

Thank you for joining us. Today's Seminar is presented by:

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Staffordshire Bull Terrier

The Breed Standard Explained
& Illustrated

The Breed Standard

∞ General Appearance,
Characteristics

∞ Size, Proportion,
Substance

∞ Head

∞ Eyes

∞ Ears

∞ Mouth

∞ Neck, Topline, Body

∞ Forequarters

∞ Hindquarters

∞ Coat

∞ Color

∞ Gait

∞ Temperament

∞ Faults

General Appearance

“The Staffordshire Bull Terrier is a smooth-coated dog. It should be of great strength for its size and, although muscular, should be active and agile.”



General Appearance

The Stafford is an athlete. Everything about him should mark him as such. There should be no exaggeration in his make-up.

He needs enough bone/substance; enough muscle; enough strength of limb etc; but not too much of any of these features. He will need strength and vigor, allied to speed and suppleness, with endurance and stamina in abundance. He should feel hard to the touch, never soft.

The cloddy, heavy boned, over muscled dog may look impressive but he'll lack the speed, agility and stamina of the athlete.

The light boned, racy dog will lack strength and power.

The one in the middle will get the job done.



General Appearance

Look for good show condition, a close short coat shining with a natural gleam. Good straight bone, long rubbery resilient muscle and a Staffordshire Bull Terrier must never be fat.



General Appearance

Smooth coated

A first glance one may think that all Staffords are smooth coated, however, get your hands on some and you will notice a wide range of coat types, textures & thicknesses. The coat should feel slightly hard to the touch, not silky. It should be tight, short and lay flat against the skin - without the use of additives.

Great strength for its size, Muscular, Active & Agile

The Stafford is a medium sized dog. Their appearance should be that of an athlete or a gladiator. They should be quite active indeed - sometimes too active for many people.

A Stafford should be very agile and able to twist, sit, lie, move and in general simply 'be' nimble - both physically AND mentally.

They make amazing athletes when kept in good condition. Staffords excel in sports such as agility, fly ball, coursing, weight pull, frisbee and more. Mentally they are agile working as tracking, search & rescue, service, obedience, rally and therapy dogs. They are intelligent animals and need mental stimulation.

Characteristics

A keen intelligent expression with obvious awareness, he should stand his ground without being too troublesome.

Cringing Staffordshire Bull Terriers should be penalized as without their temperament they lose their magic and breed presence. Exceptions should be made for a pup just starting out in the ring. They will more than likely melt into a wiggling licking baby as soon as you speak to them. As long as they are happy and not overly afraid this is fine.

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.”**



Size, Proportion, Substance

As our Breed Standard is written, a Staffordshire Bull Terrier DOG in order to be in Standard weight should fall between 28 - 38 lbs. and BITCHES falling between 24 - 34 lbs.

“These heights being RELATED to weights.”

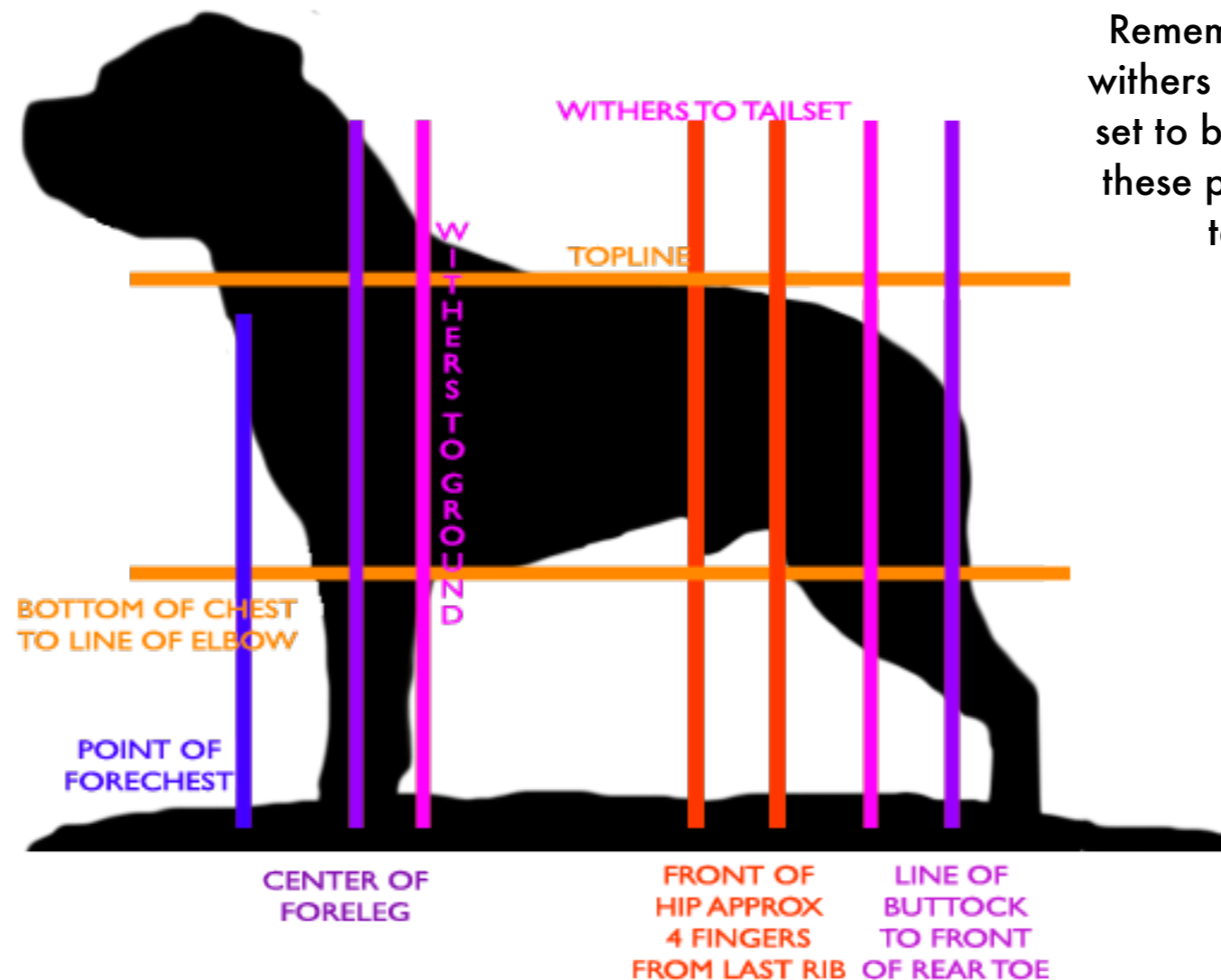
“Non-conformity with these limits is a fault.”

BALANCE is key.

A well balanced dog, all components blending together smoothly and be no taller than 16 " or less than 14" at the withers, weight to balance with height.

Proportion

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



Keeping in mind that the distance from withers to ground and the distance from withers to tailset should be equal – this means that the Stafford is NOT a true square breed –

Remember that the points from withers to forechest and from tail set to buttock extends outside of these parameters making him a tad longer than tall

Size, Proportion, Substance

We need to remember that the standard is a guide, so none of these heights or weights are cut-off points. We will get quality dogs outside these marks and we should be always willing to appreciate and reward quality. The folks who drew up the standard were describing what, in their opinion, was the ideal Stafford.

