

# THE FRENCH BULLDOG

CKC - GROUP 6 - NON-SPORTING

The French Bulldog is fast becoming one of the most popular breeds. Presented in a variation of size, proportion, shape and style. Some can be “bullier”, some are slighter, while only a small percentage have the desired ratio of size to substance and bone.

The first paragraph of the breed standard states - muscular dog, of heavy bone, compactly built, and of medium or small structure - bone and substance are an essential part of the breed, while keeping an overall balance.

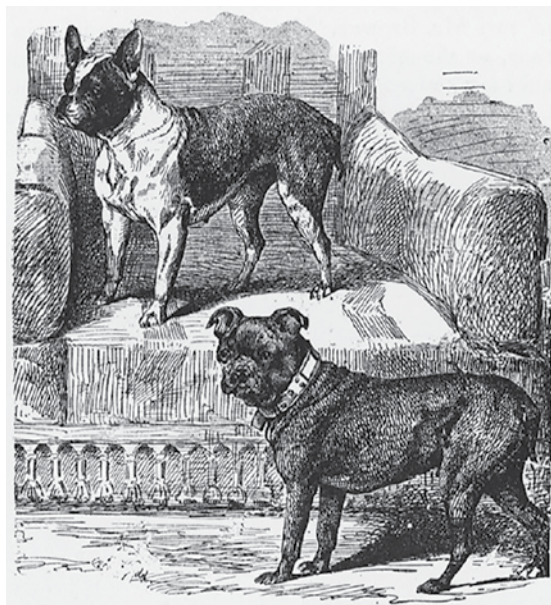
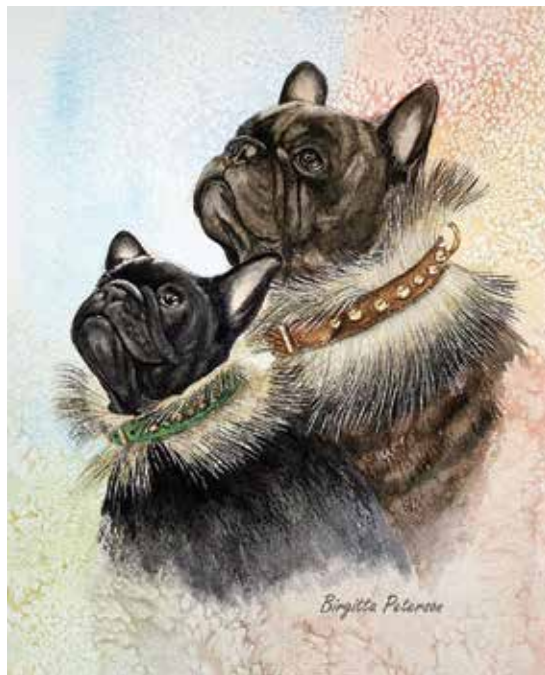
The bat ears are the hallmark of the breed, and judges should pay particular attention to them. They should be set correctly at 11 and 1 o'clock, being the correct size and shape.



Dimboolaa, Mikko and Diabutsu  
Owned by Mrs. Amy C. Gillig and first shown at the French Bulldog Club of America Specialty Show in 1898

*“We should know what breed it is at midnight, in the dark of the moon, on top of the picket fence — by the silhouette!”*

*Alva Rosenberg*



Bat and Rose Ear French Bulldogs owned by Mr. Thomas, England

## A brief history...

- Bull-baiting was outlawed in England in 1835, resulting in variations in size in Bulldogs.
- The breed was developed from the English Toy Bulldogs in the mid to late 1800s.
- Originally those small bulldogs had both rose and erect ears.
- The bulldog we know is the product of different crossings (possibly Pugs and the Terrier Boule) may have been used to set size and type by enthusiastic breeders in the popular quarters of Paris in the 1880s. However no records exist that document the early history of the breed.
- 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.
- There are 3 French Bulldog CKC accredited clubs in Canada, in 2000 the CKC recognized the French Bulldog Fanciers of Canada as a National club, in 2010 the French Bulldog Club of Western Canada as a regional club, and the newest in 2016, is the French Bulldog Club of Central Canada, also a regional club.

