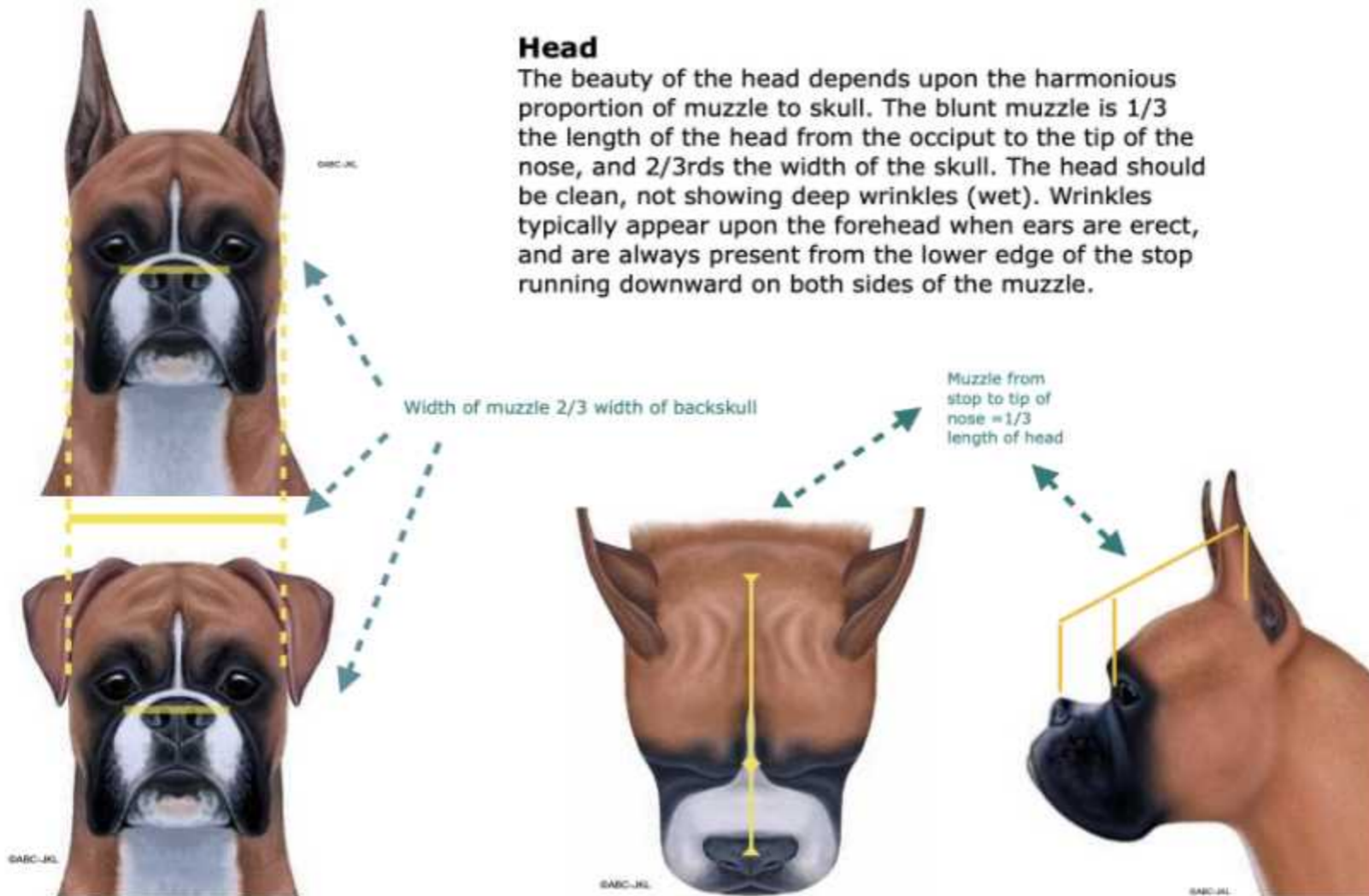


Muzzle to Skull

- 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 as they taper into the muzzle in a slight, graceful curve.



The Boxer Head



Head

The beauty of the head depends upon the harmonious proportion of muzzle to skull. The blunt muzzle is $\frac{1}{3}$ the length of the head from the occiput to the tip of the nose, and $\frac{2}{3}$ 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 are always present from the lower edge of the stop running downward on both sides of the muzzle.

