

The Illustrated Standard
of the
Dalmatian



Prepared and published by
Judges Education Committee

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The Official Standard for the Dalmatian

General Appearance - The Dalmatian is a distinctively spotted dog; poised and alert; strong, muscular and active; free of shyness; intelligent in expression; symmetrical in outline; and without exaggeration or coarseness. The Dalmatian is capable of great endurance, combined with fair amount of speed. Deviations from the described ideal should be penalized in direct proportion to the degree of the deviation.

Size, Proportion, Substance - Desirable height at the withers is between 19 and 23 inches. Undersize or oversize is a fault. Any dog or bitch over 24 inches at the withers is disqualified. The overall length of the body from the forechest to the buttocks is approximately equal to the height at the withers. The Dalmatian has good substance and is strong and sturdy in bone, but never coarse.

Head -The head is in balance with the overall dog. It is a fair length and is free of loose skin. The Dalmatian's **expression** is alert and intelligent, indicating a stable and outgoing temperament.

The **eyes** are set moderately well apart, are medium sized and somewhat rounded in appearance, and are set well into the skull, Eye color is brown or blue, or any combination thereof: the darker the better and usually darker in black-spotted than in liver-spotted dogs. Abnormal position of the eyelids or eyelashes (ectropion, entropion, trichiasis) is a major fault. Incomplete pigmentation of the eye rims is a major fault.

The **ears** are of moderate size, proportionately wide at the base and gradually tapering to a rounded tip. They are set rather high, and are carried close to the head, and are thin and fine in texture. When the Dalmatian is alert, the top of the ear is level with the top of the skull and the tip of the ear reaches to the bottom line of the cheek.

The top of the skull is flat with a slight vertical furrow and is approximately as wide as it is long. The **stop** is moderately well defined. The cheeks blend smoothly into a powerful **muzzle**, the top of which is level and parallel to the top of the skull. The muzzle and the top of the skull are about equal in length.

The **nose** is completely pigmented on the leather, black in black-spotted dogs and brown in liver-spotted dogs. Incomplete nose pigmentation is a major fault.

The **lips** are clean and close fitting. The teeth meet in a **scissors bite**. Overshot or undershot bites are disqualifications.

Neck, Topline & Body - The **neck** is nicely arched, fairly long, free from throatiness and blends smoothly into the shoulders. The **topline** is smooth. The **chest** is deep, capacious and of moderate width, having good spring of rib without being barrel shaped. The brisket reaches to the elbow. The underline of the rib cage curves gradually to a moderate tuck up.

The **back** is level and strong. The **loin** is short, muscular and slightly arched. The flanks narrow through the loin. The **croup** is nearly level with the back.

The **tail** is an extension of the topline. It is not inserted too low down. It is strong at the insertion and tapers to the tip, which reaches to the hock. It is never docked. The tail is carried with a slight upward curve but should never curl over the back. Ring tails and low-set tails are faults.

Forequarters - The **shoulders** are smoothly muscled and well laid back. The **upper arm** is approximately equal in length to the shoulder blade and joins it at an angle sufficient to insure that the foot falls under the shoulder. The **elbows** are close to the body. The **legs** are straight, strong and sturdy in bone. There is a slight angle at the **pastern** denoting flexibility.

Hindquarters - The **hindquarters** are powerful, having smooth, yet well defined muscles. The **stifle** is well bent. The **hocks** are well let down. When the Dalmatian is standing, the hind legs, viewed from the rear, are parallel to each other from the point of the hock to the heel of the pad. Cowhocks are a major fault.

Feet - **Feet** are very important. Both front and rear feet are round and compact with thick elastic pads and well arched toes. Flat feet are a major fault. Toenails are black and/or white in black-spotted dogs and liver and/or white in liver-spotted dogs. Dew claws may be removed.

Coat - The **coat** is short, dense, fine and close fitting. It is neither woolly nor silky. It is sleek, glossy and healthy in appearance.

Color and Markings - Color and markings and their overall appearance are very important points to be evaluated. The ground color is pure white. In black-spotted dogs, the spots are dense black. In liver-spotted dogs, the spots are liver brown. Any color markings other than black or liver are disqualified.

Spots are round and well defined. The more distinct the better. They vary from the size of a dime to the size of a half dollar. They are pleasingly and evenly distributed. The less the spots intermingle, the better. Spots are usually smaller on the head, legs, and tail than on the body. Ears are preferably spotted.

Tricolor (which occurs rarely in the breed) is a disqualification. It consists of tan markings found on the head, neck, chest, leg, or tail of a black or liver spotted dog. Bronzing of black spots and fading and/or darkening of liver spots due to environmental conditions or normal processes of coat change are not tri-coloration.

Patches are a disqualification. A patch is a solid mass of black or liver hair containing no white hair. It is appreciably larger than a normal sized spot. Patches are a dense, brilliant color with sharply defined, smooth edges. Patches are present at birth. Large color masses formed by intermingled or overlapping spots are not patches. Such masses should indicate individual spots by uneven edges and/or white hairs scattered throughout the mass.

Gait - In keeping with the Dalmatian's historical use as a coach dog, gait and endurance are of great importance. Movement is steady and effortless. Balanced angulation fore and aft combined with powerful muscles and good condition produce smooth, efficient action. There is a powerful drive from the rear coordinated with extended reach in the front. The topline remains level. Elbows, hocks and feet turn neither in nor out. As the speed of the trot increases there is a tendency to single track.

Temperament - Temperament is stable and outgoing, yet dignified. Shyness is a major fault.