# FRENCH BULLDOG STANDARD AT A GLANCE

**Head** - large and square

**Eyes** - wide apart, set low down in the skull, round in form, dark in colour

**Ears** - bat ears, broad at base, elongated, round tip, set high in the head

**Skull** - flat but slightly rounded when viewed from side

**Neck** - thick and well-arched with loose skin at the throat

**Stop** - well defined

Strong and short, broad at the shoulders and narrowing at the loins

**Nose** - extremely short, nostrils broad, black except on light coloured dog

**Slight fall** close behind the shoulders

**Muzzle** - broad, deep and well laid back

**Underjaw** - deep, square, broad, well turned up

**Chest** - broad, deep and full

**Forequarters** - short, stout, straight and muscular, set wide apart

\*Short coupled does not mean NO couple!

**Shoulder** - well laid back

**"Roach back"** = slight rise over the loin with highpoint at L4 (red)

**Couple\***

**Tail** - either straight or screwed, short, hung low, thick root and fine tip, carried low in repose

**Hindquarters** - strong and muscular, longer than forelegs, to elevate loin above shoulders

**Well-ribbed** - with belly tucked up

**Hocks** - well let down

**Feet** - moderate in size, compact and firmly set

**Hind feet** - slightly longer than forefeet

**Toes** - compact, well split up, with high knuckles and short stubby nails

BLACK TEXT is from the CKC Breed Standard

RED TEXT is a clarification of the Breed Standard

## Key Points

- General Appearance
  - Influence of Sex
- Size
- Head
- Neck — Topline — Body
- Forequarters — Hindquarters — Gait
- Coat — Color
- Temperament
- Disqualifications



## General Information

- The French Bulldog is a chondrodystrophic (AKA achondroplastic) breed exhibiting short limbed dwarfism, as seen in Dachshunds, Bassets, Bulldogs, and Skye Terriers, all of which exhibit some type of chondrodystrophy.
- Chondrodystrophy affects the cartilage that makes up the fetal skeleton, resulting in short, stout limb bones flared at the ends, shortened vertebrae, and a short upper jaw (brachycephaly) traits that characterize the breed.
- Do not French Bulldogs that are **extreme** examples of chondrodystrophy, as the condition can produce some undesirable effects as well as those that characterize the breed.

## General Appearance

The French Bulldog should have the appearance of an active, intelligent, muscular dog, of heavy bone, smooth coat, compactly built, and of medium or small structure. The points should be well distributed and bear good relation one to the other, no feature being in such prominence from either excess or lack of quality that the animal appears deformed or poorly proportioned.

### General Appearance, Proportion and Symmetry



Dogs



Bitches



### INFLUENCE OF SEX

In comparing specimens of different sex, due allowance is to be made in favor of bitches, which do not bear the characteristics of the breed to the same marked degree as do the dog.

*Recognize that despite being a muscular breed, bitches should show feminine characteristics.*

### SIZE

A lightweight class under 22 lb. (10 kg); heavyweight class, 22 lb. (10 kg) and not over 28 lb. (10-13 kg).  
Over 28 lb. (10-13 kg) is a **DISQUALIFICATION**.

*The two classes isn't really looked at anymore. If you are unsure of the weight, please call for the scale.*



Bitch

Dog

**Dogs with good body proportions**



9 month old male



1-1/4 year old male



5 year old male

**Bitches with good body proportions**



2 year old bitch



3 year old bitch



8 year old bitch

**PROPORTION**

Distance from withers to ground in good relation to distance from withers to onset of tail, so that the animal appears compact, well balanced and in good proportion. Compact refers to length of loin; it does not mean square.

**HEAD**

**Head** should be large and square (*in front view*)

**Top of the skull** should be flat but slightly rounded.

**Stop** should be well defined, causing a hollow or groove between the eyes.

**Muzzle** should be broad, deep, and well laid back; the muscles of the cheeks well developed.

**Nose** should be extremely short; nostrils broad with well defined line between them. The nose and flews should be black, except in the case of the lighter-coloured dogs, where a lighter colour of nose is acceptable. The flews should be thick and broad, hanging over the lower jaw at the sides, meeting the underlip in front and covering the teeth which should not be seen when the mouth is closed.

