



Prepared by the AWC Judges Education Committee - 2011

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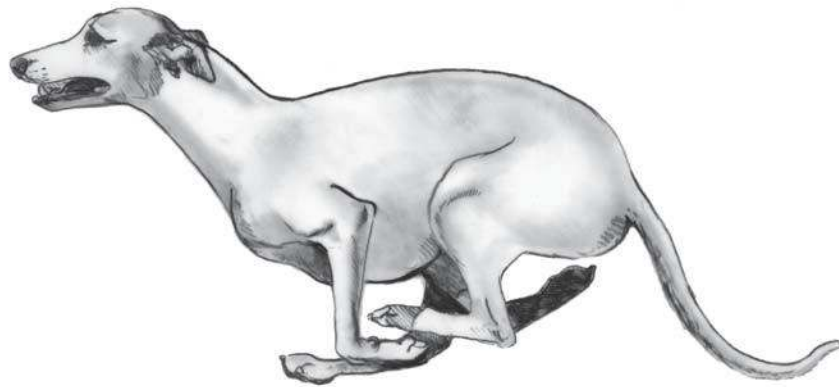
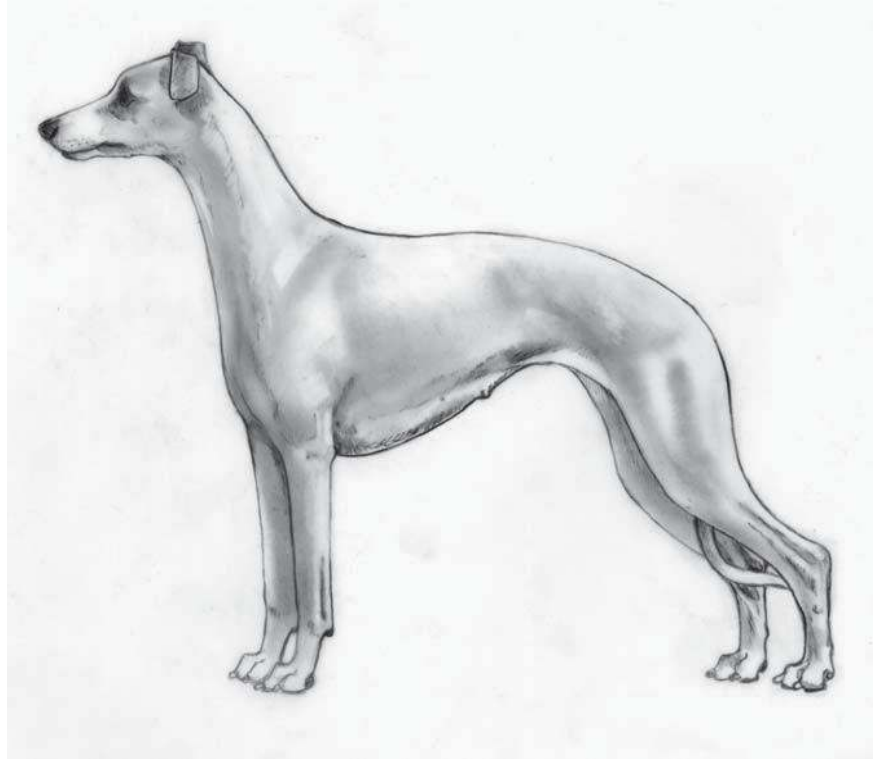
GENERAL APPEARANCE

AKC Standard

A medium size sighthound giving the appearance of elegance and fitness, denoting great speed, power and balance without coarseness. A true sporting hound that covers a maximum of distance with a minimum of lost motion. Should convey an impression of beautifully balanced muscular power and strength, combined with great elegance and grace of outline. Symmetry of outline, muscular development and powerful gait are the main considerations; the dog being built for speed and work, all forms of exaggeration should be avoided.

Elaboration

The “General Appearance” portion of the standard is very well written and needs little elaboration. However, judges should be reminded that when evaluating this breed they should take into account its original working/sporting purpose as a hunting and racing dog. Breeders and judges should place significant emphasis on the importance of physical conditioning in the breed. Fitness is an important aspect that judges should not overlook. Defined muscles, particularly in the shoulder, loin and hip area, should be apparent, so long as they are not bunchy, loaded or thick. Whippets are athletes not lap dogs and as such should have sufficient muscling and conditioning as long as the muscling is not excessive or overdone.



SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE

AKC Standard

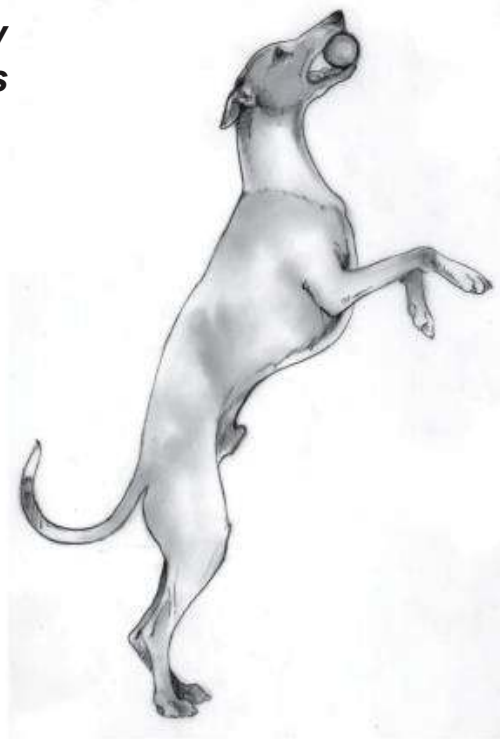
Ideal height for dogs, 19 to 22 inches; for bitches, 18 to 21 inches, measured at the highest point of the withers. More than one-half inch above or below the stated limits will disqualify. Length from forechest to buttocks equal to or slightly greater than height at the withers. Moderate bone throughout.

