

The Basset Hound

Illustrated Standard

Published by the Basset Hound Club of America, Inc.

The Basset Hound Illustrated Standard



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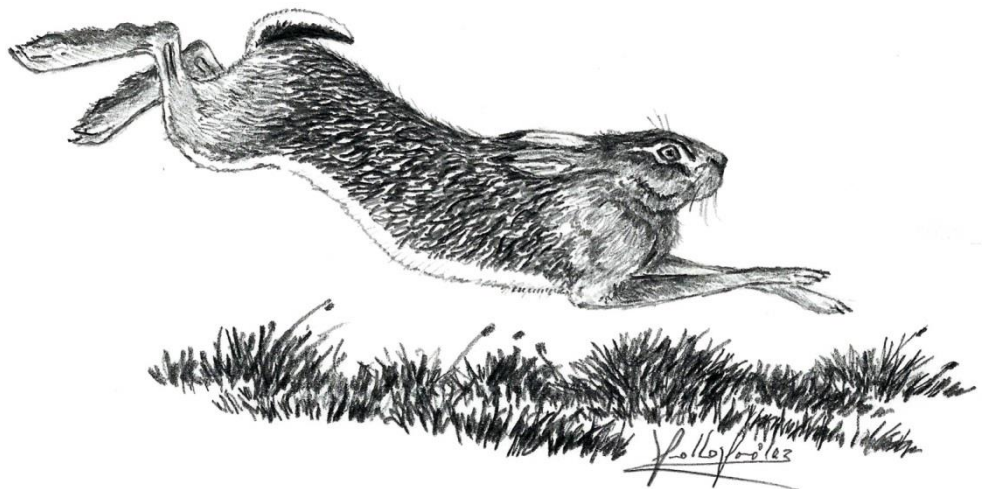
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*Photo with permission from **Les Bassets Courants** (1987) by Maurice Leblanc and John A Miller. Published by Gerfaut Club. Paris, France.*

The Basset Hound Illustrated Standard



Forward

We would like to welcome you to this latest, updated edition of ***The Basset Hound Illustrated Standard***, which has been prepared by the 2014 Judges' & Breeders' Education Committee of the Basset Hound Club of America, Inc. It is our intent that this current publication be of as much value and assistance to breeders of the Basset Hound as it is to judges of our breed. ***The Basset Hound Illustrated Standard*** is based on several parent club approved sources of information, including the official ***AKC Breed Standard***, the official ***Judges' Education Seminar*** and the illustrated ***Pocket Guide to the Basset Hound***.

The achondroplastic, low to ground Basset Hound is often a challenge to new judges whose expertise is in longer legged breeds with straight columns of support. An added learning curve also involves various hallmarks of our breed, which include a wrap-around front, short legs, heavy bone, a prominent forechest, long ears and wrinkled skin.

Although written and illustrated materials can only serve as points of departure in truly understanding the essence of a breed, we hope this publication will guide you in acquiring the hands-on expertise needed to accurately judge and evaluate the unique and essential traits of the Basset Hound. The role of the judge in helping to preserve the integrity of any breed is a serious responsibility and we sincerely appreciate your decision to judge the Basset Hound.

Thank you!

The 2014 Judges' & Breeders' Education Committee

Claudia Orlandi, PhD (Chairman)
Sandra Campbell
Penny Frederiksen
Claudia Lane

Bill Nolan
Joani Rush
Susan Nelson Smyth

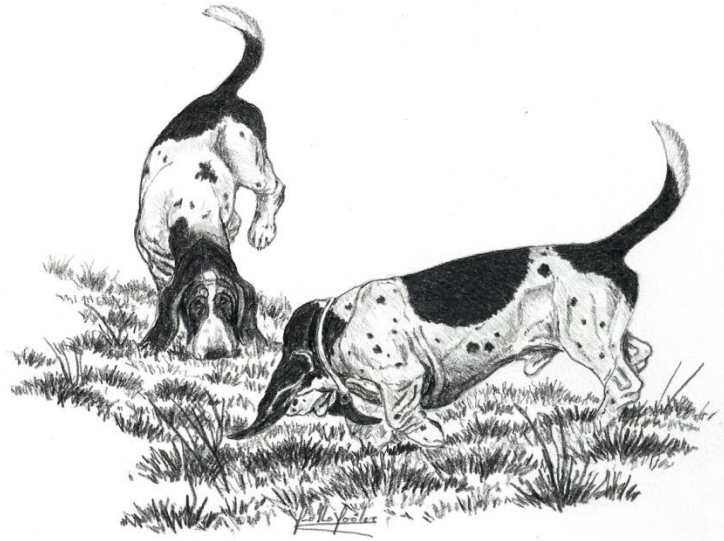
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*Drawings by Guillermo González Suárez
Peñanes, Asturias, Spain*

*Some photos and drawings have been electronically altered
to illustrate various morphological features.*

Breed Hallmarks of the Basset Hound



-
- Bred to follow a trail over and through difficult terrain
 - Smooth, powerful, effortless movement
 - Long, low body
 - Short legs
 - More bone, size considered, than any other breed of dog
 - Soft, sad expression
 - Long, low set ears
 - Prominent forechest
 - Heavily boned forelegs with wrinkled skin
 - Wrap-around front
 - 90° front and rear angulation

Form Following Function in the Basset Hound

When giving tongue (sounding alert to the hunter) the Basset has a deep, melodious voice.

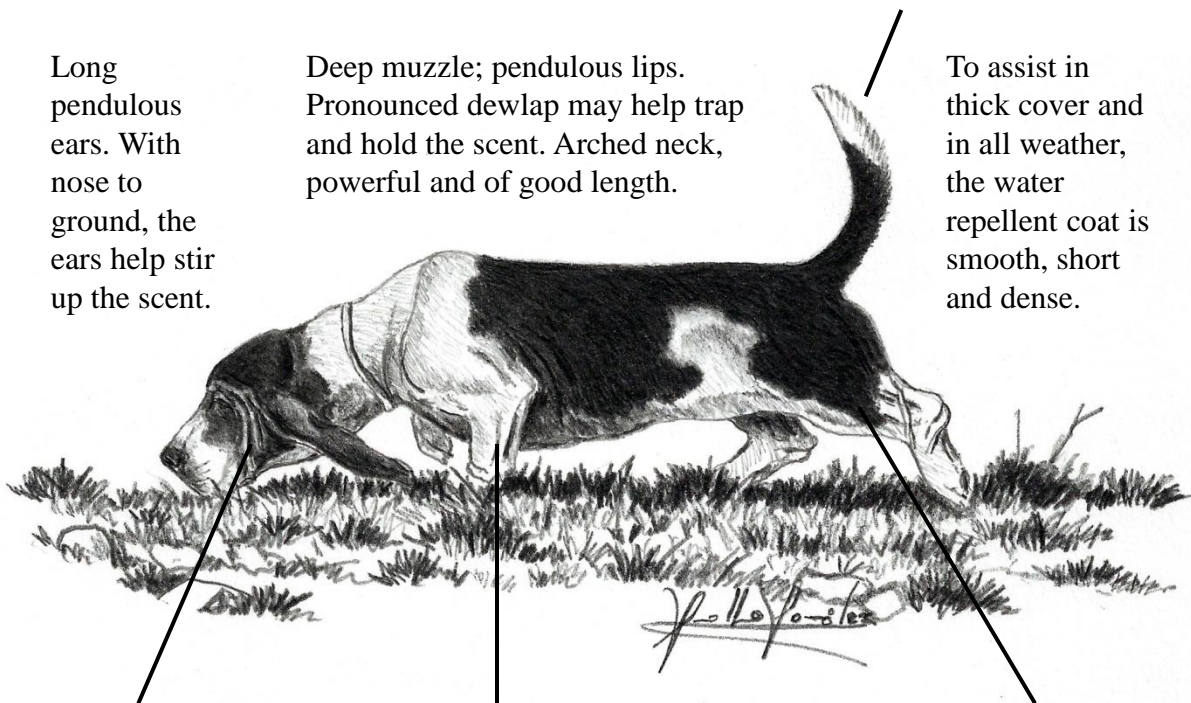
Large nose for trailing game. Especially keen sense of smell, which is second only to the Bloodhound.

Tail is carried gaily. The tail is frequently white tipped, making it easier to spot hounds in tall grass.

Long pendulous ears. With nose to ground, the ears help stir up the scent.

Deep muzzle; pendulous lips. Pronounced dewlap may help trap and hold the scent. Arched neck, powerful and of good length.

To assist in thick cover and in all weather, the water repellent coat is smooth, short and dense.



When the head is lowered to the ground, the loose skin falls into brow wrinkles which help protect the face from thorns while moving through the underbrush.

More bone, size considered, than any other breed of dog. The Basset has good reach and drive.

A prominent forechest is part of a long smooth ribcage, which houses strong heart and lungs for endurance in the field.

Strong hindquarters allow the Basset to cover the ground with strength and endurance.

Short legs are useful in dense cover. The front legs wrap around the ribcage to support the low, heavy body. The short-legged Basset is easier to follow on foot.

The Official AKC Standard for the Basset Hound

General Appearance The Basset Hound possesses in marked degree those characteristics which equip it to admirably follow a trail over and through difficult terrain. It is a short-legged dog, heavier in bone, size considered, than any other breed of dog, and while its movement is deliberate, it is in no sense clumsy. In temperament it is mild, never sharp or timid. It is capable of great endurance in the field and is extreme in its devotion.

Head The head is large and well proportioned. Its length from occiput to muzzle is greater than the width at the brow. In over-all appearance the head is of medium width. The *skull* is well domed, showing a pronounced occipital protuberance. A broad flat skull is a fault. The length from nose to stop is approximately the length from stop to occiput. The sides are flat and free from cheek bumps. Viewed in profile the top lines of the muzzle and skull are straight and lie in parallel planes, with a moderately defined stop. The skin over the whole of the head is loose, falling in distinct wrinkles over the brow when the head is lowered. A dry head and tight skin are faults. The *muzzle* is deep, heavy, and free from snipiness. The *nose* is darkly pigmented, preferably black, with large wide-open nostrils. A deep liver-colored nose conforming to the coloring of the head is permissible but not desirable. The *teeth* are large, sound, and regular, meeting in either a scissors or an even bite. A bite either overshot or undershot is a serious fault. The *lips* are darkly pigmented and are pendulous, falling squarely in front and, toward the back, in loose hanging flews. The *dewlap* is very pronounced. The *neck* is powerful, of good length, and well arched. The *eyes* are soft, sad, and slightly sunken, showing a prominent haw, and in color are brown, dark brown preferred. A somewhat lighter-colored eye conforming to the general coloring of the dog is acceptable but not desirable. Very light or protruding eyes are faults. The *ears* are extremely long, low set, and when drawn forward, fold well over the end of the nose. They are velvety in texture, hanging in loose folds with the ends curling slightly inward. They are set far back on the head at the base of the skull and, in repose, appear to be set on the neck. A high set or flat ear is a serious fault.

