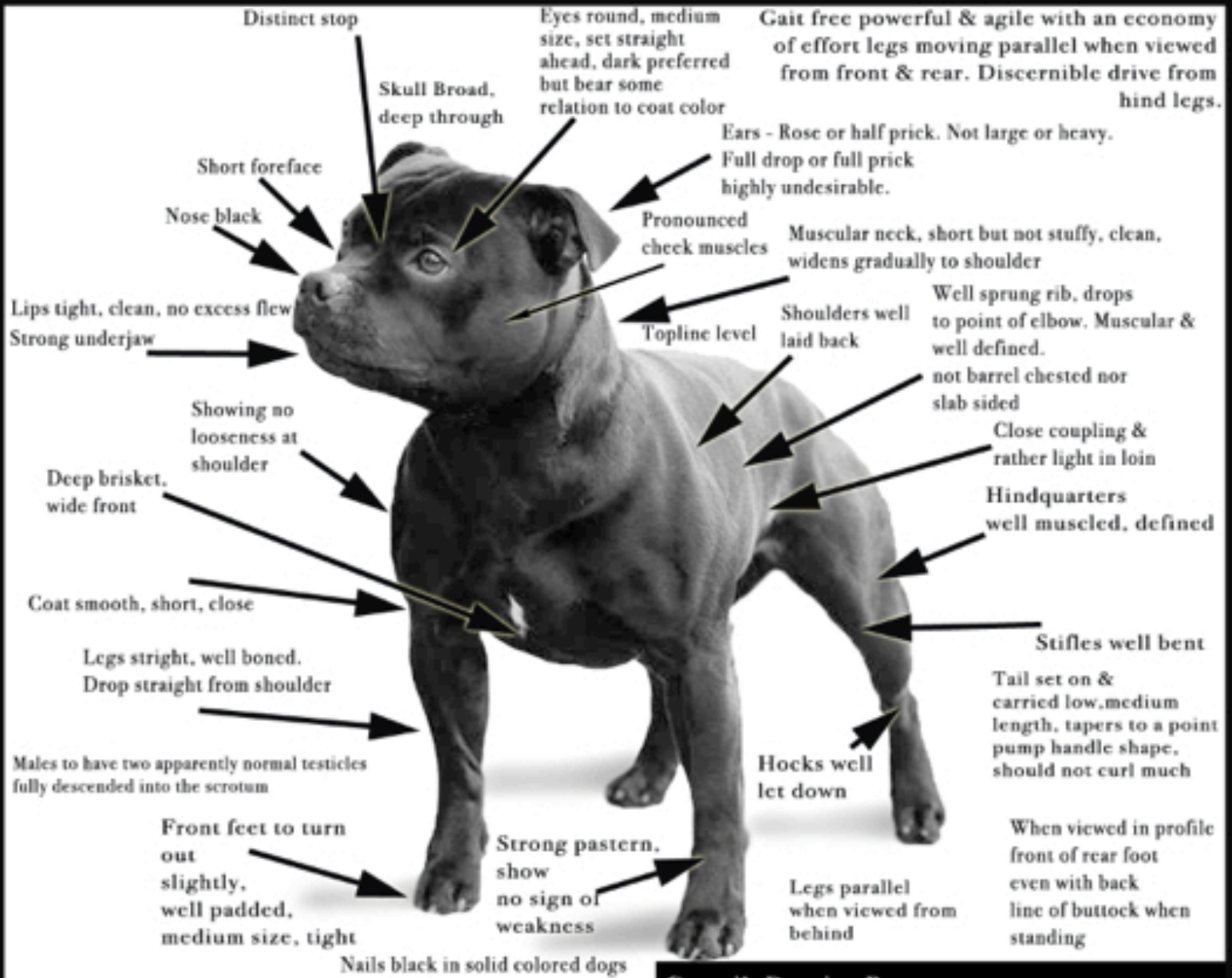


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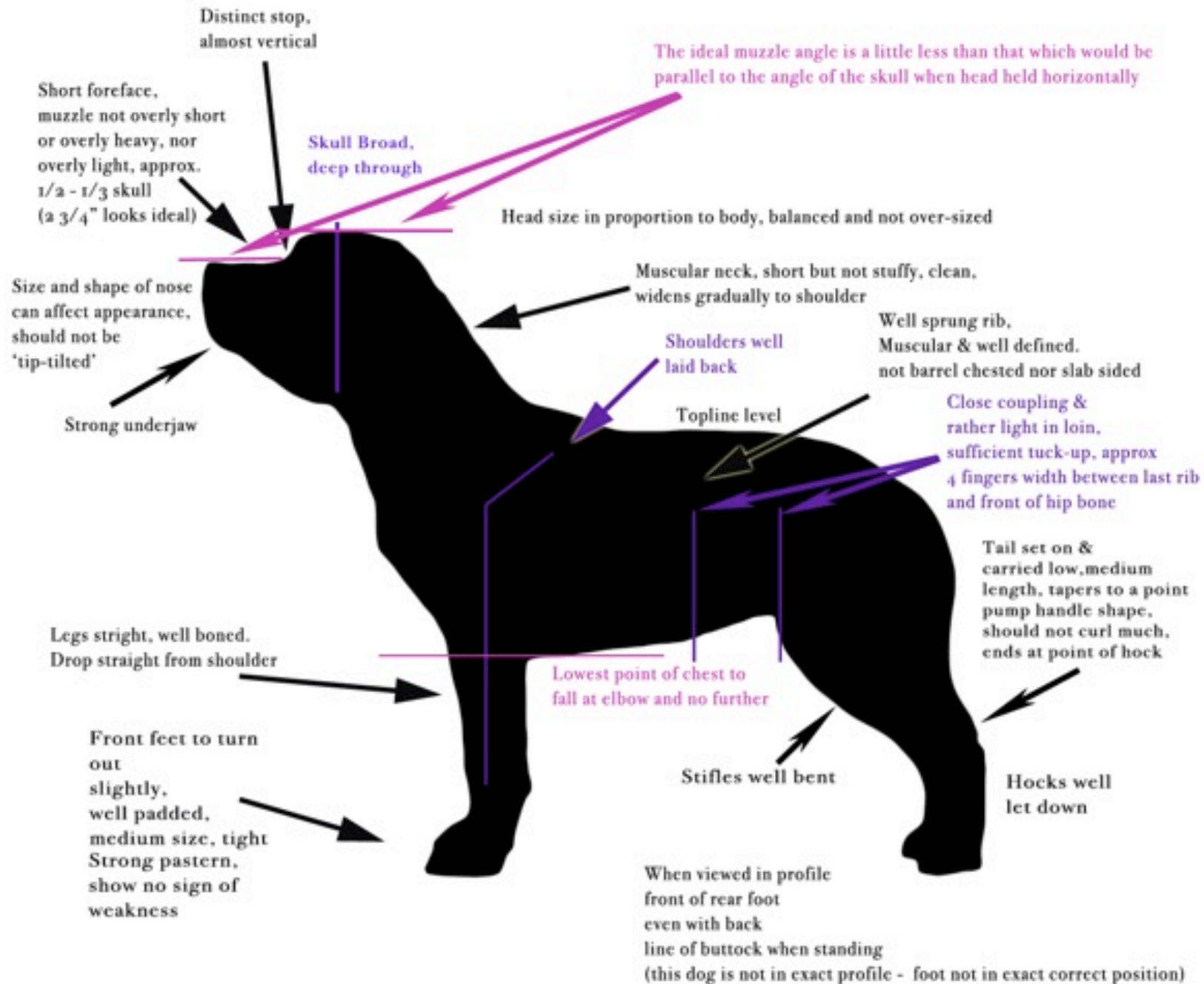
Staffordshire Bull Terrier - Illustrated Breed Standard