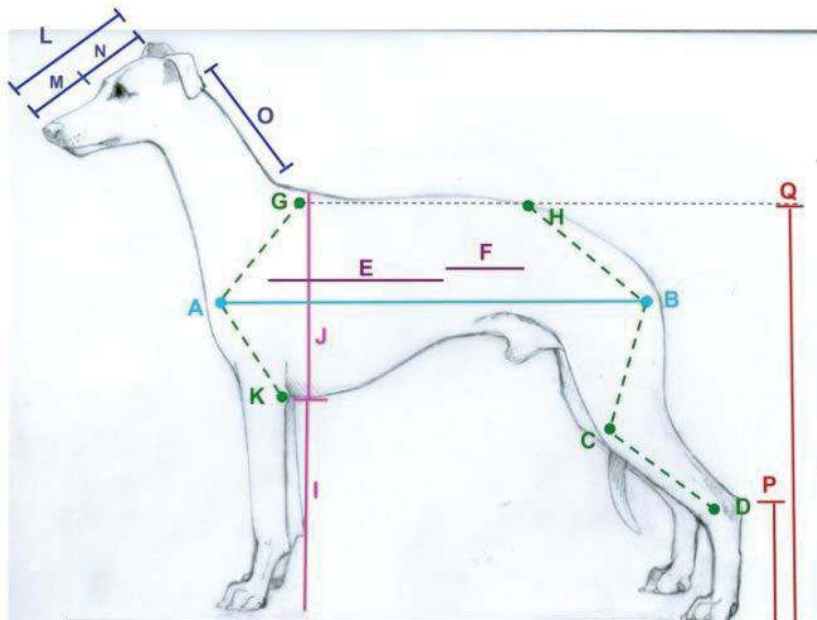
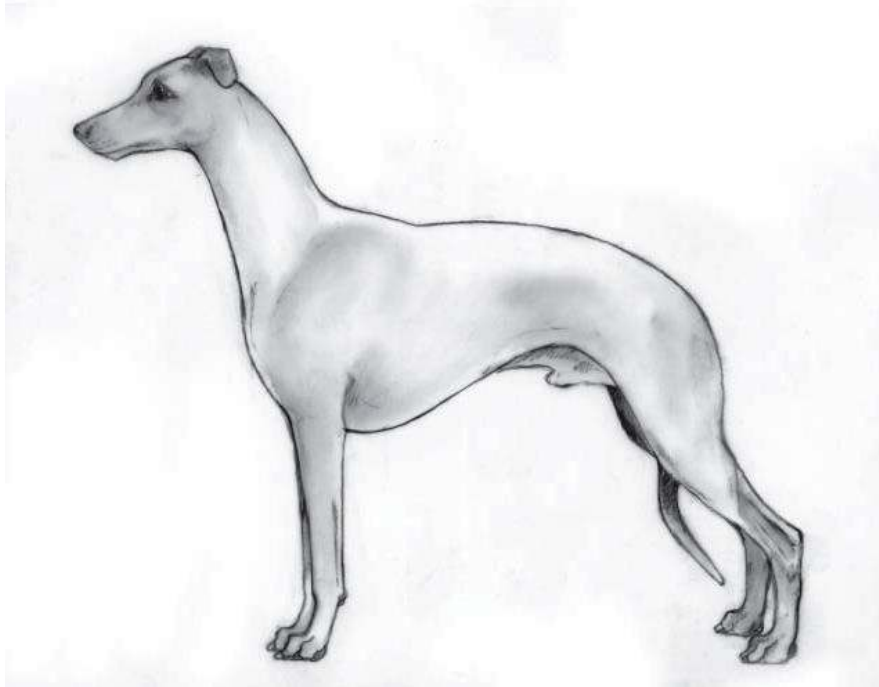
Elaboration

Judges should take note that the Whippet standard allows for a wide range within its acceptable heights. From the smallest allowable bitch (17 1/2") to the largest allowable dog (22 1/2") there is a difference of five inches which is substantial on a dog of this overall size. ANY HEIGHT WHICH FALLS WITHIN THIS STATED RANGE IS EQUALLY ACCEPTABLE. No preference should be shown for dogs or bitches at either the top or bottom of the height standard. Very simply put, in is in and out is out - in any measurable breed this is very clear cut. It should also be noted that judges are encouraged to measure and should not hesitate to measure any dog whose height they may feel is in question. It's better to measure and know than think a dog may be outside of the height parameters and leave it out of the ribbons based on a guess.

Length to height ratio in this breed should be equal to or slightly greater than height at the withers. Judges should be aware that a dog that measures dead square will appear slightly longer than tall due to the curvature of the topline and the dog's angulation fore and aft.

As Whippets should possess equal parts elegance and athleticism, bone and substance should be moderate throughout. Bone that is too fine or too coarse will impede the dog's ability to do its job with maximum efficiency. Judges should also be reminded that color, particularly solid color, can affect the perception of bone and substance, with dark colors, particularly black, diminishing this perception and light colors, particularly white, amplifying this perception.





Proportion and Balance in the AKC Whippet

Point A-Point B = Length of Body. Length equals or SLIGHTLY exceeds height at withers (Point G).

Shoulder angle (G-A-K) equals hip angle (H-B-C). This is what is meant by having a balanced angulation in quarters.

Ratio of ribcage depth to leg length (J:I) is approximately 1:1.

Points G and H are as near to equal height off the ground in as relaxed a stance as possible. H may be slightly lower but should not be higher if type is not to be compromised.

B-C and C-D lengths are equal. So are G-A and A-K. A short upper arm (G-A to A-K ratio) causes breaking at the pasterns and hackney gait in whippets. A shorter second thigh (C-D) than first thigh (B-C) causes hitching and skipping - an unbalanced gait. A long second thigh is associated with cowhocks or sickle hocks.

Hocks well let down means that the hock length (P) is no greater than one third the height at the hip (Q).

E-F (Ribcage to Loin) is two to one. This is a critical aspect of whippet TYPE. In greyhounds, it is usually three to one, while in Italian greyhounds it is closer to one to one.

The length of the head (L) is normally the same length as the back of the neck (O) from occiput to withers.

The length of the muzzle from nose to inside corner of eye (M) is equal to the inside corner of the eye to the occiput (N).

These ratios, if present, create an AKC Whippet which is of harmonious beauty to satisfy the eye, conforms to the AKC standard, and has nothing acting against performance and durability at the gallop.

Used with permission: Karen Bowers Lee, Surrey Hill

HEAD

AKC Standard

Keen intelligent alert expression. Eyes large, round to oval in shape. Small and/or almond shaped eyes are undesirable and are to be faulted. Eyes to be dark brown to nearly black in color. Eye color can vary with coat color, but regardless of coat color dark eyes are always preferred. Light eyes are undesirable and yellow eyes are to be strictly penalized. Blue eye(s) or any portion of blue in the eye(s), as well as both eyes not being of the same color shall disqualify. Fully pigmented eye rims are desirable.

Rose ears, small, fine in texture; in repose, thrown back and folded along neck. Fold should be maintained when at attention. Erect ears should be severely penalized.

Skull long and lean, fairly wide between the ears, scarcely perceptible stop.

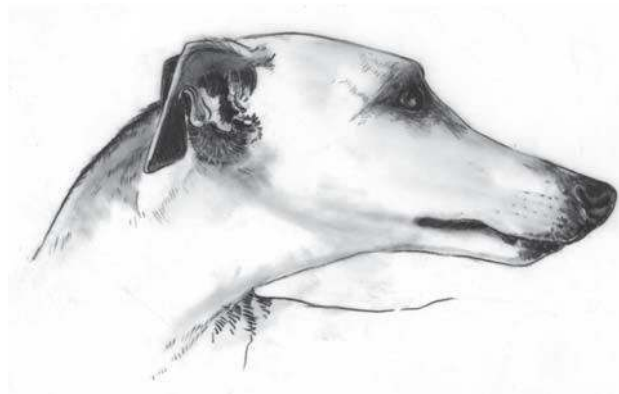
Muzzle should be long and powerful, denoting great strength of bite, without coarseness. Lack of underjaw should be strictly penalized. Nose leather to be entirely and uniformly pigmented. Color to be black, dark blue or dark brown, both so dark so as to appear nearly black.

Teeth of upper jaw should fit closely over teeth of lower jaw creating a scissors bite. Teeth should be white and strong. Undershot shall disqualify. Overshot one-quarter inch or more shall disqualify.



Elaboration

While it should always be remembered that Whippets are not a 'head breed', certain head properties do define elements of breed character.



Eyes should be large and dark and the expression should be soft not harsh, however expression will be intense when the dog is in hunting mode. Though still dark, eyes on blue and cream dilute colored dogs will have a different undertone than those of black pigmented individuals. Blue dilute dogs will tend to have a slate undertone to the eye while cream dilutes tend to have a gold undertone. However, it should be noted that dark eyes within these tones are very achievable from a breeding standpoint and are definitely preferred. Fully pigmented eye rims are desirable, but missing eye rim pigment is not a 'deal breaker' on an otherwise good dog.