The ideal is in the middle

....and to keep it there we have to use dogs on either side of it, in this case above and below. If we use the ideal as the top limit then we will breed down; if we use it as the bottom-line then we will breed up. We have a breed which could quite easily split into two types, a terrier type and a bulldog type.

We need to always look for the Bull AND Terrier type.
The BALANCED type.



“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

Size, Proportion, Substance

Head



“Short, deep through, broad skull, very pronounced cheek muscles, distinct stop, short fore-face, 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.”

Head - ratio, skull, fore-face

The Stafford's head should have an approximate skull/muzzle ratio of 2 parts skull and 1 part muzzle measuring from the tip of the nose to the stop, and then measuring from the stop to the occiput. So the fore-face/muzzle is short in relation to the rest of the head, shorter in this respect than most terriers' but not so short it interferes with function.

The Stafford's skull should be balanced for equal width and depth and be well padded with muscle, with well-developed cheek "bumps". These are the muscles which close the jaw and enable the Stafford to grip with power and endurance. The Stafford should not have a domed, apple head. There should exist a 'furrow' made up of muscles on the top of a mature Staffords head. Puppies and young Staffords may not get this muscling until they reach 12 months or so but it should be there as adults. Same goes for the pronounced cheek muscles. Until the Stafford reaches maturity (preferably between 2-5 years old depending upon the lines) the head will continue to change and mature. The head will change continuously throughout the Staffords life.

His foreface, muzzle and jaw, should be equally balanced for width and depth and continue the strength of his head as a whole. A foreface which falls off below his eyes makes for a "foxy" head. But too much bone will make him coarse and take away from the quality of the head.

Enough is the key word.



Head - ratio, skull, fore-face

A muscular, clean head of good depth & breadth, with pronounced cheek muscles and definite stop and in balance with the whole dog. A strong deep underjaw is a pre-requisite. Loose skin or pendulous lips to be severely penalized.





Head - underjaw, lip, muzzle

One thing to look for in examining the skull/muzzle relationship is the underjaw. A Stafford could very well have strength of underjaw, however it may remain hidden under loose lips giving the appearance of a weak underjaw. It is for that reason you need to put your hands on the dogs and let your hands 'see' for you. A strong underjaw has a deeper vertical line from lower lip to tip of chin than a weaker one which would tend to quickly advance towards the rear of the skull as seen in profile.

The Stafford should have a clean and tight lip - not only is fleshy lip unattractive, but it could get the dog into trouble in an altercation where either his own tooth could puncture his lip - or his opponent could easily grab a loose lip. The lip should be very tight against the teeth. No looseness or wrinkle or any spongy appearance.

Muzzle width should appear as a rounded off block widening until just below the eyes and increasingly deepening until the rear of the lower jaw. The muzzle is more square rather than wedge. Again, get your hands on the exhibit and feel for a fleshy muzzle, wrinkle or a narrow muzzle. Without feeling it, the muzzle can be camouflaged by excess flesh. You want to feel a rigid, hard and smooth muzzle.



Head - stop, nose

The stop, the step down from the top of the skull to the top of the muzzle is quite marked. Not as deep as in other breeds with this type (Brachycephalic) of headpiece eg; Boxer, Bullmastiff. But it is definite and will affect the setting and shape of the eyes and overall expression. The stop can be deceiving. It should be around an inch deep and the angle should be almost vertical. Place your thumb on the stop to measure and see the angle. Simply looking from the profile may cause you to be distracted by the eye socket.

You **MUST** get your hands on this in order to know - colors, patterns, lighting and coat can all make this depth and angle deceiving.

His nose is black. His nostrils wide/open. He'll need to breathe through them at times so little, pinched nostrils will not suffice. Remember, he's an athlete so all his parts will have to function well.



Head - eyes

Eyes are to be round with a keen and intelligent expression, of medium size set in the skull to look straight ahead. Not small and not bulging . Almond shaped, bulbous protruding eye to be penalized.

Staffords usually have very animated eyes resulting in wonderful expression. The round shape contributes to this.

To complete the expression the darker the eye the better. If the stop is correct, the eye size and shape should be as well. If the stop is shallow, eye shape will be almond and the expression will suffer. If the stop is exaggerated, the eyes will be overly large and prominent, again moving from the correct expression.

Eye rims should be dark but will bear a relationship to coat color and pigmentation. The AKC Standard does not call for pigment on the eye rims of white Staffords. The color is a cosmetic feature and has no effect on function. Should be judged assuch.



Examples of dark eyes on Black Brindle, Red & Pied dogs



This is an acceptable example of lighter eyes in keeping with coat color on a Red dog



This is an acceptable example of lighter eyes in keeping with coat color on a Blue dog

Head - ears

Ears -

Check for shape, thickness, evenness, form and set. They should be tightly rose or half prick, not large or heavy in leather and check for even thickness for both ears. They should not droop low or appear too heavy in proportion to the overall head itself. It is important that they should be tidy.

They should not be set high up on the head, giving a flighty appearance, nor too low giving a bored appearance. Pulled forward the tip should not extend beyond the corner of the eye. They preferably fold back close to the back of the skull. Remember his past. Big, heavy, untidy (badly carried) ears present an easy grip for his opponent and packed with tiny blood vessels bleed profusely.

Ears are responsible for how the Stafford shows emotion and alertness. Correct ears can be so flattering and incorrect ears can take away so much from an otherwise lovely headed Stafford.

A full drop or a full prick is a serious fault and shouldn't be the goal.



Top row shows rose ears (preferred) front and back views,
bottom left shows half prick (acceptable) and bottom right rose from side view

Head - mouth

A clean scissor bite with some reservations toward excellent specimens with slight dentition problems. The wry mouth, badly undershot or overshot, badly inverted canines should debar a dog from winning. However remember the Stafford is a terrier and missing or broken dentition due to an accident should be considered in it's severity (you can still assess if the scissor bite is evident) and the dog judged as a whole bearing in mind breed type, balance, soundness.

The scissor bite is important for all carnivores. The mouth of the Stafford contains large, white, strong scissored teeth. The incisors should appear level and evenly shaped and set & ideally in a straight line. The occlusion should appear evenly spaced. A scissor bite is essential.

This is the nip which the animal uses to cut through the skin/hide of its prey; this is the nip with which the bitch opens the sack to release the newborn pup. The incisors are precision instruments, the close scissor bite is their means of operation. The canines are the striking/gripping/catching tools. They puncture and hold. The molars are the crushing tools. They break-up and grind the food for swallowing.

So that all these teeth can exert maximum pressure they must be set square to the jaws; they must be in line to support each other. Teeth, which are not set square or in line, will sustain more damage in normal wear and tear and would have sustained massive damage in the dog pit. Ask anyone with working terriers about the importance of good mouths. Look for big, strong, well-placed teeth in your Stafford.