Scale of Points

General Appearance	5
Size, Proportion and Substance	10
Head	10
Neck, Topline and Body	10
Forequarters	5
Hindquarters	5
Feet.....	5
Coat	5
Color and Markings	25
Gait	10
Temperament	1Q
TOTAL.....	100

Disqualifications

Any dog or bitch over 24 inches at the withers
Overshot or undershot bite
Tri-color
Patches
Any color markings other than black or liver

Approved July 11, 1989

The Illustrated Dalmatian Standard

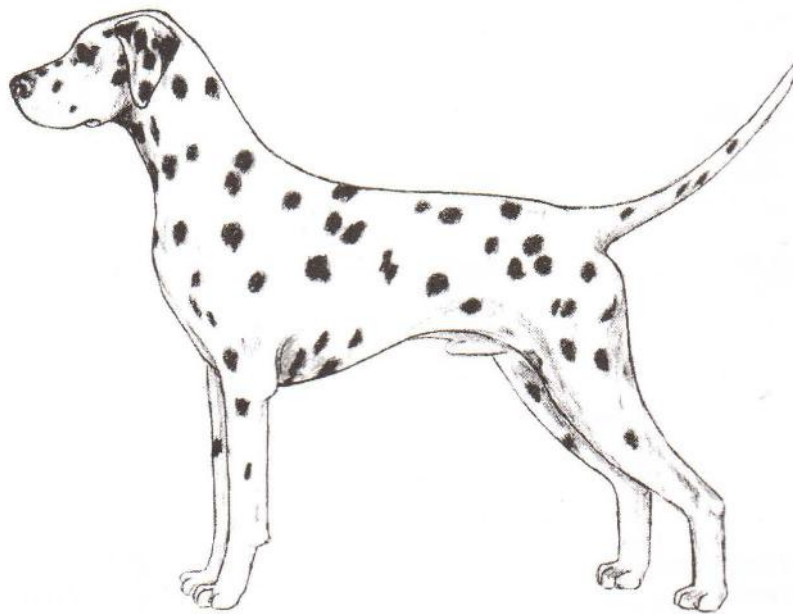
INTRODUCTION:

The Dalmatian Club of America, Inc. has published this document for the purpose of aiding judges, breeders, and fanciers to increase and enhance their understanding of the Dalmatian.

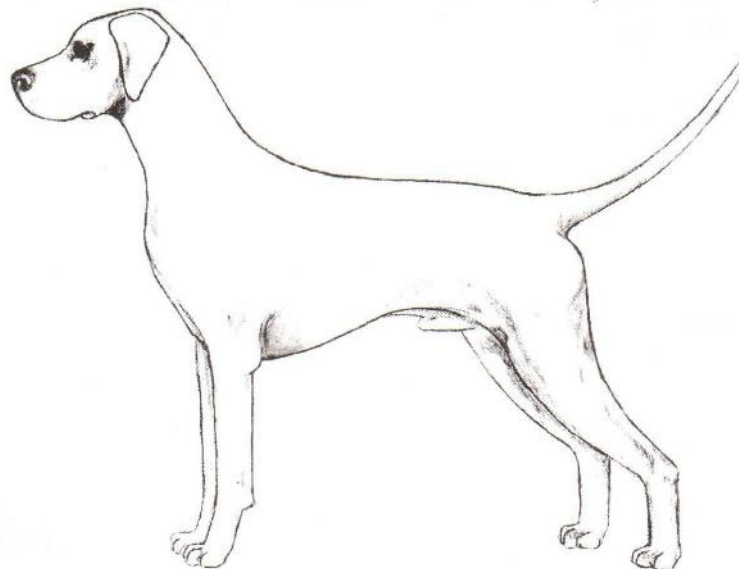
The illustrations attempt to depict a correct Dalmatian, not patterned after any particular "style" but to follow the language of the Standard as closely as possible. Some of the more significant points from the Standard are illustrated.

(Note: All comments not part of the Official AKC Standard are written in italics)

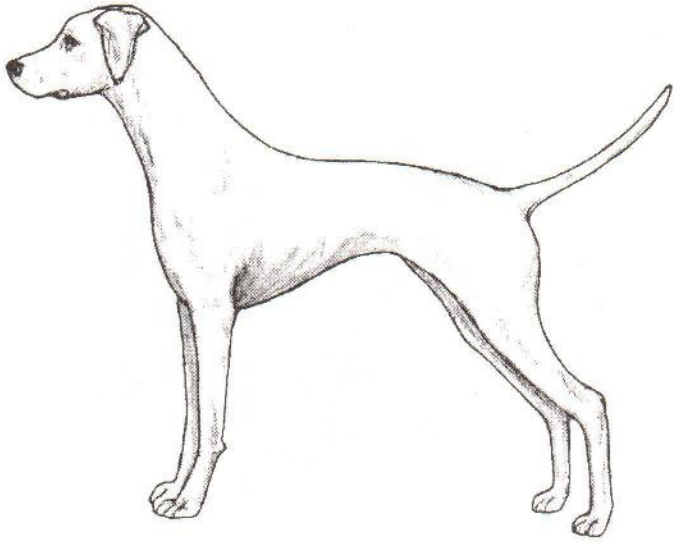
Desirable height at the withers is between 19 and 23 inches. Undersize or oversize is a fault. Any dog or bitch over 24 inches at the withers is disqualified. The overall length of the body from the forechest to the buttocks is approximately equal to the height at the withers. The Dalmatian has good substance and is strong and sturdy in bone, but never coarse.



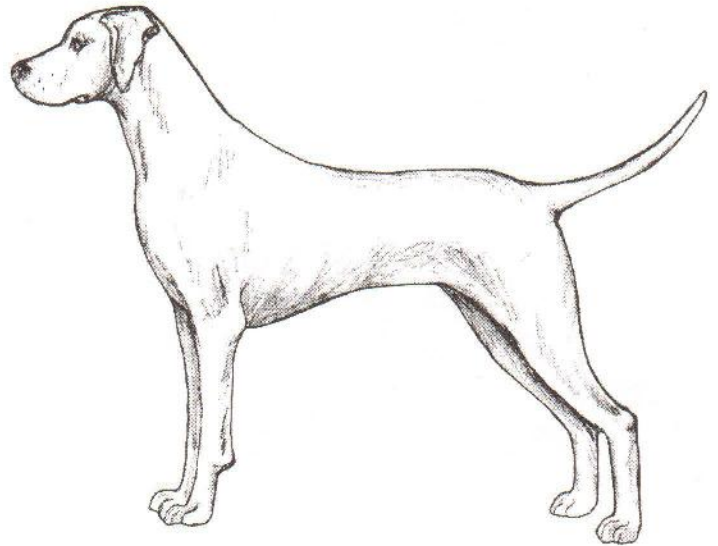
An example of correct type with and without markings