Cragails Dancing Brave
Breeder - Craig Dillon
Photo by Kenny Brown - Darmcid Photography

Balance = Lack of Exaggeration

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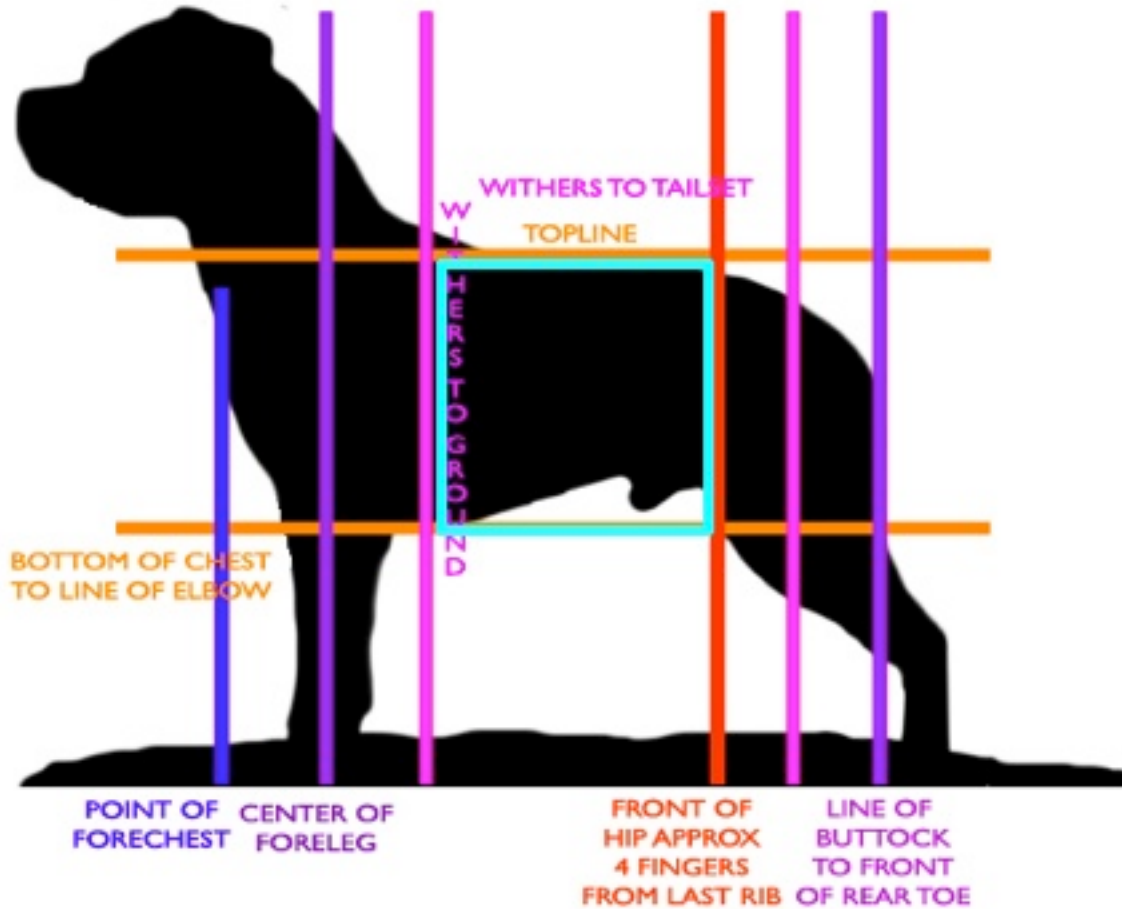