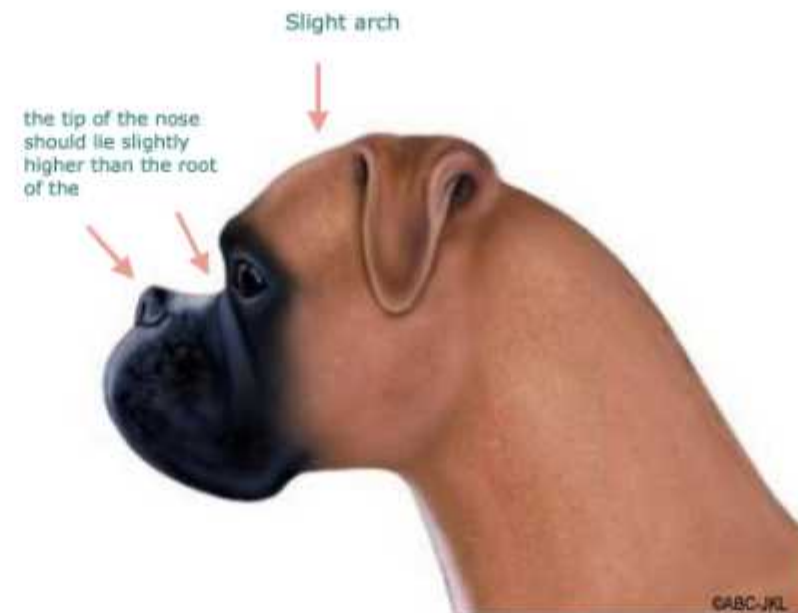
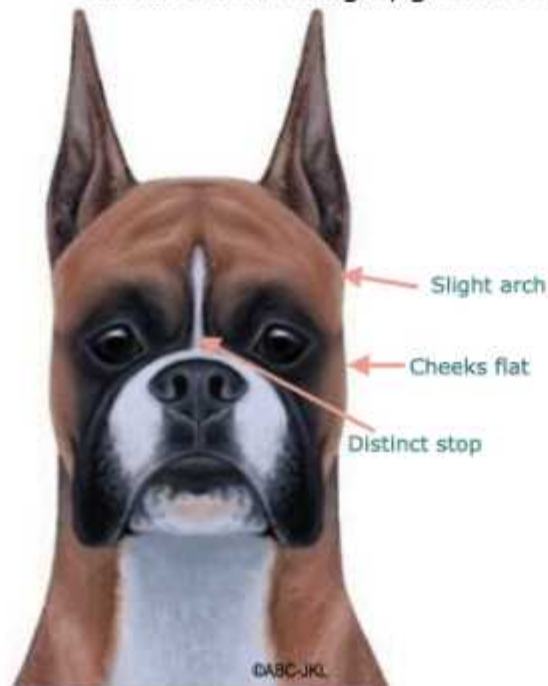
Width of muzzle $\frac{2}{3}$ width of backskull

Muzzle from stop to tip of nose = $\frac{1}{3}$ length of head

Expression: Intelligent and alert.

Muzzle to Skull (cont.)

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 as they taper into the muzzle in a slight, graceful curve.



