

**BREED SEMINAR**

# **LÖWCHEN BREED STANDARD**

**STANDARD EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2022  
PRESENTATION APPROVED DATE JULY 15, 2022**

# How do you Pronounce Löwchen?

- Lerv-chun
- Lo-chin
- Loation
- Lotion
- Lou-chen
- Lurve-hen
- Also different names in other languages



# Löwchen or The Little Lion Dog



Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Austria,  
Löwchen, Group 9 Companion Dogs

Poland, Lwi Piesek – Lion Dog, Petit  
Chien Lion, Group 9 Companion

United Kingdom, Löwchen (Little  
Lion Dog), Toy Group

Hungary, Estonia, Latvia and  
Lithuania, Little Lion Dog,  
Group 9 Companion

United States of America and  
Canada, Löwchen, Non-Sporting  
Group

France, Petit Chien Lion,  
Group 9 Companion

Belgium, Little Lion Dog or Leeuw hondje,  
Group 9 Companion Dogs

Italy, Piccolo Cane Leone,  
Group 9, Companion Dogs

Australia and New Zealand, Löwchen,  
Toy Group

# Purpose

- Companion dog to entertain the court or to run right into your heart.
- The Lion Cut resembles a Lion. The legend of the clip is that the shaved parts would keep people warm in bed, and the hairy parts would collect lice and nits from the humans.



# Breed History



# Breed History



# Breed History



*Ladies and their Lowchen*

*Carved Lion*





# Bijou's story



*Weilburg Castle*

*Bijou*



# Madame Bennert



# History



## Little Lion Dog

In the Middle Ages, this gentle dog has been depicted in European art. Later, when the dog in woodcuts, it appeared in tapestries and Germanic peasant paintings. The Duchess of Alba, owned several painted them. Nearly a hundred years ago, the breed was extinct in the region of the Iberian Peninsula. Probably fewer than 500 exist in the world. (2004 Aug 25)

**1897:**

Madame Bennert bought her first Lowchen from Maximillian de Conick.

**1962:**

Lowchen were named the rarest breed in the world.

**1991:**

Club name was changed to Lowchen Club of America.

**1999:**

Lowchens were accepted into Nonsporting Group with the American Kennel Club.

### Theory 1:

Related to breeds that were forerunners of the modern poodle.

### Theory 2:

Originated in the Mediterranean region and related to Bichon type breeds.

### Early 1800's:

First record of a breeder and fancier was a Dr. Walthier in Germany.

### Theory 3:

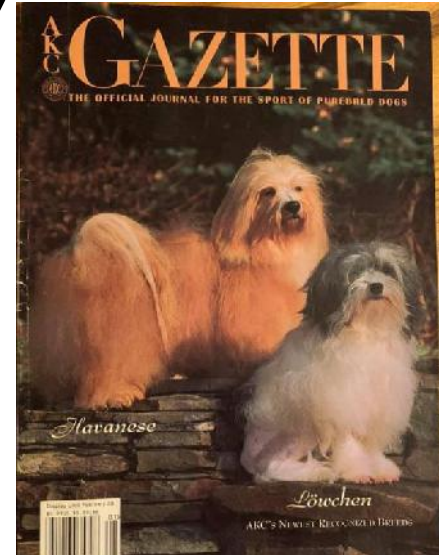
Set in Russian and even the region that is known as Tibet.

**1971:**

Three Lowchen were imported into the United States. The Little Lion Dog Club of America was founded by Charles and Jane Cook and Robert and Carol Yhlen.

**1996:**

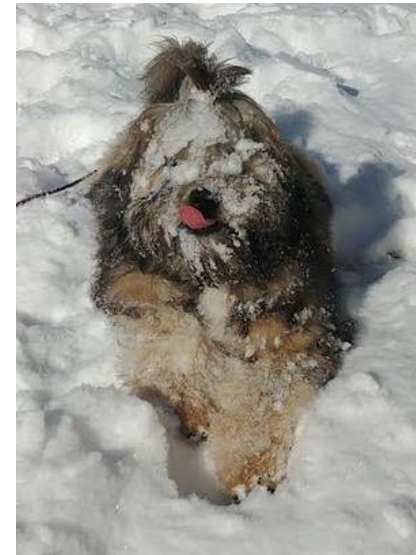
Accepted into the American Kennel Club Miscellaneous Class.



# Modern Löwchen

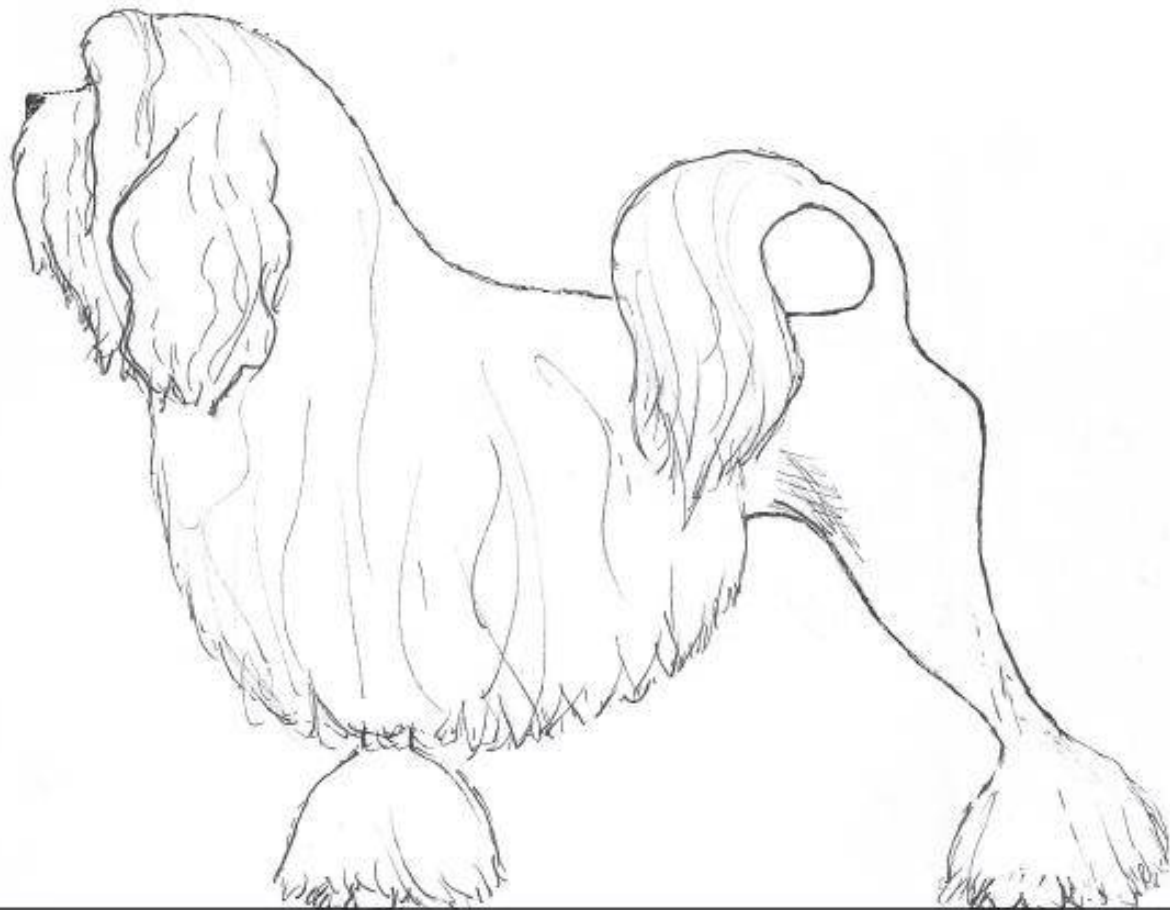


# Modern Löwchen Lifestyle



# General Appearance

A small, bright, and lively dog that originated as a companion breed in pre-Renaissance Europe where ladies of the court groomed it in the likeness of a little lion. Breed characteristics are a compact, balanced body; a relatively short, broad top skull and muzzle; and a proud, lively gait that accentuates the lion cut with a long flowing mane. These quintessential features, combined with an outgoing and positive attitude, result in a dog of great style.



# General Appearance

Happy, enthusiastic little dog with great style.

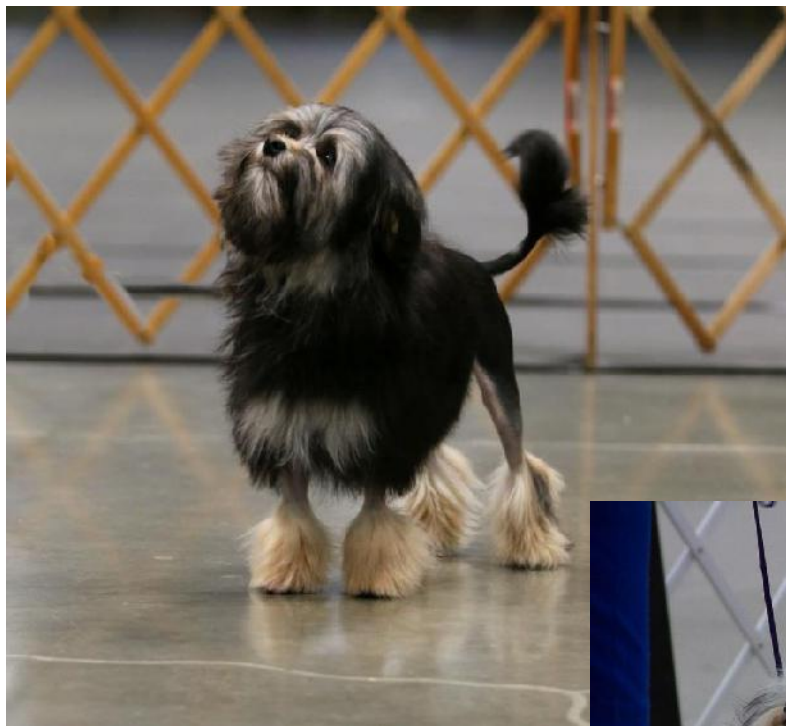


# Typical Adults





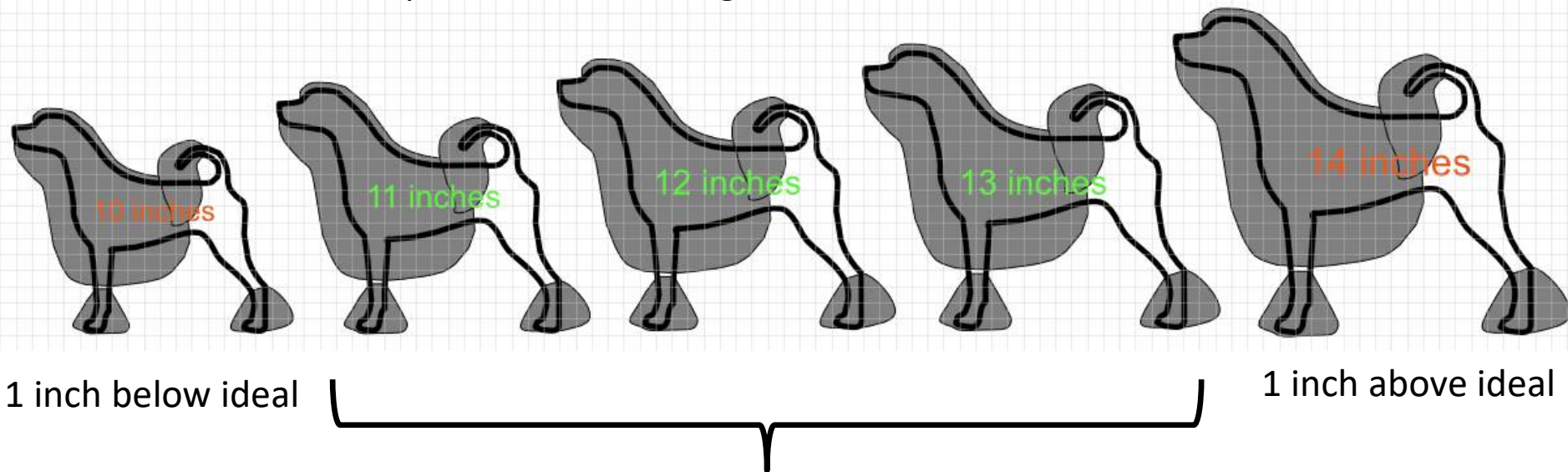
# Typical Puppies



# Size, Proportion, Substance

Ideally, mature dogs and bitches are between 11 to 13 inches at the withers. Height may vary 1 inch above or below this ideal. Only where the comparative superiority of a specimen outside this range clearly justifies it should greater latitude be taken. Absolute height at the withers should not take precedence over correct proportion and substance.

Dogs above or below the ideal range shall be penalized to the degree of the deviance.

