

# The Leonberger Club of America



Founded - 1985

Approved for AKC Parent Club - 2007

Approved for Full Working Breed - July 2010

## A few things to pay attention to.

There are no extremes in this breed.

It is a moderate breed.

Look at the whole dog, rather than focusing on particular faults.

Type is of utmost importance; which especially includes temperament!

Any alterations of the coat are not allowed with the exception of neatening the hair on toes.

# GENERAL APPEARANCE

Large, muscular and elegant  
Balanced, slightly rectangular build



4

Calm, non-aggressive, quietly confident,  
depicts good-natured watchfulness





5

Always with a black mask and  
double coat

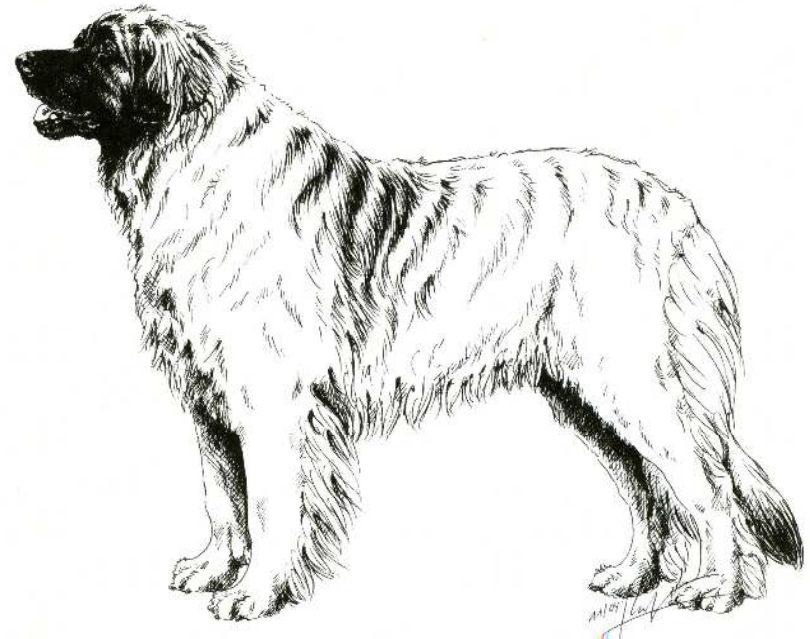


Mature males: powerful and strong and carry a lion-like mane on the neck and chest



A dimorphic  
breed:

Males  
and  
Females  
are  
distinguishable  
as such





# Mature males with good type





# Mature males with good type





# Mature females with good type



Because natural appearance is essential to breed type, the Leonberger is to be shown with no trimming, sculpting or other alterations of the coat.



# A multi-purpose Working Dog

- ◆ Original purpose - a family and working farm dog, valued for his watch and draft capabilities.
- ◆ Today - an agreeable companion, comfortable performing a wide variety of jobs.
- ◆ He is vigilant, obedient, and confident in all situations.





# SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE



# Size

## Male

Minimum	28"
Maximum	31.5"
Preferred	30.0"

## Female

Minimum	25.5"
Maximum	29.5"
Preferred	27.5"

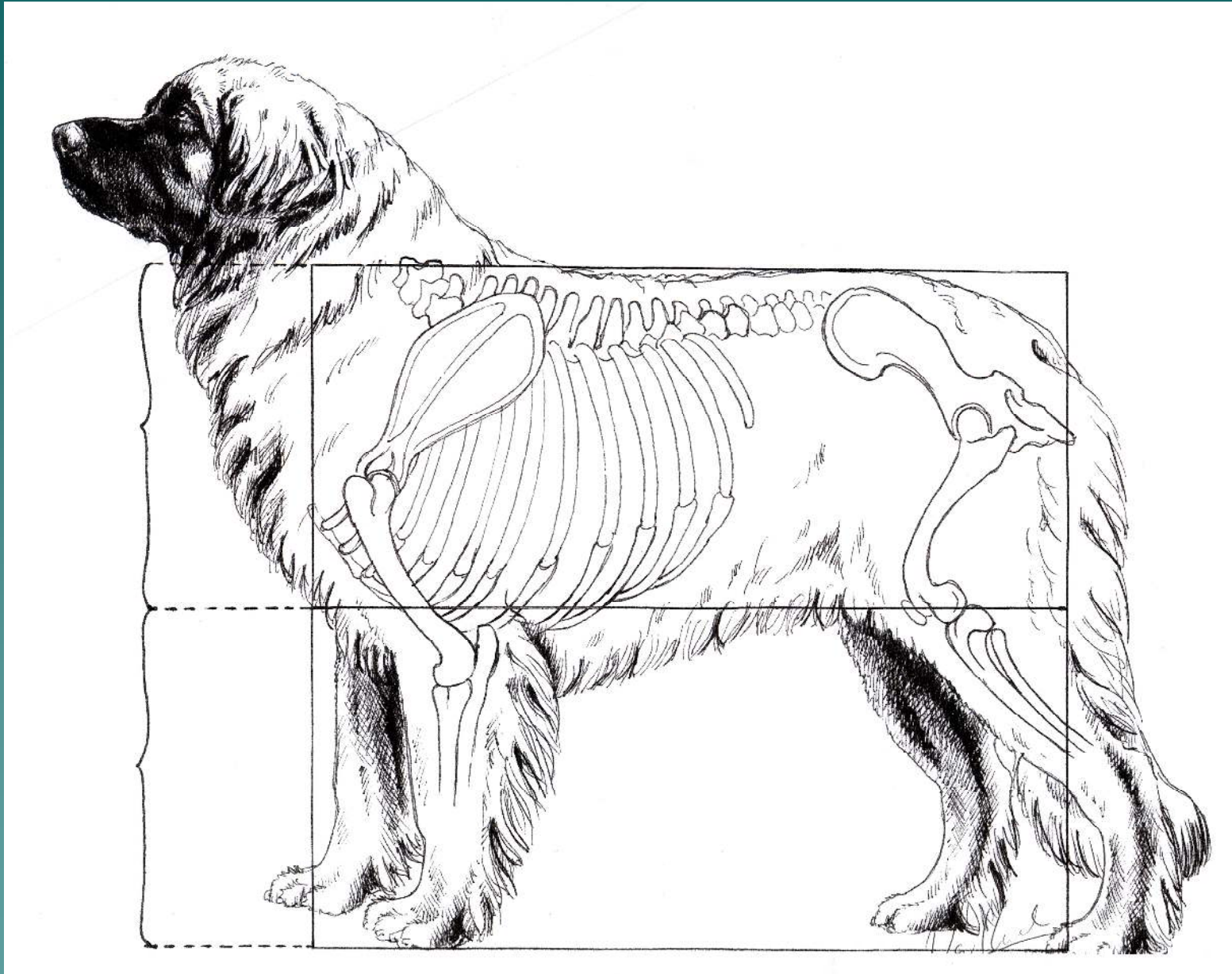
- ◆ A slight deviation above standard is tolerated
- ◆ Minimum height not applied until 18 months of age

# Proportion

- ◆ Balanced build
- ◆ Height to body length ratio 9:10
- ◆ Height measured at withers
- ◆ Length measured from point of shoulder to buttock