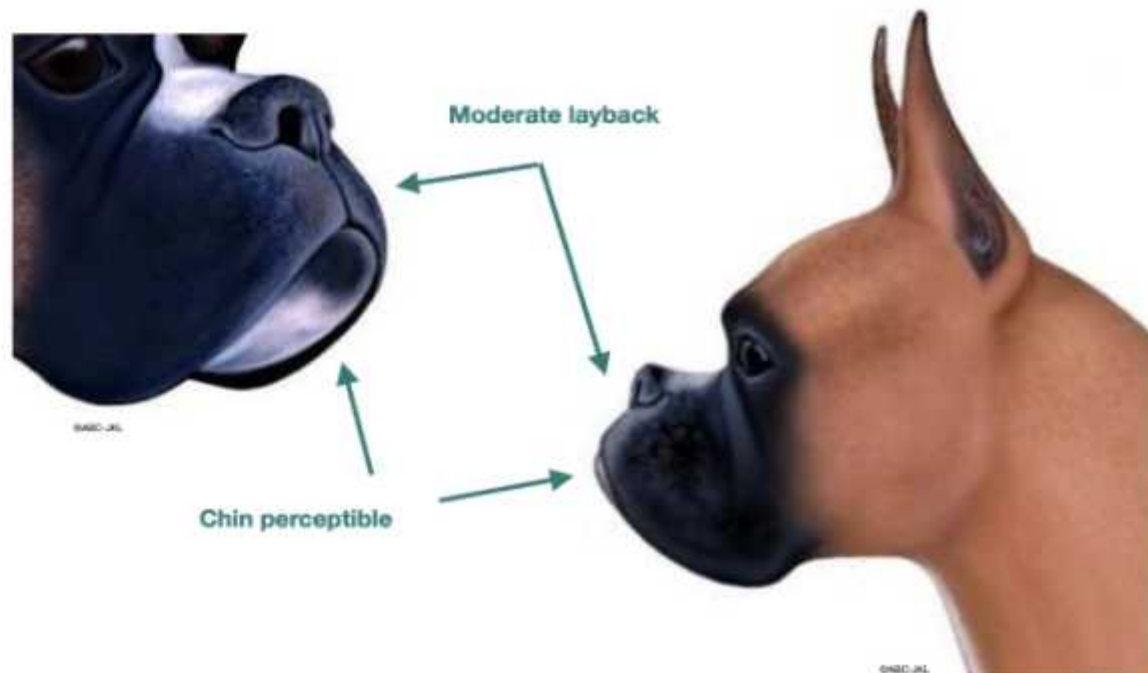
Muzzle and Nose:

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.



Muzzle to Skull (cont.)

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. Any suggestion of an overlip obscuring the chin should be penalized.

