



# Mastiff and Bullmastiff

Anne-Marie Class

All pictures in this PowerPoint are just examples.  
All these dogs are Mastiffs and Bullmastiffs with qualities and faults, some of them being good examples by comparison with the standards.  
Some of them have faults which are exaggerations .

# Firstly dogs ... Don't forget !

## ► Some history

Dogs of Mastiff types existed in Great Britain since the earlier centuries.

In fact at that time, they were only big dogs.

But one thing is assured, it was always considered as a working dog.

They were used for guarding villages or castle, as well as keeping livestock, also for hunting when they belonged to lords, unfortunately for fighting sometime .



# And the Bullmastiff ?

In fact, in Britain, there were for a long time kind of dogs who were not Bulldogs, not Mastiffs.



The perfect dog is not born but these 2 dogs are correct examples of their breed



Excellent construction  
muzzle slightly short



Good example of a correct  
silhouette



# The Mastiff



An easy temperament, sociable with people and other animal if used.

A good guarding dog, deterring.

# Mastiff



“Extremely large dog in both height and girth, broad and deep in body, full of substance, with large strong bone.”

« Large, powerful, well-knit frame. »

Does it mean that the bigger is the better ?



# What says the standard ?



Size is desirable, but only if combined with quality and if absolute soundness is maintained. Height and substance important **if** both points are proportionately combined.

**Clear no ?**

# Proportions



Strong body of  
a young male

Length of body taken from point of shoulder to point of buttock greater than height at withers.

Length of muzzle to whole head and face as 1 : 3.

Circumference of muzzle (measured midway between eyes and nose) to that of head (measured before the ears) as 3 : 5.



# Head



No more wrinkles desired

Skull: Skull broad between ears, forehead flat, but wrinkled when attention is excited.

Stop: Stop between eyes well marked but not too abrupt.

Whilst in repose, any exaggeration of wrinkle or excess of skin is unacceptable in mature adults.

# Just examples



Overdone and not in accordance with the standard which says :  
*Whilst in repose, any exaggeration of wrinkle or excess of skin is unacceptable in mature adults.*



# Jaws / Teeth

Under-jaw broad to end. Canine teeth healthy; powerful and wide apart.

Incisors level (pincer bite, edge to edge) or lower projecting beyond upper (reversed scissor bite) but never so much as to become visible when mouth is closed.

*Under-jaw not curved and undershot if exists should not be too big*

# Eyes and ears

Moderate size, wide apart. Colour hazel brown, darker the better, showing no haw.

Loose eyelids highly undesirable.

Free from obvious eye problems.

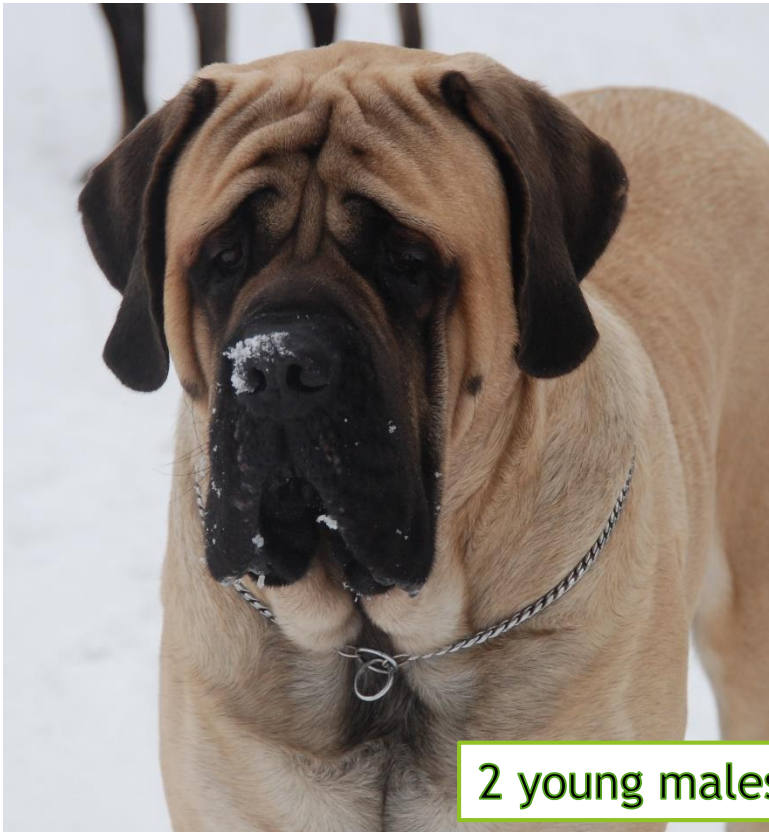
Ears: Small, thin to touch, wide apart, set on at highest points of sides of skull, so as to continue outline across summit and lying flat and close to cheeks when in repose.

