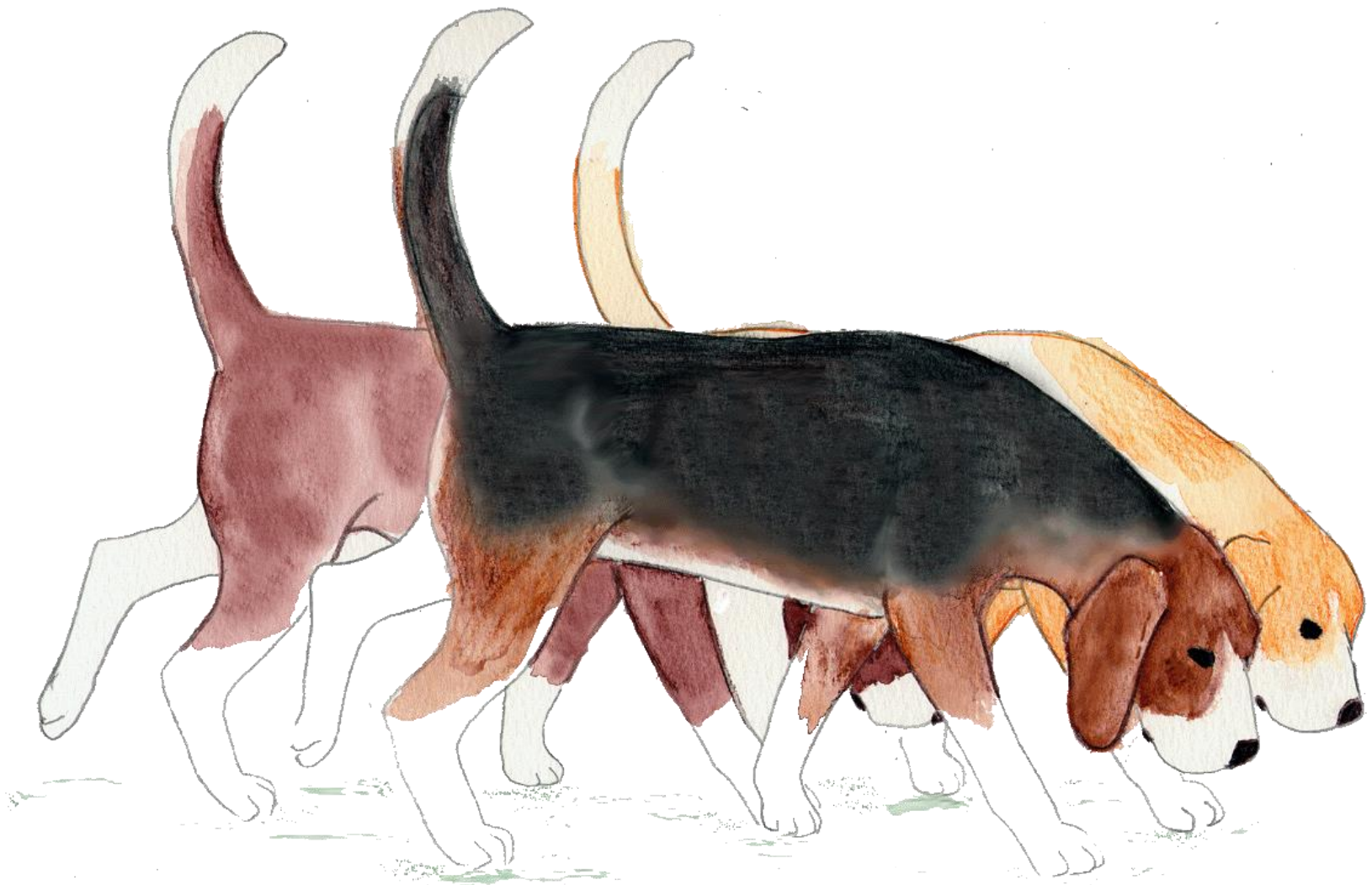




HUNTING FOR THE “CORRECT” BEAGLE

An In-Depth Analysis Of The American Standard

Author: Ruth Darlene Stewart

Graphic assistance provided by Sandra Fikes

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

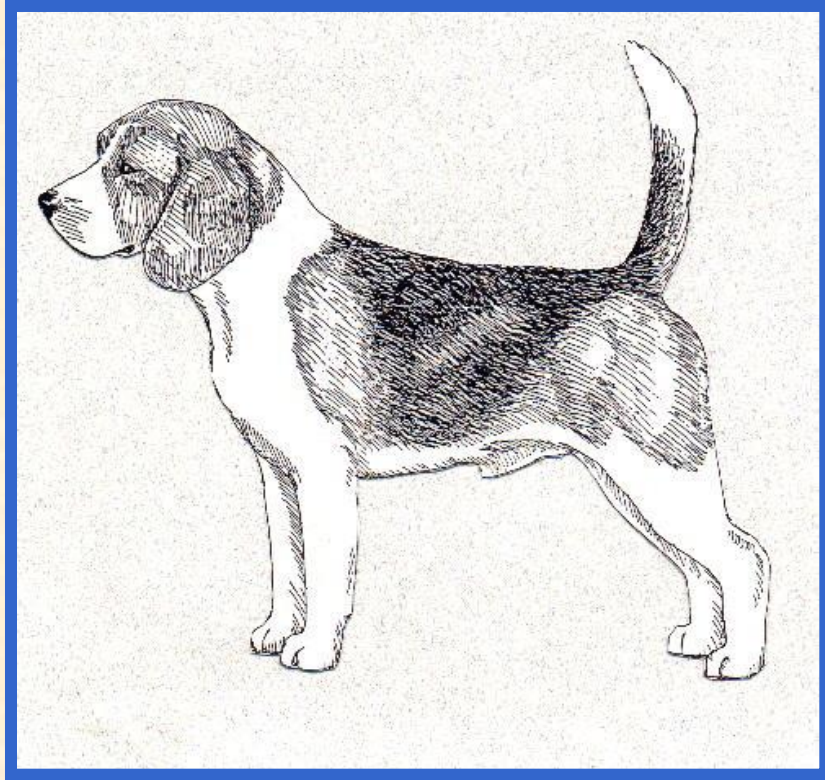
Ruth “Darlene” Stewart has been involved with dogs since 1975. She has been showing and breeding beagles over 40 years. Darlene is a supporting member of the National Beagle Club of America and a NBC breed mentor. She currently serves as the Chairperson of the NBC Health and Genetics Committee and is a member of the NBC Judges Education Committee.

Darlene received the NBC Outstanding Sportsmanship Award in 2014 and was elected by the NBC supporting membership to judge the 2018 Beagle National. She is the Past President of the Beagle Rescue Foundation of America. Darlene is a published author in breed journals and has served as a breed consultant in numerous national magazines and books.

The Alabama Veterinary Medical Association awarded Darlene “Lay Person of the Year” in May 2025.

Darlene is an AKC licensed judge and breeds beagles under the AKC registered kennel name of AlaDar.

Judging The Beagle

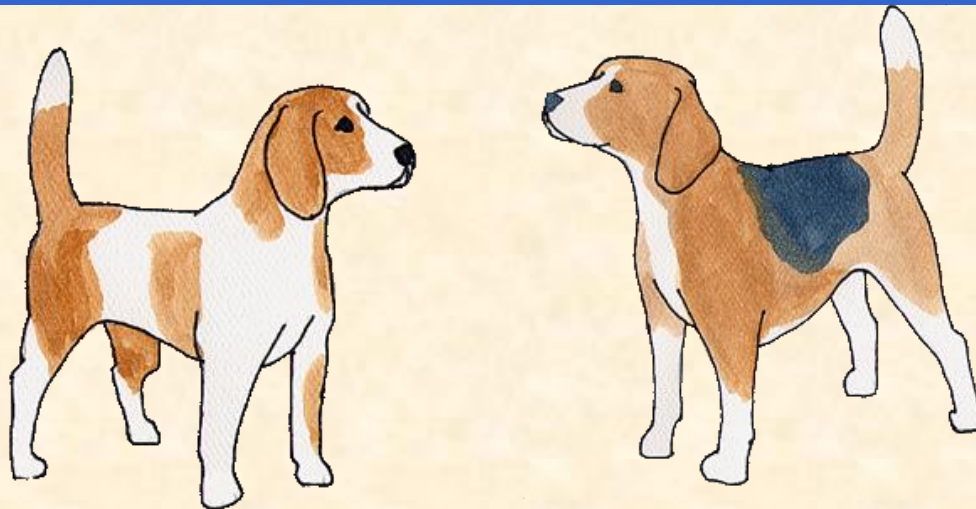


This presentation should be used as a reference to aid you in evaluating correct structure in the Beagle.

Also, to help you reward positive traits and alert you to some common faults found in the breed today.

The Basics!

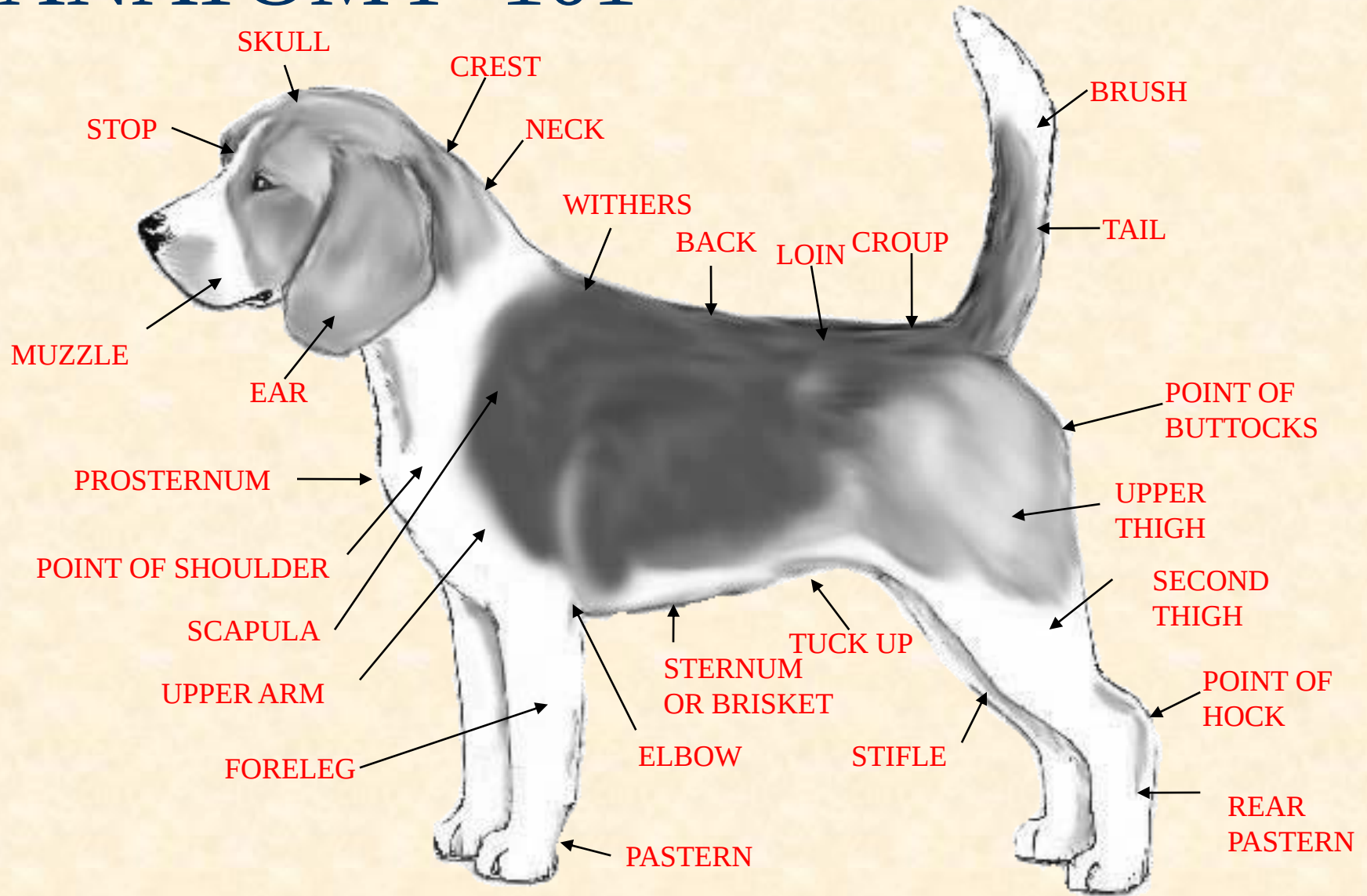
Breed standards assume we all know the fundamentals and terminology. A standard is meant to describe a specific breed and outlines the typical components and differences as compared to other similar breeds. Let's review some basics....

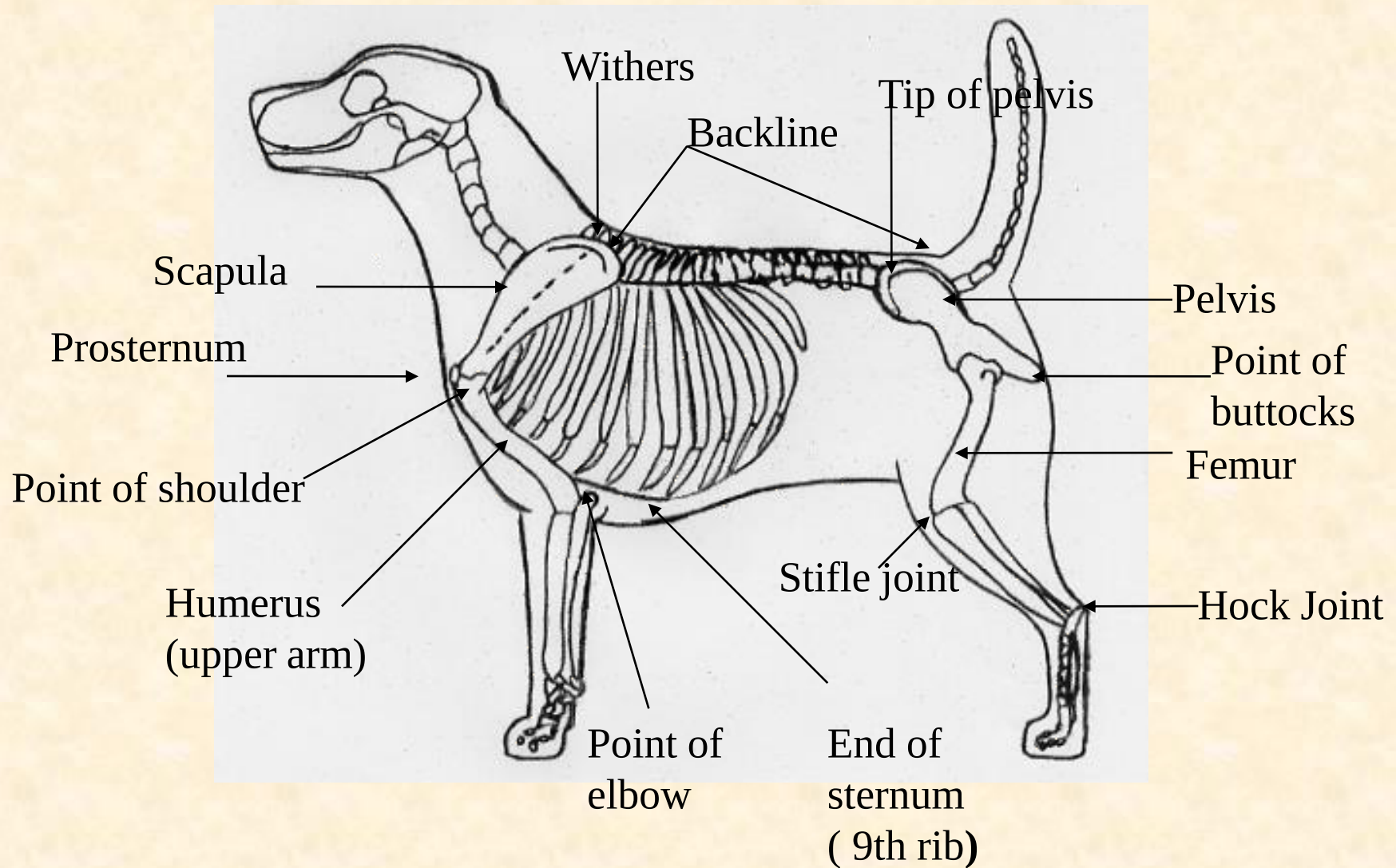


IMPORTANT TERMS:

- Angulation**-refers to the angles created by bones meeting at various joints, especially at the shoulder, stifle and hock; the pastern and pelvis areas may also be included. (Spira)
- Backline**- that portion of the entire topline of a dog, beginning at the rear end of the withers and ending at the tail (Spira)
- Topline**-normally taken as dog's entire upper outline seen in profile, starting at the ears and ending at the tail. (Spira)
- Length of body** -the body length of an animal is taken as the distance from the point of the shoulder to the rearmost projection of the upper thigh (or point of buttocks.) (Spira)
- Arched loins**- a request of many breed standards, especially in the hound group, symptomatic of strength and agility in that area, but only if due to muscular, not structural, development over the spine. (Spira)
- Underline**-the combined contours of the brisket and abdominal floor. (Spira)

ANATOMY 101





IMPORTANT LANDMARKS FOR ANALYSIS OF STANDARD

Beagles are a basic kind of dog.....

Basic dogs are

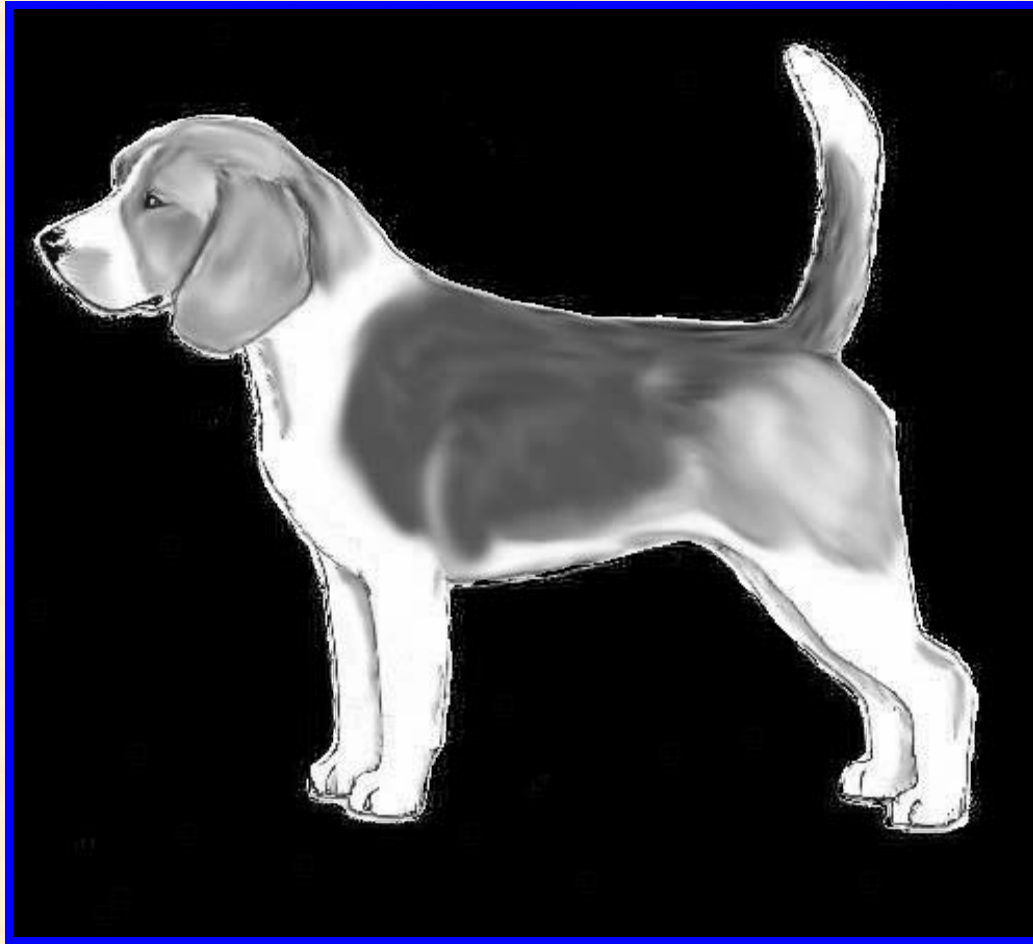
- Muzzle length to skull length is **approximately** 50:50.
- Head has **parallel planes** with some stop.
- Neck transitions **smoothly** into withers.
- Withers to elbow **equals** elbow to ground.
- **Chest reaches to elbow.**
- Ribs are **long** with a gentle rise to a **moderate** tuck-up.
- Angulation of the front and rear is **balanced** and **moderate**.
- Forelegs are **straight** and feet face forward.

To separate the Beagle from other basic dog breeds, we must add the unique and other features of the body to create the individual breed.

We add the general appearance, typical head shape, body structure, size varieties, coat, and color for the breed.

These are the major components that separate the Beagle from other basic dog breeds.





GENERAL APPEARANCE

The shape and general appearance of a dog at a distance should tell you at a glance that it is a Beagle. This is a MAJOR component of breed type.

GENERAL APPEARANCE: A miniature Foxhound, solid and big for his inches, with the wear-and-tear look of a hound that can last in the chase and follow his quarry to the death. (AKC Standard)

LOOK FOR:

- Sturdy, compact, firm bodied hound with strength, beauty, and symmetry.
- A dog of moderation, not coarseness.
- Should not appear light of bone, nor heavy in bone.



GENERAL APPEARANCE

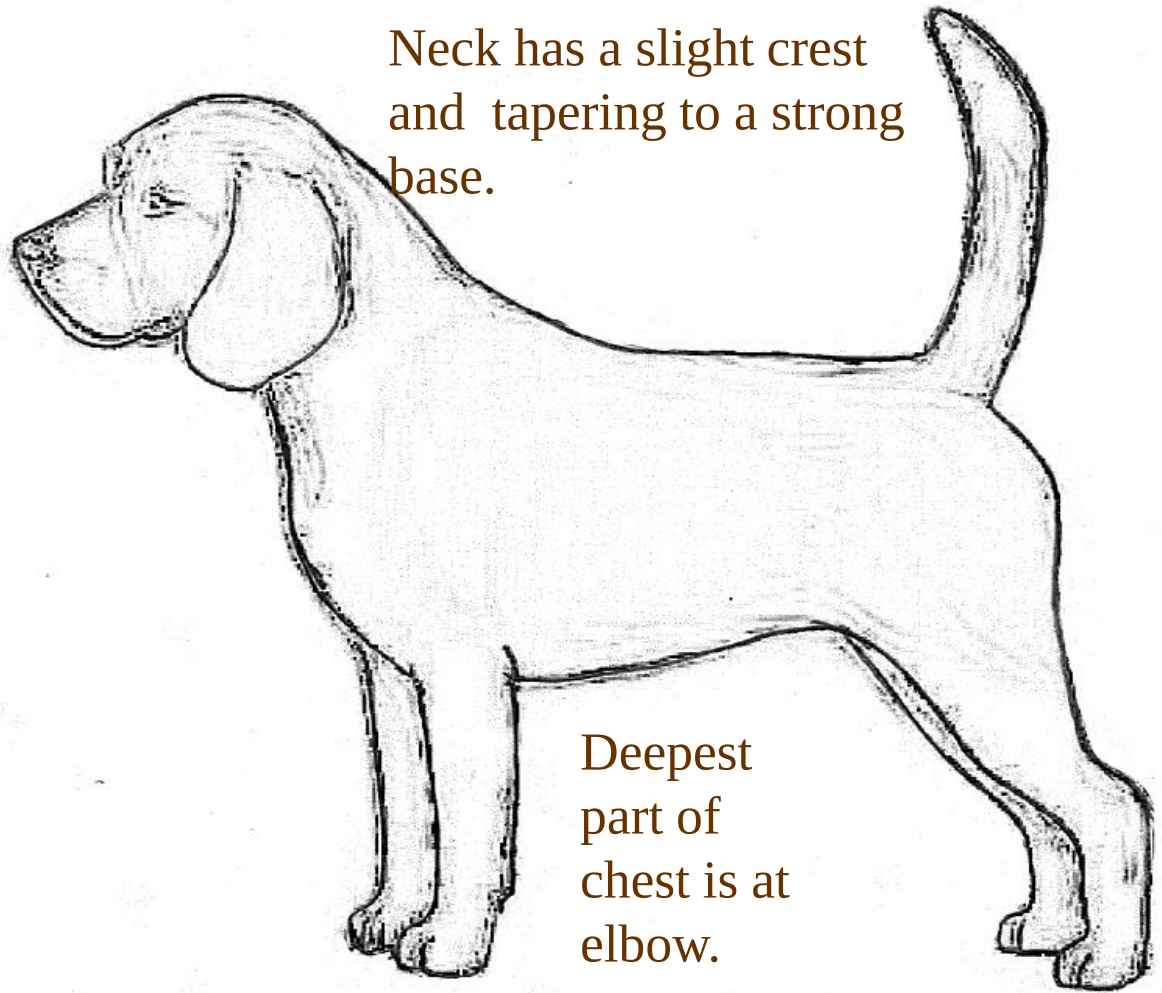
Ears set at outer corner of eye, long with rounded edges.