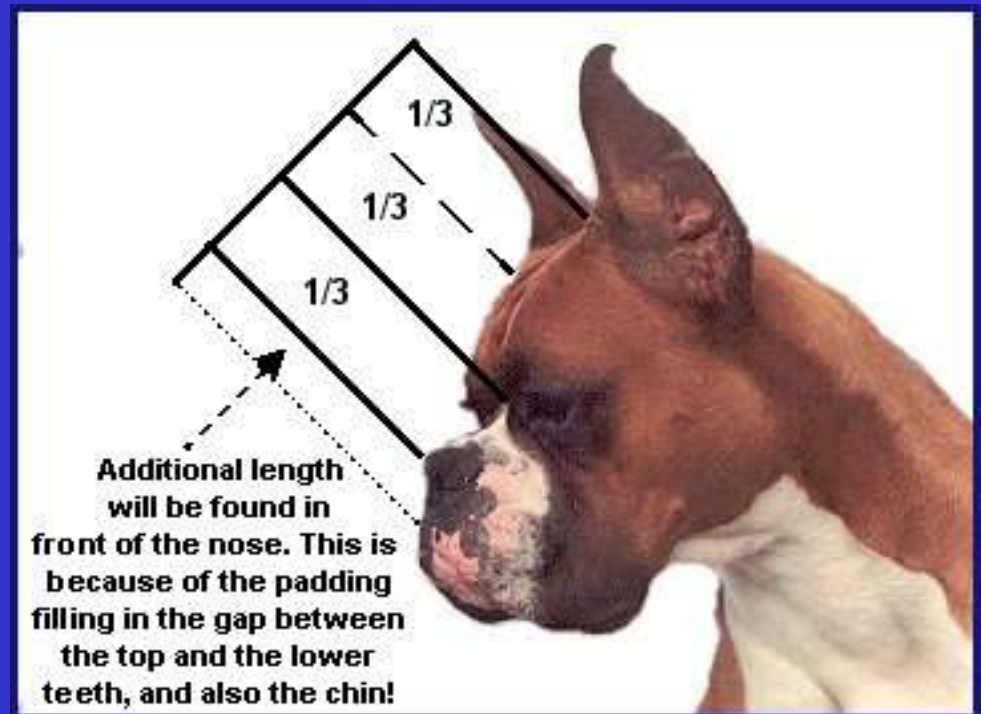


Lips meet evenly in front...no over-lip



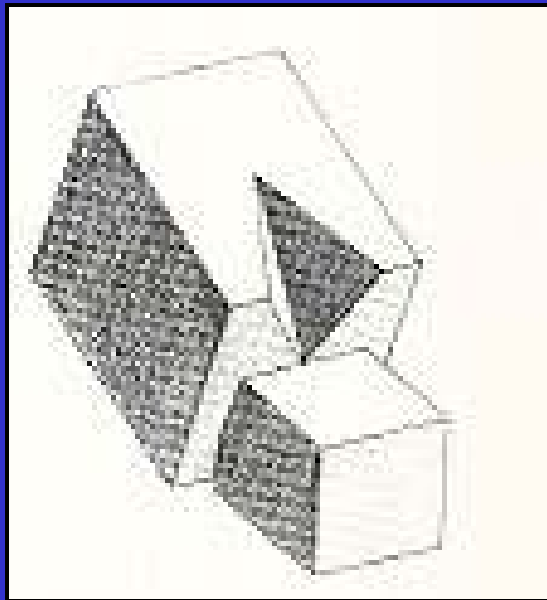
Visually Measuring the Head

- Harmonious proportion of muzzle to skull.
- The blunt muzzle is $\frac{1}{3}$ the length of the head from the occiput to the tip of the nose
- The muzzle is $\frac{2}{3}$ the width of the skull. The tip of the nose is higher than the root of the muzzle.
- The chin should be perceptible both in profile and from the front. There should be no overlip.
- The head is clean, without excessive wrinkles.



Boxer Male Head

- The head gives you the impression of a smaller square attached to a larger square.



Boxer Male Head

- **Harmonious proportion of muzzle to skull**
- **Eyes - Dark, full and generous**
- **Ears set high**
- **Lips meet evenly - No overlip.**



Boxer Male Head



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A Good Head Does Not Coarsen With Age



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Eyes

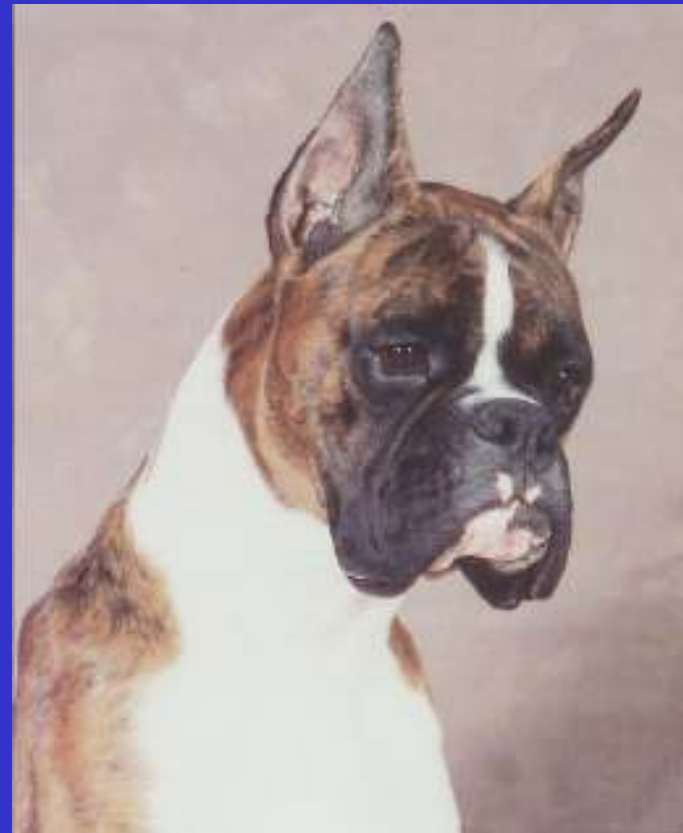
- **Dark brown in color, frontally placed, generous, not too small, too protruding, or too deep-set.**
- **Their mood-mirroring character, combined with the wrinkling of the forehead, gives the Boxer head its unique quality of expressiveness.**
- **Third eyelids preferably have pigmented rims.**



Ears -- Cropped or Uncropped

Ears

- Set at the *highest points of the sides of the skull*, the ears are *customarily cropped, cut rather long and tapering, and raised when alert.*
- If uncropped, the ears should be of *moderate size, thin, lying flat and close to the cheeks in repose, but falling forward with a definite crease when alert.*



Uncropped Ears -- U.S.



