

Illustrated  
FCI - Standard No. 45

Bernese Mountain Dog  
("Dürrbächler")

Approved by the Swiss Club of Bernese Mountain Dog  
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**ORIGIN:** Switzerland

## **UTILIZATION**

Originally used as a guard-, draught- and cattle dog on farms in the Canton Bern, today also family dog and versatile working dog.



## FCI CLASSIFICATION

Group 2: Pinscher and Schnauzer, type-Molosoid, breeds-Swiss Mountain and Cattle-Dogs

Section 3: Swiss Cattle Dogs without working trial

## BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The Bernese Mountain Dog is a farm dog of ancestral origin which was used as a guard and draught dog and for driving cattle in the prealpine regions and in the midland areas around Bern. Originally he was named “Dürnbächler” according to the name of the hamlet and of the inn of Dürnbach, near Riggisberg in the Canton Bern where these long-haired tricoloured farm dogs were especially numerous. In 1902, 1904 and 1907 specimen of this breed had already been exhibited at dog shows, and in 1907 some breeders of the region of Burgdorf decided to promote the pure breeding of these dogs by founding the “Schweizerischer Dürnbach-Klub”, and fixing the characteristic traits of the breed. In 1910, at a show in Burgdorf where many farmers of that region brought their Dürnbächler dogs to, already 107 specimen were shown.

From that day onward this dog, renamed “Bernese Mountain Dog” following the example of the other breeds of Swiss Mountain Dogs became rapidly appreciated all over Switzerland and in the neighbouring parts of Germany. Today the Bernese Mountain Dog is well known and appreciated all over the world as a family dog thanks to its striking tricoloured coat and its great adaptability



# The optimal family dog



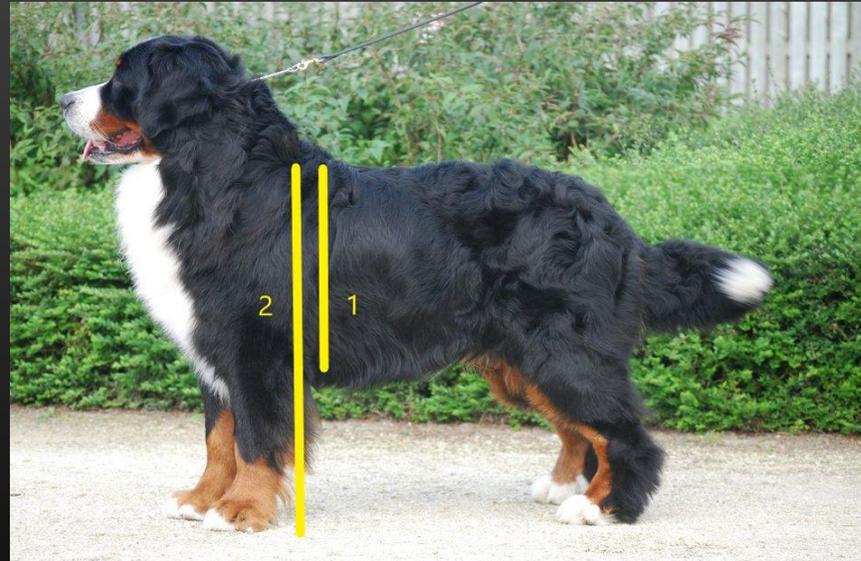
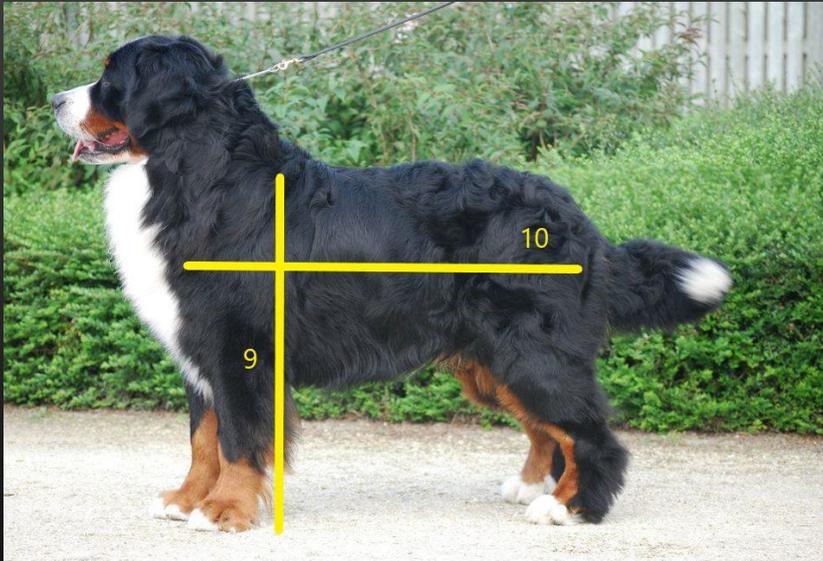
## GENERAL APPEARANCE

Longhaired, tricoloured, strong and agile working dog, of above medium size, with sturdily built limbs; harmonious and well balanced.



## IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

- Height at withers : length of body (measured from the point of the shoulder to the point of the buttock) = 9 : 10, rather compact than elongated
- Ideal relation of height at withers : depth of chest = 2 : 1.



## SIZE

Height at withers : for dogs 64 – 70 cm → ideal size 66 – 68 cm  
for bitches 58 – 66 cm → ideal size 60 – 63 cm



✘ incorrect  
format square



✘ incorrect  
format too long

## BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

Self-confident, attentive, vigilant, fearless in every day situations, good-natured and devoted to his own people, self-assured and placid towards strangers, of medium temperament, docile.