Some forechest. Space between forelegs well filled.

Withers to elbow equals elbow to ground.

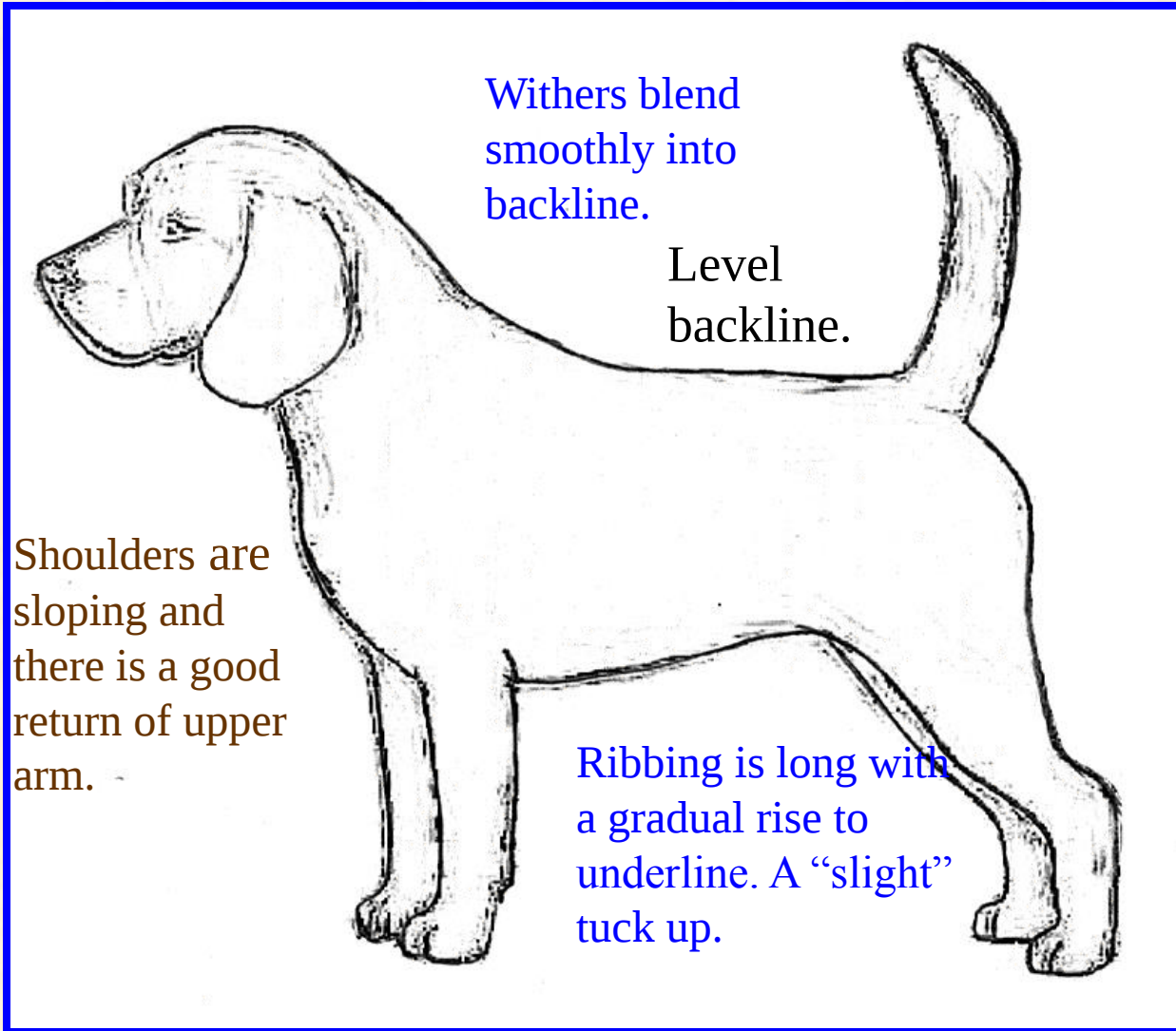
Straight forelegs with straight but flexible pasterns and nice cat-like feet.

Neck has a slight crest and tapering to a strong base.



Deepest part of chest is at elbow.

GENERAL APPEARANCE



Moderate angulation front and rear.

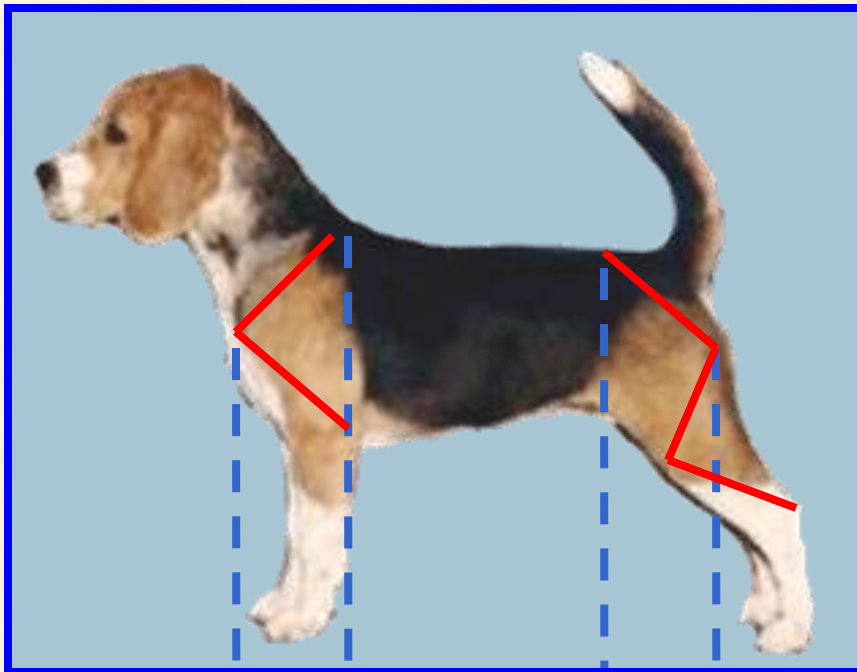
A tail with good brush carried upright with "slight" curve forward.

Moderate stifle angulation.

Well let down hocks.

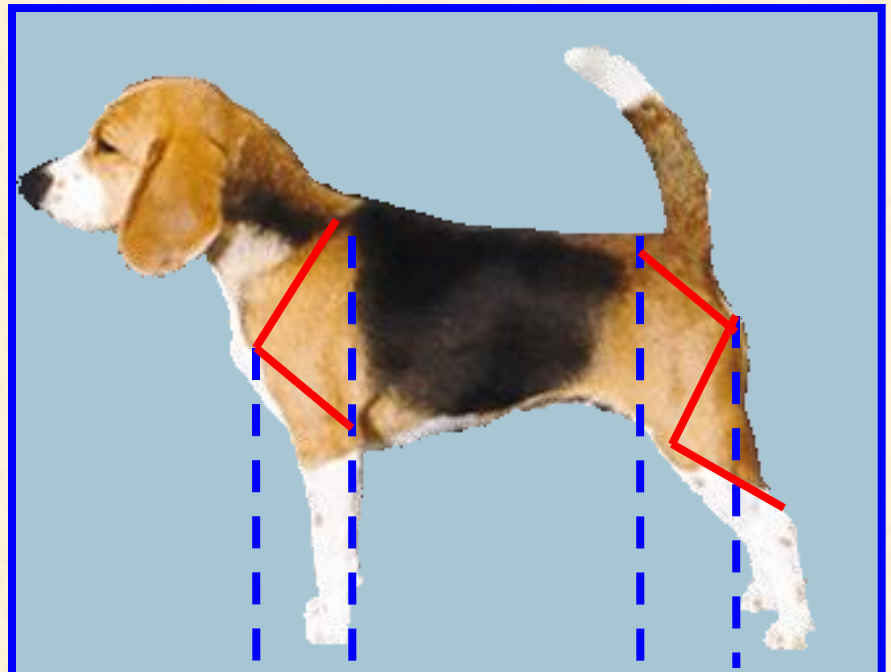
Balanced -- front and rear.

This simply means that the angulation of the forequarters and the angulation of the rear quarters look “matched” Nothing appears jarring to the eye. A beagle can be moderately angulated and balanced and also “straight” and balanced.



Forequarters

Hindquarters



Forequarters

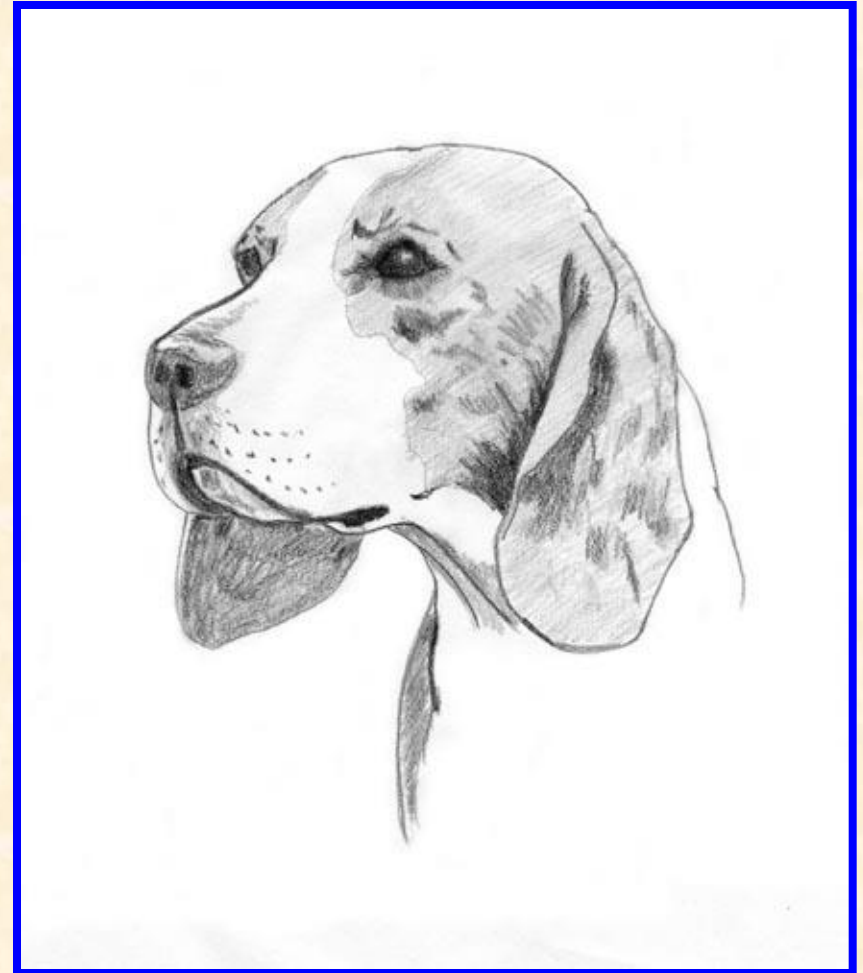
Hindquarters

EVALUATION OF HEAD STRUCTURE

The expression of the beagle should melt your heart.

Alertness, curiosity, happiness, and softness should exude from the eyes of a beagle. You can almost read a beagle's mind through their eyes...

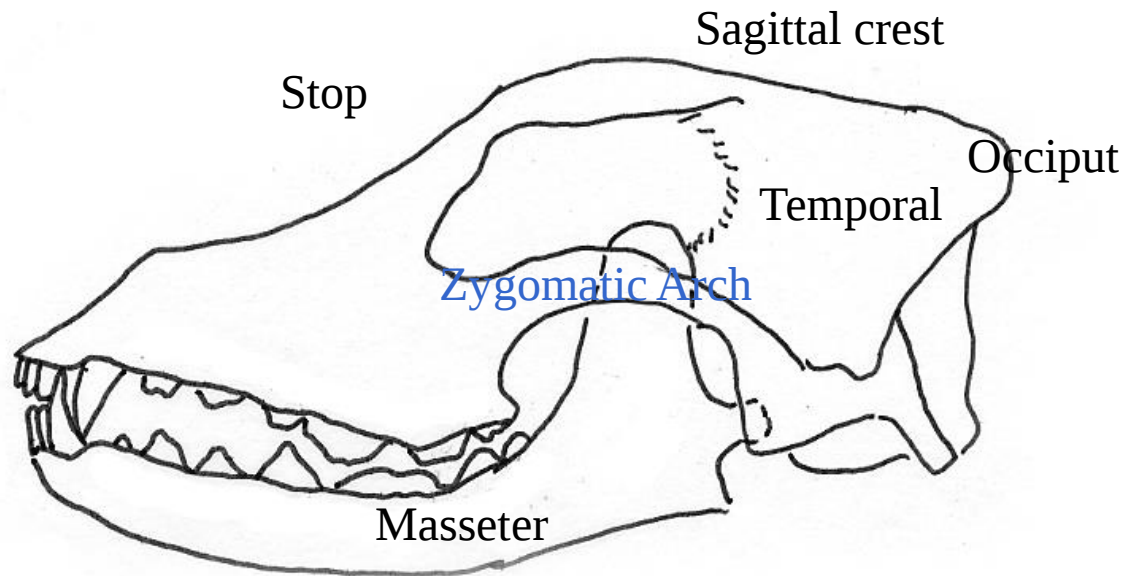
A beautiful head and expression is a major component of beagle breed type.



Overall head structure counts for 25 points (out of 100) in the AKC standard.

There are three skull types in dogs:

- *Brachycephalic* (*Bulldogs*)
- *Dolichocephalic* (**Collies**)
- *Mesaticephalic* (*Beagles*)



The six bones of the skull that cause variations in head types

The bite is not mentioned in the AKC standard, but a scissors bite is preferred and a level bite is acceptable.

Bite: The position of the upper and lower incisor teeth in relation to one another. *Is determined with the mouth closed.*

Level bite: Also called level mouth & pincer mouth. Vise like bite where upper and lower incisors meet edge to edge.

Scissors bite: Upper incisor teeth fit tightly over the lower incisors.

Reverse scissors bite: Lower incisor teeth fit tightly over the upper incisors when the mouth is closed.

Overshot: Upper jaw incisors extend slightly in front and beyond the lower jaw incisors.

Undershot: The upper jaw does not extend as far as the lower jaw; lower jaws projects beyond the upper jaw.

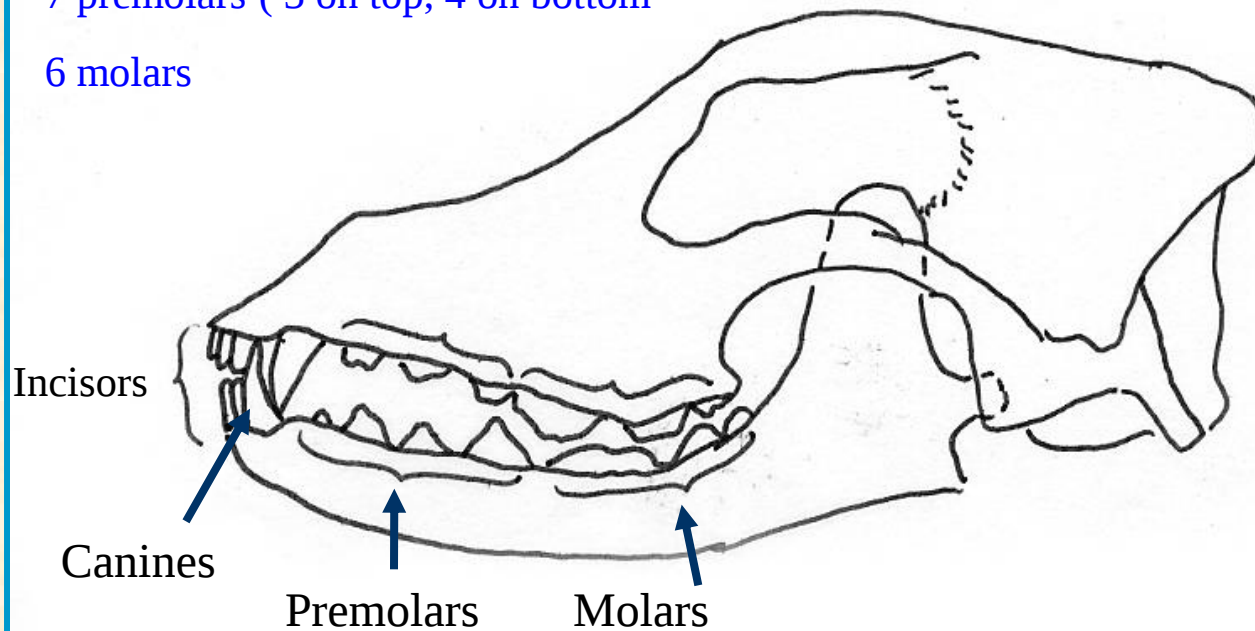
Adult Beagles should have a total of 42 teeth. It's easier to remember on one side.

6 incisors

2 canines

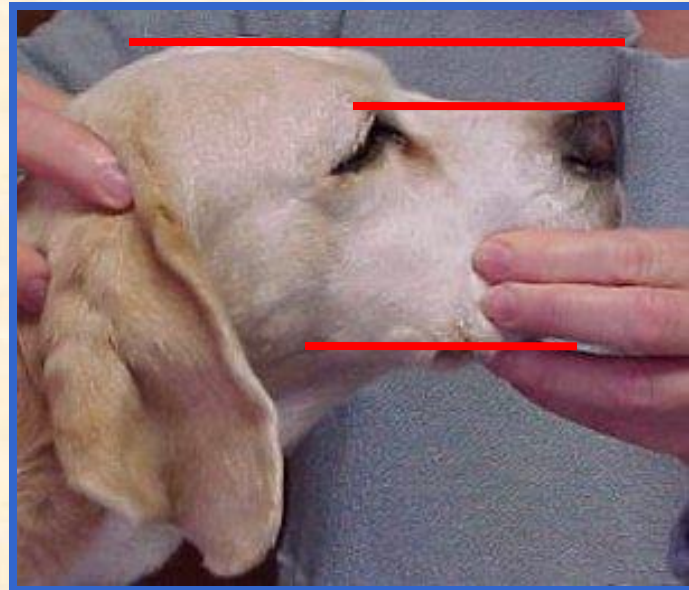
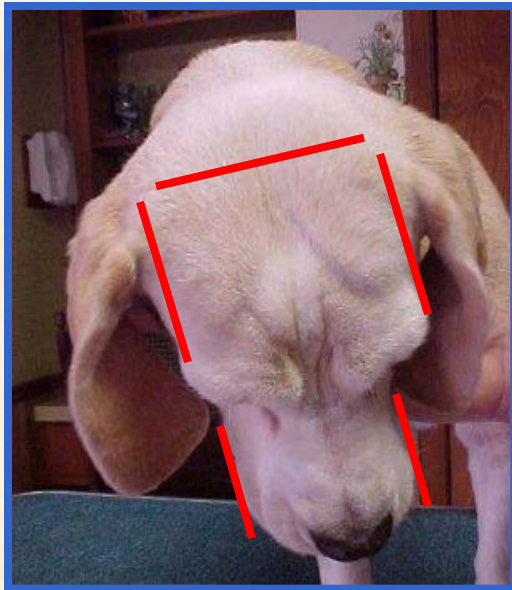
7 premolars (3 on top, 4 on bottom

6 molars



Skull-5 pts: The skull should be fairly long, slightly domed at occiput, with cranium broad and full. (AKC Standard)

- Planes of the skull and muzzle should be parallel.
- The length of the skull from the occiput to the stop should be **almost equal** to the length of the muzzle from stop to the tip of the nose.
- The cranium should be only “moderately wide” but should not appear coarse.



Muzzle- 5 pts: Muzzle of medium length-- straight and square cut-- the stop moderately defined.



Jaws--Level. Lips free from flews; nostrils large and open. (AKC Standard)

Cheeks flat without bulge of muscle. The cranium should have a dome with a “slight” curve from side to side as well as from the occiput to the stop.

Nostrils should be large and open to aid in breathing and to provide a large surface for the olfactory nerves.

Nose pigment dark . Tri-color beagles should have black noses. (except in liver or blues- with dark brown nose and dark slate nose, respectively). Pied colored beagles will have a nose colored darker on the rims with paler pigment in the center. The bi-colored beagles may have a black to lighter pigmented nose, especially in the winter. White areas (patches) in the nose is a fault.

Ears-10 pts: Ears set on moderately low, long, reaching when drawn out nearly, if not quite, to the end of the nose, fine in texture, fairly broad--with almost entire absence of erectile power--setting close to the head, with the forward edge slightly inturning to the cheek--rounded at tip. (AKC STANDARD)

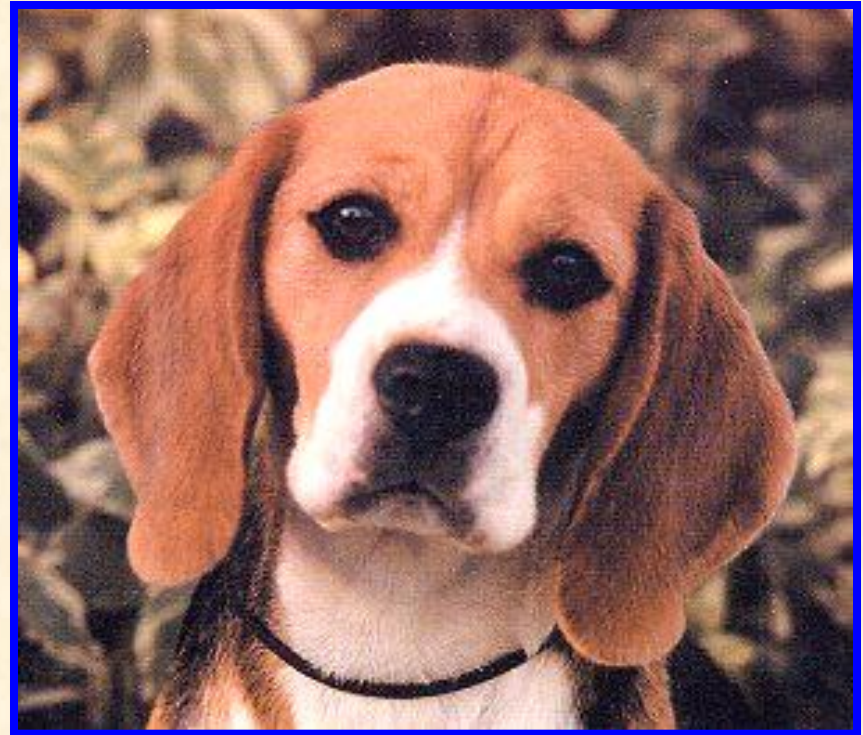


- The ears should be set on level with outer corner of eye.
- Evaluate the ear set on the table with the ears in repose.
- Rounded tips are natural. Not surgically rounded.
- Ears can “lift” slightly when the beagle is alert—when baiting is a good example.
This is acceptable.

Eyes- 5 pts: Eyes large, set well apart--soft and houndlike--expression gentle and pleading; of a brown color or hazel color.. (AKC Standard)

- Eye shape is not mentioned in standard but should be almost round to “slightly” oval. The mascara may add to the slightly oval look.

- Color of eye blends with color of hound. Darker eye is preferred. Darkly pigmented hair around eye “Mascara” enhances the softness of the pleading beagle look.



EVALUATE....



- Is the muzzle length almost equal to the skull length?
- Does the muzzle blends nicely into skull?
- Does the skull have a slight dome occiput to stop?
- Is the plane from stop to nose level?
- Is the lower jaw line plane level?
- Are the ears set on level with outer corner of eye?
- Are the flews deep enough to cover teeth securely but are not heavy and excessive?
- Are the planes of skull and muzzle parallel?

Yes to all.

EVALUATE....



- Are the planes of the skull and muzzle parallel?
- Does the muzzle blends nicely into skull?
- Is the a slight dome of skull from side to side?
- Are the cheeks flat without bulge of muscle?
- Are the flews deep enough to cover teeth securely but are not heavy and excessive?

Yes to all.