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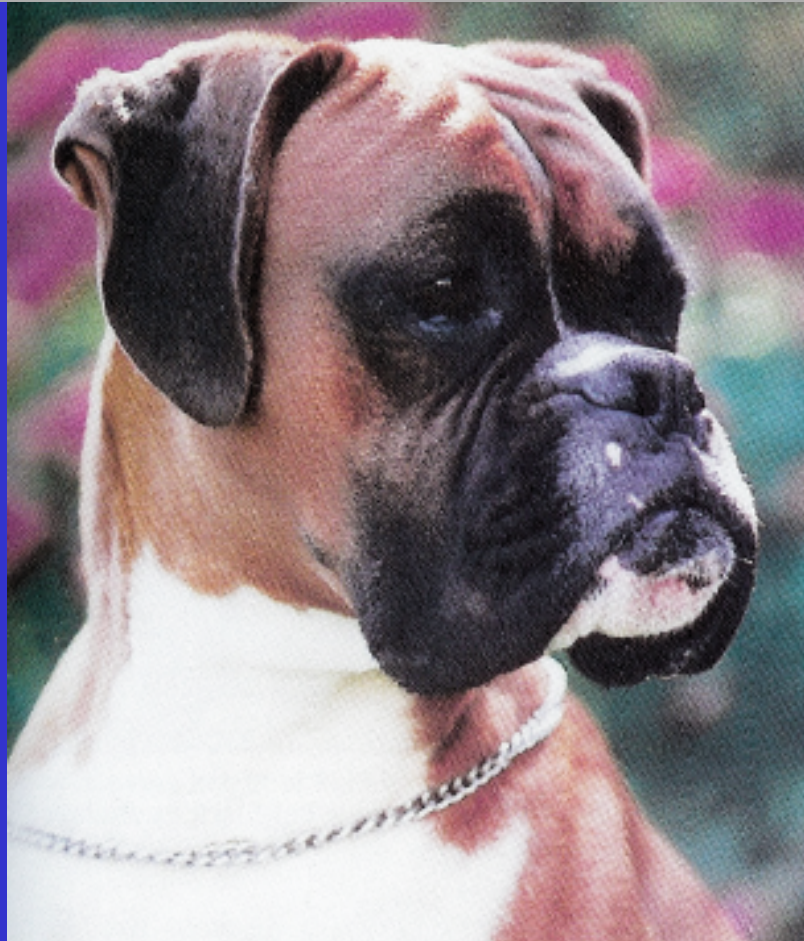
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Uncropped Ears -- British



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Uncropped Ears -- British



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Uncropped Ears -- British



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And now...plain and uncropped



