

# FRENCH BULLDOG



## JUDGES COMPENDIUM

PREPARED FOR SDHK's JUDGES CONFERENCE 2019

French Bulldogs are a bracycephalic and molossoïd breed covered by BSI (breed-specific instructions). See also page 25



#### Image comment

Very young puppies with promising heads. The top of the skull is slightly rounded at this age; this will develop into a flat skull in the adult. No excessive wrinkles in the face and almost no wrinkles above the nose, which is correct. Correct eye form and positioning. The positioning of the nose is correct for the age and the nostrils look promising. The form of the ears, with the rounded top, and positioning are correct. The ear position will improve when the muscles of the shoulder and chest develop. The puppies already have a good balance between skull and face with "cushioned" muzzle sections. Each puppy has a good width in the underjaw with a correct "turn up".

## Background

**The French Bulldog** as a national breed was created in Paris in the late 1880s, but its composition and origins are shrouded in mystery.

In Spain and England, dogs were kept as fighting dogs and for bull baiting. The meat was considered to be more tender if the bull was stressed by the dogs before slaughter.

Betting formed an integral part of the sport, which was a popular recreation with medieval roots until it was banned by law – however, it continued in secret.

Smaller bulldogs were bred to be used for badger baiting or dogfighting in rings or for rat baiting against the clock. In Paris, competitions were also held in which dogs were forced to hold onto moving windmill sails.

Before the 1860s, after which planned breeding on the basis of fixed breed standards and dog shows became more common, dogs of the type sought were paired and lineages were rarely noted. In the 1800s, dogs were often imported from Spain to France and England for fighting and baiting.

The litters produced by these fighting dogs often contained dwarf specimens which were given away as curiosities and pets. It is also possible that the Spaniards may have brought home what are known as Chincha Bulldogs, from Peru, where archaeologists have found them mummified or depicted in the form of ceramic objects. These were small, brindled dogs with the bat ears characteristic of the breed.

What is certain, however, is that English Toy Bulldogs were important in the development of the breed. These imported dogs, together with domestic Terrier Boules, formed the basis for today's French Bulldog.

In accordance with its origins, the French Bulldog is also a fearless dog with great fighting spirit, often with a certain amount of sharpness, but it is simultaneously responsive, intelligent and friendly with people. It requires a leadership figure and should be treated with a firm, loving hand and complete impartiality. It is not a dog for everyone, but requires care and attention. The love of a French Bulldog is constant once it has been won – as is its loyalty.

Today's French Bulldog, with its devastating charm and lively, happy temperament with elements of melancholy, has rightly been called the clown of the dog world. It is always happy to play up and be the centre of everyone's attention. It has a sense of humour and is always ready for lively antics and adventures, and throws

itself wholeheartedly into most situations life can offer. Whether it lives in a castle or a cowshed, the French Bulldog will quickly become the axis around which its family rotates.

The French Bulldog is extremely trusting in its owner and will be very unhappy if it does not receive sufficient appreciation and loving care from those around it. Brief description The French Bulldog is a small dog with a substantial rib cage and broad chest, roach back and powerfully muscled hindquarters. Its weight is between 8 and 14 kg. The head of the French Bulldog is the breed's most distinctive characteristic: Powerful, solid and square with characteristic "bat ears" correctly carried erect and with rounded tops give the dog an impression of massive power and lightning strength. A real powerhouse. The eyes are medium-sized, round and expressive with an intelligent and alert expression.

The first breed standard was written in 1898, and in this a dwarf variant of the English Bulldog was preferred, with "rose ears", even if dogs with erect ears and a straighter, squarer muzzle were also described. However, the unique bat ears were adopted.

In 1898 the French Kennel Club finally approved the breed, exclusively with bat ears. From being a dog of the working and lower middle classes, this charming and alert dog gained entrance to Paris salons as the companion of mistresses and artists. The breed became very fashionable amongst the cream of society who gathered in the European cultural capital. Amongst them were many rich Americans, together with Russian and European aristocratic families.

The first French breed club, the Club Amical du Bouledogue Français, was formed in 1880 and the French Bulldog Club of America was the world's second breed club, formed in 1897, at the same time that the American Kennel Club approved the breed.

In 1914, the breed arrived in Sweden. Here it was primarily reared in noble homes and Swedish breeders were coming to prominence as early as the 1920s.

## Breed standard for French Bulldog with Comments.

Group 9

"Standard for French Bulldog FCI number 101 (Bouledogue Français)

FCI standard in French published 17/04/2015

FCI standard established by the FCI General Committee, 03/11/2014

Translation established by the Swedish Kennel Club (SKK) working group for standard-related issues 07/03/2016

Country of origin: France

Use areas: Companion dog, watchdog

Classification: Group 9, Section 11"

## 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, the Bulldog was a dog belonging to Parisian market porters, butchers and coachmen, it soon won over high society and the artistic world by its particular appearance and character. It 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 recognized the French Bulldog breed. The first dog of this breed was shown at an exhibition as early as 1887.

## 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.

Compared with other breeds of the same height at the withers, the French Bulldog should be much more powerfully built. Its extremities and body must demonstrate powerful musculature and well-developed, sound and stable movements. The dog must not have such short proportions as to impact its mobility. "Small" therefore means that the dog must be short and collected in proportion to its body weight.

The so-called “bat ear”, taller than it is wide at the base and with a rounded top, is characteristic of the breed. The ears must be carried parallel and erect. The “ten to two” ear position detracts from the French Bulldog’s alert expression.

A dog in good condition can vary between 8 and 14 kg in weight. However, the upper limit for bitches should be around 13 kg.



A well-balanced bitch with correct leg height. Correct depth in the rib cage and length in the rib cage where the elbows are positioned immediately above the lowest point of the rib cage. The front feet are small, round and compact. The pasterns could be slightly straighter. Very good throat length. A moderate topline and correctly tucked up underline. A classic head with correct proportions without excessive wrinkles. Correct brindling.

## 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. The length of muzzle is about 1/6 of the total length of the head.

The muzzle should not be shorter than 1/6 of the head length, but may be slightly longer.