Forequarters The *chest* is deep and full with prominent sternum showing clearly in front of the legs. The *shoulders* and elbows are set close against the sides of the chest. The distance from the deepest point of the chest to the ground, while it must be adequate to allow free movement when working in the field, is not to be more than one-third the total height at the withers of an adult Basset. The shoulders are well laid back and powerful. Steepness in shoulder, fiddle fronts, and elbows that are out, are serious faults. The *forelegs* are short, powerful, heavy in bone, with wrinkled skin. Knuckling over of the front legs is a disqualification. The *paw* is massive, very heavy with tough heavy pads, well rounded and with both feet inclined equally a trifle outward, balancing the width of the shoulders. Feet down at the pastern are a

serious fault. The *toes* are neither pinched together nor splayed, with the weight of the forepart of the body borne evenly on each. The dewclaws may be removed.

Body The rib structure is long, smooth, and extends well back. The ribs are well sprung, allowing adequate room for heart and lungs. Flatsidedness and flanged ribs are faults. The topline is straight, level, and free from any tendency to sag or roach, which are faults.

Hindquarters The hindquarters are very full and well rounded, and are approximately equal to the shoulders in width. They must not appear slack or light in relation to the overall depth of the body. The dog stands firmly on its hind legs showing a well-let-down stifle with no tendency toward a crouching stance. Viewed from behind, the hind legs are parallel, with the hocks turning neither in nor out. Cowhocks or bowed legs are serious faults. The hind feet point straight ahead. Steep, poorly angulated hindquarters are a serious fault. The dewclaws, if any, may be removed.

Tail The tail is not to be docked, and is set in a continuation of the spine with but slight curvature, and carried gaily in hound fashion. The hair on the underside of the tail is coarse.

Size The height should not exceed 14 inches. Height over 15 inches at the highest point of the shoulder blade is a disqualification.

Gait The Basset Hound moves in a smooth, powerful, and effortless manner. Being a scenting dog with short legs, it holds its nose low to the ground. Its gait is absolutely true with perfect coordination between the front and hind legs, and it moves in a straight line with hind feet following in line with the front feet, the hocks well bent with no stiffness of action. The front legs do not paddle, weave, or overlap, and the elbows must lie close to the body. Going away, the hind legs are parallel.

Coat The coat is hard, smooth, and short, with sufficient density to be of use in all weather. The skin is loose and elastic. A distinctly long coat is a disqualification.

Color Any recognized hound color is acceptable and the distribution of color and markings is of no importance.

Disqualifications

Height of more than 15 inches at the highest point of the shoulder blade.

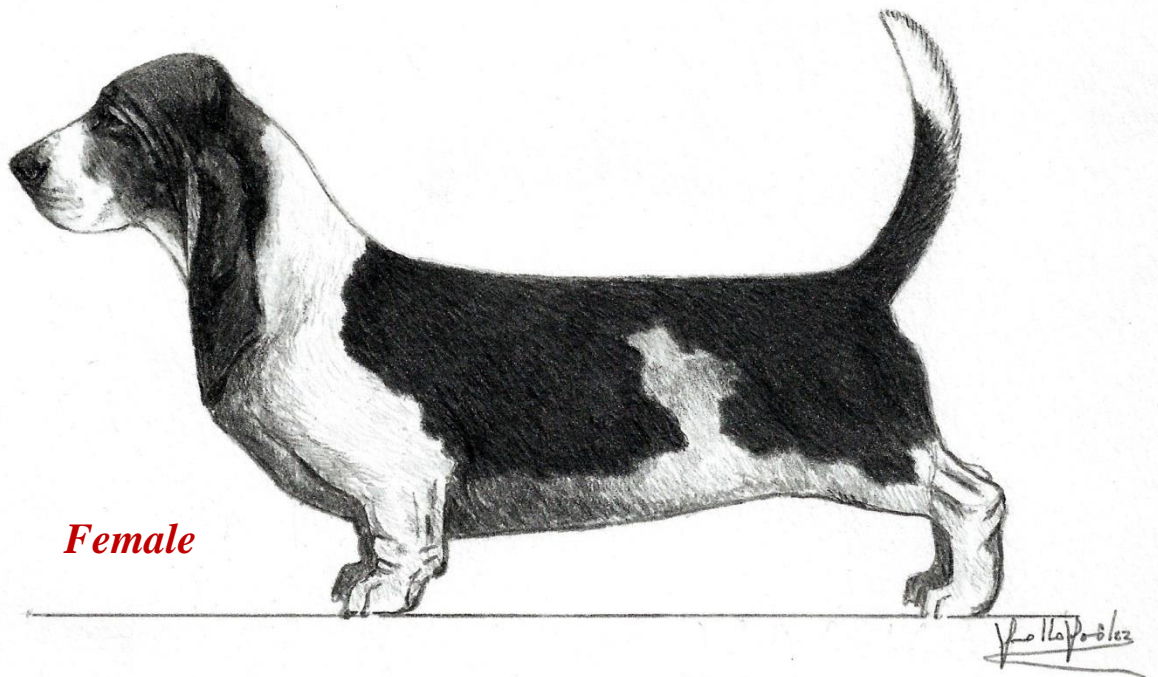
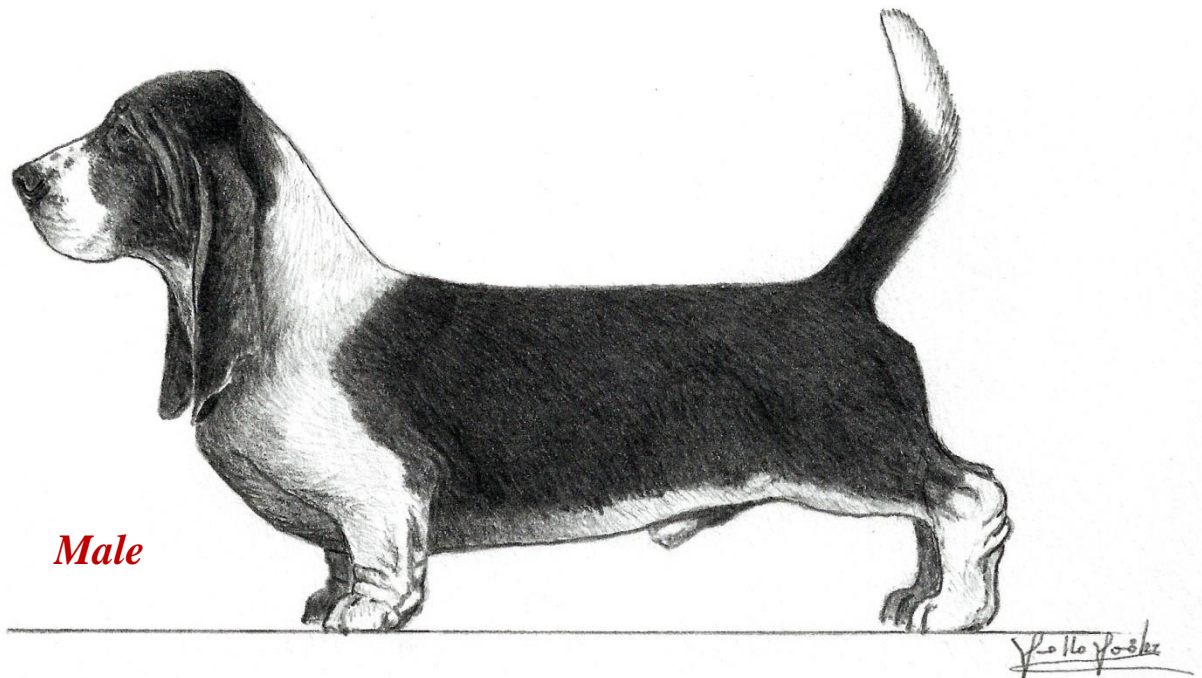
Knuckled over front legs.

Distinctly long coat.

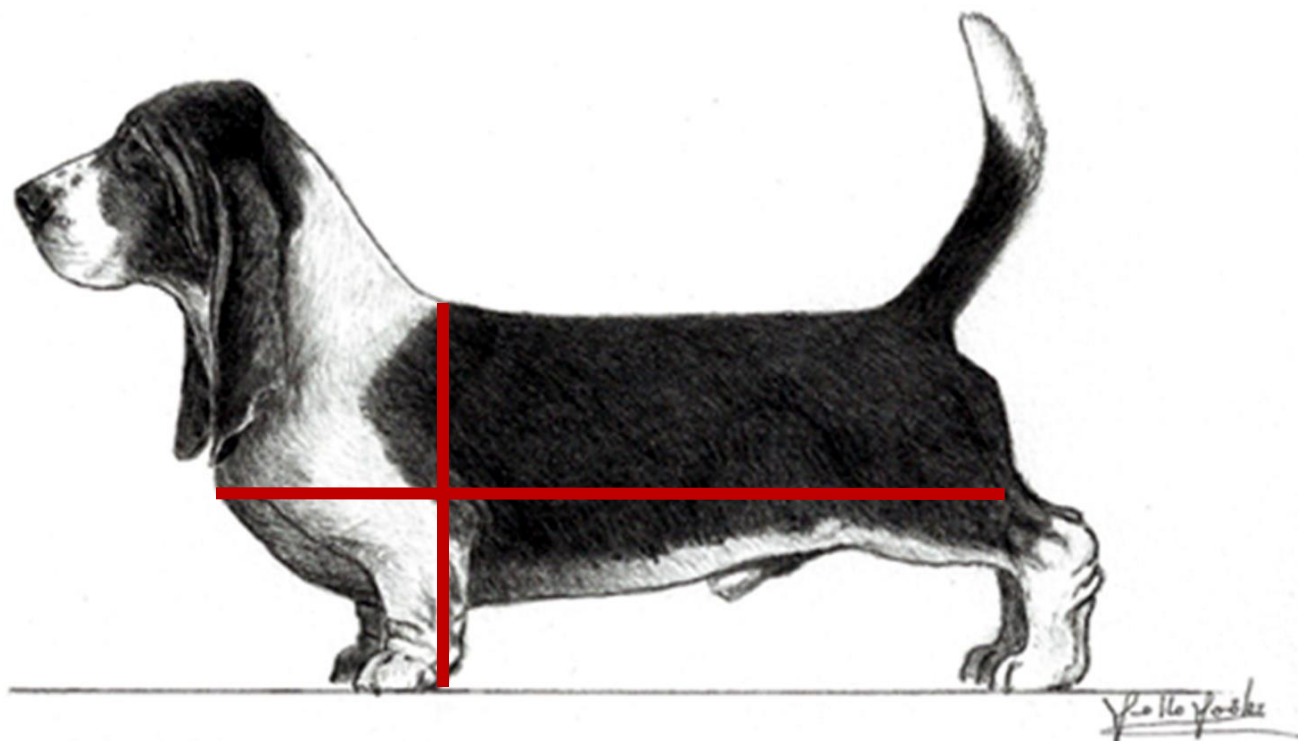
Approved January 14, 1964

The Well Balanced Basset Hound

These are correct Basset Hounds. They are balanced yet substantial in bone. All parts fit smoothly into one another without being overdone.