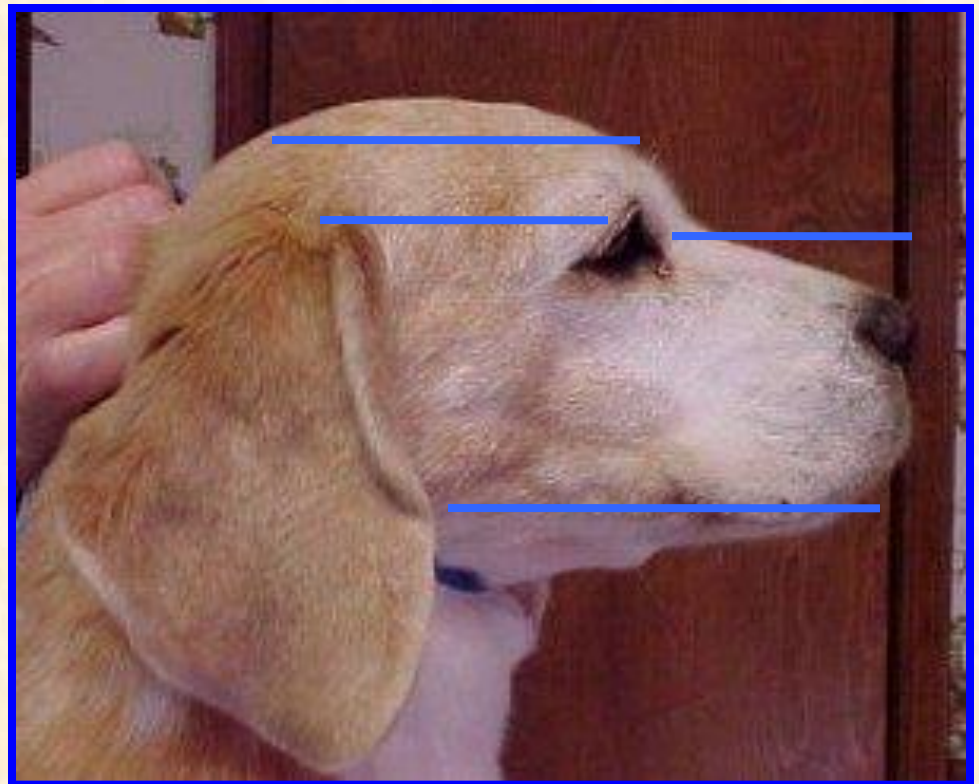
DEFECTS: A very flat skull, narrow across the top, excess of dome, eyes small, sharp, and terrier-like, or prominent and protruding; muzzle long, snipy or cut away decidedly below the eyes, or very short. Roman-nosed, or up turning giving a dish-face expression. Ears short, set on high or with a tendency to rise above the point of origin. (AKC Standard)

Common Faults

- Ear set slightly **above** outer corner of eye.
- Distance from occiput to stop **greater than** length of muzzle.
- Slope of muzzle is **not** parallel to slope of skull. “Down Faced”

Positive Comments.....

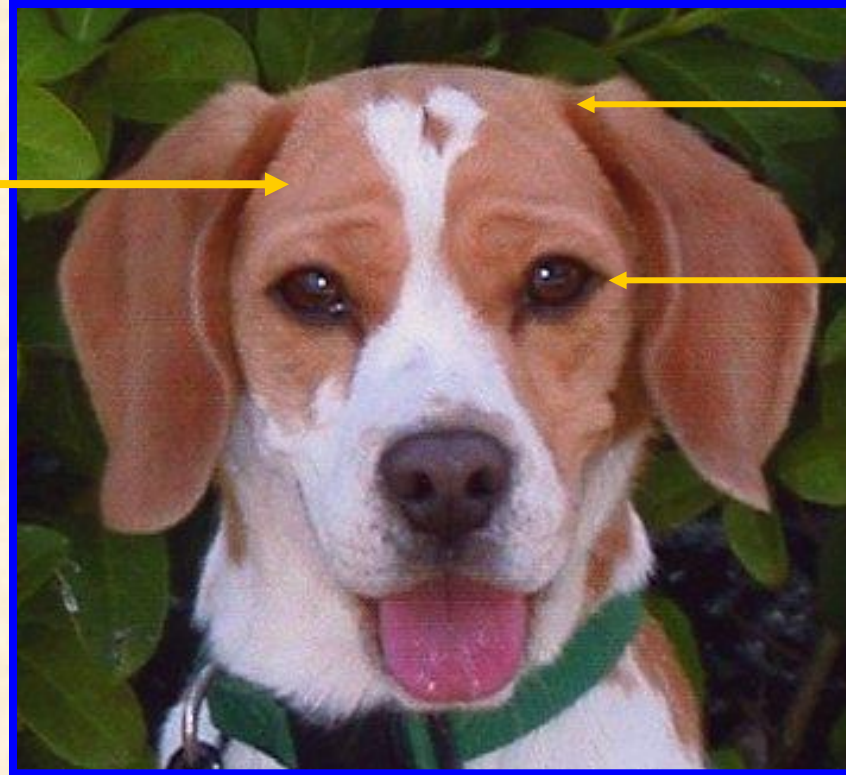
- Lower jaw line is level as desired.
- Length of ear is appropriate.
- Dark pigment of eyes and nose.



MORE COMMON FAULTS

A slight wrinkle with an alert expression is acceptable.

More wrinkle than this would be excessive.



High set ears

Small eye

Other faults to consider:

- Light eyes-gives the beagle a harsh expression.

Light eyes can be changed in one generation. Bad shoulders may take generations to overcome.



A white haw-gives the beagle a harsh expression.



Important
factors when
evaluating
heads.



- Parallel planes of skull and muzzle.
- Almost equal length muzzle to skull.
- Muzzle blends nicely into skull.
- Slight dome of skull from side to side.
- Slight dome of skull from occiput to stop.
- Cheeks flat without bulge of muscle.
- Level from stop to nose.
- Level lower jaw line.
- Ears set on level with outer corner of eye.
- Dark eye pigment, round to slightly oval shaped.
- Flews deep enough to cover teeth securely but are not heavy and excessive.

EXAMPLES OF NICE HEADS



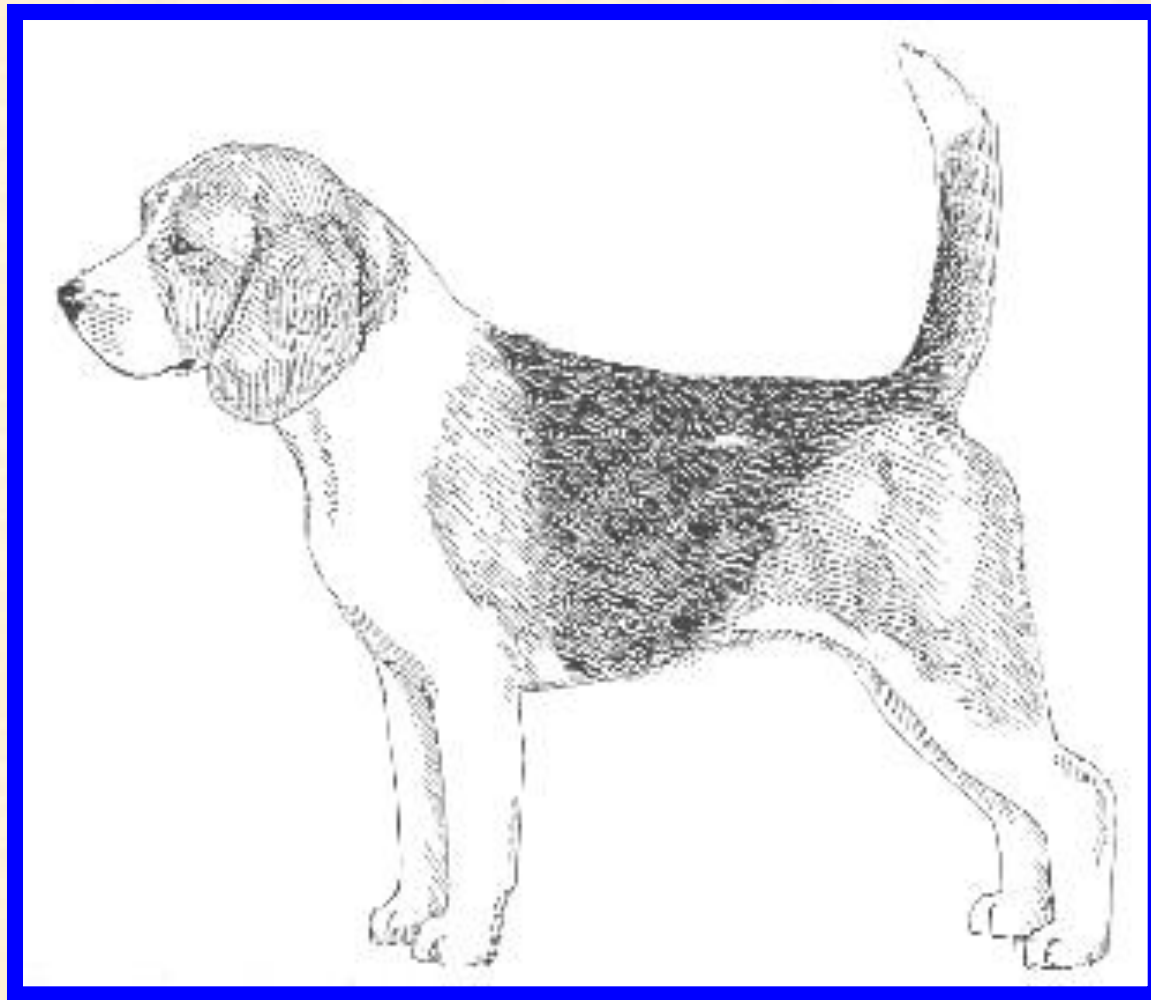


Many breeders consider the beagle's pleading expression to be the hallmark of the breed. It is a MAJOR component of breed type...

However

Judge the structure of the dog first!

Do not become a head judge and forget the rest of the dog.



THE BODY-Neck, Chest, Shoulders, Back, Loin, and Ribs
(Overall Body-35pts)

Some common terms in this section are.....

WITHERS: The **region** between the upper portion of the shoulder blade and the spinous processes of the first and second thoracic vertebrae. **The withers are located just behind the base of the neck at the junction of the neck and back.**

SHOULDER BLADE: The scapula; the large, flat, triangular bone just below the first and second thoracic vertebral spine.

PROSTERNUM: That portion of the breast bone that projects beyond the point of the shoulder, when the beagle is seen in profile.

POINT OF SHOULDER OR SHOULDER JOINT: The point where the scapula and humerus join.

POINT OF ELBOW: The upper point of the ulna-- olecranon process.

KNOWN FACTS:

All dogs have the same number of vertebrae in the neck, back, and loin.

The shoulder blade muscle (**Trapezius**) attaches to the same vertebrae in all dogs. The trapezius muscle attaches the spine of the scapula to the neck vertebrae (4-7). This muscle also anchors the scapula to the tips of thoracic vertebrae (3-9), **regardless of the ribcage length**.

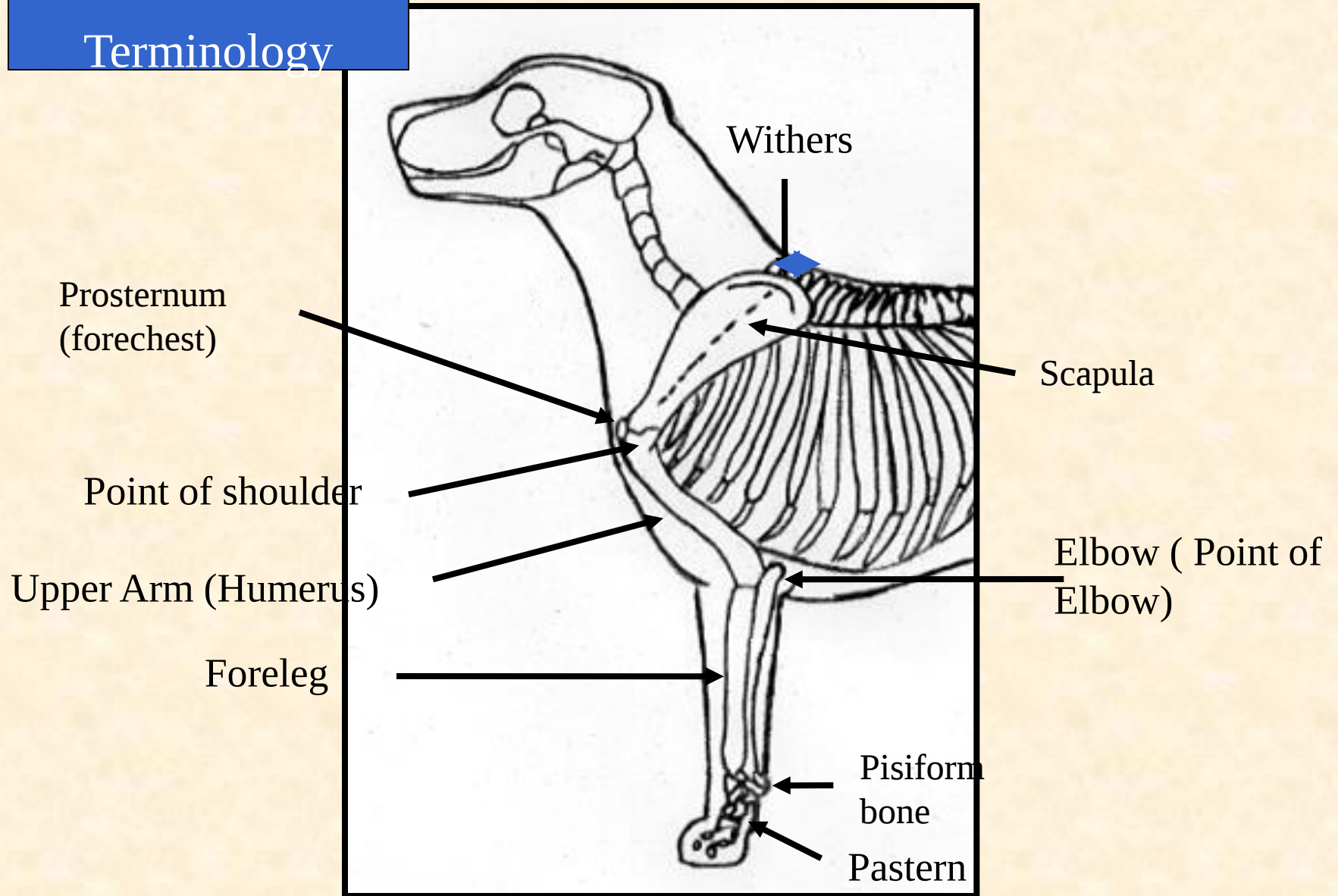
Length of ribcage is determined by the slant of the ribs and the width of the ribs.

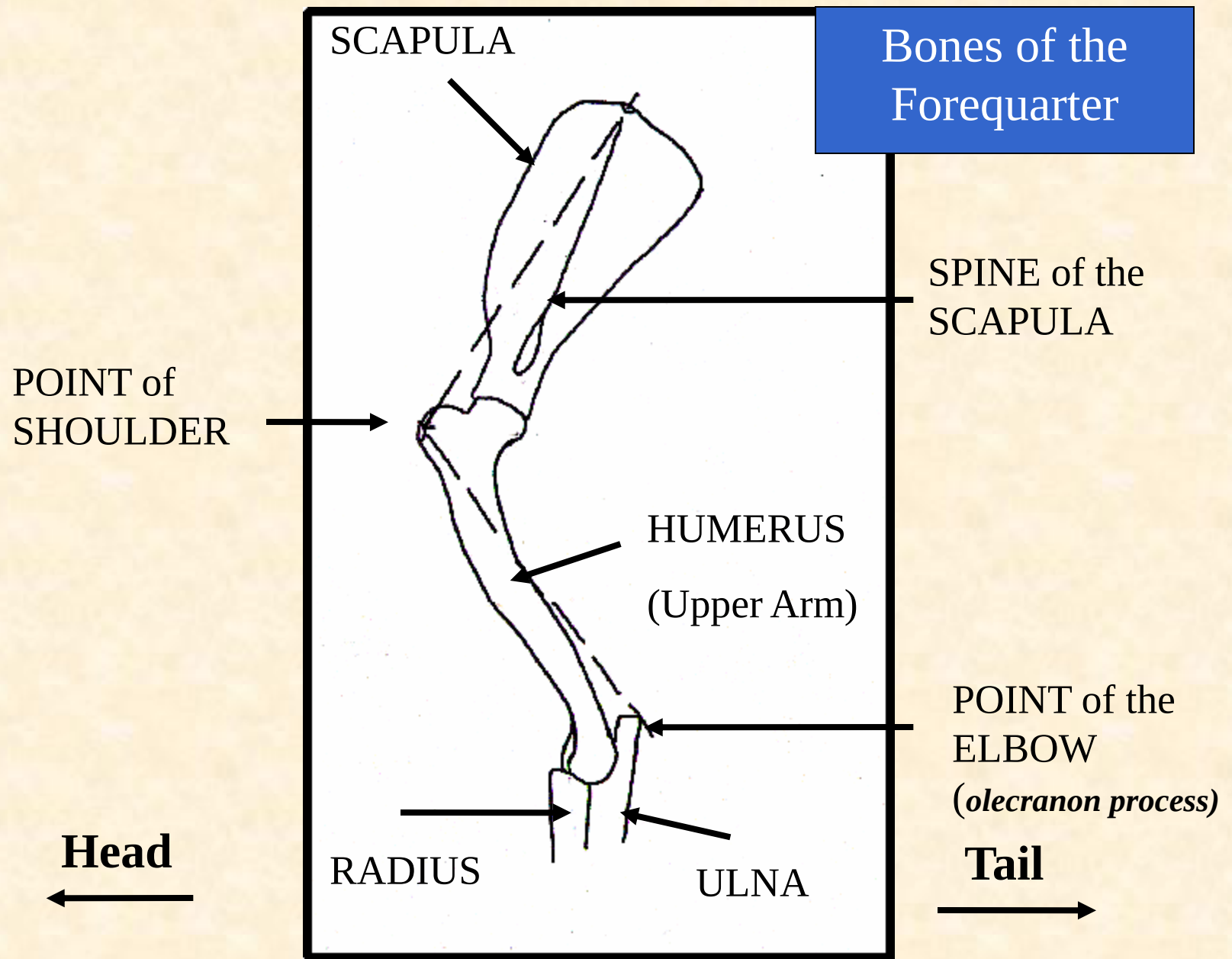
The spine of the scapula points to the second or third thoracic vertebrae.

Vertebrae tend to gradually reduce in length from neck to loin. Long neck, long ribcage and short loin is genetically easiest to breed, due to this fact.

The front carries approximately 60% of the vertical weight while trotting.

Common Terminology



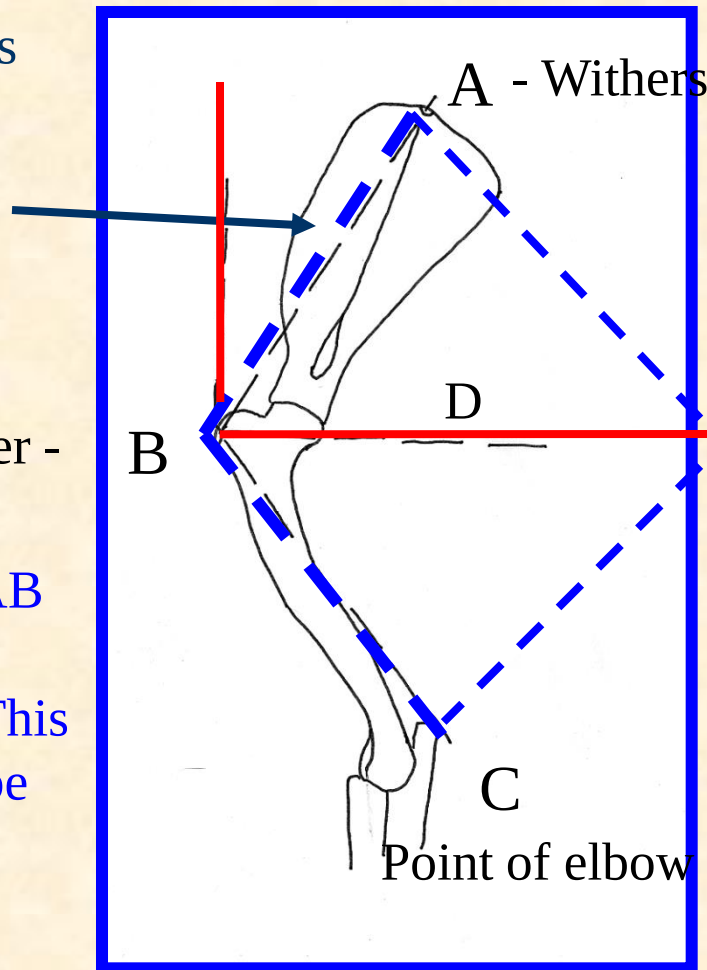


Since we don't have "X-ray" vision, we must measure the angulation of the forequarter using points A, B & C - withers, point of shoulder and point of elbow - which we can feel and see.

When this line (AB) is 35-40 degrees off the vertical plane, we say the dog is "well laid back".

Point of shoulder -

Many experts also measure the layback (AB line) in regards to the horizontal plane (D). This scapular angle should be 50-55 degrees off the horizontal plane.



Ideally, the length from point A to point B and from point B to point C should be equal.

When point C sits under point A and the length from A to B and B to C is about equal, we say the dog has a "good return of upper arm."

Neck and Throat-5 pts: Neck rising free and light from the shoulders, strong in substance yet not loaded, of medium length. The throat clean and free from fold of skin; a slight wrinkle below the angle of the jaw, however, may be allowable.

Defects: A thick, short, cloddy neck carried on a line with the top of the shoulders. Throat showing dewlap and fold of skin to a degree termed “throatiness”. (AKC Standard)

The neck should be supple and have adequate length for the nose to easily reach the ground while tracking. A short neck will cause the beagle to crouch while tracking. **The neck should blend smoothly into the withers.**



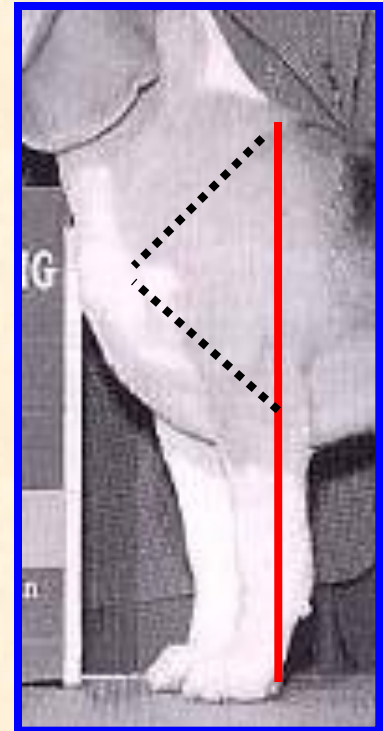
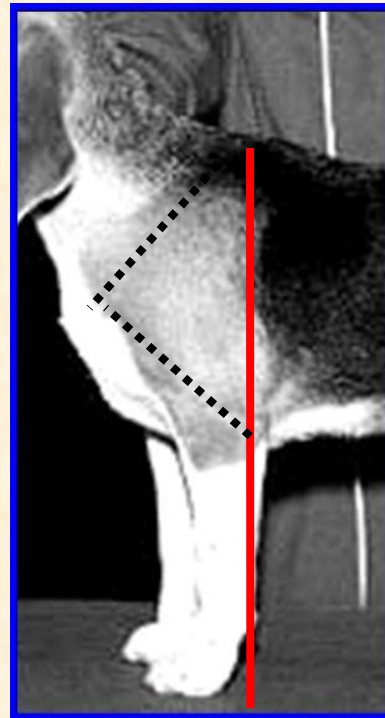
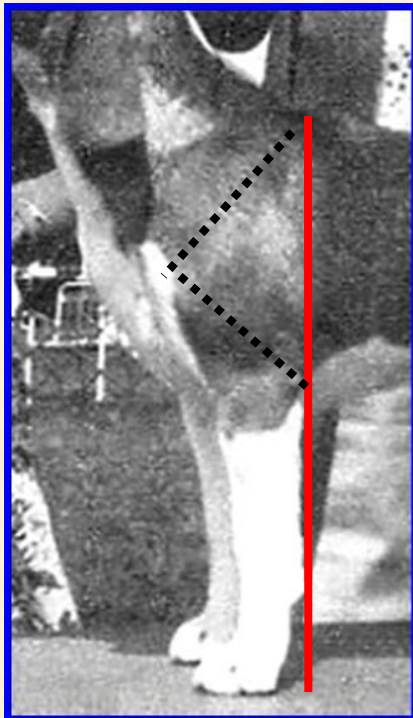
Shoulders and Chest-15pts: Shoulders sloping—clean, muscular, not heavy or loaded—conveying the idea of freedom of action with activity and strength. Chest deep and broad, but not broad enough to interfere with the free play of the shoulder.

Defects: Straight, upright shoulders, Chest disproportionately wide or with lack of depth. (AKC Standard)

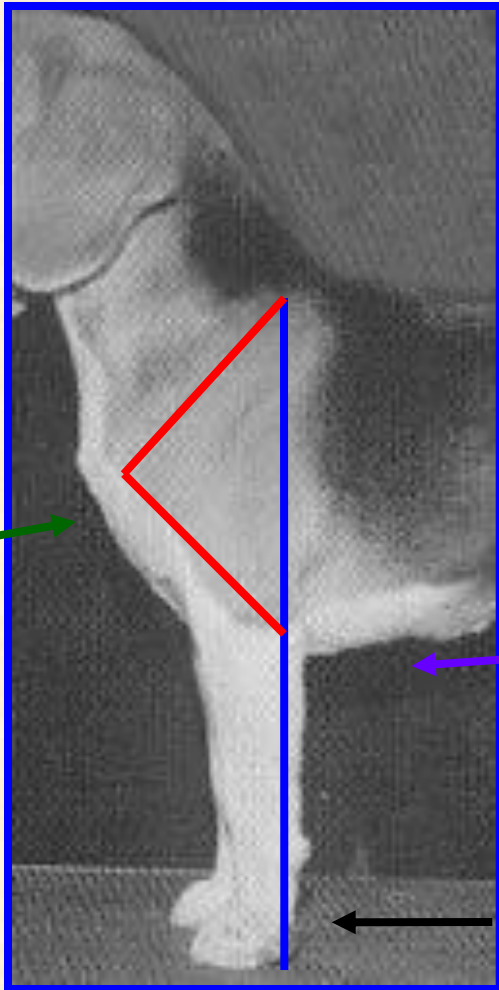
A line dropped from the tip of the scapula to the ground will fall **through** the front leg in a correct shoulder assembly. The length of the scapula (shoulder blade) should be **equal** to the length of the humerus (upper arm).