**Underjaw** should be deep, square, broad, undershot, and well turned up.



*Typically a Frenchie has a wrinkle over the nose and a wrinkle on each side of the nose.*

## CORRECT HEAD PROFILE



*Note good layback, upturn of underjaw and rounded forehead in this young dog.*

- *A straight line should connect the underjaw, tip of nose, and top of the stop.*
- *The forehead is rounded when viewed from the side.*
- *This rounded forehead is a major departure from the Bulldog's flat, laid-back forehead.*

**Eyes** should be wide apart, set low down in the skull, as far from the ears as possible, round in form, of moderate size, neither sunken or bulging, and in colour dark. No haw and no white of the eye showing when looking forward.

**Ears** shall hereafter be known as the bat ear, broad at the base, elongated, with round top, set high in the head, but not too close together, and carried erect with the orifice to the front. The leather of the ear fine and soft.

## Judge Head Type Both Front and Profile



Same 2-year-old bitch both shots

### Positive Points

- Acceptable front view
- Square head — good ears
- Flat skull between the ears

### Negative Points

- Side view is incorrect
- Down-faced; nose well below the Center of the eyes
- Long nose; forehead not rounded

## Incorrect Nose Placement



- Incorrect nose placement ("down-faced")



- Correct nose placement (nose digitally raised here)

The top of the nose should be just below a line drawn through the center of the eyes.

## EARS

- **Bat Ears**  
Broad at the base, elongated with a round top, carried erect
- Top of skull flat between the ears
- **Other than Bat Ears Disqualifies**
- Ears should be placed at "11 and 1 o'clock."
- Ears are expressive
- Evaluate ear expression on the floor, not on the table
- Do not penalize for failure to use ears at all times

### Pointed Ears



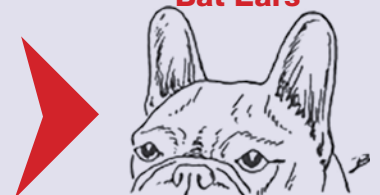
### Drop Ears



### Poor Ear set



### Bat Ears



## NOSE

- Black
- Extremely short
- Nostrils broad with a well defined line between them
- Nose other than black is a disqualification, except in the case of lighter colored dogs, where a lighter colored nose is acceptable

- Cream and fawn Frenchies may have lighter (self) colored noses
- Pink (unpigmented spot) on the nose is NOT a lighter colored nose (multi-colored or “butterfly” nose)
- Nose other than black is a DQ in a brindle, brindle and white, or white and brindle dog.



In fawn dogs a lighter colored nose is acceptable but not desirable



Nose other than black is a DQ in a brindle, brindle and white, or white and brindle dog.



Pink (unpigmented) spot on nose or “butterfly” nose is a disqualification.



“Mouse” nose, other than black, is a disqualification in a brindle dog.

### French Bulldogs

Open



Mild Stenosis



Moderate Stenosis



Severe Stenosis



The above nose variations are not a disqualification

## BITE

- Underjaw is deep, square, and broad
- Undershot
- Well turned up
- Teeth are not seen when the mouth is closed
- Do not reward a dog with a wry bite or with tongue or teeth showing when the mouth is closed.

Note: Often a Frenchie's teeth are not in a straight line. Examine bite from side if necessary to confirm whether bite is wry.



Note broad underjaws and teeth in a straight line.

### Mouth Examination



**INCORRECT**

Do not cover the dog's eyes or nose when examining the mouth. You are not required to check, nor should you check, for full dentition. Check only that the jaw is undershot and not wry.



**CORRECT**

## Neck - Topline - Body



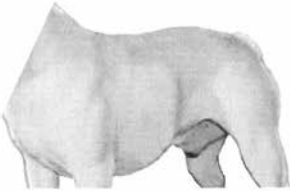
**Neck** - The neck should be thick and well arched, with loose skin at throat.