Non-dilute pigment



Blue dilute

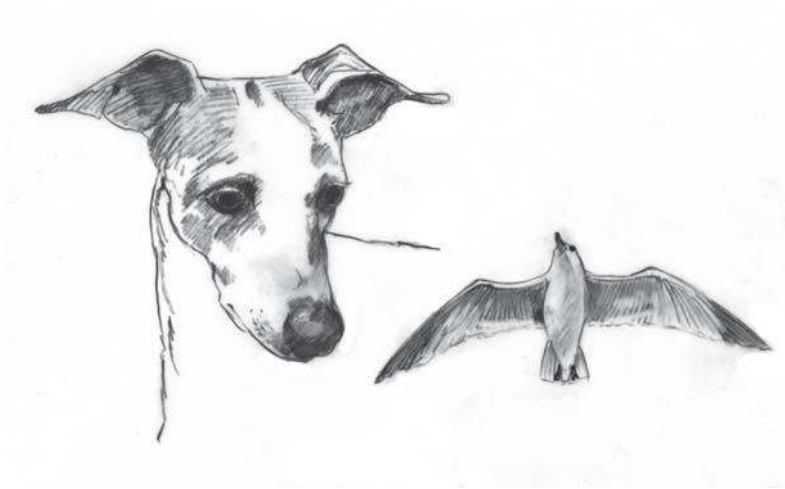


Cream dilute

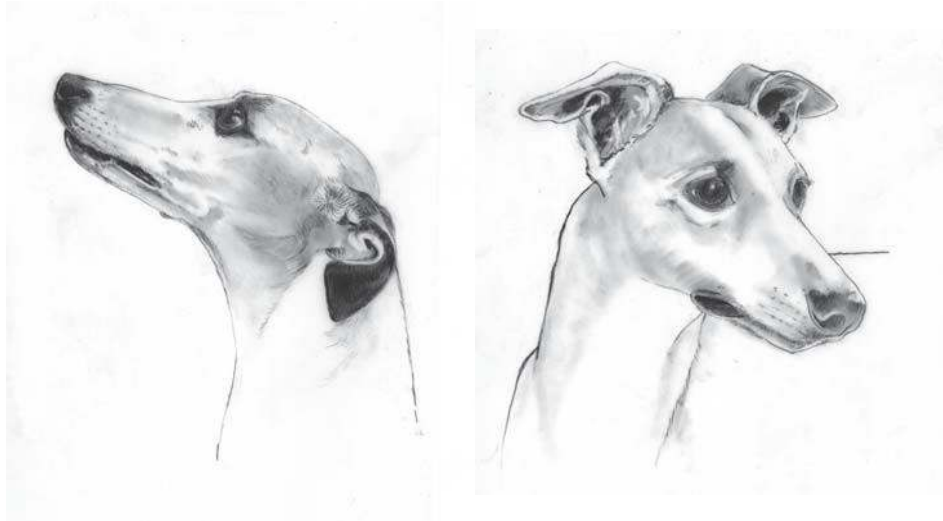
A 'rose ear' can have many different incarnations and still be correct, depending on the set on the head, the length and weight of the ear and the location of the 'break' - the point at which the ear folds.



High, fine, crisp 'gull wing' ears are preferred, but as long as the ear falls into the definition of 'rose', it should not be faulted unless a judge is splitting hairs between two otherwise equal specimens.



Erect or 'prick' ears are to be severely penalized. Equally offensive are large, heavy, low set 'hound' ears with little or no 'break' or 'fold' on the upper contour of the ear.

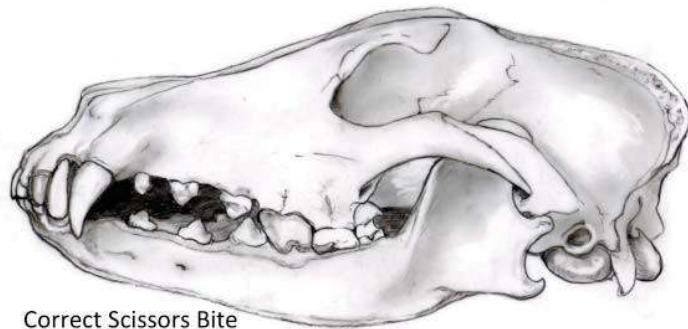


Remember that a Whippet should not be penalized for NOT 'using' its ears. It is perfectly acceptable for a Whippet to perform in either an animated or in a more stoic fashion while in the show ring and neither should be given preference.

Judges should remember that the standard calls for a skull which is long and lean, yet fairly wide between the ears, being neither narrow and Borzoi like nor round or cheeky. The width between the ears accommodates the characteristic large, correctly shaped eye. Head planes should approach parallel (neither down faced nor dished) and muzzle is approximately equal in length to the back skull. As part of the breed's function is to catch and hold prey, a strong powerful underjaw with 'great strength of bite without coarseness' is of great importance.



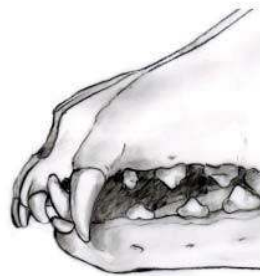
The Whippet breed as a whole has very few bite or mouth issues. An 'off' bite, particularly one that appears before you in the show ring, is a very rare exception. Judges should also note that our standard only addresses the occlusion, or bite, there is no need to probe into the sides of the mouth during your exam to count teeth or check for missing teeth as Whippets are not accustomed to this as part of the normal exam process.