☞ Behavior is one of the most important trademarks of the Bernese Mountain Dog!

The unique, good-natured and philanthropic being farther much attention is paid. From the former farm dog he has become versatile family, companion, therapy, social and sports dog and has created a whole new status in society. Much higher expectations are placed on mental resilience and nerve costumes today. Today's Bernese Mountain Dog must be absolutely adaptable, without losing its independence and security. A strong reserved breed representative should therefore not be graded excellent.

Only with a free behavior the sequence of movements, the tail sets and the posture can be optimally assessed. Dogs showed like puppets and that stand like statues in the ring can not really be judged of behavior and/or character.

☞ **Aggressiveness and anxiety are disqualifying faults!**

# Bernese Mountain Dogs in use as therapy and social dogs





## HEAD

Strong, in size balanced to general appearance, not too massive

Cranial Region:

Skull : Viewed from the front and in profile little rounded. Frontal furrow hardly marked

Stop : Well defined, but without being too pronounced

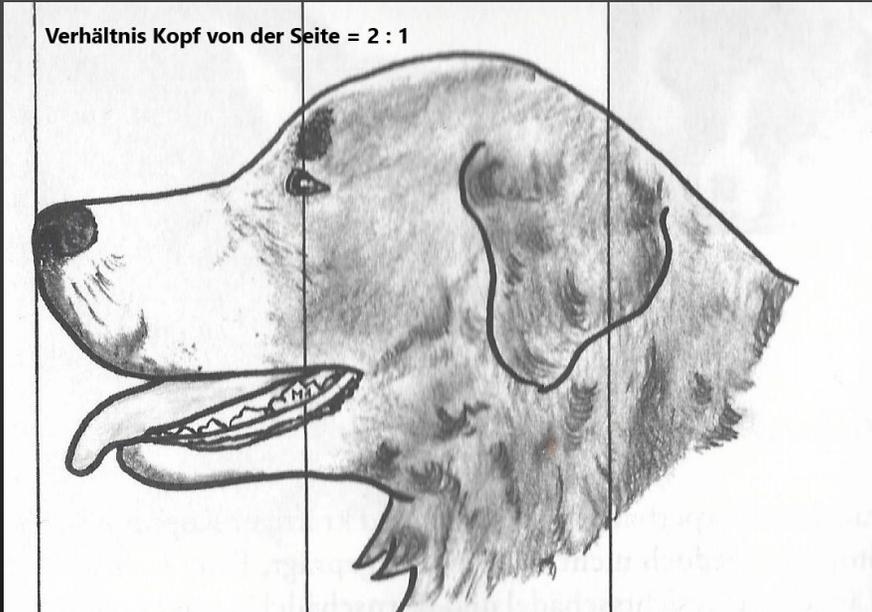


✓ Correct dog head



✓ Correct bitch head

## Ratio head to muzzle 2:1



- ✓ Correct  
stop and skull





- ✘ Incorrect
- Short muzzle in ratio to the head
- Stop is too pronounced
- Eyes light brown
- Spots of pigmentation

- ✘ Incorrect
- Flat skull, not enough stop



## FACIAL REGION

Nose: black

Muzzle: strong, of medium length, nasal bridge straight.

Lips: close fitting, black

✓ Correct





✘ Incorrect  
Open lips

✔ Correct  
Black pigmentation



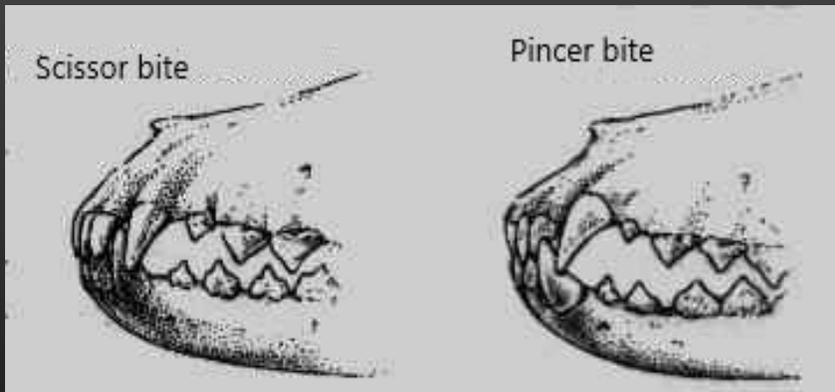
- ✘ Incorrect
- Overall too much loose skin
- Open lips
- Big ears



- ✘ Incorrect
- Lack of pigmentation
- Low earset

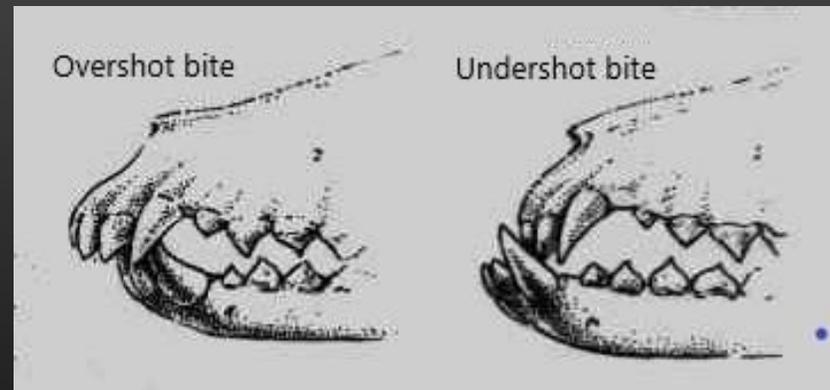
## Jaws/Teeth

Strong, complete scissor bite (molars 3 (M3) are not taken into consideration). Pincer bite accepted



correct

just tolerated !!