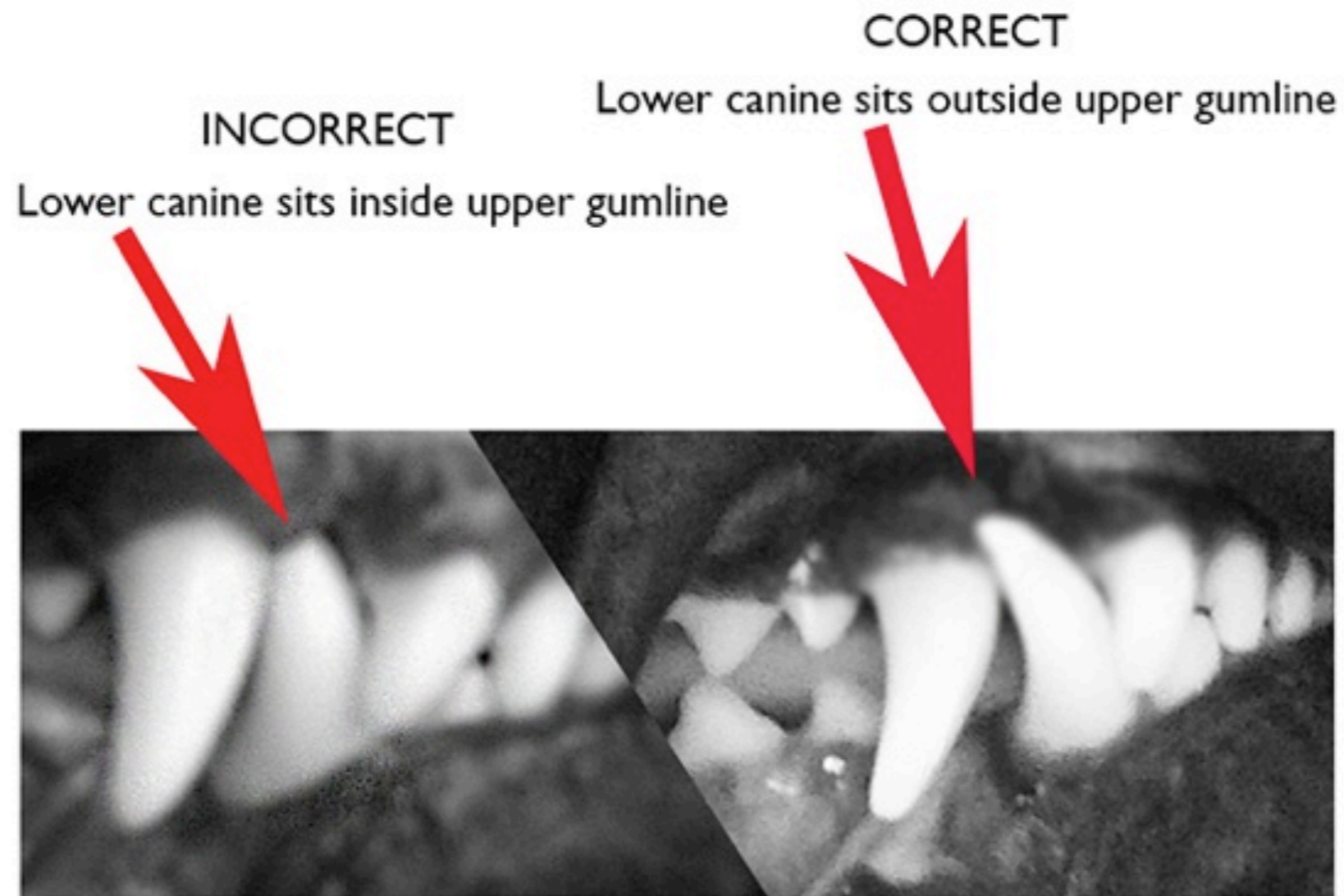
The badly undershot or overshot bite is a serious fault and should be judged as such.



Examples of good bites with tight clean lips, dark pigment on gums.

Mouths & Bites

Bites



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



Neck, Topline & Body

“The neck is muscular, rather short, clean in outline and gradually widening toward the shoulders. The body is close coupled, with a level topline, wide front, deep brisket and well sprung ribs being rather light in the loins. The tail is undocked, of medium length, low set, tapering to a point and carried rather low. It should not curl much and may be likened to an old-fashioned pump handle. A tail that is too long or badly curled is a fault.”

Neck

Compared to humans who balance their heads above their shoulders, dogs carry their heads in front of their shoulders. This construction requires a strong neck, stronger in relation to the weight of the headpiece. Nature provides them with a strong neck.

Too short/stuffy a neck means the dog must shake with its whole forequarters to get the job done. Too long/elegant a neck is weak. So look for a rather short neck; of moderate length.

Length from nose-tip to occiput could be a guide to a proper neck length. The power for any head action comes from the dog's neck.

One way to measure the proper length of neck is to stack the dog into a show position and look from profile to see where the underjaw bottom line lines up. It should be level or perhaps slightly above the top of the withers. It should also widen as it reaches the shoulder and be very muscular. Once again, referencing the Staffords fighting past.



Topline

“UNDULATIONS OF THE SPINAL COLUMN”