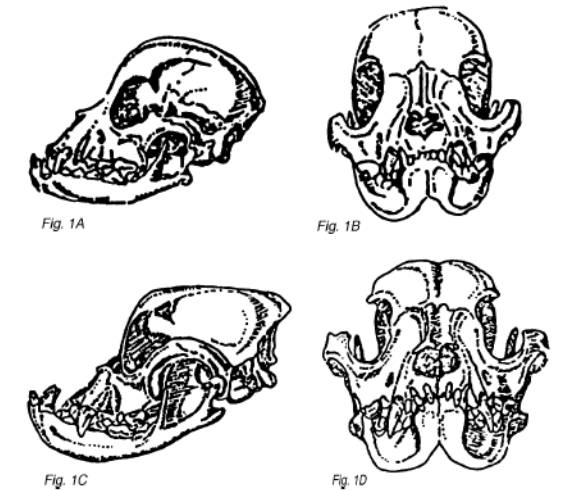
## Behaviour / Temperament

**S**ociable, lively, playful, possessive and keen companion dog.

## Head

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

Own notes:



**F**igure 1A and 1B. A French Bulldog's skull compared to the skull of an English Bulldog, Figure 1C and 1D.

It is immediately clear that the French Bulldog has a shorter skull and straighter muzzle and a shorter, not so extremely upswept underjaw than that of the English Bulldog.

The frontal images (Fig. 1B and 1D) show that the French Bulldog has no groove in the centre of the head like the English Bulldog. Note also that the French Bulldog's head is squarer seen from the front.

When looking at a French Bulldog, the first impression should be that the head is large and square in relation to the dog's overall size.



Cranial Region  
Skull

**B**road, 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.

**O**wn notes:

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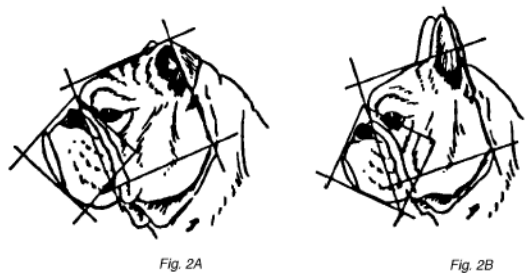
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**F**igure 2A and 2B, where the skulls of a French and an English Bulldog respectively have been “stripped”, are easier to recognise. To illustrate the differences between the breeds, primarily in the muzzle and its angle, known as “lay back”, the illustrator has drawn in the skull and muzzle as two squares.

Stop

**P**ronounced

**O**wn notes:

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**T**he centre of the stop marks the point where the nose begins and should form a deep and sharp groove between the eyes. In the French Bulldog, the groove may not continue up to the forehead as it does in the English Bulldog. Sometimes the deep groove of the stop is concealed by skin wrinkles. In this case, it is necessary to feel whether the stop is sufficiently well marked and if it forms as perpendicular an angle as possible to the bridge of the nose. An open angle is a serious fault and produces what is known as “down face” or “drop nose”.

**Facial Region** **BSI** Face and eyes: Too short muzzle and protruding eyes, which increase the risk of eye injuries.

**T**he head of the Bulldog is characterized by a shortening of the maxillary-nasal part as well as a slight to moderate slope of the nose backwards. The nose is slightly upturned (“snub nose”).

Nose

**B**lack, 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.

**C**ompletely closed nostrils are a disqualifying fault. Assessment of the shape of the nostrils should be carried out on the basis of the images on the next page.

**Muzzle** **BSI** Breathing problems: Forced breathing, with pronounced snoring sounds due to short muzzle, pinched nostrils and/or narrow respiratory channels (insufficient room in pharyngeal cavities and airways) and/or ribcage.

**V**ery short, broad, with concentric symmetrical folds.

**T**he muzzle must be broad and well laid back, but straighter than in the English Bulldog. The upper line of the nose must coincide with the lower line of the eye. It is good if the muzzle is slightly longer but it must not be shorter than 1/6 of the total length of the head.



The standard says that the length of the muzzle must constitute approximately 1/6 of the total length of the whole head. The images show a male dog with a muzzle which is 1/5 of the total head length and with excellent nostrils. The nose could be more upturned.



Grade I - Open nostrils	Grade II - Mildly stenotic nostrils	Grade III - Moderately stenotic nostrils	Grade IV - Severely stenotic nostrils
Nostrils are wide open. During exercise, the nostril wings should move dorso-laterally (upwards and outwards) to open on inspiration.	Slightly narrowed nostrils but the lateral (outer) nostril wall does not touch the medial (inner) nostril wall. During exercise, the nostril wings should move dorso-laterally (upwards and outwards) to open on inspiration.	The lateral (outer) nostril wall touches the medial (inner) wall at the dorsal (upwards) part of the nostrils and the nostrils are only open at the bottom. During exercise, the nostril wings are not able to move dorso-laterally (upwards and outwards) and there may be nasal flaring (i.e. muscle contraction around the nose trying to enlarge the nostrils but failed).	Nostrils are almost closed. The dog may switch to oral breathing from nasal breathing with stress or very gentle exercise such as playing. During exercise, the nostril wings are not able to move dorso-laterally (upwards and outwards) and always presents with nasal flaring.



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## Cranial Region

### Lips

**T**hick, a little loose and black. The upper lip meets the lower lip at its middle, completely covering the teeth. FCI-St. N° 101 / 17.04.2015 4 The profile of the upper lip is descending and rounded. The tongue must never show when the dog is not excited.

**T**he upper lip must be thick and with plenty of cushion. Under the lip there must be a broad upper jaw with broadly spaced canine teeth.



A fawn dog with very good colour and excellent pigment, dark pigment around the eyes, lips and a dark mask. Correct lips which are not too loose. The relationship between the top of the nose and the lower line of the eye is correct. Symmetrical wrinkles on either side of the muzzle which may not be more than shown on the image. The upturned jaw and depth of the jaw are correct. A correct throat and neck of good length with good musculature but without being too coarse.

The setting and position of the ears is correct but would be preferable if more rounded at the top. Note the correct position at the base of the ear in relation to the outer edge of the eye. The eye gives an almond-shaped impression, but this may be due to the dog squinting in the sunlight.

## Cranial Region



Fig. 3A



Fig. 3B



Fig. 4A



Fig. 4B

**F**igures 3A and 3B show a rounded, peaked head; what is known as an "apple head". The ears are also low set and carried incorrectly. The upper lips are heavy and broad curtains that cover the majority of the underjaw. A dog with such a head must have its bite checked. Level bite or overbite can occur.