Correct Scissors Bite

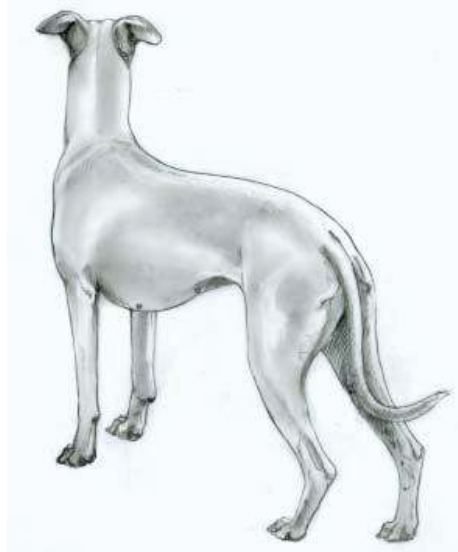


Undershot
Disqualifying



Overshot more than ¼ inch
Disqualifying

NECK, TOPLINE, BODY



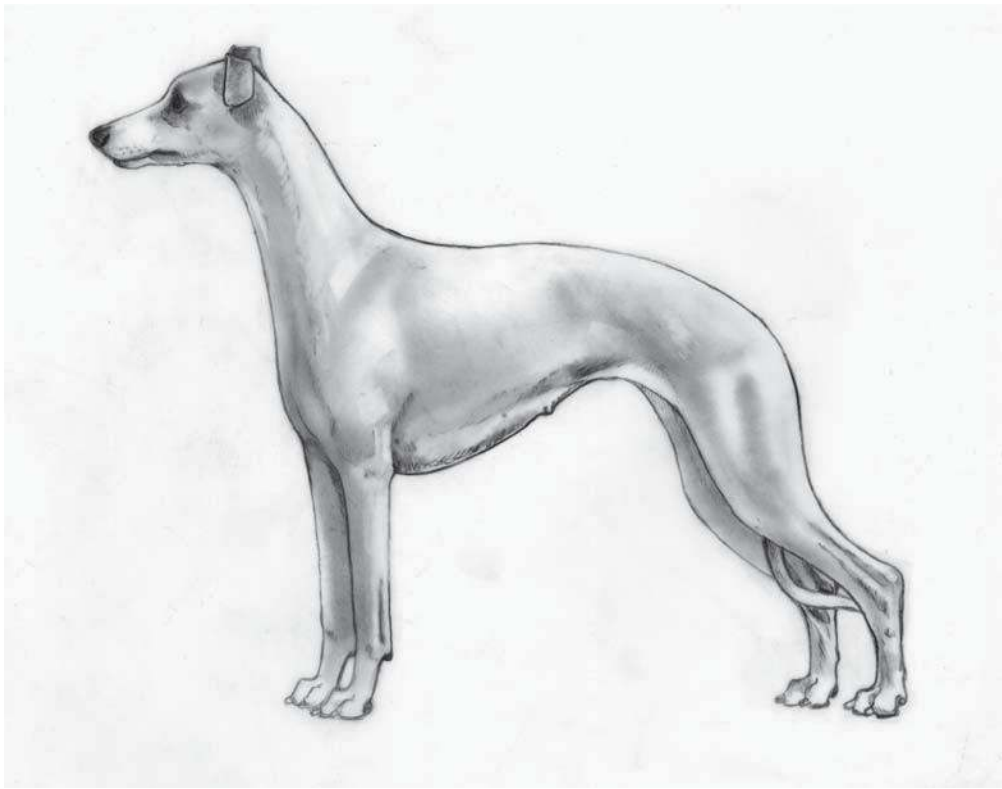
AKC Standard

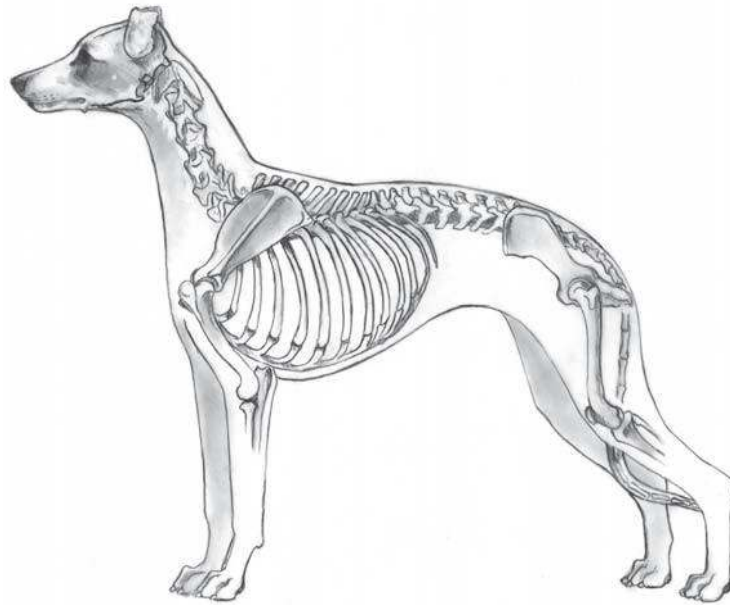
Neck long, clean and muscular, well arched with no suggestion of throatiness, widening gracefully into the top of the shoulder. A short thick neck, or a ewe neck, should be penalized. The back is broad, firm and well-muscled, having length over the loin. The backline runs smoothly from the withers with a graceful natural arch, not too accentuated, beginning over the loin and carrying through over the croup; the arch is continuous without flatness. A dip behind shoulder blades, wheelback, flat back, or a steep or flat croup should be penalized. Brisket very deep, reaching as nearly as possible to the point of the elbow. Ribs well sprung but with no suggestion of barrel shape. The space between the forelegs is filled in so that there is no appearance of a hollow between them. There is a definite tuck-up of the underline. The tail long and tapering, reaching to at least the inside of the hock when measured down along the hind leg. When the dog is in motion, the tail is carried low with only a gentle upward curve; tail should not be carried higher than top of back.

Elaboration

The outline of the Whippet is arguably its most important and distinct feature.

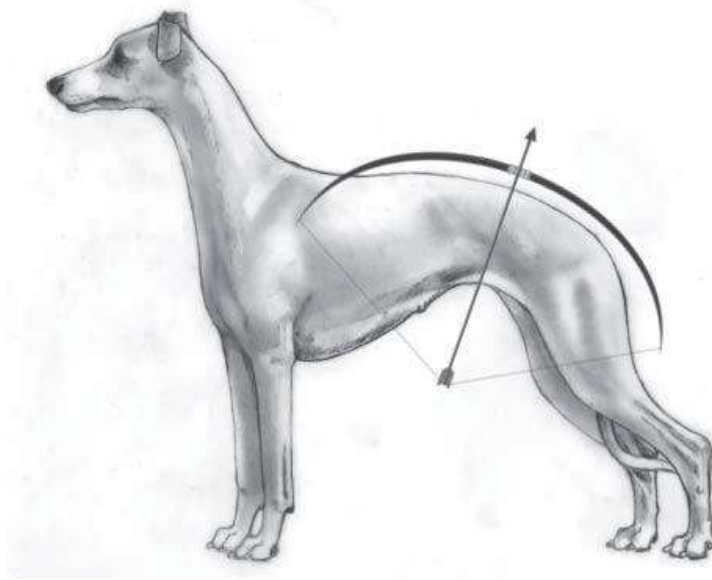
A correct and smooth melding of topline and underline with proper body length combined with well-made running gear fore and aft makes for a beautiful and efficient running machine. The body and outline of the Whippet should be a continuous series of 'S' curves, with the only hard angle found at the hock.





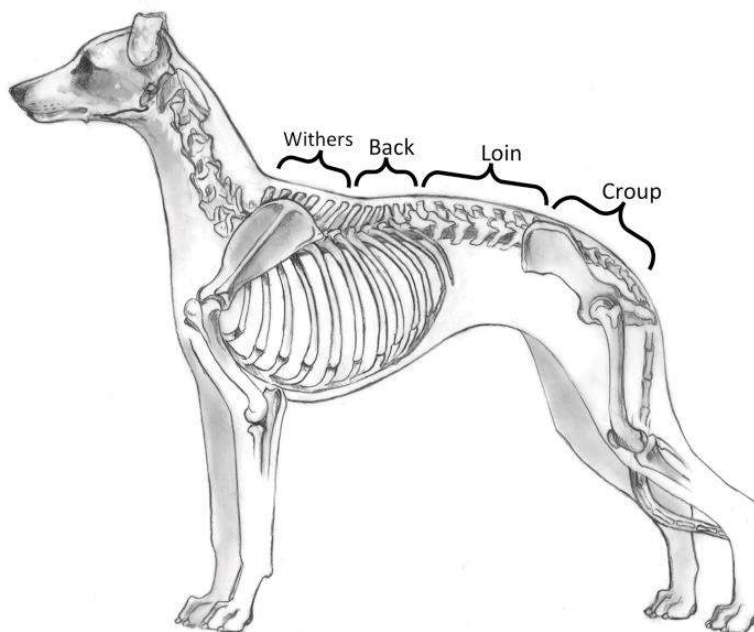
The proper topline is often a point of confusion for judges new to Whippets, particularly those who come from level backed or high tail set breeds. Often in the show ring you will see a number of different topline on the dogs in front of you - which of those is most correct? Please remember that, unlike most breeds that require short coupling through the loin, Whippets must have length, breadth and elasticity through the loin. This is an adaptation in breeds of extreme speed, primarily Whippets and Greyhounds wherein the loin provides the 'hinge' and flexibility to successfully perform the double suspension gallop (*see definition in Appendix) at speed.

The topline possesses a smooth natural arch, analogous to the “arc of a well-drawn bow”, with the highest point of the arch never being any higher than the highest point of the withers.

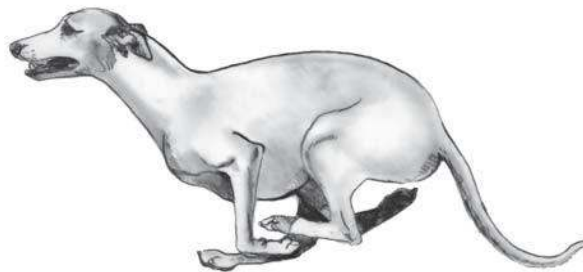


This smooth muscular curve, which is a hallmark of the breed, allows the transmission of power from the hindquarters through the loin and forequarters when running. It should be noted that short coupled or steep crouped individuals are significantly hampered in successful performance at a run than those who are slightly too long or flat because they are typically restricted in their rearward extension and thrust. Judges should also remember that the topline that the dog carries while standing should be maintained at a trot when in the show ring.