"Non-conformity with these limits is a fault" Any departure from these limits should be considered a fault and the 'SERIOUSNESS' with which the fault should be regarded, should be in exact proportion to its DEGREE.

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The head and neck should extend above and in front of the imaginary horizontal line across the Topline and imaginary vertical line from center of foreleg

Keeping in mind that the distance from withers to ground and the distance from withers to tail set **should** be equal - this means that the Stafford is **NOT** a true square breed - remember that the points from withers to forechest and from tailset to buttock extends outside of these parameters making him a tad longer than tall



“Heights Being Related to Weights”

Size, Proportion, Substance

Height at shoulder: 14 to 16 inches. Weight: Dogs, 28 to 38 pounds; bitches, 24 to 34 pounds, **these heights being related to weights**. Non-conformity with these limits is a fault. In proportion, the length of back, from withers to tail set, is equal to the distance from withers to ground.

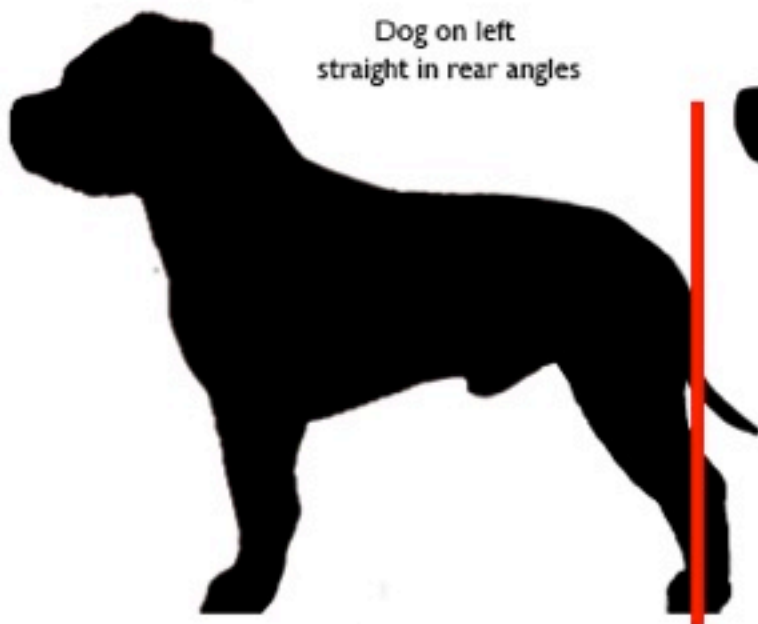
Males

14” 28lbs
 14 1/2” ..30.45lbs
 15”32.85lbs
 15 1/2” ...35.5lbs
 16” 38lbs

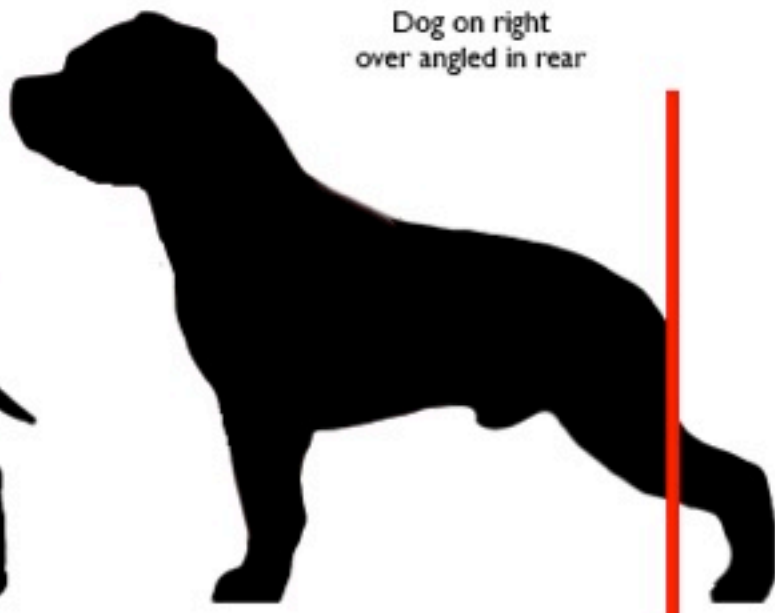
Females

14”24lbs
 14 1/2” ...26.25lbs
 15”28.80lbs
 15 1/2” ...31.31lbs
 16”34lbs

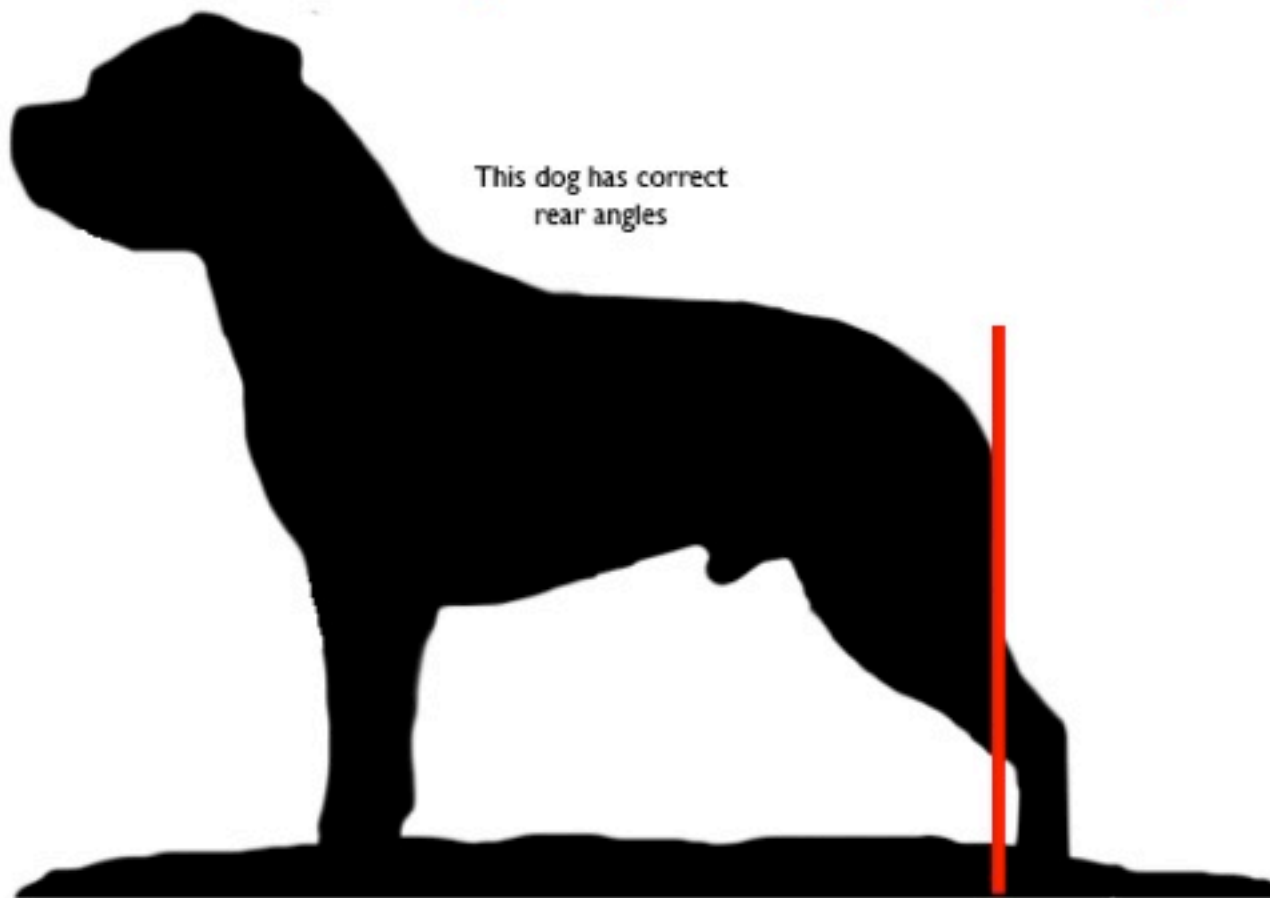
Dog on left
straight in rear angles



Dog on right
over angled in rear

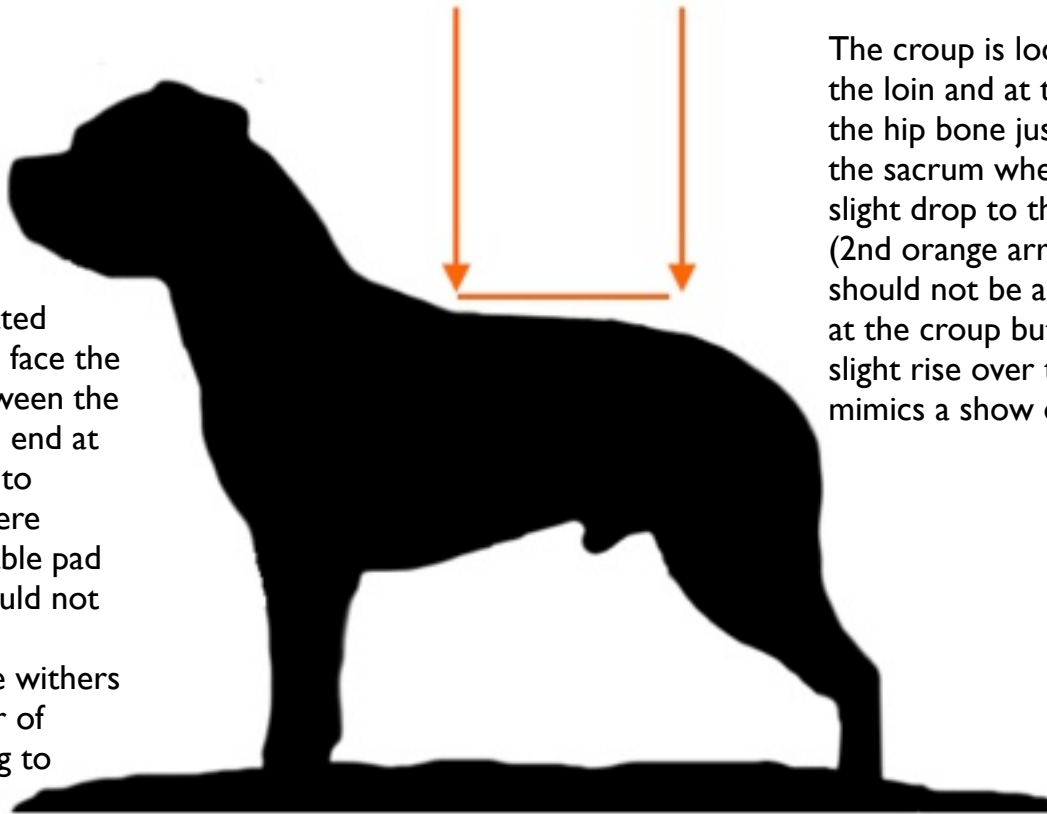


This dog has correct
rear angles



The Stafford Topline

The topline is level from the withers to the croup