Figures 4A and 4B show a dog with good skull form and quite good ears. However, the eyes are too far from each other and almond-shaped, which gives the dog an atypical expression. The muzzle slopes outwards, which produces what is described as "down face" or "drop nose". The underjaw seems to be straight and is insufficiently turned up. The muzzle is insufficiently laid back.



Fig. 5A



Fig. 5B



Fig. 6A



Fig. 6B

Figures 5A and 5B show a dog with a good skull, with correct ear setting and well positioned eyes. The muzzle is short, but not wide enough in relation to the skull. Poor underjaw with significant overbite and visible teeth, which is a disqualifying fault.

Figures 6A and 6B show a head good in all parts. Sufficiently broad and flat skull, good ear form and setting. Short, wide and deep muzzle. Nose correctly placed. The upper edge of the nose and the lower edges of the eyes must run on the same line. The drawings show sufficient size and shape of the eyes. The illustrations also show a broad and upturned underjaw, which describes the desired half-circle from the jaw joint and forwards. The head of a French Bulldog also develops after 3 years of age.



A correct, square head with a good balance between skull and face. The skull is flat between the ears and the forehead is slightly arched. The ears are carried erect and have rounded tops. Well-positioned round eyes of moderate size without showing any white. The position of the nose is excellent with excellent nostrils, particularly for the breed. Very good wrinkles on the skull, which is clearly visible when the dog is attentive, as on the image. No exaggerated wrinkles on the sides of the muzzle or on the upper part of the bridge of the nose. Good width in the muzzle with sufficiently "cushioned" lips. A correctly rounded lip line that meets the underjaw well. The lips are acceptable but may be no further down than on the dog in the picture. An intelligent and soft expression. Overall, this is a very good example of a head that shows correct details typical of the breed.



# Cranial Region

## Jaws/Teeth

**B**road and powerful. 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, the essential condition being that the upper and the lower lips meet to completely cover the teeth. The lower incisors surpass the upper incisors. Sufficiently developed incisors and canines. Complete bite is desirable.

**Q**uotation from Gay & Gay, Die Französische Bulldogge: "The distance between the two rows of the front teeth cannot be stated exactly. It is important that, when the mouth is closed, the upper and lower lips meet so that the teeth are hidden.

When the mouth is kept closed, the bite should be verified for symmetry. Crooked jaws occur. This can be both the upper and lower jaw. The incisors are often unevenly positioned. The canines must sit wide apart and be well developed." A tongue which is visible when the mouth is closed is a serious fault. Crooked or skewed jaws that mean the tongue is permanently visible are a disqualifying fault.



Fig. 7A



Fig. 7B



Fig. 7C



Fig. 7D

Figure 7A shows an excessively long underjaw with a lower jawbone which is too poorly curved. Underjaw entirely without turn up.

Figure 7B shows an acceptable length of underjaw, but it is far too poorly curved and lacks turn up.

Figure 7C shows a sufficient length of jaw with acceptable turn up, but insufficient curve of the lower jawbone.

Figure 7D shows a correctly curved lower jawbone with the right semi-circular sweep from the jaw joint and forwards. An underjaw of this appearance contributes to the French Bulldog's typical "cheeky" expression.



These three head profiles illustrate differences in the underjaw and the upturned nose demanded. The dog closest in the image has a longer muzzle and a very strongly upturned underjaw. This produces a more upturned muzzle than on the dog furthest away in the image. The middle dog has a more balanced head and a more moderate head in profile.

# Cranial Region

## Cheeks

**W**ell developed.

**T**he cheeks must be powerful with well developed cheekbones. The face must be well filled out under the eyes.

## Eyes

**C**learly 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.

**T**he eyes must not show any signs of irritation. Much of the French Bulldog's typical expression is due to the relatively large, dark eyes. Light and/or almond-shaped eyes give an expression which is foreign to the breed. The eyes must be expressive and slightly prominent, but may not give an impression of protruding.

Pied dogs, where white areas predominate, so that only small areas display the dog's yellow or dark brindled patches, often have unpigmented third eyelids. The eye rims must be dark in all colour variants. This pigmentation may be delayed until after the age of six months. The colour of the eye rims in the pied variant is almost never visible at birth, and rarely even at the age of eight weeks. The pigment first appears as small sharp spots, which become larger and gradually run together.

The pigment in the muzzle and lips is also formed in the same way. Explicitly de-pigmented lips, nose and eye rims is a serious fault.

A square head with good balance between skull and face. Dark, clear and round eyes of the correct size and positioning. Very good pigmentation in the eye lines, nose and lips and a good dark mask. Excellent nostrils and width in the muzzle. Ears of the correct size, shape and positioning in good balance with the head. Slightly fewer wrinkles are desirable.





# Cranial Region

## 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.

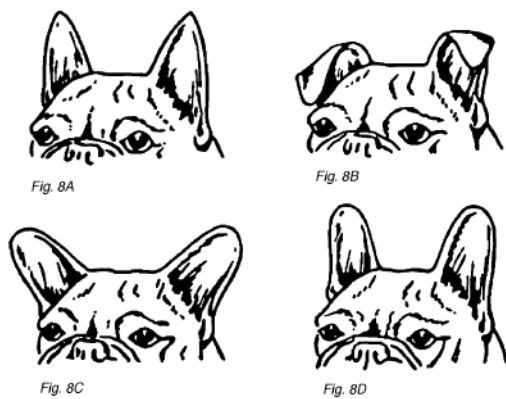


Figure 8A shows well-positioned ears – the major fault is that the top is pointed instead of rounded. This is not typical of the breed.

Figure 8B shows soft and folded ears with poorly developed cartilage. However, all puppies have hanging ears. These become erect at varying ages without special measures. The dog on the figure has ears which have not risen properly, but have become what are known as “tip ears”. Both variants 8A and 8B are incorrect. A tip ear can occur as a result of injury.

Figure 8C shows ears that in shape and size are good, but they are set too far down the sides of the skull. This “10 to 2” position of the ears detracts from the French Bulldog’s wakeful and alert expression.

Figure 8D shows correctly set and carried ears. Note in particular that the “bat ears” typical of the breed, seen from in front, show the orifice and are higher than they are broad at the base and have a rounded top.

The French Bulldog often expresses its mood with its ears. A bored and disappointed or sad dog can hold its ears according to Figure 8C, even if it has correctly set ears, but it immediately raises the ears again when it becomes attentive to something. An uncertain and frightened dog puts its ears back, as does a dog when it is affected by the “zoomies” and is rushing around in large circles from pure happiness, which is typical of the breed.