Correct Proportions in the Basset Hound



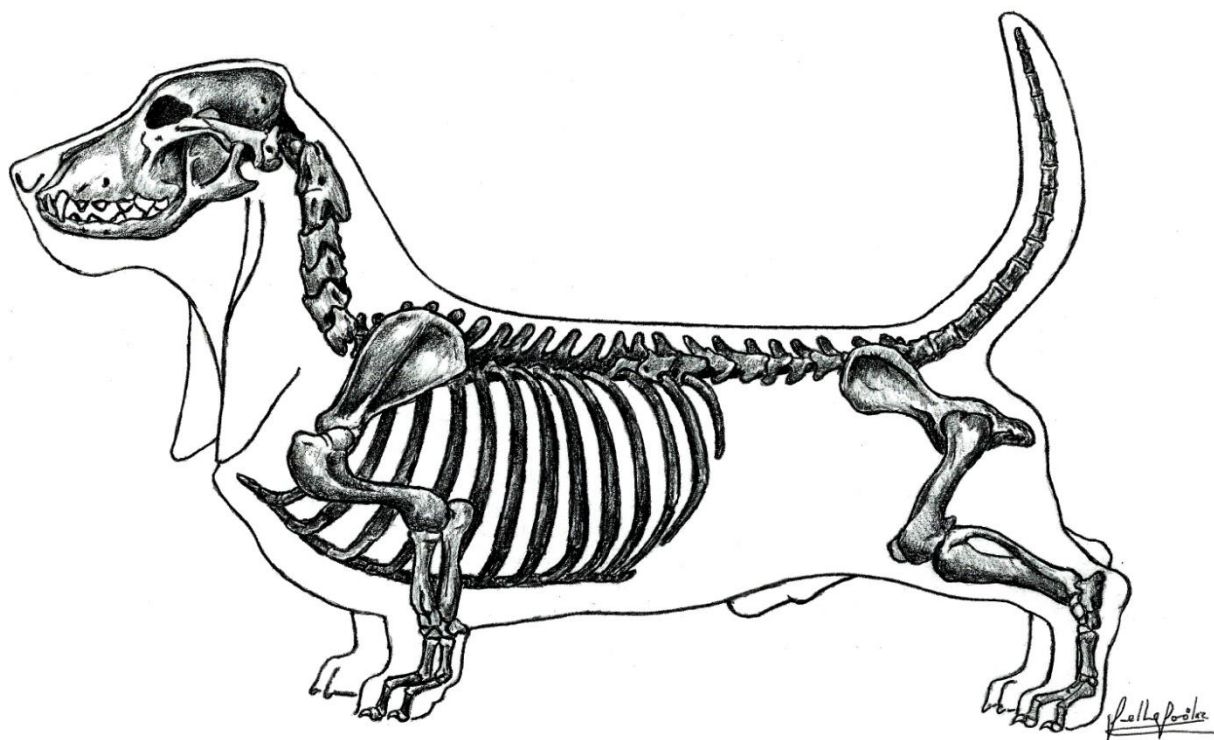
Length to Height

Length to height proportions in the Basset Hound represent approximately a 2:1 rectangular outline. Length is measured from the forechest to point of buttocks. Height is measured from the highest point of the withers to the ground.

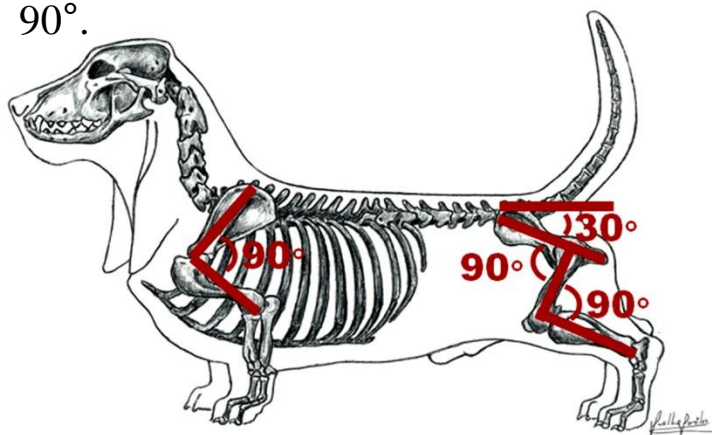
Wither Height versus Depth of Ribcage

The chest reaches below the elbow and the deepest point of the chest to ground is not to be more than one third the total height at the withers of an adult Basset Hound.

Front and Rear Angulation

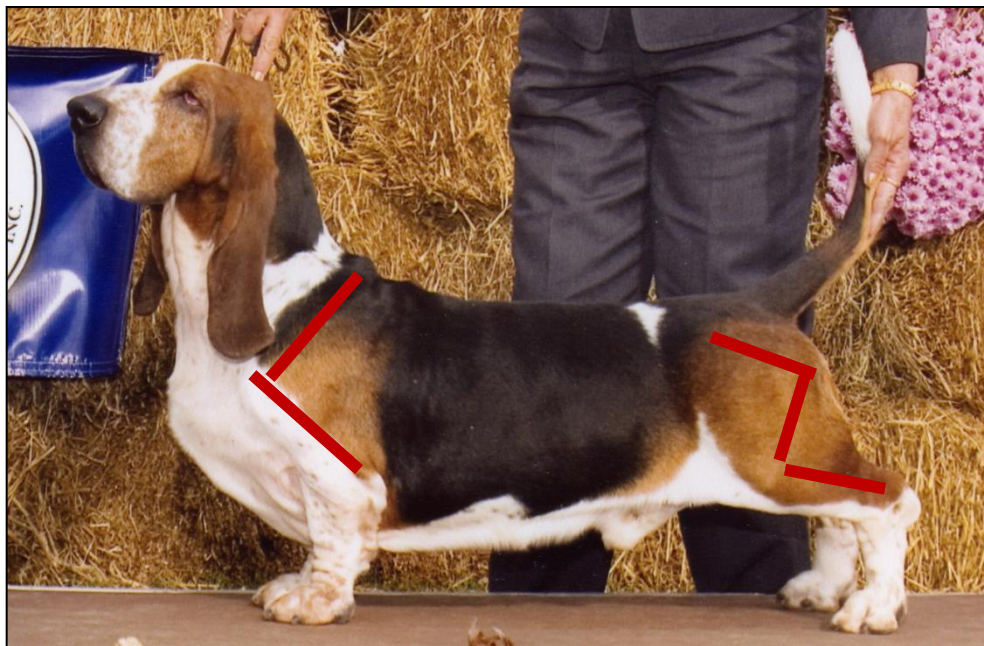


Upper arm and shoulder blade are of equal length and shoulder placement is well under the dog. Angle between the shoulder blade and upper arm is ideally 90° .

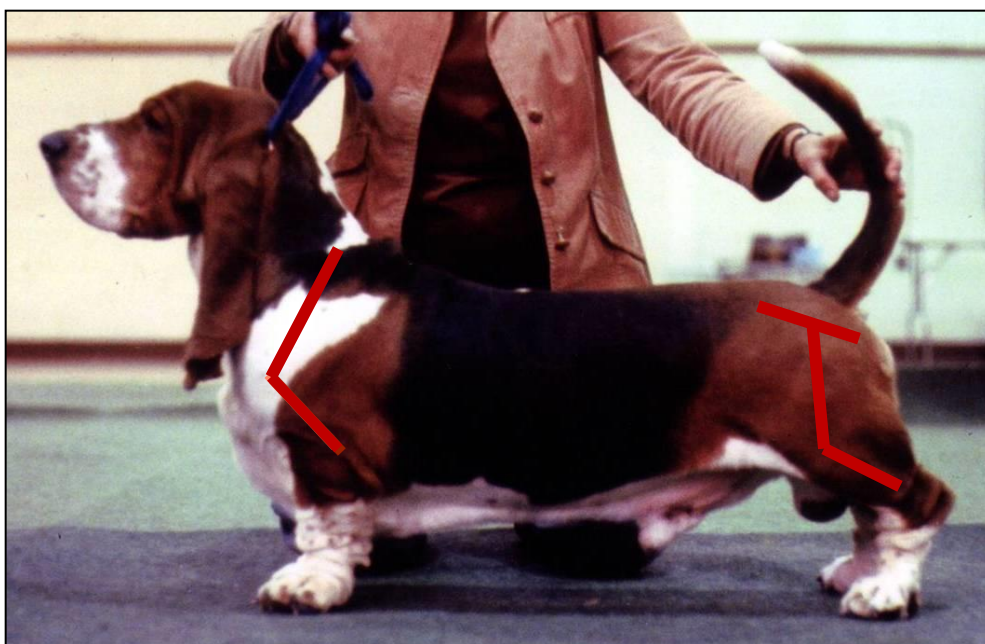


Pelvic slope approximates 30° . The angle between the pelvis and upper thigh and the angle between the upper and lower thigh, ideally are 90° , balancing with the front. Stifle is well-let-down. There is no tendency toward a crouching stance.