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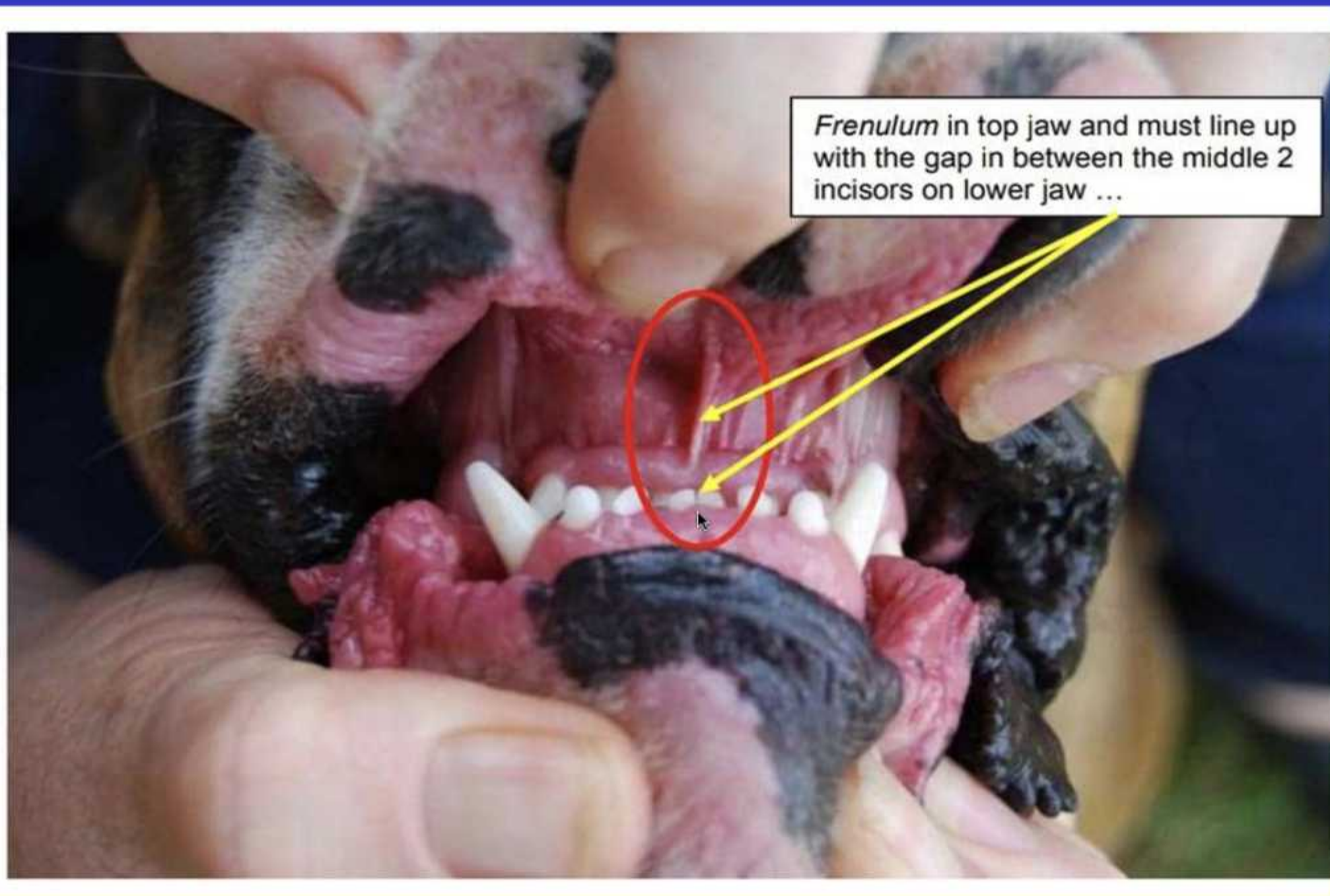
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The Boxer Bite