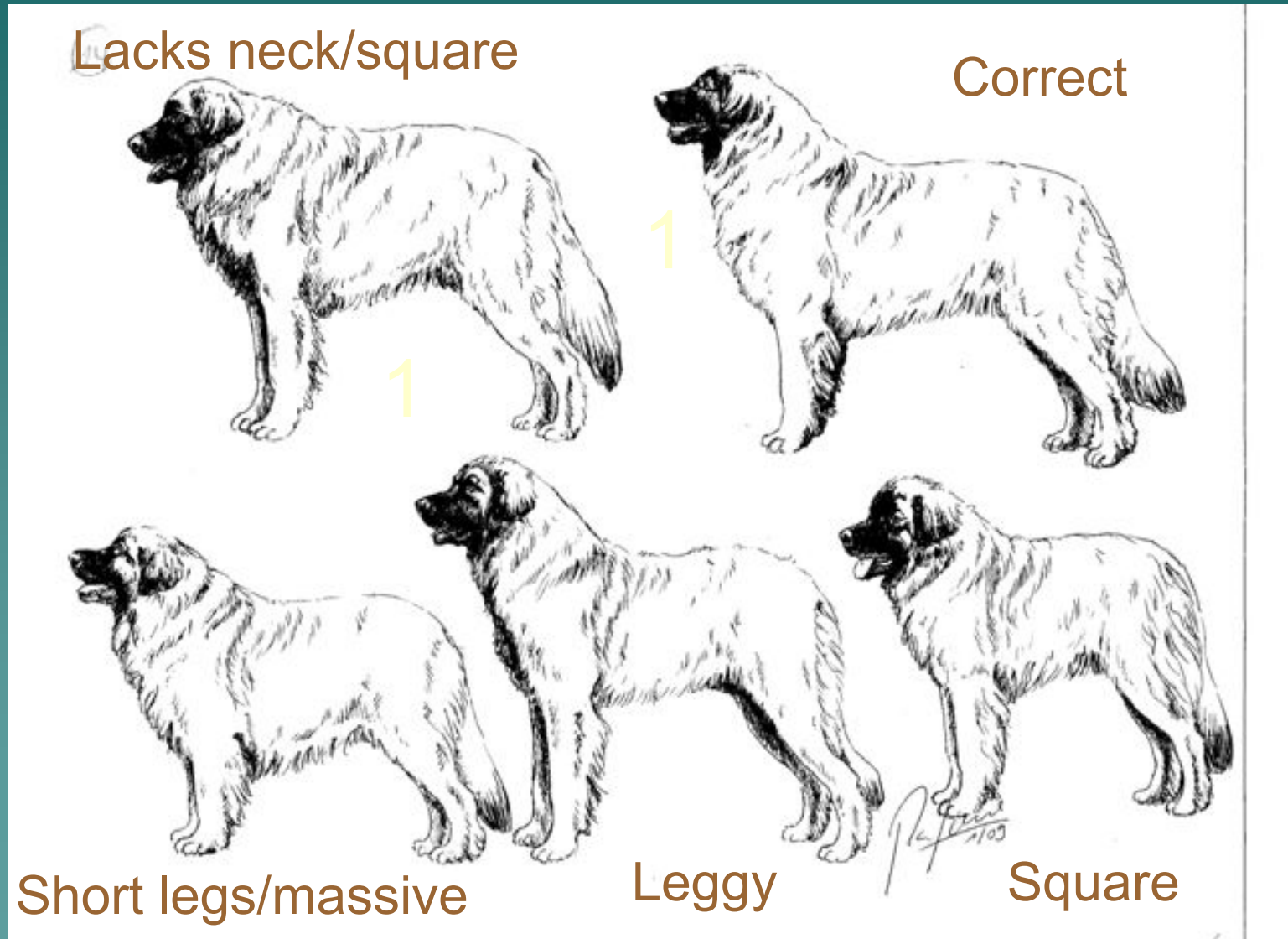








# Proportion - Balance is equally as important as size.



# Substance - male

- ◆ Bone is in proportion to size
- ◆ Medium to heavy
- ◆ Well-muscled in order to support frame





# Substance - Young Males



# Substance - female





# Young females with good substance/type



# HEADS

Male - Excellent expressions





# Females - excellent expressions with head fill differences





- ◆ Males - strong masculine head without being blocky
- ◆ Females - head expresses femininity



# Masks

- ◆ Black mask (preferred) extends up to and over eyes
- ◆ A lesser mask is acceptable but not as desirable



# More types of masks





# Eyes

- ◆ Dark brown is much preferred over light brown.  
(Yellow cast is NOT desirable!)





- ◆ Almond/oval shaped eyes
- ◆ Medium size
- ◆ Eyelids - tight
- ◆ Placement not too close nor too far apart
- ◆ Neither deep-set or protruding
- ◆ No haw showing





# Ears

- ◆ When alert, level with top of skull and set slightly forward
- ◆ Medium size – fleshy
- ◆ Hang close to the head
- ◆ Triangular and pendant
- ◆ Tip of ears level with inside corners of mouth



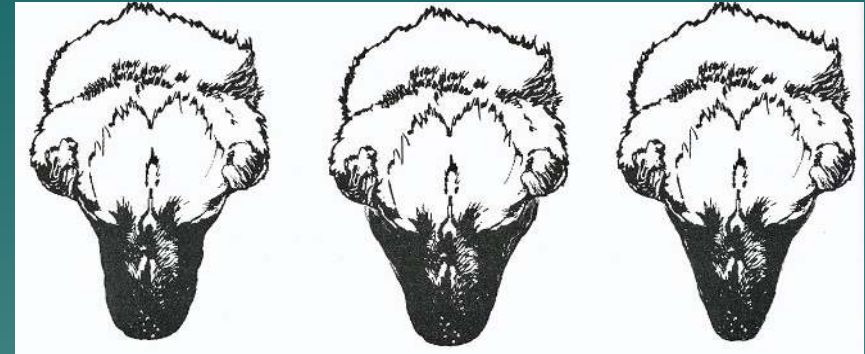
# Judge heads when at ALERT





# Overall Head Shape

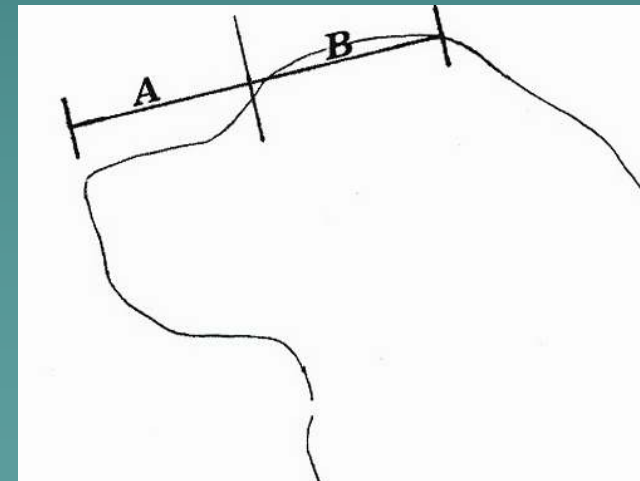
- ◆ Head - deeper than broad - rectangular
- ◆ Length of muzzle to back skull and equal
- ◆ Cheeks only slightly developed
- ◆ Skin close fitting - no wrinkles!
- ◆ Length of muzzle and length of skull are equal