Classic well-balanced head with correct ears, eyes and nose. Round, dark eyes which should not be bigger than this. The lower edge of the eyes is aligned with the upper line of the nose, which is correct. The ears have the correct size, form and positioning. Excellent nostrils. Correct nose with good depth and width and a fine upturned chin. Needs a little more padding under the eyes.

# Cranial Region

## Neck

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

The fact that, according to the breed standard, the throat should be short, does not mean “the shorter the better”. The head may not give the impression of sitting directly on the shoulders. The length of the throat must be in balance with the length of the body. It is important that the throat is muscular, with a powerful and slightly arched neck. There should be no exaggerated throat skin.



A dog with correct neck ratio. Good neck length, slightly arched and with good musculature without being too coarse. A correct head in profile.

**Body**  
**Topline** **BSI** Proportions and construction: Overly short proportions in neck and back as well as insufficient angulation in fore- and hindquarters can cause powerless dragging movement.

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

**Back**  
Broad and muscular, firm without slackness.

**Own notes:**

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Broader over the shoulders, correct rib cage with well laid back ribs. Strong and well-muscled loin. Well marked waist, broader over the hips which transition into well-rounded and well-muscled hindquarters. Correct pear-shaped body seen from above.

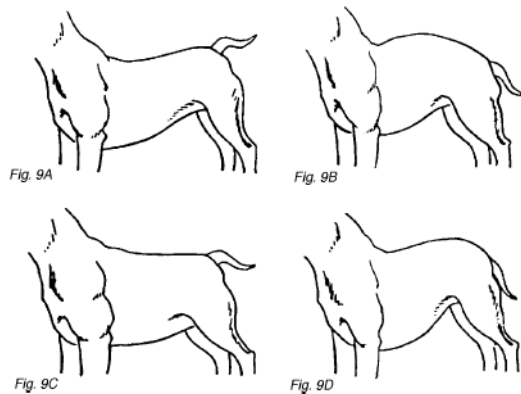


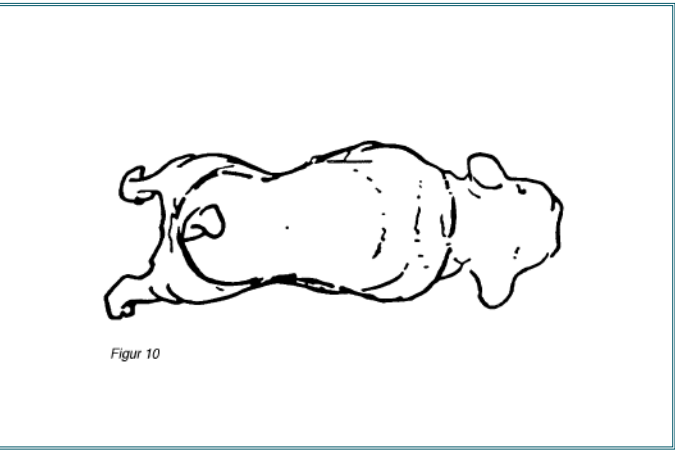
Figure 9A shows a lowered back line, which gives an overbuilt impression. The figure also shows a tail set too high.

Figure 9B shows an incorrect back line, which forms a hump in the middle of the back – known as “camel back”. Many people mistake the camel back for the correct roach back.

Figure 9C shows a back which is too flat, often accompanied by a poorly set tail. The figure also shows a poorly drawn up abdominal line.

Figure 9D shows a correct roach back – in other words, the hindquarters are slightly higher than the forequarters. The lines must be smooth and rounded and help to achieve the desired “pear shape” in the torso, seen from above. The figure also shows a correctly tucked up abdominal line and correct setting of the tail, with the full permissible length in the tail, even if it is unusual today and without a “screw”.

Figure 10 shows the breed’s typical “pear-shaped” body of a good French Bulldog seen from above.



**Body**  
**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”. Fore chest, broad and square-shaped, seen from the front.

**Underline and belly**  
Tucked up but not whippety.

An exaggeratedly short bulldog rarely shows the desired back and abdominal lines typical of the breed, which are illustrated on the following pages.

It is permitted for a bitch to have slightly longer loins.

The rib cage must not only be broad and deep. It must also be relatively long to give good volume. The sternum must not be too short.

The French Bulldog is not fully developed before at least the age of 2 or 3, and often still develops after this age.

The body length, measured from the shoulder joint to the sit bones, must slightly exceed the height at the withers.



Well-brindled dog with a balanced whole. Size of the head in good balance with the body, excellent length in throat and neck without being too coarse. No loose skin on the cheeks or throat. Excellent forechest and depth in the rib cage. Note the relationship between the elbow and the depth of the rib cage. Correctly laid back shoulders. Strong, straight front legs of correct length. Slightly oblique pasterns as demanded by the standard. The feet are acceptably clenched. A gentle curve in the upper line with a correctly angled croup and a low set tail. Strong loin of the correct length. The underline shows a correct length in the rib cage and ribs with a correctly tucked up abdominal line. Correctly angled hindquarters with good musculature. Solid hock joints and fine small hind feet.



Body

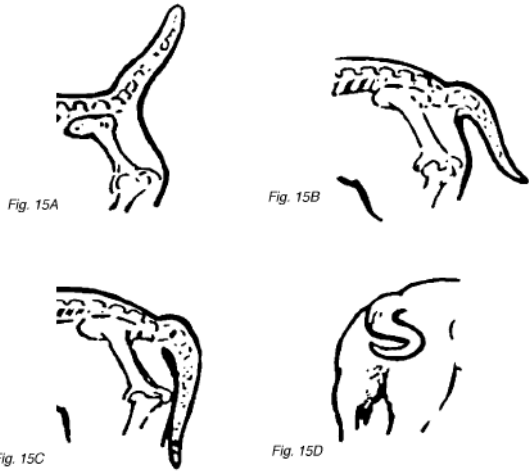
**Tail** **BSI** Underdeveloped tail: Lack of visible/touchable tail vertebrae is a disqualifying fault.

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.



Correct, well-muscled hindquarters. Well-muscled thighs. Correctly set tail of sufficient length to cover the anus. Correct, solid hock joints. The front legs should be slightly wider positioned.