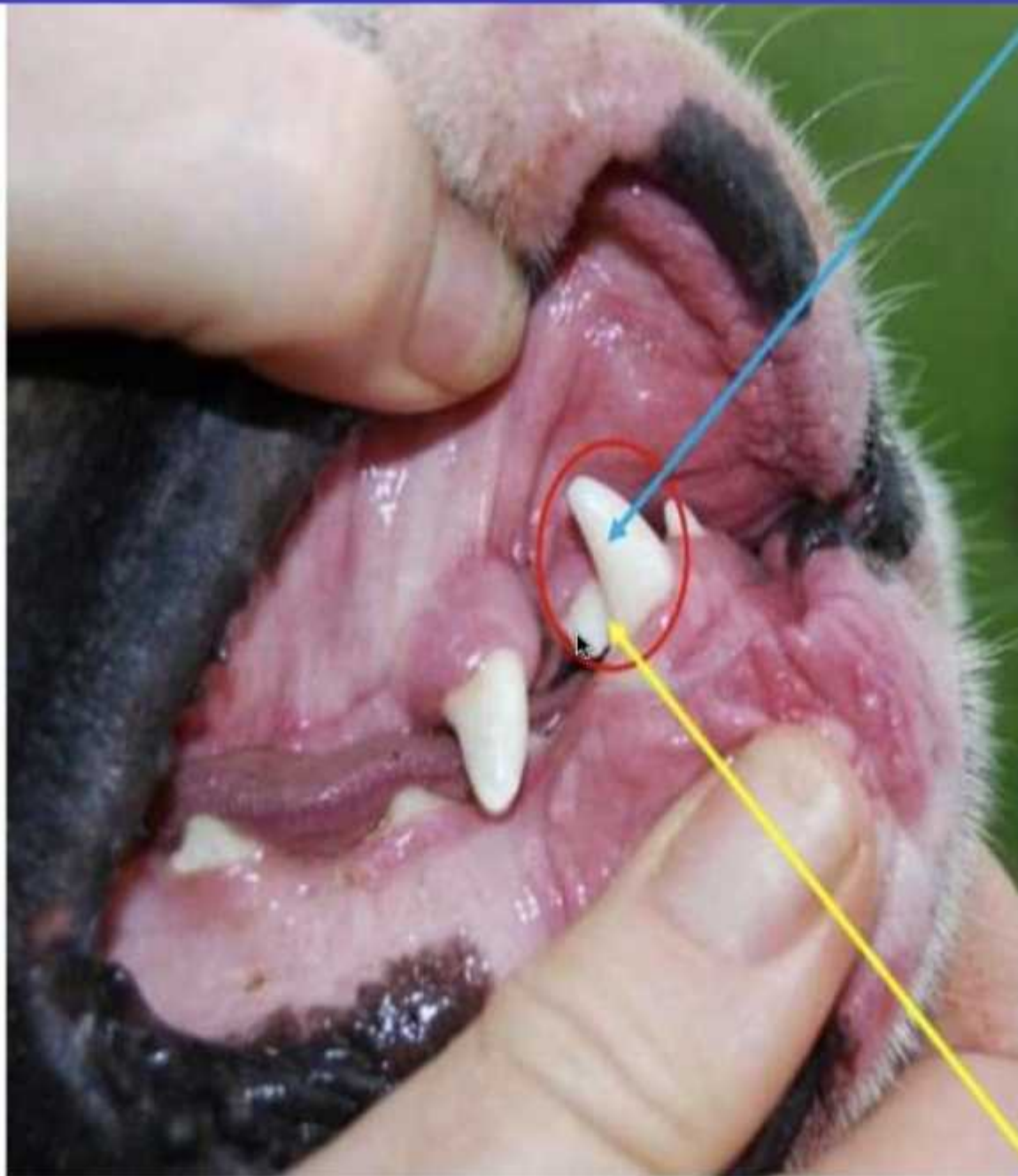
Boxer Bite



Front View Boxer Bite



Side View Boxer Bite

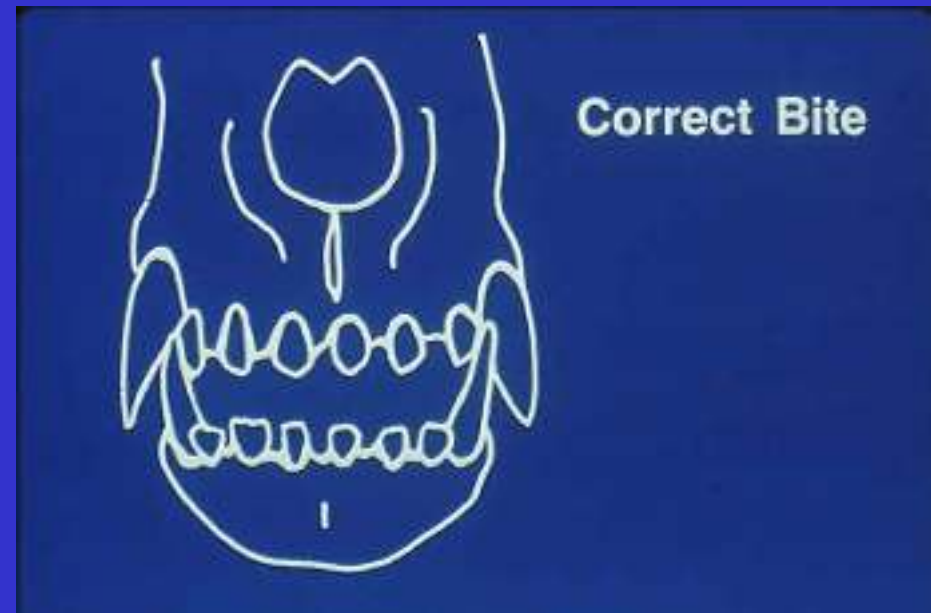


The distance between the upper incisor on the right hand side and the lower canine on the right hand side must be exactly the same as the distance between the upper incisor on the left hand side and the lower canine on the left hand side...



Boxer Bite

- The Boxer bite is undershot, the lower jaw protruding beyond the upper and curving 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.



Boxer Bite

- The upper line of the incisors is slightly convex with the corner upper incisors fitting snugly in back of the lower canine teeth on each side.
- Neither the teeth nor the tongue should ever show when the mouth is closed.





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Structure

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.**



Body

- The lower stomach line is slightly tucked up, blending into a graceful curve to the rear.
- The croup is slightly sloped, flat and broad.
- The pelvis is long, and in females especially broad.
- The tail is set high, docked, and carried upward. An undocked tail should be severely penalized.