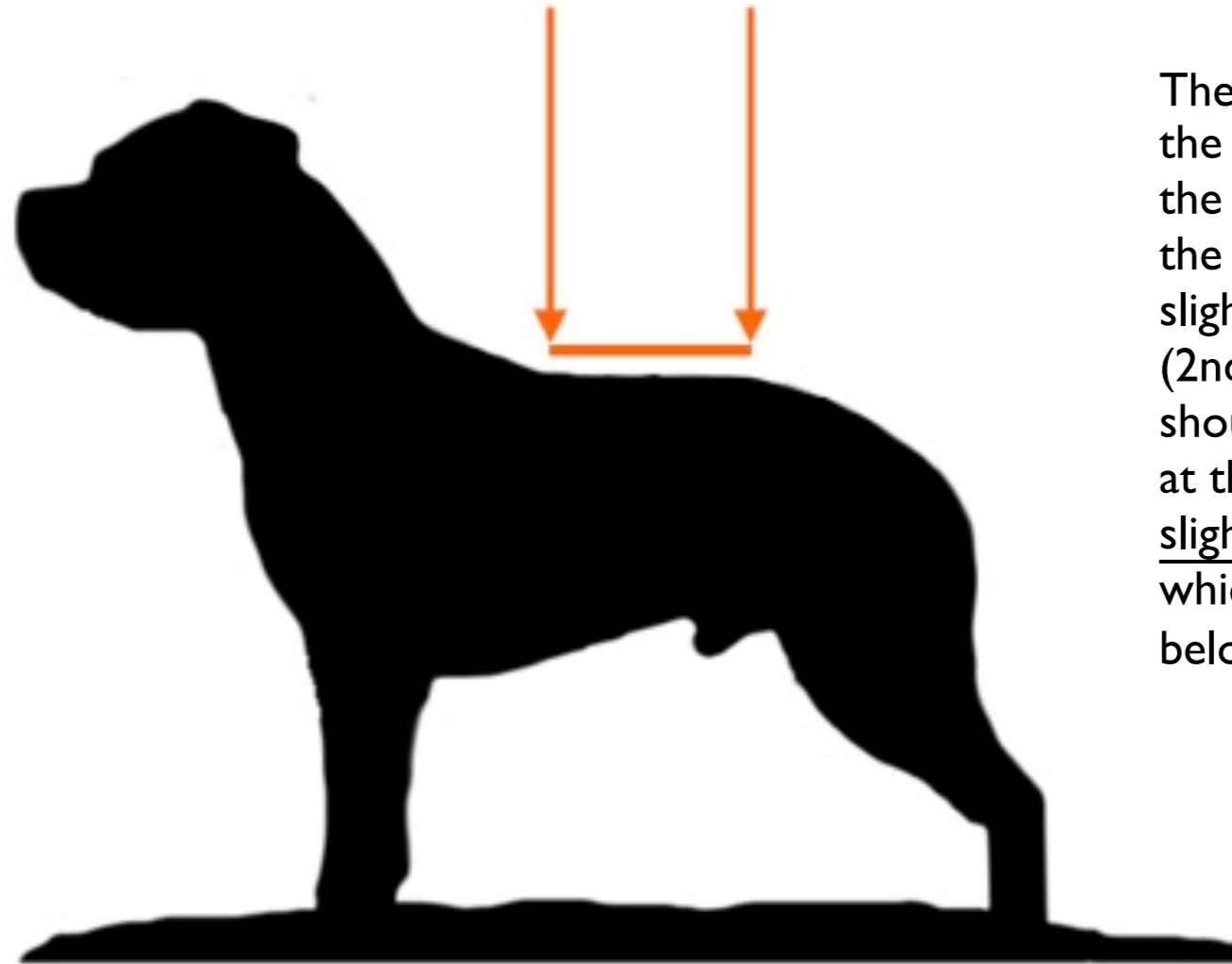
“Owing to the different angles of the spines of the vertebrae from the withers to the tail, it will be seen that the top-line could never be absolutely level. Obviously, since the spinal processes are in four distinct areas and in each area they incline in different directions, where they do meet there has to be a slight dip or rise. There is often a slight dip downwards at the withers and in the show world this is often considered a fault. Structurally, however, it is not a fault; it merely indicates that the spines are long. But where this dipped section meets the five vertebrae of the back, the top-line must change direction and this part of the back must be parallel to the ground. The forward slanting spines of the loins must now meet the more or less upright ones of the back and where they meet there must be another slight undulation, just as there will be where the croup starts. The whole spinal column will not and should not be absolutely straight. Just as the spinal column is not absolutely straight in the human. Yet we erroneously talk about straight backs in both humans and in dogs!”



from page 170 of the book Showing & Judging Dogs by Hilary Harmar (1977, Arco Publishing Co. Inc., NY)

Topline - Body

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.

Topline - Body



Level topline, strong and short in coupling. Ample depth of brisket and the smooth contour of that great smooth muscle. Well sprung ribs that are well ribbed back. Overloaded muscle, short heavy bones, long weak backs, lack of brisket and/or spring of rib are untypical and highly undesirable.

Tail

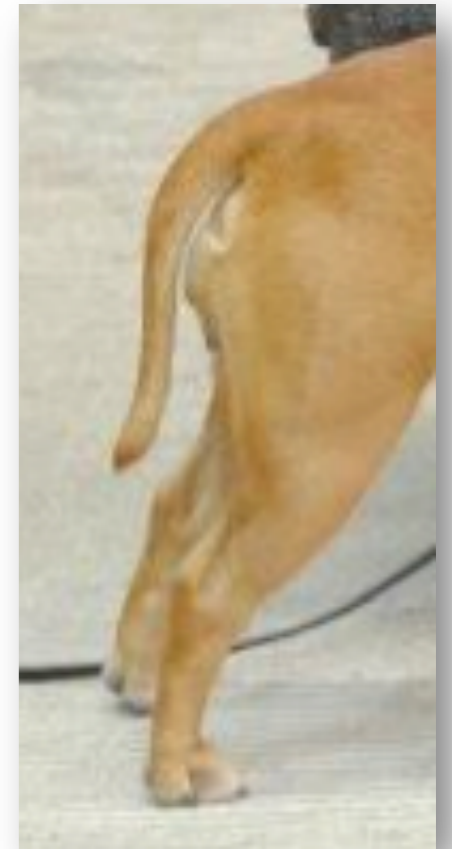
The Staffordshire Bull Terrier breed standard mentions the tail in more detail and uses more words to describe its features than any other part of our breed standard. This is quite interesting as the tail seemingly serves little purpose beyond balance and communication and many consider this a cosmetic part of the standard. Perhaps our forefathers in the breed felt otherwise.

∞ The Stafford tail remains undocked and of medium length. Measure the tail by pulling down to one hock joint or another and seeing that it reaches but does not surpass that point.

∞ Low set - meaning it is set along the spine and not high. If you raise the tail with one hand and use your other hand to feel the 'set on' you should not feel a pronounced dip. When the tail is in relaxed position it should look like a smooth extension of the dogs spine.

∞ Tapering to a point and carried rather low. Rather low meaning not up and over the back, but keep in mind that this breed can get 'excited' around other dogs so do not confuse excitement or agitation for a gay tail.

∞ The tail should come to a point and not be a bushy or thick. The tail should not curl much however, should resemble an old fashioned pump.



Examples of acceptable tail sets and shapes

Forequarters

“Legs straight and well boned, set rather far apart, without looseness at the shoulders and showing no weakness at the pasterns, from which point the feet turn out a little. Dewclaws on the forelegs may be removed. The feet should be well padded, strong and of medium size.”



The Stafford does not have the short upper arm associated with a “Terrier” front.

Forequarters - legs, shoulders, upper arm

Good straight front with slight turn out at pastern. Clean muscled shoulders well laid with no sign of looseness. Do not be impressed by the buncy loaded muscle in the shoulder. Feel for the correct thickness and roundness of the bone, which should be ample rather than heavy. A stilted action in the forward movement will indicate upright placed shoulders which is highly undesirable.

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.