**Own notes:**



The tail

Figures 15A to 15D show a selection of tails.

Figures B, C and D are all tail types approved according to the breed standard.

Figure 15A shows an undesirable tail, set and carried far too high. With a correct, sloping croup, not even a happy French Bulldog should be able to carry its tail over the back line. This type of tail is not common, but does occur. In such cases, almost always with a straight back and insufficiently sloping croup.

Figure 15B shows correct tail setting, carried low under the back line. Such a long and straight tail is permitted, but is uncommon.

Figure 15C shows a tail set low, rather close lying, which is long and well formed.

Figure 15D shows a correct, well set and carried screw tail. A significantly shorter tail than is shown in Figure D is permitted. However, the tail should consist of at least one vertebra and be grippable and ideally mobile.

Observe that the tail should be short, but not "the shorter the better". A relatively long tail is uncommon but permitted, as long as it does not reach the hock joint and is not carried over the back line. This is usually a congenitally bent "screw tail", and has in general never been docked. The tail must not lie in a pit in the spine and a total lack of tail is a disqualifying fault. An immobile tail tight to the anus can make it difficult for the dog to release faeces. The tail should therefore be mobile and may not be extremely close lying.

Limbs Forequarters  
General appearance

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

**Own notes:**

Left-hand image:

A good front with strong, straight front legs with good bone structure and musculature. Good pasterns and slightly turned out feet, which are correct. The toes could be more closed. Correct balance between rib cage depth and length of legs. Note the rib cage, which is immediately beneath the elbow. Remember that the French Bulldog is a short-legged dog.

Right-hand image:

An excellent front with the correct musculature and bone structure. Straight front legs with absolutely correct pasterns. Small compact feet. Excellent balance between rib cage depth and length of legs. The width in the front is excellent and you can just see the hindquarters between the front legs, as required. A very well balanced dog. The head displays all of the correct details characteristic of the breed, with the correct proportions.



Front extremities

Because a stationary French Bulldog places approximately two thirds of its weight on the front legs, and still more when in movement, it is very important that the forequarters are correctly constructed.

The hindquarters must also fulfil their function when the dog stands and moves, and a dog should not give the impression of being "front leg driven"; the body must be well balanced.

The shoulder blades and upper arm should certainly be short, in accordance with the fact that the dog is a short-limbed dog. However, its skeletal components may not be too short in relation to the chest depth.

Poor shoulder construction is most easily revealed during movement



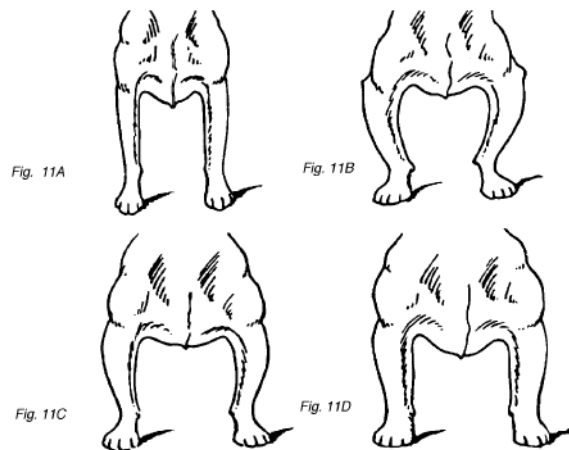




A young bitch with fine proportions that will still develop in terms of mass. Good throat and neck. Correct forechest and well-constructed rib cage. Good upper line and with the tail correctly set. Muscular loin and hindquarters with correct angles.

## Shoulder

**M**ust be well laid back.



**T**he front  
Figure 11A shows a front which is far too narrow and gives a bow-legged impression. The shoulders are insufficiently developed and lacking muscle.

Figure 11B shows elbows turned outwards incorrectly, with shoulders that are too loose. The forearms are also bent and the pasterns weak with turned out feet, producing what is known as a "French front", which is not desirable.

Figure 11C gives a good overall impression. The figure shows a moderately broad front, but far too little chest depth. The forearms are bent and the pasterns weak, which means that the feet become very turned out.

Figure 11D displays a correct front with sufficient chest depth and shoulders, as it should be. Observe the powerful bone and straight front legs with slightly turned out feet in conformity with the standard.

A poor shoulder construction is most easily revealed during movement.

**O**wn notes:

## Limbs Forequarters Upper arm

**S**hort, thick, muscular, slightly curved.

## Elbows

**C**lose and tight to the body.

## Forearm

**S**hort, straight and muscular.

## Carpus (Wrist)

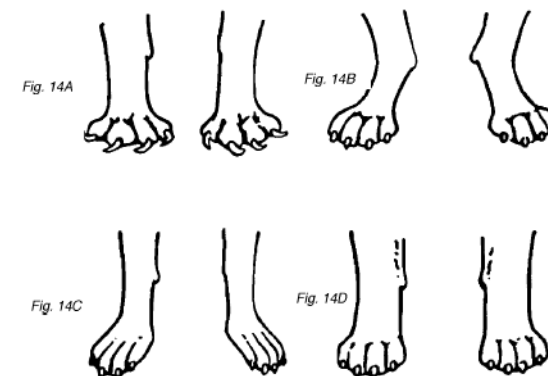
**S**olid and short.

## Metacarpus (Pastern)

**S**hort and slightly oblique seen in profile.

## Forefeet

**R**ound, compact, of small dimension, i.e. «cat feet», turning slightly outward. The toes are tight, nails short, thick and black.



**O**wn notes:



A well balanced male with correct topline and underline. Strong, muscular loin. Correct forechest and a deep and wide rib cage. The elbow is positioned immediately above the lowest point of the rib cage. Correct hind-quarters with good angles and muscular thighs. Correct length and circumference in throat. It would be preferable for the underjaw to be slightly longer to give a correctly laid back muzzle.

**F**igure 14A shows what are known as "duck feet" or "splay feet". Open feet may be due to a lack of mineral storage in the skeleton or weak musculature in the feet. This form can also arise through poorly maintained feet, e.g. claws which are far too long and rarely trimmed.

Figure 14B shows flat feet and a poor leg position, which can also be due to a lack of mineral storage in the skeleton. The pasterns are weak and the toes insufficiently arched.