Correct

Cheeky

Pointed



A = B 50% - 50%

# Skull

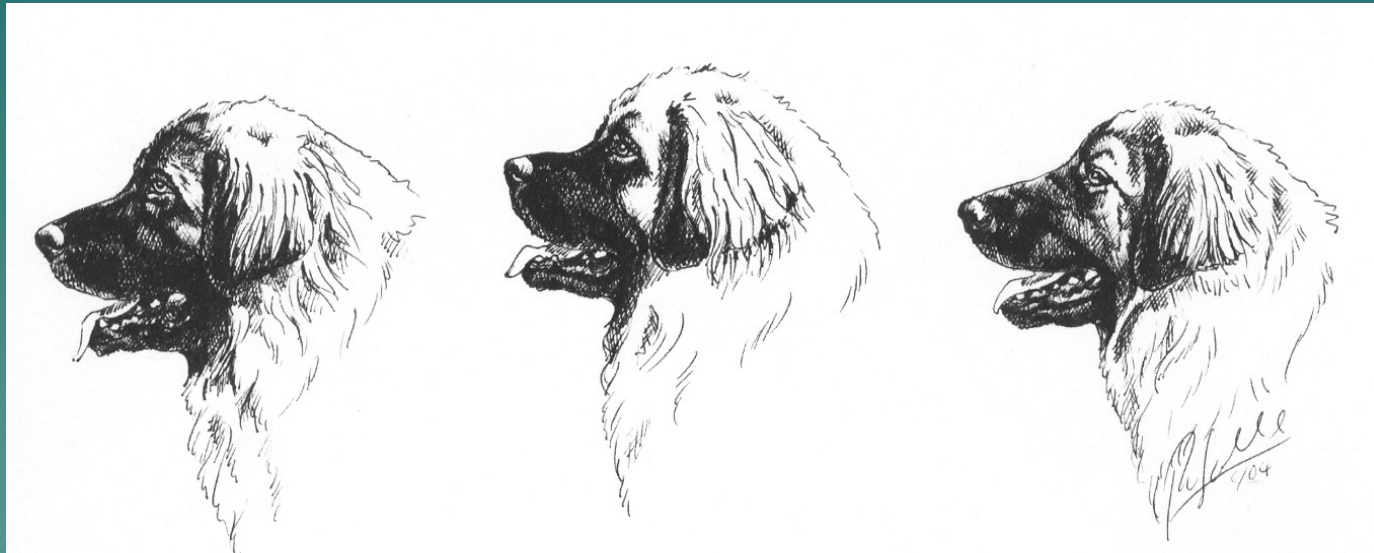
- ◆ From front and in profile - skull is slightly arched
- ◆ Back skull is slightly deeper than broad
- ◆ Width of back skull only slightly broader than at eyes





# Stop

Clearly recognizable and moderately defined.



Correct

Stop too steep  
Muzzle too short

Stop too shallow  
Skull too short

# Muzzle

- ◆ Rather long - never running to a point
- ◆ Nasal bridge of even breadth - slightly arched (Roman nose) - never dipped





Jaw is broad and strong between the  
canines



# Correct Skull, Stop, Muzzle, Jaw



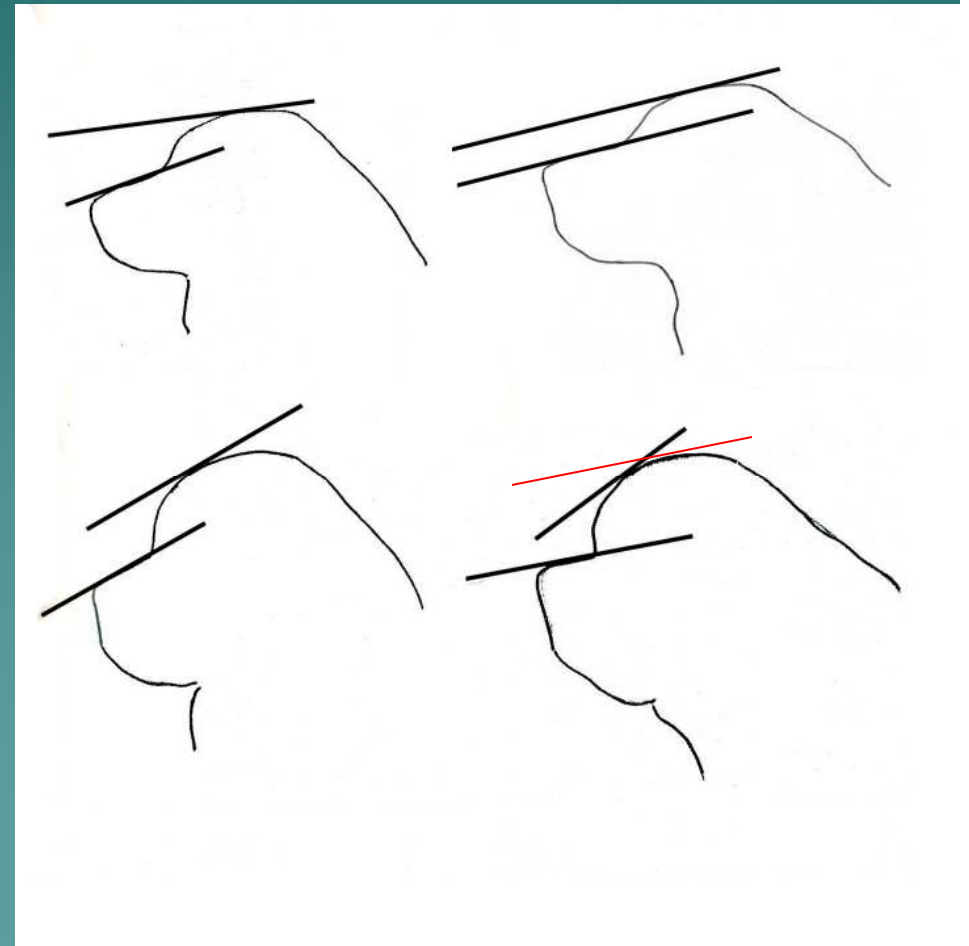
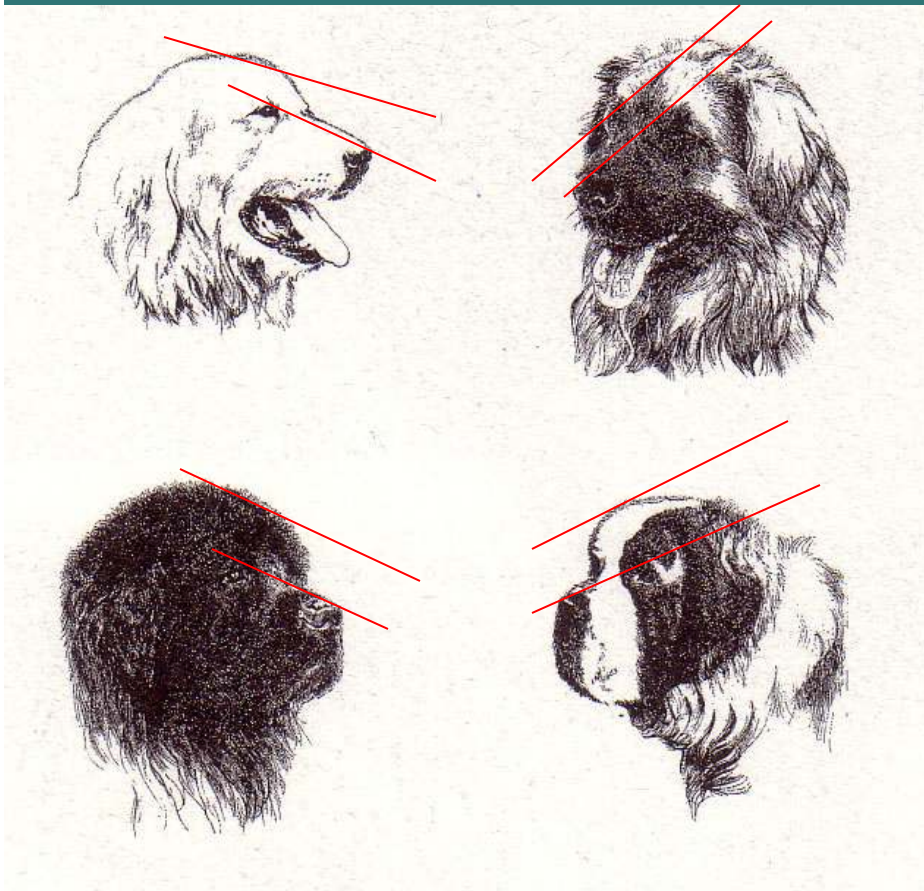


