



*IGauthier*

**THE OFFICIAL  
ILLUSTRATED  
STANDARD**

**OF  
THE  
GREAT DANE  
CLUB OF  
AMERICA, INC.**

THE OFFICIAL ILLUSTRATED STANDARD  
OF THE  
**GREAT DANE**

REVISED AND EDITED BY  
THE GREAT DANE CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.

WRITTEN TEXT AKC APPROVED AUGUST 10, 1976

ILLUSTRATED BY  
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GREAT DANE BREEDER AND JUDGE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS		PAGE
1.	GENERAL CONFORMATION	
	A. GENERAL APPEARANCE	2
	B. COLOR AND MARKINGS	4
	C. SIZE	4
	D. CONDITION OF COAT	4
	E. SUBSTANCE	4
2.	MOVEMENT	
	A. GAIT	5
	B. REAR END - CROUP, LEGS, PAWS	6
	C. FRONT END - SHOULDERS, LEGS, PAWS	7, 8
3.	HEAD	
	A. HEAD CONFORMATION	9
	B. TEETH	10
	C. EYES, NOSE, EARS, CROPPED EARS	10, 11
4.	TORSO	
	A. NECK	12
	B. LOIN AND BACK	13
	C. CHEST	14
	D. RIBS AND BRISKET	14
5.	TAIL	15
	DISQUALIFICATIONS	16

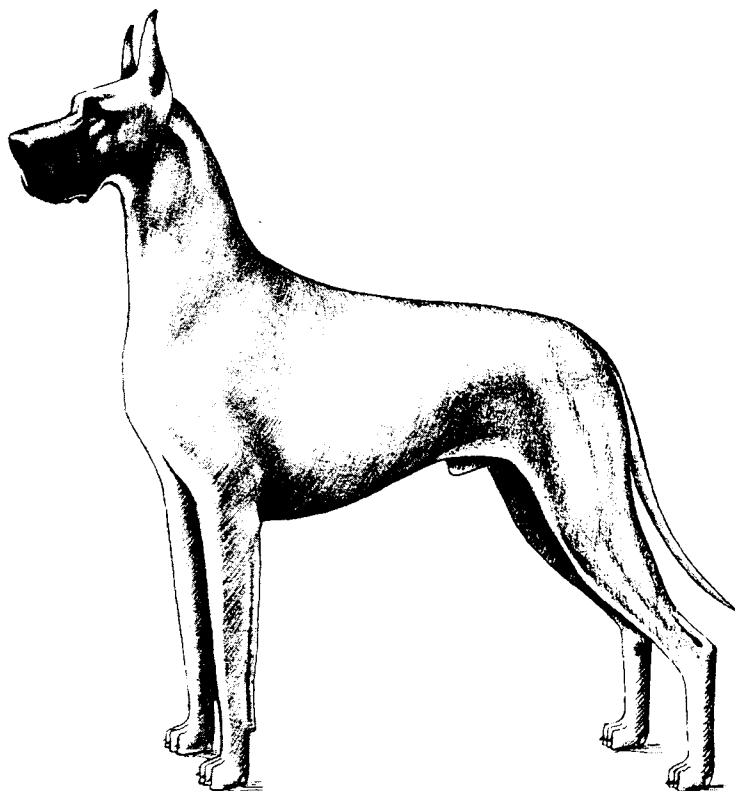


CHART 1. GREAT DANE, DOG



CHART 2. GREAT DANE, BITCH

THE  
APOLLO  
OF  
DOGS

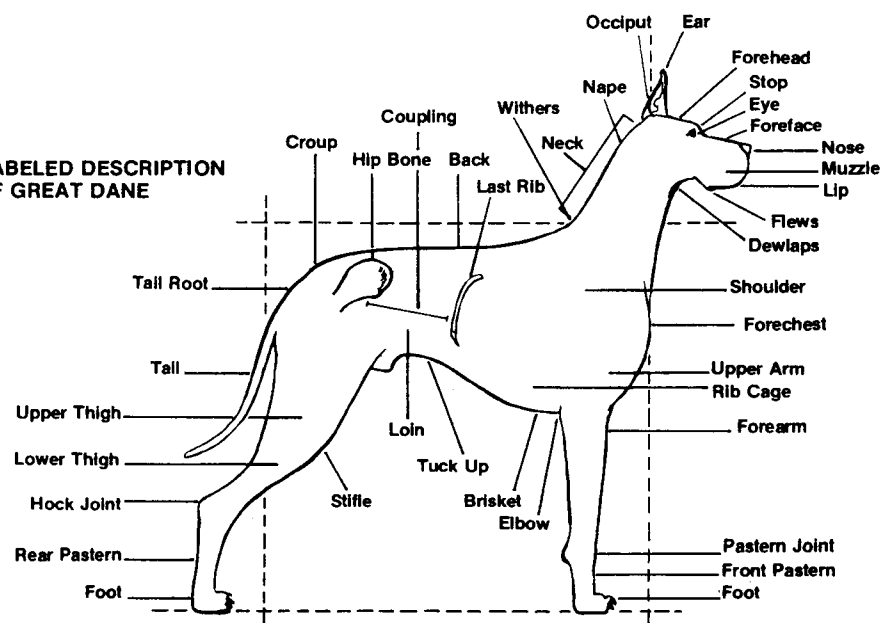
## 1. GENERAL CONFORMATION

### (a) GENERAL APPEARANCE.

The Great Dane combines in its distinguished appearance dignity, strength and elegance with great size and a powerful, well-formed, smoothly muscled body. He is one of the giant breeds, but is unique in that his general conformation must be so well balanced that he never appears clumsy and is always a unit—the **Apollo of dogs**. He must be spirited and courageous—never timid. He is friendly and dependable. This physical and mental combination is the characteristic which gives the Great Dane the majesty possessed by no other breed. It is particularly true of this breed that there is an impression of great masculinity in dogs as compared to an impression of femininity in bitches. The male should appear more massive throughout than the bitch, with larger frame and heavier bone. In the ratio between length and height, the Great Dane should appear as square as possible. In bitches, a somewhat longer body is permissible.

**Faults**—Lack of unity; timidity; bitchy dogs; poor musculature; poor bone development; out of condition; rickets; doggy bitches.