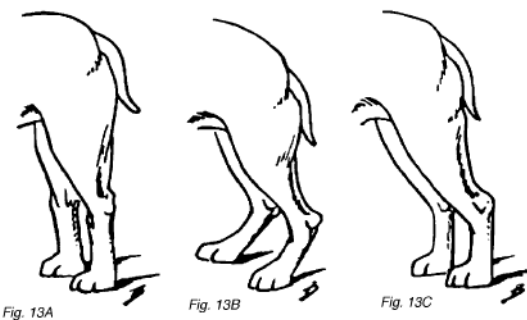
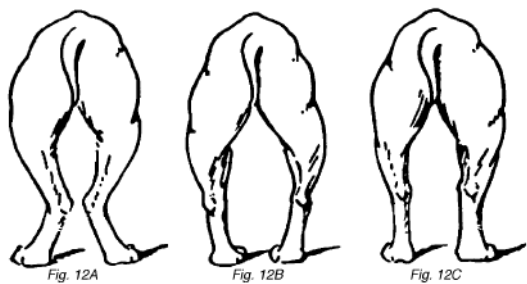
Figure 14C shows "rabbit's feet", i.e. long, narrow feet which are not correct in the French Bulldog. These are often seen together with a narrow front and turned-in, pinched elbows.

Figure 14D shows correct, compact feet with arched and firmly set toes – a round "catsfoot".



Limbs Hindquarters  
General appearance

The hindlegs 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.



**R**ear extremities While the front legs often receive significant attention in the French Bulldog, there is a tendency to “neglect” the hind legs. The angles of the hindquarters must be relatively open, but there should be no absence of angles, or weakness. The hindquarters must fulfil their function well when the dog stands and moves, and a dog must not give the impression of being “front leg driven”; the body must be well balanced.

Figure 12A shows a narrow-hocked leg position – what is known as “cow hocked”. This leg position affects hind leg function and results in a “shuffling” gait.

Figure 12B shows a wide hocked “bow-legged” leg position. In movement, dogs with this leg position often display a twisting, “winding” action.

Figure 12C shows a correct leg position with correctly positioned hock joint and pastern.

The hind legs

Figure 13A shows hindquarters which are insufficiently angled at both the hock and knee joints, which produces a poor leg position with incorrect, stiff movements and a stilted gait. A widespread fault.

Figure 13B shows the opposite of the above. Hindquarters with weak, soft hock joints, which produce an over-angled impression, with the feet set under the body.

Figure 13C shows perfectly angled hindquarters with long muscle lines from the loin to the point of the hock. Correctly positioned hock joint, pastern and feet. A dog with such hindquarters is stable and moves freely.

Own notes:

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A younger male which is still developing. Needs broader musculature and more bone mass. Despite this, the image shows correct, straight hindquarters. Very good tail.



Limbs Thigh

**W**ell muscled, firm.

Hock joint

**Q**uite well let down, neither too angulated nor too straight. Tarsus solid.

Metatarsus (Rear pastern)

**S**hort.

Hind feet

**R**ound, compact, turning neither inward nor outward.



Fawn with excellent colour and correct dark pigment. Dark eye lines, lips and nose. Correct bone and substance. Excellent forechest and rib cage with correct depth and length in the ribs. Muscular neck and a correct topline with good arching over the loin. Fine, muscular hindquarters with good angles. Fine, straight front legs with good pasterns and small, round and compact feet. A well-balanced bitch with good proportions.



Gait/Movement



A good image of movement, even though a little more width in the front would have been better to balance the step at the back. Good throat and neck. The tail could be set slightly lower. The muzzle and underjaw are far too short!

The legs moving parallel to the median plane of the body, whether seen in front or in profile. Free, powerful and smooth movement.

**M**ovements  
In the trot, the front legs should move with a forward and backward oscillating action.

The elbows must lie against the body and may not turn outwards during movement. Loose shoulders can mean that the movement becomes twisting and narrow.

The ideal is for each front leg to follow its own track during the trot. The track width must be almost as wide as the distance between the feet when the dog is stationary.

A deviation from the normal movement pattern is when the dog does not lift the front leg during forward oscillation, but instead moves the leg in a small half-circle, from back to front. This can be described as a paddling movement, which is not typical of the French Bulldog breed.

During the trot, the dog droops slightly forwards, because the bodyweight is placed on the front legs. This should normally look balanced and natural, and may not deteriorate so that the dog gives the impression of falling forwards.

When trotting, the hind legs are moved closer to each other than the leg position when stationary. The hind feet move on a narrower track than the front feet.

When you see a French Bulldog trot towards you, it should therefore move on a wide track with the front part, and between the front legs it should be possible to see the hind legs, which move on a narrower track.

The trot must be calm, even and regular. It must not give a laborious impression.

The French Bulldog normally has an easy, rolling movement.

The roll takes place with each step, so that the dog does not lose balance. The spine moves slightly around its own axis and this gives the shift in the centre of gravity necessary to prevent the broad and deep dog from losing balance during the trot, when it is only supported alternately by the two diagonal feet.

The roll is smooth and the gait must not involve rocking or winding from side to side.

A French Bulldog must breathe unhindered, even during movement.

Skin **BSI** Skin problem

Firm.

Coat  
Hair

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

Colour

Fawn, brindled or not, with or without white spotting.

**Coat with colouring:**  
**Brindle:** Fawn coat moderately characterized 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, with or without a black mask, although masked subjects are preferred. Sometimes accompanied by limited white spotting.

**Coat with white spotting:**  
**Brindled with moderate or important white spotting:** So-called 'pied', the spotting being ideally distributed over the entire subject. Some blotches on the skin are admissible.  
**Fawn with moderate or important white spotting:** So-called 'fawn and white', 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.

**The allwhite** subjects provided the edge of eyelids and nose are black – are admitted but not bred for, because of a risk of deafness.



**S**kin  
Exaggerated loose skin is not desirable and throat bags may not occur. The skin status must be without comment. Observe the nose groove, feet and ears, which must be free of redness and irritation.

**C**olour  
To put it simply, the colours of the French Bulldog are brindled, yellow and white.

Dogs with a predominantly white base colour with yellow or brindled markings are called pied. Almost completely white dogs also occur. These are genetically pied and this is not a fault. The white colour must be clean, but smaller areas of "ticking" – patches with black hairs in the white areas – occur. However, this is not desirable and is a listed fault. Predominantly pie colour – the "mantle" pattern – is not typical of the breed. The eye rims, nose and lips must be well pigmented.