# Planes

- ◆ Seen from the side, muzzle and skull are parallel
- ◆ Moderate stop



# Comparison of Planes of Skulls of familiar breeds





# Compared to similar breed - Estrela Mountain Dog

- ◆ Ear placement - open and set very low
- ◆ Stop - quite flat
- ◆ Skull - protrudes above ear set
- ◆ Muzzle is more pointed at nose end



# Nose/Lips/Flews

## Nose

- ◆ Large with clearly outlined nostrils
- ◆ Always black

## Lips/Flews

- ◆ Corners of lips - closed
- ◆ Flews close fitting – dry
- ◆ Always black
- ◆ Some de-pigmentation due to aging is acceptable





# Tight lips and flews = dry mouths



## No Towels necessary!

The dry mouth of a Leo is an important distinction between the Leonberger and other large breeds.

**SEVERE FAULT:  
DROOLING OR WET MOUTH**



Excellent proportions and expression



Cyd

# Youth heads still developing



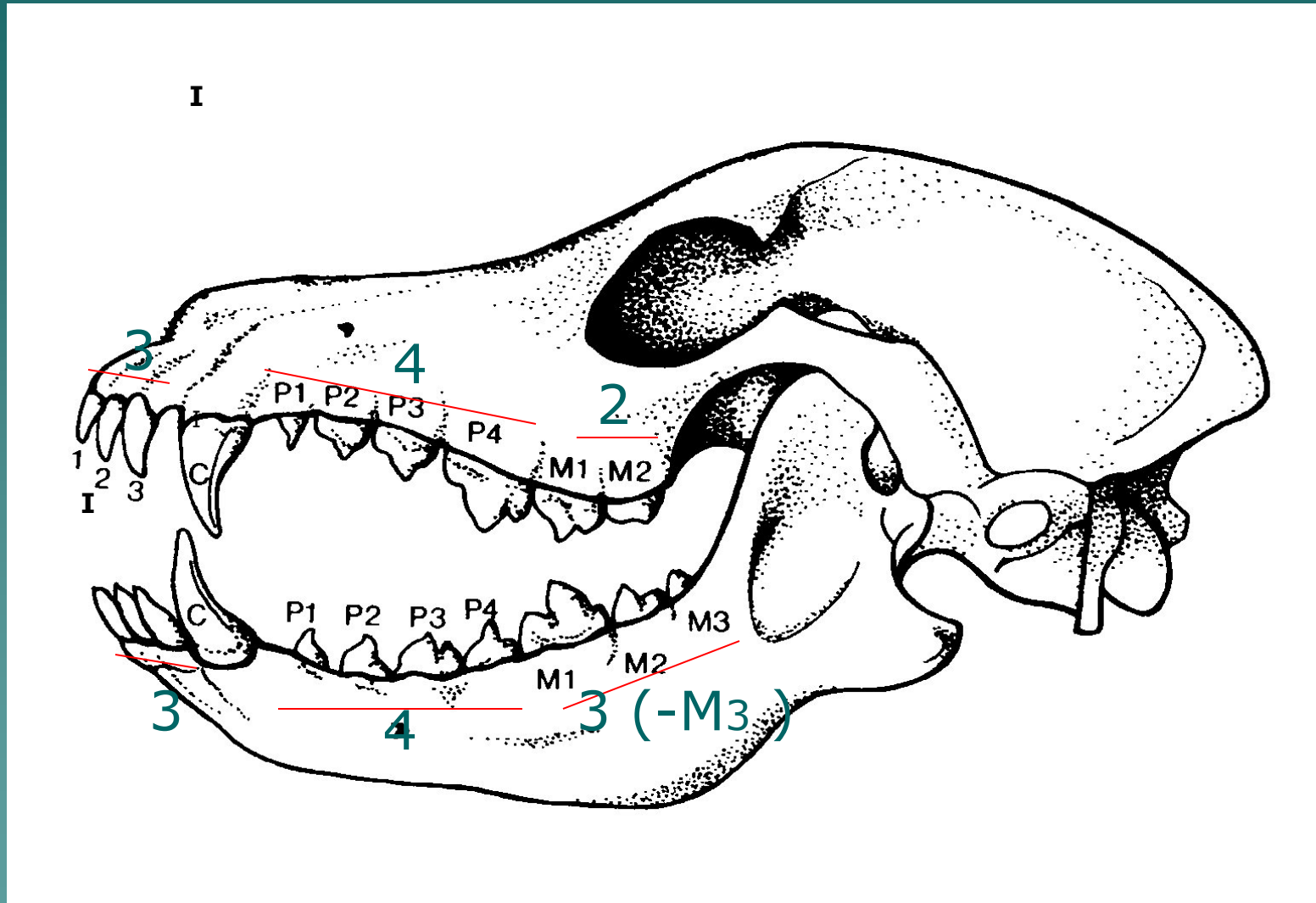


# Teeth / Bite

- ◆ 42 in number (20 upper, 22 lower)
- ◆ Strong, correctly placed
- ◆ Scissors bite (lower incisors touching inside upper)
- ◆ Level bite - accepted



# Teeth - count in “bunches”





Dropped lower incisors, in an otherwise normal bite, are considered only a minor deviation –

(are not indicative of a skeletal malocclusion)



# HEAD

## Serious Fault

Lips: Drooling or wet mouth

## DISQUALIFICATION

Expression/Mask: Complete  
lack of mask

Teeth/Bite: Any missing teeth  
other than M3s



# NECK, TOPLINE, BODY



# Neck / Topline

## Neck

- ◆ Muscular
- ◆ Well set on shoulders
- ◆ Long enough for proud head carriage
- ◆ Blends smoothly into withers
- ◆ No dewlap

## Topline

- ◆ Withers set above firm, level back
- ◆ Rump not higher than at withers.





## Body

- ◆ Chest broad, roomy, deep – reaching to elbows
- ◆ Pro-sternum easily felt
- ◆ Fore and rear quarters well muscled
- ◆ Ribs – well-sprung, oval - not barrel shaped



# Underline/ Loin

## Underline

- ◆ Only slightly tucked up

## Loin

- ◆ broad
- ◆ strong
- ◆ well muscled





# Croup

## Croup

- ◆ Broad - relatively long - sloped
- ◆ Flows smoothly into root of tail

## Serious Fault:

- ◆ Croup - short, level - creating high tail carriage



# Tail - Standing

- ◆ Relaxed tail hangs straight down
- ◆ Last vertebrae reaches to, or below hock