Undershot or overshot mouth + wry mouth are disqualifying faults !

👉 In the country of origin, a maximum of two P1 may be missing for breeding use (M3 (molars 3) are not taken into consideration) !

Eyes:

Dark brown, almond-shaped, with close fitting eyelids. Neither too deep-set nor prominent. Loose eyelids are faulty.



✓ Correct



✘ Incorrect

Open loose eyelids

☞ Disqualifying faults are entropion and ectropion and also one or two blue eyes (wall eye) !



✘ Incorrect  
light round eyes



✘ Incorrect  
round eyes

## Ears :

Medium-sized, set high, triangular in shape, slightly rounded at the tips, in repose hanging flat and close to the head. When alert, the rear part of the set-on is raised while the front edge of the ear remains close to the head.



✓ Both correct earset



✘ Incorrect:  
low and open earset  
too rounded skull

## NECK

Strong, muscular, of medium length

## BODY

Topline: From the neck running slightly downwards to the withers in a harmonious line, then running on straight and level.

Back: Firm, straight and level.

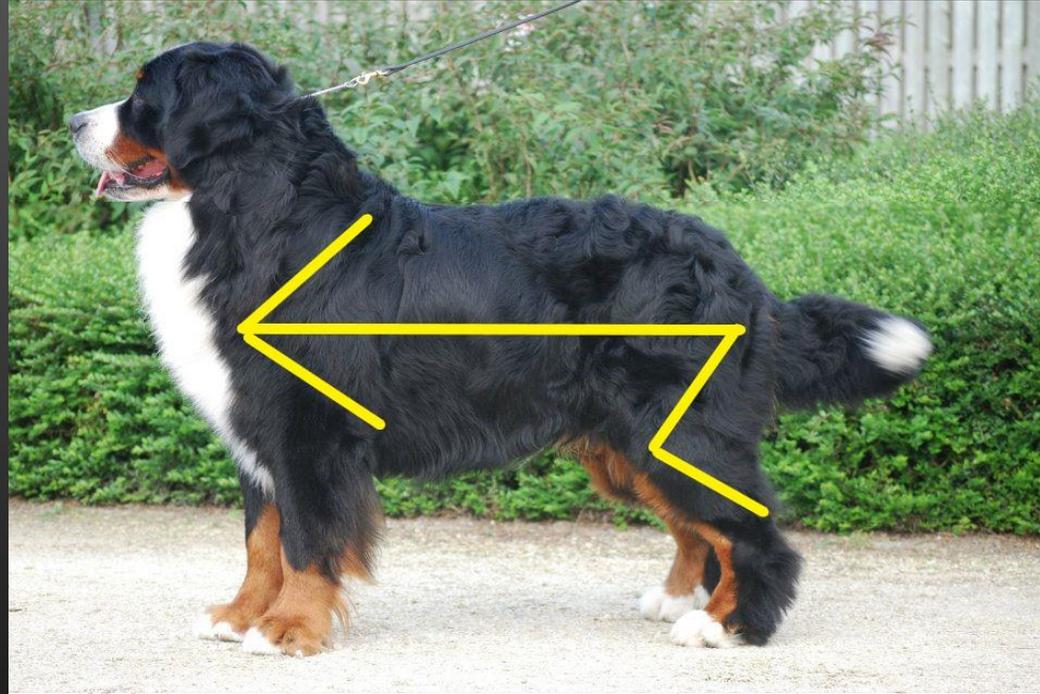
Loins: Broad and strong, seen from above slightly less broad than the chest.