A good shoulder assembly is critical in an endurance hound.

Correct
Shoulder
Assemblies



CORRECT SHOULDER ASSEMBLY



Vertical plane from withers thru foreleg.

Length of scapula equals length of upper arm.

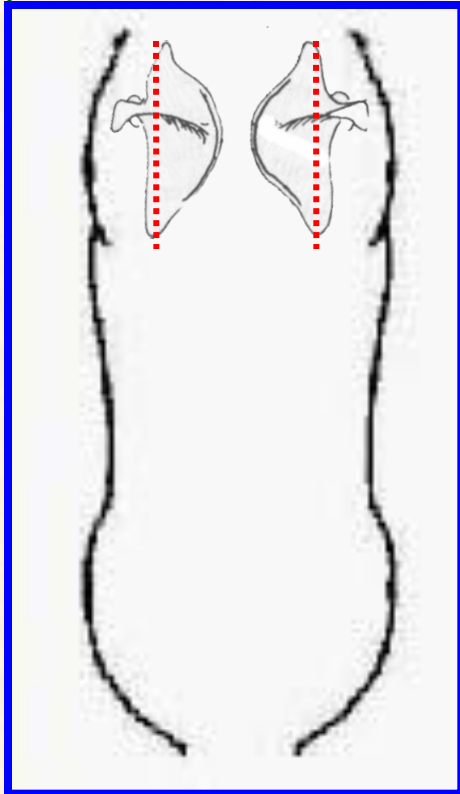
Adequate prosternum.

Sternum appears to end well behind front legs. Indicates proper rib cage length.

Proper stack: Heel pad in line with withers.

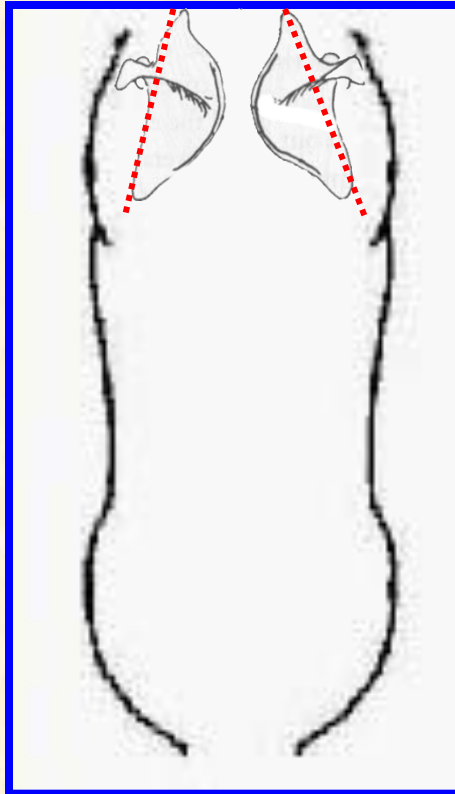
FRONT ASSEMBLY-- TOP VIEW

The front of the chest rounds off and the shoulder blades should sit flat on the side of the chest. The upper tip of the withers should be close. But they should not be touching or “pinched”.



CORRECT

These shoulder blades are set too far forward. Neck will appear to be set on at withers.



INCORRECT

Shoulder blades will point inward.

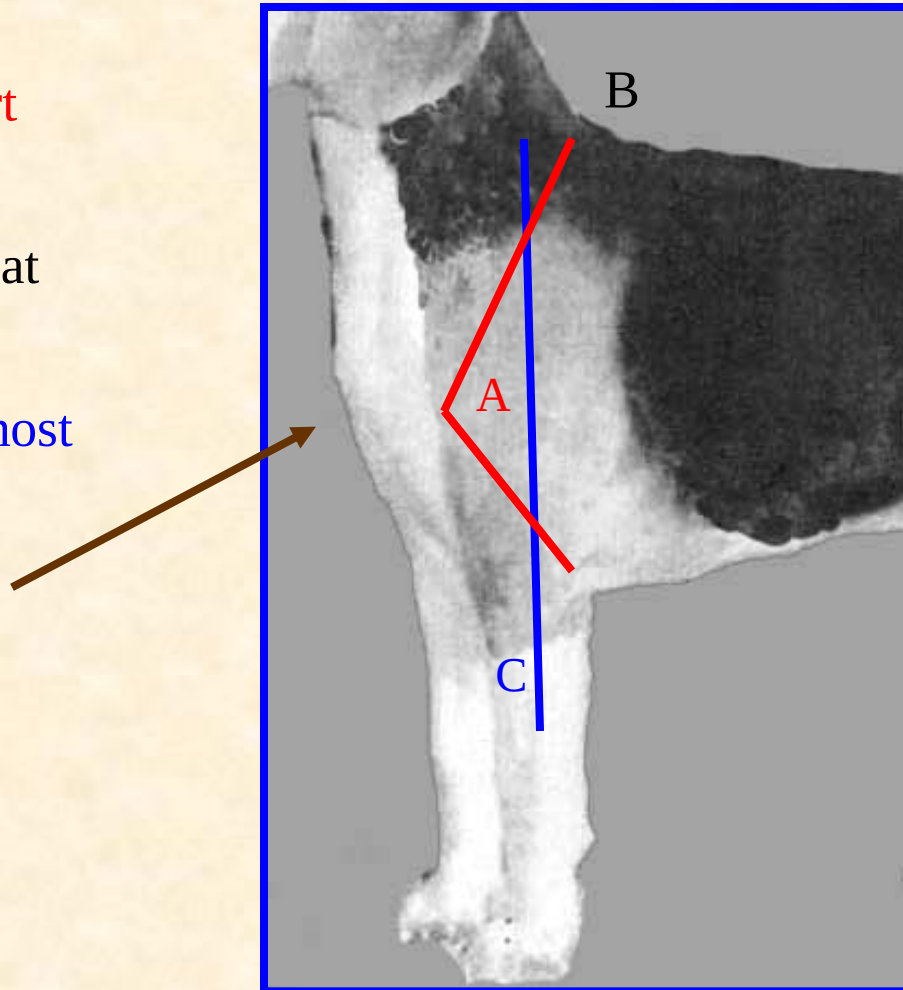
From a side view minimal prosternum will be seen.

Due to the point of the shoulder possibly projecting out farther than the prosternum, you may notice a defined hollow between prosternum and point of shoulder.

INCORRECT SHOULDER ASSEMBLY

Front Assembly Too Far Forward

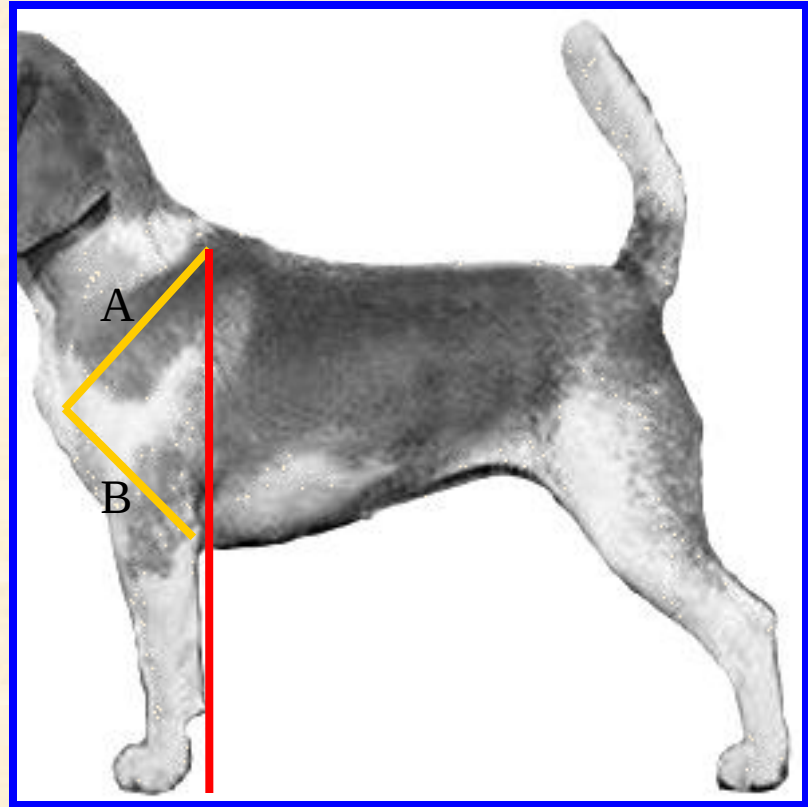
- Straight shoulder and short upper arm (A)
- Neck appears to be set on at withers. (B)
- Front leg and neck are almost in vertical plane. (C)
- Minimal prosternum.
- Toeing in, crossing, and out at elbows are frequent movement faults with this structure.



INCORRECT SHOULDER ASSEMBLY

Short upper arm--(Humerus)

- Forelegs are in front of a line drawn from withers to ground.
- Humerus is shorter than scapula. (Line B is shorter than Line A.)
- Restricted reach will often be seen with this fault.



Correct Prosternums

Picture A is correct-less would be undesirable.

Picture B is correct.

Picture C is correct –more would be undesirable.

A



B



C



Nice clean shoulders, proper fill and straight forelegs

Picture A is correct-less fill would be too narrow.

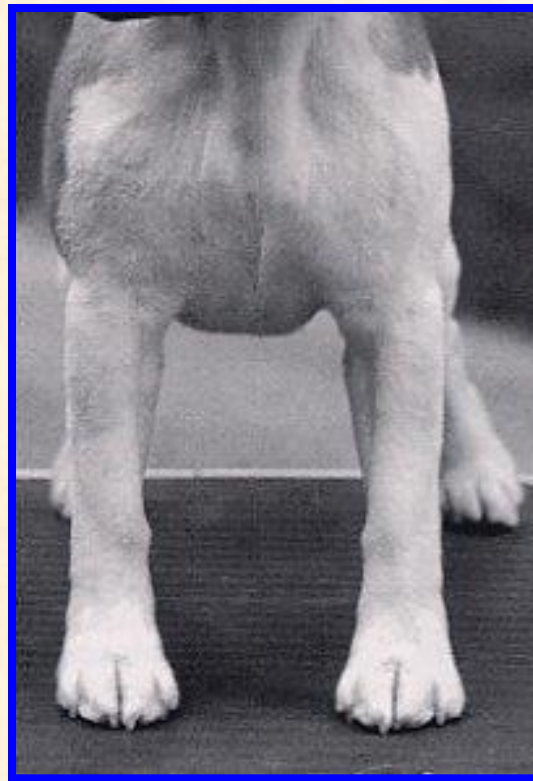
Picture B is correct.

Picture C is correct –more fill would be too wide.

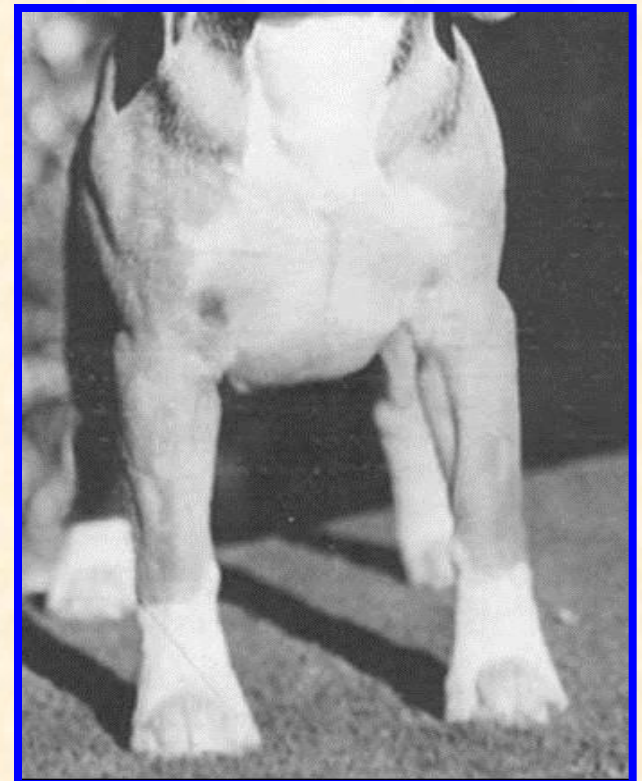
A



B

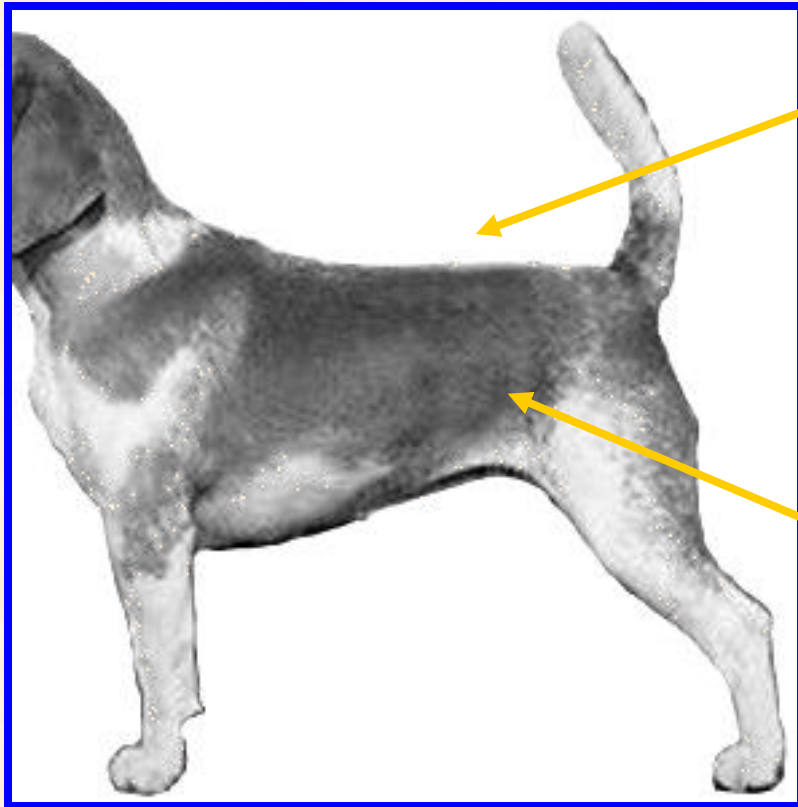


C



Back, Loin, and Ribs -15pts: Back short, muscular and strong. Loin broad and slightly arched, and the ribs well sprung, giving abundance of lung room.

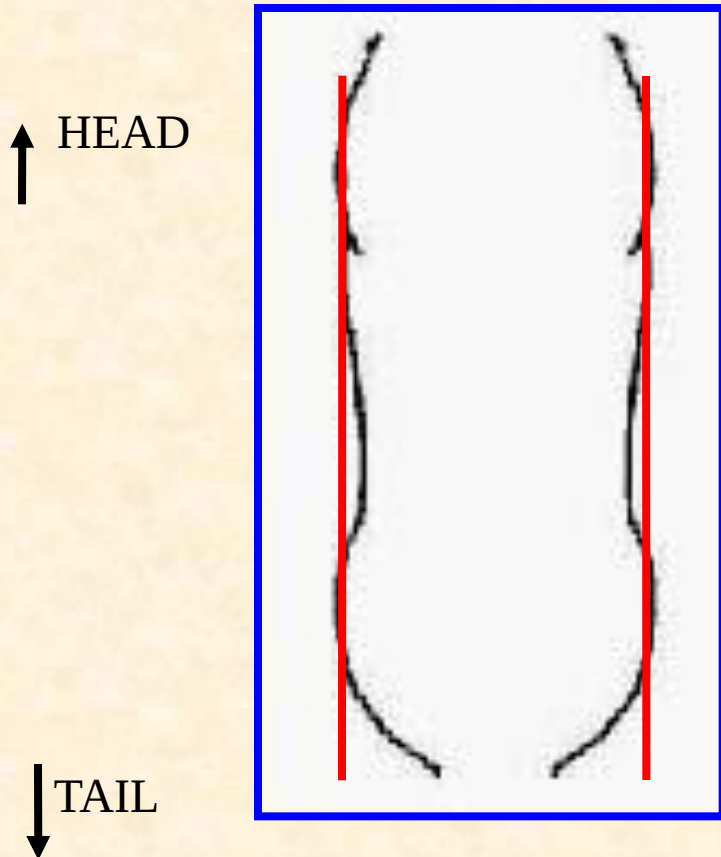
Defects: Very long or swayed or roached back. Flat narrow loin, flat ribs. (AKC Standard)



The backline should be **level** in a beagle. The withers should always be slightly higher than the backline, but only” slightly”. A sloping backline is **not** correct in a beagle.

The “slightly arched loin” is from muscle development along the backline at the loin. This can be seen when viewed from above and felt on examination.

VIEW FROM ABOVE



Width of shoulders =
width of chest =
width of pelvis.
(at proper weight)

The beagle should be well ribbed out and well ribbed back. This provides a thoracic cavity that can accommodate the heart and lungs as needed for an endurance hound.

The ribs spring nicely from the spine. The maximum amount of rib spring should be at the top, but then the ribs should gradually round off to the brisket.

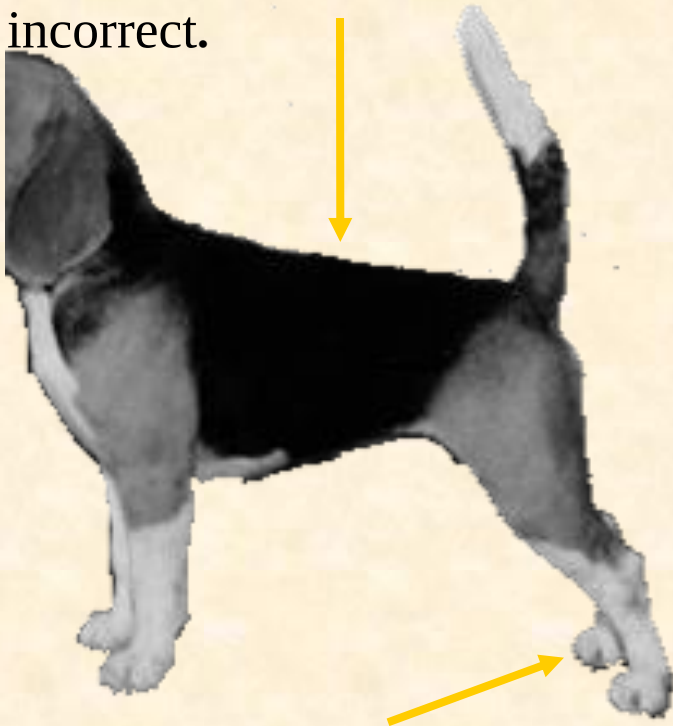
Flat ribs or barrel shaped ribs are **incorrect**.

Flat ribs can restrict lung expansion and reduce endurance.

Barrel shaped ribs can impede the front leg movement by interfering with the elbows.

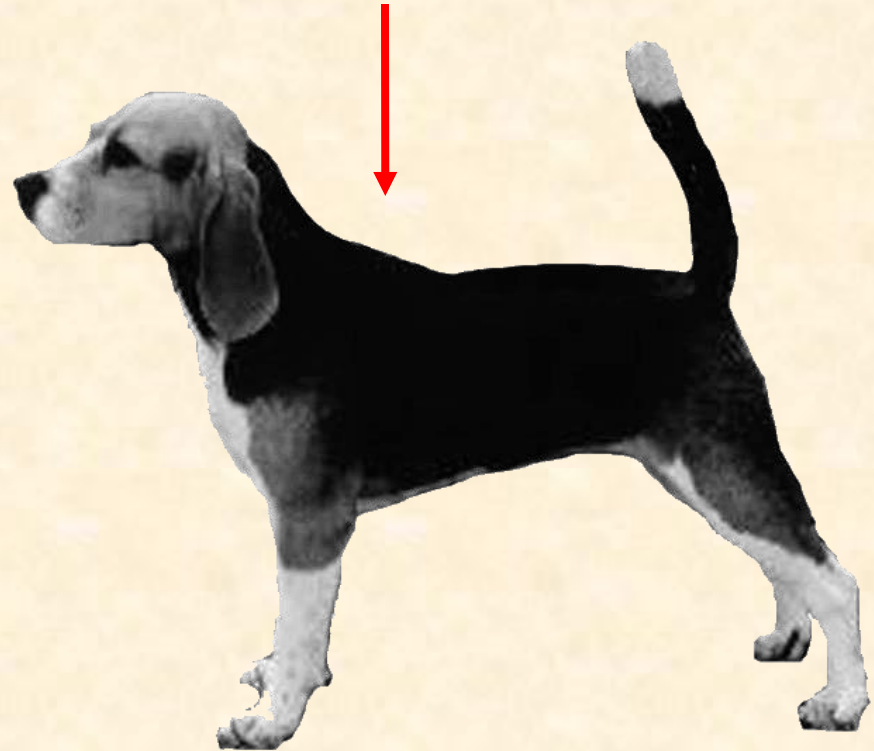
BACKLINE FAULTS

Sloping backline is incorrect.



Hocks should be perpendicular with ground-incorrect stack may create a sloping backline.

Dip behind withers -incorrect



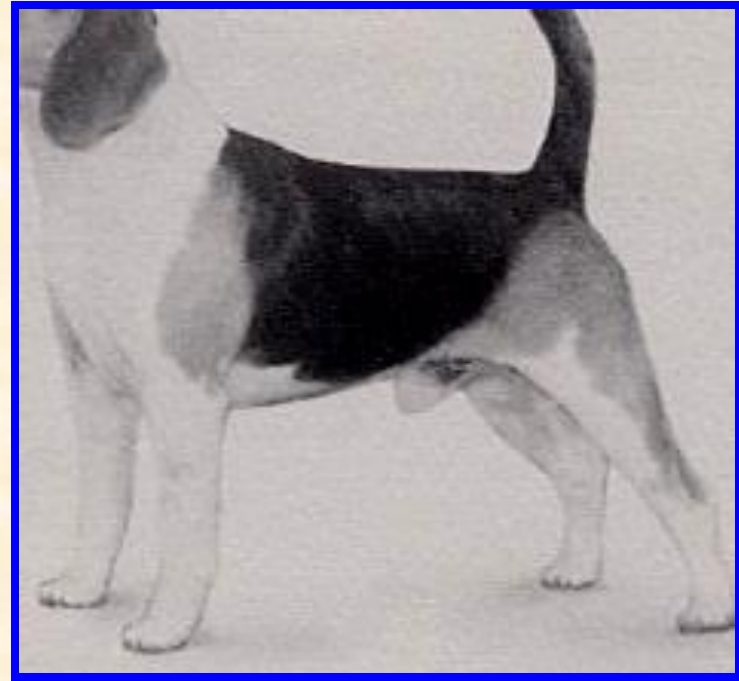
Dip behind withers, arched backline and high in rear – all incorrect



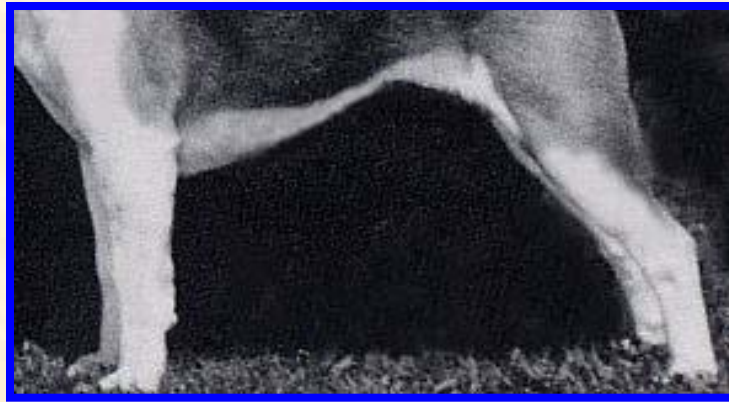
UNDERLINE:

The underline is not mentioned in the AKC standard but the United Kingdom standard reads “without excessive tuck-up.” A proper underline gradually rises from the brisket to the flank.

ACCEPTABLE UNDERLINES



INCORRECT UNDERLINES

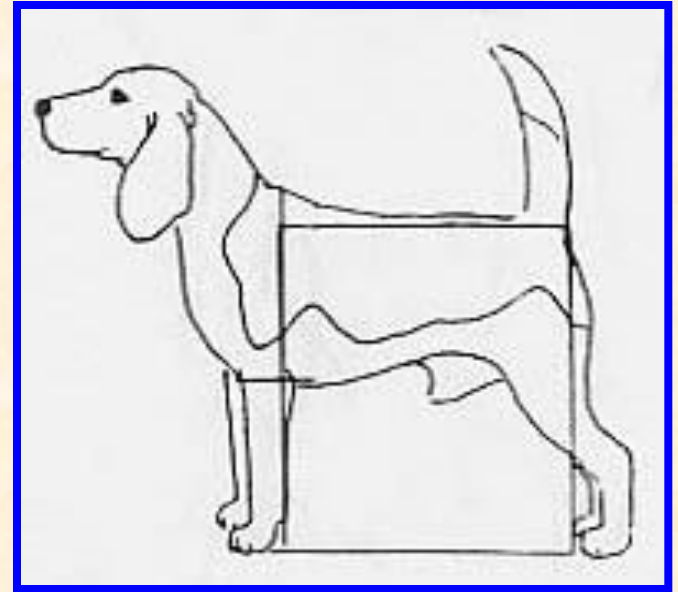


CORRECT HEIGHT TO LENGTH PROPORTIONS

This subject alone is the basis for confusion and in-depth discussions among judges and breeders. The term “Appears square, or approximately square” was often used in past references to describe a beagle. It is important to note that the term “Square” in a beagle context uses the **distance from withers to base of the tail and the distance from withers to ground** as the reference points.

