

FRENCH BULLDOG

A Breed Standard is the guideline that describes the ideal characteristics, temperament, and appearance of a breed, and ensures that the breed is fit for function, with soundness essential. Breeders and Judges should, at all times, be mindful of features that could be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare, or soundness of this breed.

Most recent changes to this Standard have an effective date of 01/01/2024

ORIGIN

France.

UTILISATION

Companion and Toy dog.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Probably descending, like all Mastiffs, from the Epirus and the Roman Empire Molossers, relative of the Bulldog of Great Britain, the Alaunts (tribe of the Middle Ages), the Mastiffs, and small-type Mastiffs of France. The Bulldog, we know, is the product of different crossings done by enthusiastic breeders in the popular quarters of Paris in the 1880s. During that period, Bulldogs were dogs belonging to Parisian market porters, butchers, and coachmen. A smaller variety, so-called “Toy Bulldog”, soon won over high society and the artistic world by its particular appearance and character

and rapidly became popular. The first breed club was founded in 1880 in Paris. The first registration dates from 1885, and the first standard was established in 1898, the year in which the French Kennel Club recognised the French Bulldog breed. The first dog of this breed was shown at an exhibition as early as 1887. The standard, modified in 1931-1932 and 1948, was reformulated in 1986 by H.F. Reant, with the collaboration of R. Triquet (F.C.I. publication 1987), then in 1994 by Violette Guillon (F.C.I. publication 1995), and in 2012 by the French Bulldog Club committee.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The type is of a small-sized Molossian. A powerful dog for its small size, short, stocky, compact in all its proportions, smooth-coated, with a snub nose, erect ears, and a naturally short tail. Must have the appearance of an active, intelligent, very muscular dog, of a compact build, with a solid bone structure. No point is exaggerated compared to the others, which could spoil the dog's general harmony, in appearance and in movement.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

- The length of the body – between the point of the shoulder and the point of the buttocks – slightly surpasses the height at the withers.
- Short Face.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

Sociable, lively, playful, possessive, and keen companion dog.

HEAD

Must be strong, broad, and square, covered by the skin of the head, which forms symmetrical folds and wrinkles, without excess.

Cranial Region:

Skull: Broad, almost flat from ear to ear, domed forehead. Prominent superciliary arches, separated by a particularly developed furrow between the eyes. The furrow must not extend onto the skull. External occipital protuberance is barely developed.

Stop: Pronounced.

Facial Region:

The head of the French Bulldog is characterised by a shortening of the maxillary-nasal part [ed. muzzle] as well as a slight, to moderate, slope of the nose backwards. The nose is slightly upturned (“snub nose”).

Nose: Black, broad, snubbed, with symmetrical and well-opened nostrils, slanting towards the rear. The slope of the nostrils, as well as the upturned nose must, however, allow normal nasal breathing.

Muzzle: Very short, broad, with concentric symmetrical folds.

Lips: Thick, a little loose, and black. The upper lip meets the lower lip at its middle, completely covering the teeth. The profile of the upper lip is descending and rounded. The tongue must never show when the dog is not excited.

Cheeks: Well-developed.

Jaws and teeth: Broad and powerful jaws. The lower jaw projects in front of the upper jaw and turns up. The arch of the lower incisors is rounded. The jaw must not show lateral deviation or torsion. The gap between the incisors of the upper and the lower jaw should not be strictly delimited [*ed.defined*], the essential condition being that the upper and the lower lips meet to completely cover the teeth. The lower incisors surpass [*ed. overlap*] the upper incisors. Sufficiently developed incisors and canines. Complete bite is desirable.

Eyes:

Clearly visible eyes, striking, with lively expression, set low, quite far from the nose and the ears, dark-coloured, rather large, rounded, showing no trace of white (sclera) when the dog is looking straight forward. Rims of eyelids must be black.

Ears:

Medium size, wide at the base and rounded at the top. Set high on the head, but not too close together, carried erect. The ear is open towards the front. The skin must be fine and soft to the touch.

NECK

Short, powerful, slightly arched, without dewlap, broadens towards the shoulder.

BODY

Topline: Rising progressively, but not excessively, from the withers towards the loin. This conformation – also called roachback – is typical for the breed.

Back: Broad and muscular, firm without slackness.

Loin: Short, broad, and arched.

Croup: Well-sloping.

Chest: Cylindrical and well let down (slightly under the elbows); very well-sprung ribs, so-called “barrel shaped”. Forechest broad and square-shaped, seen from the front.