Croup: Smoothly rounded

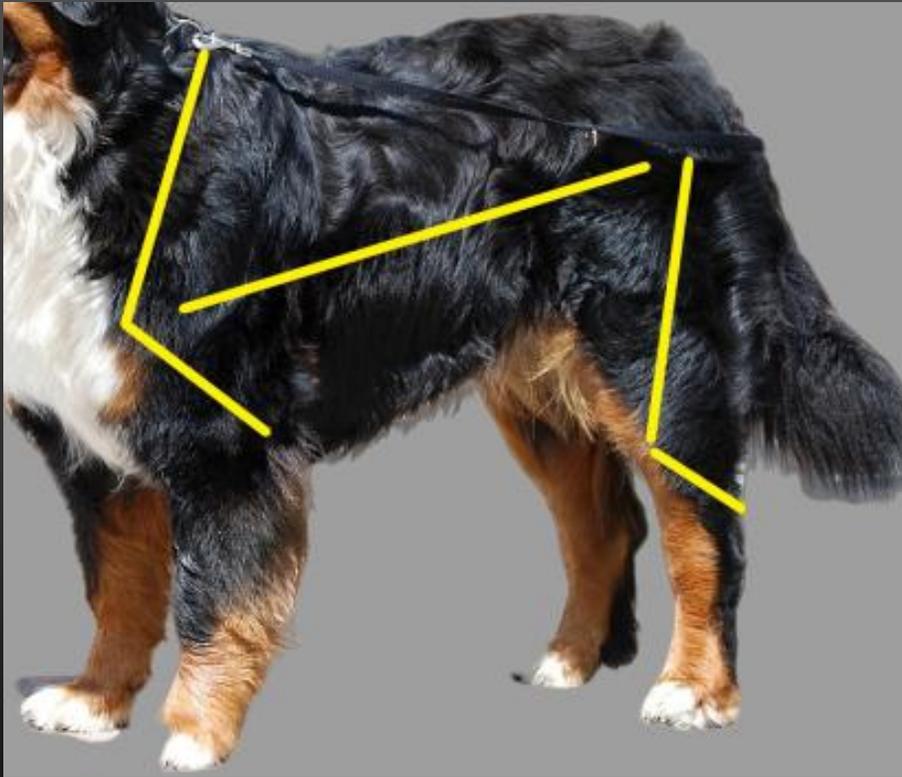


✓ Correct

Back line is parallel to line from the shoulder point to the buttock



👉 A weak back line is not to be rewarded in the judgement, especially with a large and heavy dog breed



✘ Incorrect:

The back line is not parallel to the line from the shoulder point to the buttock

Short upper arm and lower thigh

## Chest:

Broad and deep, reaching to the elbows; forechest distinctly developed; ribcage of wide-oval section extending as well back as possible.



✓ Correct



✓ Correct

👉 For a long time, poor breast shape has been a striking problem for the Bernese Mountain Dog. Since this entails further faulty features, great care should be taken. That requires an exact palpation with both hands!

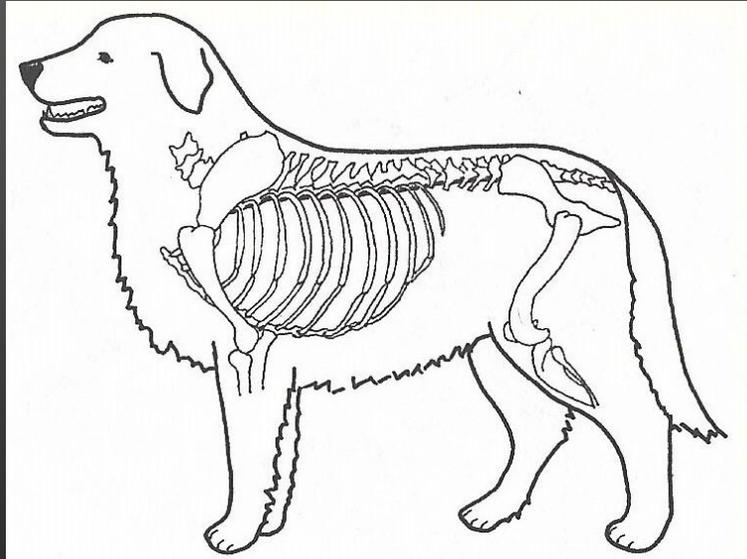


✘ Incorrect  
narrow chest

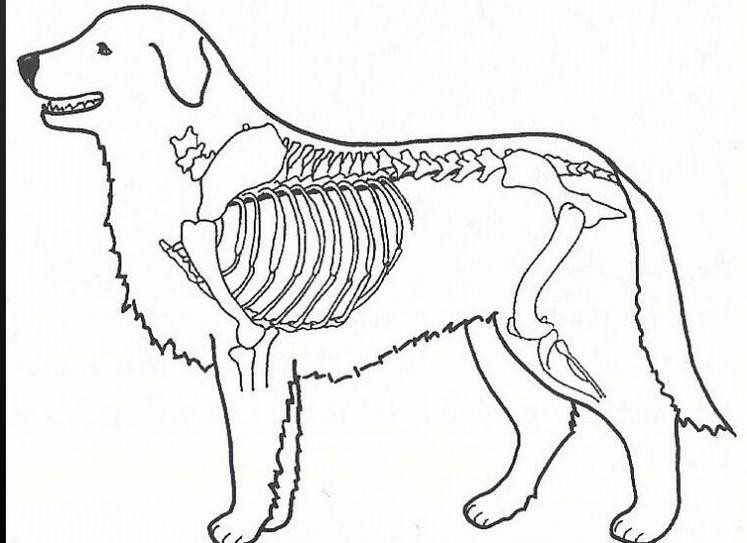


✘ Incorrect  
not enough forechest

✓ Correct  
long ribcage  
short in the loin



✗ Incorrect  
short ribcage  
long in the loin



# Underline / belly

Slightly rising from chest to hindquarters



## TAIL

Bushy, reaching at least to the hocks, hanging straight down when at rest, carried level with back or slightly above when moving.



✓ Correct  
hanging when at rest



✗ Incorrect  
tail between the legs

- ✓ Correct  
Slightly above the back when moving



- ✓ Correct  
Carried level with back when moving



✘ Incorrect  
high tail set, but not touching  
the back



☞ Kinky tail and ring tail are disqualifying faults!