Must be black





Head, in general outline, giving a square appearance when viewed from any point.



2 young males (around 2 years)



# Body

- ▶ Body broad, deep, long, powerfully built, on legs wide apart and set.
- ▶ Muscles sharply defined.

This is an important point. Christopher Habig says :

A Mastiff is not a piece of meat



# good example and severe fault



Good strong and well angulated hindquarters



Good depth of flanks

*Cow hocks : Strength in hindquarters is of paramount importance, **cow hocks in mature adults is unacceptable.***

# BODY



2 year old dog, muscles well defined, correct topline

Do not forget high, long, wide ... That means never short body

Topline: **Level.**

Back: Wide and muscular.

Loin: Wide and muscular; flat and very wide in bitch, slightly arched in dog.



# Examples of good deep bodies

Mature 4 year old dog





Strong, powerful but never with excessive weight which is not desirable



Chest: Wide, deep and well let down between forelegs. Ribs arched and well rounded. False ribs deep and well set back to hips.



# Tail



**TAIL:** Set on high, and reaching to hocks, or a little below them, wide at its root and tapering to end, hanging straight in repose, but forming a curve with end pointing upwards, but not over back, when dog is excited.

# HINDQUARTERS



- ▶ General appearance: Broad, wide and muscular. **Strength in Hindquarters is of paramount importance, cow hocks in mature adults is unacceptable.**
- ▶ Lower thigh: Well developed.
- ▶ Metatarsus (Rear pastern): Hocks bent, wide apart, and quite squarely set when standing or walking.
- ▶ Hind feet: Large, round **and tight**. Toes well arched. Nails **black**.



# A Mastiff should be a sound mover



A puppy can be a good mover

## **GAIT / MOVEMENT:**

Powerful, easy extension, driven from the rear, fluent, sound, with ground-covering strides.

Level topline maintained whilst on the move. Tendency to pace is undesirable.

Absolute soundness essential.







# Temperament



- ▶ A combination of grandeur and courage. Calm, affectionate to owners, but capable of guarding. **Usually indifferent with strangers; timidity is unacceptable.**

# And what about the Bullmastiff



- ▶ In fact the breed existed for long In Great-Britain even if it was not known by this name.
- ▶ Buffon, a famous French naturalist, wrote in 1775 about a dog called “Strong Bulldog” supposed to be crossed between Mastiffs and Bulldogs. In fact, in that times, there were lots of diverse types between the biggest, the Mastiff or Bandog and Bulldogs which were very different from the current English Bulldog.



# It became officially the Bullmastiff

In the late part of the nineteenth century, they became gamekeeper helper. They were called Gamekeepers night dogs.

Mastiffs were too cumbersome and too big for this use and more active and agile mixed dogs between Mastiffs types and Bulldogs were selected. Their function was to put down poachers and hold him until the gamekeeper arrives.

The official recognition of the breed date back to 1924.

# Différents types of earlier times





# GENERAL APPEARANCE



- ▶ Powerful build, symmetrical,
- ▶ showing great strength, but not cumbersome; sound and active.



# HEAD

- ▶ Skull: Skull large and square, viewed from every angle, fair wrinkle when interested, but not when in repose.
- ▶ **Broad and deep.**
- ▶ Stop: Pronounced.