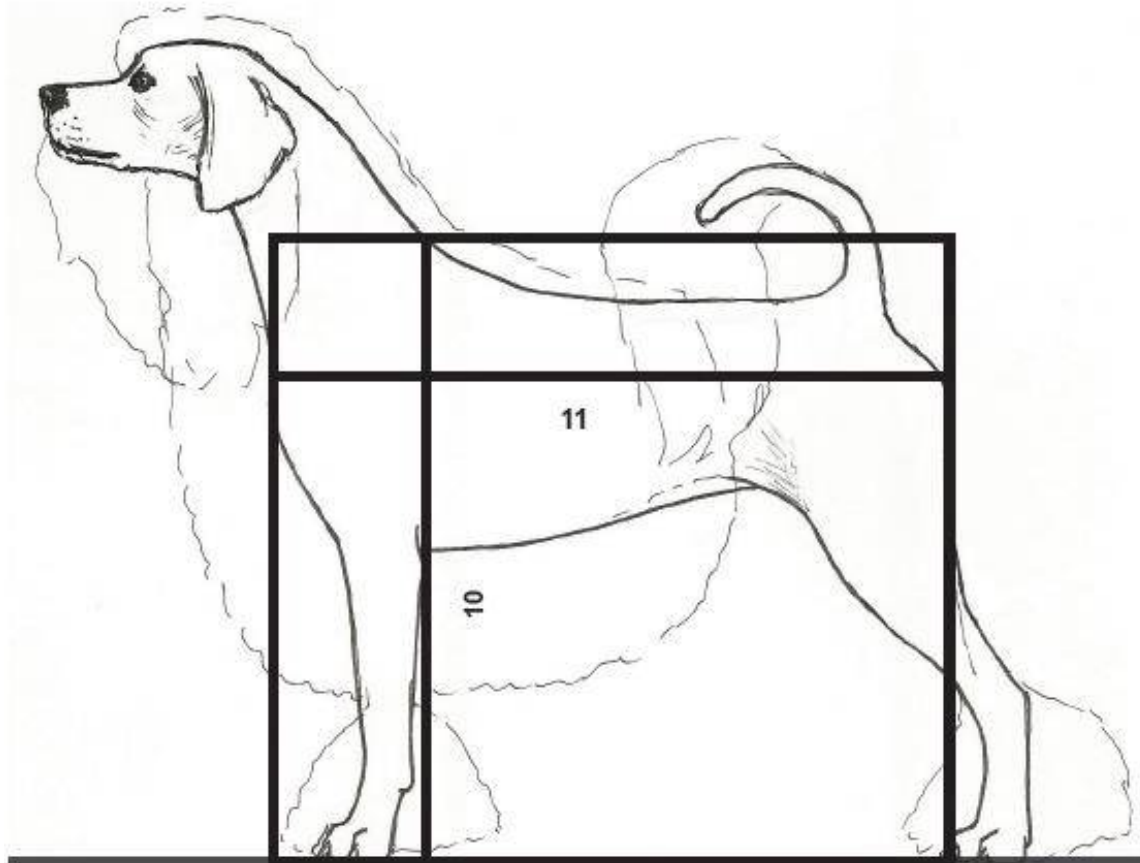


Ideal is 11-13 inches

Correct proportion and substance > absolute height.

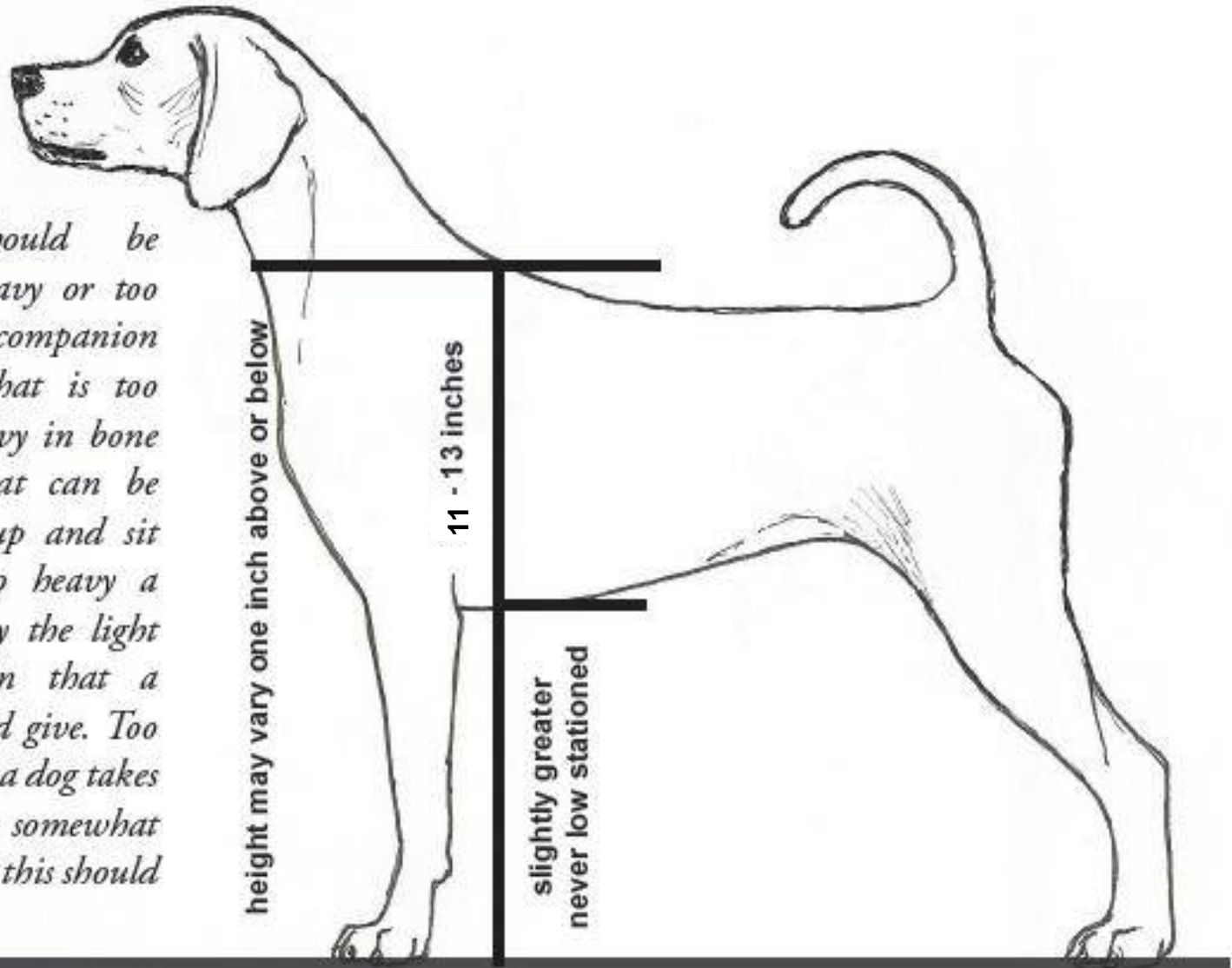
# Proportion

The body is just off square when properly balanced. The distance from the prosternum to the point of buttocks is slightly greater than the distance from the withers to the ground in an 11 to 10 ratio. The distance from the ground to the elbow is slightly greater than the distance from the elbow to the wither. The Lowchen should never be low stationed.



# Depth of Body

*Substance should be neither too heavy or too light. This is a companion dog. A dog that is too coarse and heavy in bone is not one that can be easily picked up and sit on a lap. Too heavy a dog takes away the light airy impression that a Löwchen should give. Too small and light a dog takes away from the somewhat sturdy little dog this should appear to be.*



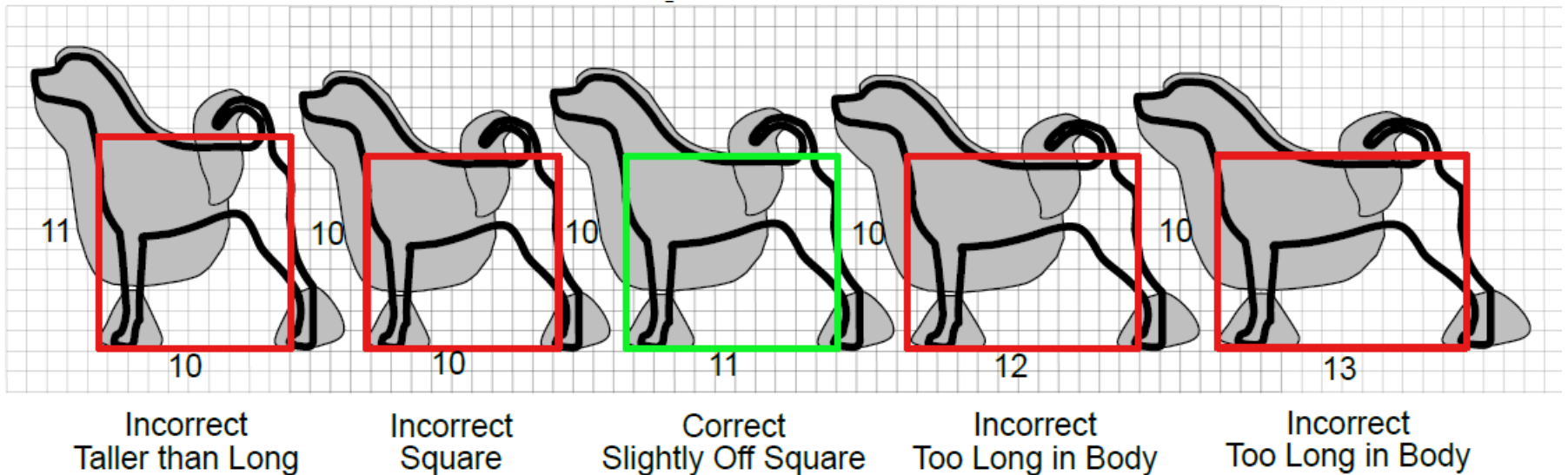
height may vary one inch above or below

11 - 13 inches

slightly greater  
never low stationed

# Proportion

The body is just off square when properly balanced. The distance from the prosternum to the point of buttocks is slightly greater than the distance from the withers to the ground in an 11 to 10 ratio. The distance from the ground to the elbow is slightly greater than the distance from the elbow to the wither. The Lowchen should never be low stationed.



# Substance

The mature Lowchen is sturdily built with strong bone and muscular hindquarters, but never coarse.



Substance should be appropriate for the size of the dog. A dog with great presence and style does NOT imply oversized or heavy substance.



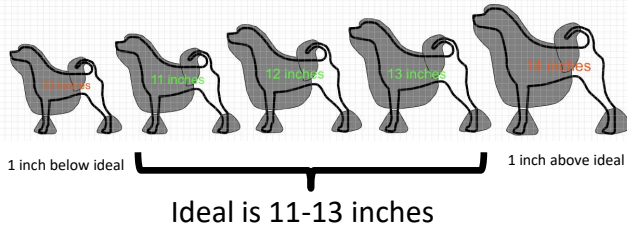
A sturdy lowchen does not imply large, or heavy boned, nor does it imply that bigger is better. The Lowchen is a moderate breed with substance and elegance.

# Size, Proportion, Substance

The combination of correct size, proportion, and substance should result in a “compact, balanced body. ... a proud, lively gait that accentuates the lion cut with a long flowing mane. These quintessential features, combined with an outgoing and positive attitude, result in a dog of great style.”

## Size

11 to 13 inches at the withers. Height may vary 1 inch above or below this ideal. Only where the comparative superiority of a specimen outside this range clearly justifies it should greater latitude be taken. Absolute height at the withers should not take precedence over correct proportion and substance.



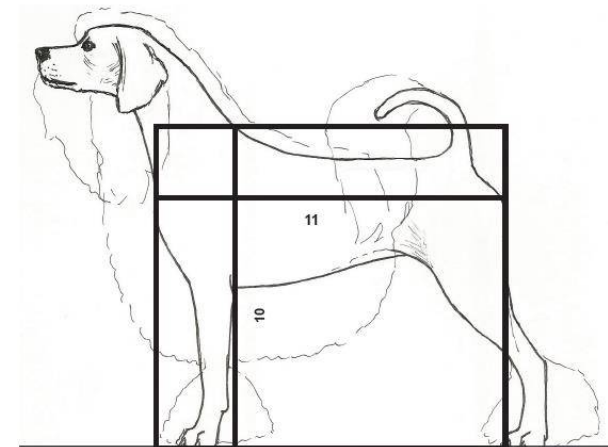
## Balance

## Substance

Sturdily built with strong bone and muscular hindquarters, but never coarse.