Correct and Incorrect Angulation

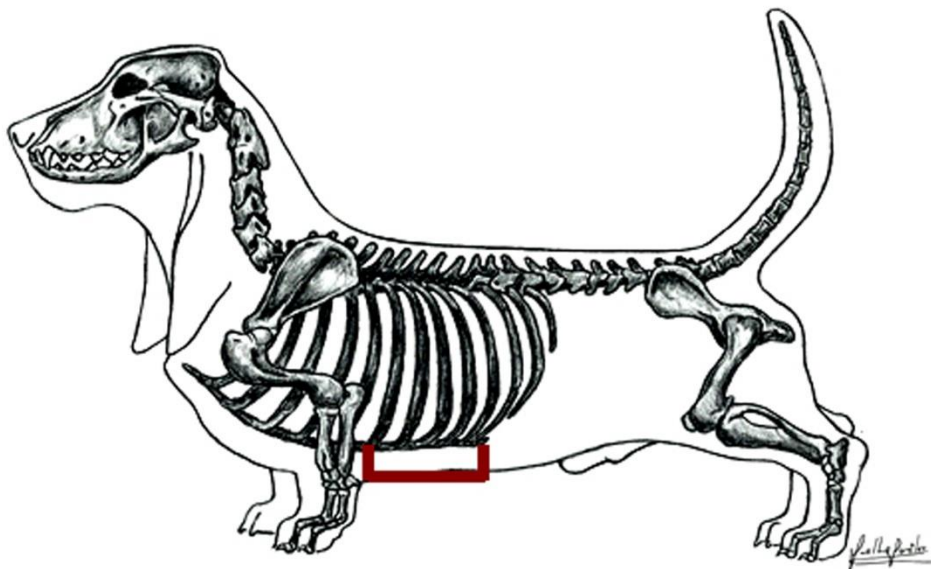


Correct Forequarter & Hindquarter Angulation



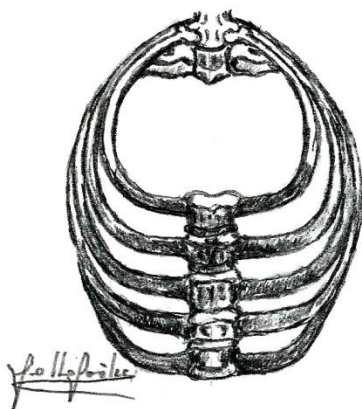
*Straight Forequarter & Hindquarter Angulation
Note Lack of Forechest Due to Short Upper Arm*

Long, Smooth, Well Sprung Ribs



The length of keel behind the front legs (indicated in red) should be of sufficient length. Ribcage reaches below the elbow.

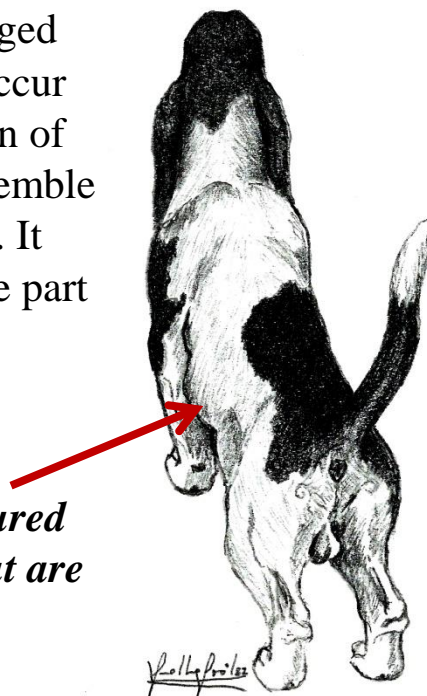
Correct



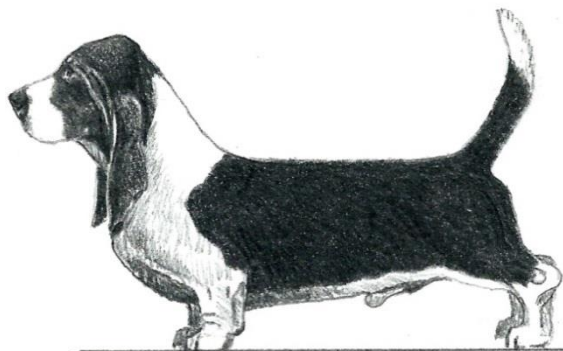
Ribs are smooth and well sprung.

Incorrect: A flanged (bumpy) rib may occur on the lower portion of the ribcage and resemble a flipped up hairdo. It may affect only one part or one side of the ribcage.

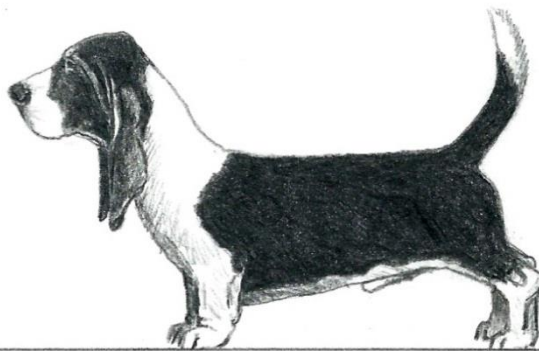
Flanged ribs and flatsidedness (pictured right) are faults but are less serious than movement faults.



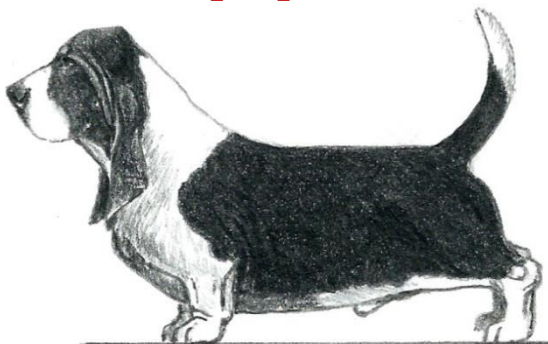
Faulty Outlines



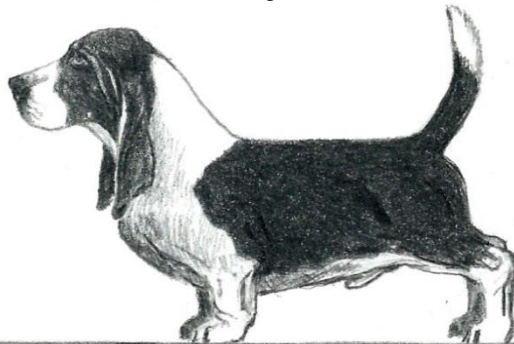
Correct angles & proportions.



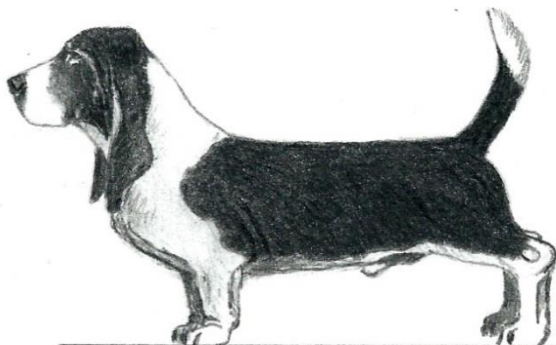
Straight front & rear; lacks forechest.



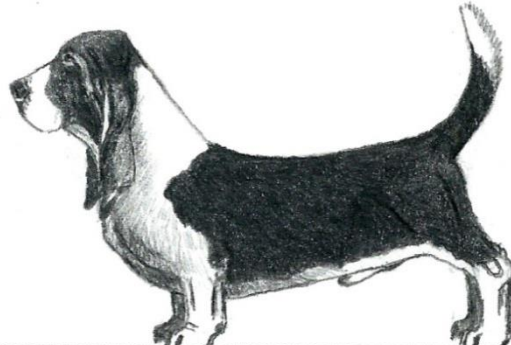
Too heavy and close to ground. Out at elbow.



Cobby dog; lacks length.



Leggy – too much space between ribcage & ground.



Straight rear; saggy topline.

Pollock

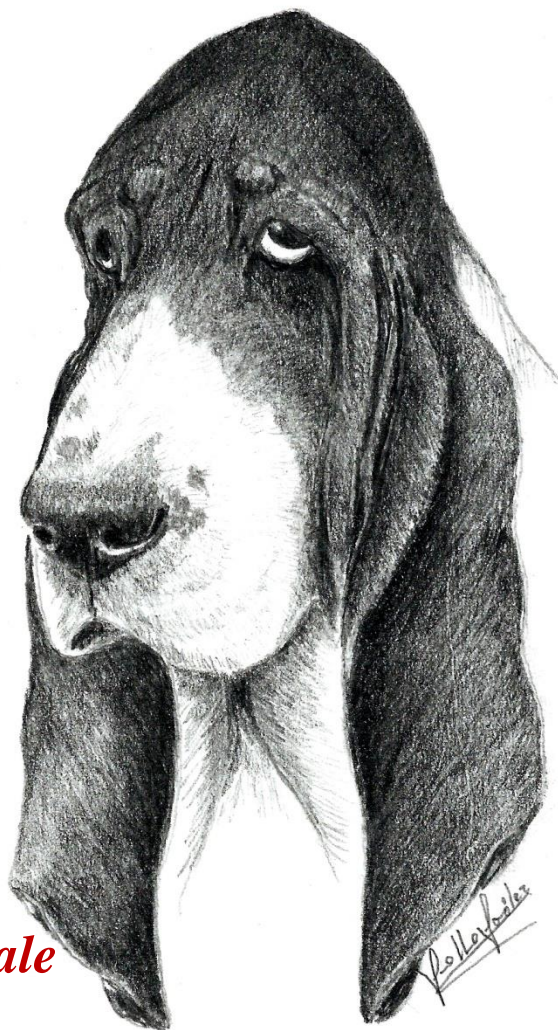


Male

- Deep, heavy muzzle, free from snipiness.
- Low set, long, velvety ears that fold over end of nose.
- Ears curl slightly inward and are set far back on head at base of skull.

Correct Head

- Well-domed, medium width.
- Large, with loose skin, which falls in distinct wrinkles when head is lowered.
- Pronounced occiput.
- Flat on sides of skull; no cheek bumps.



Female

Correct Head

- Slightly sunken, dark eyes, brown color.
- Dark nose, preferably black.
- Viewed in profile, top lines of the muzzle and skull are straight and lie in parallel planes, with a moderately defined stop.
- Lips fall squarely in front and back, in loose hanging flews. A high set, flat ear is a serious fault.