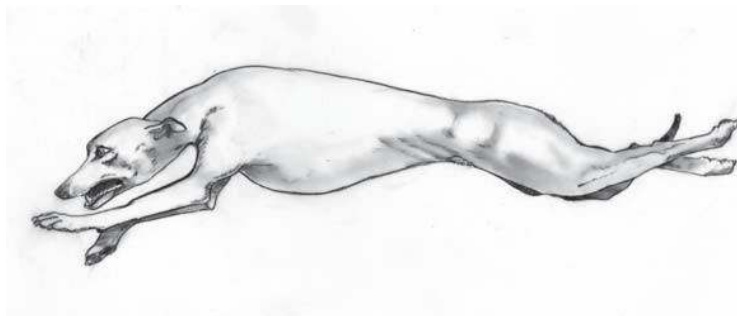
All dogs, running hounds or otherwise, will possess a small 'divot' in the topline in the thoracic region at the anticlinal vertebrae (between the thoracic and the lumbar vertebrae). This is where the vertebrae change direction from pointing backward to forward. This slight indentation can also appear accentuated in dogs that are racing/coursing fit by development of the rhomboid muscle over the shoulder area. A small 'divot' is normal, however, an accentuated dip is incorrect.



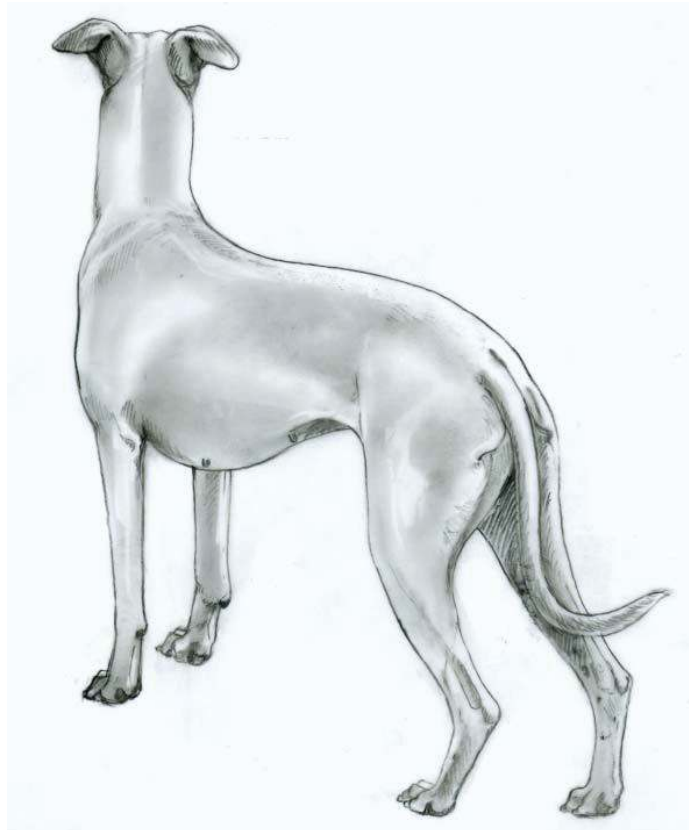
The underline is equally important and functions in concert with the topline during the Whippet's working gait, the double suspension gallop. Sufficient 'tuck up' allows for the spine flexion and the folding of the body during the overreach phase when running at speed.



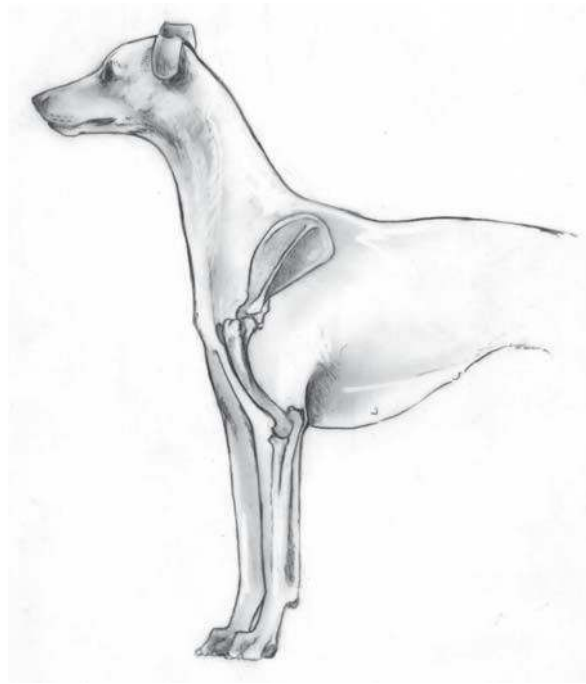
The Whippet should have a smooth supple body with great flexibility. The body should be deep, capacious and oval shaped (NOT ROUND), providing great heart and lung room and must complement the functional topline and underline.



The tail should reach at least to the hock when drawn down along the hind leg. A low tail set is important as the tail functions as a counterbalance when the dog is running at speed. A high tail set typically indicates an incorrect, short croup.



FOREQUARTERS



AKC Standard

Shoulder blade long, well laid back, with flat muscles, allowing for moderate space between shoulder blades at peak of withers. Upper arm of equal length, placed so that the elbow falls directly under the withers.

The points of the elbows should point neither in nor out, but straight back. A steep shoulder, short upper arm, a heavily muscled or loaded shoulder, or a very narrow shoulder, all of which restrict low free movement, should be strictly penalized. Forelegs straight, giving appearance of strength and substance of bone. Pasterns strong, slightly bent and flexible. Bowed legs, tied-in elbows, legs lacking substance, legs set far under the body so as to create an exaggerated forechest, weak or upright pasterns should be strictly penalized.

Both front and rear feet must be well formed with hard, thick

pads. Feet more hare than cat, but both are acceptable. Flat, splayed or soft feet without thick hard pads should be strictly penalized. Toes should be long, close and well arched. Nails strong and naturally short or of moderate length. Dewclaws may be removed.



Elaboration

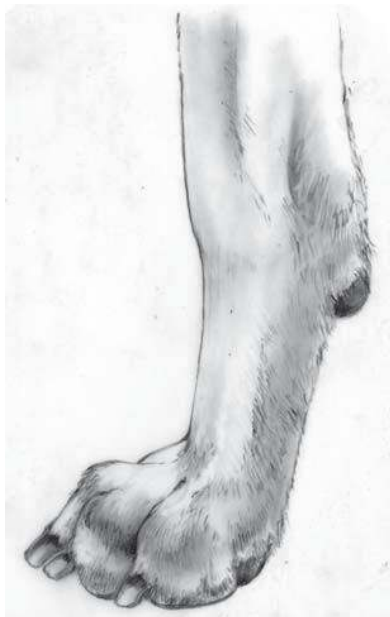
A well-made front end on a running hound is critical to the dog's ability to function and remain sound. The forequarters bear most of the impact and shock absorption when a dog is running and turning at speed. For this reason, the elements of sound front end construction are vitally important.

Whippets (and Sighthounds in general) will have a more open shoulder angle (typically 100 to 110 degrees) than conventional trotting breeds. This does not imply a straight shoulder and upper arm, just not the classic 90-degree scapula to humerus angle that is accepted and correct in most other breeds.

The brisket should reach to the elbow allowing for great heart and lung capacity, and the chest area between the front legs should be well filled and not 'cut-up' or hollow. The shoulders and front will have defined musculature, but judges are reminded that well-defined, flat musculature is correct. Coarse, round and bulging musculature is not.