Shoulder, Arm, Front



Pinched and too narrow with weak pastern



Overloaded shoulder, chest drops below elbow, weak pastern

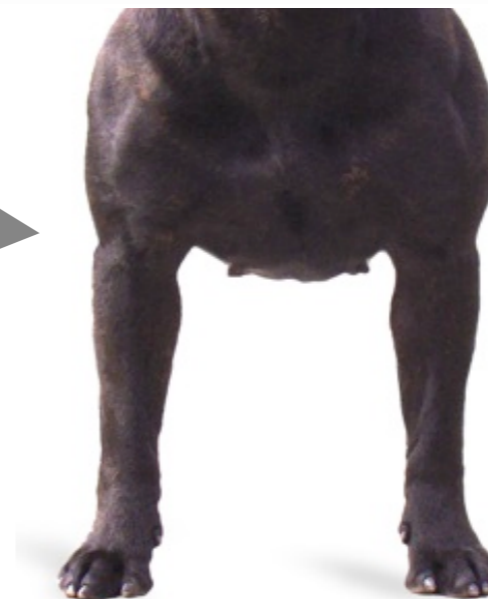


Bossy shoulder, lacking depth of chest, low on leg

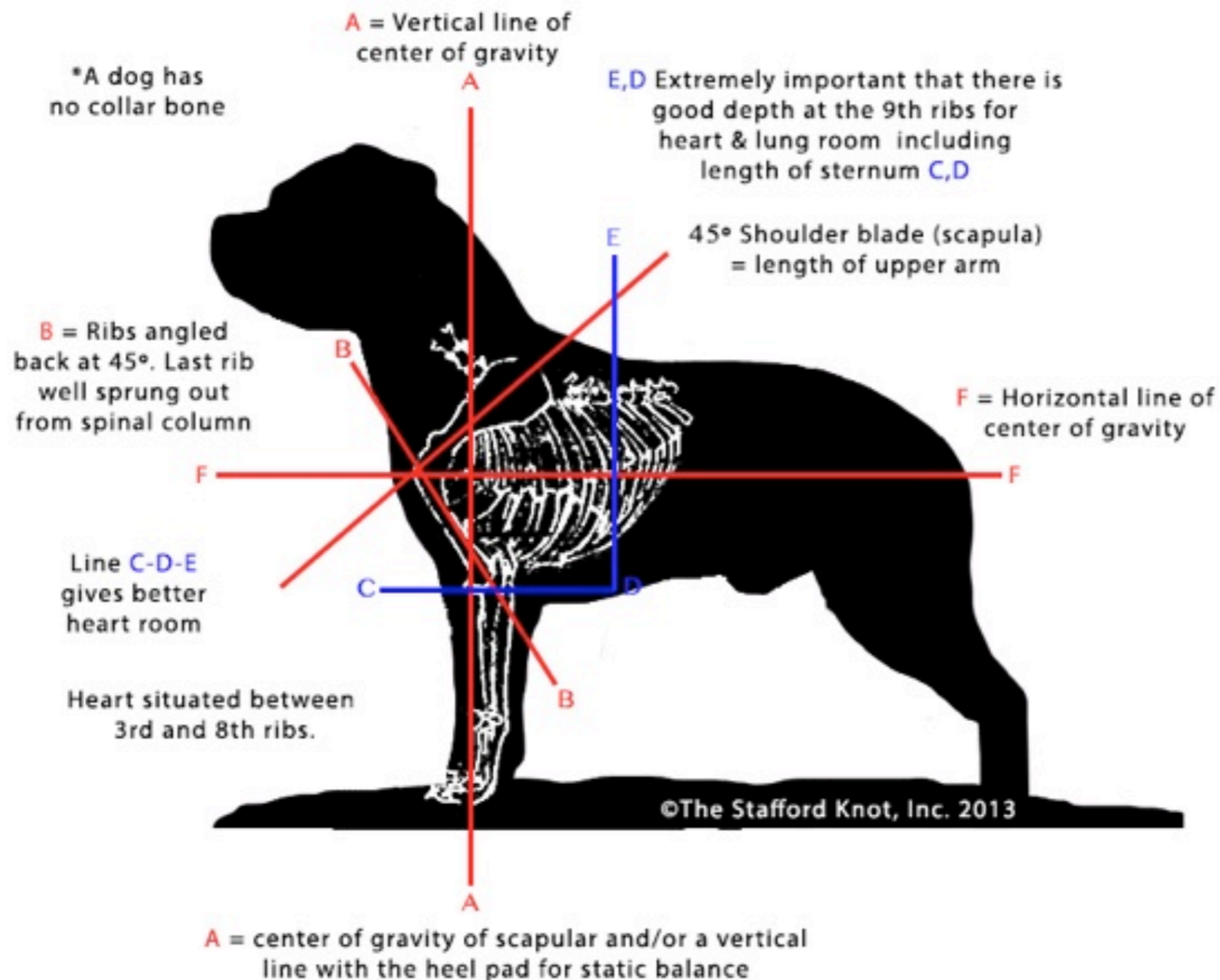


Bossy shoulder, out at elbows, short leg, too thick, not balanced

Correct



Shoulder, Arm, Front



Hindquarters

“The hindquarters should be well muscled, hocks let down with stifles well bent. Legs should be parallel when viewed from behind. Dewclaws, if any, on the hind legs are generally removed. Feet as in front.”



Hindquarters

Substantial muscle development in the inner and outer confines of the hind leg.
(Not bulging)

When viewed from behind from hip to hock should be parallel and hocks well let down (short). The hock joint, ankle, should, in the Stafford, be close to the ground, to his pads and toes. This, quite simply, gives stability to his hind limb in all its actions. The hock should NOT slip forward.

Good turn of stifle.

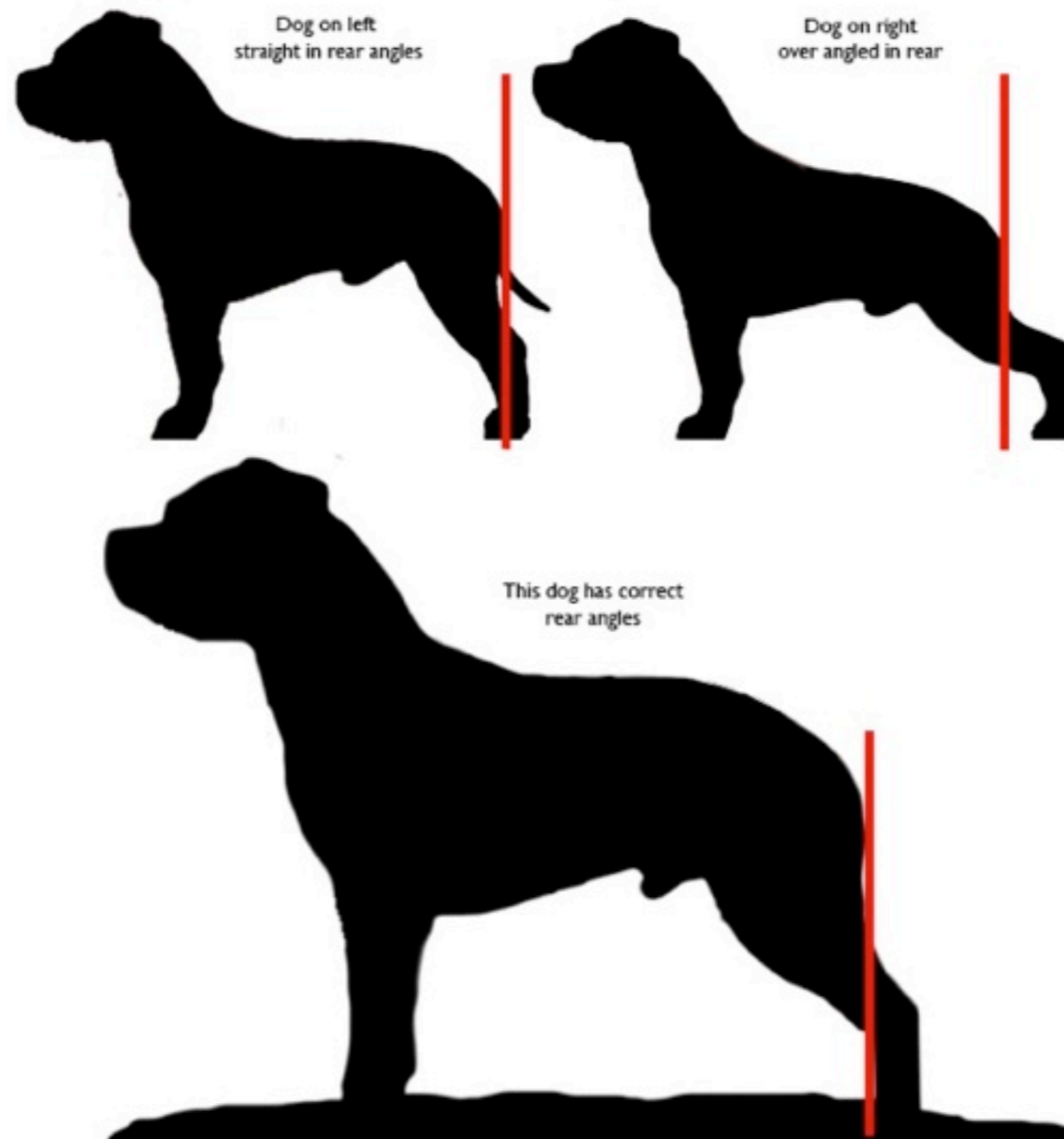
Equivalent to your knee. In a comfortably freestanding dog the stifle joint should be sufficiently bent to place the hind foot just behind a vertical line from hip to tip of toes. Easy to pose a dog thus. So try to find him off duty. Having moved a dog in the show ring he should be allowed to come to a comfortable stop unaided, unposed. Then you'll see the bend of stifle.