CHART 3. LABELED DESCRIPTION  
OF GREAT DANE



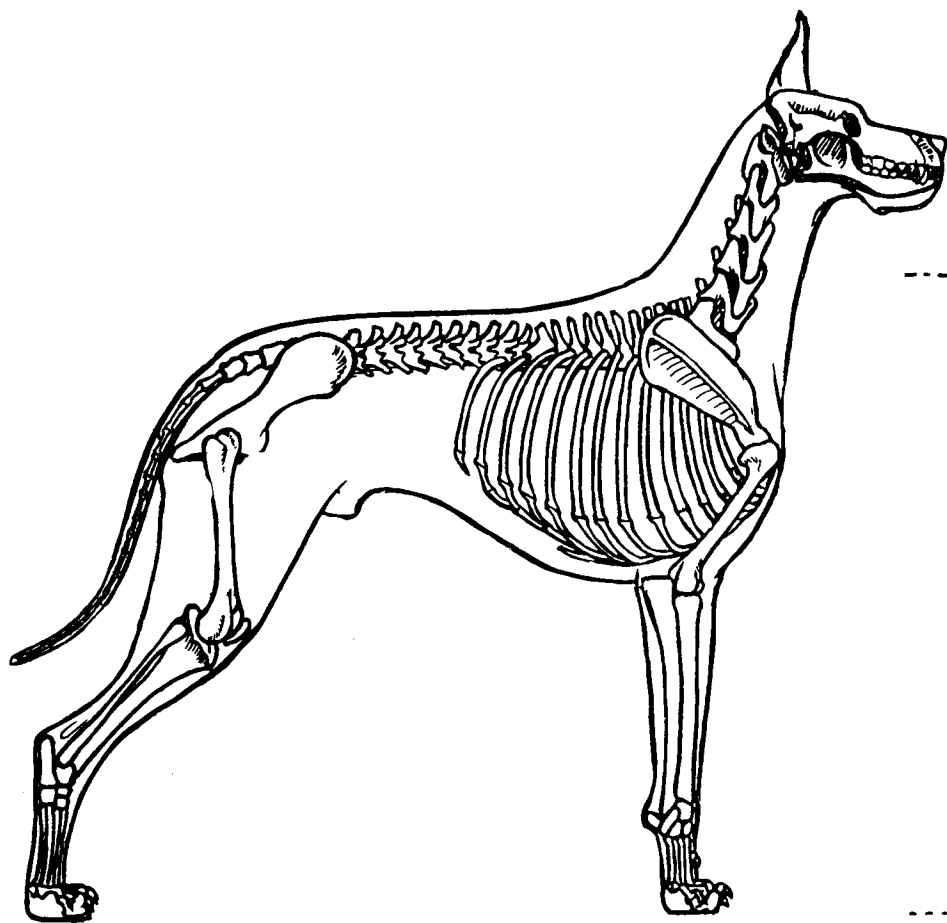


CHART 4. SKELETAL STRUCTURE

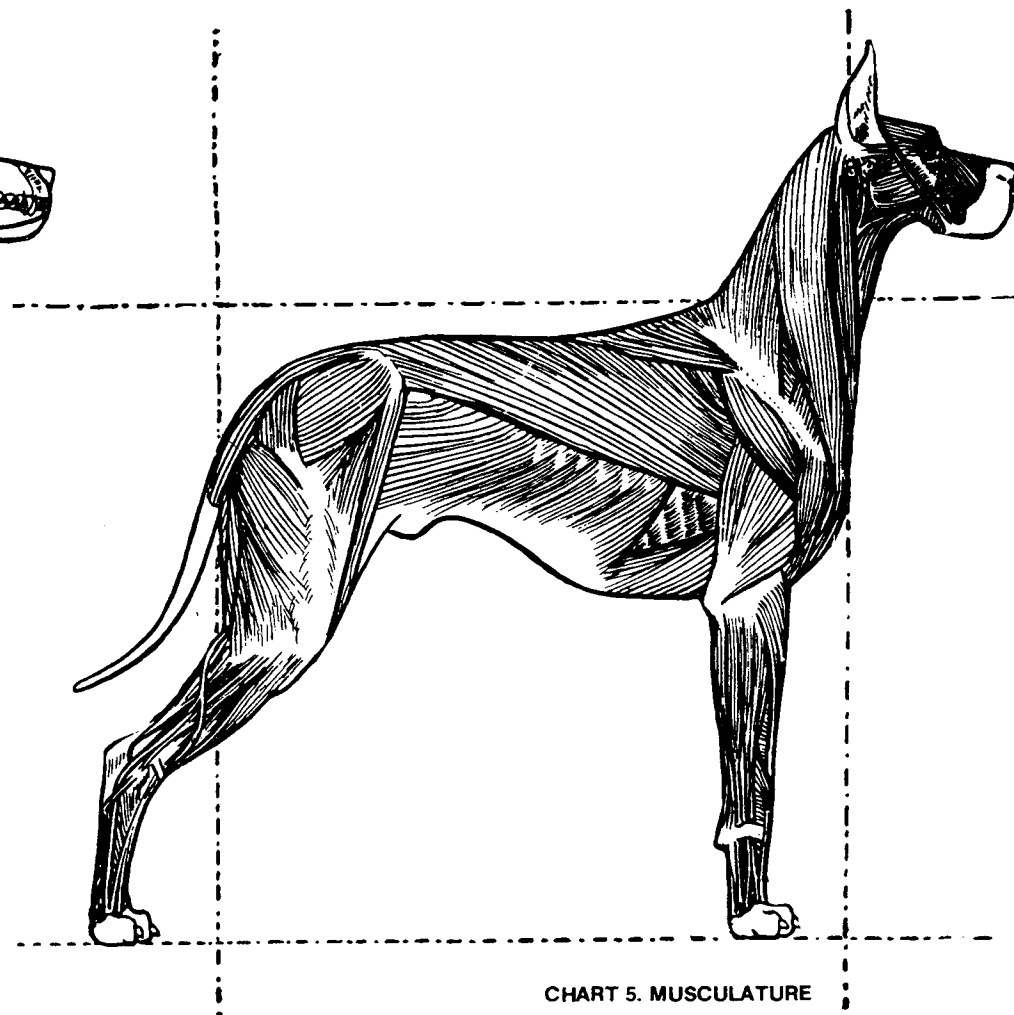


CHART 5. MUSCULATURE

## (b) COLOR AND MARKINGS

(i) **BRINDLE DANES.** Base color ranging from light golden yellow to deep golden yellow always brindled with strong black cross stripes; deep-black mask preferred. Black may or may not appear on the eyes, ears and tail tip. The more intensive the base color and the more distinct the brindling, the more attractive will be the color. Small white marks at the chest and toes are not desirable.