# Tail – In Movement

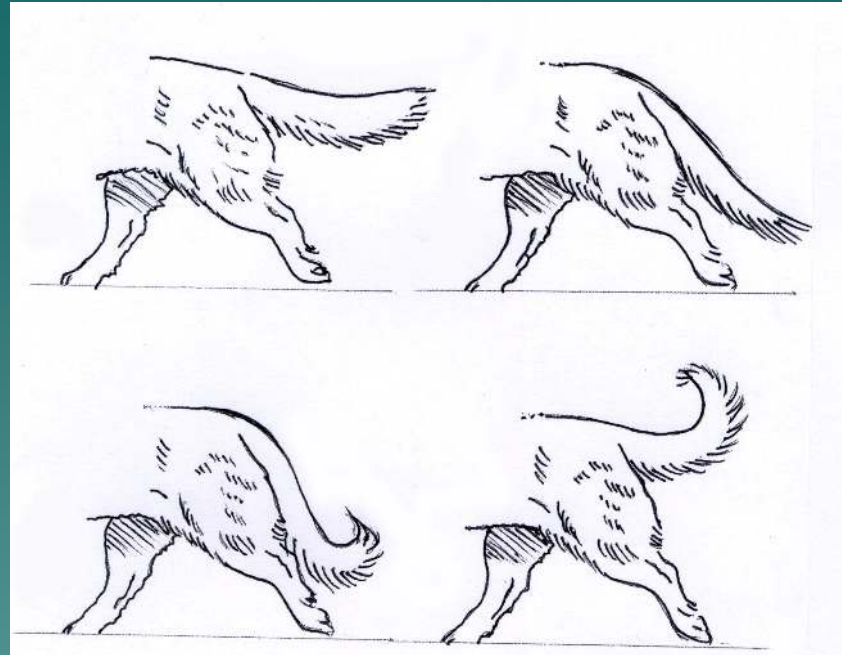
Ideally not carried higher than topline  
Curve up at the end permitted



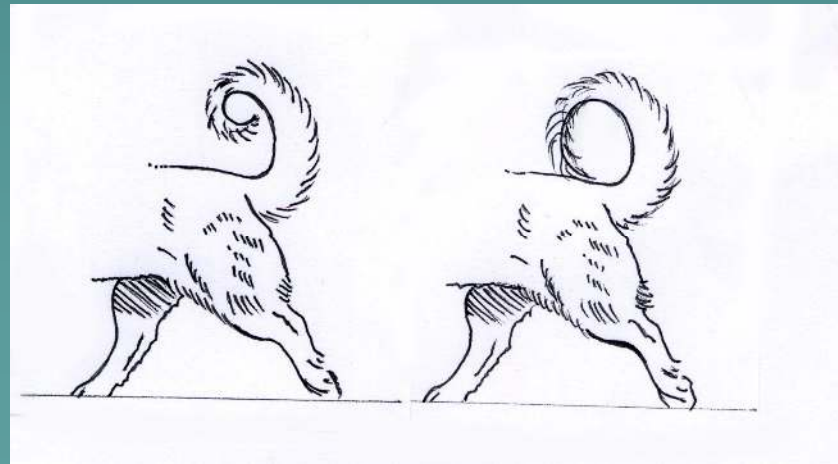


# Tail Carriage - In Movement

- ◆ Top 4 are all correct



- ◆ Lower 2 are incorrect



## **Serious Fault:**

Tail consistently curled/carried over back.

Note: Incorrect tail set not to be confused with exuberance, especially with males

# FOREQUARTERS

## Shoulder

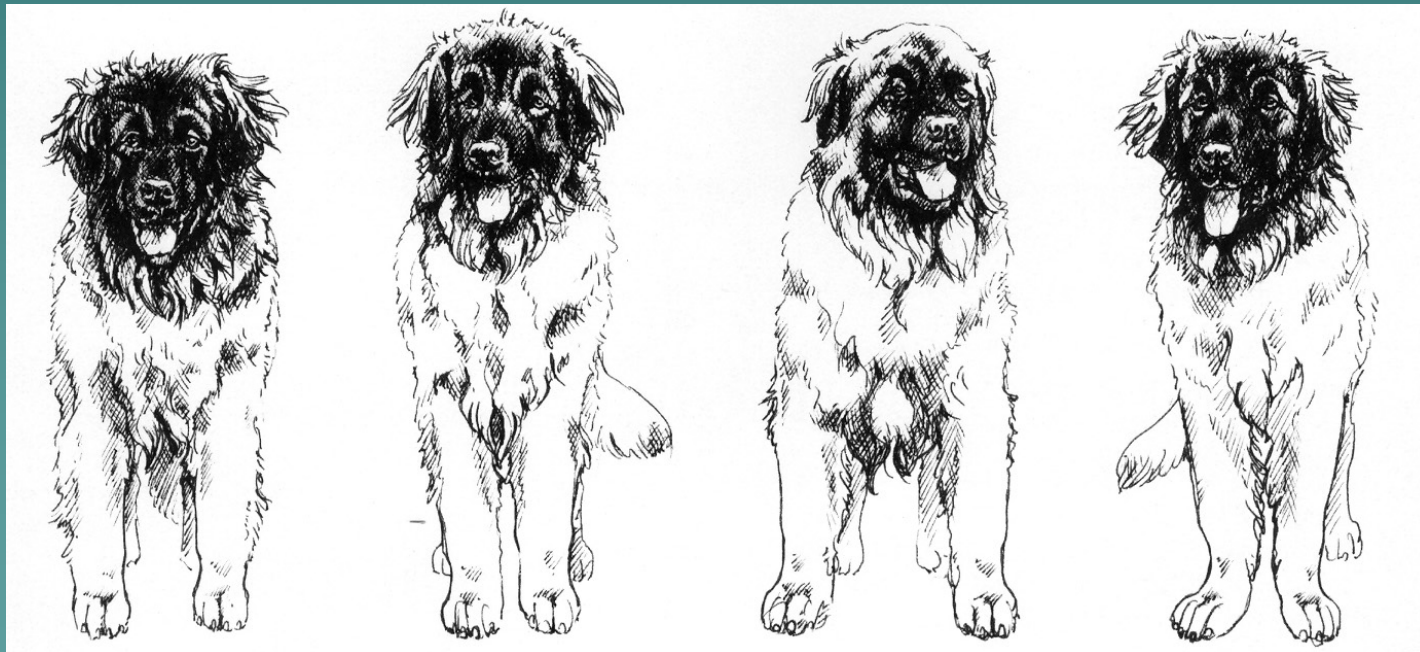
- ◆ Well laid back, well muscled, lying close to body
- ◆ Shoulder meets upper arm – approaching a right angle
- ◆ Shoulder and upper arm are equal in length





# Forelegs

- ◆ Well boned - muscular
- ◆ Straight - parallel to each other
- ◆ Elbows close to body



Correct

Narrow

Too wide

East-West

# Correct, well boned forelegs





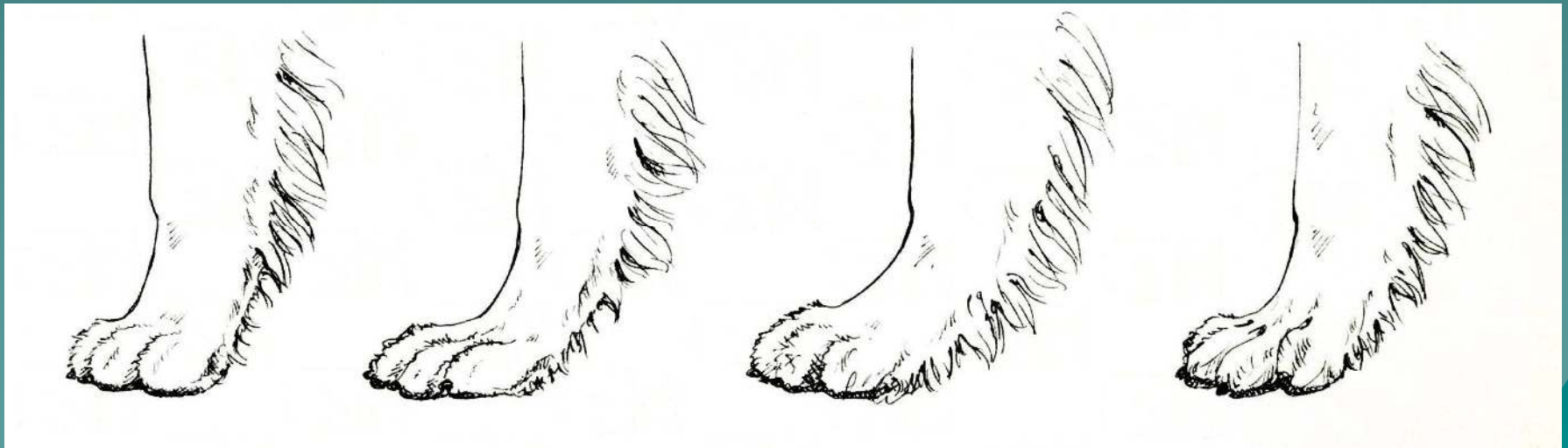
# Pasterns / Feet

## Pasterns

- ◆ Strong, firm
- ◆ Straight, viewed from the front
- ◆ Slightly sloping, viewed from the side (cat foot)
- ◆ **Dewclaws** usually present