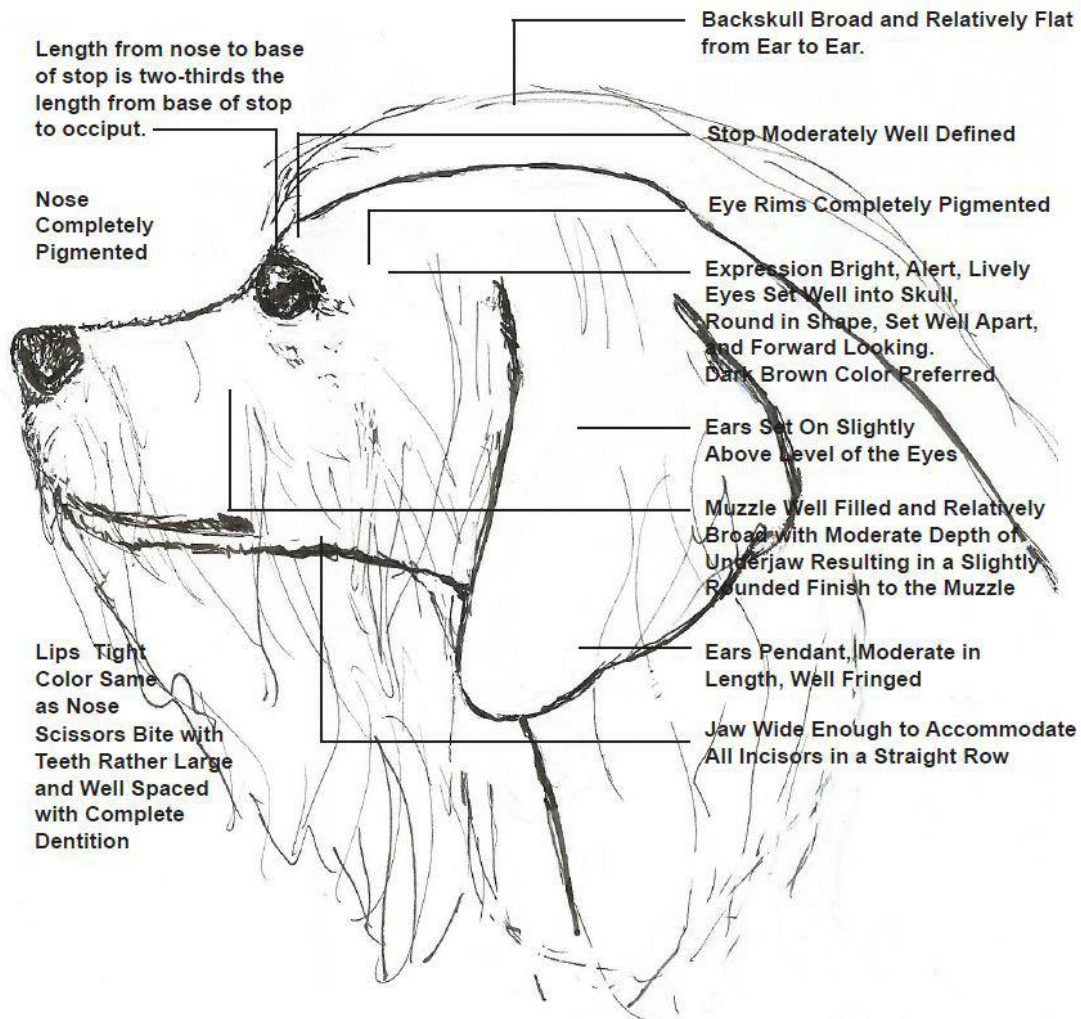
## Proportion

Off square when properly balanced. The distance from the prosternum to the point of buttocks is slightly greater than the distance from the withers to the ground in an 11 to 10 ratio. The distance from the ground to the elbow is slightly greater than the distance from the elbow to the wither. The Lowchen should never be low stationed.



# Head

The head is a hallmark breed characteristic. The expression is bright, alert, and lively.





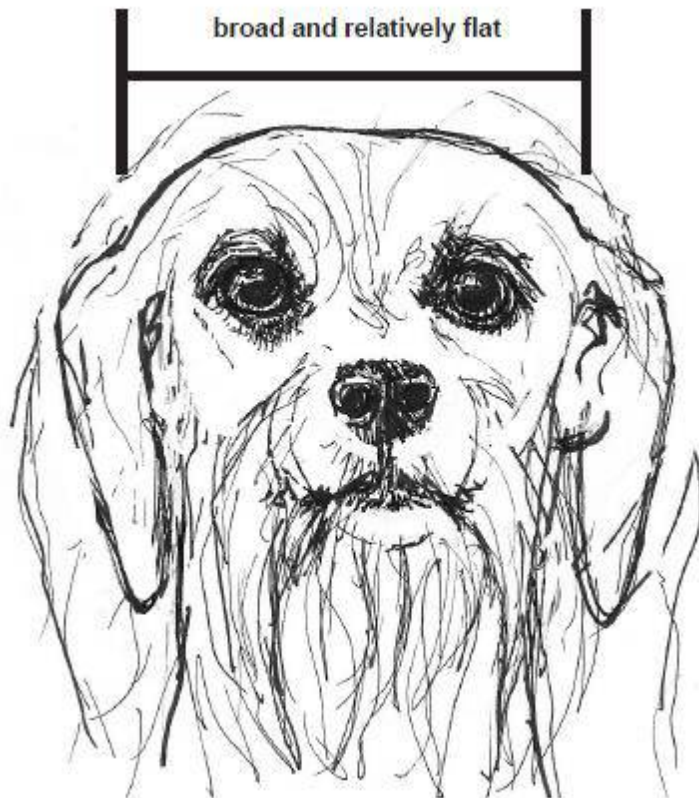
# Typical Heads

The head is a hallmark breed characteristic. The expression is bright, alert, and lively.

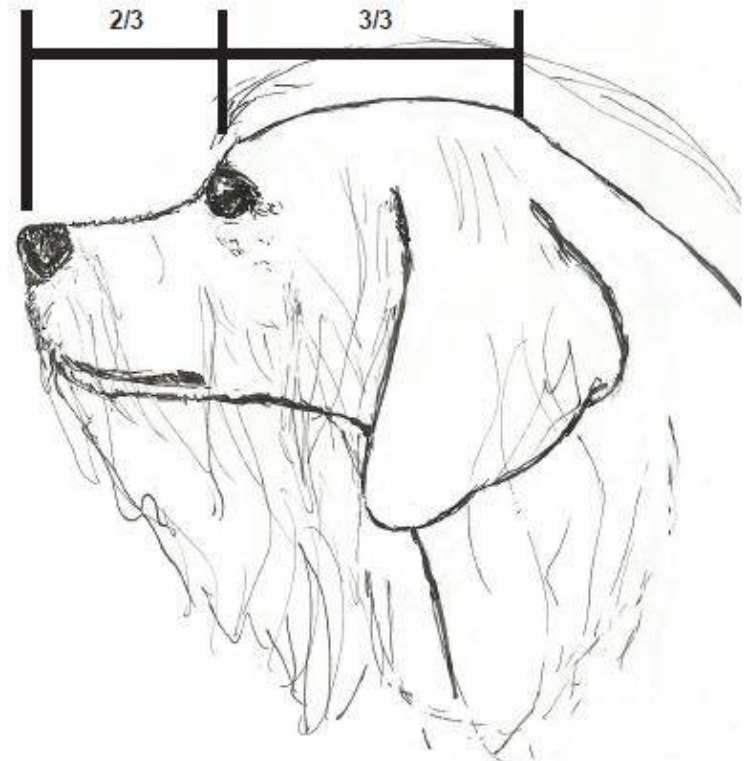


# Head Proportions

The backskull is broad and relatively flat from ear to ear.



The stop is moderately well defined. The length from nose to base of stop is two-thirds of the length from base of stop to occiput.



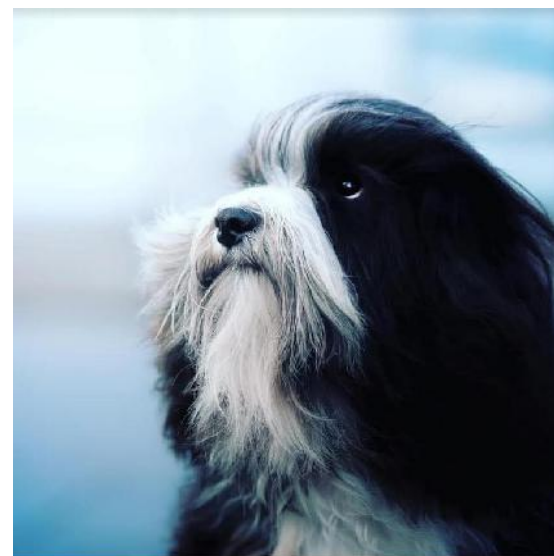
# Head Proportions

The backskull is broad and relatively flat from ear to ear. Puppies might be a little rounded.

The stop is moderately well defined. The length from nose to base of stop is two-thirds of the length from base of stop to occiput.



# Head Proportions



# Typical Heads - Eyes

The eyes are set well into the skull, round in shape, large, set well apart, and forward looking. Eyes are dark brown in color. "



# Head - Muzzle

The muzzle is well filled and relatively broad with moderate depth of underjaw resulting in a slightly rounded finish to the muzzle. The jaw is wide enough to accommodate all incisors in a straight row. Coloration of pigment is in accordance with coat color. Nose and eye rims are completely pigmented. The lips are tight with color the same as the nose.



The *bite* is scissors and the teeth are large and well-spaced, with ideally complete dentition.



# Head - Muzzle



*Incorrect , almond shaped eyes*



*Downturned muzzle.*

# Head - Ears

The ears are pendant,  
moderate in length, well  
fringed, and set on slightly  
above the level of the eye.



*Ear set too high*





# Head – Pigment around Eyes

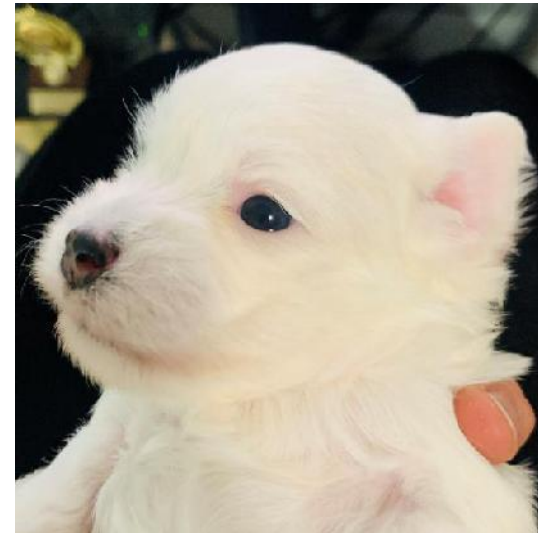
*Pigmented eye rims. Color matches the dog.*



Lighter colored dogs may have lighter brown eyes. but darker eyes are preferred.



*Incorrect. Unpigmented eye rims.*



# Head – Pigment around Eyes

*White coat around the eyes. Eye rims are still full and dark.*



*Incorrect. Unpigmented eye rims.*



# Head – Pigment of Nose

*Correct dark nose and pigmented eye rims.*



*Correct given coat color (chocolate).  
“Coloration of pigment is in accordance with coat color.”*