**Faults**—Brindle with too dark a base color, silver-blue and grayish-blue base color; dull (faded) brindlings; white tail tip. Black fronted, dirty colored brindles are not desirable.

(ii) **FAWN DANES.** Light golden yellow to deep golden yellow color with a deep black mask. Black may or may not appear on the eyes, ears, and tail tip. The deep golden yellow color must always be given the preference. Small white spots at the chest and toes are not desirable.

**Faults**—Yellowish-gray, bluish-yellow, grayish-blue, dirty yellow color (drab color), lack of black mask. Black fronted, dirty colored fawns are not desirable.

(iii) **BLUE DANES.** The color must be a pure steel blue, as far as possible

without any tinge of yellow, black or mouse gray. Small white marks at the chest and toes are not desirable.

**Faults**—Any deviation from a pure steel-blue coloration.

(iv) **BLACK DANES.** Glossy Black.

**Faults**—Yellow-black, brown-black or blue-black. White markings, such as stripes on the chest, speckled chest and markings on the paws are permitted but not desirable.

(v) **HARLEQUIN DANES.** Base color: pure white with black torn patches irregularly and well distributed over the entire body; pure white neck preferred. The black patches should never be large enough to give the appearance of a blanket nor so small as to give a stippled or dappled effect. (Eligible, but less desirable, are a few small gray spots; also pointings where instead of a pure white base with black spots, there is a white base with single black hairs showing through which tend to give a salt and pepper or dirty effect.)

**Faults**—White base color with a few large spots; bluish-gray pointed background.

(c) **SIZE.** The male should not be less than 30 inches at the shoulders, but it is preferable that he be 32 inches or more, providing he is well proportioned to his height. The female should not be less than 28 inches at the shoulders, but it is preferable that she be 30 inches or more, providing she is well proportioned to her height.

(d) **CONDITION OF COAT.** The coat should be very short and thick, smooth, and glossy.

**Faults**—Excessively long hair (stand-off coat); dull hair (indicating malnutrition, worms and negligent care).

(e) **SUBSTANCE.** Substance is that sufficiency of bone and muscle which rounds out a balance with the frame.

**Faults**—Lightweight whippet Danes; coarse, ungainly proportioned Danes—always there should be balance.

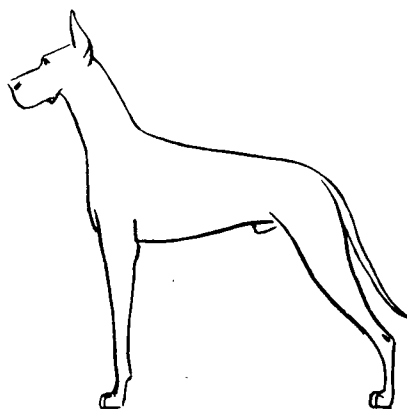


CHART 6. LIGHTWEIGHT WHIPPETY DANE

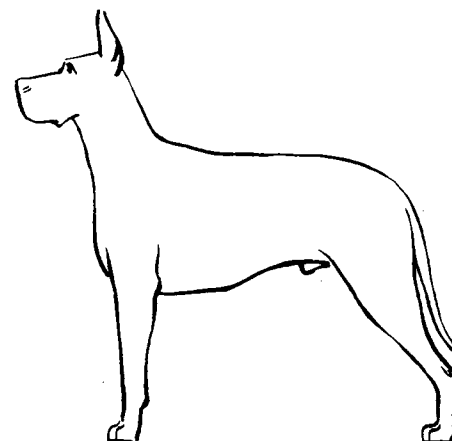
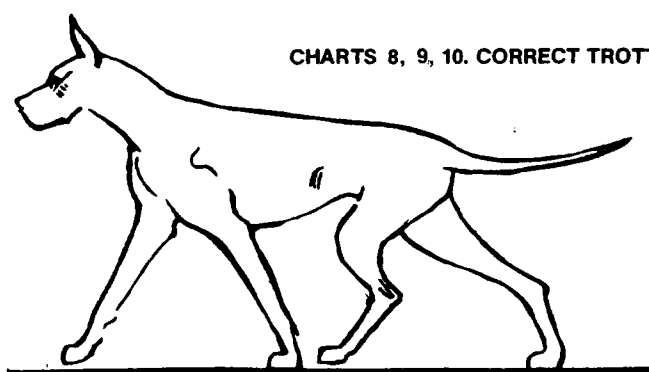


CHART 7. COARSE DANE

## 2. MOVEMENT

**(a) GAIT.** Long, easy, springy stride with no tossing or rolling of body. The back line should move smoothly, parallel to the ground, with minimum rise and fall. The gait of the Great Dane should denote strength and power showing good driving action in the hindquarters and good reach in front. As speed increases, there is a natural tendency for the legs to converge toward the center line of balance beneath the body and there should be no twisting in or out at the joints.

**Faults**—Interference or crossing; twisting joints; short steps; stilted steps; the rear quarters should not pitch; the forelegs should not have a hackney gait. When moving rapidly, the Great Dane should not pace for the reason that it causes excessive side-to-side rolling of the body and thus reduces endurance.



CHARTS 8, 9, 10. CORRECT TROTTING

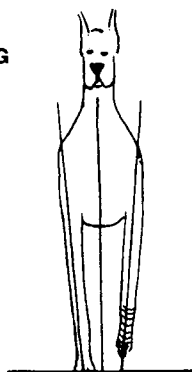


CHART 8.

CHART 9. FRONT

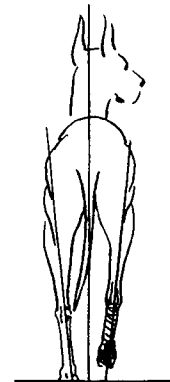


CHART 10. REAR

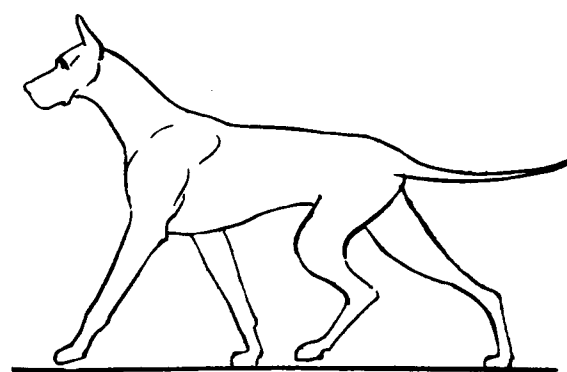


CHART 11.