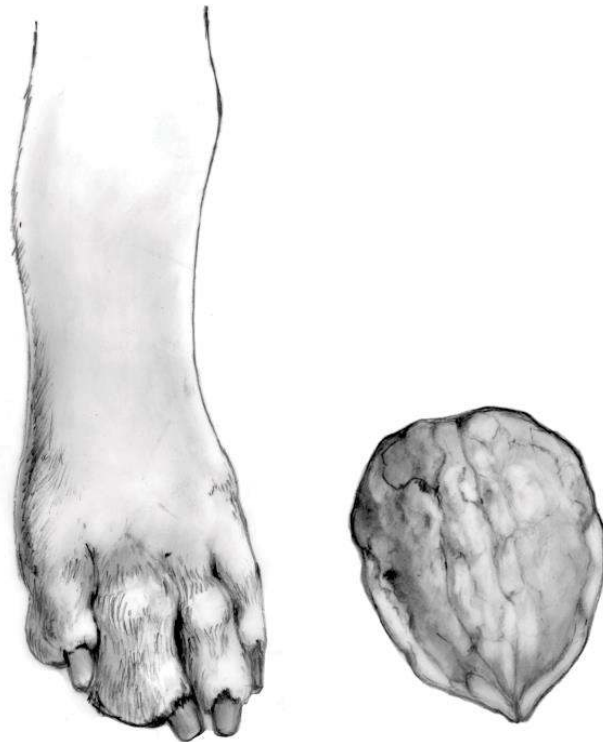


In a running hound, the importance of correctly made feet and pasterns cannot be emphasized strongly enough. If these two areas are not well made, the dog will not be able to stay sound over time while performing the job it was bred to do. Pasterns should be slightly bent and flexible. As the pastern absorbs the majority of the shock when the dog is running and turning, flexibility and a proper slight bend are critical. A pastern that is upright and straight does not have the flexibility and suspension capabilities required and will ultimately cause unsoundness in the running dog. Conversely too much angle in the pastern will cause weakness in the area and will also ultimately affect the dog's ability to stay sound.



Judges should also note that when presented with a dog that toes out slightly and one that toes in to any degree, the dog that toes in runs a much higher risk of becoming injured or unsound if asked to perform at speed over any period of time. Toeing in is a much more serious functional fault than a slight toe out.

Strong, well-knit feet are also critically important to a running dog. The foot is more hare than cat and a perfectly shaped foot resembles a half walnut shell lying flat. Open, splayed or soft feet as well as very upright 'cat' feet will not serve the dog well over time at speed.



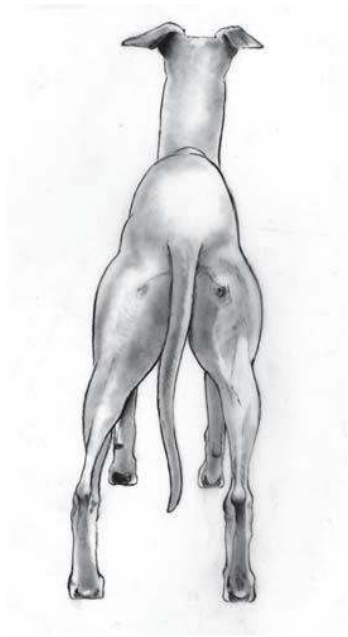
HINDQUARTERS

AKC Standard

Long and powerful. The thighs are broad and muscular, stifles well bent; muscles are long and flat and carry well down toward the hock. The hocks are well let down and close to the ground. Sickie or cow hocks should be strictly penalized.

Elaboration

The hind end of a running animal is its “engine”. It provides the power to propel the animal forward in a double suspension gallop. Therefore, correctly made hindquarters are crucial to the breed’s ability to do its job. The hindquarters should be balanced, well angulated and muscular with both bend and depth through the stifle and a strong second thigh. Hocks are moderately low to the ground. All of these traits combined give the whippet a rear that is powerful with drive and flexibility, thus enhancing speed and agility. Rear angulation should be in relative balance to the angulation of the forequarters. Both too much and too little angulation are impediments to a running hound. Over angulation is a more frequently seen fault in the show ring, often in combination with a relatively straight front, and should be strictly penalized. Overangulation is very inefficient in any dog bred for running at speed and is rarely seen in competitive racing and open field coursing dogs.



COAT

AKC Standard

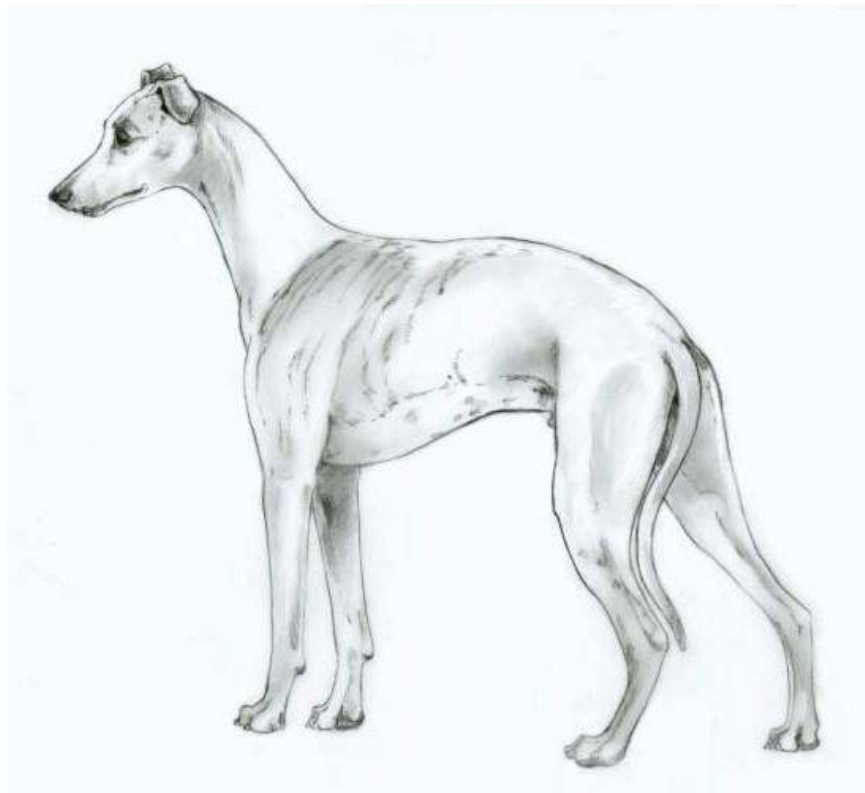
Short, close, smooth and firm in texture. Any other coat shall be a disqualification. Old scars and injuries, the result of work or accident, should not be allowed to prejudice the dog's chance in the show ring.

Elaboration

“Short, close, smooth and firm in texture. Any other coat shall be a disqualification.”

This wording was added to our standard a number of years ago when “longhaired” Whippets (actually later determined to be probable Borzoi, Sheltie, Whippet crosses) began appearing. Hairless (or very nearly so...) Whippets have also been seen. Any coat other than short, close, smooth and firm including the absence of a normal coat covering the body of the dog (hairlessness) should be considered a disqualification.

Whippets also have thin, tight skin that tears easily. Judges should be reminded that our standard specifically states that dogs should not be penalized for scars that are a result of either accident or injury.



COLOR

AKC Standard

Color immaterial.

Elaboration

COLOR IMMATERIAL!

In the breed one can see everything from pure white to pure black with every color, marking and shade variance in between. Blue and cream dilution factors are also frequently seen and are equally acceptable.

Judges are cautioned not to be swayed by fancy or glamorous color or markings on an otherwise inferior dog.