The ability of the stifle, and indeed hock, joints to open and close is an essential element to movement. This is how the dog uses his legs to drive and reach, to change the length of the limb to clear the ground and swing through its movement.

Legs parallel when viewed from behind. Hocks, from joints to feet should be parallel. Look for squareness here too. Again, beware the posed dog. Well-constructed Staffords should stand four square without any assistance.



Hindquarters



Feet



Correct Stafford feet examples

Incorrect Feet Examples



Rabbit/Cat Foot

Splayed

Well padded strong feet with strong wrists and pasterns.

No sign of weakness.

Keeping in mind we have an athletic breed in the Stafford, thin, flat or splayed feet constitute a bad fault. Look for short black nails in solid colored dogs. If a dog has white feet you would expect white nails. Be mindful of dark nails which have been recently filed using a Dremel will appear gray where they are worn. Same goes for dogs who are walked often on hard surfaces. This is indicative of worn nails, not discolored in most cases.

correct PASTERN



Coat

“Smooth, short and close to the skin, not to be trimmed or de-whiskered.”



Coat

The easiest way to determine correct coat on a Staffordshire Bull Terrier is to put your hands on them. Run your hand along the coat from shoulder to croup. The coat should feel slightly hard and smooth and sit close to the skin. The hairs themselves should be short and lie flat. When you rub your hand along in the opposite direction, the hairs should feel spiky and close to the body.

The hairs should not be soft, wirelike, silky or long. They should be short and straight. The Stafford should have equal covering of coat, not appear balding on the underside of the neck or chest.

There is no need for coat dressing of any kind, nor for frequent bathing.

There is no need to trim the Stafford, however, many people do trim the underside of the tail. The Stafford is to be shown with full whiskers.

Pigmentation

The Stafford should exhibit clean colors with good pigmentation. This is apparent on nose, eye rims, nails, ear leather and gums. Around the eyes shouldn't appear balding or light in color. Good pigment add to the attractiveness of the Stafford



Black Nails



Dark gums on RED dog



Dark gums on Brindle dog



Dark inner ear leather on Black
Brindle dog

Color

“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.”



Color

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 color) and usually very light eyes "yellow" (not light brown which some dogs will have) and sometimes light nails.

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

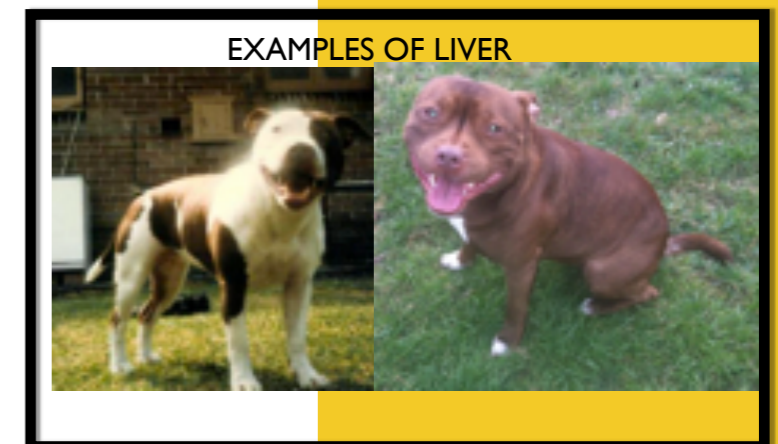
When judging the Stafford do not penalize "battle scars" . As a fighting dog it is certainly permissible to have scarring and is part of the history of the breed.

All feet in solid colored 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 colored 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.

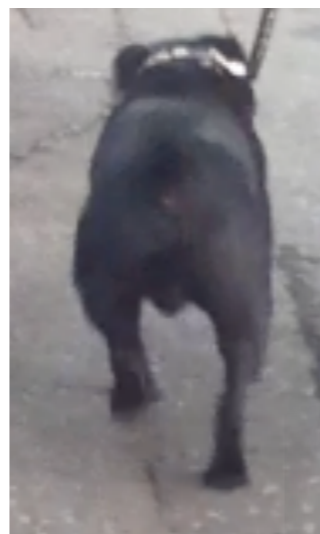
Color

- the dogs shown below (genetically speaking) are Black and Tan which is a DQ in America and undesirable elsewhere. It is genetically referred to as the 'Tan Point Gene'.



Gait

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



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.

Gait

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 discernible drive from the rear is the goal.



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.

One way to assess if movement is correct is to look for any wasted movement. Ideally there should be no rolling or up and down motion. No wasted energy. Simply forward movement.

Temperament

“From the past history of the Staffordshire Bull Terrier, the modern dog draws its character of indomitable courage, high intelligence, and tenacity. This, coupled with its affection for its friends, and children in particular, its off-duty quietness and trustworthy stability, makes it a foremost all-purpose dog.”



Temperament

Bold, fearless and totally reliable

If a Stafford gets noisy in the ring, fires up or 'talks back' this is normal and should be accepted. This is no different than other terriers who are on their toes, when asked to 'spar' in the ring. A Stafford, needn't be asked to spar, nor should they be - but should already be on his toes, at the ready, but under control. He is, after all, a terrier!

A Stafford should never be overly shy or cowering nor overly aggressive. A Stafford should never be aggressive towards humans, but many do not enjoy the company of other animals. Still, they should be under control by their handler. He is no different from any other terrier being judged on spirit and attitude. It is when it becomes out of control that there is an issue.