Many other breed standards use the point of shoulder to the point of buttocks as the reference points. When these reference points are used for beagles then they will be slightly longer than tall.

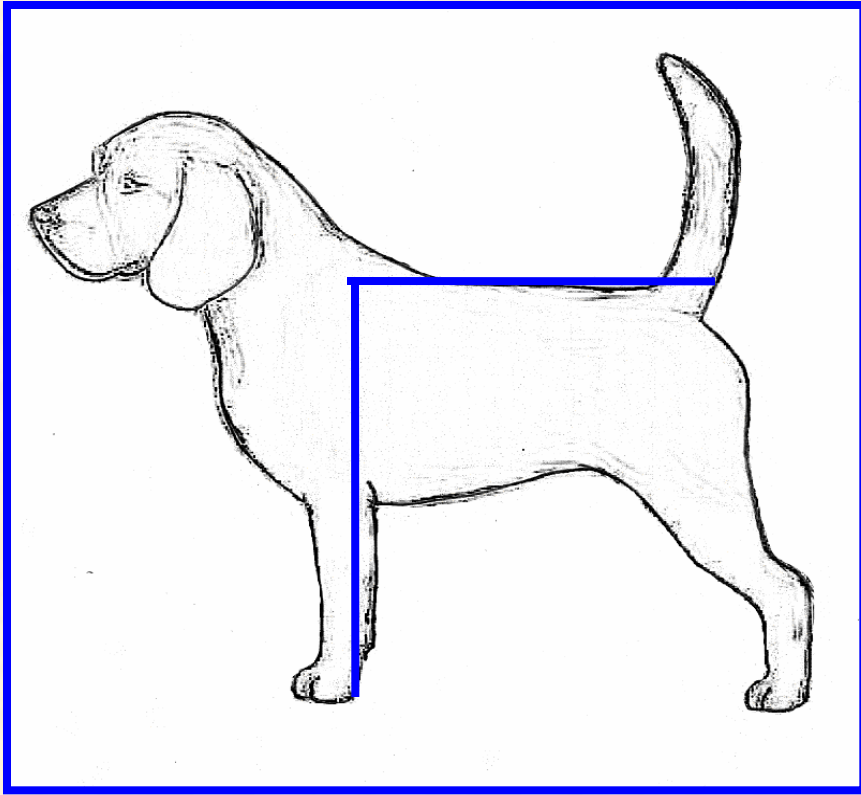
National Beagle Club of America-Visualization
“the beagle is off square, longer than tall.”



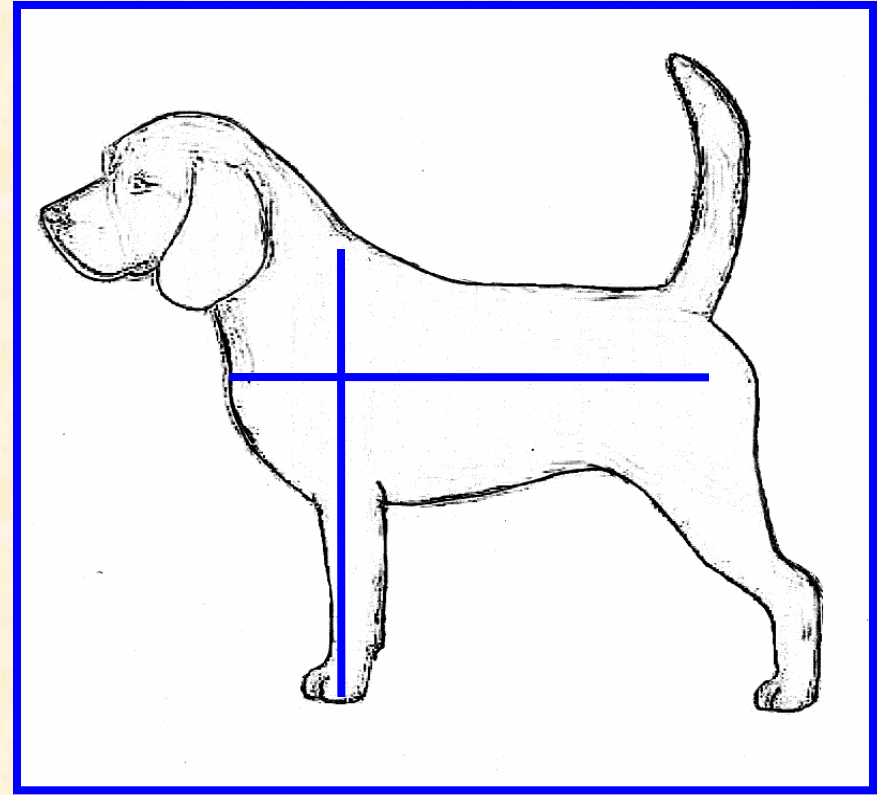
SQUARE--“Ratio of height to length, approximately square from tip of withers to base of tail to ground.”

The New Beagle-Howell Book House, 1st. Edition. J. Musladin et al. Used with permission .

CORRECT PROPORTIONS: Height to length



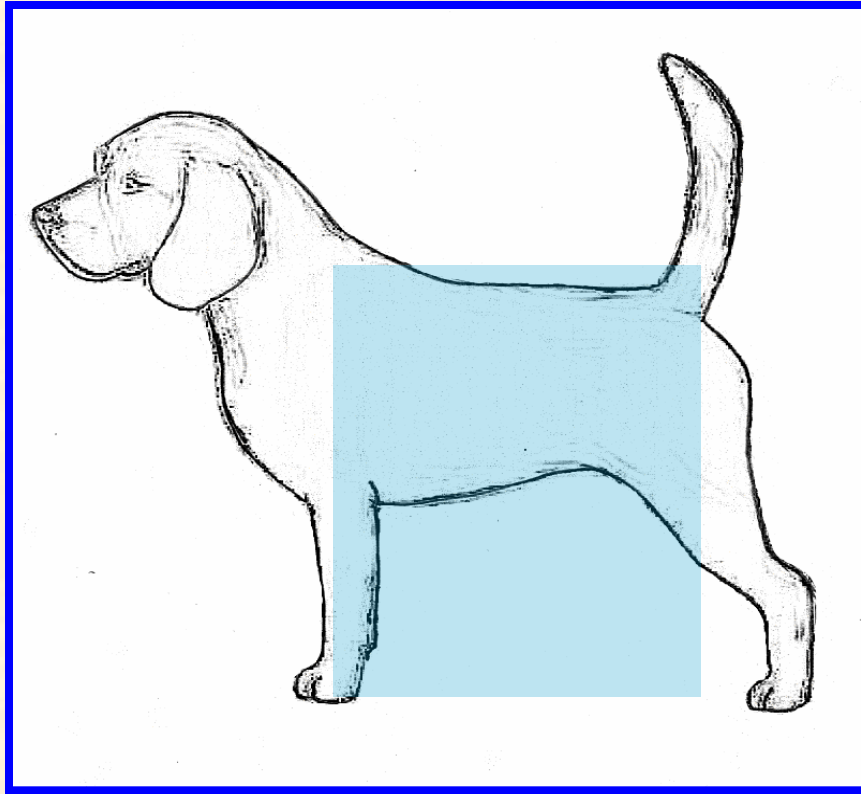
The distance from withers to base of tail is “slightly” less than or equal to the distance from withers to ground.



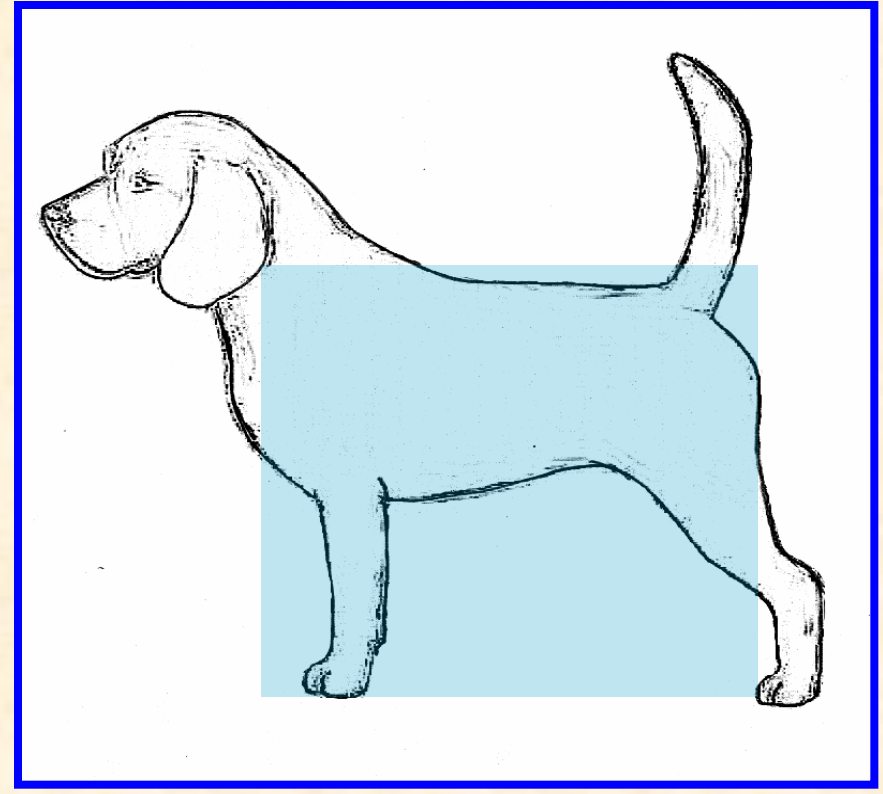
The distance from the point of shoulder to the point of buttocks equals or is slightly greater than the distance from withers to ground. Add forechest plus “a little something behind the dog” and.....

Now, you have a dog that is SLIGHTLY longer than tall.

CORRECT PROPORTIONS: Height to length – “another view”



Distance from withers to base of tail is “slightly” less or equal to the distance from withers to ground.



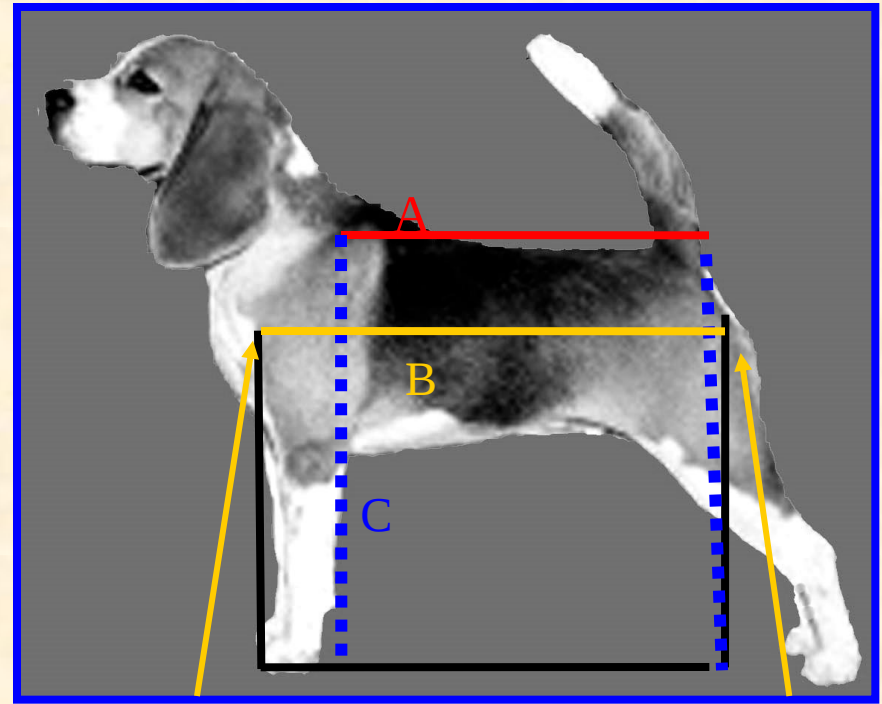
The distance from the point of the shoulder to the point of buttocks equals or is slightly greater than the distance from withers to ground. Add forechest plus “a little something behind the dog” and.....

Now, you have a dog that is SLIGHTLY longer than tall.

How about the length of this dog?



Distance from withers to base of tail (Line A) is slightly shorter than distance from withers to floor. (Line C) acceptable



Point of shoulder

Point of buttocks

Length of body = Line B

Distance of Line B is greater than the distance of Line C.

This beagle is **slightly** longer than tall. This is correct.

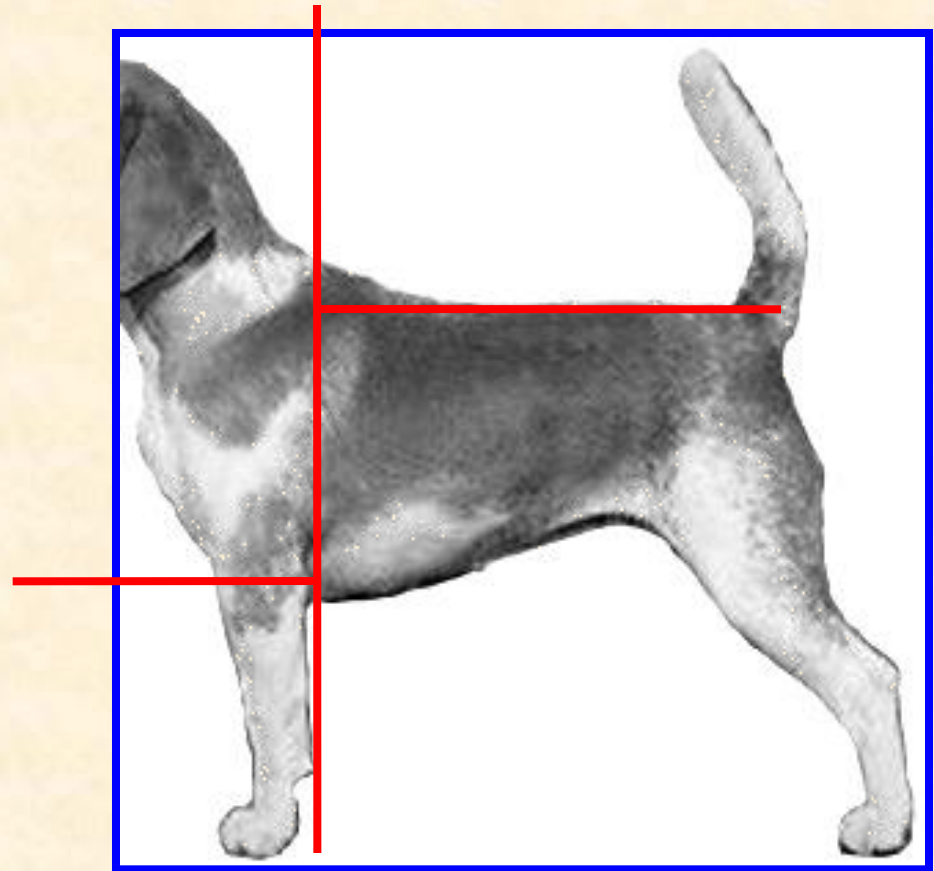
Correct Proportions: Body to Leg

- Distance from withers to base of tail is **slightly shorter** than the distance from withers to ground.
(Acceptable.)

- The elbow is **half** the distance from withers to ground.
(Correct.)

Point of
elbow

Withers



COMMON FAULT-SHORT ON LEG

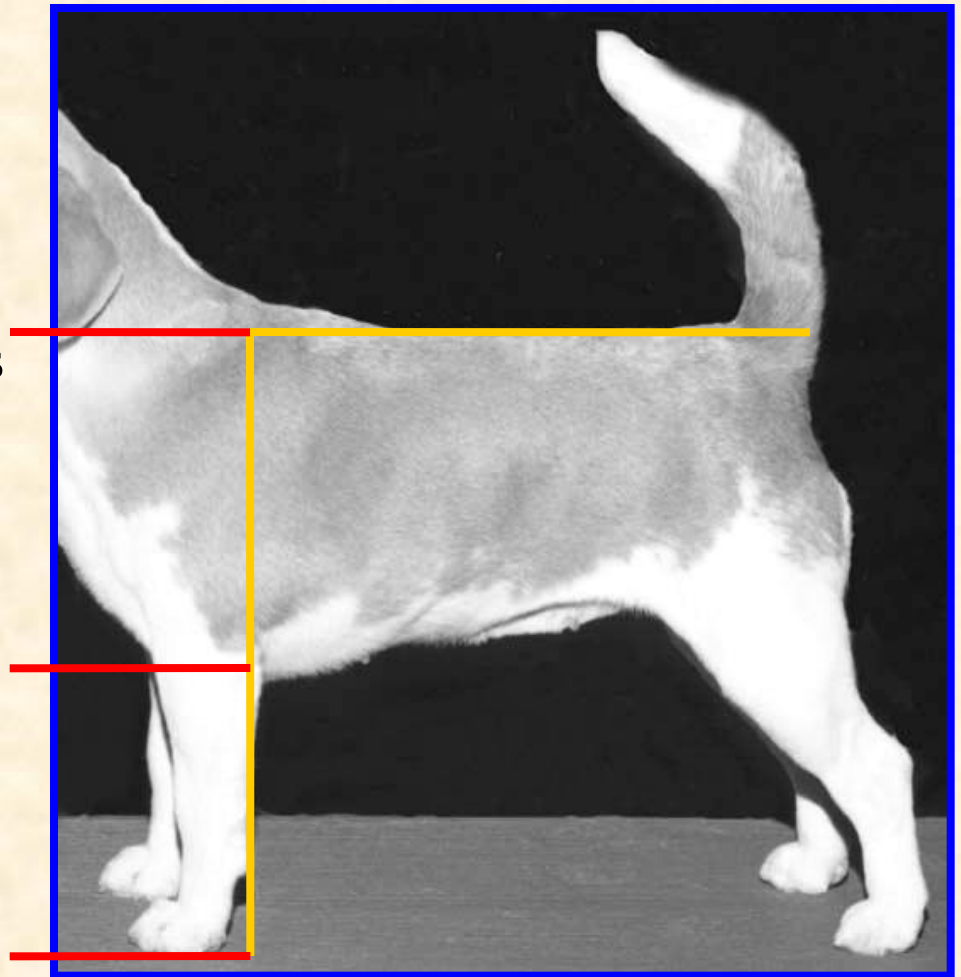
The distance from elbow to ground is **less than** distance from withers to elbow.
(Incorrect.)

Length to height is acceptable.

Withers

Point of elbow

The distance from elbow to ground should **equal** the distance from withers to elbow.



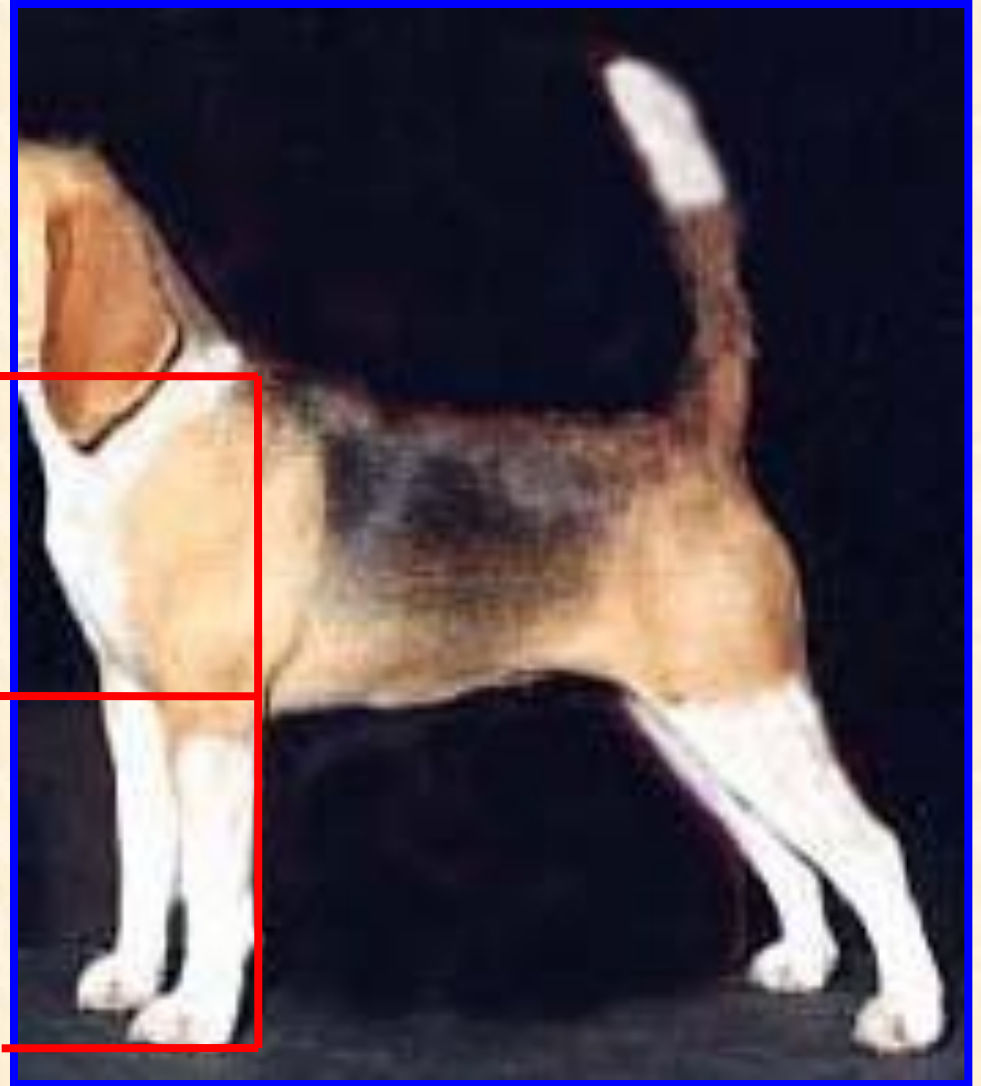
COMMON FAULT--HIGH ON LEG

The distance from elbow to ground is **greater** than distance from withers to elbow. (**incorrect**)

Withers

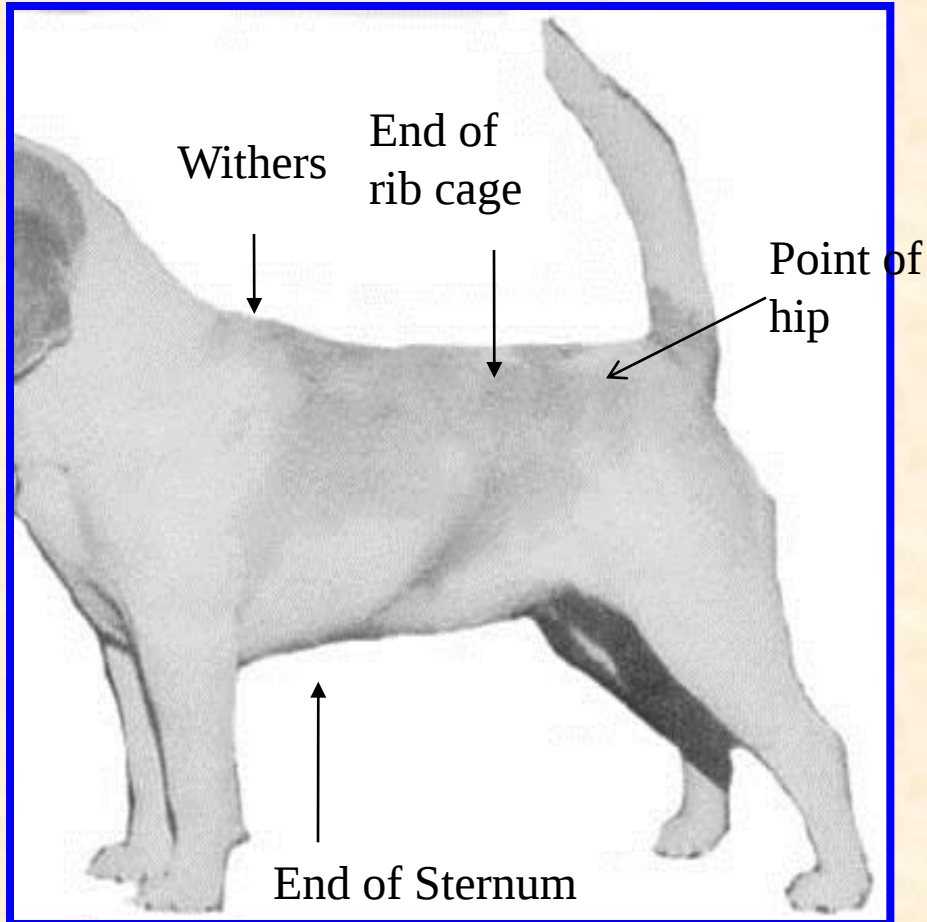
Point of elbow

The distance from elbow to ground should **equal** the distance from withers to elbow.