Incorrect

A *Not enough stop*

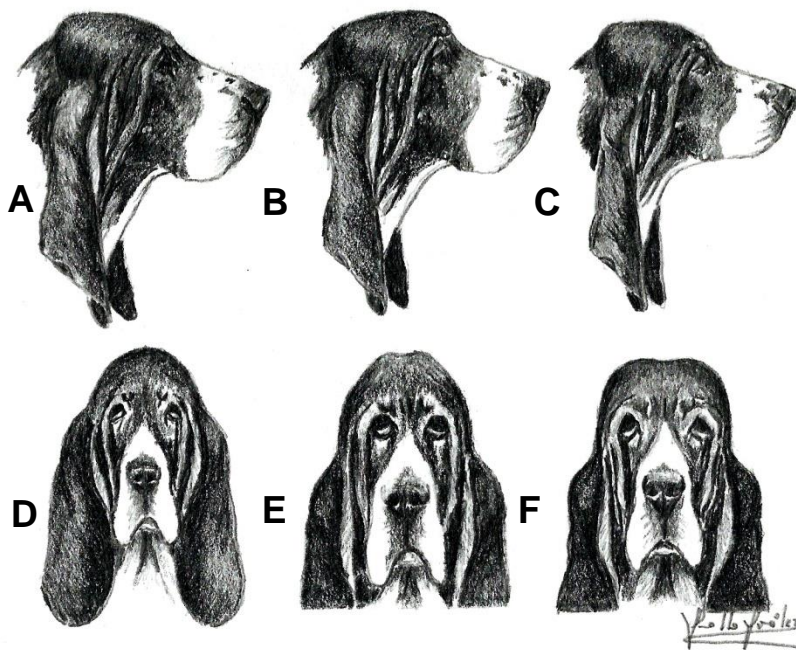
B *Planes not parallel*

C *Snipey; dry head*

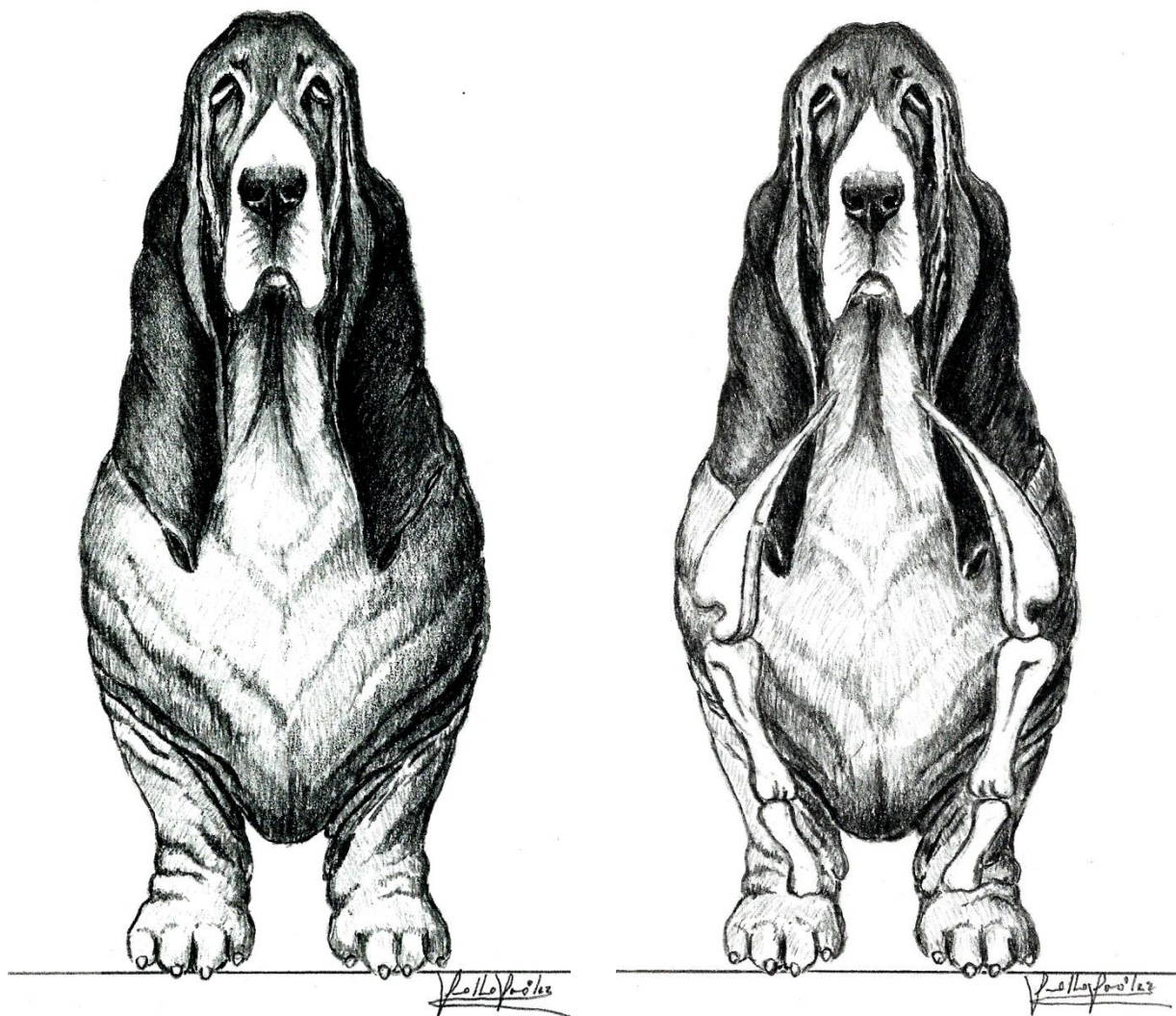
D *High set, flat ear*

E *Round, bulging eye*

F *Broad, flat skull*



A Correct Basset Hound Viewed From the Front



This is a correct front with elbows close to the sides of the ribcage. Front legs curve under the chest so that it is supported by the front legs rather than suspended between them.

Correct Front Assemblies

A



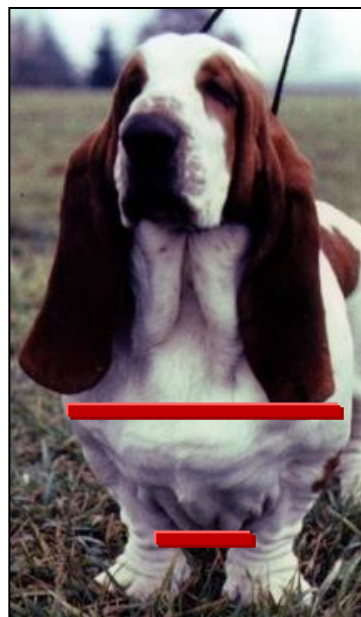
(A) Forelegs are heavily boned with wrinkled skin and wrap around the ribcage to support the heavy forequarters.

B



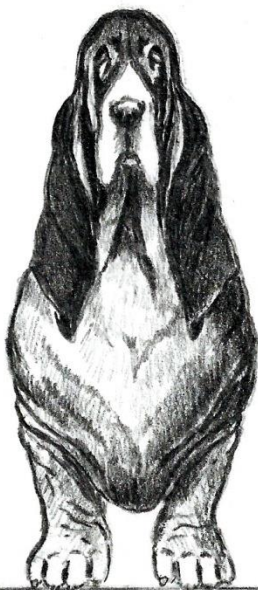
(B) The Basset Hound is a dwarf breed with short legs. The wrap-around structure resembles an egg nesting in a cup.

C

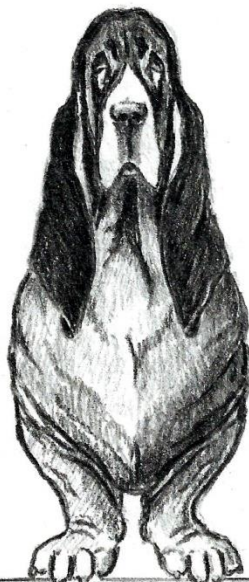


(C) Wrists are closer together than the shoulder joints and feet are inclined equally a trifle outward balancing the width of the shoulders.

Faulty Fronts



Correct wrap-around front.



Fiddle front; out at elbow.



Toes in – out at elbow.



Wide – legs lack crook.



Mismatched front.

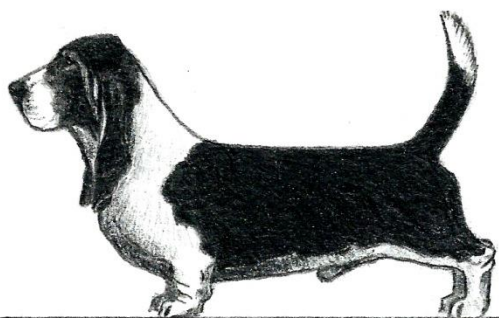


Narrow front.

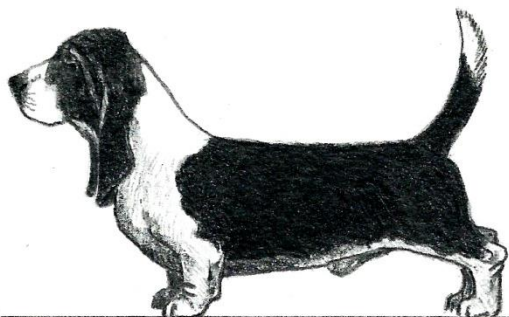
Y. L. L. L. L.

Forechest

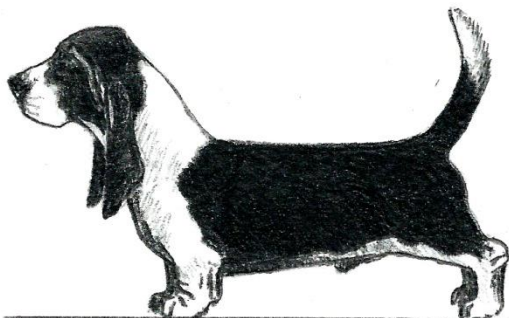
A prominent forechest is a breed hallmark and is part of a long smooth ribcage and should show clearly in front of forelegs. Lack of forechest may be due to a short upper arm.



Desirable prominent forechest



Moderate amount of forechest

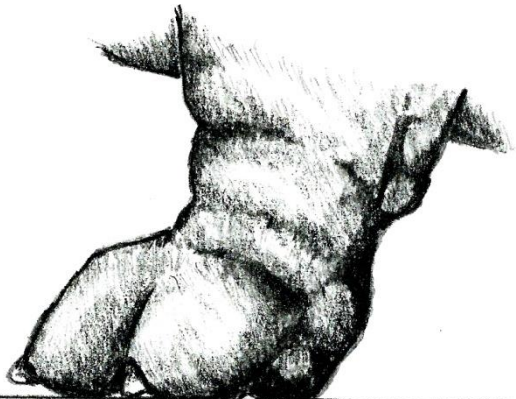


Lacks forechest

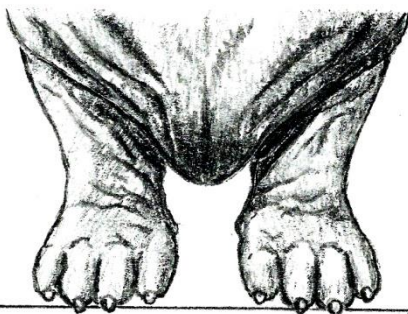
Feet

"The paw is massive, very heavy with tough, heavy pads, well rounded and with both feet inclined equally a trifle outward, balancing the width of the shoulders. Feet down at the pastern are a serious fault. The toes are neither pinched together nor splayed, with the weight of the forepart of the body borne evenly on each."