The withers are located where the vertebrae face the rear of the dog (between the shoulder blades) and end at the point they begin to change direction where there is also a noticeable pad of muscle. There should not be a noticeable dip in vertebrae behind the withers but allowing for layer of muscle pad according to fitness level.

The croup is located after the loin and at the point of the hip bone just in front of the sacrum where there is a slight drop to the tail set (2nd orange arrow) There should not be a severe drop at the croup but should be a slight rise over the loin which mimics a show of tuck below.

Toplines are designed to help the dog perform a particular function, in this case they must be agile enough to perform the job they were originally designed to do. In very fit dogs there will be muscle pads along either side of the spine. This should not be confused with a dip or roach in the topline. There is a very slight arch over a fairly short loin. The arch occurs over the unsupported-by-ribs portion of the topline (the loin). The strong, flexible loin contributes to the Stafford's endurance. The topline must be correct or balance is not possible.



The example to the right shows a Stafford in good physical condition showing a correct topline - it is easy to hide a topline with layers of fat instead of muscle - the appearance changes.

With the formation of the first Staffordshire Bull Terrier club in 1935, a standard was drawn. Jim the Dandy owned by Jack S. Barnard, was chosen as the most perfect specimen of his time, and his breeding could be traced back thirty years or so.



Jim The Dandy

If we compare that standard with today's standard, and then compare the majority of today's show specimens with either standard, we can see that a contradiction of type exists, and that the Bulldog has been developed at the expense of the Terrier. We find this unacceptable, since the combination of both breeds was essential to producing a dog that was very unique and original.



Jim The Dandy

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The Stafford Front

Elbows tight against the body, showing no looseness, legs perpendicular to ground, dropping straight from the shoulder. The chest drops just to the elbow and no further. Well sprung but not barreled.

Moderation is key - Not overdone but showing strength - too much rib spring will hinder efficient movement and too much depth of brisket only adds bulk and heaviness not conducive to agile and free movement. Not enough forechest or brisket weakens movement.

The Stafford requires excellent balance to move freely.



Pinched and too narrow with weak pastern



Overloaded shoulder, chest drops below elbow, weak pastern



Bossy shoulder, lacking depth of chest, low on leg



Bossy shoulder, out at elbows, short leg, too thick, not balanced

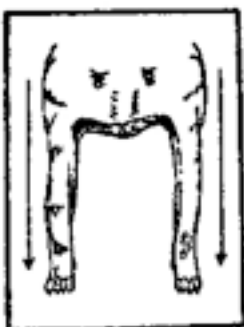
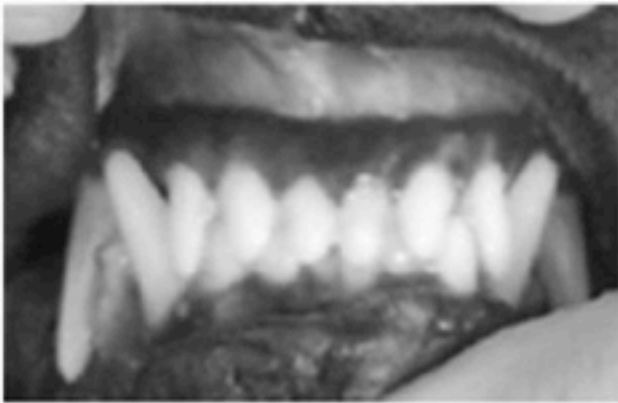


Illustration at left taken from “The Staffordshire Bull Terrier Handbook” by John F. Gordon, 1951 - showing a correct Stafford front - “Legs reasonably straight in line from shoulders, showing no weakness at pasterns, from where the feet turn out a little.”