CORRECT RIB CAGE TO LOIN RATIO

2/3 rib cage and 1/3 loin

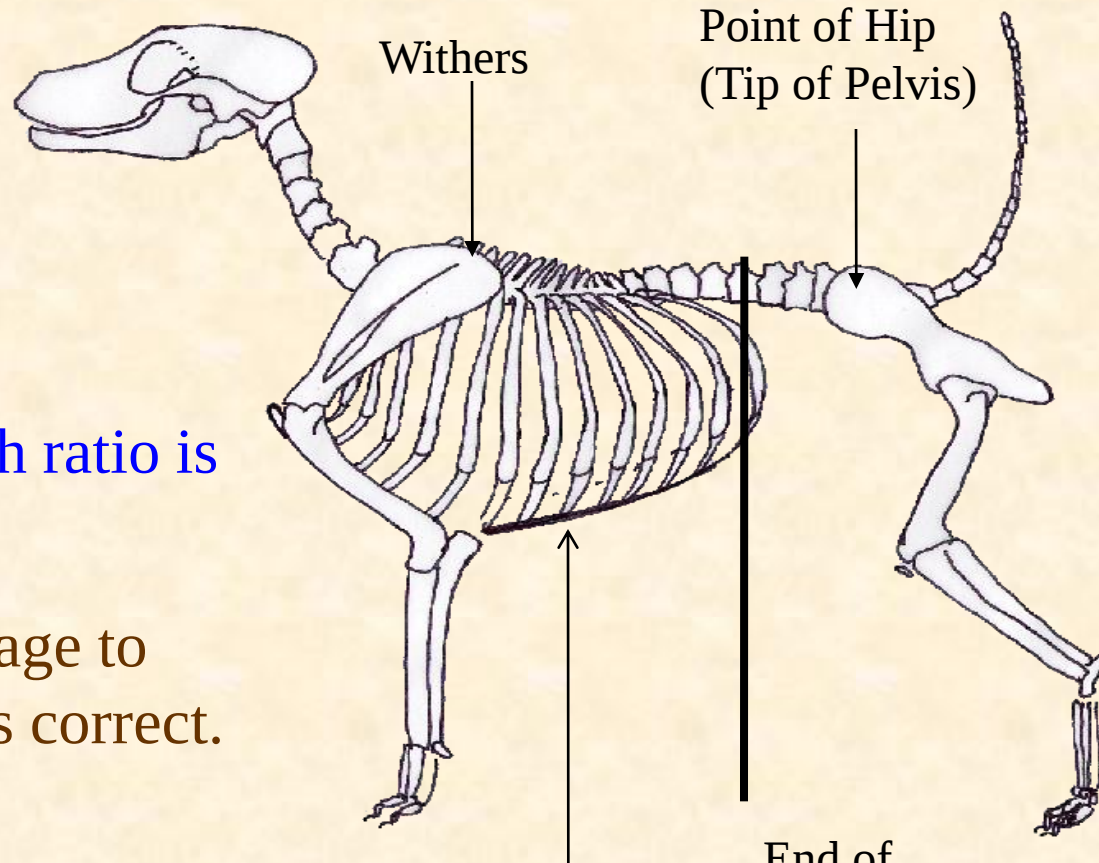


- The end of sternum is well behind the front legs.
- Distance from withers to point of hip is approximately 2/3 ribs and 1/3 loin.

A running hound needs a nice long rib cage to provide protection for internal organs and room for the heart and lung capacity. Heart and lung capacity is an important endurance factor.

Proper rib cage to loin ratio.

2/3 rib cage and 1/3 loin
Desired Ratio



Height to length ratio is correct.

Length of rib cage to length of loin is correct.

End of sternum well behind front legs.

End of rib cage

LONG IN LOIN OR SHORT IN RIB CAGE??

The rib cage should extend well back, with the sternum ending at the ninth rib. The end of the sternum should be well **behind** the front legs. Some beagles have short rib cages. It is becoming common to find the sternum ending **between** the front legs. This is indicative of a SHORT RIB CAGE.

The problem lies with the length of rib cage, NOT the length of loin. A beagle that has a proper height to length ratio, but the ratio of rib cage to loin is 1/2 rib cage and 1/2 loin is short in the rib cage. This can be due to incorrect slant of the ribs and/or decreasing width of the ribs. (The angle of the last rib to the spine should be approximately 45 degrees.) Attention must be given to the structure of the rib cage versus the actual length of loin. We cannot continue to “shorten the loin” and ignore the “shortened rib cage”.

True “Long in loin” usually goes with additional length of body. The beagle will have a nice rib cage with the sternum ending well past the front legs and still be 1/2 rib cage and 1/2 loin. If you shorten the loin of this beagle and kept the nice long rib cage, then the height to length ration would be correct.

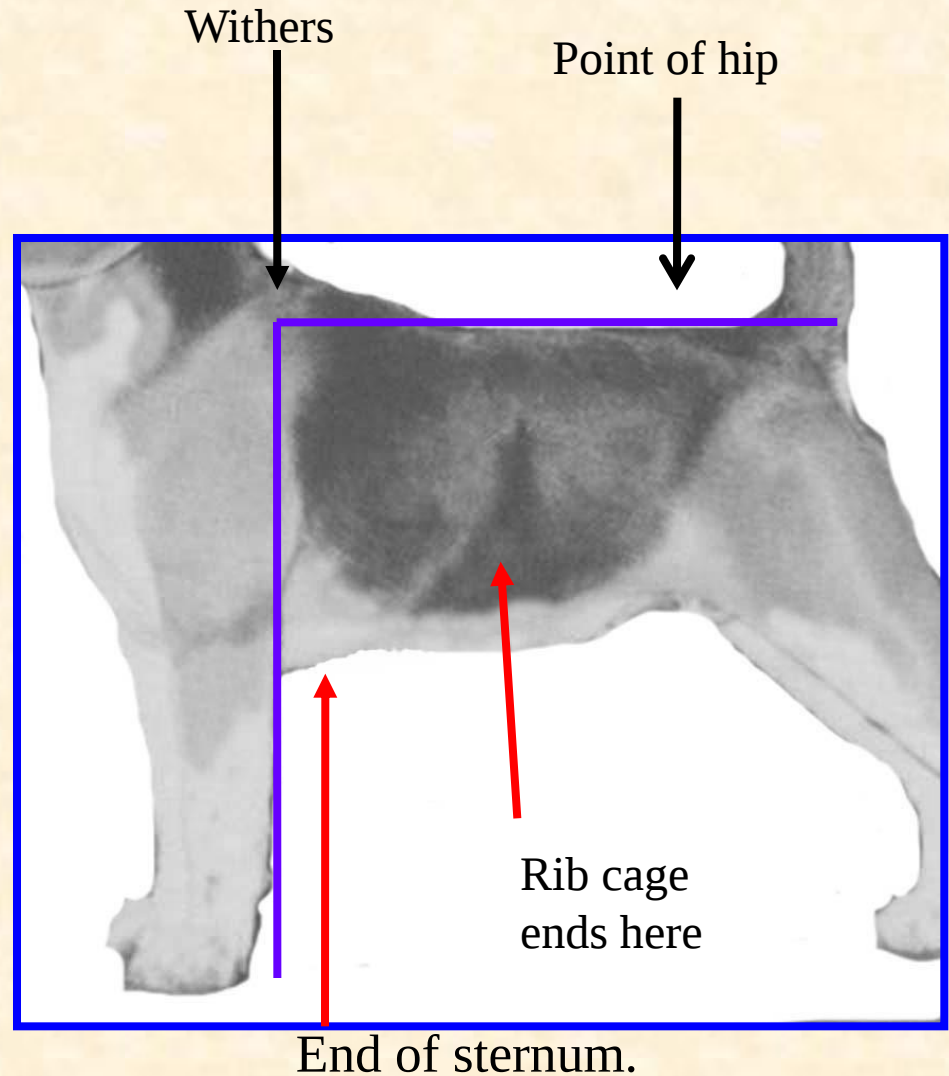
LET'S EVALUATE

SHORT RIB CAGE

- Short rib cages are common. You will find during an examination a short sternum (brisket) that ends almost between the front legs.
- The distance from withers to base of tail is *slightly* shorter than from withers to floor. (acceptable.)
- Sternum ends almost between front legs. (incorrect)
- The distance from withers to point of hip is $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ (incorrect). It should be $\frac{2}{3}$ ribbing and $\frac{1}{3}$ loin.

This beagle is short in rib cage length.

$\frac{1}{2}$ ribcage to $\frac{1}{2}$ loin
Major fault



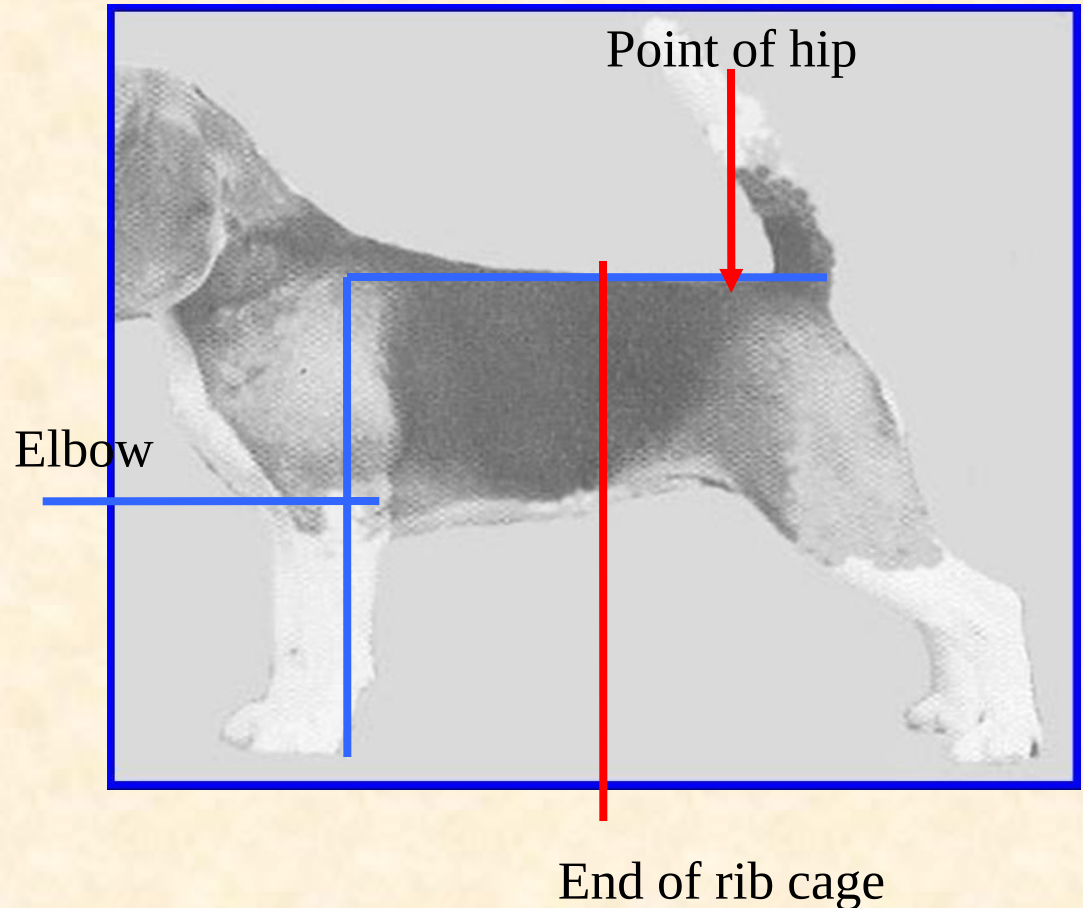
LONG IN BODY

Distance from withers to base of tail **is longer** than distance from withers to floor. **(Incorrect.)**

Backline faults are frequently seen with a long body.

Distance from withers to elbow equals distance from elbow to floor. **Correct ratio.**

The rib cage to loin ratio is correct .

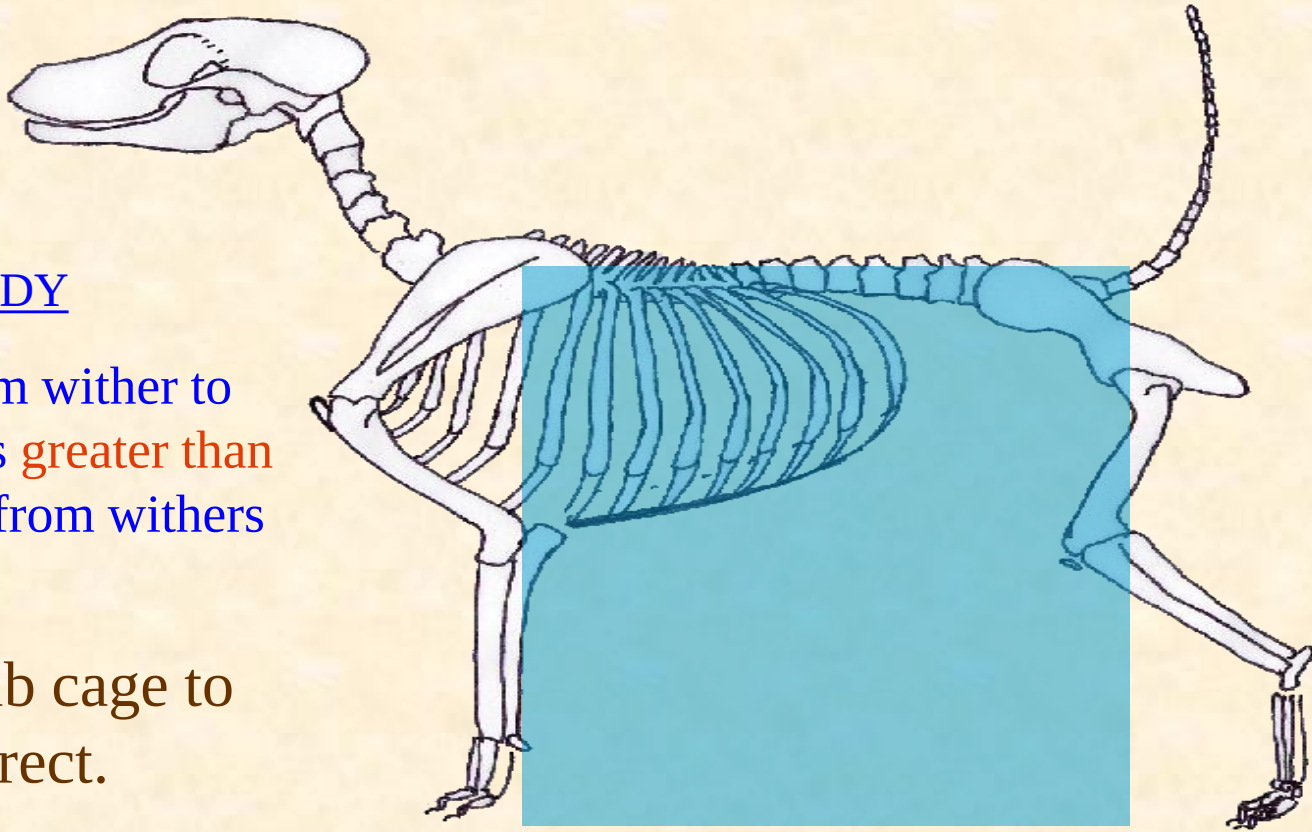


LONG IN BODY WITH CORRECT RIB CAGE LENGTH

LONG IN BODY

Distance from wither to base of tail is **greater than** the distance from withers to ground.

Ratio of rib cage to loin is correct.



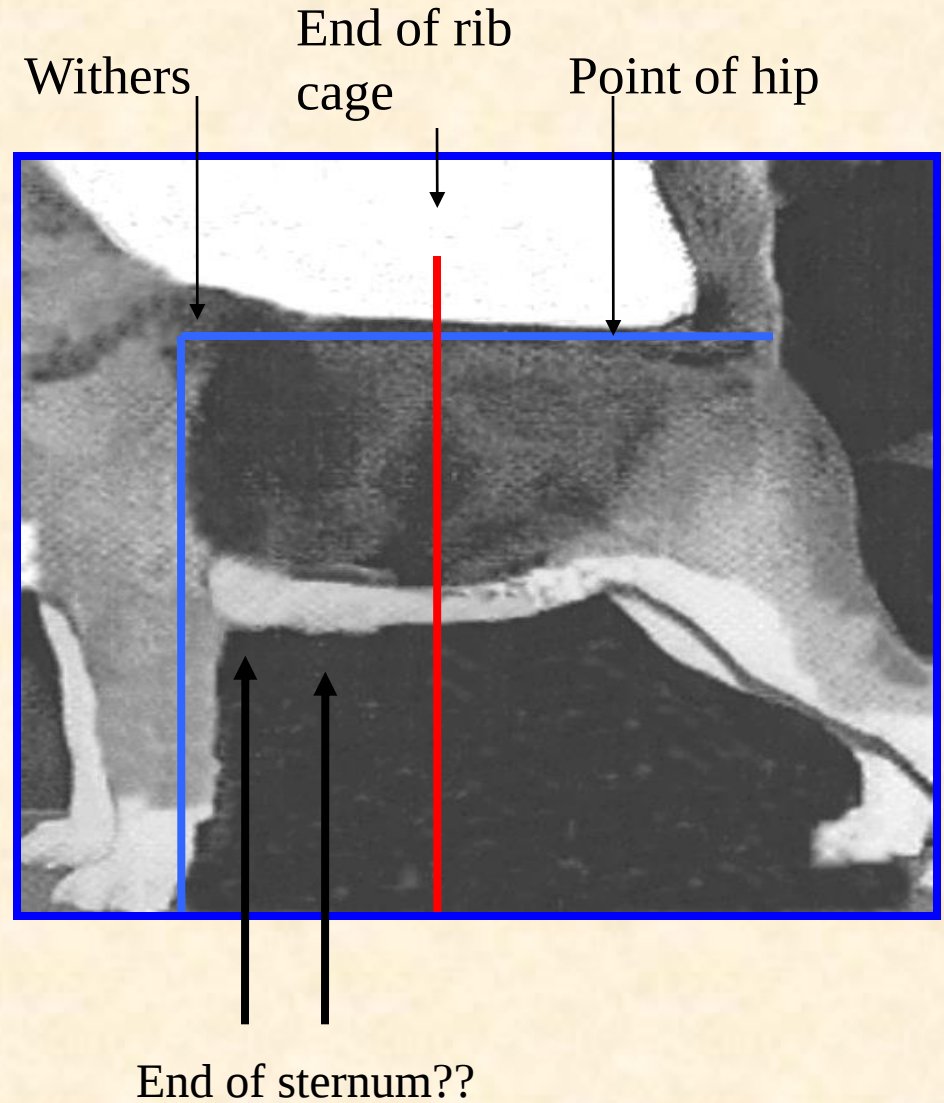
EVALUATE.....

Distance from withers to base of tail is **greater than the** distance from withers to ground. **Long in Body**

Check to see where sternum ends.

If it ends between the front legs then this beagle is also short in rib cage.

If the end of the sternum is well behind the front legs then this beagle is long in body and long in loin.



More Thoughts on Correct Proportions.....

A 13” should just be a smaller version of a 15” and both varieties should be smaller versions of an English Foxhound.

A “true” or “correct” 13” will have the correct leg to body ratio, the correct height to length ratio, and appropriate bone for his size.

Keeping those correct ratios, a nice length of ear and expression is a challenge in 13” beagles. Especially in 13” males.

A beagle “short on leg” may be a 13” (in height) but actually have the body of a 15”. This is not a true 13” beagle.

A very small “toyish” beagle that is slight of bone is undesirable.



THE RUNNING GEAR

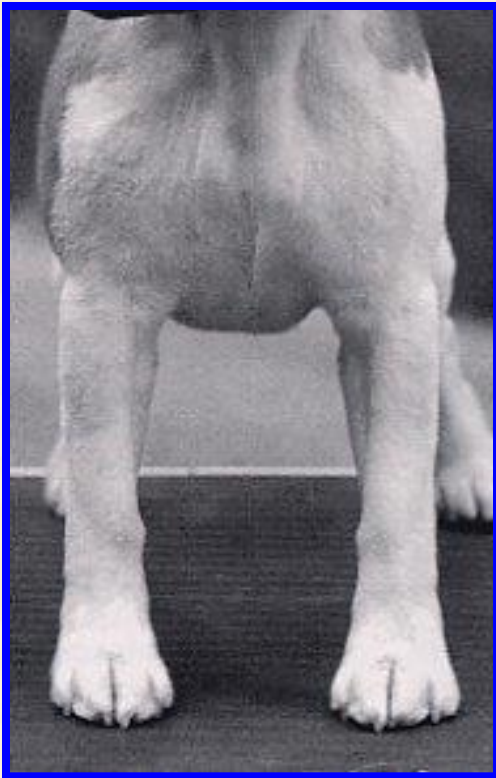
Forelegs, Hips, Thighs, Hind legs, and Feet

Running Gear = 30 pts total

Forelegs -10pts: Straight, with plenty of bone in proportion to size of the hound. Pasterns short and straight.

FEET-10 pts: Close, round and firm, Pad full and hard.

Defects: Out at elbows. Knees knuckled over forward or bent backward. Forelegs crooked or Dachshundlike. Feet long, open or spreading. (AKC Standard)

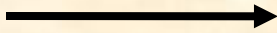


When properly standing, forelegs should drop straight to the feet with very little evidence of a pastern joint. The bone should be rounded, straight, and have substance the entire length. A beagle **should not be heavy in bone; but also should not be slight in bone.**

The bone should be in “**proportion to the size of the hound**” and is the foundation for muscle attachment.



ACCEPTABLE
“CAT” FEET



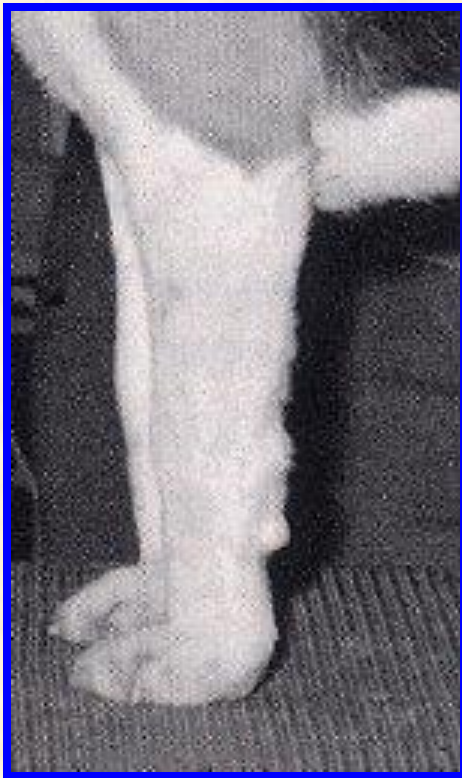
HARE FOOT
(incorrect)



SLOPING
PASTERN
(incorrect)

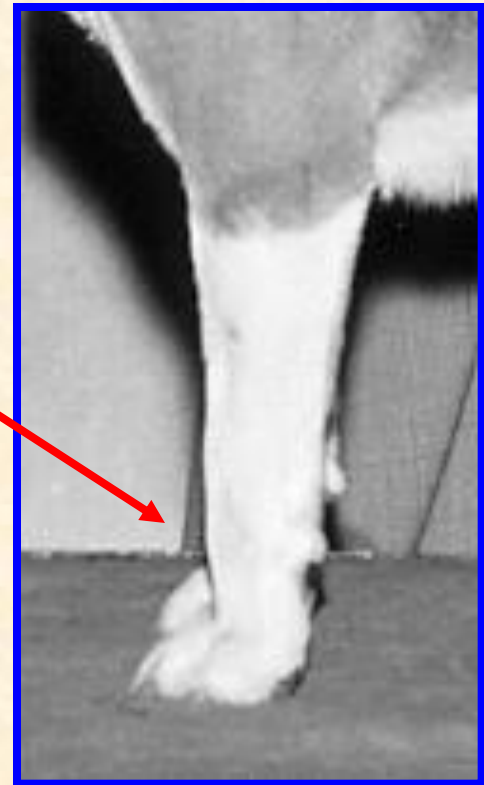


Major faults seen in the ring today.

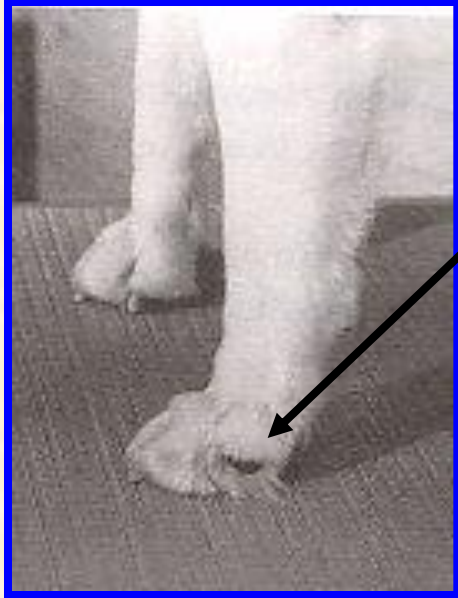


Thin or flat feet.

Knuckling Over



Less common seen **major** faults.



Short toes, generally outside toe and on one front leg. Maybe seen on back leg occasionally.