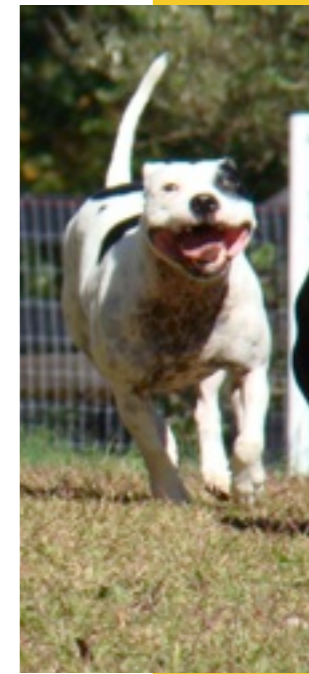
When in the show ring, a Stafford should appear confident and strut, show off and look proud and happy to be there.

They should stand for exam as if they had been doing this forever. Some degree of exception should be made, of course, for puppies new to the show ring. Most Stafford puppies will simply melt and wiggle when spoken to upon approach. This is totally normal behavior.

If you see a Stafford being dragged around a ring on its belly, leaning away from human touch or, heaven forbid, snapping or snarling in fear - this is unacceptable and not to be encouraged nor rewarded. A Stafford showing signs of fear is as incorrect as a Stafford showing any kind of human directed aggression!

Either direction in temperament is totally unacceptable! However, please understand the differences between any aggression towards a human (NOT acceptable in a Stafford), and any aggression towards another animal. These are not the same thing, nor should they be defined or judged as such.

Temperament



Faults

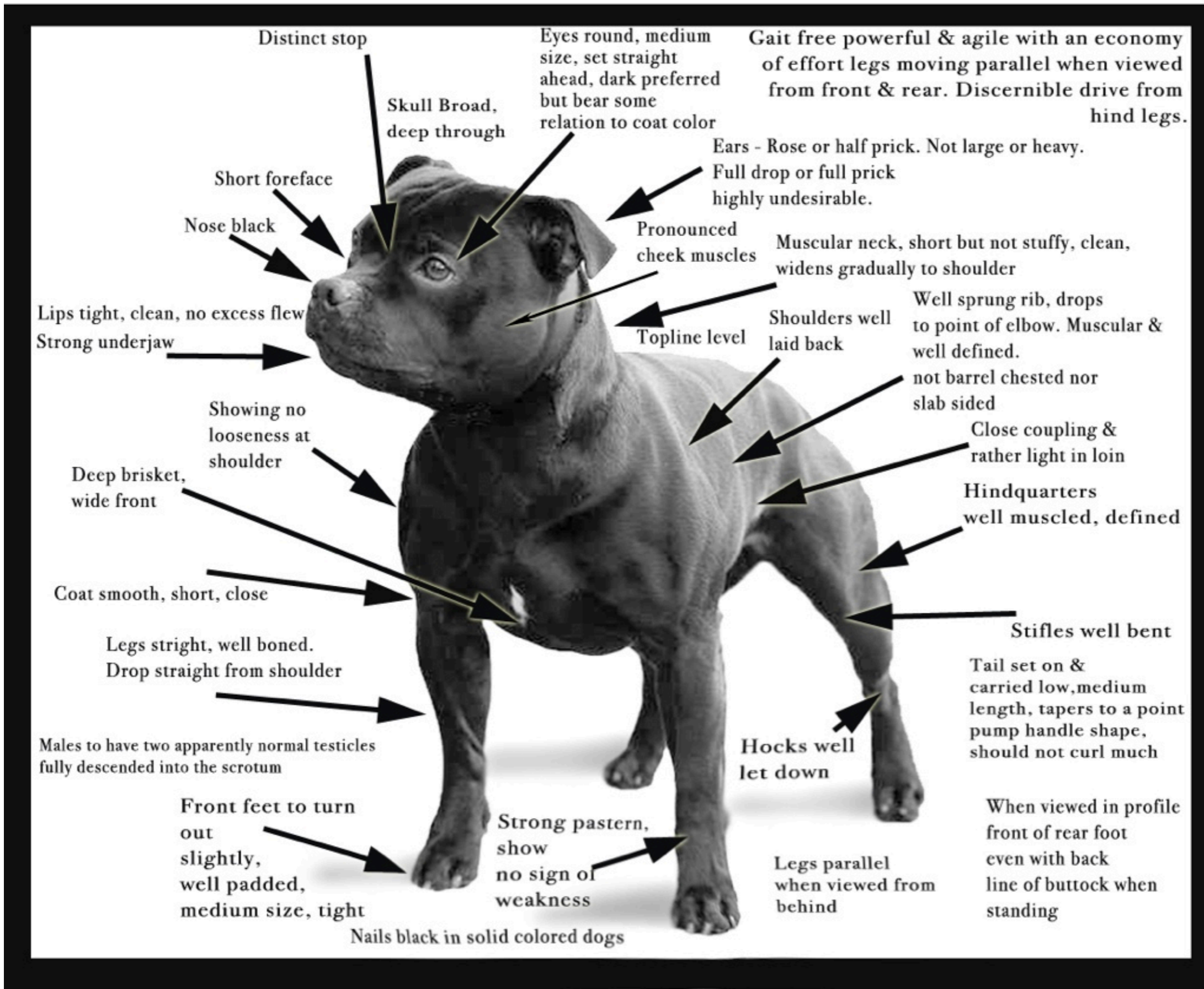
Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree.