(The Official Standard for the Basset Hound)



Yolke Foster



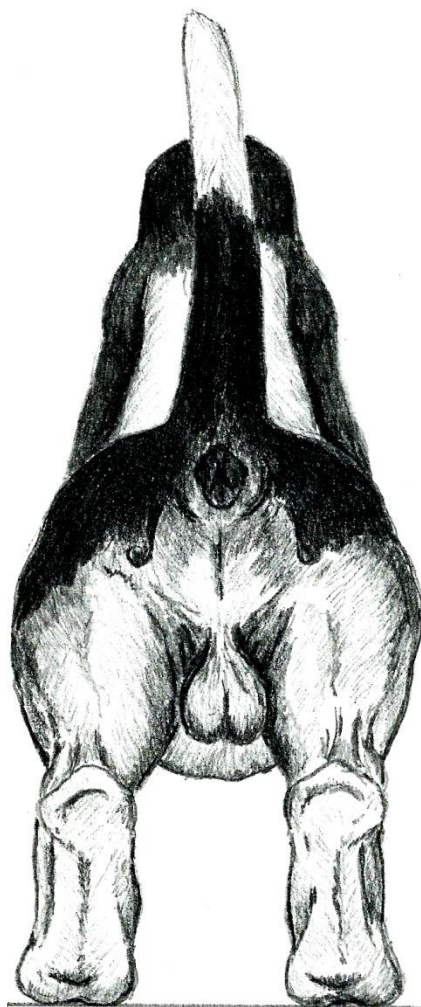
Yolke Foster

Hindquarters

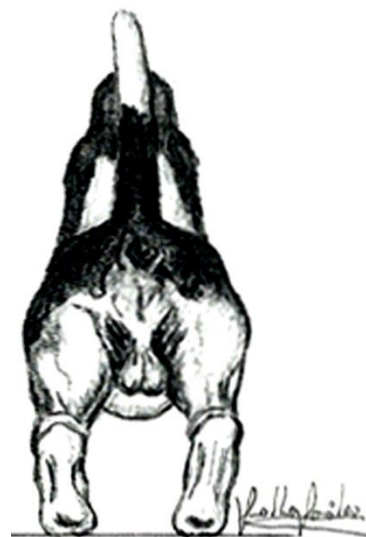
Hindquarters are full and well rounded and about equal to the shoulders in width. They must not appear slack or light in relation to the over-all depth of the body. Viewed from behind, the hind legs are parallel, with the hocks turning neither in nor out. Cowhocks and bowed legs are serious faults.



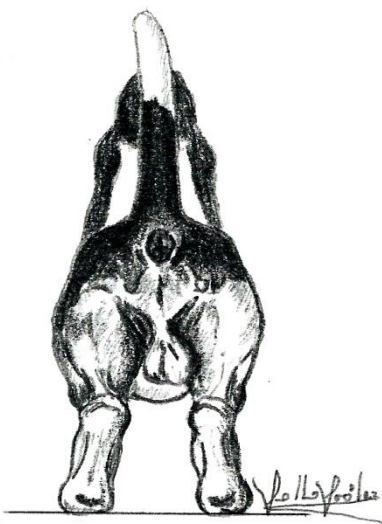
Correct



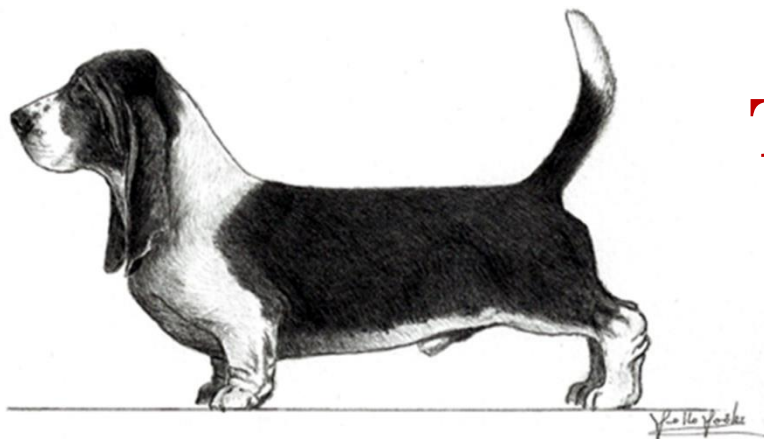
Correct



Bowed Legs

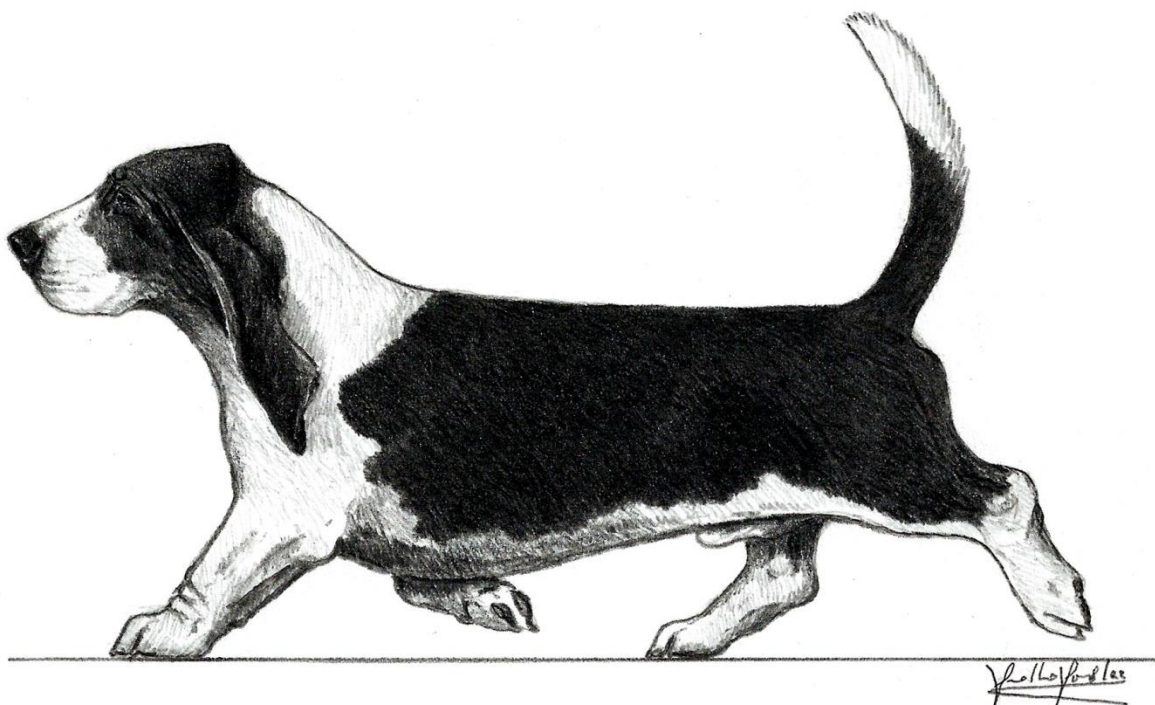


Cowhocks



The Basset Hound In Motion

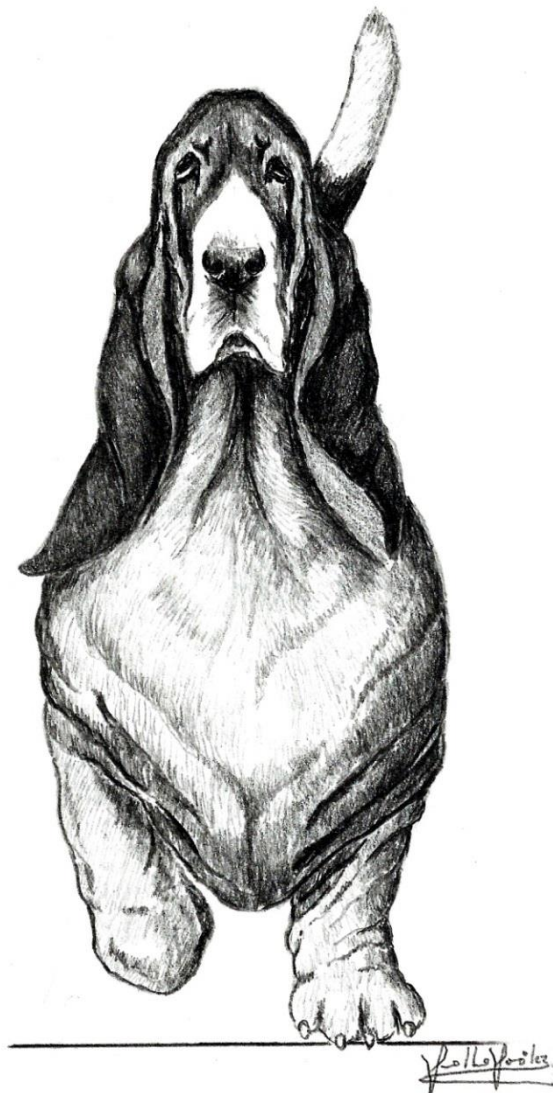
In addition to the stacked picture, correct movement is given high priority. The Basset Hound moves in a smooth, powerful, effortless manner. Its gait is absolutely true with perfect coordination between front and hind legs; it moves in a straight line with hind feet following in line with front feet; hocks are well bent with no stiffness of action.



Correct reach and drive with level topline in motion and tail carried gaily.

Correct Coming and Going

The Basset Hound moves in a straight line with hind feet following in line with the front feet; the hocks are well bent with no stiffness of action. Going away, the hind legs are parallel.

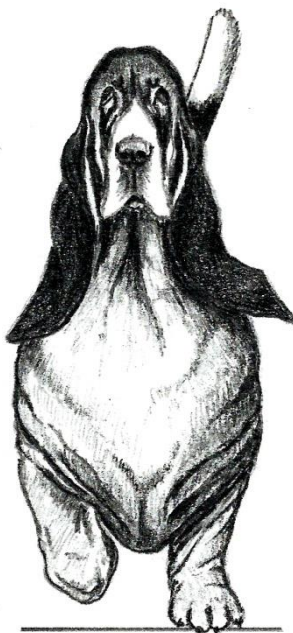


The front legs do not paddle, weave, or overlap, and the elbows must lie close to the body.