Additionally, judges must be aware that color and particularly markings can create visual illusions in evaluating conformation, either positively or negatively (e.g. make neck look short or long, distort topline, make overall dog look shorter or longer). Therefore, judges should not hesitate to look at the dog's "off" side to ascertain if what they see is the true conformation or an illusion due to markings. Darker colors, particularly black, tend to diminish the perception of size and bone while lighter colors, particularly white, tend to enhance or increase it. Black masks can tend to make the foreface appear snipey.

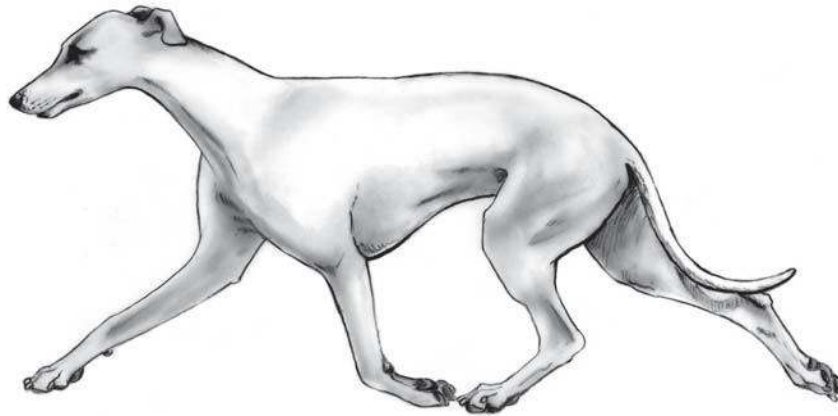


GAIT

AKC Standard

Low, free moving and smooth, with reach in the forequarters and strong drive in the hindquarters. The dog has great freedom of action when viewed from the side; the forelegs move forward close to the ground to give a long, low reach; the hind legs have strong propelling power. When moving and viewed from front or rear, legs should turn neither in nor out, nor should feet cross or interfere with each other.

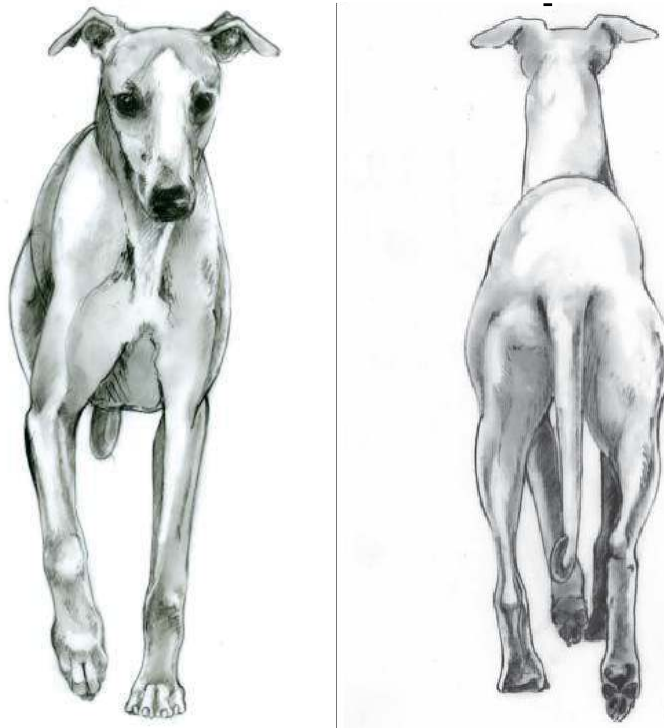
Lack of front reach or rear drive, or a short, hackney gait with high wrist action, should be strictly penalized. Crossing in front or moving too close should be strictly penalized.



Elaboration

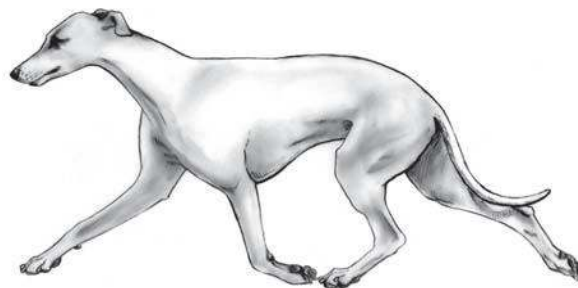
Judges should look for ease of movement with effortless 'daisy cutting' action. Remember that this is a running (sprinting) breed, not a trotting breed, so you should not be looking for excessive reach and drive or a short mincing gait, but rather efficiency of motion. When viewed from the side at a moderate trot, gait should be unrestricted, balanced and effortless.

When viewed coming and going, the legs tend to converge toward the center line as the dog increases speed at the trot but they do not single track.



It is important that the dog maintains its outline at the trot, not flattening out, but holding the proper smooth arched topline and underline. This is where the Whippet, a dog meant to be a double suspension galloper, is most markedly different than a trotting breed: they have a smoothly arched topline that blends into a gently sloping croup. This smooth muscular curve allows for the transmission of power from the hindquarters through the loin and forequarters when running. This also creates a pelvis that is set at more of an angle than that of an endurance trotter. This pelvic angle has its benefits. It makes the dog more agile and maneuverable at a run than a trotting specialist and it allows for quick acceleration at the gallop, as the dog can get its rear legs easily far forward under its body due to this configuration.

Also, the head will lower somewhat at the trot, but body carriage and topline should always be maintained. They should not carry an erect head like an Afghan or a Poodle or a low head like a Herding dog, but a powerful gait with forward momentum should cause the head to lower to aid the reach in front.



TEMPERAMENT

AKC Standard

Amiable, friendly, gentle, but capable of great intensity during sporting pursuits.

Elaboration

Whippets are friendly and outgoing, though not necessarily overtly so; particularly with those that they don't know well. An extremely shy or spooky Whippet is atypical as is a dog that shows any aggression towards other dogs or people, especially in the show ring, and such behavior should not be rewarded.

Whippets can be and are often shown 'baited' and alert but judges must be cautioned that dogs that do not bait should NEVER be penalized in the ring. It is equally acceptable for whippets to use their ears or not and no preference should be shown either for the animated dog or the more stoic exhibit. Both represent equally correct facets of the temperament of the breed.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- ***More than one-half inch above or below stated height limits.***
- ***Blue eye(s), any portion of blue in the eye(s), eyes not of the same color.***
- ***Undershot.***
- ***Overshot one-quarter inch or more.***
- ***Any coat other than short, close, smooth and firm in texture.***

APPENDIX

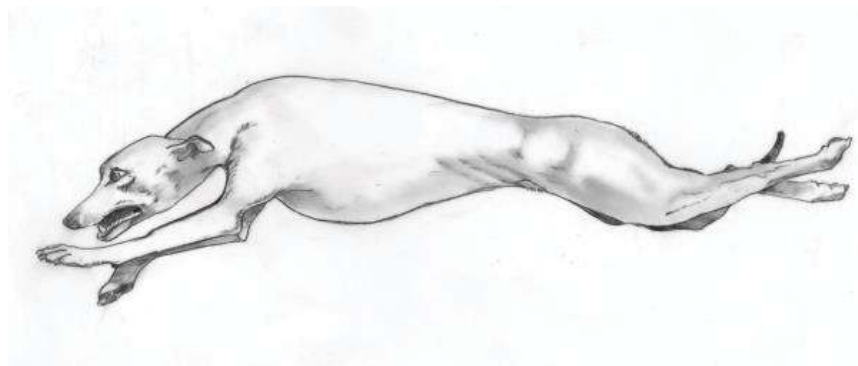
Definition of the double suspension gallop:

The double suspension gallop is a four-time gait with two periods of suspension during one complete stride. This is the only gait in which the dog is fully extended. The forelegs are fully extended forward and the hind legs are fully extended to the rear. Also in this gait the dog's back folds and attains maximum reach; that is, the hind feet extend in front of the forefeet and the forefeet extend behind the hind feet.