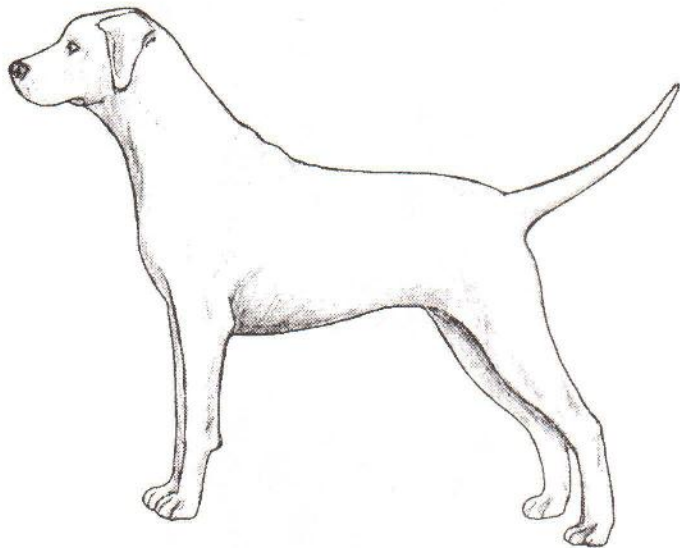
Deviations from correct type



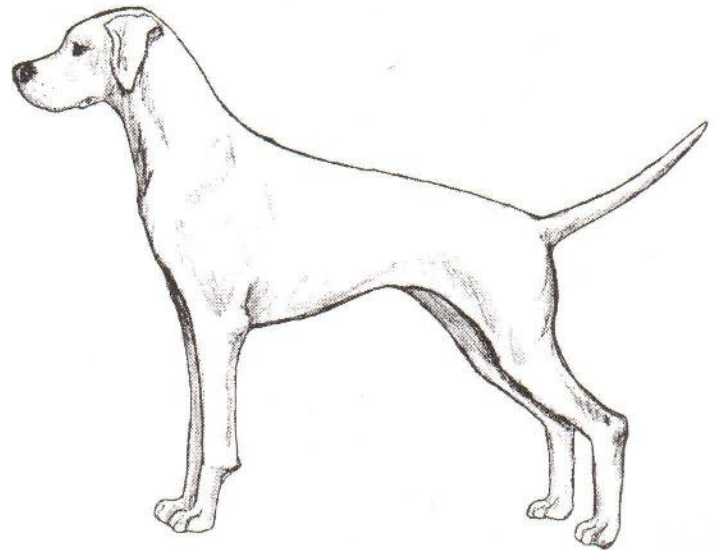
*Not sturdy in bone (too fine boned),
exaggerated tuckup*



*Body is longer in loin than desired,
topline is not smooth,
croup not nearly level with back*



*Too coarse, front and rear not balanced,
stifles not well bent*



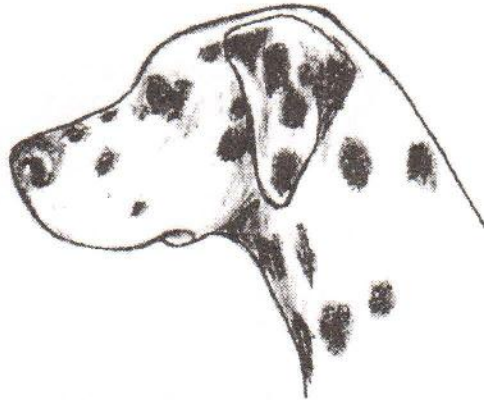
*Sloping topline, over-angulated rear,
high hocks*



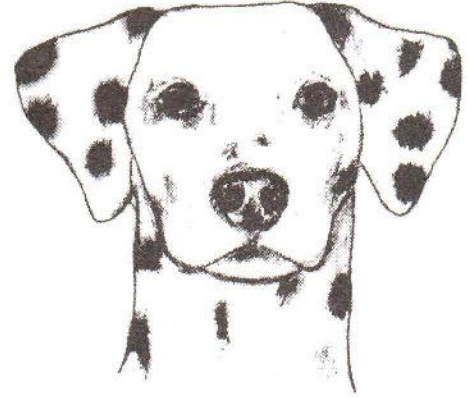
The Head

The top of the skull is flat with a slight vertical furrow and is approximately as wide as it is long. The **stop** is moderately well defined. The cheeks blend smoothly into a powerful **muzzle**, the top of which is level and parallel to the top of the skull. The muzzle and the top of the skull are about equal in length.

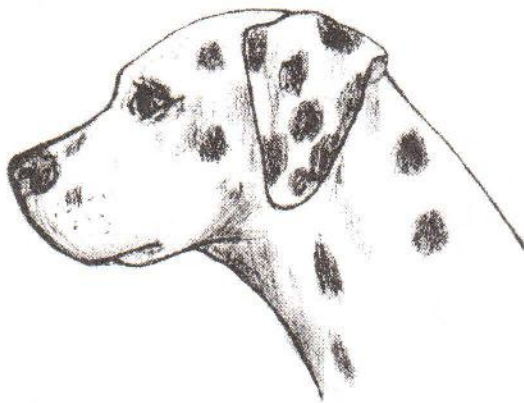
The lips are clean and close fitting. The teeth meet in a scissors bite. Overshot or undershot bites are disqualifications.