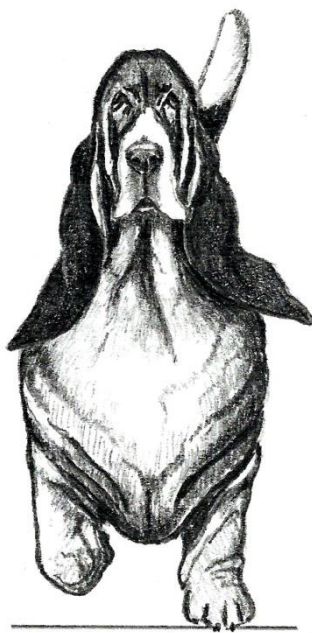


The Basset Hound does not single track going away. The hind legs should remain parallel.

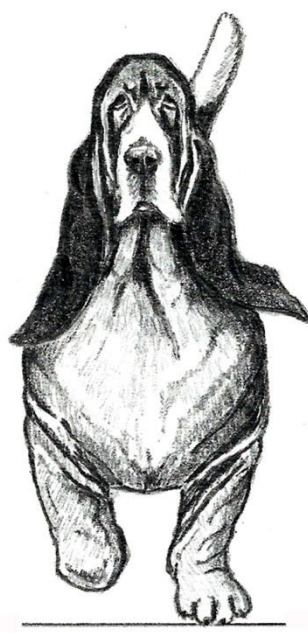
Faulty Coming and Going



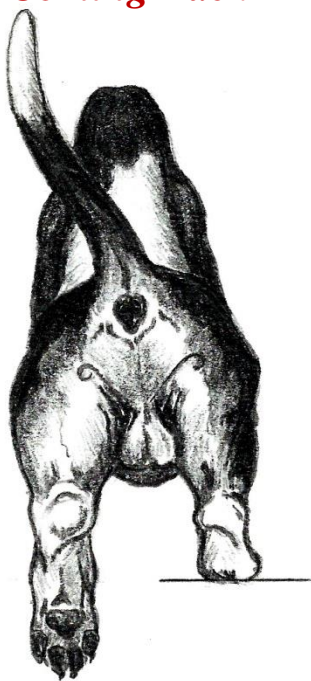
*Correct
Coming Back*



*Legs lack crook
("Wide Front")*



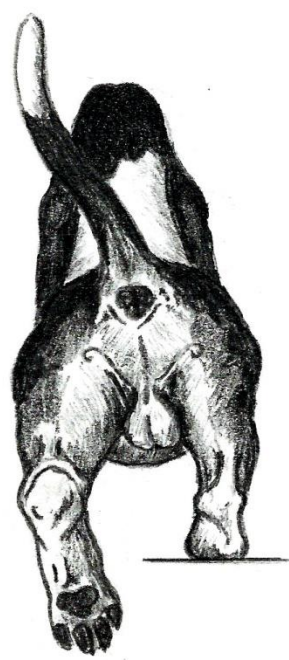
*Lacks
Forechest (Fill)*



*Correct
Going Away*



Cowhocks

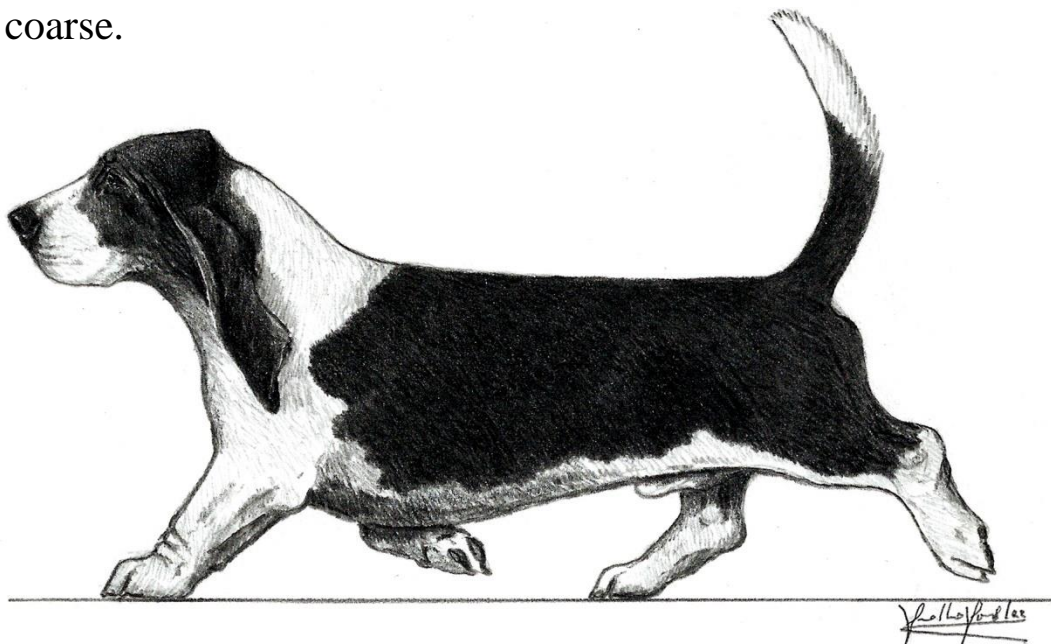


Bowed Legs

H. LeFevre

Tail

The tail is set in continuation of the spine with slight curvature, carried gaily in hound fashion. Hair on underside is coarse.



Correct tail carriage in motion.



Good set



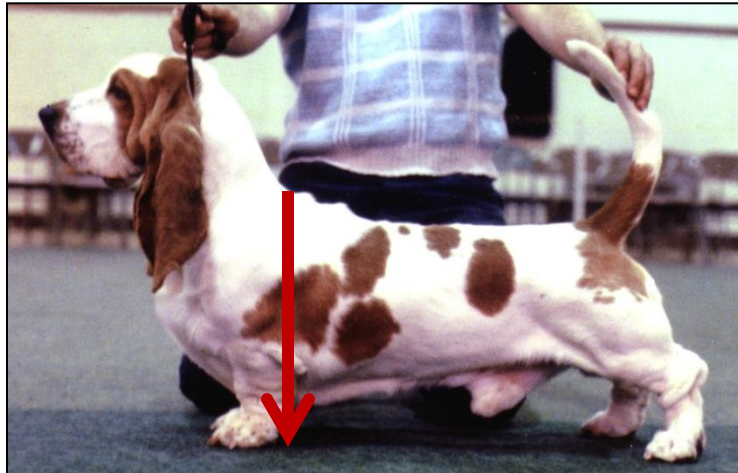
Sickle tail



Low Set

Size

Height should not exceed 14". Height over 15" at the highest point of the shoulder blade is a disqualification.



Coat and Color

The coat is hard, smooth, and short, with sufficient density to be of use in all weather. The skin is loose and elastic. A distinctly long coat is a disqualification. Any recognized hound color is acceptable and the distribution of color and markings is of no importance.



Disqualifications



Knuckling

**There are 3
Disqualifications
in the Basset Hound
Breed Standard**

1. Height of more than 15” at highest point of the shoulder blades.
2. Knuckled over front legs.
3. Distinctly long coat.



*Height of more than 15
inches at highest point
of shoulder blade*

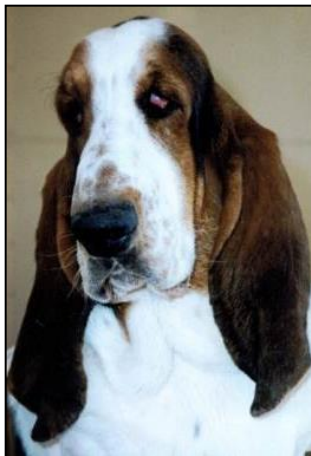


Distinctly long coat

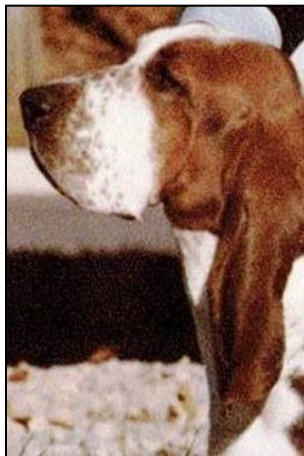
Gallery of Heads

M = Male F = Female

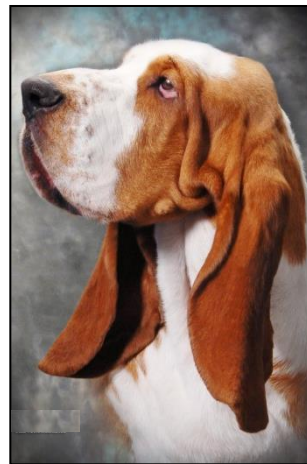
M



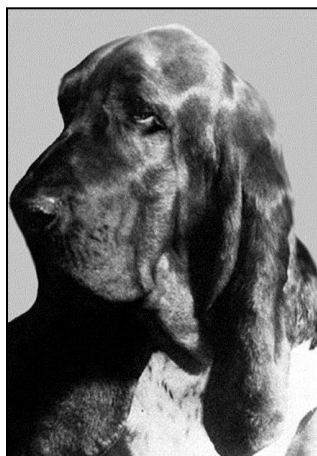
M



M



M



M



F



F



F



F



Gallery of Balanced Basset Hounds Reflecting Various Styles, Colors & Patterns

M = Male F = Female

M



F



M



F



M



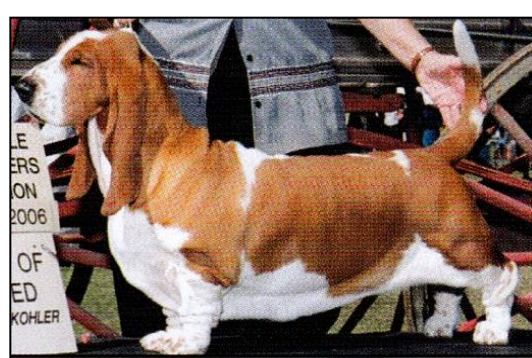
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M

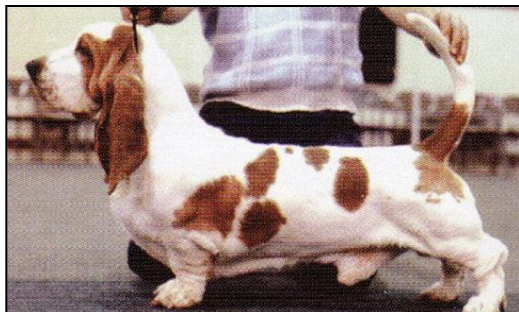


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Any recognized hound color is acceptable and the distribution of color and markings is of no importance.