# LIMBS

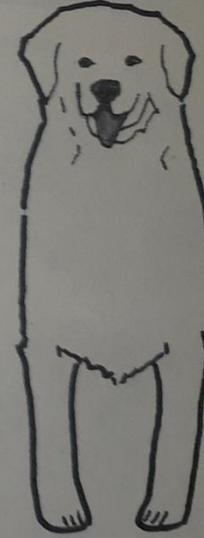
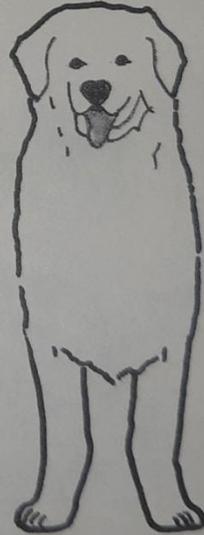
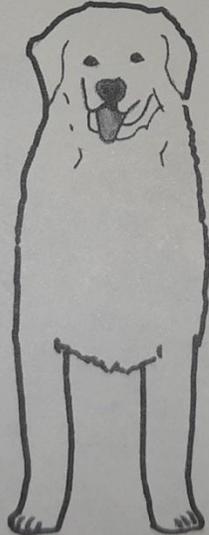
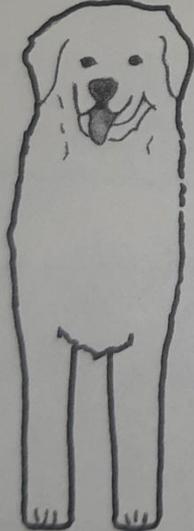
Generally: Strong bones

Forequarters: Forelegs seen from the front straight and parallel, standing rather wide apart



✓ Correct  
parallel and rather wide apart

Abweichungen



1

2

3

4

5

1. ✓ Correct -> parallel and straight, standing rather wide apart
2. ✗ Incorrect -> parallel and straight, but narrow
3. ✗ Incorrect -> standing rather wide apart, but toes turned out
4. ✗ Incorrect -> Elbows turned in, forefeet strongly turned out
5. ✗ Incorrect -> Elbows turned out, forefeet turned in

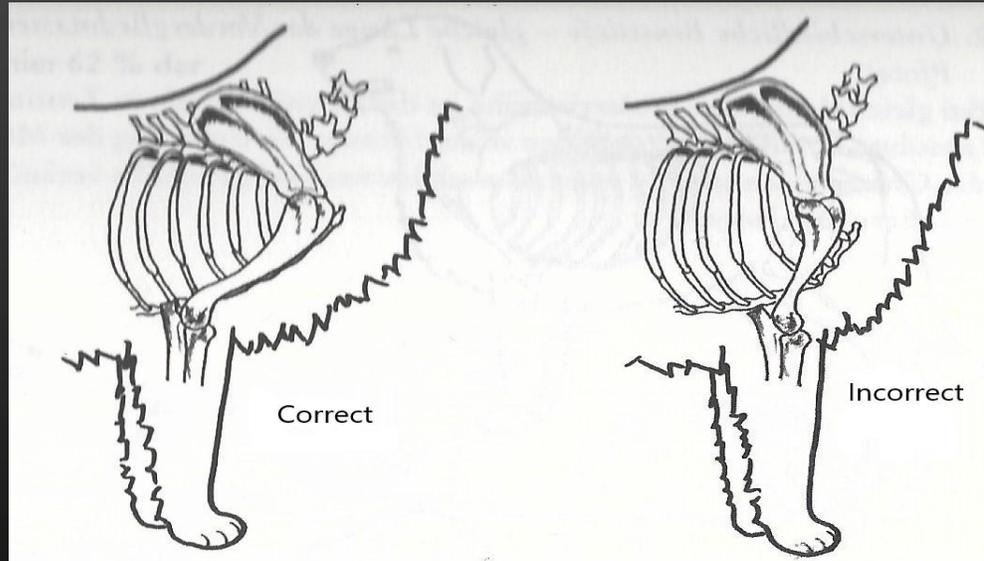
✘ Incorrect

Elbows turned in and narrow standing



Shoulders: Shoulder blade long, strong and well laid back, forming a not too obtuse angle with the upper arm, well attached to the chest, well muscled.

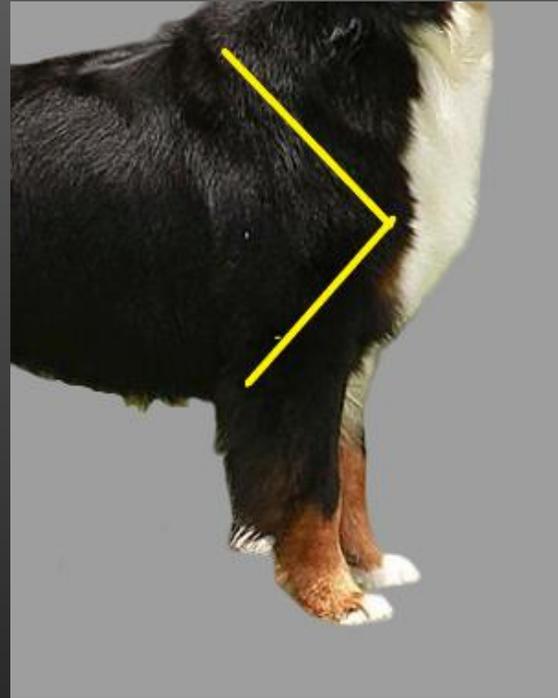
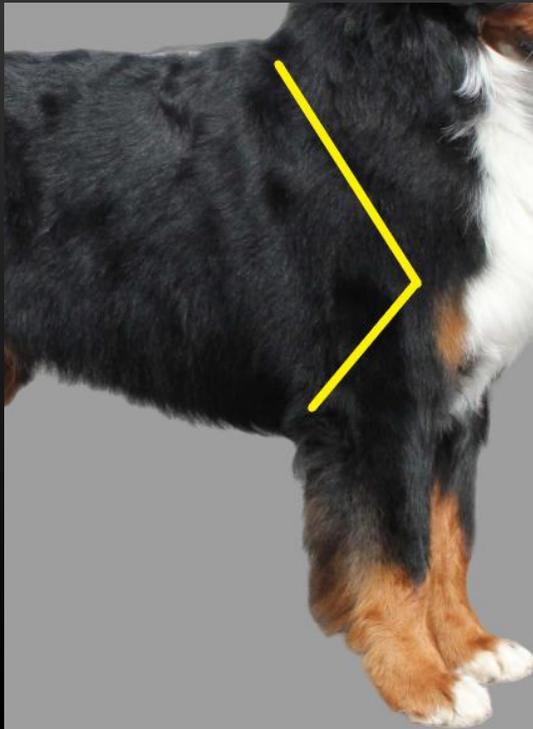
Upper arm: Long, set oblique