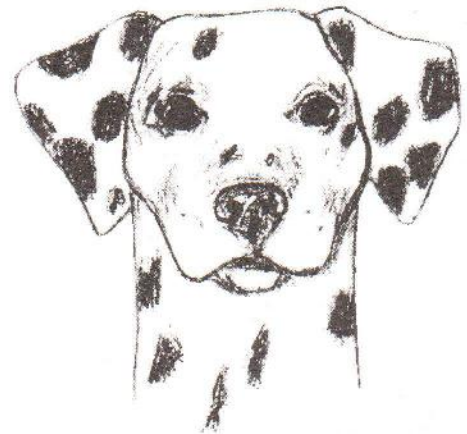
Correct Head, Side View



Correct Feminine Head, Front View



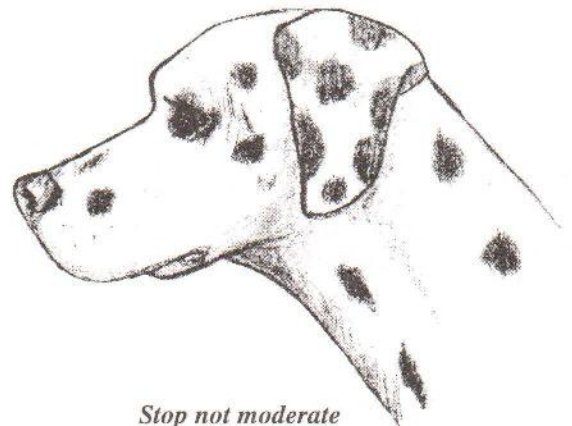
Muzzle too short



Cheeks do not blend smoothly



Muzzle not powerful

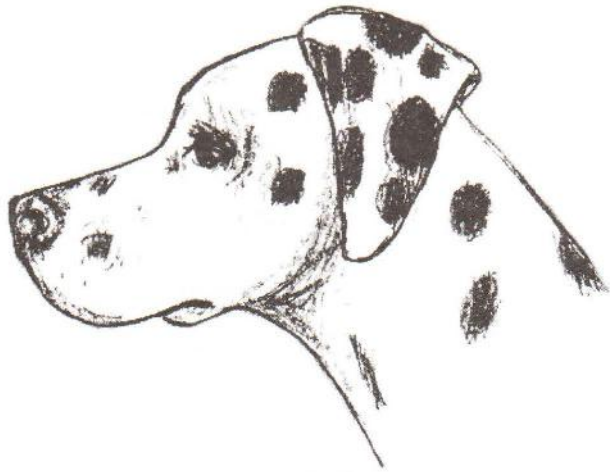


Stop not moderate



Head (continued)

When the Dalmatian is alert, the top of the ear is level with the top of the skull and the tip of the ear reaches to the bottom line of the cheek.



Ear set too high



Ear set too low



Ear set too high, front view



Ear set too low, front view

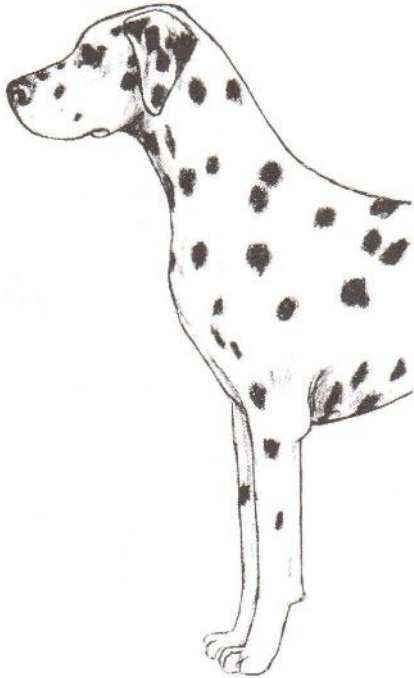
Incomplete pigmentation of the eye rims is a major fault. Incomplete nose pigmentation is a major fault.

Although there are a number of head illustrations, "HEAD" only accounts for 10 points in the standard.



Forequarters

Forequarters - The shoulders are smoothly muscled and well laid back. The upper arm is approximately equal in length to the shoulder blade and joins it at an angle sufficient to insure that the foot falls under the shoulder. The elbows are close to the body. The legs are straight, strong and sturdy in bone.



Example of correct front, side view



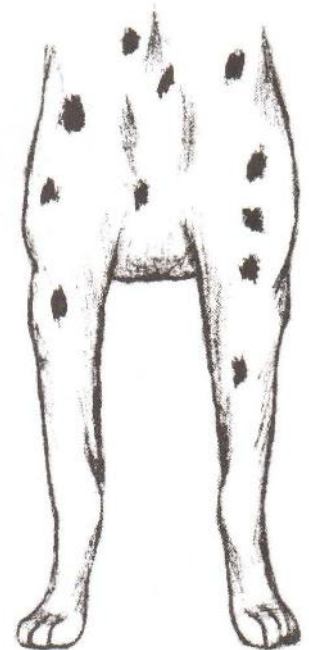
Example of correct front



*Out at elbows, toes in.
Lacking in muscling and
substance in forequarters*



*Coarse forequarters.
Shoulders not smoothly
muscled*

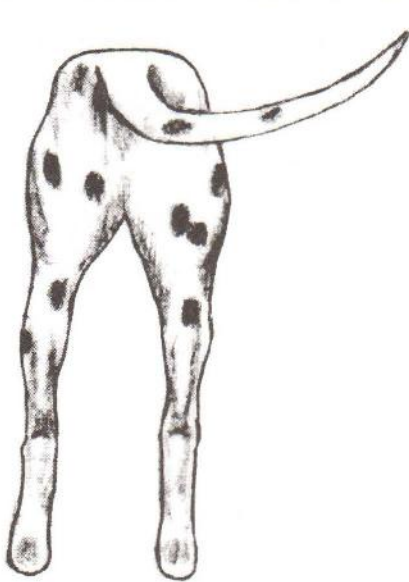


*Legs are not straight,
strong, or sturdy*

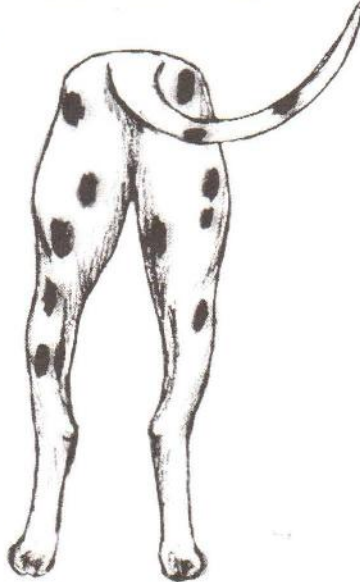


Hindquarters and Feet

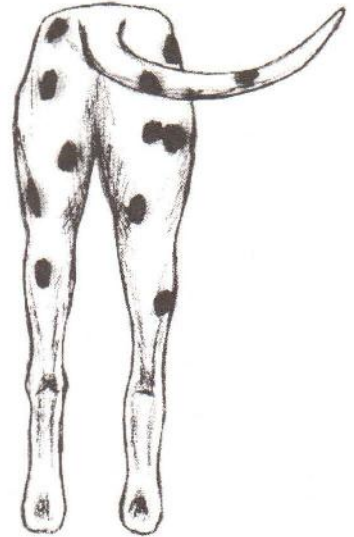
Hindquarters - The hindquarters are powerful, having smooth, yet well defined muscles. The stifle is well bent. The hocks are well let down. When the Dalmatian is standing, the hind legs, viewed from the rear, are parallel to each other from the point of the hock to the heel of the pad. **Cowhocks are a major fault.**