The Stafford Bite is a scissor bite



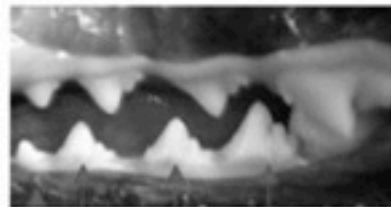
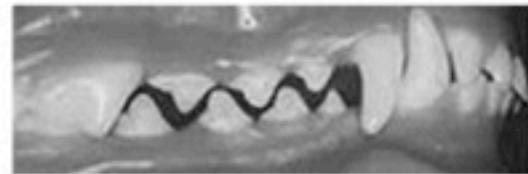
Jaws strong with perfect, regular & complete scissor bite, set square to jaw



Normally, the lower canine should intersect the upper lateral incisor and upper canine



Farther back in the mouth the lower premolars are located directly in front of their upper premolar counterparts. When viewed from the side, the lower premolars will interdigitate in the space between the upper premolars.



Notice how the occlusion lines up



Base narrow (lingually displaced but sometimes referred to as 'converging') canines occur when the lower canines are deflected toward the midline and may penetrate the hard palate.



Level Bite

Level, over or under shot mouths are seen in the Stafford and are to be penalized only according to severity

INCORRECT

Lower canine sits inside upper gumline

CORRECT

Lower canine sits outside upper gumline



Not only is the dog on the left going to be in pain, this can cause infection

The dog on the right has normal Staffordshire Bull Terrier canine placement
however the occlusion does not line up properly on this bite

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Correct Stafford ears should be ROSE or HALF PRICK

Not large, not heavy, even, well placed

Rose



Half Prick



Side view Rose ear

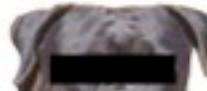
These examples are considered
serious faults

The following examples are considered faults,
but **not serious** faults

High set, flighty, large bell, un-even,
thick or heavy leather



FULL DROP



FULL PRICK



As taken from John F Gordons book-



a) Typical 'rose' b) Semi-erect c) Erect d) Button

Ears

Rose or half-pricked and not large. Full drop or prick to be penalised.

Ears play an important part in general appearance. Ears should be carried alertly. Badly carried ears and big ears detract from the pleasurable appreciation of a Staffordshire Bull Terrier. The medium sized rose ear is superior to other kinds. If a dog has half-pricked ears, they need to be small and perky in use to equal rose ears. Such appendages are frequently thick in cartilage at the point where they join the skull, causing rigidity.

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The Stafford Foot is well padded & tight

Illustration at right taken from "The Staffordshire Bull Terrier Handbook" by John F. Gordon, 1951

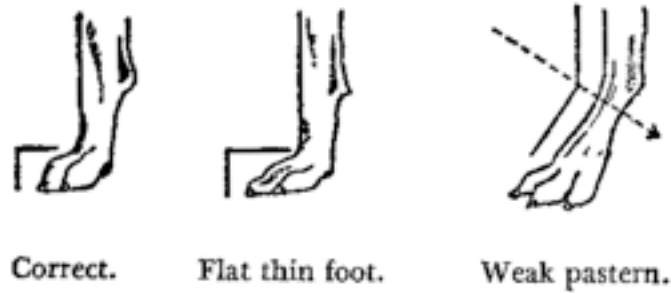
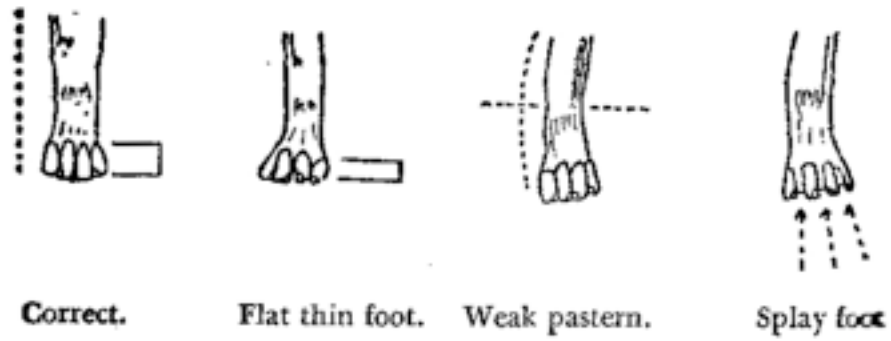
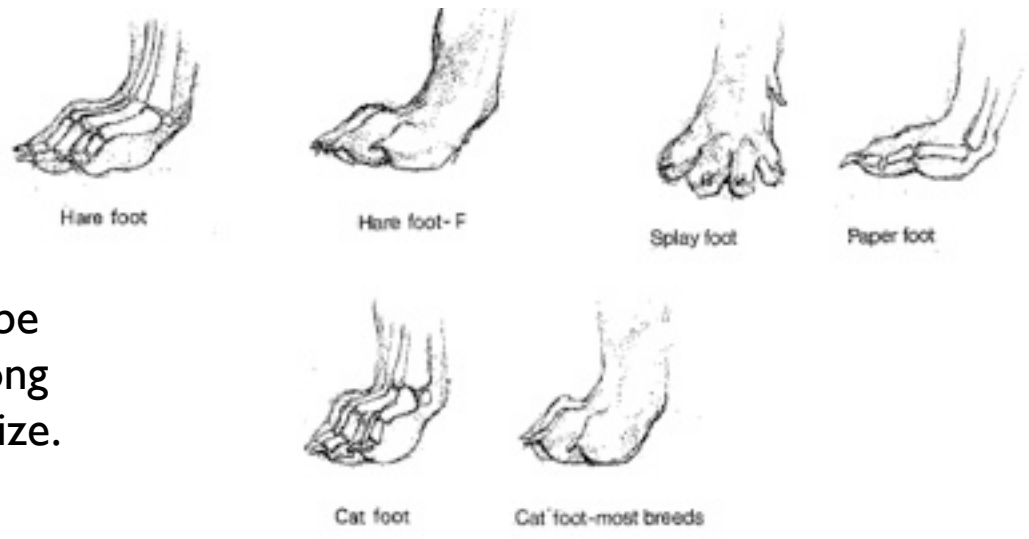