✓ Shoulder well laid back  
= clear angulation  
Shoulder and upper arm both long

✗ Shoulder not enough laid back  
= not enough angulation  
Shoulder long and upper arm short

✓ Correct  
clear forechest, shoulder and  
upper arm same length



✗ Incorrect  
Upright shoulder, not enough  
forechest, upper arm short

Elbows: Close fitting; neither turned in nor out.



✓ Correct

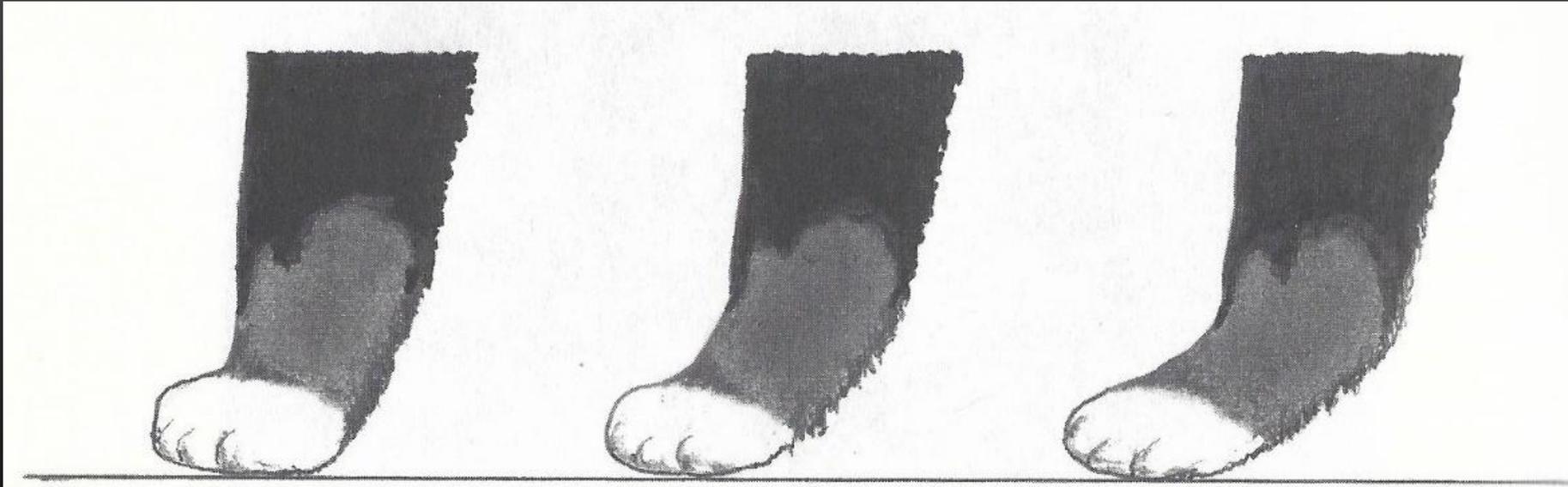
✘ Incorrect

Elbows turned in, narrow standing, weak in the pastern



Forearm: strong, straight

Pastern: Seen from the side almost upright, firm; seen from the front in straight line with the forearm.