***Incorrect.  
Nose lacks full pigment.***



# Neck, Topline, Body

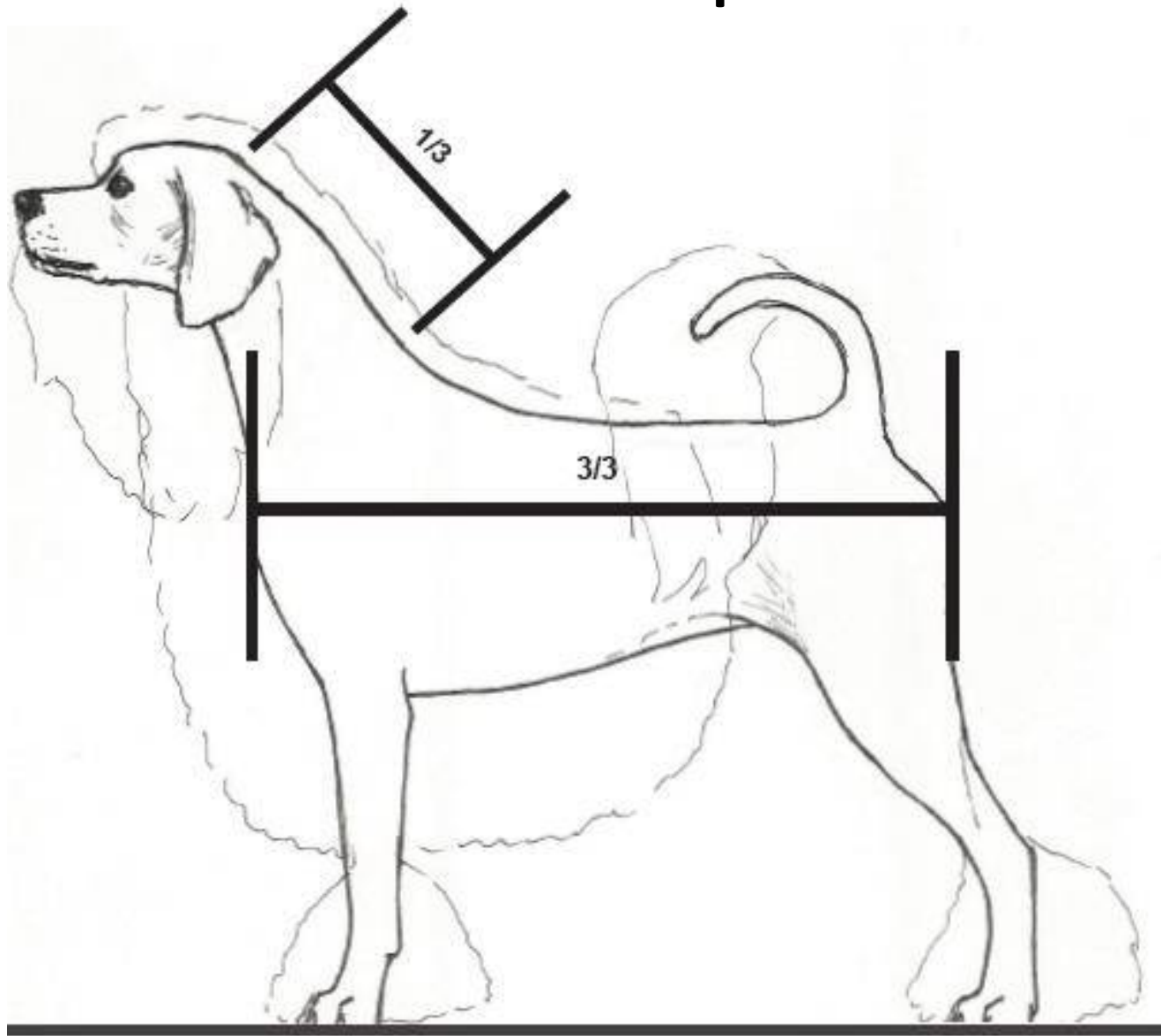
The neck is of good length with a slight arch, fitting smoothly into the shoulders and topline. The head is carried high when the dog is moving.

The topline is level from withers to tail set.

The body is slightly off-square when properly balanced. The loin is short and strong. The ribs are well sprung. The brisket is moderate in width and extends approximately to the elbows. The underline has a slight tuck-up at the loin.

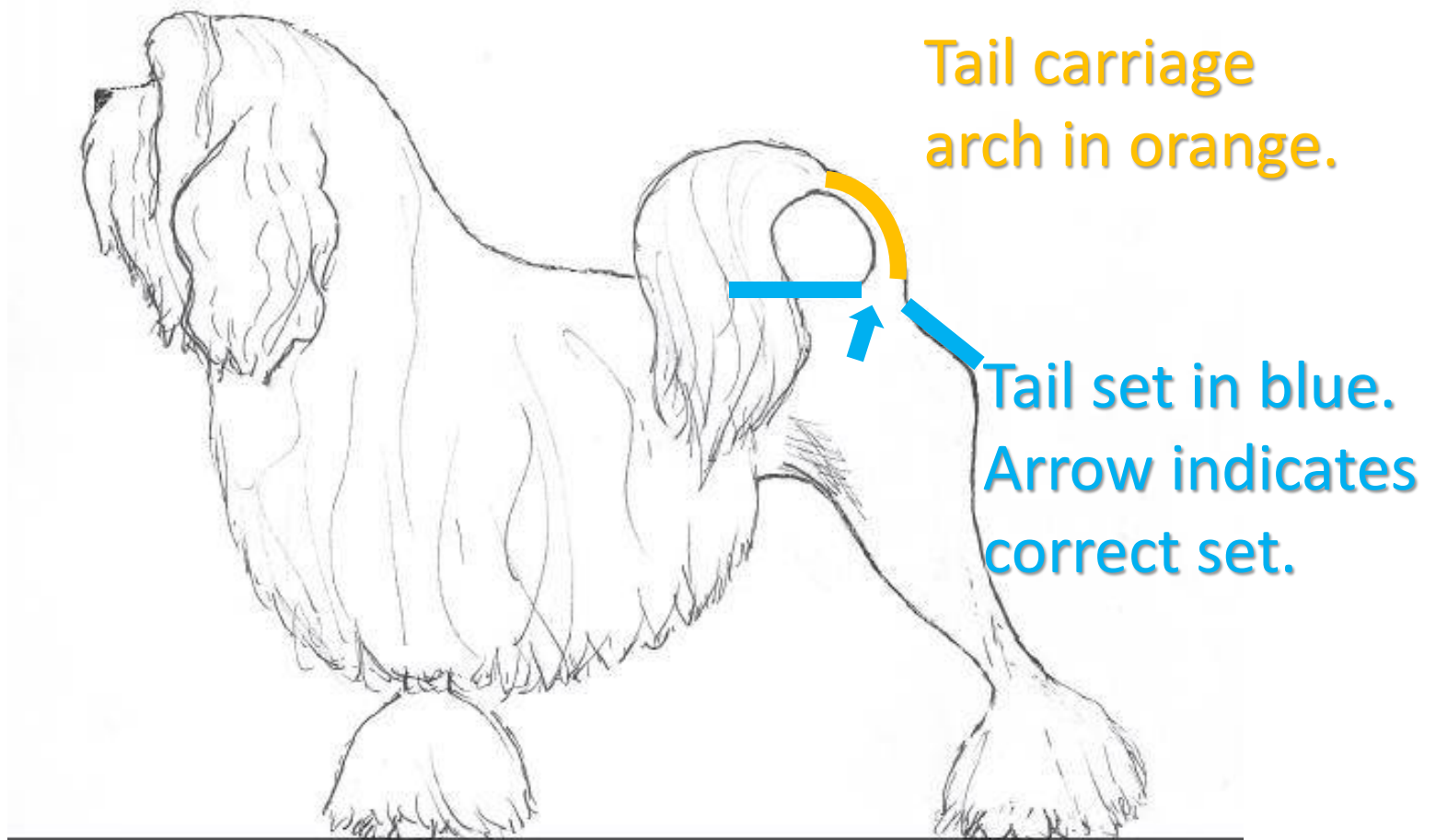


# Neck and Topline



# Tail Set and Carriage

The tail is set high and carried in a well-arched cup-handle fashion with the plume touching the topline when the dog is moving. A dropped tail while standing is not to be penalized.



# Correct Tail Set and Various Carriages when Moving

✓ Correct with plume



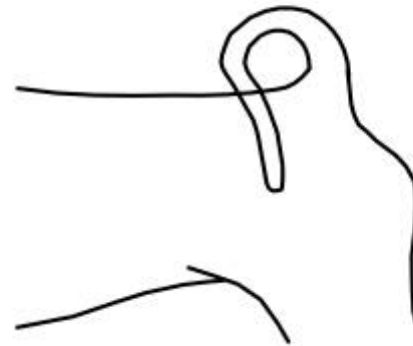
✗ Incorrect Flag



✓ Correct without plume



✗ Incorrect Too Tight



# Tail



Relaxed at a stand. Acceptable.



Correct carriage.



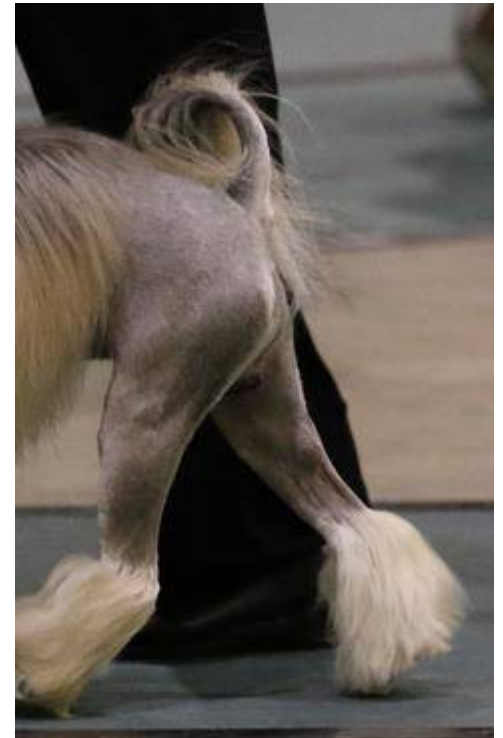
Flag tail fault.



# Tails



Correct carriages.



\*Topline is roached.

# Tails



**Too tightly curled.**



**Almost flat.**



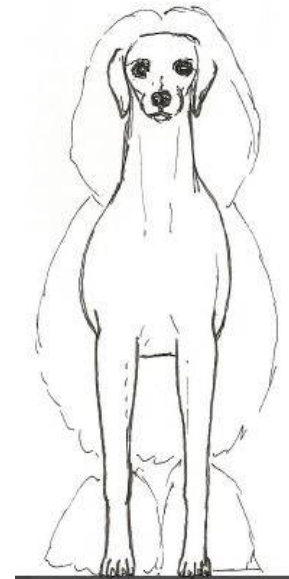
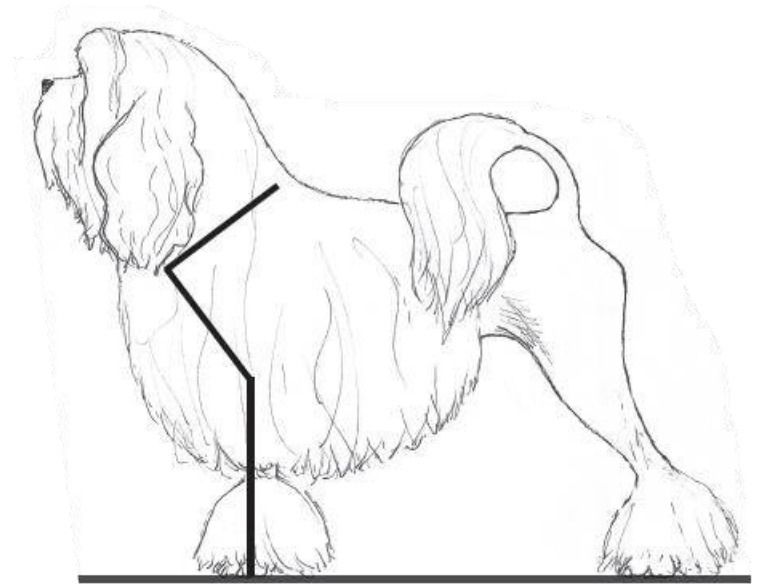
**Too loose, almost flagged.**

# Forequarters

**Shoulders** are strong and well laid back with smooth musculature. The upper arm is of equal length to the shoulder blade and the two meet in a near 90 degree angle.

**Pasterns** are short, parallel from the front, and very slightly bent when viewed from the side.

**Forearms** are of good length and the distance from the withers to the elbow is slightly less than the distance from the elbow to the ground. From the front the legs are perfectly parallel from the elbows to the feet. The bone is more round than oval and of medium size with only a slight decrease in size at the pasterns.



# Forequarters

**Forefeet** - Point straight ahead and are tight and well arched with deep pads, and the two center toes are slightly in advance of the two outer toes. Dewclaws may be removed. The nails are relatively short.

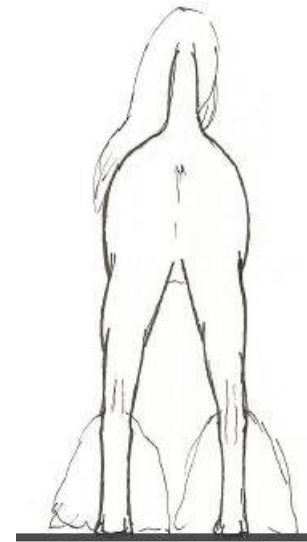
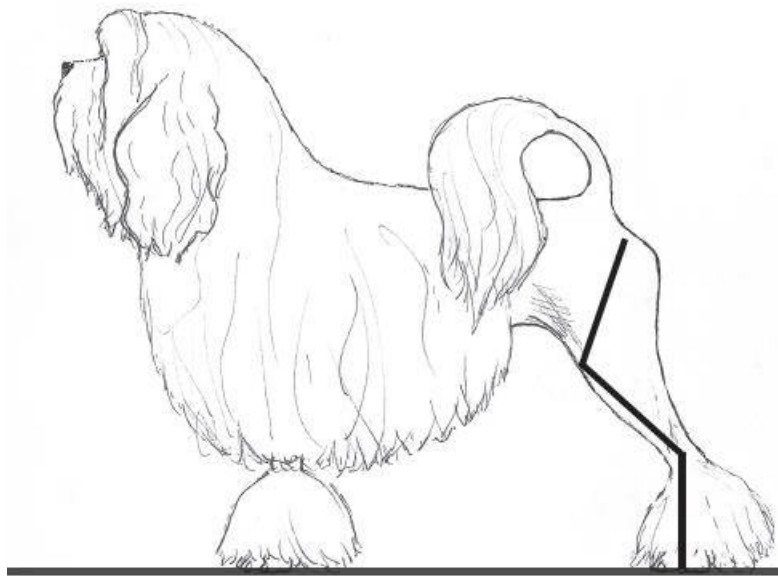


***Long foot***  
***Lacks substance***



# Hindquarters

The pelvic bone projects beyond the set of the tail and is at an approximate 30 degree angle from a perfectly horizontal line. The upper and lower thighs are well muscled and of approximately equal length with medium bone. The stifles are well bent. The hocks are well let down and perpendicular to the ground from any angle. The hindfeet point straight ahead, are slightly smaller than the forefeet, and are well arched with deep pads.