## Feet

- Turn neither in nor
- Rounded – tight
- Toes well arched
- Black pads



Well arched,  
strong pastern

Long flat foot,  
weak pastern

Weak pastern

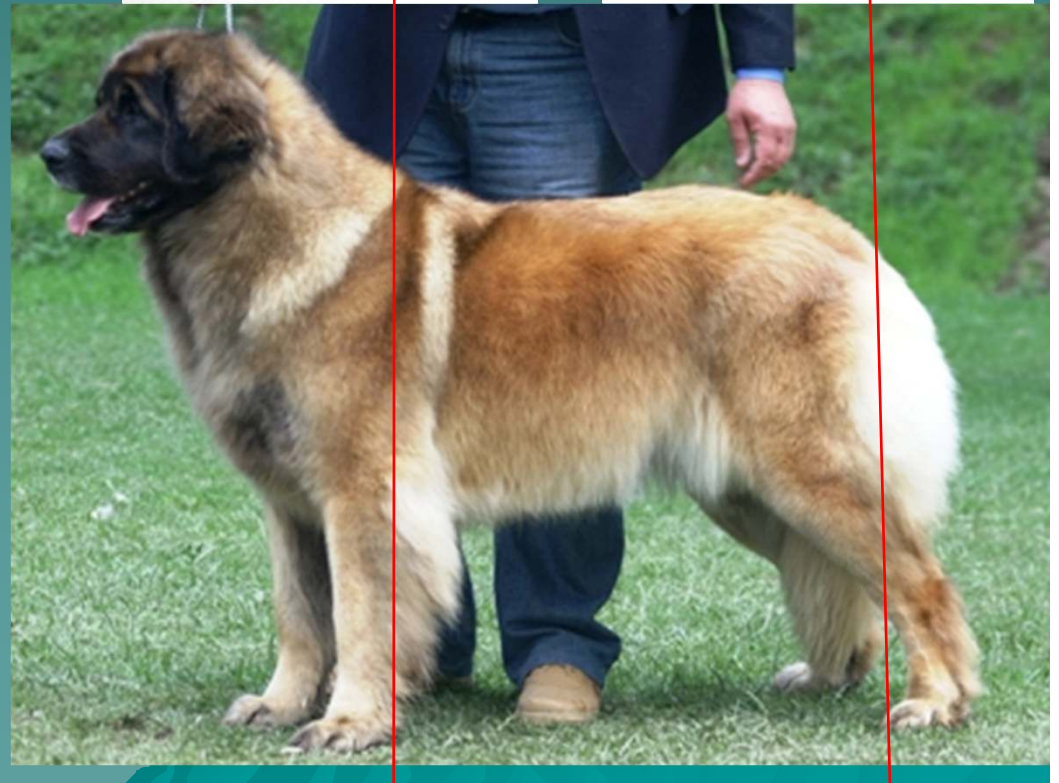
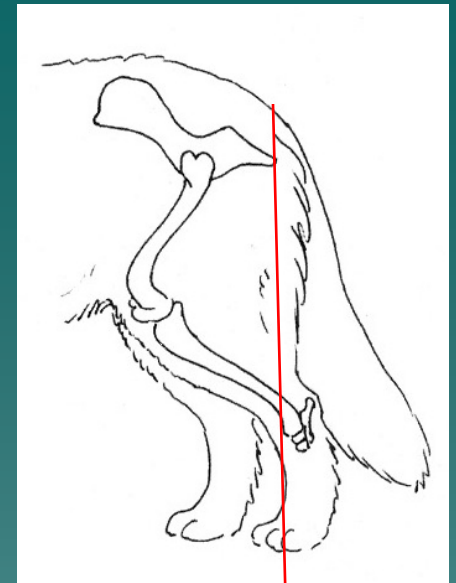
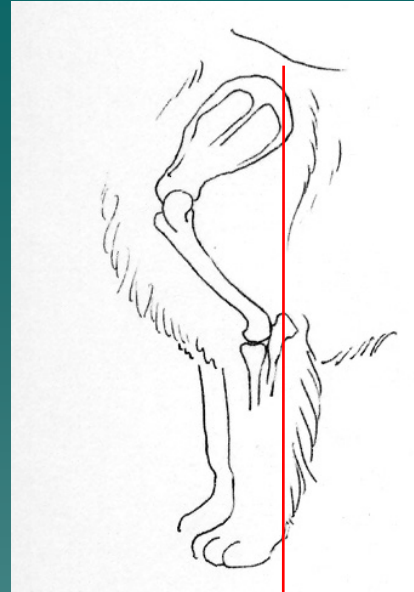
Splay foot

CORRECT



# HINDQUARTERS

- ◆ Hindquarter angulation is in balance with forequarter angulation



## Thighs

- ◆ Upper and lower of equal length – slanting
- ◆ Strong bones and well muscled

## Stifle and Hock

- ◆ Stifle and hock angles are clearly defined
- ◆ Stifles and feet turned neither in nor out
- ◆ Hock well let down