Underline and belly: Tucked-up but not whippet.

TAIL

Naturally short, ideally long enough to cover the anus, set low, rather straight, thick at the base and tapering at the tip. A kinked, knotted, broken, or relatively long tail that does not reach beyond the point of the hocks, is admitted. It is carried low. Even in action, the tail must not rise above the horizontal.

LIMBS

Forequarters:

General appearance: Forelegs upright (and straight) seen in profile and from the front.

Shoulder: Must be well laid back.

Upper arm: Short, thick, muscular, slightly curved.

Elbow: Close and tight to the body.

Forearm: Short, straight, and muscular.

Carpus (wrist): Solid and short.

Metacarpus (pastern): Short and slightly oblique, seen in profile.

Hindquarters:

General appearance: The hind legs are strong and muscular, a little longer than the forelegs, thus raising the hindquarters. The legs are upright as seen both in profile and from behind.

Thigh: Well-muscled, firm.

Hock joint: Quite well let down, neither too angulated nor too straight. Tarsus: solid.

Metatarsus (rear pastern): Short.

FEET

Forefeet:

Round, compact, of small dimension, i.e. “cat-feet”, turning slightly outward. The toes are tight, nails short, thick and black.

Hind feet:

Round, compact, turning neither inward nor outward.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

The legs move parallel to the median plane of the body, whether seen in front or from behind. Free movement with good hind leg thrust.

SKIN

Firm.

COAT

Smooth coat, close, glossy, and soft, without undercoat.

COLOUR

- **Brindle:** Fawn coat moderately characterised by transversal dark brindling, creating a 'tiger-marked' effect. Strongly brindled coats must not cover out the fawn ground colour. A black mask may be present. Limited white spotting is admissible.
- **Fawn:** Solid coat, from light fawn to dark fawn, sometimes presenting a paler colouring of the inclined parts [*ed. angled surfaces*], with or without a black mask, although masked subjects are preferred. Sometimes accompanied by limited white spotting.
- **Coat with white spotting:**
 - **Pied:** Brindled with moderate or important [*ed. extensive*] white spotting, the spotting being ideally distributed over the entire subject. Some blotches on the skin are admissible.
 - **Fawn and white:** Fawn with moderate or important [*ed. extensive*] white spotting, the spotting being ideally distributed over the entire dog. Some blotches of the skin are tolerated.

* The nose is always black in all coat colours, never brown or blue.

* All-white subjects – provided the edge of eye rims and nose are black – are admitted, but not bred to, because of a risk of deafness.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: 27cm – 35cm (approx. 10½" – 14").

Females: 24cm – 32cm (approx. 9½" – 12½").

A deviation of 1cm above and below the standard is tolerated.

Weight:

Males: 9kg – 14kg

Females: 8kg – 13kg

500g more than the standard weight is allowed when the subject is typical.

N.B. Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum. Only functionally and clinically healthy dogs, with breed typical conformation should be used for breeding.

FAULTS

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog, and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

- Strongly flecked black brindle with white coat.
- Fawn and white coat strongly red-speckled.
- In fawn coats, deep black trace extending along the spine.
- White stockings in brindles and fawns.
- Light-coloured nails in brindle and fawn.
- No roach back

Severe faults:

- Muzzle too long or excessively short.
- Tongue visible when mouth is closed.
- Light eyes (hawk eye).
- Excessive depigmentation of the lips, nose, eyelids, the rim of which should never be entirely depigmented.
- Pincer bite.
- Arch back (camel back)

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Lacking type: insufficient characteristics that result in the dog not really resembling other subjects of the breed.

- Completely closed nostrils.
- Torsion or lateral deviation of the jaw, resulting in the tongue constantly being visible.
- Lower incisors articulating behind upper incisors.
- Permanently visible canines (fangs), mouth being closed.
- Heterochromie eyes (wall eye).
- Colour of nose other than black.
- Ears not carried erect.
- Tail-less or ingrown tail.
- Dewclaw on hindquarters.
- Reversed hock.
- Long, wired-haired, or woolly coat.
- Colour not in accordance with what is prescribed in the standard, namely black, black with fawn markings (black and tan), and all dilutions of black, with or without white spotting.
- Size and weight outside the standard limits.
- Respiratory distress.
- Deafness.

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FCI Standard No 101: BOULEDOGUE FRANÇAIS (FRENCH BULLDOG)

FCI Classification: Group 5: Spitz and Primitive types

Section 11.2. Small Molossian dogs

Without Working Trial