FIG. 9. Leg and foot studies, front and side.



The feet should be well padded, strong and of medium size.



Correct Stafford foot examples

Incorrect Feet Examples



Rabbit/Cat Foot



Splayed

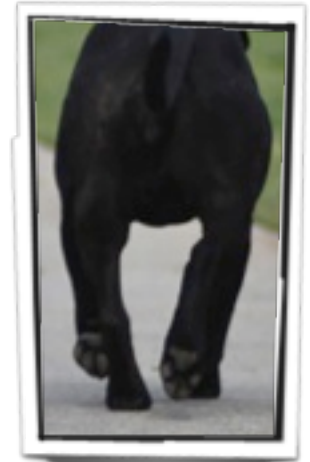
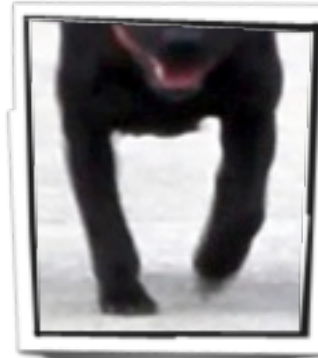
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Knowledge of the breed, structure, genetics and movement is suggested.

The Stafford Gait

Free, powerful and agile with economy of effort. Legs moving parallel when viewed from front or rear. Discernible drive from hind legs.

If we do not know the mechanical factors involved in movement, our ideas are apt to be unsound.

When viewed coming towards you there is no paddling, wading, circling, stilted movement or looseness. The front legs should block your view to the rear legs in parallel motion with effortless ease of movement.



When the Stafford is moving away from you - you should view its rear pads pushing off effortlessly.

There should be decidedly no effort on the Staffords part to get his pads and body support under his center of gravity.

Viewed from the side on the move you will see the tip of the front foot reaching the end of the muzzle. The foreleg must reach forward of the line of scapula then on the foot striking the ground, forward momentum would then see the scapula travel over the striking foot which then ends behind the center line of the scapula. Similarly with the rear foot strike and the line of the pelvis.



The Stafford is not expected to move like other terrier breeds. In order to be balanced all the time he is moving he has to place his front feet slightly under his body with each stride. This inward inclination must begin from the shoulder and never from the elbow.

The front feet should never touch each other or cross in movement and any looseness in shoulder is highly undesirable. The gait must be light and jaunty with the feet skimming the ground without any wasted movement.

The hind legs should drive strongly moving as much as possible parallel with each other. They should never touch or cross each other in movement.

The Stafford on the move should show strength, agility and drive. The Stafford will appear extremely light and bouncy on his feet. This is caused by the width of the front assembly with a well developed rib cage, the lighter loin and slightly less width of rear.

Also because of the lesser width at the rear, the hind legs although moving parallel will be just slightly inside the line of the front legs.

A specimen that is loose in shoulder can be supported by his handler while on the stack however as soon as the dog becomes mobile any structural faults will become apparent.

In the show ring, Staffords should be walked at a steady pace and not run. Always ask exhibitors to walk their Stafford on a loose lead.

The Stafford is an efficient working machine, not a cloddy bulldog, heavy breather gasping for air in a show ring nor a prancing terrier. Effortless movement with discernable drive from the rear is the goal.

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The Stafford Coat & Colors

Red, fawn, white, black or blue, or any of these colors with white. Any shade of brindle or any shade of brindle with white. Black-and-tan or liver color to be disqualified.

The Stafford coat should shine. It is a single coat and thinner and finer than a fox terrier. It is of medium texture neither course nor silky. The coat should be very close fitting. Because of its fine coat the Stafford feels the wind and rain and if you are judging in inclement conditions expect to see even the best topline with a roach.