Correct rear



*Cow hocks
(a major fault)*



*Rear musculing not
powerful or well defined -
lacking in substance.*

Feet - Feet are very important. Both front and rear feet are round and compact with thick elastic pads and well arched toes. **Flat feet are a major fault.** There is a slight angle at the pastern denoting flexibility.



Correct foot



*Pastern too straight
knuckling over*



*Hare foot,
pastern too angled*



Splayed foot

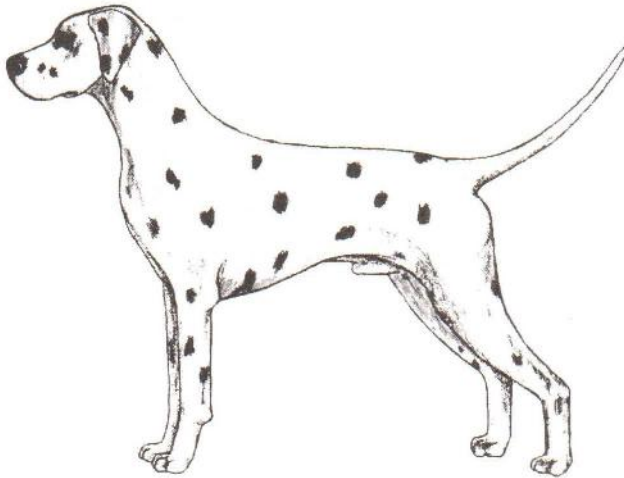


Color and Markings

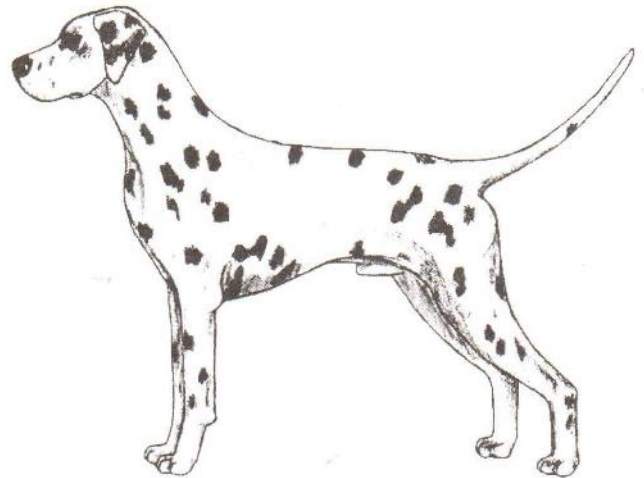
Color and Markings - Color and markings and their overall appearance are very important points to be evaluated. The ground color is pure white. In black spotted dogs, the spots are dense black. In liver spotted dogs, the spots are liver brown. Any color markings other than black or liver are disqualified.

Spots are round and well defined, the more distinct the better. They vary from the size of a dime to the size of a half dollar. They are pleasingly and evenly distributed. The less the spots intermingle, the better. Spots are usually smaller on the head, legs, and tail than on the body. Ears are preferably spotted.

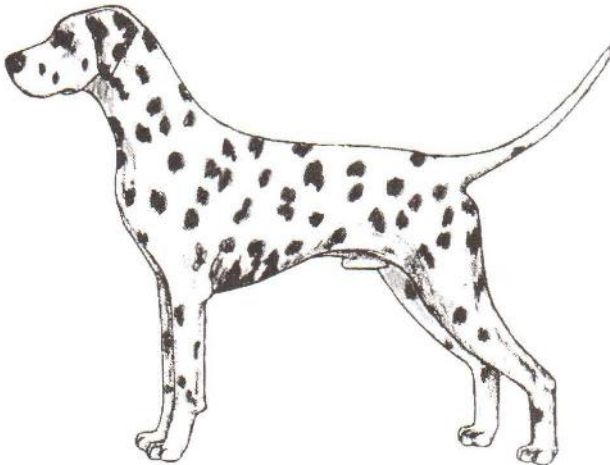
The first six of the following Dalmatians are spotted within the acceptable range denoting breed type.



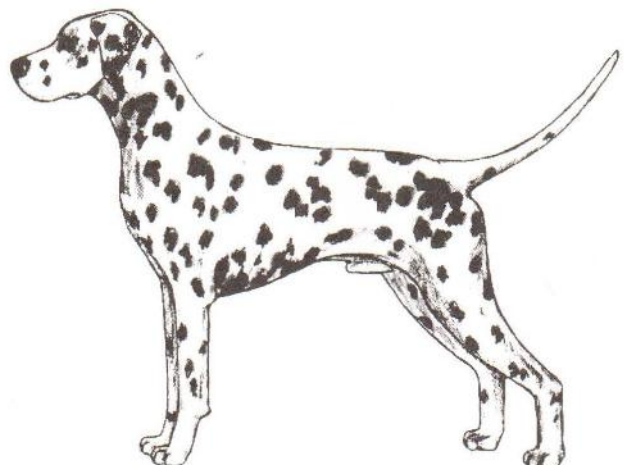
#1 - Close to minimum spotting required



#2 - Spotting slightly uneven in distribution, but distinct, rounded and well defined without intermingling