When the feet pass one another the forefeet are inside the hind feet. Dog's use their backs to attain speed. The most flexible spot is over the loin and the tuck-up allows folding of the under part of the body. The hind legs pass on the outside of the forelegs. The ability to flex the back from a straight position to a well-arched position is essential for fast running dogs. A permanent arch is not flexible and therefore a serious fault.

The double suspension gallop is a leaping gait. First the hind legs propel the dog into the air, then the forelegs take their turn. The engines are required: the muscles in the shoulder, the muscles in the "ham" and the muscles in the back. Although animals can run faster using this gait, endurance is sacrificed.

Double suspension running dogs that have arched backs that will not flatten or flat backs that will not arch have serious faults. Dogs with too much permanent arch or a permanent flat back will be limited on their reach and maximum speeds.



Proper measuring technique for AKC judges **by Mary Dukes, AKC Executive Field Representative**

Recently we have seen a number of judges having some problems with correct measurement technique. If you judge measurable breeds, proper measuring technique is a fundamental skill that you must master. There is indeed a specific technique and procedure that judges must utilize when performing a measurement on a dog to be fair to the exhibitor, the dog and to assure that the measurement is true and accurate.

To measure, or not to measure....

Whether the judge chooses to measure a dog or the measurement is the result of an in ring exhibitor protest, the measurement technique itself is the same. I should point out that if a judge thinks a dog may be over or under size, it is the judge's OBLIGATION to measure the exhibit. This is a mandatory part of your job in judging to the standard of the breed for which you have been approved and entrusted to judge.

The Wicket.

Once the decision to measure an exhibit has been made, the first step in the process is to inform the exhibitor that you will be measuring their dog. Next have your ring steward call the superintendent to bring the wicket to the ring. Be sure you notify the superintendent which breed you will be measuring so that the correct size wicket is delivered. If there are multiple dogs in the class, you should continue examining the remaining exhibits while waiting for the wicket to arrive. If you are judging a large entry of a measurable breed, you may choose to request the wicket prior to the start of your assignment.

With the proper wicket in hand, call the exhibitor to your judge's table to observe you set the wicket. Lay the wicket flat on the table to set each leg to the appropriate height. You should always re-read the breed standard disqualification immediately prior to measuring so as to be absolutely certain of the height at which you will be setting the wicket and to remind yourself exactly how the standard reads. This can make a difference as to whether a dog is disqualified or not. For example, if a standard reads "over 20 inches at the shoulder to disqualify" you will set the wicket to 20" to measure the dog. If the wicket is touching the dog's withers (highest point of shoulder) AND both legs are touching the surface on which you are measuring, the dog is EXACTLY 20" and not to be disqualified. Conversely, if the standard reads "20 inches and over to disqualify" the same dog and measurement would result in a disqualification. Be aware that a very slight difference in wording can make a very big difference in meaning, and it is very important that you as a judge are sensitive to and aware of this nuance.

Be sure to screw each leg in tightly so the legs are firmly set. Then, with the wicket still laying flat on the table, use your metal measuring tape (which you should always carry in your briefcase – if you find that you do not have one with you [shame on you!] call for the AKC Rep, as we always carry a tape with us) to measure each leg of the wicket individually. Confirm that they are both set to the proper height. The exhibitor should be part of this process in that they watch you set and measure the wicket. Once finished, ask them to concur that the wicket is indeed set to the proper height.

Get it right and don't scare the dog!

Now that the wicket is properly set it is time to actually perform the measurement on the dog. The dog should be measured on the surface that it is typically examined, the table for breeds normally examined on the table, the ground for breeds normally examined on the ground or the ramp for those breeds which may be judged on the ramp. If you are performing a measurement on the ground on an uneven surface you must ask the superintendent to bring a board to the ring on which to stand the dog to perform the measurement. This should be requested at the same time as the wicket if there is a need for such.

Where to measure the dog is generally pretty straightforward, smaller breeds on the table and larger breeds on the ground, but what do you do in the case of a breed like the Whippet where it is equally acceptable and at the discretion of the judge to examine the dogs on the table, the ramp or the ground? Although this decision lies completely with the judge, many judges in this situation will ask the exhibitor if they have a preference as to where the dog is measured (typically on the ground or on the table unless the judge is using the ramp for their examination process) and will then grant that request. (As an exhibitor of this breed, I always very much appreciated being given this option). It should also be noted that this option (ground or table for measurement) should extend only to the measurement itself, wherever (table, ramp or ground) the judge has chosen to examine their dogs must remain consistent throughout the entry.

Next you will ask the handler to stack the dog at the chosen measuring location. The dog should be in a natural stance, four square, with its head in a natural position. If the handler does not stack the dog to your satisfaction, you must request that they re-stack the dog so that you, the judge, are content that the dog is standing in a normal stance where its true height can be determined. You may give the handler a couple of chances to get it right, telling them what adjustments you would like them to make, but if the handler continues to be uncooperative (either intentionally or unintentionally) or the dog becomes difficult and cannot be stacked to your satisfaction, you must excuse the dog and mark your book "excused, unable to measure". You, the judge, ARE NOT permitted to physically assist the handler in stacking the dog or touch or hold the dog

in any way during the stacking or measuring process.

Once the dog is satisfactorily stacked you will ask the exhibitor if they are ready and you will proceed with the actual measurement. Approach the dog in a normal manner appropriate for the breed. Hold the wicket in your right hand and down at your side as you approach the dog. Be very aware that most dogs will be suspicious when approached by a stranger carrying a large metal stick, so try to make your movements as smooth, efficient and natural as possible as you approach the dog.

You will touch the dog at the withers (highest point of the shoulder) to make clear where your measurement point will be. **This is the only place you are permitted to touch the dog during the measurement process.** **DO NOT** hold the dog's muzzle or move its head up or down, **DO NOT** re-adjust its legs. Then you will bring the wicket forward from the rear of the dog, place it only on the highest point of the withers and leave it only long enough to determine if the dog is in or out and then remove the wicket. At all times take extreme care not to inadvertently bump the dog with the wicket's legs. This will spook the dog and annoy the exhibitor. Additionally, do not release the wicket from your hand at any time while you are actually measuring the dog. This can result in the wicket falling on the dog who will now be really spooked and you also have an exhibitor who is **REALLY, REALLY ANNOYED** and will not hesitate to hunt down the AKC Rep at the show and tell them over and over again what a moron you, the judge, are.

Immediately after completing the measurement, inform the exhibitor of your decision as to whether their dog measured in or out. Realize that many exhibitors may be nervous and flustered by the experience so please be polite, clear and direct, such as either, "Today your dog measured in, please take your place back in line", or "I'm sorry, today your dog measured out and is disqualified under the breed standard". In the latter case please do not hesitate to advise them to seek out the AKC rep for clarification if they have questions or tell them that you will be happy to discuss it with them after judging is completed. This way the exhibitor can get any questions answered, and you can continue judging your class.

Tying up the loose ends.

Any dog that is measured must be noted in your judge's book and also whether it measured in or out. If you measure a dog in, you should note adjacent to the dog's number "measured – in". Conversely if the dog measures out, you will note by the dog's number "DQ – measured out". Also, if the measurement is the result of an in ring protest that should be noted in your book, clarifying the armband number of the dog measured and the outcome as well as the armband number of the exhibitor filing the protest.

As an AKC judge who adjudicates on measurable breeds, it is

your responsibility to become proficient at the proper technique to measure a dog. You owe that to the breed, the exhibitors and the individual dogs.