# Hindquarters

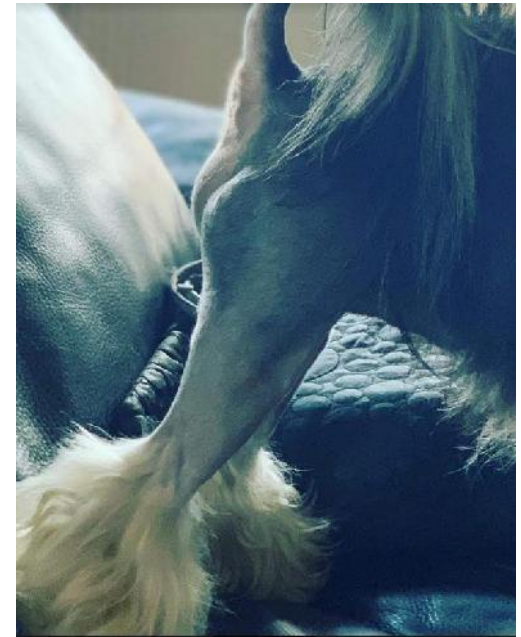
The pelvic bone projects beyond the set of the tail and is at an approximate 30 degree angle from a perfectly horizontal line. The upper and lower thighs are well muscled and of approximately equal length with medium bone. The stifles are well bent. The hocks are well let down and perpendicular to the ground from any angle. The hindfeet point straight ahead, are slightly smaller than the forefeet, and are well arched with deep pads.



**Falling croup.**

# Hindquarters – Prominent Shelf

The pelvic bone projects beyond the set of the tail and is at an approximate 30 degree angle from a perfectly horizontal line. The upper and lower thighs are well muscled and of approximately equal length with medium bone. The stifles are well bent. The hocks are well let down and perpendicular to the ground from any angle. The hindfeet point straight ahead, are slightly smaller than the forefeet, and are well arched with deep pads.



# Coat

The Löwchen must be shown in the traditional Lion Clip. The unclipped areas of the coat are long, rather dense and moderately soft in texture. The unique Löwchen coat consists of hairs of varying diameters with a more noticeable collection of denser hair around the neck and withers. The coat may fall to either side but must never be artificially parted.

The ideal texture should be 50% softer hairs and 50% denser hairs.

It has a slightly to moderately wavy appearance. Wiry, woolly, curly and flat coat textures are not correct and are to be penalized to the degree of severity. Puppies typically have a softer coat.





# Coat Trim

The coat is clipped to approximately 1/8" on the shaded parts of the body.

The tail is clipped from the base to approximately one-half way to the tip leaving a plume at the end of the tail.

The body is clipped from the last rib to and including the hindquarters, leaving a ruff or mane which just covers the last rib.

Last Rib

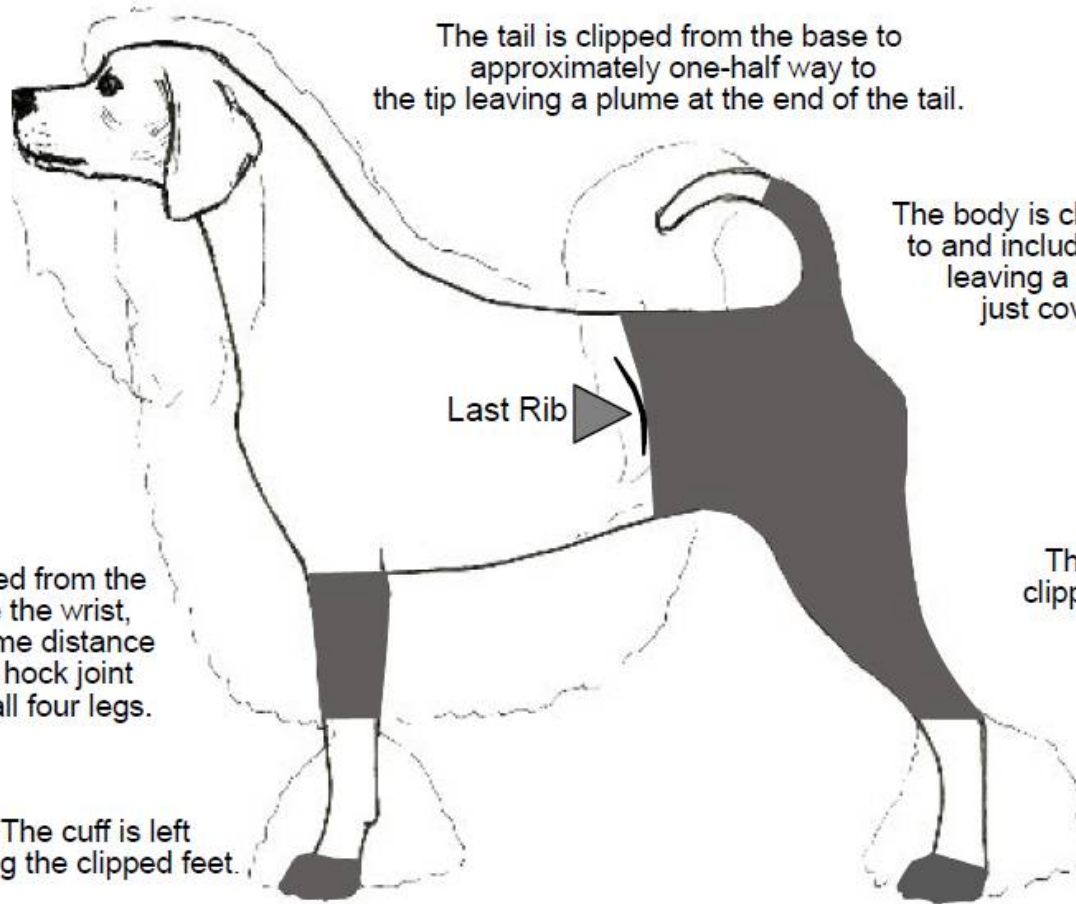
The hindquarters are clipped to the hock joint.

The front legs are clipped from the elbow to a point above the wrist, which is equal to the same distance from the ground to the hock joint leaving cuffs of hair on all four legs.

The feet are clipped. The cuff is left untrimmed, often covering the clipped feet.

Any cut / trim / pattern other than what is listed in the standard is a disqualification.

Natural breakage of coat can appear straight in this breed particularly on the cuffs, underline, and ears.



# Puppy Coat

It is noted that young Löwchen will appear to have a sculpted and shaped look as the coat at that age is the same length. The puppy coat is also softer than an adult coat. Puppies do not have coat long enough to experience coat breakage, and puppies are not to be penalized for having a sculpted appearance due to age.



# Coat Breakage and Coat Change

Löwchen are active dogs, and as such the coat does break. In many dogs, the way the coat breaks can appear straight or perfect from a distance, particularly on the cuffs, underline, and ears. Upon examining the coat up close, judges will see that the coat is comprised of various lengths of hair.

*“Appearance should not be sculpted or scissored. No other trimming or sculpting of the coat is warranted and is to be severely penalized as to preclude placement.”*



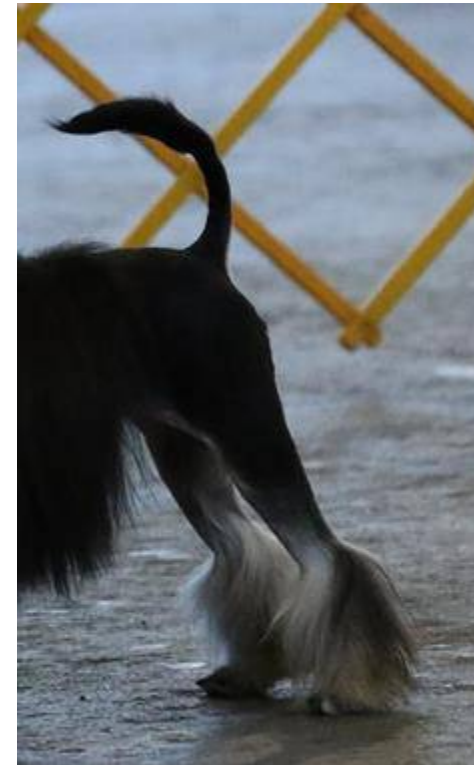
Recent coat change.



Natural coat breakage.

# Self Initiated Coat Breakage

Additionally, chewed coats can appear to have very straight lines as well. Natural breakage or canine chewing of the coat, even if appearing to be straight, shall not be interpreted as intentional trimming.



# Coat Presentation

Is the dog wearing the coat or is the coat wearing the dog?

The Trim pattern is a distinctive characteristic of the breed, but it is not the definition of the breed. The breed is more than the coat.



# Coat Presentation

Is the dog wearing the coat or is the coat wearing the dog?

The Trim pattern is a distinctive characteristic of the breed, but it is not the definition of the breed. The breed is more than the coat.



# Coat Presentation

Dogs should be clean and presentable. Löwchen are an active breed, and it can be expected that coat may be sacrificed for the dog's lifestyle.



# Is the dog in the described trim?

## Visual Inspection

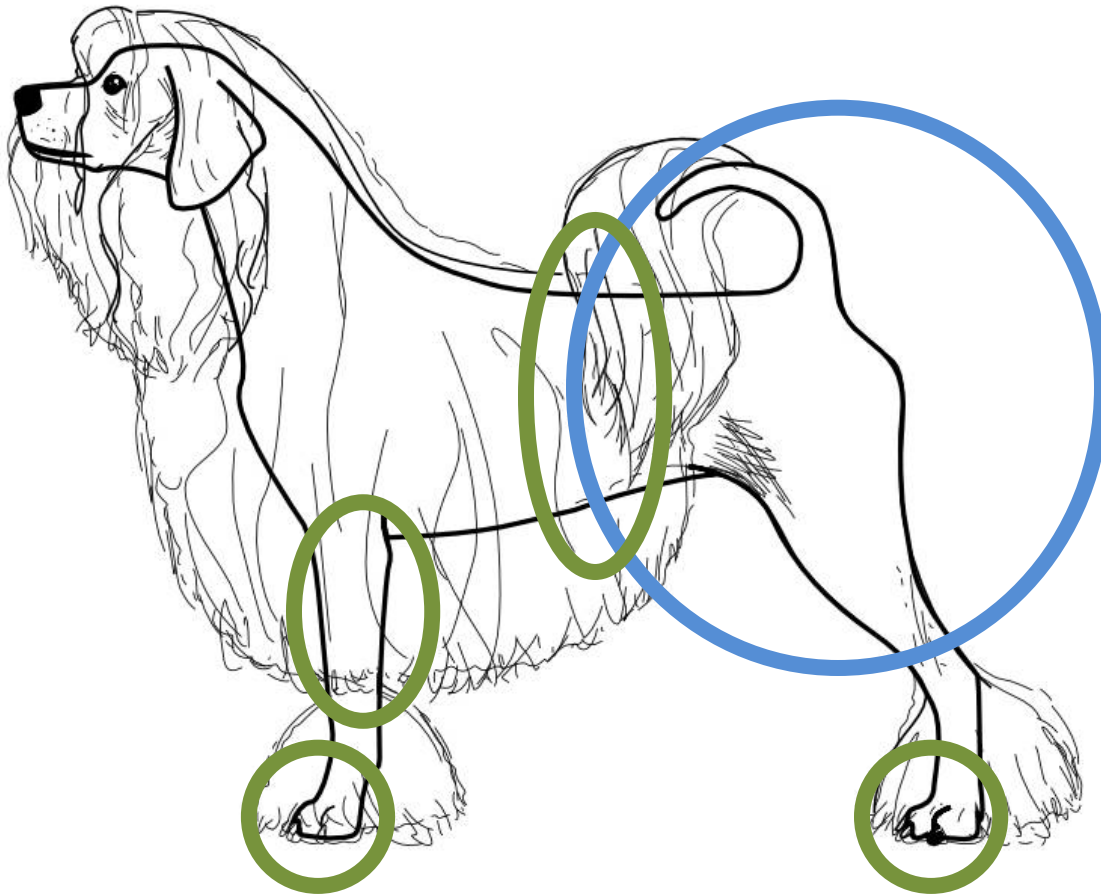


Is the rear and tail clipped? Are the forearms clipped?  
\*Sometimes visible without moving coat on the body.