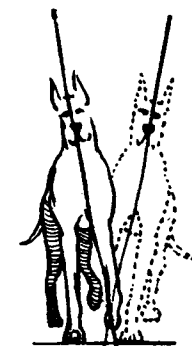


CHART 12.

CHARTS 11, 12. PACING

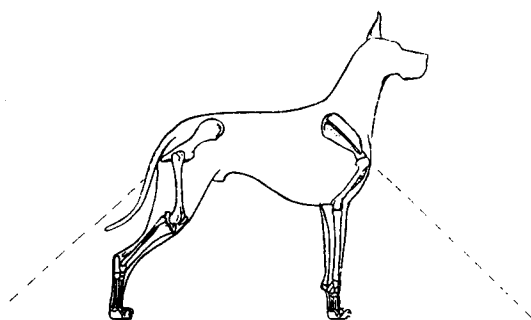


CHART 13. SHOULDER ANGULATION

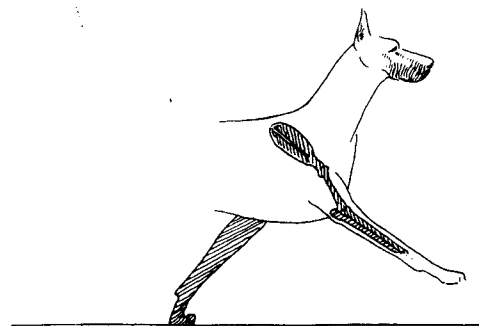


CHART 14. FRONT LEG REACH

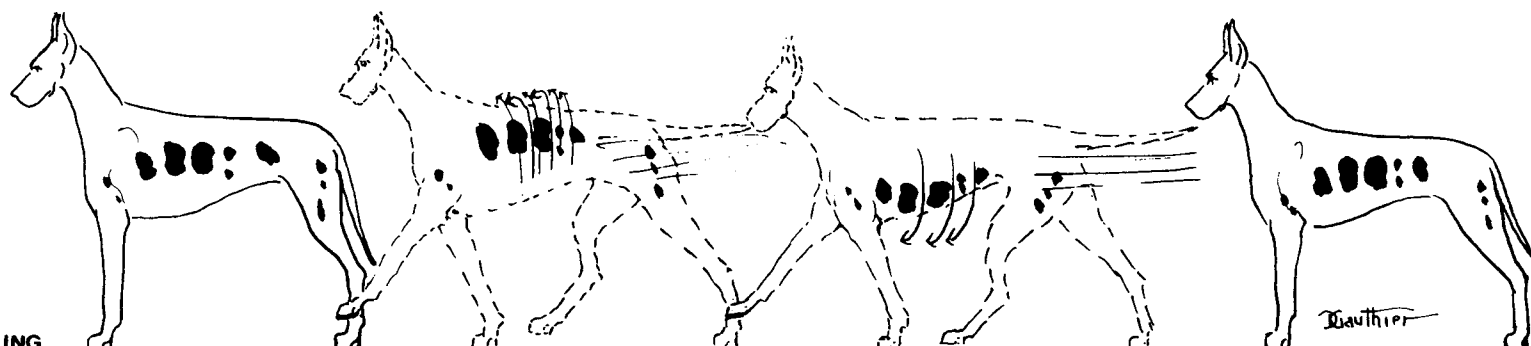


CHART 15. ROLLING

## (b) REAR END

### CROUP, LEGS, PAWS

The croup must be full, slightly drooping and must continue imperceptibly to the tail root.

**Faults**—A croup which is too straight; a croup which slopes downward too steeply; and too narrow a croup.

Hind legs, the first thighs (from hip joint to knee) are broad and muscular. The second thighs (from knee to hock joint) are strong and long. Seen from the side, the angulation of the first thigh with the body, of the second thigh with the first thigh, and the pastern root with the second thigh should be very moderate, neither too straight nor too exaggerated. Seen from the rear, the hock joints appear to be perfectly straight, turned neither towards the inside nor towards the outside.

**Faults**—Hind legs: Soft flabby, poorly muscled thighs; cowhocks which are the result of the hock joint turning inward and the hock and rear paws turning outward; barrel legs, the result of the hock joints being too far apart; steep rear. As seen from the side, a steep rear is the result of the angles of the rear legs forming almost a straight line; overangulation is the result of exaggerated angles between the first and second thighs and the hocks and is very conducive to weakness. The rear legs should never be too long in proportion to the front legs.