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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.



Forequarters

- 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.



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 are long.**
- **The legs are well-angulated at the stifle, neither too steep nor over-angulated, with clearly defined, well “let down” hock joints.**



Hindquarters

- 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.



Movement

Movement



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Ground-Covering Stride



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Color

Fawn and Brindle

- **Short, shiny, lying smooth and tight to the body.**
- **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)**

Light Brindle



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Classic Fawn



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Markings

- **White markings, if present, 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.**
- **The absence of white markings, the so-called "plain" fawn or brindle, is perfectly acceptable, and should not be penalized in any consideration of color.**

Markings -- Visual Effect



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Color Disqualification

- **Boxers that are any color other than fawn or brindle. Boxers with a total of white markings exceeding one-third of the entire coat.**

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.**
- **Any evidence of shyness, or lack of dignity or alertness, should be severely penalized.**

Temperament

- The adult Boxer should exhibit confidence, dignity, and showmanship.
- The inexperienced Boxer puppy *may* exhibit signs of being unsure of surroundings.
- Fear of judge and/or surroundings, is not proper Boxer temperament and is unacceptable.
- Any evidence of shyness, or lack of dignity or alertness, should be severely penalized.
- Aggression to other dogs is not considered a fault.

Confidence, Dignity, Showmanship



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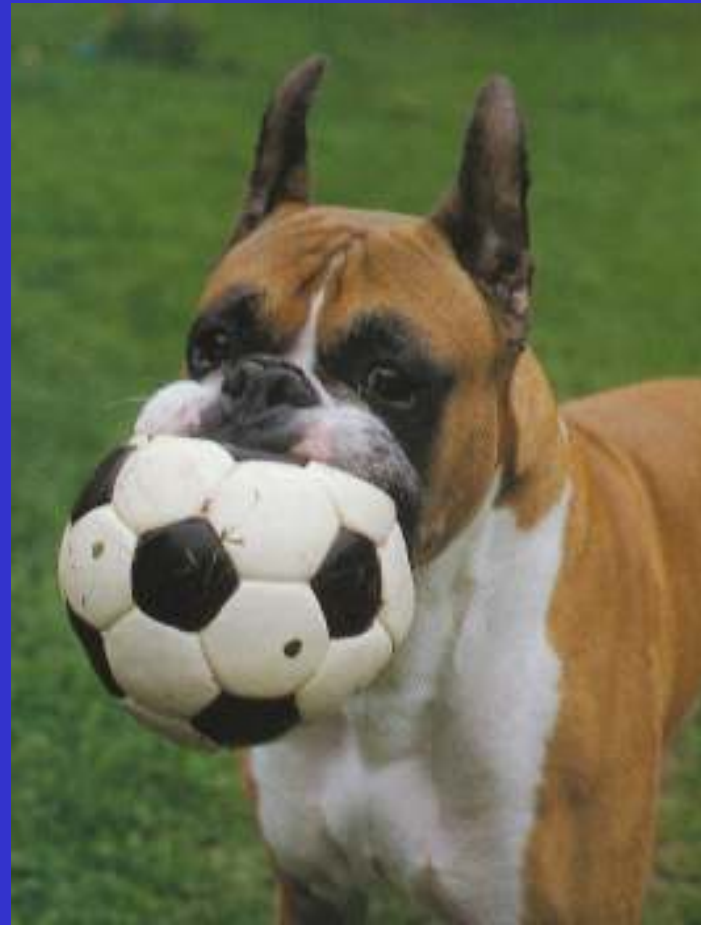
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The Ideal Boxer

- **The new Boxer Standard does not include any statements of faults.**
- **The following statements apply:**
 - **The foregoing description is that of the ideal Boxer.**
 - **Any deviation from the above-described dog must be penalized to the extent of the deviation.**

This is the Boxer



[General Appearance](#)

[Profile](#)

[Head](#)

[Dentition](#)

[Ears](#)

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[Structure](#)

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Credits

- Prepared by **Stephanie Abraham and Judy Voran and the Judges' Education Committee.**
- Contributor and consultant -- **Shirley Bell, Pat Mullen and Vickie Rounsaville-Millard.**
- **Boxer Standard -- © 2005 American Boxer Club.**
- **Thanks to all the breeders, exhibitors and, above all, the Boxers that made this presentation possible.**