✗ too upright

✓ correct

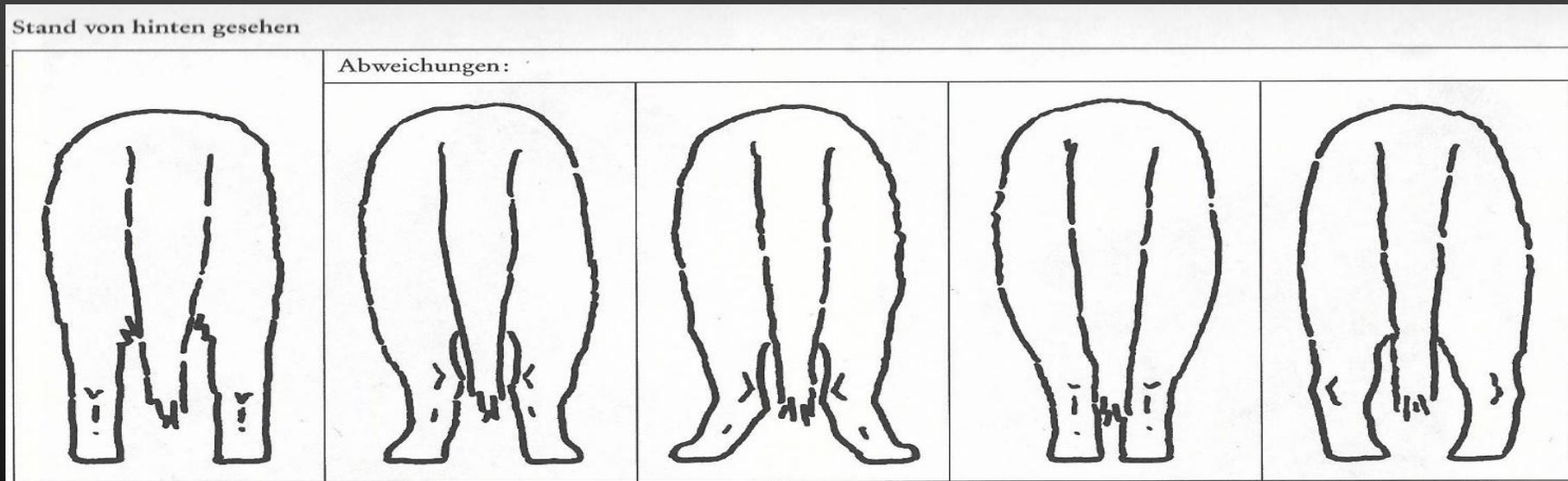
✗ not strong enough firmed

Forefeet: Short, roundish; with well-knit, well-arched toes.

Turned neither in nor out.

# HINDQUARTERS

Generally: Seen from the rear straight and parallel, not too close.



✓ Correct

✗ turned in

✗ turned out and  
with cow hocks

✗ Close hocks

✗ bandy legged

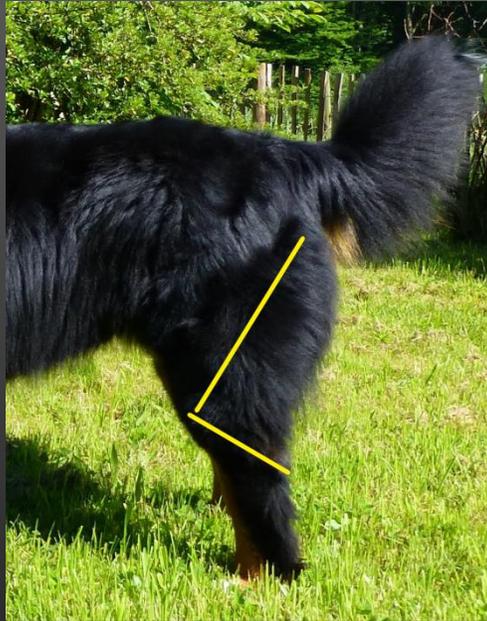
- **Upper thigh : Long, broad, strong and well muscled.**
- **Stifle : Distinctly well bent.**
- **Lower thigh : Long and oblique.**
- **Hock joint : Strong, well angulated.**
- **Metatarsus : Set almost vertically. Dewclaws to be removed (except in those countries where it is prohibited by law).**
- **Hind feet : Slightly less arched than forefeet, turned neither in nor out.**



✓ Correct  
well angulated

✗ Incorrect  
overangulated





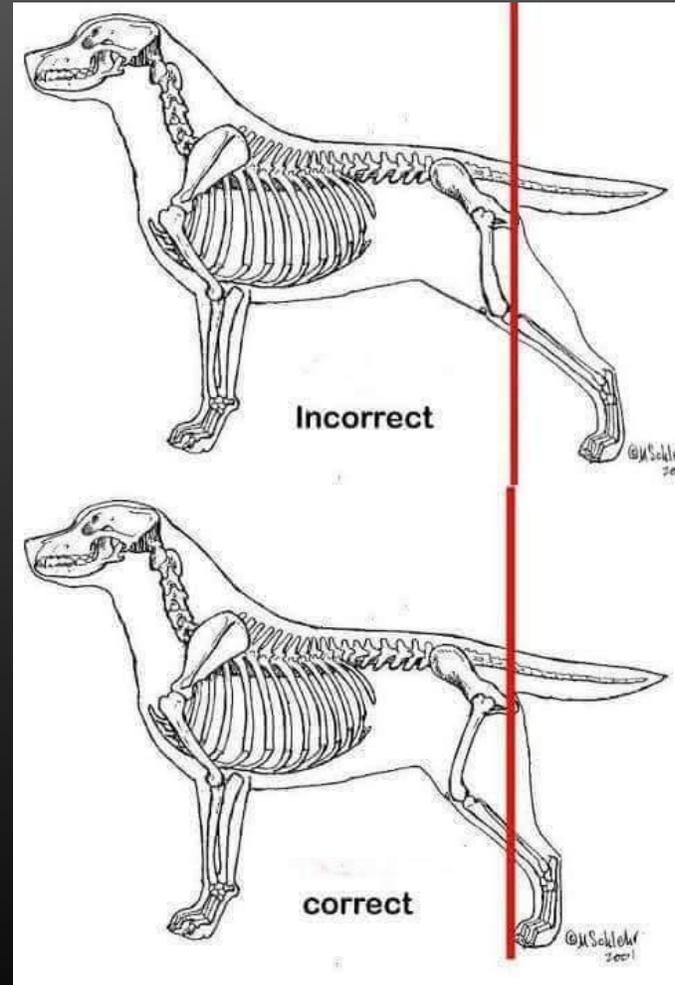
✘ Incorrect  
straight, long upper thigh,  
short lower thigh



✘ Incorrect  
sufficiently angulated



✗ Incorrect  
rear to far extended behind  
→ atypically!



## GAIT / MOVEMENT

Sound and balanced movement in all gaits covering a lot of ground, free stride reaching well out in front, with good drive from behind, at the trot, coming and going, legs moving forward in a straight line.

- ✓ Correct  
seen from the side  
with a correct tailset





✓ Correct  
not too close



✓ Correct  
Elbows neither turned in nor turned out

## COAT

Hair: Long, shining, straight or slightly wavy.