CHART 16. CORRECT ANGULATION

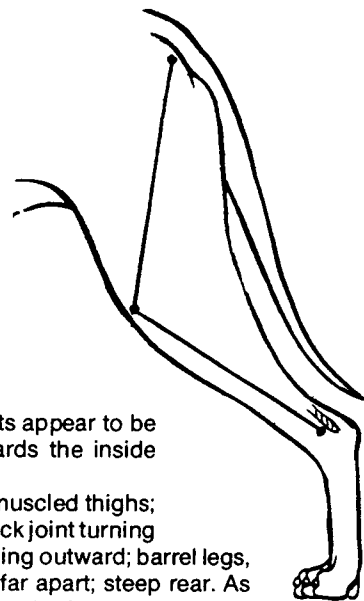


CHART 17. CORRECT REAR

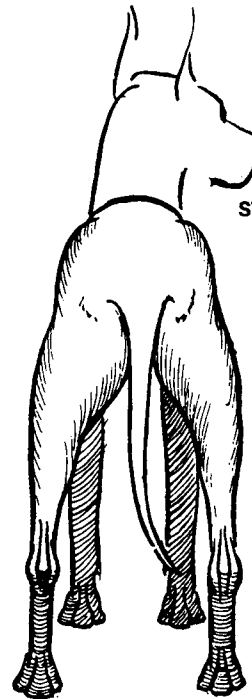


CHART 18. TOO STRAIGHT A CROUP

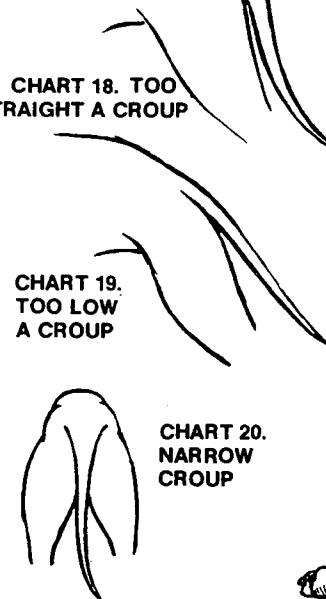


CHART 19. TOO LOW A CROUP



CHART 20. NARROW CROUP

CHART 21. COW HOCKS



CHART 22. BARREL-LEG REAR

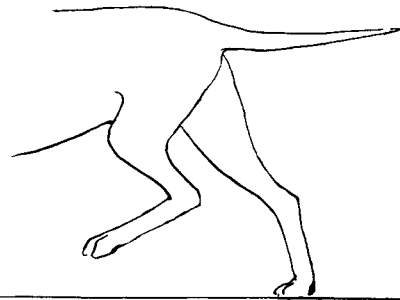
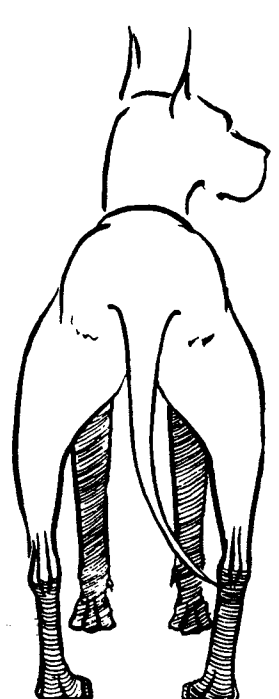


CHART 23. CORRECT FLEXING

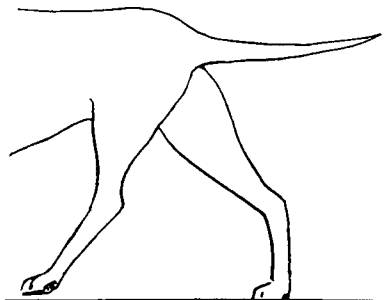


CHART 24. INCORRECT, LACK OF FLEXING



CHART 25. STRAIGHT STEEP REAR, LACKING ANGULATION



CHART 26. EXAGGERATED ANGULATION

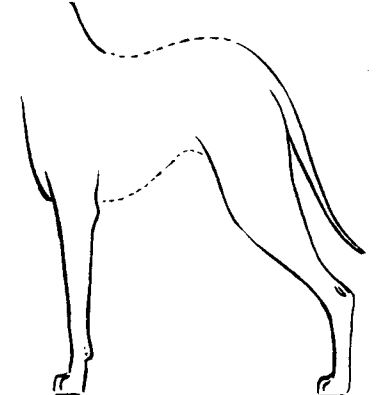


CHART 27. REAR LEGS TOO HIGH

**PAWS.** Round and turned neither toward the inside nor toward the outside. Toes short, highly arched and well closed. Nails short, strong and as dark as possible.

**Faults**—Spreading toes (splay foot); bent, long toes (rabbit paws); toes turned toward the outside or toward the inside. Furthermore, the fifth toe on the hind legs appearing at a higher position and with wolf's claw or spur; excessively long nails; light-colored nails.

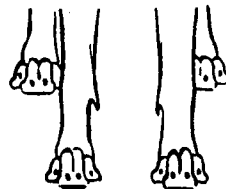


CHART 28. CORRECT PAWS



CHART 29. WELL CLOSED PAW



CHART 30. WELL ARCHED PAW

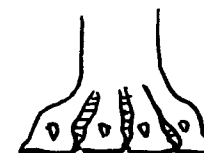


CHART 31. SPLOY FOOT



CHART 32. RABBIT FOOT

## (c) FRONT END SHOULDERS, LEGS, PAWS

**SHOULDERS.** The shoulder blades must be strong and sloping and seen from the side, must form as nearly as possible a right angle in its articulation with the humerus (upper arm) to give a long stride. A line from the upper tip of the shoulder to the back of the elbow joint should be as nearly perpendicular as possible. Since all dogs lack clavicle (collar bone) the ligaments and muscles holding the shoulder blade to the rib cage must be well developed, firm and secure to prevent loose shoulders.

**Faults**—Steep shoulders, which occur if the shoulder blade does not slope sufficiently; overangulation; loose shoulders which occur if the bone is flabby muscled, or if the elbow is turned toward the outside; loaded shoulders.

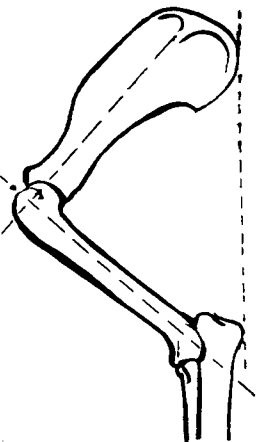


CHART 33. CORRECT BONE STRUCTURE AND ANGULATION



CHART 34. CORRECT MUSCLE STRUCTURE



CHART 35. SHOULDER BLADE STRUCTURE

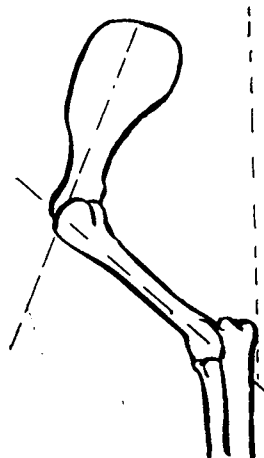


CHART 36. SHOULDER BLADE TOO STEEP

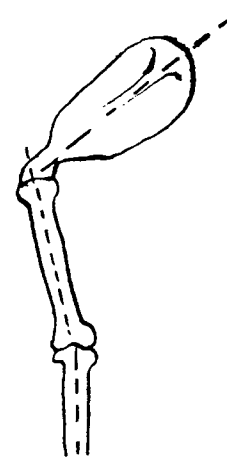


CHART 37. UPPER ARM TOO SHORT, SHOULDER TOO STRAIGHT

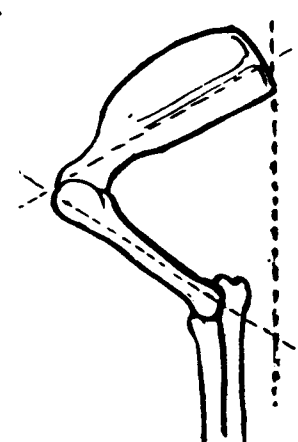


CHART 38. OVERANGULATION

**PAWS.** Round and turned neither toward the inside nor toward the outside. Toes short, highly arched and well closed. Nails short, strong and as dark as possible.