M



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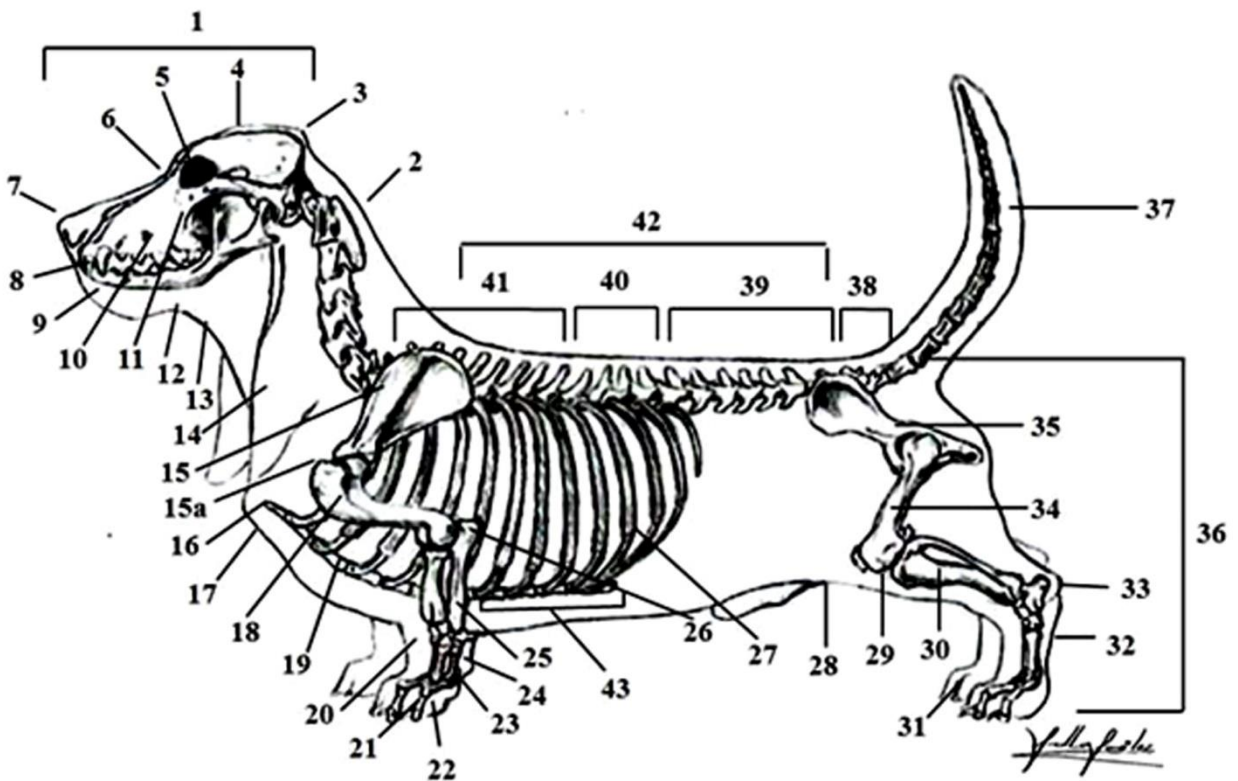


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Parts of the Basset Hound With Definitions from the Breed Standard

Descriptions *not in italics* describe what the AKC Breed Standard calls for regarding that specific part or feature in the Basset Hound. Definitions in *italicized type* are from Gilbert and Brown. (2001). *K-9 Structure and Terminology*. New York: Howell.



1. **HEAD** Large, well proportioned, medium width; covered with loose skin.
2. **NECK** Powerful; good length; well arched.
3. **OCCIPUT** (*High point of the back part of the head*) - pronounced.
4. **SKULL** Well domed; pronounced occipital protuberance; length from nose to stop is approximately the length from stop to occiput. Top lines of muzzle and skull are straight and lie in parallel planes.
5. **EYES** Soft, sad, slightly sunken; prominent haw; brown or dark brown preferred.
6. **STOP** (*The change in profile lines between the muzzle and skull*) Moderately defined.
7. **NOSE** Darkly pigmented; preferably black; large wide-open nostrils; liver color permissible if conforms with head color.
8. **TEETH** Scissors or even bite.
9. **LIPS** Darkly pigmented; pendulous; fall squarely in front and towards the back in loose hanging flews.

10. **MUZZLE** (Head in front of the eyes) **Deep, heavy, free from snipiness.**
11. **CHEEK** (The side of the head) **Flat; free of cheek bumps** (i.e., the masseter muscles below the eyes are not overly developed).
12. **FLEW** (*The corner rear portion of the upper lip*) **Loose hanging.**
13. **DEWLAP** (*Loose pendulous folds of skin about the neck*) **Pronounced.**
14. **EARS** **Extremely long, low set; fold over end of nose; ends curl slightly inward; set far back on the head at the base of skull.**
15. **SHOULDER BLADE** (*Scapula*) **Well laid back.**
- 15a. **POINT OF SHOULDER** (*Foremost tip of upper arm*)
16. **PROSTERNUM** (*Point of the breastbone. Is in front of point of shoulder when viewed from side.*) **Prominent.**
17. **CHEST** (*Forepart of the body enclosed by the ribs and breastbone*) **Deep, full; prominent sternum showing clearly in front of the legs.**
18. **UPPER ARM** (*Humerus*) *In the Basset Hound it is about the same length as the shoulder blade.*
19. **STERNUM** (*Breastbone; brisket. The lower part of the chest between and in front of the legs*). *Should extend well back behind the front legs.*
20. **FORELEGS** (*Front legs*) **Short, powerful, heavy in bone with wrinkled skin.**
21. **TOES** **Neither pinched nor splayed.**
22. **PAW** (*Foot*) **Massive, very heavy with tough heavy pads; well rounded; both front feet inclined equally a trifle outward.**
23. **PASTERN** (*Region between the wrist and forefoot*). **Feet down at the pastern are a serious fault.**
24. **WRIST** (*Region between the forearm and the pastern*).
25. **ULNA** (*One of the two bones of the foreleg*).
26. **ELBOW** **Set close to the side of the chest.**
27. **RIBCAGE** **Long, smooth; extends well back; well sprung.**
28. **TUCK-UP** (*Area of the lower stomach line or belly*).
29. **KNEE or STIFLE** **Well-let-down.**
30. **LOWER THIGH** (*Second thigh*)
31. **HIND FEET** **Point straight ahead.**
32. **REAR PASTERNS** **Turn neither in nor out. Hind legs are parallel when viewed from behind.**
33. **HOCKS** **Turn neither in nor out.**
34. **UPPER THIGH** (*First thigh*)
35. **PELVIS** (*Provide sockets for attachment of rear legs*)
36. **HINDQUARTERS** **Full and well rounded.**
37. **TAIL** **Set in a continuation of the spine with but slight curvature, and carried gaily in hound fashion.**
38. **CROUP** (*Portion of the body above the hind legs extending from loin to the set-on of tail*).
39. **LOIN** (*Area between the end of the ribcage and croup*).
40. **TRUE BACK** (*The portion of the anatomy between the withers and the loin*).
41. **WITHERS** (*Highest point of the shoulders behind the neck. 1st to 9th thoracic vertebrae*). *Should not exceed 14", over 15" disqualifies.*
42. **BACKLINE** (*Line from the rear of the withers to the tail set*) **Straight, level, and free from any tendency to sag or roach.**
43. **POSTERIOR STERNUM** (*Sternum is the portion of the breastbone running between the forelegs and extending backward to the line of the abdomen*). *BHCA JE refers to the sternum that extends back behind the front legs as posterior sternum.*

Judging Tips for the Hands-On Evaluation

Bassetts are expected to be judged on the ramp for the Breed, Group and Best in Show levels of judging.



- Do the exam **quickly** and **gently**!
- **Don't pull skin** over the head or up on the back to check wrinkling and looseness.
- **Never pick up** a Basset Hound to drop its front.
- **Do not push down** on the hindquarters.
- **Never straddle** a Basset during the exam.
- **Don't wear** long ties and scarves.
- **Don't make sounds** to elicit expression.
- Use the **ramp to re-examine an exhibit!**

Final Check List for Judges On the Way to the Ring!

1. **Original Purpose:** Bred to follow a trail over and through difficult terrain.
2. **Proportion and Substance:** Approximately a 2:1 rectangular outline (almost twice as long as tall measured from forechest to point of buttocks). Distance from deepest point of chest to ground not to be more than 1/3 the total height of an adult Basset Hound at the withers. Height should not exceed 14". Over 15" disqualifies.
3. **Angulation and Movement:** Agile, deliberate, not clumsy. 90 degree angulation front and rear. Smooth, powerful, effortless movement, with good reach and drive and level topline in motion. Movement faults are similar to those found in other breeds. Front feet do not paddle, weave or overlap. Hind feet follow in line with front feet. Hocks are well bent with no stiffness of action and are parallel going away. Correct movement should be given high priority.
4. **Head, Body, Temperament:** Large, well-proportioned head with moderate stop, well-domed skull, deep muzzle, slightly sunken eyes, pronounced dewlap and extremely long, low set ears. Look for a wrap-around front. Feet inclined equally a trifle outward but are matched. Massive paw and heavily boned foreleg with wrinkled skin. Prominent forechest is a breed hallmark and should show clearly in front of legs. Look for smooth, well laid back shoulders with upper arm and shoulder blade of equal length and shoulder placement well under dog. Feel for length of posterior sternum or keel. Elbows should lie close to chest. Front legs should intersect deepest part of the chest. Temperament is mild, never sharp or timid. Any recognized hound color is acceptable. Distribution of color and markings is of no importance.

5. Prioritizing Faults:

DISQUALIFICATIONS: Height over 15"; knuckled over front legs; distinctly long coat.

SERIOUS FAULTS: Steep front and rear angles, fiddle front, elbows out, feet down in pastern, cowhocks and bowed legs. Undershot or overshot bite. High set, flat ear.

FAULTS: Incorrect head, ribcage and/or topline.

PERMISSIBLE BUT NOT DESIRABLE: Liver nose and lighter eye conforming to head and general coat coloring of the dog.

Notes

[illegible]

About the Artist

Guillermo González Suárez is a well-known wildlife artist who resides in Peñanes, Asturias, Spain. He is a member of the Basset Hound Club of America and was a founding member of the National Spanish Hound Club (Club de Sabueso Español). He is also an FCI approved judge of working and conformation hounds. He has owned Basset Hounds for more than 50 years and still regularly hunts European hare with his pack, the majority of which go back to American bloodlines.