Crooked front leg or legs.

Some common terms in this section are....

CROUP: The region of the pelvic girdle, formed by the sacrum and surrounding tissue.

Point of Hip: Iliac Crest: Tip of Pelvis: Hucklebones—the upper edge of hip. Rounded, outer edge of the pelvis.

POINT OF BUTTOCKS (ISCHIUM/ISCHIAL TUBEROSITY/PIN BONE): The rearmost extremity of the pelvic bone

STIFLE or KNEE: The joint of the hind leg between the thigh and the second thigh; the dog's knee.

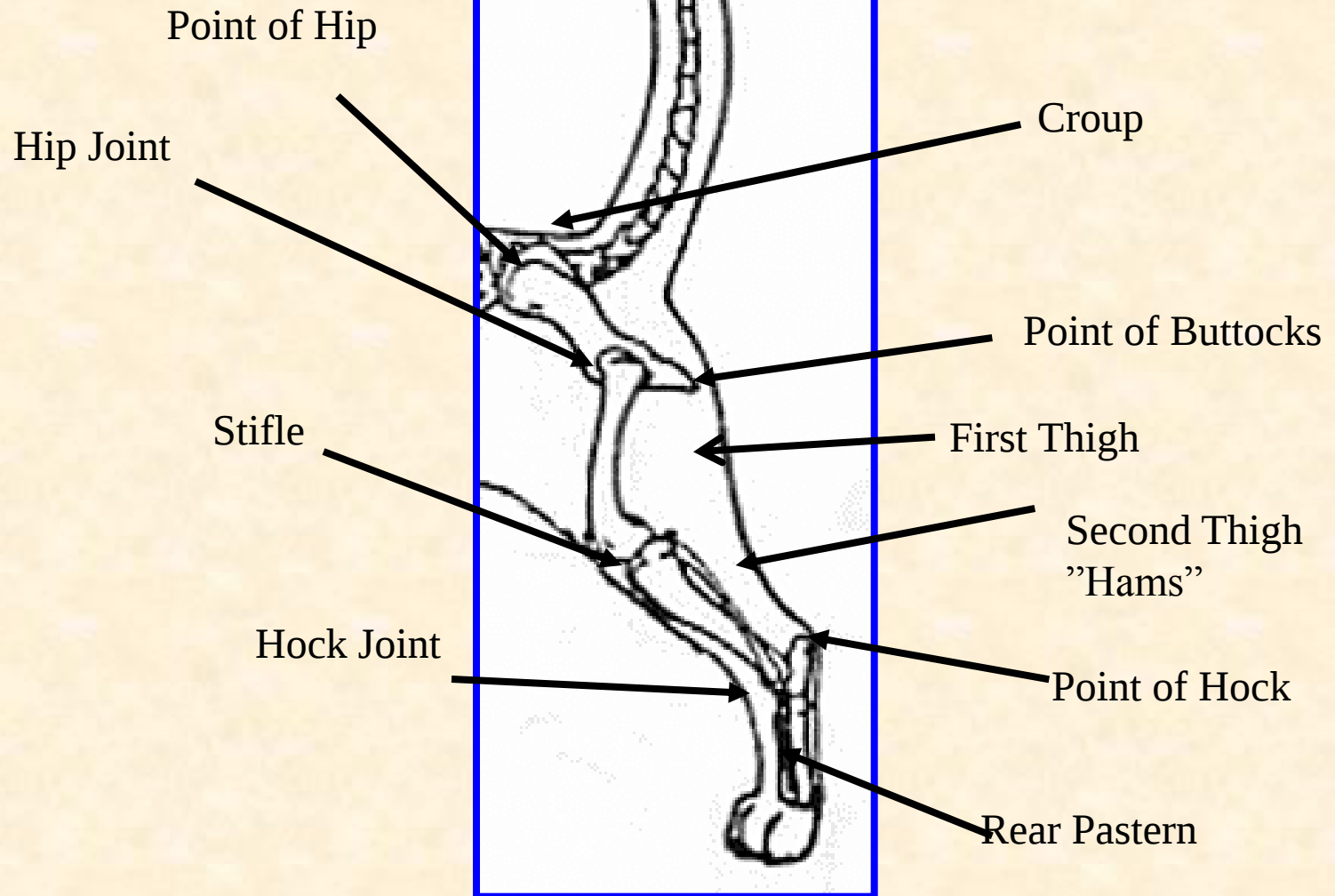
HOCK/ HOCK JOINT: The tarsus or collection of bones of the hind leg forming the joint between the second thigh and the metatarsus. (Like the ankle in humans).

POINT OF HOCK: Calcaneal Process.

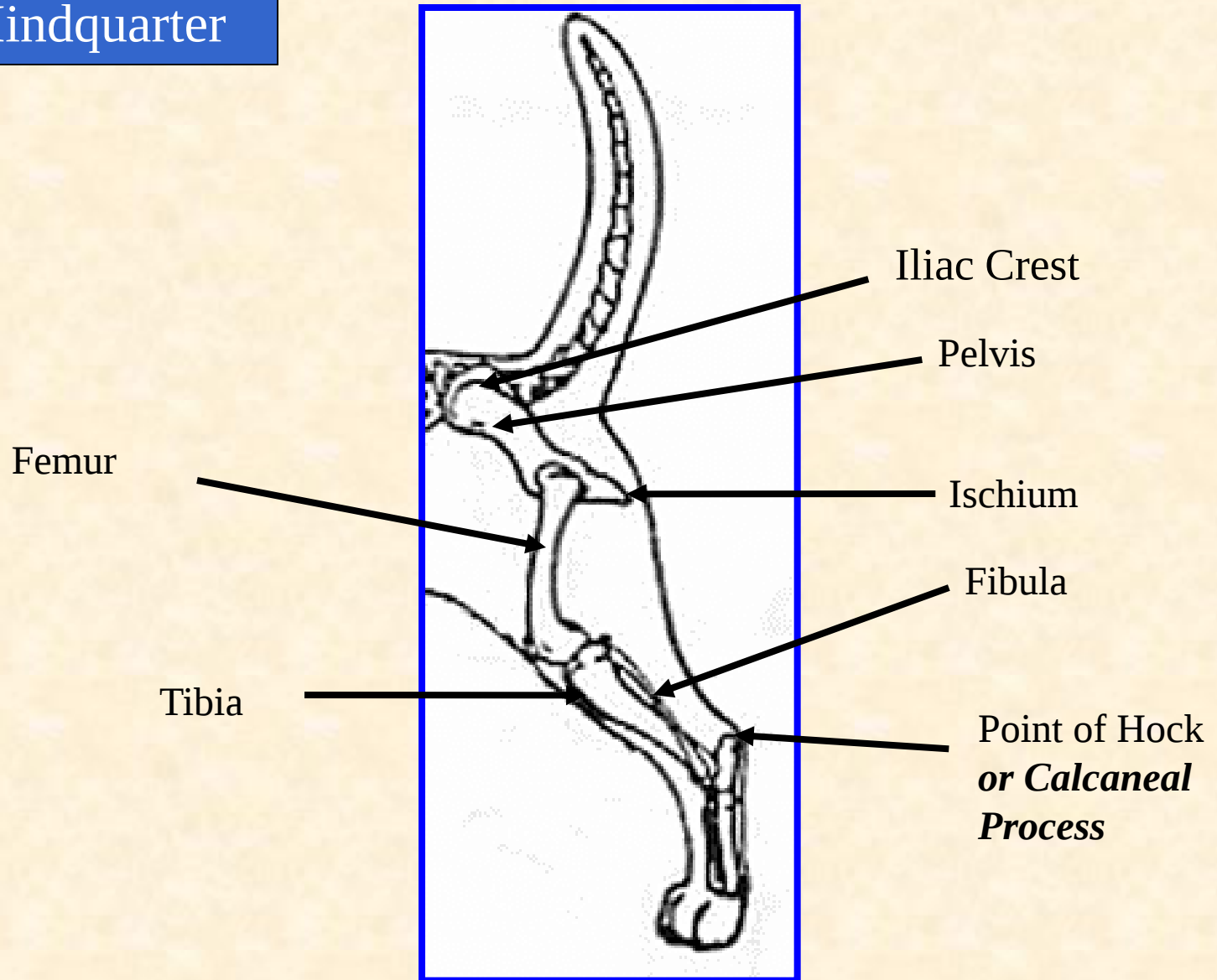
REAR PASTEREN: The area between the hock joint and the feet.

Pelvic Slope-Slope of Pelvis: Angle between the horizontal and the axis of the pelvic girdle. (Gilbert/Brown)

Common Terminology

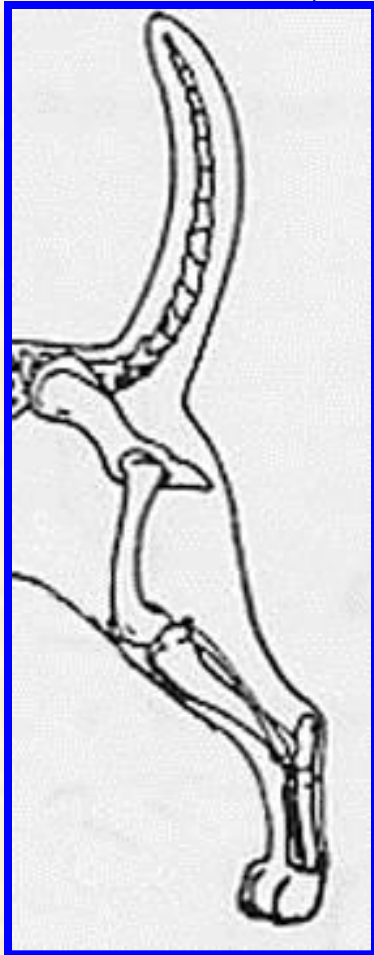


Bones of the Hindquarter



Hips, Thighs, Hindlegs, and Feet-10pts: Hips and thighs strong and well muscled, giving abundance of propelling power. Stifles strong and well let down. Hocks firm, symmetrical and moderately bent. Feet close and firm.

Defects: Cowhocks or straight hocks. Lack of muscle and propelling power. Open feet. (AKC Standard)



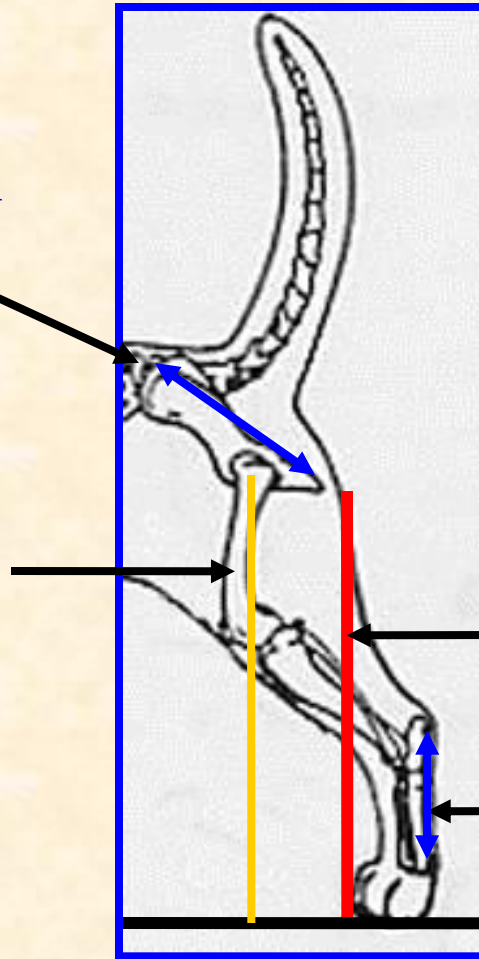
The hindquarters produce the power to propel the beagle. Correct structure is a major requirement for efficient production and utilization of movement forces.

The Beagle is an endurance hound and was originally followed by a hunter on foot. This meant that great speed was not as important as endurance. Only moderate angulation is required for the beagle.

CORRECT REAR ASSEMBLY

Slope of pelvis should be approximately **30 degrees**. This provides a wide base for muscle attachment.

The femur should be set at approximately **80-90 degrees** from horizontal ground angle.

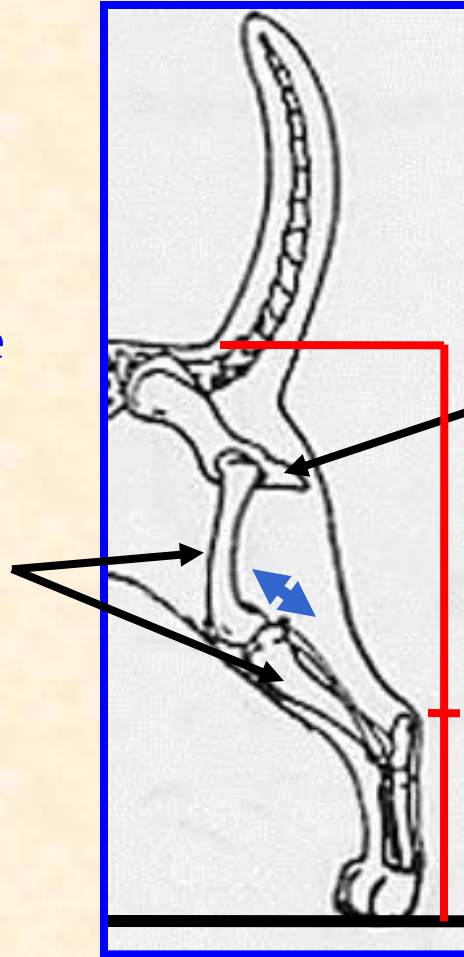


When correctly stacked a line should fall straight from point of buttocks to directly in front of the toes of the rear foot and....

rear pastern should be perpendicular to ground.

CORRECT REAR ASSEMBLY

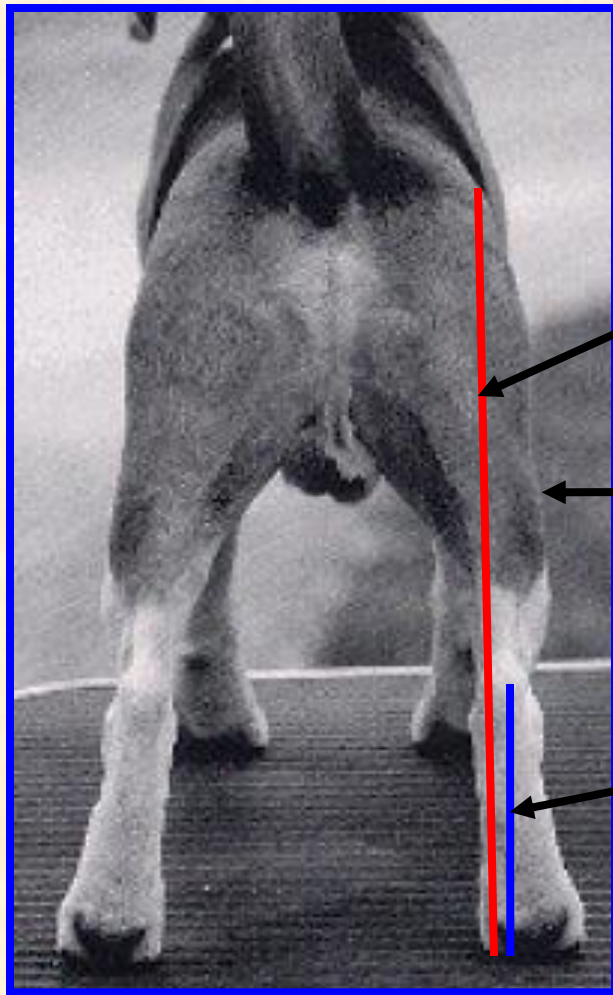
Femur and tibia are equal in length. The inside angle of the stifle joint (A) should approximate 120 degrees for “well let down” stifles.



A long ischium correlates with well muscled thighs “hams” due to wide base for muscle attachment.

Distance from Point of Hock to ground should be no greater than $\frac{1}{3}$ the distance from level of backline to the ground in endurance hounds.

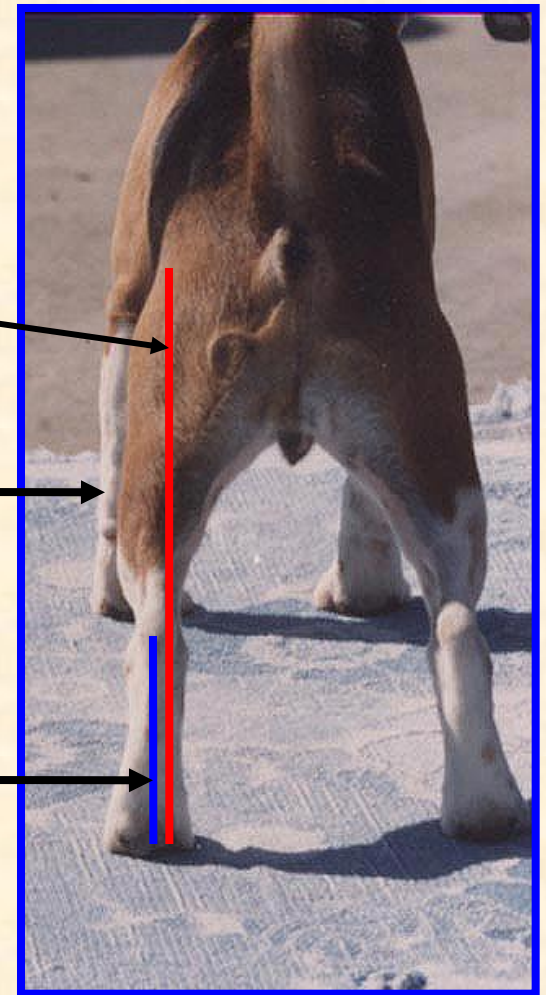
CORRECT REAR ASSEMBLY



When properly stacked a line should fall perpendicular from outer iliac crest through the hock joint, rear pastern, and foot.

Good muscle development of first and second thighs.

Distance from Point of Hock to ground should be approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ the distance from backline plane to ground.



COMMON REAR ASSEMBLYS SEEN IN THE RING

ACCEPTABLE



INCORRECT--
Over angulated



INCORRECT--
Too Straight, no
bend of stifle.



Generic show dog syndrome

Tail – 5 pts. Set moderately high, carried gaily, but not turned forward over the back; with slight curve; short as compared with the size of the hound; with brush.

DEFECTS: A long tail. Teapot curve or inclined forward from the root. Rat tail with absence of brush. (AKC Standard)



“ Correct Brush ” in an adult beagle.

A beagle working in the field will beat the tail against many objects as it wags back and forth in excitement. The brush is the protection for the tail, without adequate brush the tail will be bleeding and raw at the end of a hunt.

Puppies will develop “brush” as they mature.

The tip of the tail should be slightly higher than the beagle’s head when standing alertly with head up.

The tail should be carried up perpendicular to backline with a possible slight curve forward while gaiting but should not be penalized should it drop when the dog stops. The white tip is suppose to act as a “flag” to the hunter, making it easier to follow the beagle. An absence of a white tip is not to be penalized. A “Gay” tail or a tail that touches the back would be hard to see in the field.



Acceptable brush
and tail set.



Acceptable brush.
Lower tail set
would be incorrect.



Incorrect Brush
“Rat Tail”



Gay tail or “Tea Pot
Tail”--Incorrect

Coat-5 pts: A close hard hound coat of medium length.

Defects: A short thin coat or of a soft quality.

Color: Any allowed hound color. Merle and Brindle color patterns are not accepted and shall be disqualified. (AKC Standard)

A beagle's coat must protect it when working in the brush. A close, hard coat of medium length is desired. *A thin soft coat (seal coat) is undesirable.*

It is desirable (but not required) that the “points” (feet, and tip of tail) of the beagle be white.

Any true hound color is acceptable. A tri color may be black/white and tan, liver(chocolate)/white and tan, or blue/white and tan. The Tri's may have rich dark blankets or faded blankets. Bi-colors which may vary from lemon and white to a dark red and white. Pies are equally acceptable Ticking on a beagle is acceptable. A light eye and pink nose pigment associated with some of the coat colors is to be penalized.

JUDGE THE STRUCTURE NOT THE COLOR!
IMPORTANT IS THE QUALITY OF THE HOUND

ACCEPTABLE COLORS (just a small sample)



Faded tri

Liver or chocolate tri



Black/white and tan tri “Classic Tri”



Blue tri

MORE ACCEPTABLE COLORS



Red and
white



Tan and
white



Lemon
and
white



Badgered
Pied (note
nose
color)

TEMPERAMENT

A Beagle should be a “merry little hound”. Outgoing, friendly, curious and confident in his manner. Being a scent hound, many beagles will automatically lower the nose to the ground when on a loose lead.

A shy beagle or a beagle that is unhappy should be heavily penalized in the show ring. A shy beagle or unhappy beagle will typically carry the tail down at all times. A very shy beagle will actually carry the tail “tucked.”

Aggressive beagles should be heavily penalized.

Shy and aggressive beagles should not be tolerated in the ring.

And now...

MOVEMENT IN BEAGLES



Movement is not mentioned in the standard. Basic assumptions are made based on the description of the running gear, shoulders, and rear construction. A beagle works in the field at a walk, trot, and gallop. Efficiency of movement is important to this endurance hound.

GAIT/MOVEMENT

- Straight forward, free and active.
- Movement should be balanced, harmonious, sure, and unhindered.
- The motion should appear effortless, efficient, and ground-covering.
- Front and rear legs are thrown neither in nor out.
- In trotting, the forequarters and hindquarters are coordinated and the back should remain level, firm and relatively motionless.
- The tail should be carried upright while gaiting but should never be penalized should it drop when the dog stops.



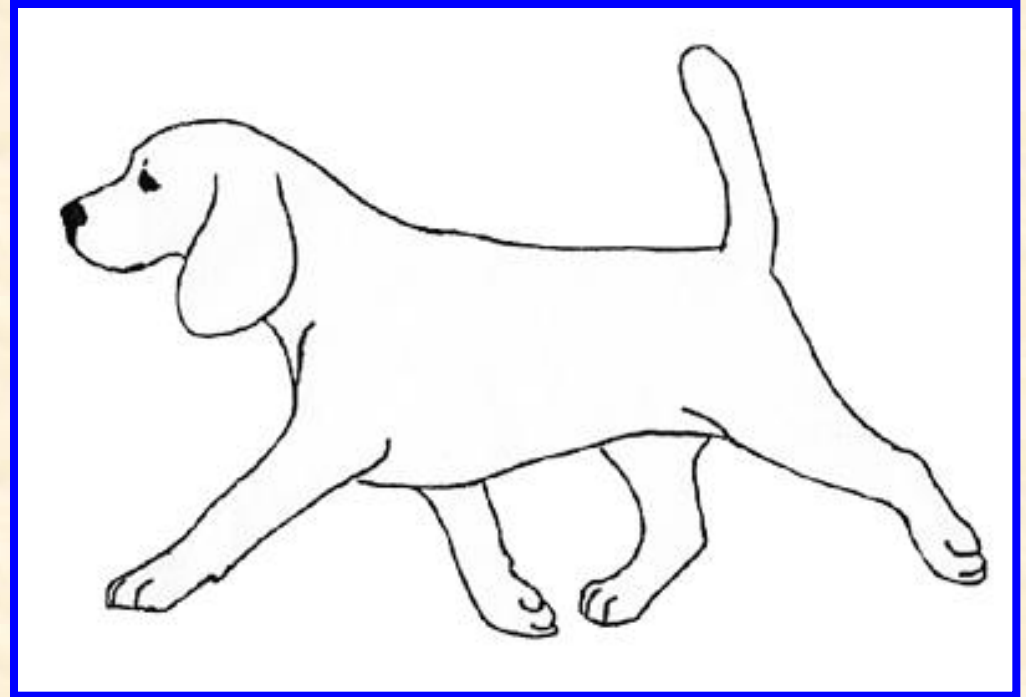
- Strong forereach and rear drive.
- As speed increases the legs tend to converge “slightly” under the body towards a center line.

SIDE MOVEMENT: Observe

at a slow to moderate trot:

- Head carriage should be between slightly above the horizontal to approximately 35 degrees.
- Appearance of effortless, powerful and flexible movement.
- Good reach of front legs.
- As the front foot is brought forward there should be minimum lift for efficiency. The toes should almost skim the ground as they are coming forward.

• Backline level. Tail upright.



- Good drive with the rear.
- Hind feet fall into footsteps of front feet.

CORRECT SIDE GAIT



Head carriage slightly above the horizontal at approximately 35 degrees.

Appearance of effortless, powerful and flexible movement.

Good reach of front legs.

(You could almost draw a line from tip of nose to tip of paw at full extension.)

The toes skim the ground as they are coming forward.

Backline level. Tail upright.

Good drive with the rear.

Hind feet fall into footsteps of front feet.

FRONT MOVEMENT:

(Observed at a moderate or slow trot.)

The forelegs should move straight forward in parallel planes.

The hind foot should almost be hidden by front leg.

Elbows should remain close to body.



REAR MOVEMENT

(Observed at a moderate or slow trot)

Hocks should move perpendicularly to the ground.

Front legs should almost be hidden by rear legs.

Hind legs follows the footsteps of front legs.

Line should fall straight from iliac crest through hock to paw when moving at a slow trot.



MOVEMENT FAULTS COMMONLY SEEN

Paddling, high-stepping, elbows out, pounding, hock joints turning in or out, close in rear and **skipping** are all common movement faults seen in the beagle ring.