**Faults**—Spreading toes (splay foot), bent, long toes (rabbit paws); toes turned toward the outside or toward the inside; light-colored nails.

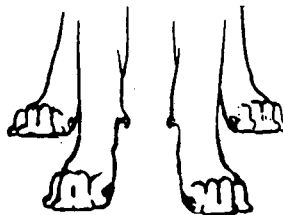


CHART 39. PAWS TURNED OUT

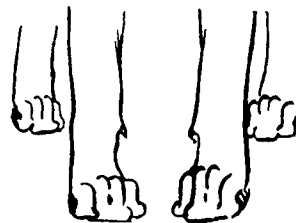


CHART 40. PAWS TURNED IN

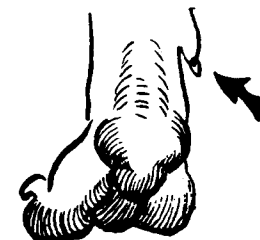


CHART 41. WOLF'S CLAW





CHART 42. CORRECT ELBOWS  
FORELEGS  
FEET

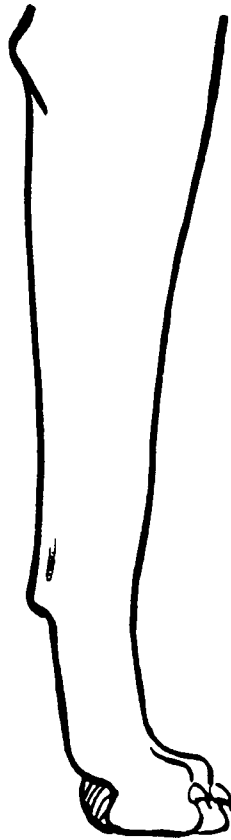


CHART 43. CORRECT SIDE VIEW



CHART 44. ELBOWS TURNED OUT  
FEET TURNED IN



CHART 45. ELBOWS TURNED IN  
FEET TURNED OUT

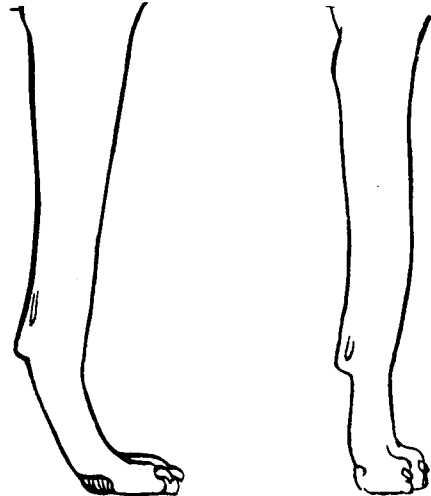


CHART 46. WEAK PASTERN



CHART 47. CHAIR LEG



CHART 48. KNOBBY JOINT  
ABOVE PASTERN

**FORELEGS.** The upper arm should be strong and muscular. Seen from the side or front, the strong lower arms run absolutely straight to the pastern joints. Seen from the front, the forelegs and the pastern roots should form perpendicular lines to the ground. Seen from the side, the pastern root should slope only very slightly forward.

**Faults**—Elbows turned toward the inside or toward the outside, the former position caused mostly by too narrow or too shallow a chest, bringing the front legs too closely together and at the same time turning the entire lower part of the leg outward; the latter position causes the front legs to spread too far apart, with the pastern roots and paws usually turned inwards. Seen from the side, a considerable bend in the pastern toward the front indicates weakness and is in most cases connected with stretched and spread toes (splay foot); seen from the side, a forward bow in the forearm (chair leg); an excessively knobby bulge in the front of the pastern joint.

### 3. HEAD

**(a) HEAD CONFORMATION.** Long, narrow, distinguished, expressive, finely chiseled, especially the part below the eyes (which means that the skull plane under and to the inner point of the eye must slope without any bony protuberance in a pleasing line to the full square jaw), with strongly pronounced stop. The masculinity of the male is very pronounced in the expression and structure of head (this subtle difference should be evident in the dog's head through massive skull and depth of muzzle); the bitch's head may be more delicately formed. Seen from the side, the forehead must be sharply set off from the bridge of the nose. The forehead and the bridge of the nose must be straight and parallel to one another. Seen from the front, the head should appear narrow, the bridge of the nose should be as broad as possible. The cheek muscles must show slightly, but under no circumstances should they be too pronounced (cheeky). The muzzle

part must have full flews and must be as blunt vertically as possible in front; the angles of the lips must be quite pronounced. The front part of the head, from the tip of the nose up to the center of the stop should be as long as the rear part of the head from the center of the stop to the only slightly developed occiput. The head should be angular from all sides and should have definite flat planes and its dimensions should be absolutely in proportion to the general appearance of the Dane.

**Faults**—Any deviation from the parallel planes of skull and foreface; too small a stop; a poorly defined stop or none at all; too narrow a nose bridge; the rear of the head spreading laterally in a wedgelike manner (wedge head); an excessively round upper head (apple head); excessively pronounced cheek musculature; pointed muzzle; loose lips hanging over the lower jaw (fluttering lips) which create an illusion of a full deep muzzle. The head should be rather shorter and distinguished than long and expressionless.