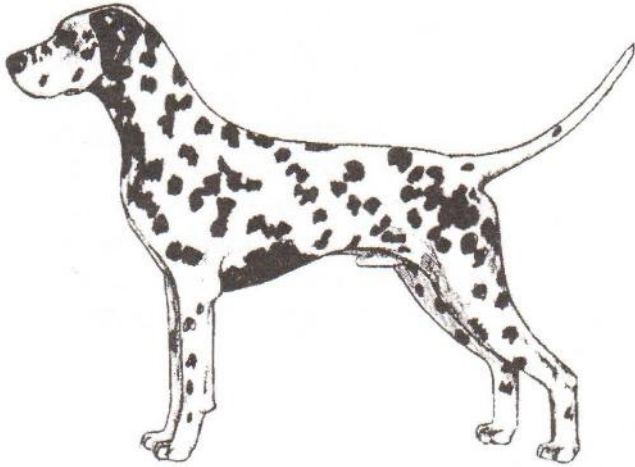
#3 - Distinct spotting, rounded and well defined with even distribution and no intermingling



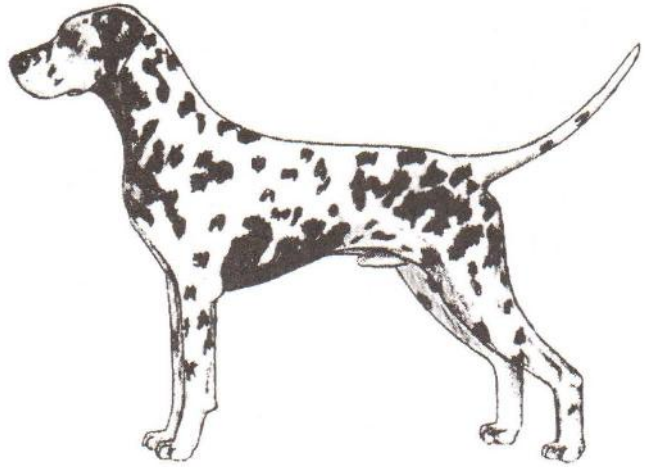
#4 - Heavier spotting, but still generally even distribution of round, distinct spots



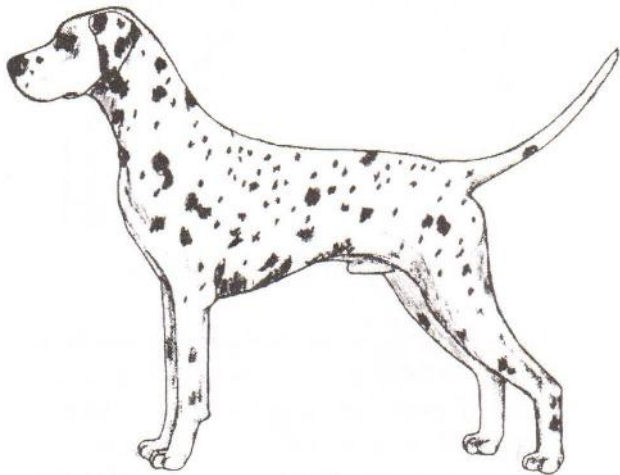
Color and Markings (continued)



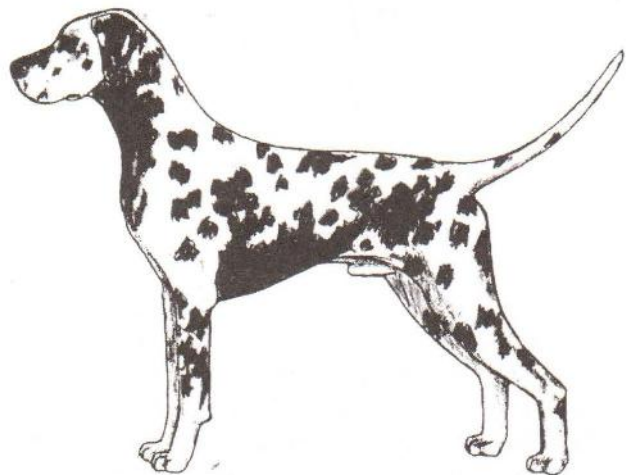
#5 – Heavier spotting, generally round and evenly distributed, but with some minor intermingling.



#6 – It is common to have more intermingling of spots on the ears and on the underside of the body with the balance of the body being evenly distributed. The less the spots intermingle the better.



#7 – Spotting can be from a dime to a half dollar in size. (smaller spots on head, legs, and tail) Since ticking is NOT spotting, excessive ticking detracts from breed type. Please note, spots larger than a half dollar also detract from breed type.



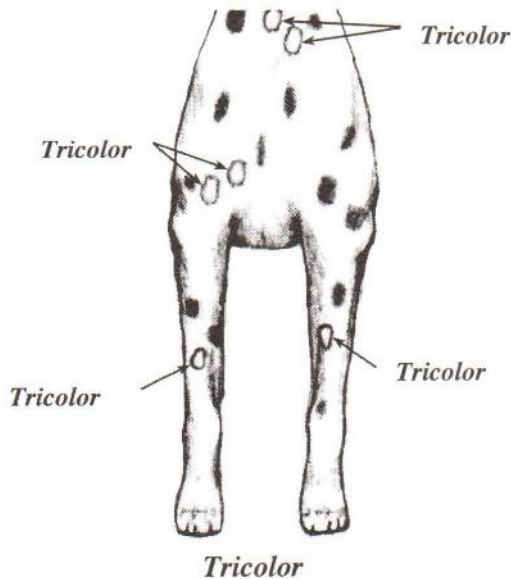
#8 – Spotting on body is intermingled to the point that they are no longer “distinct”. Excessive intermingling can affect breed type and is undesirable.

Dalmatian spotting is the breed's most distinguishing feature. Spotting helps to establish breed type, along with the structure of the dog. In the scale of points, 25 of 100 points are assigned to color and markings. After subtracting for head, coat, and temperament, more than half the points relate to structure or function. Thus, both spotting and soundness are essential parts of correct Dalmatian type, and one must not be over-emphasized at the expense of the other. With spotting, a wide range of acceptability is found in the Dalmatian. It is not unusual to find variations in patterns and some intermingling of spots within the acceptable range. What is a “pleasing distribution” is a subjective judgment. The outside range of acceptable patterns is determined by whether or not the pattern is so light, so heavy, or the spotting is so intermingled as to seriously detract from breed type.