# HINDQUARTER ANGULATION



## Top images

### ◆ Correct Angulation

both stifle and hock joints are clearly bent



## Bottom images

### ◆ Incorrect Angulation

stifle and hock joints lack bend





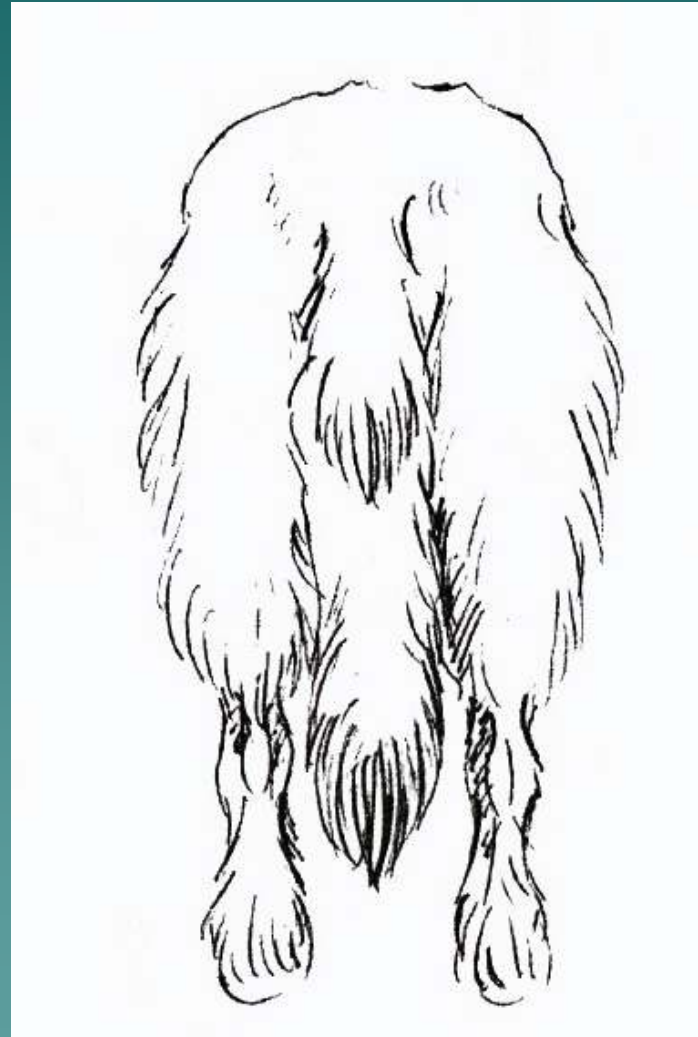
## Legs - Viewed from rear

- ◆ Straight and parallel
- ◆ Placed wide enough to support body

**Dewclaws** may be present.

### Feet

- ◆ Turned neither in nor out
- ◆ Toes arched
- ◆ Pads black



# COAT

- ◆ Water resistant, **double coat** on body
- ◆ Undercoat is soft and dense
- ◆ Coat may be less dense in warmer climates and summer



- ◆ Outer coat, medium-soft to coarse, straight (some wave permitted)
- ◆ Mature males - **mane** extends over neck and chest
- ◆ Short, fine hair on muzzle and front of limbs





# Manes



Despite heavy coat, outline of body should always be recognizable





- ◆ Females – typically carry less coat than males ...

... and are not to be penalized in the ring for this disparity





# Feathering

- ◆ Some ear feathering
- ◆ Distinct feathering on back of forelegs
- ◆ Ample feathering on breeches
- ◆ Tail - very well furnished, bushy



**Fault:**  
Parted or curly coat

# COAT

The Standard says, "In spite of the double coat a Leonberger must always be recognizable." This is TYPE, that can not be seen if they are sculpted.

## The Standard states ...

“Leonbergers are to be presented naturally, except for trimming of excess hair on toes. Any other alteration of the coat, including whiskers, is penalized to the extent that dog is effectively eliminated from competition.”

The Standard goes on to state,

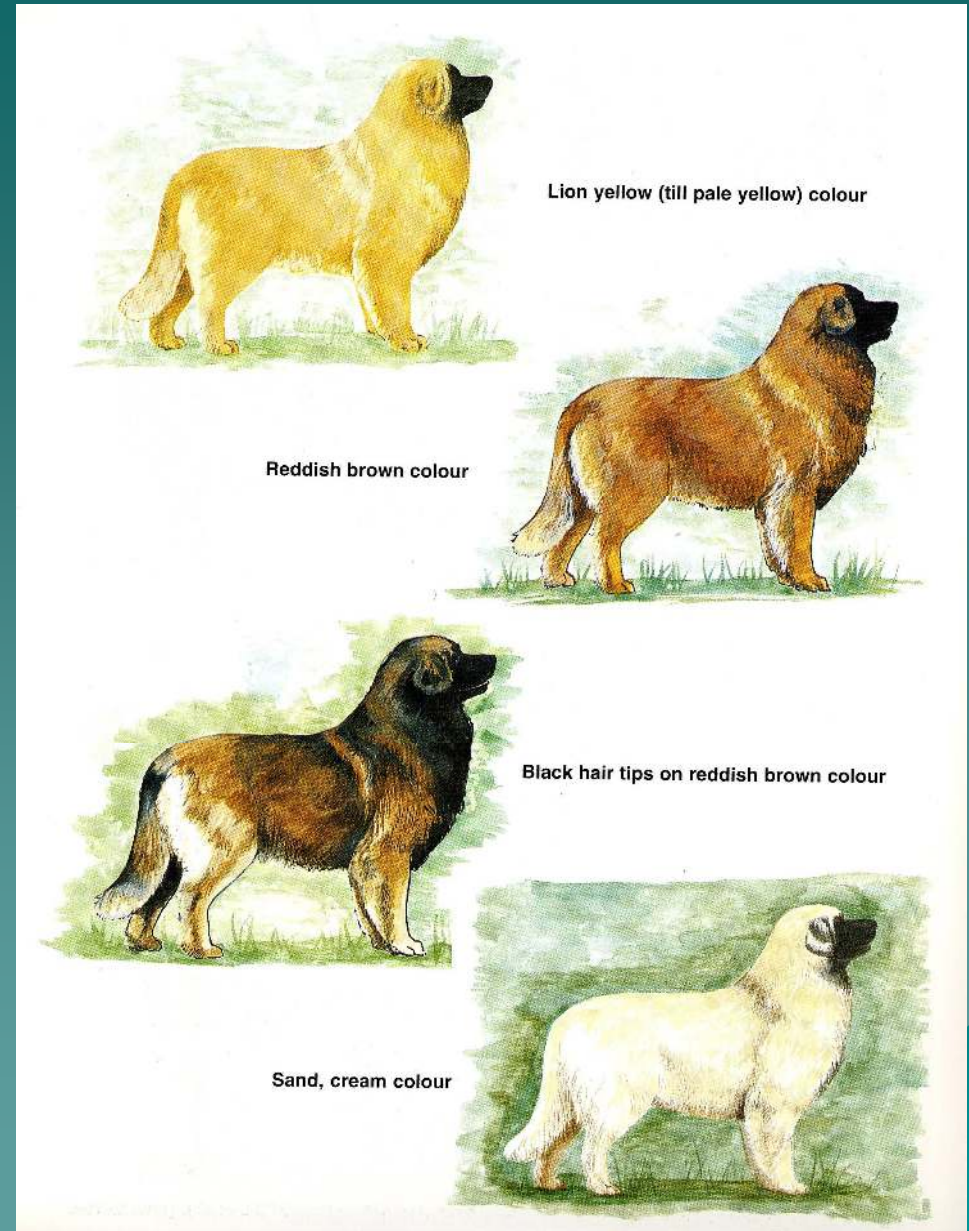
—“JUDGES ARE TO ERR ON THE SIDE OF WITHHOLDING RIBBONS IF THERE IS ANY DOUBT”.

Because we value natural coat as an important aspect of TYPE, we ask our judges not to award any sculpted specimen. There are many other breed standards that also require a natural coat.



# COLOR

- ◆ Lion-yellow
- ◆ Golden to red-brown
- ◆ Sand colored (cream, pale yellow)
- ◆ And all combinations thereof
- ◆ Always with a black mask





All colors accompanied with lighter feathering.  
All colors may have black tips on outer coat.