Use hands to move hair  
aside for evaluation.



Are the feet clipped? Is the dog trimmed to the last rib?





# Clipped Portions

Clipped parts are “clipped to **approximately**  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch.”

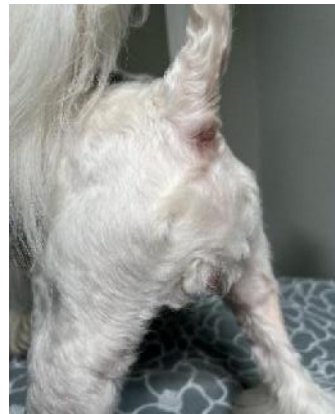
The standard describes a distinctive trim that resembles a lion.

**The lion trim should be immediately recognizable in silhouette.**

**Exactness of the clipped portions shall not be prioritized over breed type.**

This dog is not freshly groomed.

While in the correct trim, the silhouette is fuzzy and irregular, particularly around the areas where the natural hair growth patterns create ridge. Evaluate the dog as you would a dog that was not presented well.



**Unclipped**



~1 inch

Freshly Shaved

**Clipped half to demonstrate growth**



Freshly Shaved

~1/2 inch

This dog was clipped 14 days ago with a 40 blade against the hair. The hair is still relatively tight to the body with no impact to silhouette. This is acceptable presentation.

# Checking the trim to the last rib.

Gently move hair forward and feel for the last rib.

Do not pull the hair or skin, thus distorting the trim line.

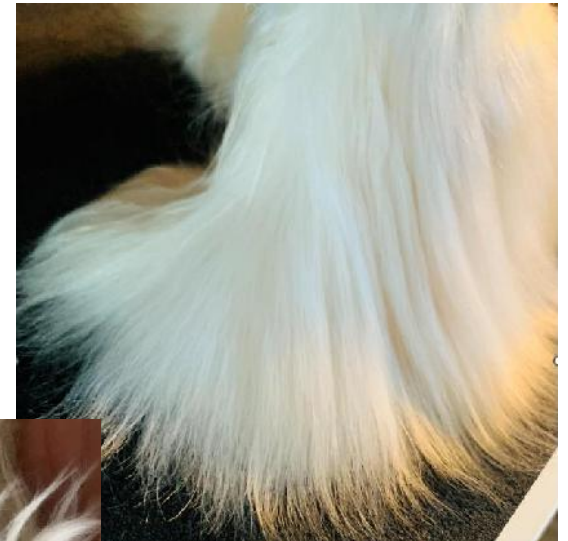


# Checking the Feet

The standard states that “the feet are entirely clipped.” The current standard does **not** state where exactly the feet should be clipped to. So long as the feet are clipped, the trim is considered correct.

The cuff of each foot often grows over the top of the clipped foot. It may be necessary to move the cuff aside to examine the clipped foot.

The Löwchen is an active breed. It can be expected that cuffs will get broken off in play, sometimes short enough for the toes to be visible. This is neither to be awarded or penalized as it is there is no cuff length requirement in the standard.



# Checking the Clipped Parts – Young Dogs

Feet and forearms are **sometimes** visible on young dogs due to coat length. This is expected as their coats do not have length to age. This is not to be awarded or penalized.



# Checking the Clipped Parts - Adult Dog

Adult dogs in proper coat condition will have long coat that covers the forearms and the toes. Sometimes during movement, clipped forearms and clipped feet are visible.

During exam on the table, gently move the long coat aside to check that the forearms and the feet are clipped.

The standard does not call for a minimum long coat length except on the tail. Dogs shall not be awarded or penalized for the length of the long coat.



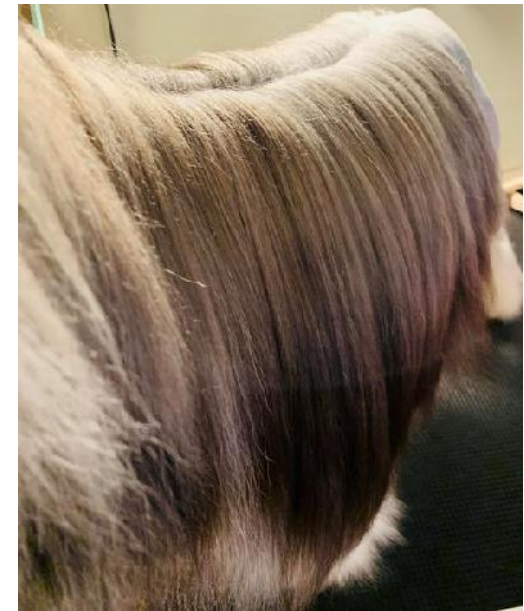
# Checking the Texture of the Long Coat

The ideal texture of the coat is 50% softer hairs and 50% denser hairs with a slightly to moderate wavy appearance. Feel the coat between your fingers to assess the texture. The correct texture creates a coat that is easy to maintain.

Puppy coats will appear softer with fewer denser hairs.



The longer coat of adults will have more density and length than puppy coats. The waviness of adult coats can be found around the neck, ears, and cuffs.



# Color Change – two dogs shown below



# Colors

All colors are acceptable with no preferences.





# Gait

- Effortless and Ground Covering
- Tail carried curved over the back
- Body nearly square
- Topline is firm and level
- Head at the 10-11 position to allow for good reach



# Gait

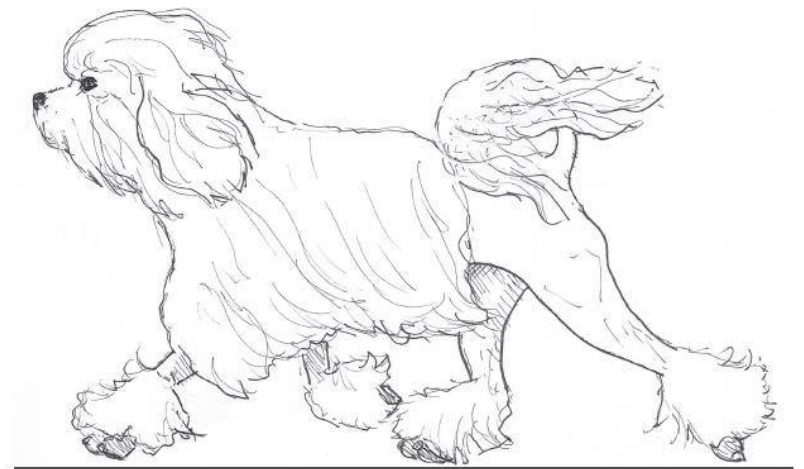
Movement at a trot is effortless with good reach in front and full extension in the rear. From the front the forelegs move in almost parallel lines converging slightly as the speed increases. From the side movement is efficient and ground covering.

The forelegs reach well out in front, and the rear legs come well under the body and extend behind to maximize propulsion. The body remains nearly square in outline and the topline is held firm and level, with the tail being carried curved over the back and the head held above the level of the back.



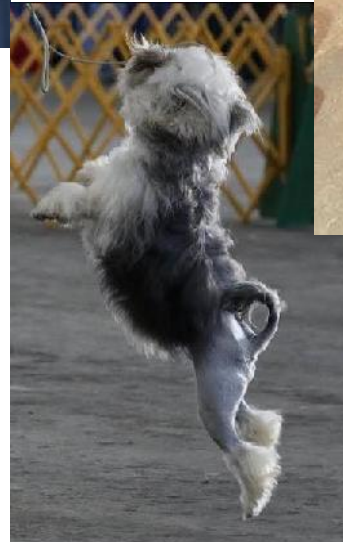
**Lacking reach and drive. Topline is not level**

# Gait



# Temperament

The Löwchen is alert, intelligent, and affectionate with the overall qualities of a loving companion dog. It has a lively, outgoing, and inquisitive personality.



The Lowchen is a lively companion breed depicted as companions for nobility. Historic paintings of the Lowchen depict a sturdy and agile dog engaged with their people. With the breed function in mind, it is imperative that hallmarks and core characteristics of the breed are prioritized.

# Temperament

Lowchen shall present as confident and alert in the ring. The Lowchen shall move in the ring with the tail carried up in a teacup fashion demonstrating willingness and liveliness. A dropped tail while standing is not to be penalized. While it is understandable that dogs may become startled, display concern due to environmental circumstances, or appear to be physically tired at times, judges should expect that exhibits appear engaged and agreeable to being examined in the ring.



- Alert, intelligent, and affectionate
- Lively, outgoing, and inquisitive personality
- Tail carried up when moving
- Tail dropped or relaxed when standing
- Leniency for young dogs learning ring procedure
- Leniency for extenuating environmental circumstances



- Aggression or menacing
- Fearful in the show environment
- Unable to be examined
- Freezing during movement, skittering, or darting away
- Tail dropped out of fear during movement
- Jumping on handler out of anxiety or fear

# Temperament

Exhibitors should have thoroughly acclimated their dogs to show environments to be comfortable with ring procedures and the table exam. Some leniency may be granted for young dogs that are still learning the process, but no leniency shall be granted to any dog that does not exhibit the Lowchen temperament.

The Lowchen shall never be aggressive or menacing. The Lowchen should never be so unconfident that it cannot be moved in the ring or examined. The Lowchen should not skitter in fright, attempt to dart away, or freeze in fear. As temperament is a hallmark of the breed, dogs displaying temperament in opposition to the standard shall be heavily penalized.

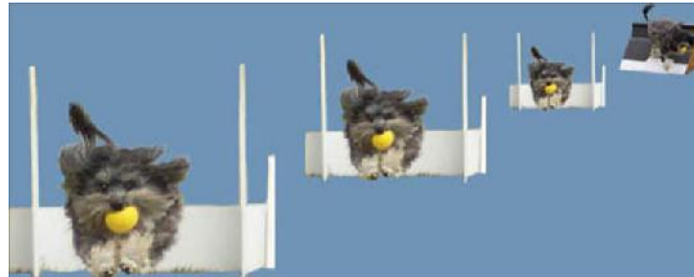


# Performance

The Löwchen is alert, intelligent, and affectionate with the overall qualities of a loving companion dog. It has a lively, outgoing, and inquisitive personality.



Agility



Flyball



Flyball



Agility



Agility

# Performance

The Löwchen is alert, intelligent, and affectionate with the overall qualities of a loving companion dog. It has a lively, outgoing, and inquisitive personality.



**Barn Hunt**



**Scent Work**



**Scent Work**



**Coursing**



**Fast Cat**



# Other Activities

The Löwchen is alert, intelligent, and affectionate with the overall qualities of a loving companion dog. It has a lively, outgoing, and inquisitive personality.