**Forequarters** - The forelegs should be short, stout, straight and muscular, set wide apart.

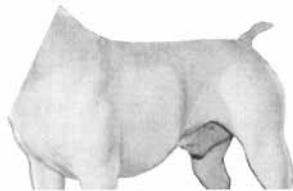
**Body** - The body should be short and well rounded. The back should be a roach back, with a slight fall close behind the shoulders. It should be strong and short, broad at the shoulders and narrowing at the loins. The chest, broad, deep and full, well ribbed with the belly tucked up.

### TOPLINE

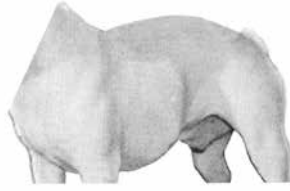
- Rise over the loin.
- Underline follows topline.
- A roll of loose skin at the withers is normal.
- Judge the topline when moving as well as when stacked.



Correct topline, tuck up, and tail set



Incorrect topline, too level, gay tail



Incorrect topline, camel back

### "PEAR SHAPED" BREED

**Broad at the shoulders and narrowing at the loins.**

(Although the breed is sometimes described as "pear shaped" this term is not in our Standard, which contains the description stated above.



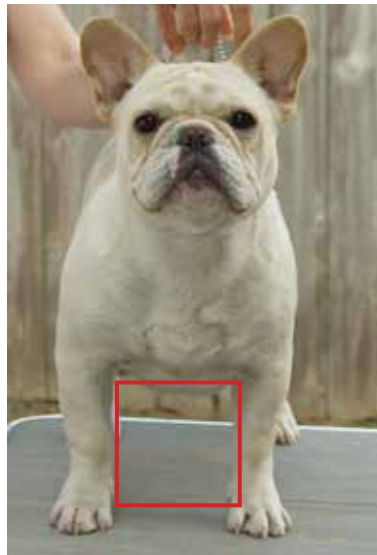
From French Bulldog Club of America Illustrated Standard

**CORRECT TOPLINE SHOULD BE OBVIOUS WHEN DOG IS STANDING STILL AND MOVING.**



### FOREQUARTERS

DOG



BITCH

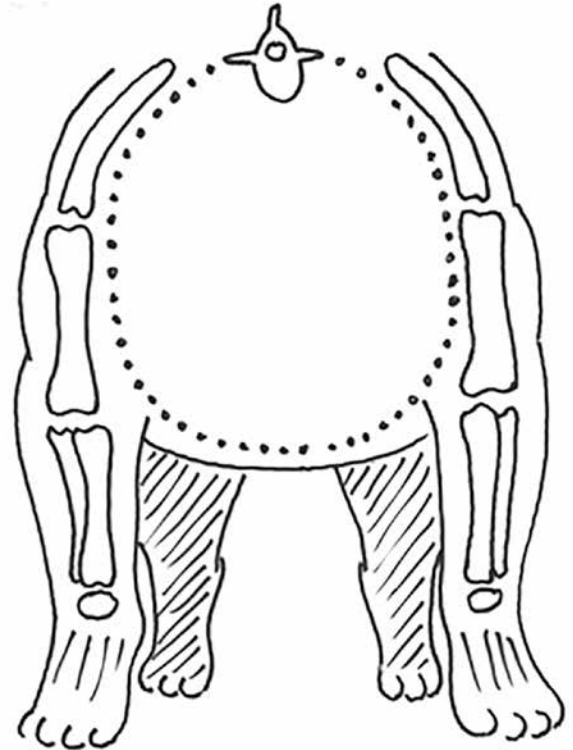


- Forelegs are short, stout, straight, muscular, set wide apart.
- Dewclaws may be removed.
- Feet are moderate in size, compact and firmly set.
- Toes compact, well split up, with high knuckles and short stubby nails

The space created between the front legs, chest, and the ground should be nearly square.