# Nose

**Well opened nostrils.**

Nose broad with widely spreading nostrils; flat neither pointed nor turned up in profile.



*Carole Martin* ~ PHOTOGRAPHIE

# Muzzle reasonably short



distance from tip of nose to stop approximately one-third of length from tip of nose to center of occiput, broad under eyes and sustaining nearly same width to end of nose; blunt and cut off square, forming right angle with upper line of face, and at same time proportionate with skull.



# Some comments



Muzzle could be cut squarer

Muzzle too short (1/4)  
Slightly over-wrinkled  
Good square Skull, well  
set and carried ears



Too much dewlepp



Correct proportions and  
lines  
Flew slightly pendulous  
(Flews not pendulous,  
never hanging below  
level of lower jaw.)

# Jaws and teeth



Mature bitch

Under-jaw broad to end. Level (**Pincer bite, edge to edge**) desired but slightly undershot allowed but not preferred.

Canine teeth large and set wide apart, other teeth strong, even and well placed.





Correct ears



Ears could be better carried  
nose lacking  
pigmentation

## Ears

V-shaped, folded back, set on wide and high, level of occiput giving square appearance to skull which is most important. Small and deeper in colour than body. Point of ear level with eye when alert.  
Rose ears highly undesirable.



## BODY

**Back:** Short and straight, giving compact carriage, but not so short as to interfere with activity. Roach and sway backs highly undesirable.

**Loin:** Loins wide and muscular with fair depth of flank.

**Chest:** Chest, wide and deep, well let down between forelegs, with deep brisket.





## TAIL

Set high, strong at root and tapering, reaching to hocks, carried straight or curved, but not hound fashion. Crank tails highly undesirable.



# FOREQUARTERS

General appearance: Forelegs set wide apart, presenting a straight front.

Shoulder: Shoulders muscular, sloping and powerful, not overloaded.

Forearm: Forelegs powerful and straight, well boned.

Metacarpus (Pastern): Pasterns straight and strong.

Forefeet: Well arched, cat-like, with rounded toes, pads hard. Dark toenails desirable. Splayed feet highly undesirable.





# American Bullmastiff



# HINDQUARTERS



General appearance: Hind legs strong and muscular.

**Lower thigh:** Well developed **lower** thighs, denoting power and activity, not cumbersome.

Hock joint: Moderately bent. Cow hocks highly undesirable. Hind feet: Well arched, cat-like, with rounded toes, pads hard. Dark toenails desirable. Splayed feet highly undesirable.



# Some comments



Back long and not  
strong enough

Flews  
not  
ideal



Slightly  
overweight  
Legs could  
stronger

# GAIT / MOVEMENT



Movement indicates power and sense of purpose. When moving **straight** neither front nor hind legs should cross or plait, right front and left rear leg rising and falling at same time. A firm backline unimpaired by powerful thrust from hind legs denoting a balanced and harmonious movement.



# Colour



Any shade of brindle, fawn or red; colour to be pure and clear. A slight white marking on chest permissible. Other white markings undesirable. Black muzzle essential, toning off towards eyes, with dark markings around eyes contributing to expression.

# What is the danger for Mastiffs and Bullmastiffs ?

## Hypertypes

Standards do not describe an unsound Mastiff or Bullmastiff.

But, if judges award overdone dogs, they work against the breeds.

Standards have to be respected by judges and breeders.

Too heavy mastiffs, not able to trot around the ring are not in the standard which says : **Absolute soundness essential.**

**Too many wrinkles, too short muzzle**



# Standard says : muscles sharply defined



And :  
Whilst in  
repose, any  
exaggeration of  
wrinkle or  
excess of skin is  
unacceptable in  
mature adults.  
We can say that  
this picture is  
not in  
accordance with  
the standard

Standard says just : fair wrinkle  
when interested, but not when in repose





Find on Internet 11 month old



This is to say  
Too heavy too early !

# Everything is in the standards

- Standards never describe an unsound dog and we breeders, judges, breed club responsible we are not in charge of statues but of dogs