✘ Incorrect

open and overgroomed hair texture

not jet black colour → not natural → not accepted!



✘ Incorrect  
short coat



☞ Disqualifying fault → short coat, double coat (Stockhaar)!

The long coat is also a typical feature of the Bernese Mountain Dog!  
Therefore, attention should be paid to the natural appearance. This means  
long top coat and undercoat must be present!

## COLOUR

Jet black main colour with rich tan markings on the cheeks, above the eyes, on all four legs and on the chest with white markings as follows :

Clean white symmetrical markings on the head : blaze extending towards the nose on both sides to a muzzle band, the blaze should not reach the tan markings above the eyes, and the white muzzle band should not extend beyond the corners of the mouth.

Moderately broad, unbroken white marking on throat and chest.

Desirable : white feet, white tip of tail.

Tolerated : small white patch on nape of neck, small white anal patch.



All of these head white and paw markings are accepted! The focus should be on more important features. White on the tip of the tail or on the paws are welcome, but should not be punished if the rating is missing!

 Only a main color other than black and a lack of tri-color are disqualifying mistakes!

## FAULTS 1/2

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.

- Unsure behaviour
- Fine bones
- Irregular set of the incisors provided that the bite remains correct
- Absence of any other teeth than 2 PM1 (premolars 1); the M3 (molars 3) are not taken into consideration

Coat :

- Distinctly curly coat

## Faults of colour and markings :

- Absence of white on head
- Blaze too large and/or muzzle band reaching noticeably beyond the corners of the mouth.
- White collar.
- Large white patch on nape of neck (maximum diameter more than 6 cm).
- White anal patch (maximum size 6 cm).
- White markings on forelegs reaching distinctly beyond half-way of pasterns (“boots”).
- Disturbingly asymmetrical white markings on head and/or chest.
- Black ticks and stripes within the white on the chest
- “Dirty” white (strong spots of pigmentation).
- Black coat with a touch of brown or red.

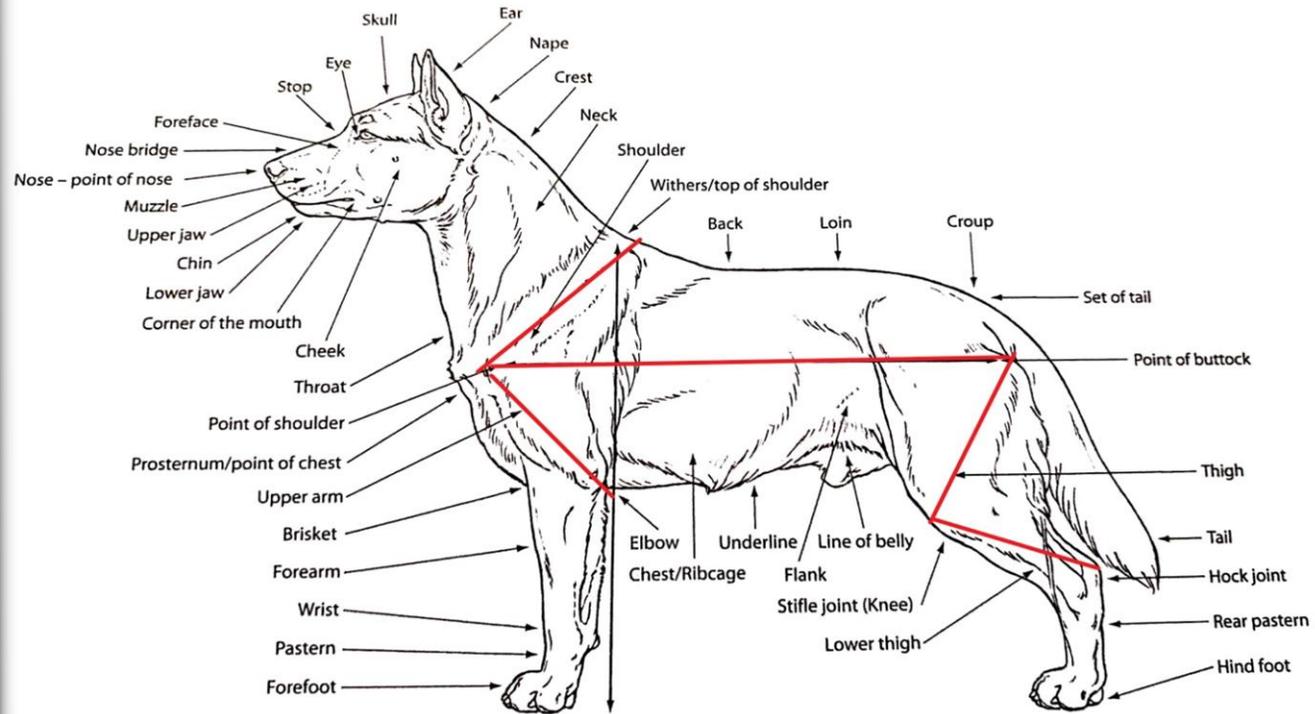
## 👉 DISQUALIFYING FAULTS

- Aggressive, anxious or distinctly shy
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified
- Split nose
- Undershot or overshot mouth, wry mouth
- One or two blue eyes (wall eye)
- Entropion, ectropion
- Kinky tail, ring tail
- Short coat, double coat (Stockhaar)
- Other than tricoloured coat
- Other main colour than black

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.

## ANATOMICAL FEATURES





Help us to maintain this wonderful, versatile breed in the sense of «Fit for function». We thank you for the careful selection when straightening