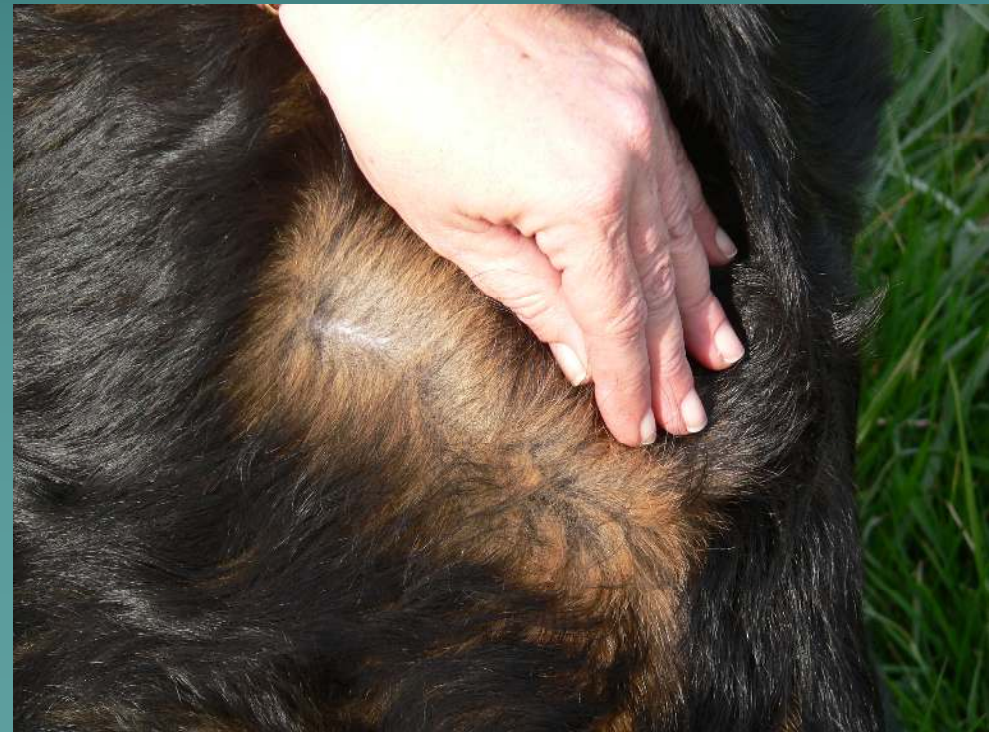


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## Please Note:

If undercoat is light, even though dog may appear black (due to long black tips of outer guard hairs) this is still acceptable.

If dog's undercoat is black, it is NOT an acceptable color.





# White extending ...



## COLOR

# DISQUALIFICATIONS

- ◆ Any color other than those listed
- ◆ White, extending above toes, or, on chest exceeding 5" wide



# GAIT





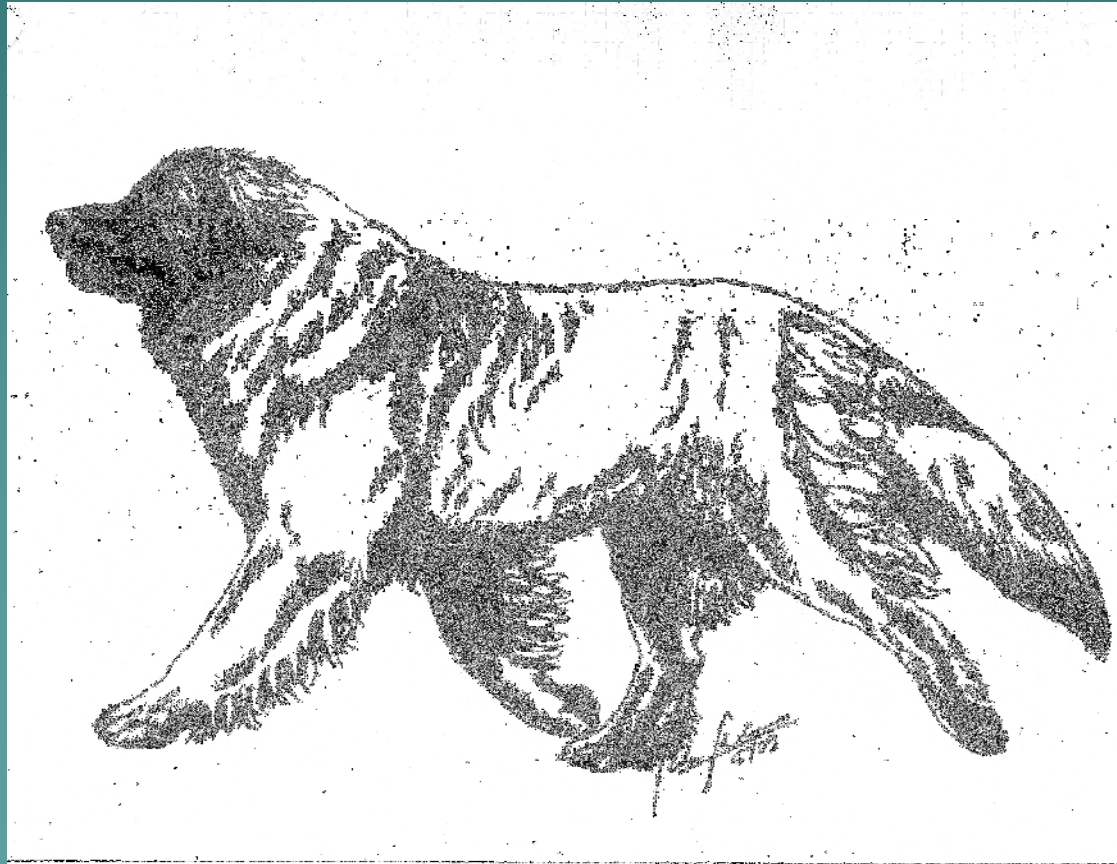
# Coming and Going

- ◆ From front and behind, legs travel straight
- ◆ As speed increases, legs tend to converge toward centerline



# Side Gait

- ◆ Ground-covering, even and balanced
- ◆ Stride is powerful, easy, free and elastic
- ◆ Good reach and strong drive
- ◆ Maintains a level topline



Correct GAIT - hind foot lands where front foot was, with good push and reach







Correct movement requires balance of front and rear assemblies and anatomically correct structure.



Picture of effortless power  
Correct level topline and tail carriage

# GAIT ISSUES



pacing



paddling



elbows out



too close



weaving



cow hocked



bow legged




# TEMPERAMENT

- ◆ Friendly, self-assured, calm, steady, playful
- ◆ Willing to please, good capacity for learning
- ◆ Loves children

At ease in all situations, never showing fear, shyness or aggression.



Leonberger temperaments must  
allow them to ...



Be friendly  
and gentle  
towards  
children





## TEMPERAMENT -

“In normal circumstances, quarrelsomeness or hostility towards people or dogs, or unwarranted timidity or nervousness, is NOT in keeping with Leonberger TYPE and shall be penalized to the extent that it is effectively eliminated from competition.”

# FAULTS - Defined

**Any deviation from stated specifications is a fault.**

In determining whether a fault is minor, serious, or major, the following should be used as a guide.

- 1) The extent to which the fault deviates from the standard
- 2) The impact such a deviation has on the dog's ability to fulfill its role as a family companion or multi-purpose working dog

**The Standard states in positive terms -  
DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS**

**Common faults -  
DEVIATIONS**

◆ **DARK BROWN EYE COLOR**

**Lacking brown tones**

◆ **TIGHT EYELIDS**

**Entropion or ectropion**

◆ **SCISSORS/LEVEL BITE**

**Overshot, undershot, wry**

◆ **LIP PIGMENT MOSTLY BLACK**

**Mostly pink**

◆ **MEDIUM TO HEAVY BONE**

**Light - not in proportion to size**

◆ **LEVEL TOPLINE**


**Rear high or weak**

◆ **REAR assembly, clearly angulated**

**Lacking clear angulation**



# STATED FAULTS

- ◆ Lips - Drooling or wet mouth
  - ◆ Tail - High tail carriage with tail carried over back due to short level croup
  - ◆ Coat - Parted or curly
- 
- A decorative graphic at the bottom right of the slide, consisting of a silhouette of a mountain range in shades of teal and blue.

# DISQUALIFICATIONS

- ◆ **Mask - Complete lack of mask**
- ◆ **Teeth - Any missing teeth other than M3s**
- ◆ **Colors - Any other than those listed; white extending to pasterns; on chest, exceeding 5 inches in width**

## Remember these few things about the Leonberger

It is a large dog.

There are no extremes in this breed.

Look at the whole dog, rather than focusing on particular faults.

Type is of utmost importance; which especially includes temperament and natural appearance!