Water Rescue



Medical Alert Service Dog



Weight Pull



Medical Alert Service Dog



Surfing

# Companion

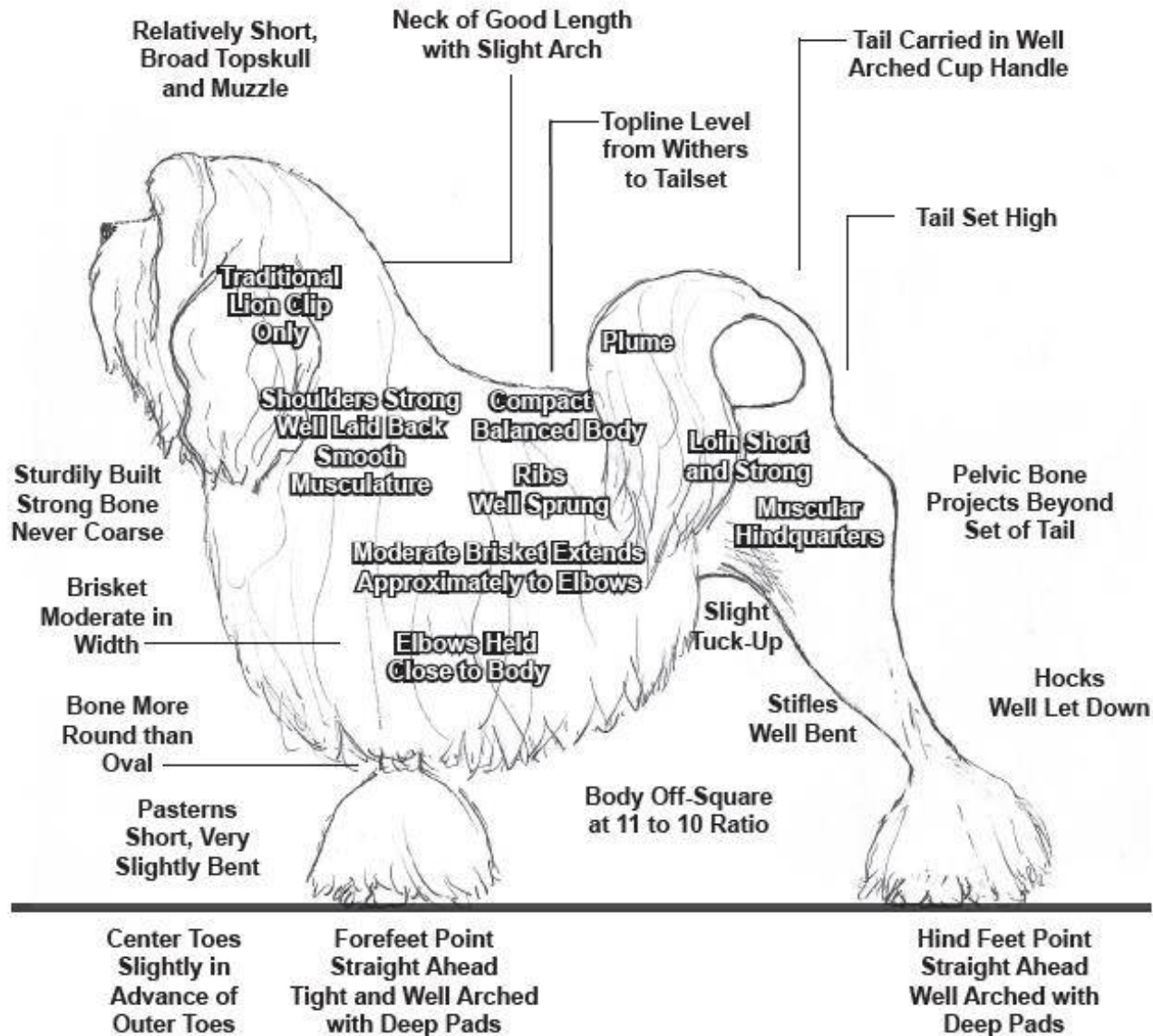


# Lion Attitude

The Löwchen is alert, intelligent, and affectionate with the overall qualities of a loving companion dog. It has a lively, outgoing, and inquisitive personality.



# Standard in Review



# You be the Judge

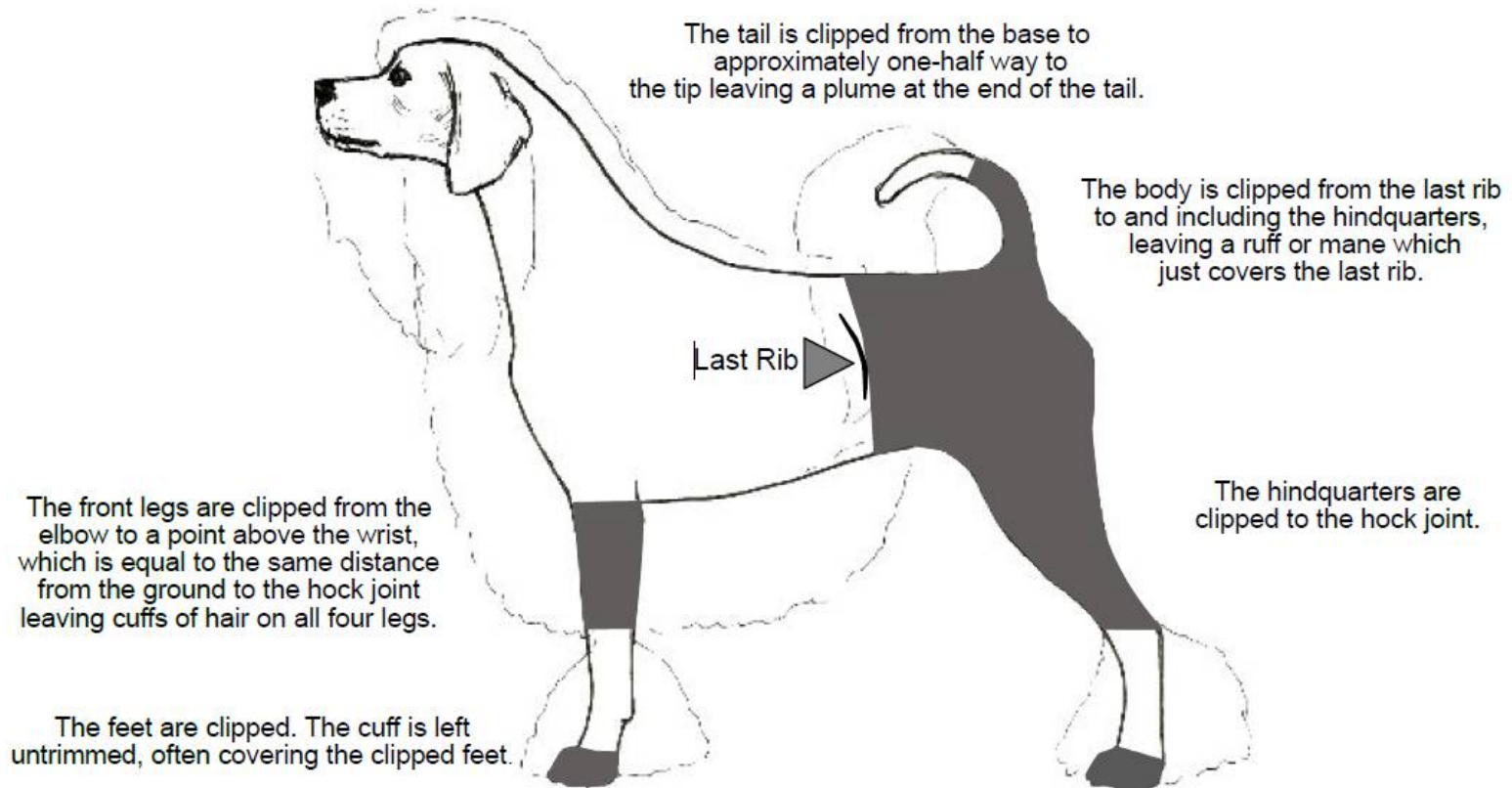


Notice other countries do not always require the front legs to be clipped.

# Disqualifications

Any trim other than specified.

The coat is clipped to approximately 1/8" on the shaded parts of the body.



Any cut / trim / pattern other than what is listed in the standard is a disqualification.  
Natural breakage of coat can appear straight in this breed particularly on the cuffs, underline, and ears.

# How to Evaluate the Löwchen

## Outline, Shape, Proportion, Size, and Substance



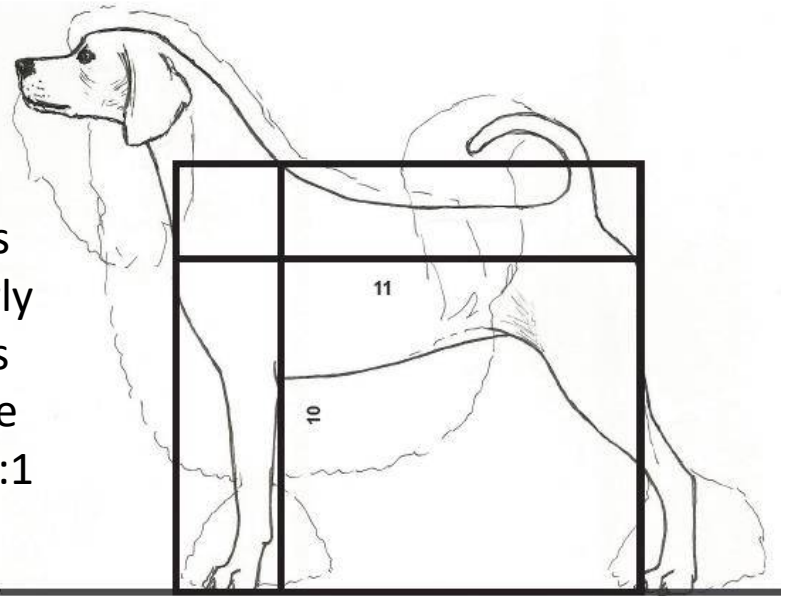
**Outline** - Assess the outline of the dogs. Does the tail fall over the back in a teacup fashion? Would the outline be obviously recognizable as a Löwchen, even without the coat?



### **Shape and Proportion** –

Using your hands, find the shoulders, prosternum, and rib cage. Do the proportions feel slightly off square? Does the dog have leg without appearing overly leggy? Does the dog lack leg and appears low-stationed? A correct dog should have a slightly off square body with a nearly 1:1 leg to chest ratio.

*\*Note: Use your hands to assess the dog's proportion. The length and volume of hair may distort the dog's true proportion.*



**Size and Substance** – Does the dog appear to have a sense of sturdiness without appear overly coarse? Is the dog's size in proportion for its substance? The dog should not appear light or heavy in bone. The standard calls for a moderate dog between 11-13 inches with one inch variance on either side if the dog is significantly superior in quality.



# How to Evaluate the Lowchen

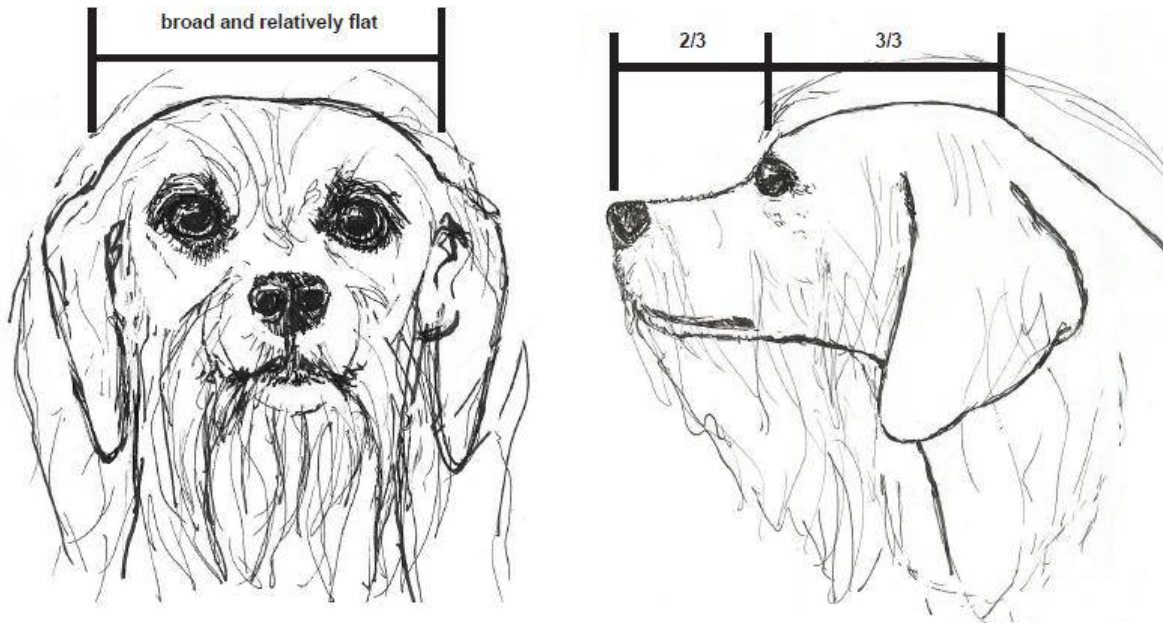
## Head and Expression



**Head and Expression** – Does the head appear to be balanced with the rest of the body? Does the expression look bright, alert, and lively? The eyes could appear large, round, engaging, wide set in accordance with a broad backskull? The muzzle should be full and in balance with the rest of the head. The muzzle should be approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the length of the backskull. It should not be too long, too short, or turn up or down.



**Head Proportion** – Using your hands, feel the backskull for shape and width. It should be broad and relatively flat.





# How to Evaluate the Löwchen

## Clip and Coat Texture

Move hair aside to check the clipped line is at the last rib. Be careful to not pull or move the skin so that the shaved line moves.