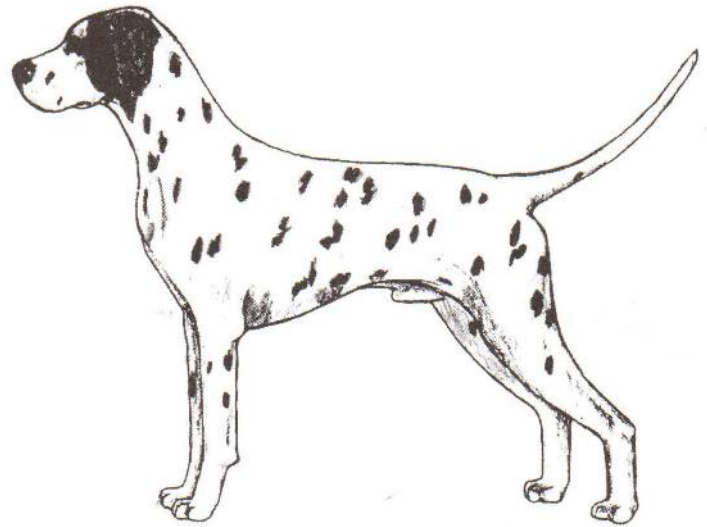


Color and Markings (continued)

Tricolor (which occurs rarely in the breed) is a disqualification. It consists of tan markings found on the head, neck, chest, leg, or tail of a black or liver spotted dog. Bronzing of black spots and fading and/or darkening of liver spots due to environmental conditions or normal processes of coat change are not tri-coloration.



Patches are a disqualification. A patch is a solid mass of black or liver hair containing no white hair. It is appreciably larger than a normal sized spot. Patches are present at birth. Large color masses formed by intermingled or overlapping spots are not patches. Such masses should indicate individual spots by uneven edges and/or white hairs scattered throughout the mass.



Patch on part of head and ear

Tricolors can have tan spots in any or all of the same areas as Dobermans (above each eye; on the muzzle, throat, and forechest; on all legs and feet; and below tail) The tan color is a light brown, not liver. These tan points can be found on both the black and liver spotted dogs.

Patches are visible at birth (non-patched puppies are born white). Patches occur in both the liver and black. Patches are not a confluence of spots, but rather a separate large, dense, solid area of black or liver, with smooth edges. There are no white hairs in the patched area. Patches are normally found on the head, around the ears, and/or eyes and occasionally appear at the base of the tail. They are very rarely found elsewhere on the body.



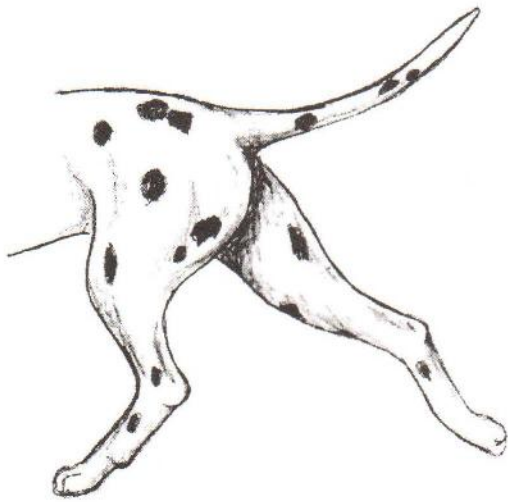
A litter of five patched puppies



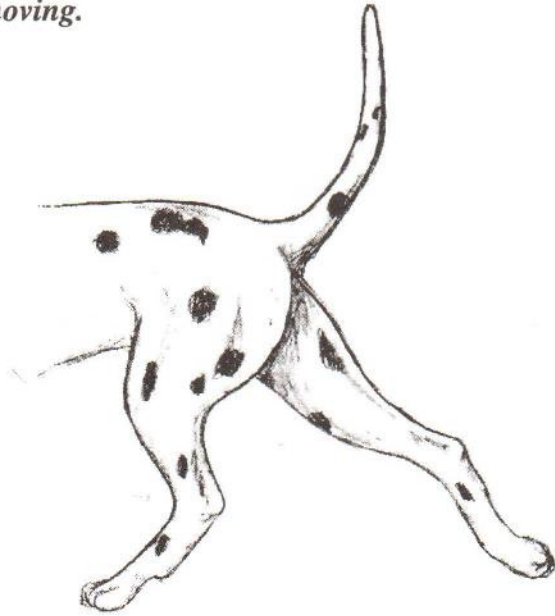
The Tail

The **tail** is an extension of the topline. It is not inserted too low down. It is strong at the insertion and tapers to the tip, which reaches to the hock. It is never docked. The tail is carried with a slight upward curve, but should never curl over the back. Ring tails and low-set tails are faults.

Tail carriage should be judged when the dog is moving.