## View from the Front

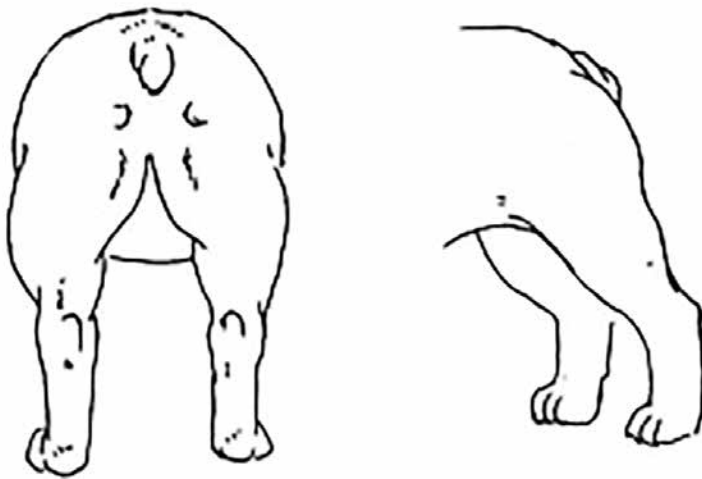
- Broad at the shoulders and narrowing at the loins.
- Front assembly in an adult dog is broader than the rear assembly.
- When viewed from the front, the hind legs are seen set up inside the front legs.
- Because of the wider front/narrower rear, the hindlegs should move closer together than the front legs when gaited.



## HINDQUARTERS

**Hindquarters** - The hind legs should be strong and muscular, longer than the forelegs, so as to elevate the loins above the shoulders. Hocks well let down. The feet should be moderate in size, compact and firmly set. Toes compact, well split up, with high knuckles and short stubby nails; hind feet slightly longer than forefeet.

Strong, muscular hindquarters are required to provide the drive necessary for good movement. A French Bulldog should have legs that, when seen from the rear, drop straight from the hips to the ground with the stifle and feet turned slightly outward. From the side view, it should exhibit moderate angulation.



**Tail** - The tail should be either straight or screwed (but not curly), short, hung low, thick root and fine tip; carried low in repose.

Low tail placement and carriage is more important than actual tail length, but note that the Standard **does** describe a tail.



Shorter Tail



Longer Tail

## GAIT

Currently there is nothing in the Canadian Kennel Club French Bulldog standard referring to the gait, it is my understanding that the National French Bulldog Club is currently looking to update the standard to mirror the American Kennel Club French Bulldog standard, so below it the information on gait from their standard.



Good topline, underline, & tail set when moving.

**Gait** - Correct gait is double tracking with good reach and drive. The action is unrestrained, free and vigorous.

Because of the wide front and narrower rear, the rear legs' track is slightly narrower than that of the front. It should move gracefully and powerfully.



Correct Stance



Correct Movement





## COAT AND COLOUR

Presently one of the biggest issues with the French Bulldog Standard is the definition of acceptable colour, the National Bulldog Club is presently rewording this section to be clearer. And to once again mirror what our American counterparts are using in their standard.

Currently the CKC standard for French Bulldogs reads:

Acceptable colours are: ALL BRINDLE, FAWN, WHITE, BRINDLE AND WHITE, and **any colour except those which constitute disqualification**. The skin should be soft and loose, especially at the head and shoulders, forming wrinkles. Coat moderately fine, brilliant, short and smooth.

**Disqualifications: black and white, black and tan, liver, mouse or solid black (black means without any trace of brindle);**

See visual chart on the next page.

### DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Other than bat ears
- Black and white, black and tan, liver, mouse or solid black (black means without any trace of brindle)
- Eyes of different colour
- Nose other than black except in the case of the lighter-coloured dogs, where a lighter colour of nose is acceptable
- Hare lip; any mutilation
- Over 28 lb. (12.7 kg) in weight

### COMMONLY SEEN DQ'S

The most common DQ's you will see in the ring are:

- Over 28 pounds in weight
- Lack of a trace of brindle
- Pink on the nose

### COMMON DEVIATIONS

- Lack of Balance
- Overly short — Overly long
- Incorrect Topline — flat backed, camel backed, high in rear
- Poor movement — unsound

## PRIORITIZE WHEN JUDGING

- **Silhouette:** encompasses muzzle layback, correct topline, neck, front and rear angulation, tail set, and proportion.
- **Head:** square, short nose, upturn and width of underjaw, broad muzzle with correct layback, ear set.
- **Movement:** coming and going and profile.
- **MOST IMPORTANTLY,** reward the overall correct, whole package, not just the pieces.