The yellow colour is also called fawn. All shades of yellow are permitted from the deepest red to light beige. The yellow colour must be clean and may not appear sooty. The light shade should not be so light that it appears to be cream. The darker shades may not fade towards grey or brown.

Brindling must have the form of clear and distinct streaks and may not give the impression of being speckled or mottled.

Where a white dog has a black nose, minor or unpigmented spots on the face can be tolerated in otherwise good examples according to the standard.

Disqualifying colours:  
Black, black with brownish red patches, brown or blue.

The fur must be shiny and short haired, and must not have an undercoat.





anatomical features, and should not be considered as normal canine anatomic variations.

Such breed types are the result of human intention to create breeds with specific physical breed characteristics. It is thus very important that judges and breeders, when preserving breed type characteristics, promote selection of dogs with optimal combination of breed type and vital constitution.

#### **Brachycephalic breeds**

The short skulled/faced (brachycephalic) breeds are represented in FCI groups 2 and 9. They constitute a group of breeds where the typical features are expressed to a varying degree in skull, muzzle, jaws, eyes, ribcage and skin. Exaggerations in the specific conformation might lead to serious health problems in these breeds; especially, but not exclusively, referring to problems in breathing and regulation of body temperature.

See Appendix 2: Assessment of breathing distress

See Appendix 3: Eye problems

#### **Toy breeds**

Small sized breeds, sometimes called dwarfs, are found in FCI group 9, but also in groups 2, 3, 4 and 5. When dwarfism is carried to the extreme, it leads to a devitalizing overall weakness and poor skeletal and muscular development. Further exaggerations of dwarfism would give rise to serious health problems. Some of the toy breeds are also brachycephalic (see above) and/or chondrodystrophic (see below).

Protruding eyes in shallow eye sockets occur in brachycephalic toy breeds. Open fontanel, wry lower jaw and lame (paralyzed) tongue also occur. Dwarfism can also cause ribcage malformations; shortened or open ribcage with short sternal bone, rib deformations and narrow ribcage. Powerless shuffling movement as a result of poor muscular condition, is seen in some breeds.

See Appendix 2: Assessment of breathing distress

See Appendix 3: Eye problems

#### **Breeds with chondrodystrophic (disproportionate) growth retardation**

Breeds with chondrodystrophic (disproportionate) growth retardation are seen in FCI groups 1, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 9. If the chondrodystrophic traits are exaggerated, it leads to serious skeletal deformities and inability to move soundly. Inadequate ground clearance interfering with the working function of the breed is also a negative consequence.

#### **The molossoïd breeds**

This group includes the mastiff breeds and the mountain dogs, descendants of the ancient molossoïd dogs. These are dogs of giant size with accentuated body volume and skin, and are seen in FCI groups 1 and 2. These dogs must have a sound conformation of muscular strength and suitable amount of skin in order to function well and being able to carry out the specific traits required by the breed standards. The specific molossoïd traits must not be exaggerated creating grotesque dimensions. To this group belongs also the small molossoïd type breeds of group 9.

See Appendix 2: Assessment of breathing distress

See Appendix 3: Eye problems

#### **FCI group 9 - Companion and Toy Dogs**

##### **About the breeds in group 9**

Most breeds in this group are toy breeds. Some have extreme conformation such as shortened skull and underdeveloped muzzle - brachycephalic. Some of the breeds are also chondrodystrophic. Further exaggeration of these standard correct features and exaggerated dwarfism would give rise to serious health problems. See also page 12 Breed types - Toy Breeds.

The brachycephalic head is part of the breed type in Boston Terriers, French Bulldogs, the Griffon breeds, Japanese Chin, King Charles Spaniels, Pugs, Pekingese and Shih-Tzus. This may give rise to breathing problems and impaired body temperature regulation. Narrow respiratory channels with restrained breathing and pinched nostrils are serious problems, which must be noted. See also Appendix 2 regarding assessment of breathing distress.

Several of the breeds have protruding eyes in shallow eye sockets disposing for eye injuries. See also Appendix 3 regarding eye problems.

Open fontanel is an anomaly and a disqualifying fault in all breeds.

Wry lower jaw and/or lame tongue, so called paralyzed tongue, are disqualifying faults.

A deviant pattern of movement in some breeds with frantic scratching behaviour and signs of unmotivated pain when on leash, may indicate a serious neurological disorder, syringomyelia.

Powerless shuffling movement can be seen in toy breeds as an effect of unsound living conditions causing poor

muscles.

Some of the breeds in this group are heavily coated. This has, in some cases, resulted in incorrect, woolly and excessive coats, so heavy that it impairs movement and affects quality of daily life for the dogs. See also Exaggerations in presentation page 9.

#### **French Bulldog (Bouledogue francais) – brachycephalic and small molossoïd breed**

The special conformation of this breed with shortened skull and overly short bridge of nose, as well as underdeveloped tail, cause health problems if exaggerated further.

##### **Areas of risk are:**

**1. Breathing problems:** Forced breathing, with pronounced snoring sounds due to short muzzle, pinched nostrils and/or narrow respiratory channels (insufficient room in pharyngeal cavities and airways) and/or ribcage. See Appendix 2.

**2. Face and eyes:** Too short muzzle and protruding eyes, which increase the risk of eye injuries. See Appendix 3.

**3. Proportions and construction:** Overly short proportions in neck and back as well as insufficient angulation in fore- and hindquarters can cause powerless dragging movement.

**4. Underdeveloped tail:** Lack of visible/touchable tail vertebrae is a disqualifying fault.

Look for sound breathing, correct bridge of nose, eyes, skin, tail, and movement. Breed standard reads; "Length of muzzle about 1/6 of the total length of the head". The breed standard calls for an "active" dog which is "powerful for its small size, short, compact in all its proportions", but the French Bulldog must not be excessively short in neck and back. Gait should be free and active.

#### **Appendix 2 - Assessments of breathing distress in the show ring**

**Basic for all dogs:** All dogs should be able to breathe normally, also when moving.

##### **Three levels of breathing distress**

should be taken into consideration in quality grading and competition assessment, with regards to the dogs' ability to breathe normally in the show ring, also when moving.

1. Nonsignificant/temporary signs of affected breathing, but without causing any difficulty to the dog: This should be noted, but not necessarily affect the quality grading. This should, however, be considered at the competition assessment.