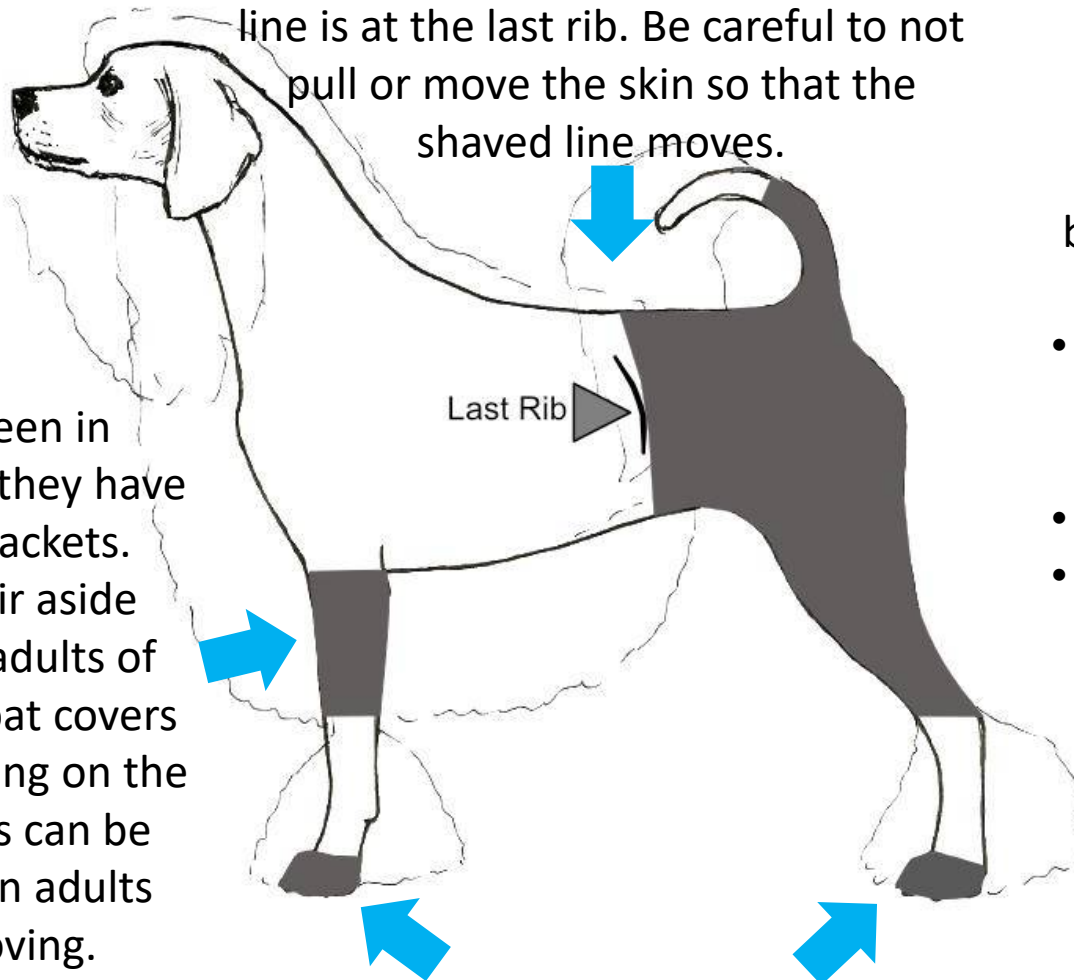


Feel the coat texture between your finger tips.

- Do you see some waviness (typically on the neck and ears)?
- Does it feel cottony?
- Does it feel wiry?

It should feel silky with multiple texture hairs.

Easily seen in puppies as they have shorter jackets. Move hair aside gently in adults of the long coat covers it if examining on the table. This can be seen when adults are moving.

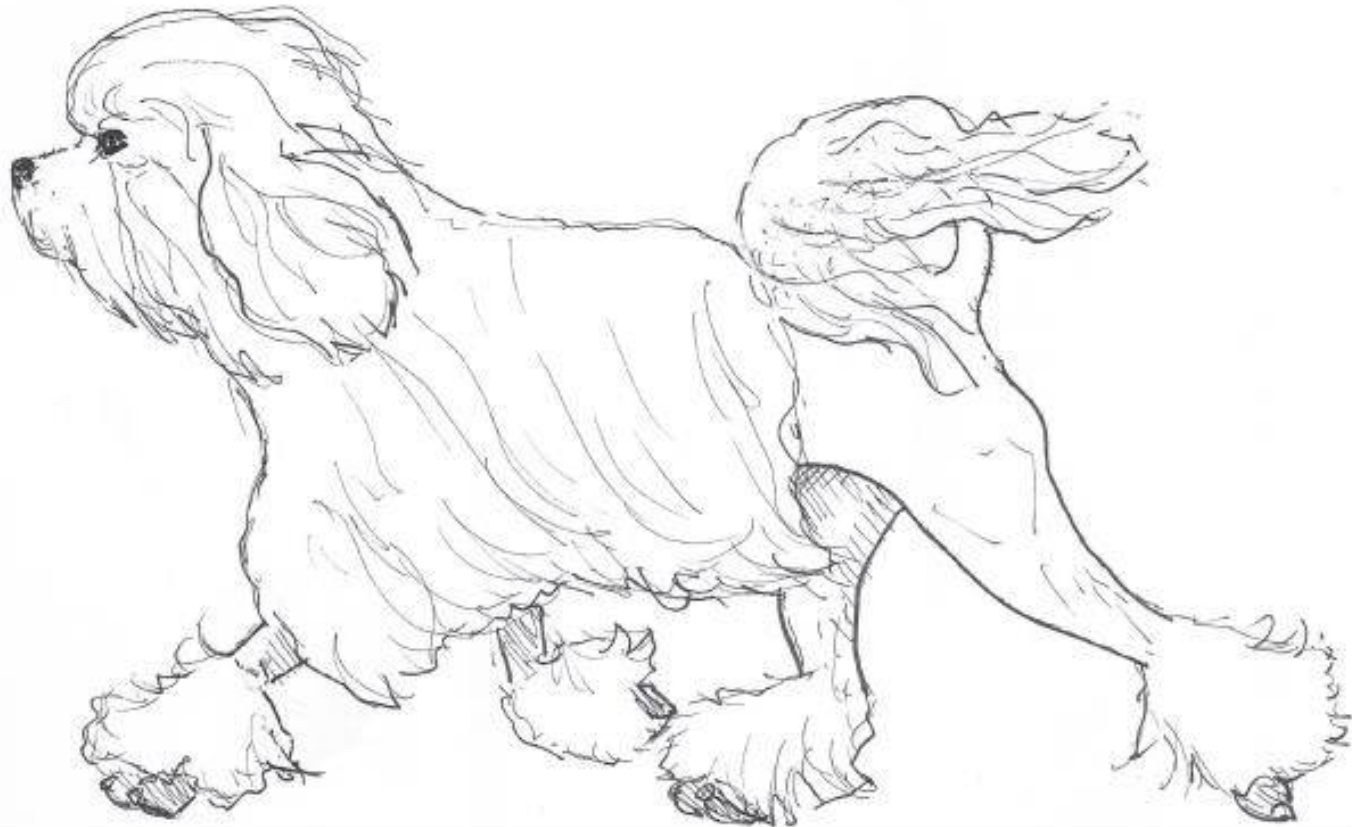


Check that the feet are clipped. Lift the hair or move aside.

# How to Evaluate the Löwchen



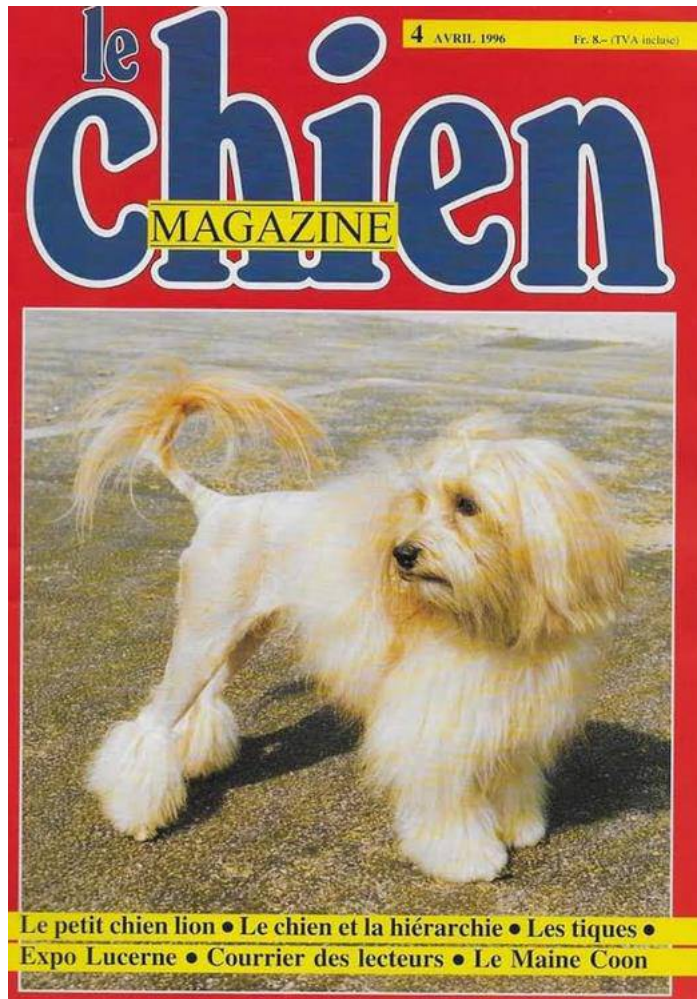
**Movement and Overall Look**– Does the dog move effortlessly while holding the correct shape? Does the dog move soundly with tail carried in a teacup fashion? Is this a moderate dog companion dog that could entertain you for hours?



# Historic Photos



# Not so distant past



*Gros plan sur...*

**Le petit chien lion**

Indéniablement ce petit chien a ses lettres de noblesse, car dès le 15<sup>e</sup> siècle on peut le reconnaître, figurant sur des tapisseries, des huiles et des gravures, grâce à son aspect très particulier le faisant ressortir du lot des autres petites races de type bichon ou épagneul. C'est probablement le seul chien de compagnie, qui déjà à cette époque était toiletté en «lion». Mais était-il uniquement chien de compagnie, car il figure également sur des gravures de Dürer, accompagnant un seigneur à cheval? Il est probable qu'il y avait plusieurs chiens toi-

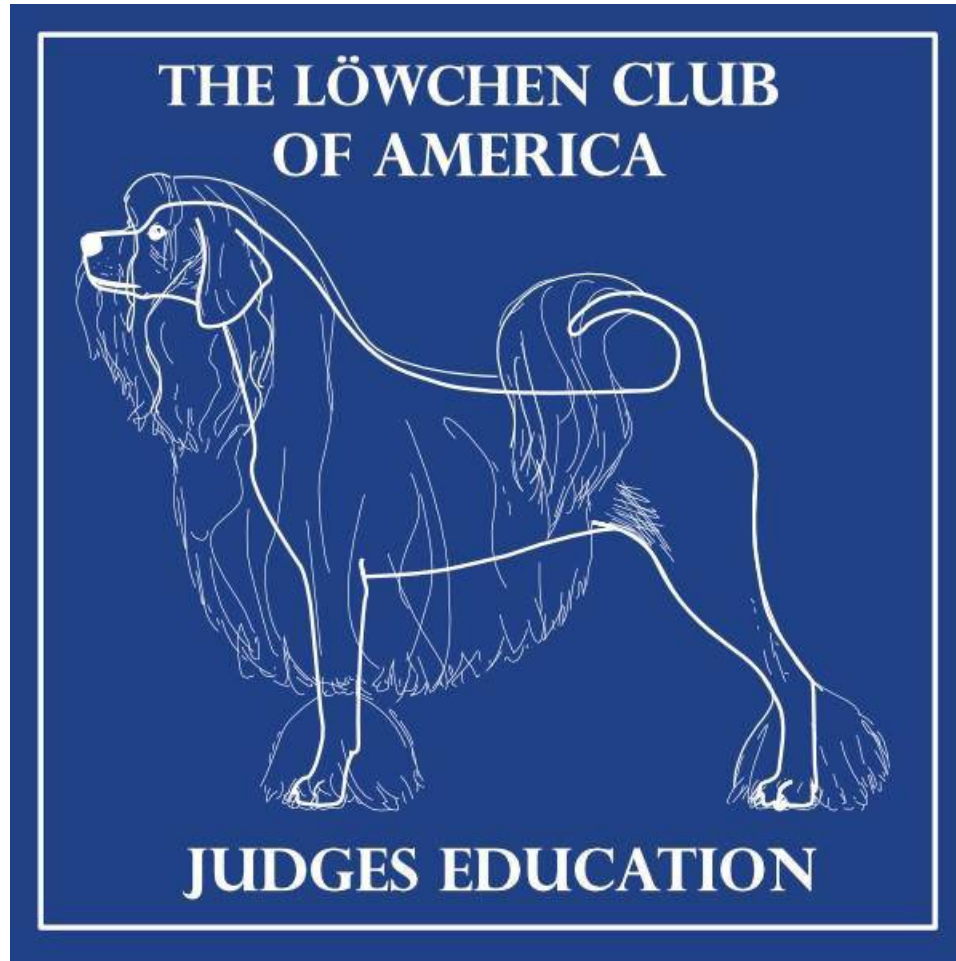
Photo LM

Bonaparte. La duchesse d'Albe avait plu- ments» dans son lit, c'est alors un petit

Sculpted Look is not desirable.



# Thank you!



# Appendix for Reference