## CKC French Bulldog Breed Standard Coat Colours/Patterns

The **RECOGNIZED French Bulldog colours** are: brindle (black with traces of tan striping); cream; fawn; black masked fawn, white, and pied (white with patches of any other recognized colour).

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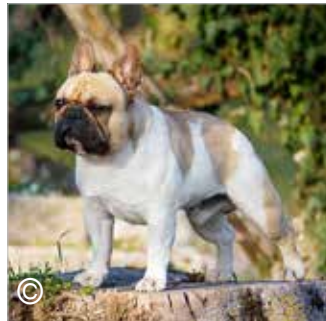
Brindle



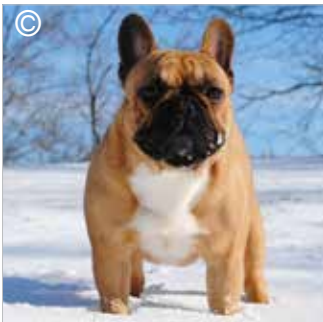
Brindle Pied



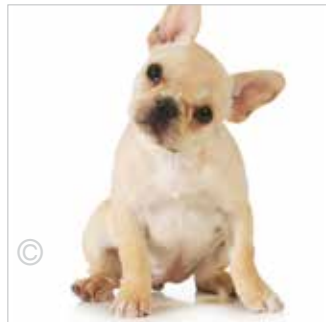
Brindle Pattern (varies)



Fawn Pied



Black Mask Fawn



Fawn



White



Cream

## DISQUALIFIED

## CKC French Bulldog Breed Standard Coat Colours/Patterns

These colours are **NOT RECOGNIZED** as acceptable colour in the breed standard.



Mouse

All shades of mouse (grey, blue, silver, Solid blue, Blue brindle, Blue brindle pied, Blue fawn, Blue fawn pied, Blue mask fawn, Blue and tan)



Liver



Black and Tan

Isabella (like in a Doberman), Black and tan



Black



Merle



All shades of liver (brown, chocolate, Chocolate fawn, Solid chocolate, Chocolate brindle pied), Lilac, Solid Black, Merle, White and black ... Black means black without a trace of brindle.



## SUMMARY

The bulk of this article was pulled from the 2015 Judging the French Bulldog seminar, created by the French Bulldog Club of America. In Canada, to date we don't have such an article.

The Canadian National French Bulldog Club is in the process of updating the breed standard, their plan is to mirror the US standard so both countries have the same breed standard as there are a lot of cross border exhibitors for both countries.

In short, the French Bulldog is a head breed, were 40 points are set aside for the head alone, the most points in the standard are given to the ears - 8 points. The frenchie should have great expression, curious soft eyes.

Bigger is not necessarily better— look for quality, type, proportion and balance.

One of the biggest issues faced by the breed today is the inconsistency of identifying a disqualifying colour. If we can get this issue recognized at a judging level, we can stop rewarding people for unreputable breeding practices.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Yvonne Poiré is a breeder, owner, handler of French and English Bulldogs under the FullofBull kennel name.

Yvonne is a founding member of the newly formed French Bulldog Club of Central Canada, serving as President, she is also an active member of the executive for the Bulldog Club of Canada for the past 7 years.

### CREDITS

- Canadian Kennel Club - French Bulldog Breed Standard
- 2015 Judging the French Bulldog, French Bulldog Club of America
- 1997 French Bulldog Illustrated Standard, French Bulldog Club of America

### PHOTO CREDITS

- Dorit Fischler, Belboulecan French Bulldogs
- Sophie St-amour, DiOro French Bulldogs
- McCartneys Dog Photography
- The Frenchie Fancy, French Bulldog Magazine