Skipping or hitching is when for no apparent reason the beagle will “hitch” or skip a step with one hind leg. Often this is seen when the beagle is making the turn on the down and back. It may only occur once, as if to get the legs in sequence.

Another type of “hitching” will occur when the beagle is in a straight trot. The beagle may skip/hitch on a routine frequency. The cause for this is unknown although hip dysplasia, slipping stifles, and muscle spasms are all theories. None have proven to be the ultimate reason.

Measuring 101

To measure or not to measure???



VARIETIES: There shall be two varieties:

Thirteen Inch – which shall be for hounds not exceeding 13 inches in height

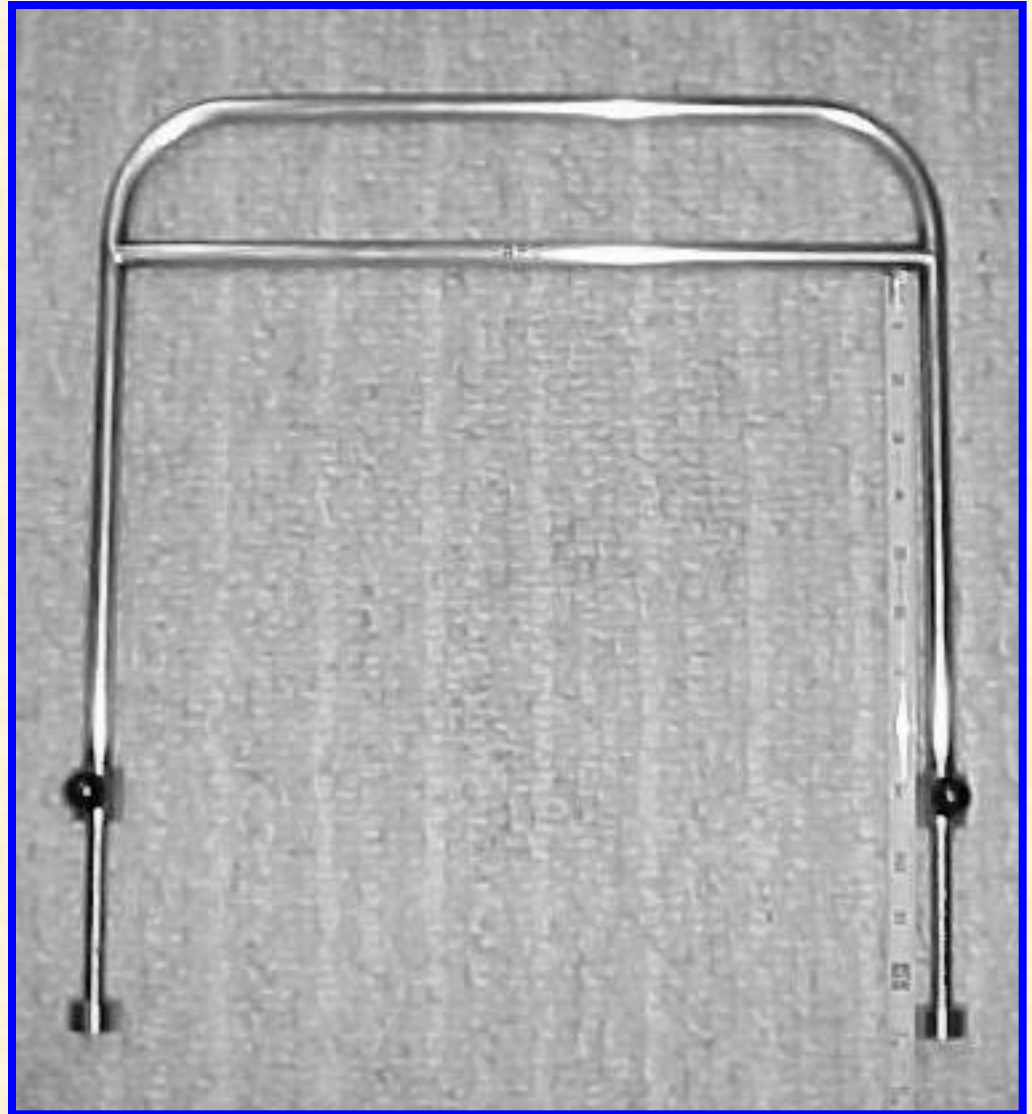
Fifteen Inch – which shall be for hounds over 13 but not exceeding 15 inches in height.

DISQUALIFICATION: Any hound measuring more than 15 inches shall be disqualified. (AKC Standard)

Measuring Procedure 101

- AKC official wicket should be obtained from superintendent.
- Set both legs to correct height.
- Height of both legs should be verified with metal measuring tape.
- Inform the exhibitor that you will be measuring their beagle.

Beagles should be measured where they are judged— on the examination table.



Measuring Procedure 101.....

- Ask the exhibitor if they would like to examine the wicket. If yes, allow them to examine the wicket.

- The exhibitor will pose the beagle.

- The beagle should be posed in normal show stance with head up at approximately the 10 o'clock position.

You may instruct the exhibitor on how you want the beagle posed, but you should not physically help pose the beagle.

- Ask the exhibitor if they are ready for you to measure the beagle.



Measuring Procedure 101.....

- When exhibitor is ready--feel for the withers.
- Keep fingers on the withers.
- Bring the wicket in from behind the dog with the other hand and place on the highest point of the withers.

If the exhibitor cannot pose the dog and you cannot get a good measurement, mark the dog: Excused--“unable to measure”.



If the dog measures in –mark your book “measured in”. This is important. Once a dog has measured in it cannot be measured again at THAT show.

Measuring Procedure 101.....

Both legs of the wicket should touch the flat surface for the beagle to be within the height limits.

Three ways to measure out a beagle.
Mark your book accordingly:

1. A 13" beagle that measures out of the 13" class. **Mark your book: Excused.**
Measured out Ineligible for class.
1. A 13" beagle that does not measure over 13" and is entered in the 15" class. (This is rare but does happen). **Mark your book: Excused.**
Measured out ineligible for class.
1. A 15" beagle that measures out of the 15" class. **Mark your book: Disqualified.**
Measured out.



The only disqualification in the beagle standard is for being over 15 inches tall.

- A beagle entered in the 13” variety and measured over 13” is ineligible for that class but can be entered in the 15” variety at future shows.

A beagle entered in the 15” variety maybe only 13 ½”. Do not ignore the smaller 15” over the larger 15”. Overall quality is most important; not if it is 13 ½” or right at 15”.

Judges are encouraged to measure as a part of their examination of the beagle. Please do not leave a nice specimen out of the ribbons because you are unsure of it’s size-measure it!!

Let's Review.....

When judging the Beagle, FIRST assess the dog from the side for balance, size, outline, head proportions, depth of body, length of body, proportion of leg to body, feet, angulation and tail set.

THEN step in front of the dog and look at the proportion of the head width and muzzle width, eye shape and placement, eye color, ear set, fill in front, and leg substance to body.

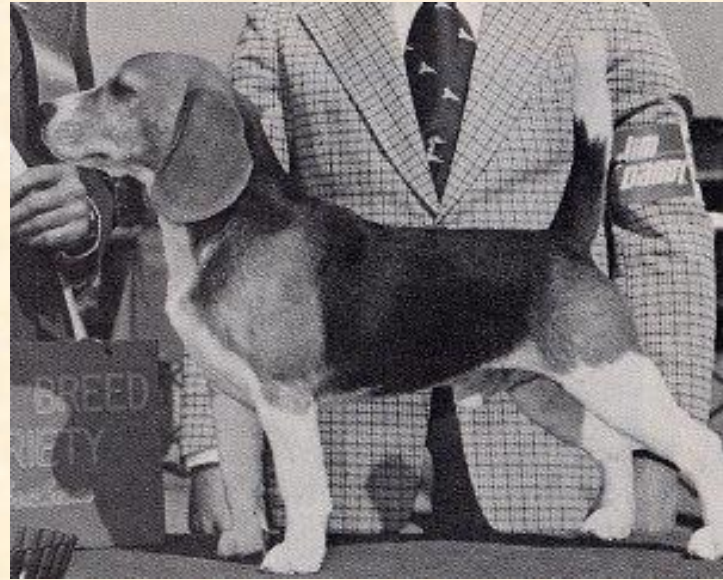
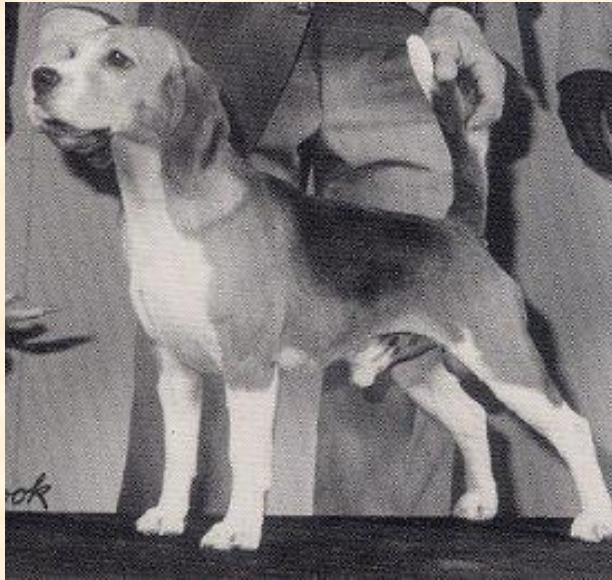
BEGIN your physical examination with a check of the bite. Measure if height is a concern. Then evaluate: the head planes, ear set, ear length, the front assembly, the body to leg ratio, the height to length ratio, backline, coat, rear assembly, tail set, muscle tone, and check for testicles on males.

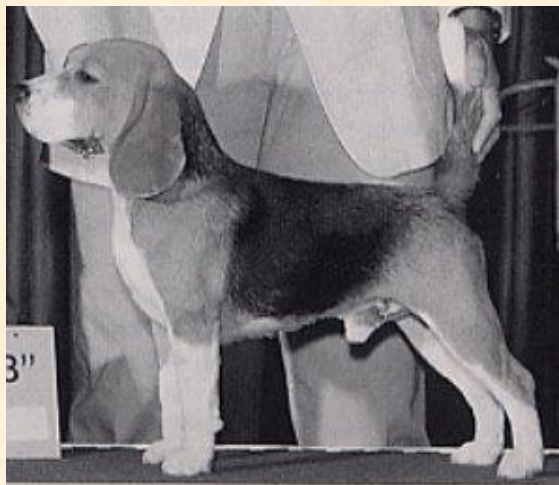
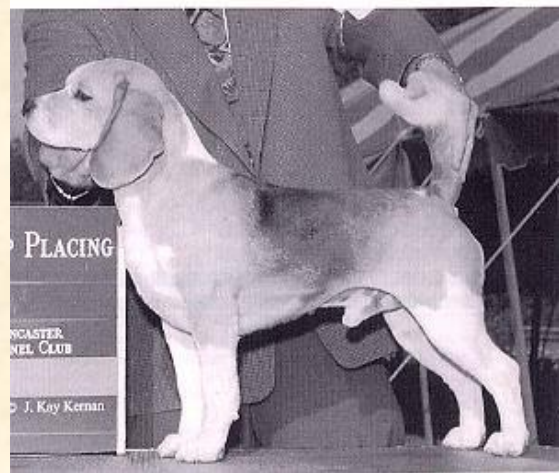
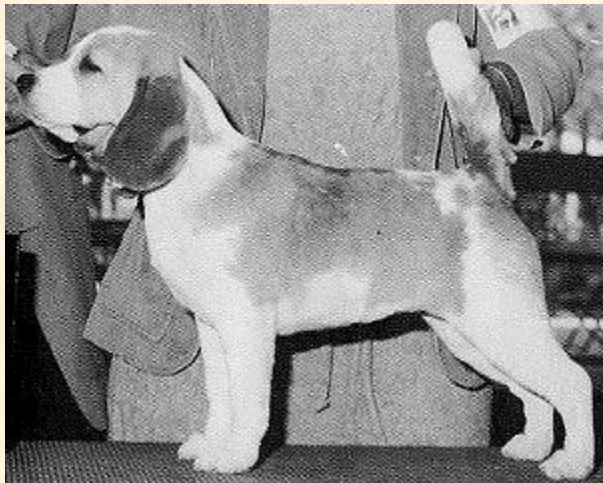
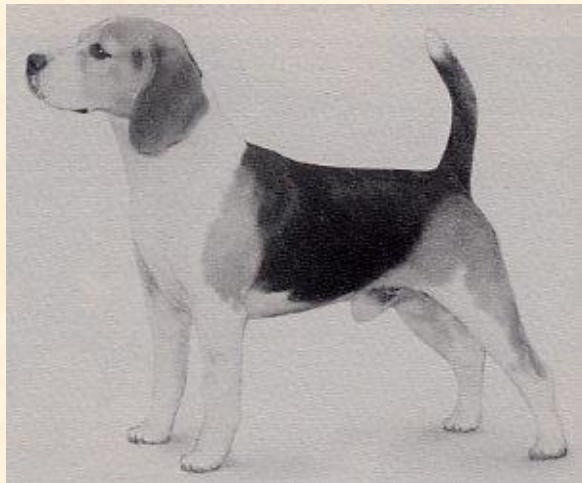
Gait the dog to check for soundness, of course!

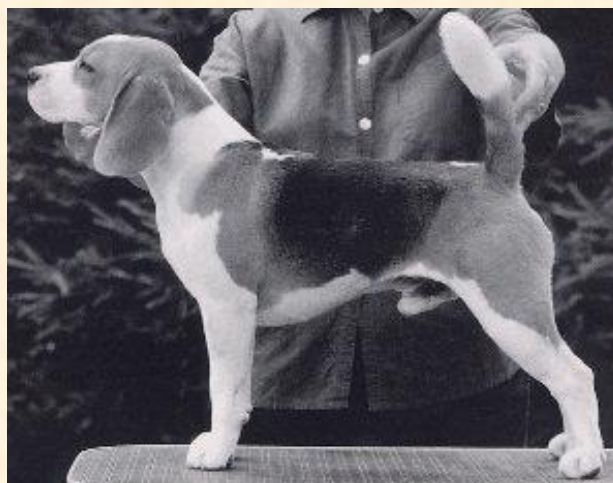
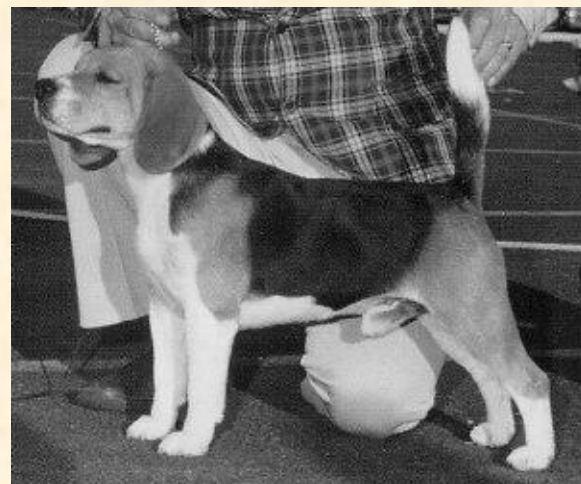
Make your final placements on general appearance, soundness, temperament, and finally, color. (You will rarely have to base your final placement on color.)

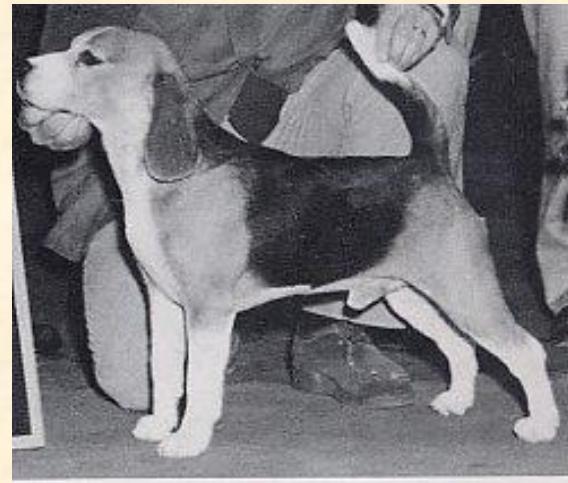
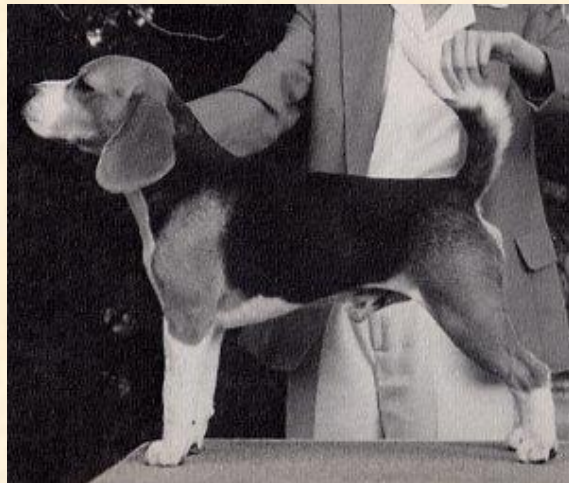
GALLERY OF BEAGLES

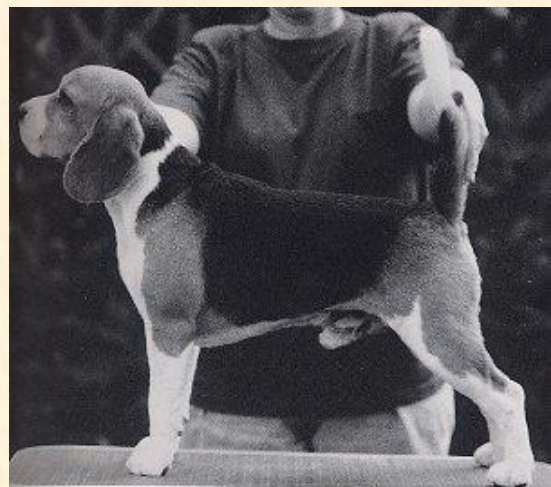
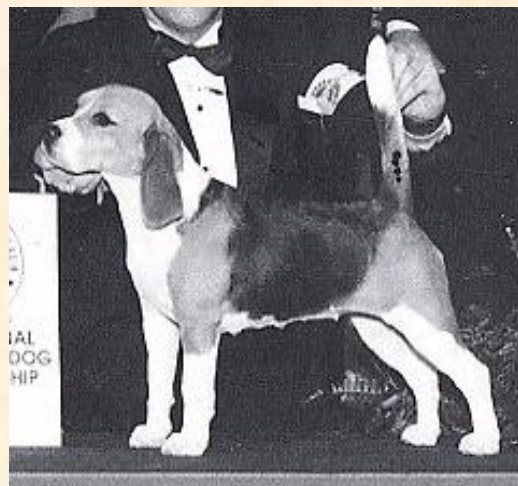
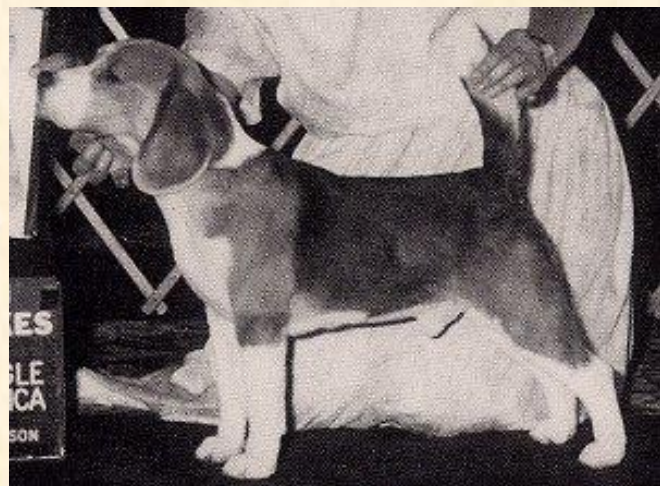
There is no such thing as a “perfect” beagle. Variety in type is good for the breed to an extent. Here are some nice examples of beagles. Do an evaluation as you “see” each one. Start developing your “eye” for breed type and correct structure.

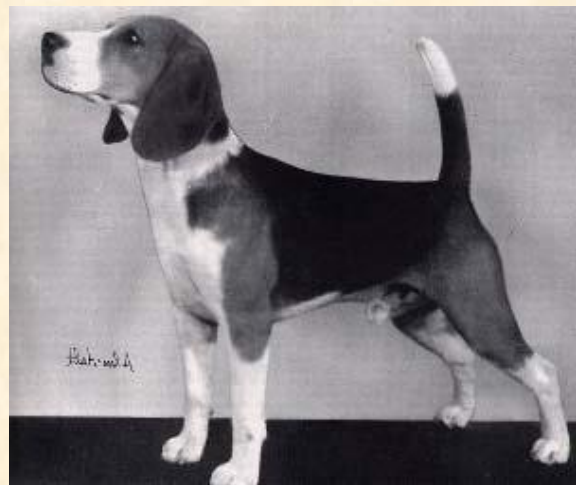
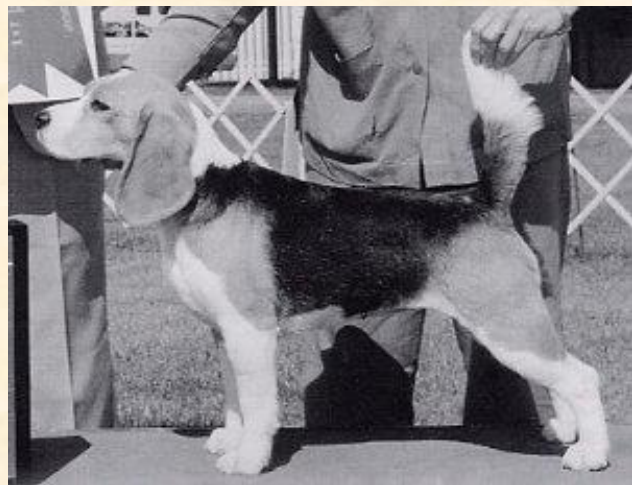










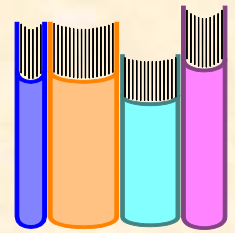








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The New Complete Beagle: Henry J Colombo, A C Holcombe, Lew Madden, Owen Payne, and Morgan Wing Jr; *Published by Howell Book House*

Visualization of the Beagle Standard: *Published by the National Beagle Club of America, Inc. www.nationalbeagleclub.org*

The New Beagle: Judith Musladin MD, A.C. Musladin MD, and Ada Lueke; *Published by Howell Book House*

All About Beagles: Heather Priestley, *Published by Pelham Books*

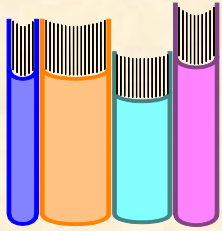
The Beagle: Marcia A. Foy, Anna Katherine Nicholas; *Published by TFH Publications*

Your Beagle: Robert J. Berndt, *Published by Denlinger's*

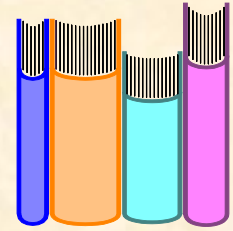
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This Is The Beagle: George D Whitney DVM, *Published by TFH publications.*

Beagles Today: Andrew H. Brace, *Published by Howell Book House*



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Canine Terminology - *Harold Spira, Published by Howell Book House, Inc.*

K-9 Structure & Terminology - *Edward M Gilbert, Jr & Thelma R Brown, published by DogFolk Enterprises*

Dog Anatomy, A Pictorial Approach To Canine Structure: *Peter C Good*
The Dog in Action: *McDowell Lyon, Published by Howell Book House*
Dogsteps: *Rachel Page Elliott, E W Tucker, Published by Doral Publishing*

Dogsteps-A New Look: *Rachel Page Elliott, Published by Doral Publishing*

Dog Locomotion & Gait Analysis: *Curtis M Brown*

A COMPREHENSIVE AND DETAILED STUDY OF THE BEAGLE STANDARD. A REFERENCE FOR ALL BREEDERS AND JUDGES.

- **Awesome job, it is well thought out, understandable, and thorough**
Eddie Dzuik, Lanbur Beagles
- **... is absolutely sensational. You have covered all aspects in an understandable manner.....I can' think of any better info I have received on the breed. ..It is so worthwhile it definitely belongs on my reference shelf.**
Barbara Langlois, AKC Judge
- **... in-depth analysis of the AKC standard. I found it to be very interesting and informative. I highly recommend this to everyone in the breed. To the new comer, it will really answer many of the questions that you have regarding structure and movement. In fact, I would recommend it to any breeder who is selling someone their first show dog. I wish that I had this when I first started in this sport. It would have helped to answer many questions that have taken me a couple of years to understand and grasp.---**
Laura Law, Beagle Exhibitor
- **Thanks for the great CD/BOOK. It is well done and we certainly enjoyed it. It is a good learning tool for anyone and will be especially valuable to new beaglers and prospective judges. If widely used it will bring uniformity to the judging seminars. Good Job!!!--Peggy and John Shaw- Shaw's Beagles**
- **WOW -Sharon Clark - SwanLake Beagles**
- **Utilized in the Beagle breed seminar at Westminster Kennel Club 2004**