CHART 49. CORRECT  
DOG'S HEAD



CHART 50. CORRECT  
BITCH'S HEAD

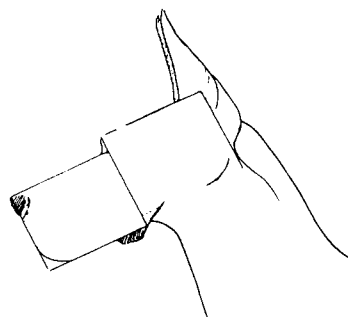


CHART 51. CORRECT  
PROPORTIONS



CHART 52. CORRECT  
SKULL

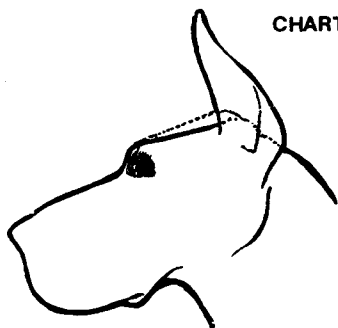


CHART 53. FOREHEAD DROPPING,  
BRIDGE OF NOSE DROPPING

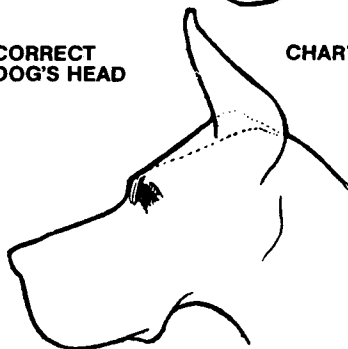


CHART 54. FOREHEAD RISING,  
BRIDGE OF NOSE RISING

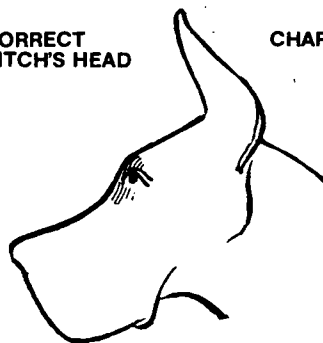


CHART 55. DISH-FACED

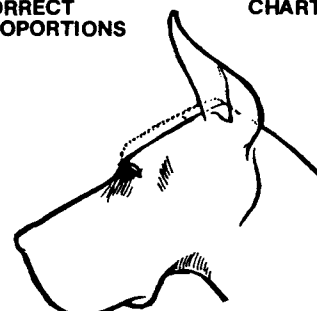


CHART 56. NO STOP

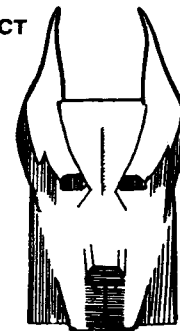


CHART 57. SKULL TOO WIDE  
(WEDGE-HEAD)

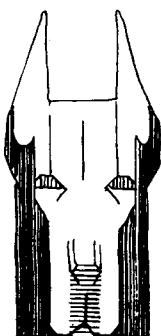


CHART 58. NARROW FOREFACE



CHART 59. APPLE-HEAD



CHART 60. CHEEKY HEAD



CHART 61. SNIPEY HEAD



CHART 62. FLUTTERING LIPS

**(b) TEETH.** Strong, well developed and clean. The incisors of the lower jaw must touch very lightly the bottoms of the inner surface of the upper incisors (scissors bite). If the front teeth of both jaws bite on the top of each other, they wear down too rapidly. **Faults**—Even bite; undershot and overshot; incisors out of line; black or brown teeth; missing teeth.

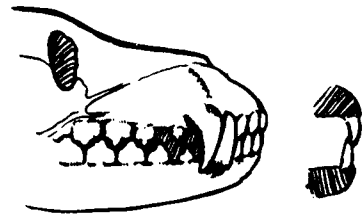


CHART 63. CORRECT SCISSOR BITE

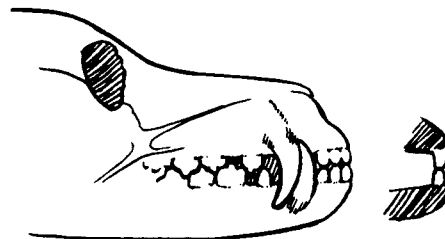


CHART 64. EVEN BITE

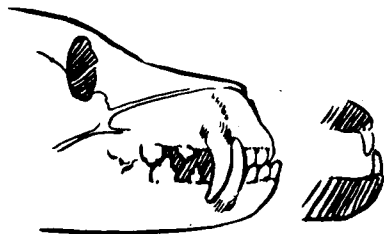


CHART 65. UNDERSHOT

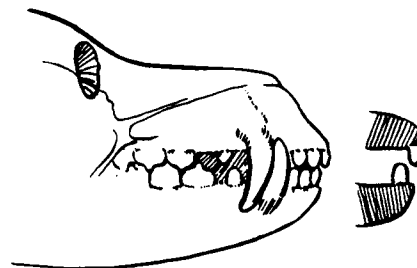


CHART 66. OVERSHOT

**NOSE.** The nose must be large and in the case of brindled and "single-colored" Danes, it must always be black. In harlequins, the nose should be black; a black spotted nose is permitted; a pink-colored nose is not desirable.



CHART 73. CORRECT NOSE



CHART 74. SPLIT NOSE

**(c) EYES.** Medium size, as dark as possible, with lively intelligent expression; almond-shaped eyelids, well-developed eyebrows.

**Faults**—Light-colored, piercing, amber-colored, light blue to a watery blue, red or bleary eyes; eyes of different colors; eyes too far apart; Mongolian eyes; eyes with pronounced haws; eyes with excessively drooping lower eyelids. In blue and black Danes, lighter eyes are permitted but are not desirable. In harlequins, the eyes should be dark. Light-colored eyes, two eyes of different color and walleyes are permitted but not desirable.



CHART 67. CORRECT EYES



CHART 68. WIDE-SPREAD EYES

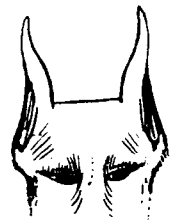


CHART 69. MONGOLIAN EYE

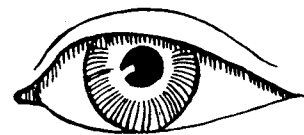


CHART 70. CORRECT EYE

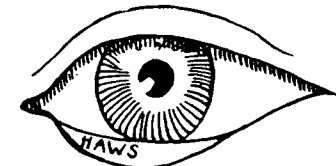


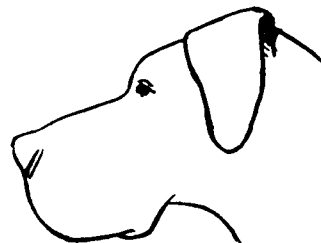
CHART 71. HAW



CHART 72. DROOPING LOWER EYELIDS

**EARS.** Ears should be high, set not too far apart, medium in size, of moderate thickness, drooping forward close to the cheek. Top line of folded ear should be about level with the skull.