Staffords are to have a black nose - a brown nose denotes liver. Eyering should be dark (some white or pied dogs will not have dark rims). Since Staffords do come in so many colors, no judging preference should be made as to color with the exception of Black and Tan (correctly described as Tan Point Markings) or Liver.

Black & Tan can mean marked like a Manchester Terrier or Rottweiler. Sometimes this color is not as clearly defined and harder to notice the tan markings. The marks over the eyes, on the face, on the chest, inside the front & rear legs and under the vent can also appear as brindle (on a black brindle) or as cream (on a red or fawn). Liver staffords are recognized by the lack of black pigmentation on the nose (brownish in colour) and usually very light eyes "yellow" (not light brown which some dogs will have) and sometimes light nails.

Both of these colours are disqualifying traits and should never be shown, bred or encouraged.

When judging the Stafford do not penalise "battle scars". As a fighting dog it is certainly permissible to have scarring and is part of the history of the breed.

All feet in solid coloured dogs should carry black toe nails. When the nails have been subjected to a good deal of wear and tear the black pigmentation can look shabby and worn however if you look at the root of the nail a truly black nail will be seen. Check for good pigmentation in diluted coloured dogs – such as blues and fawns as they cannot have the black nose genetically but still should carry good pigment and not appear washed out.

Excellent pigmentation can also show as dark gums and lips and inside the ear leather also being dark.

EXAMPLES OF TAN POINT MARKINGS



EXAMPLES OF LIVER



Photo - Ross Anderson of Aberdeen, Scotland 'Neyo'

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PIGMENT



black nails

Dark gums, lips in a red dog

Dark gums, lips in a BB dog

inside of ear leather black

Head



"Short, deep through, broad skull, very pronounced cheek muscles, distinct stop, short foreface, black nose. Pink (Dudley) nose to be considered a serious fault. Eyes--Dark preferable, but may bear some relation to coat color. Round, of medium size, and set to look straight ahead. Light eyes or pink eye rims to be considered a fault, except that where the coat surrounding the eye is white the eye rim may be pink. Ears--Rose or half-pricked and not large. Full drop or full prick to be considered a serious fault. Mouth--A bite in which the outer side of the lower incisors touches the inner side of the upper incisors. The lips should be tight and clean. The badly undershot or overshot bite is a serious fault."



Typical Stafford Head Shapes



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In Summary

The head should appear clean. No wrinkle or bunched up expression. One should strive for 2/3 to 1/3 ratio head to muzzle with a definite stop but not an EXAGGERATED stop or lack of stop. The stop itself should be almost vertical. The easiest way to determine accurate stop is to place your thumb on the stop and look at the angle of your thumb. Do not be fooled by the profile view of the eye socket and mistake this for the stop. The lip should be very clean, thin and tight to the teeth meeting top and bottom with no flews or wrinkled, fleshy or spongy excess thus giving the Stafford a somewhat serious expression at times. The lip should not turn down at the end or be excessive. Exaggerations of under jaw include total lack of under jaw, weak under jaw or too strong an under jaw. None of these are correct. Depending upon the cleanness of the lip - this can be difficult to assess without a hands on going over.

The nose itself may turn up slightly at the tip, but keep in mind the plane of the muzzle and the head - they should be parallel to one another. When the muzzle turns up more than the plane of the top skull the dog has a dish face and if the planes dip downward - a down face - neither is clean, balanced and will be exaggerated in expression. When the muzzle is too short or too long they will lack balance. Ears can deceive on a glance so best to get your hands on the dog's head and feel for placement, thickness of leather and size.

Does the dog have sufficient length of leg? If not is it due to a short upper arm or just overall shortness of bone? A balanced Stafford should measure the same from the withers to the ground - as it does from the withers to the base of the tail set. Staffords are a square breed. They are not low to the ground or squatty. They are not way up on leg either. Enough leg, enough back - not too much, not too little. Is there massive bone or fine bone? Neither is balanced. Staffords are square - BALANCED with no EXAGGERATION..

Is the animal wider in front than looks natural or is it pinched in front? Neither is correct. The front legs should appear to drop directly down from the shoulder. The front shouldn't appear to be 'in' or 'out', and MOST CERTAINLY shouldn't look like a bulldog. The legs straight, no weakness at pastern but the tight well padded feet DO turn out a little. Not a lot, and not straight with upright shoulder as in other terrier breeds. The rear should appear strong - not HUGE and not weak and narrow - somewhat even to the front but slightly narrower when viewed from above.

There should be a definite waist line with approximately 4 fingers width between the last rib and the hip bone. One should see that last rib as well, showing no fat or wrinkle and sufficient tuck up from the profile.

A Stafford is certainly well muscled, yet not bunched muscle - long and lean muscle is much more suited to the breed and its original intended purpose. Not a heavyweight boxer but more like a middleweight. It must be able to move easily, be active and agile. Too much bunched muscle is exaggeration and the dog will lack balance. Not enough and he will appear soft and will not function correctly. Exaggeration of muscle in either direction will affect movement as well.

Its all about a balance. NO EXAGGERATION.