2. Milder affection of the ability to breath (milder respiratory problems), as well as anatomical conditions that potentially affect the ability to breathe (pinched nostrils, too short nose, overly small head and/or very short proportions, underdeveloped ribcage and so on): This should influence the quality grading.

3. Obvious signs of respiratory problems should motivate disqualification. Those signs of breathing distress are at hand if the dog already while standing still and without any "provoking external factors" (like hot temperature, exciting stimuli and so on) shows laboured respiration such as:

- Mouth breathing with obvious retraction of the mouth angle, and/or very protruding tongue
- Pronounced breathing sounds (snoring); inspiratory and/or expiratory
- Retractions in the forechest area and/or behind the ribcage synchronous with the respiration
- Nodding movements of the head and neck synchronous with the respiration

The assessment of breathing should always include evaluation of possible respiratory distress symptoms during and after evaluation of movement. Movement should be of breed adequate speed and duration. General signs of exhaustion, as well as difficulties and prolongation of recovery after action, are very serious findings, and serious signs of lack of respiratory capacity.\*

\* SKK 2012 dvd Making assessments of dogs' respiration.

#### **Appendix 3 - Eye problems**

##### **Basic for all dogs:**

All dogs should have sound, clear eyes without signs of irritation.

##### **Anatomical features that may cause eye problems**

Eye problems observed by the show judge are commonly related to the ocular adnexa (tissues surrounding the



eye). Attention should also be paid to sunken eyes and/or eyes that are smaller than normal (microphthalmic), as well as to protruding eyes. Protruding eyes are often mistaken for over sized eye balls, a thing which hardly exists. Protruding eyes are due to shallow eye sockets and/or big eye openings.

Examples of adnexal features that may injure the eye: The anatomy of the skull, the position of the eye in the eye socket, the shape of the lid opening, and the presence of facial wrinkles and excessive amounts of loose skin surrounding the eyes. Folds and wrinkles on the muzzle, or in the face, may touch the cornea and cause irritation and damage. These anatomical features of the face, which increases risks for eye problems, are observable for the show judge.

The form and depth of the eye socket affects the position of the eyeball, i.e. may lead to too deeply set or protruding eyes. A too deeply set eye may cause in an inwards turning of the eyelid (entropion). A wide skull increases the risk of entropion at the outer corner.

Protruding eyes are due to shallow eye sockets, and are more prone to injury, especially in combination with a short nose where the rhinarium (wet part of the nose) is placed between and close to the eyes. Abundance of skin and hair adjacent to the eye may cause irritation or damage to the ocular surface, especially if the eye is protruding. This is often seen when the muzzle is short. Thick and heavy folds in or around the face as well as heavy lips and ears, may distort the lid opening.

Depending on the extent of these features, hair/ eyelashes may rub on the cornea and cause irritation/damage to the surface of the eye. Different parts of the eyelid may turn inwards – entropion. The lower eyelid may also drop outwards, exposing the conjunctiva – ectropion. A special form is seen in the diamond shaped eye where the eye opening is rhomboid, which can cause combined entropion and ectropion.

## Signs of eye disease

Visual problems, even blindness, are difficult to evaluate properly in the show ring.

Signs of discomfort, irritation or pain related to the eye or its adnexa, are:

- Overflow of tears, accumulation of mucus and brownish stain below the eye. Wet lid margins. Redness of the conjunctiva.
- Repeated squinting and blinking.
- Lack of corneal lustre, pigmented or opaque cornea.

### Specific features in brachycephalic breeds

The wide and short skull, short nose and bridge of muzzle, loose facial skin, skin folds and long (wide open) eyelids can cause dryness, injury and inflammation.

### Specific features in breeds with excessive and loose skin

The problems are related breed characteristics: The size and shape of the eyelids, the looseness of the skin, the heavy ears and lips. These breed characteristics can, when exaggerated, weigh down the tissues, and give rise to loose or inverted eyelids (ectropion and/or entropion, diamond eye and/or macroblepharon = oversized eyelid), as well as to upper eyelids overhanging the eye, and lashes rubbing on the cornea. Kinks on the lid margin affect the blink mechanism.

### Assessing eye problems in the quality grading

Signs of eye problems should influence the quality grading, depending on the degree and severity of the deviation. The obviously blind dog must in all cases be disqualified, irrespective of possible reasons. A dog that has removed an eye due to trauma shall not be penalized, unless the dog seem to be obviously impaired by a defect vision.

Damage to the eyeball indicated by cloudiness and/or pigmentation of the cornea is a disqualifying fault regardless of its cause.

Signs of irritation like repeated squinting and blinking should be taken into account in quality grading.

Anatomical features related to increased risk of eye problems (too short nose, too loose skin and so on) are areas of risk. They should, in relation to their extent, be taken into account in quality grading, and the competition assessment in relation.

### Considerations in competition assessment

Milder signs of irritation like excessive tear flow and staining of the facial hairs should influence the competition assessment.

**Extract from the statement by SKK in 2016 with the heading “Strategies as a result of increased knowledge about breathing-related health problems in short-skulled dogs”.**

### Statement

- It is never compatible with the Animal Protection Act and SKK's Basic Rules to use for breeding animals with clinical problems

that can be associated with shortness of the skull.

- To reduce the occurrence of health problems which can be associated with shortness of the skull, the selection of breeding stock must take greater account of the general parameters that affect breathing ability, such as the width of the nostrils, the length, width and depth of the nose, the space in the mouth and throat, the width and firmness of the windpipe, the volume of the rib cage and conditions specific to the breed.

## Measures

- First and foremost to prioritise dogs with less pronounced shortness of the skull in breeding, to reduce health problems in current breeds with regard to the correct breed type.
- Expand training of breeders, show judges and vets in assessing the suitability of dogs for breeding with regard to parameters that affect breathing ability.

Own notes:

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Vinton Breese's "The Perfect French Bulldog", together with his now classic drawings from 1924, have been used to illustrate and clarify the texts in this "Commentary on the breed standard for French Bulldogs". So have the many photographs that we have generously been allowed to use.

The comments in this booklet refer to the standard for the French Bulldog. Based on the officially established breed standard no. 101 20141103 issued by the FCI and the Swedish revision of the standard established by SKK in 2016. Comments compiled by the French Bulldog Club, which allows SKK to use the compendium for training purposes.