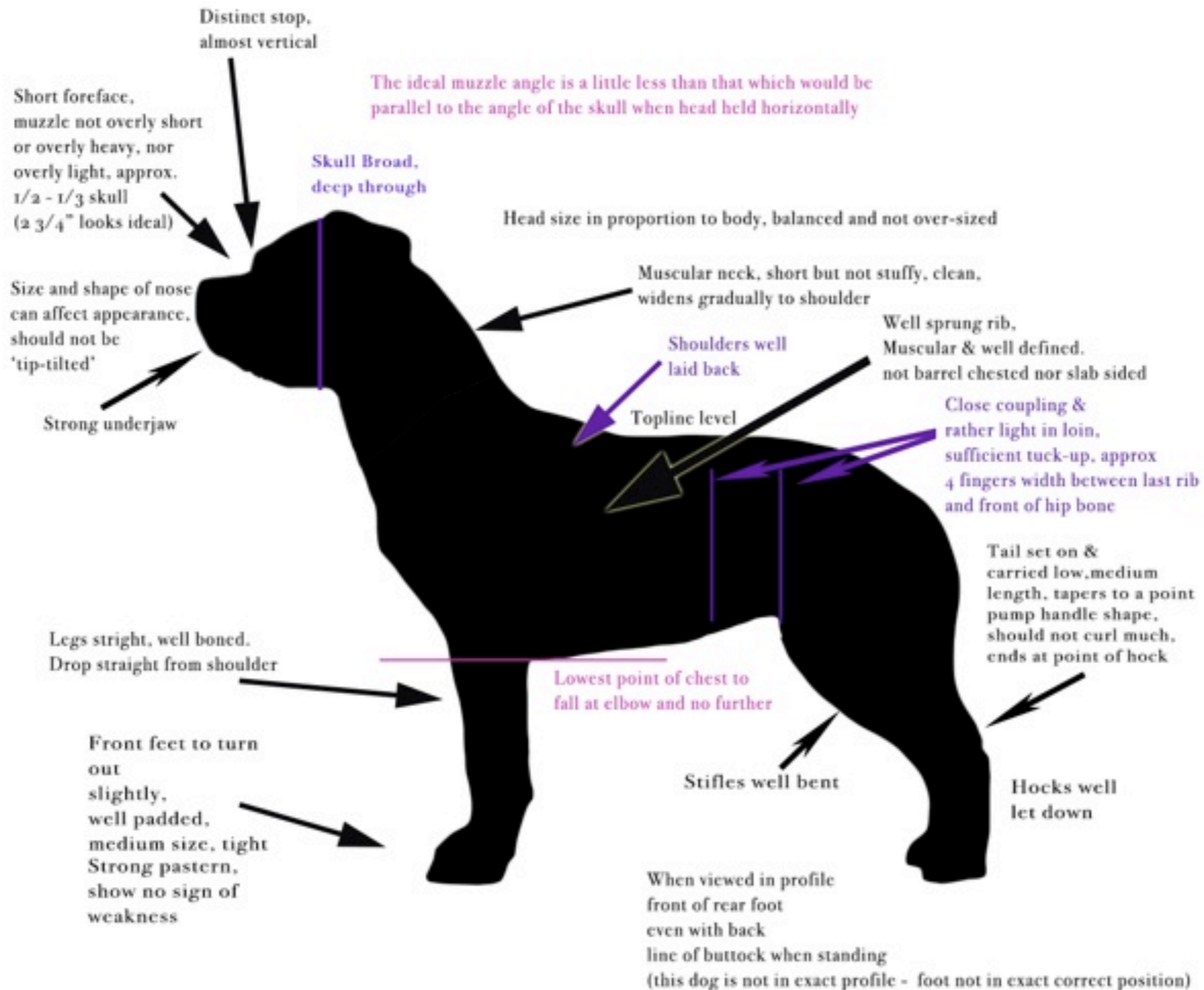
This is the pit for the faultfinding specialists; the dentists, the podiatrists, the optometrists etc.

We need to be able to look at the whole dog and see his virtues. We should view all dogs from a distance, assess them against the standard and judge them as examples of their breeds before we move close enough to get caught up in the details and cosmetics.

We need to be appreciative in our judging, not mean and small minded. The standard is a guideline open to interpretation, not etched in stone. To have digested it and memorized it word for word, but be unable to apply it sensibly, is to have wasted time and will make no contribution to the future of any breed. If we can't identify the virtues what will we build on? The quality of present Staffords is the stepping-stone to the future.

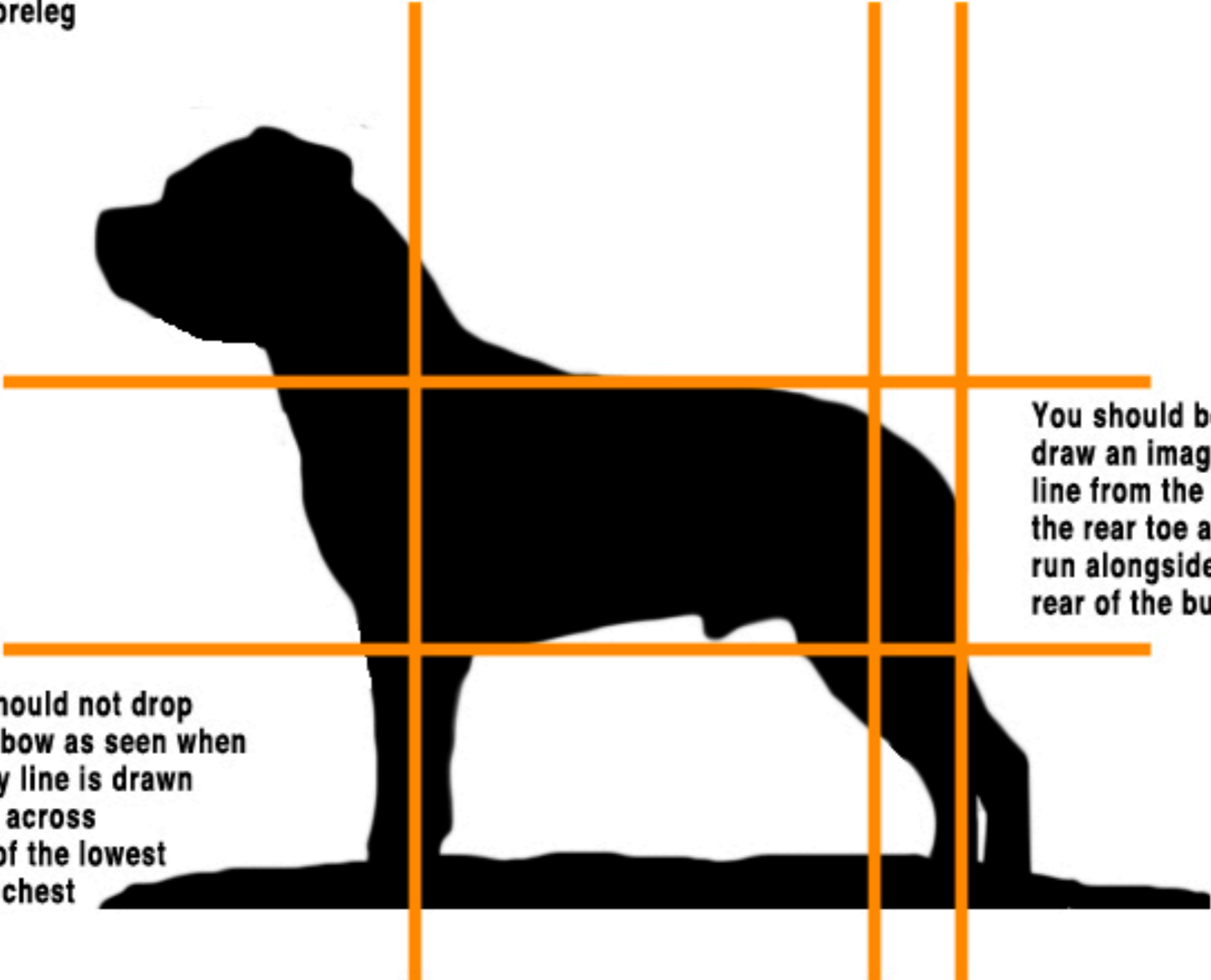
Staffordshire Bull Terrier - Illustrated Breed Standard







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



You should be able to draw an imaginary vertical line from the front of the rear toe and it should run alongside the rear of the buttock

The chest should not drop below the elbow as seen when an imaginary line is drawn horizontally across the bottom of the lowest point of the chest

Staffordshire Bull Terrier

The Breed Standard Explained The End

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