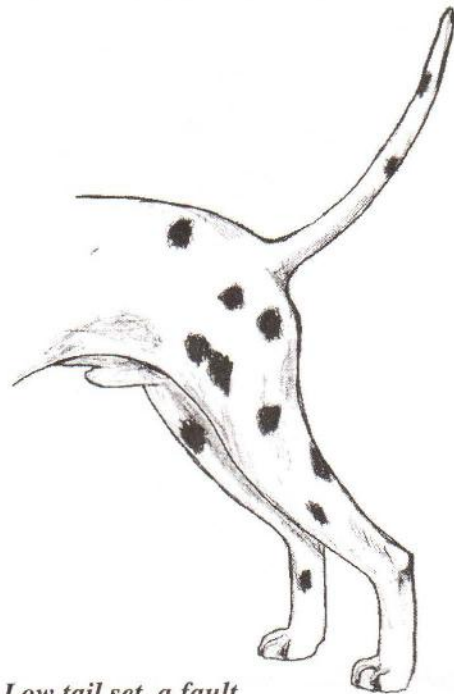
Correct tail set and carriage



When excited, a Dalmatian may carry his tail high



Tail curved over the back, a fault

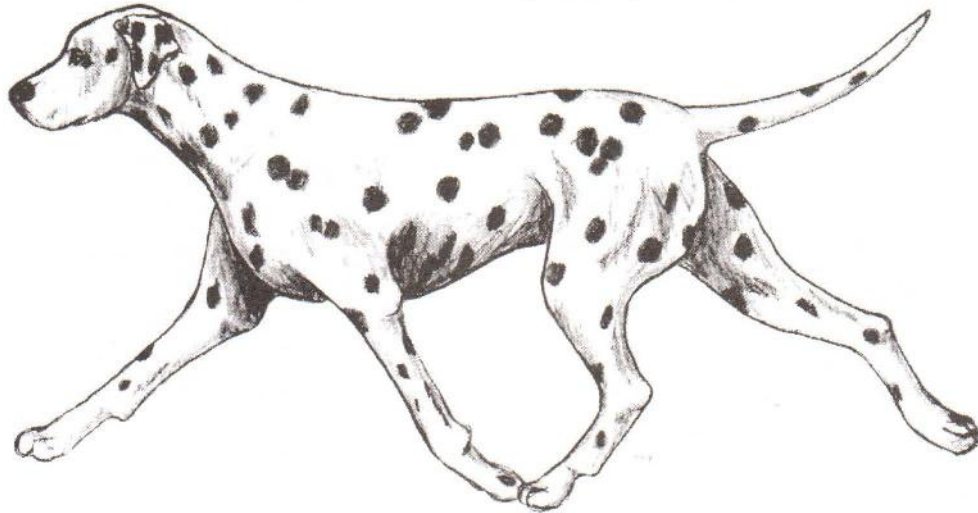


Low tail set, a fault

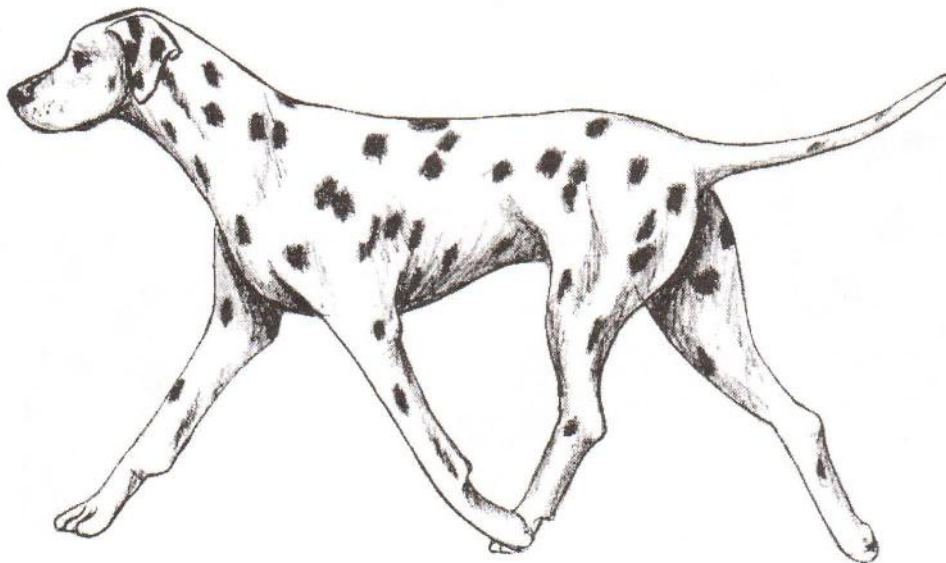


Gait

Gait - In keeping with the Dalmatian's historical use as a coach dog, gait and endurance are of great importance. Movement is steady and effortless. Balanced angulation fore and aft combined with powerful muscles and good condition produce smooth efficient action. There is a powerful drive from the rear coordinated with extended reach in the front. The topline remains level. Elbows, hocks and feet turn neither in nor out. As the speed of the trot increases there is a tendency to single track.



Correct gait- Note the extended front reach and rear extension along with a level topline. Here the front and rear movement is in balance. Note the head carriage, not carried too high so as to shorten his stride.



Poor reach and drive - Note the limited forward reach and rear extension. This may be a result of inadequate angulation in one or both ends. It is important that the angulation be balanced, or other moving faults will occur. This dog will require more steps than the correct gaiting dog to cover the same amount of distance.



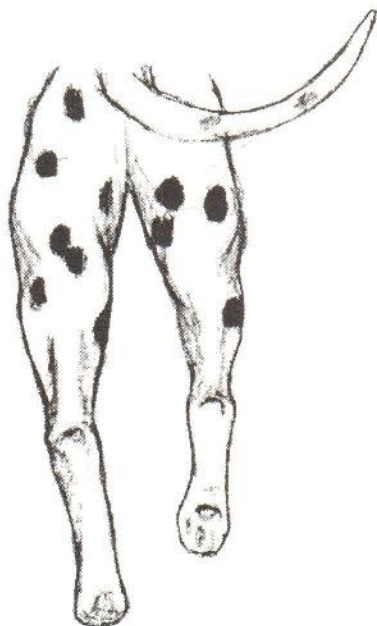
Gait (continued)



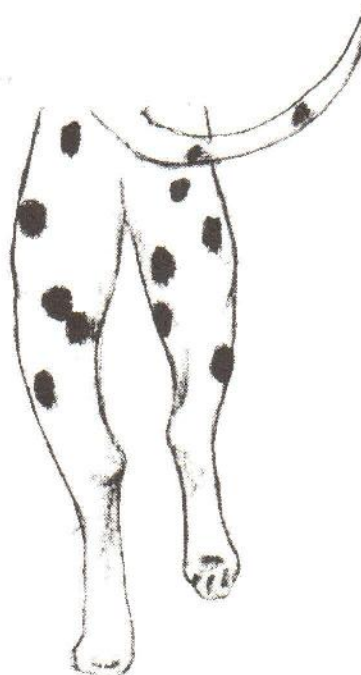
Correct front movement



Incorrect front movement, toeing in and elbowing out



Correct rear movement



Incorrect rear movement, cowhocks

Judges Education Committee

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