**Faults**—Hanging on the side, as on a Foxhound.



CHARTS 75, 76. CORRECT SIZE, PLACEMENT  
NATURAL EARS



CHARTS 77, 78. EARS TOO LARGE  
SET TOO LOW

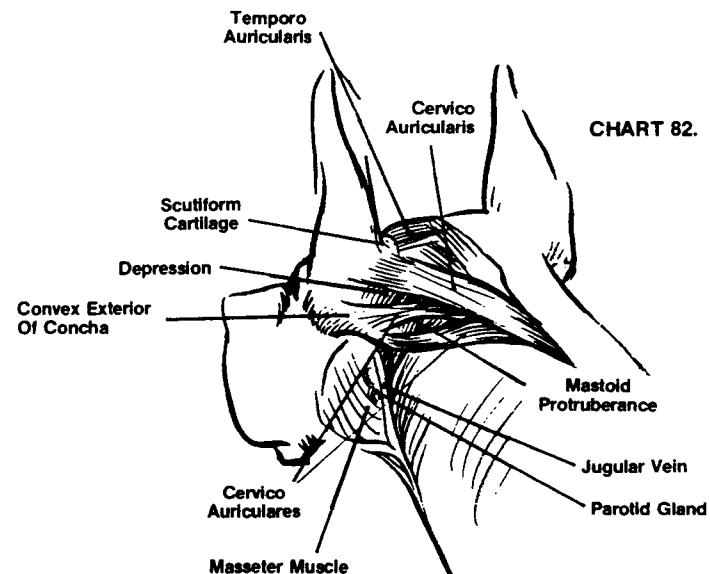
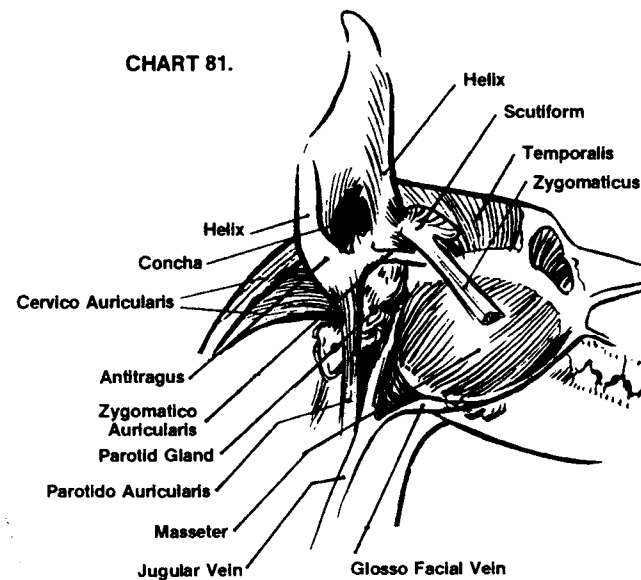
**CROPPED EARS.** High set, not set too far apart, well pointed but always in proportion to the shape of the head and carried uniformly erect.



CHART 79. CROPPED EARS, CORRECT SET

CHART 80. CROPPED EARS, SET TOO LOW

## EAR MUSCULATURE



## TORSO

**(a) NECK.** The neck should be firm and clean, high-set, well arched, long, muscular and sinewy. From the chest to the head, it should be slightly tapering, beautifully formed, with well-developed nape.

**Faults**—Short, heavy neck, pendulous throat folds (dewlaps).

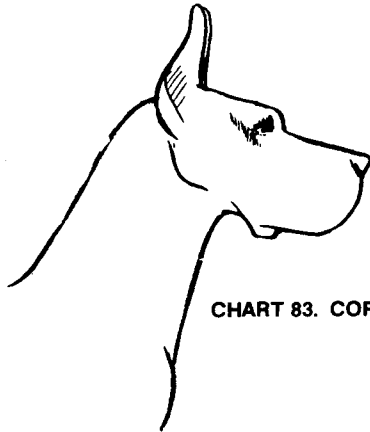


CHART 83. CORRECT NECK

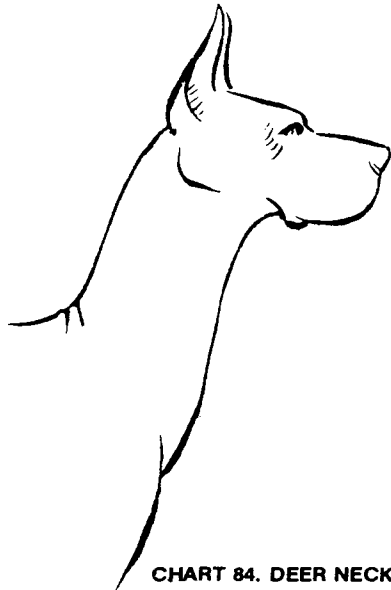


CHART 84. DEER NECK

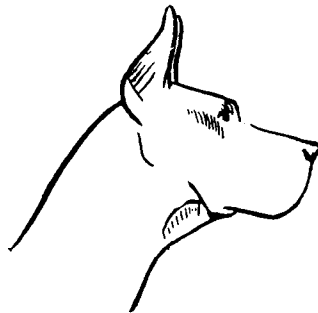


CHART 85. DEWLAPS



CHART 86. SHORT, HEAVY NECK

## NECK MUSCULATURE

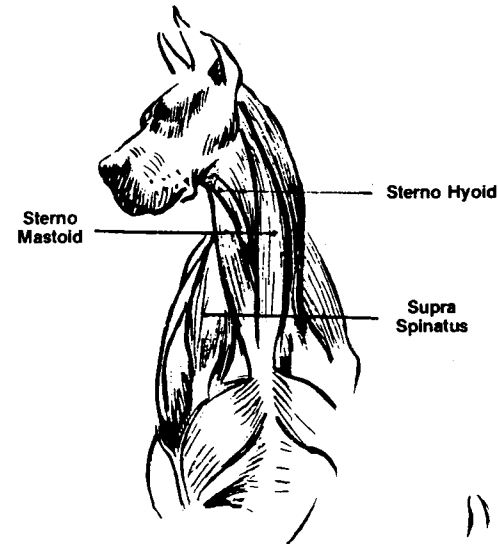


CHART 87. FRONT VIEW

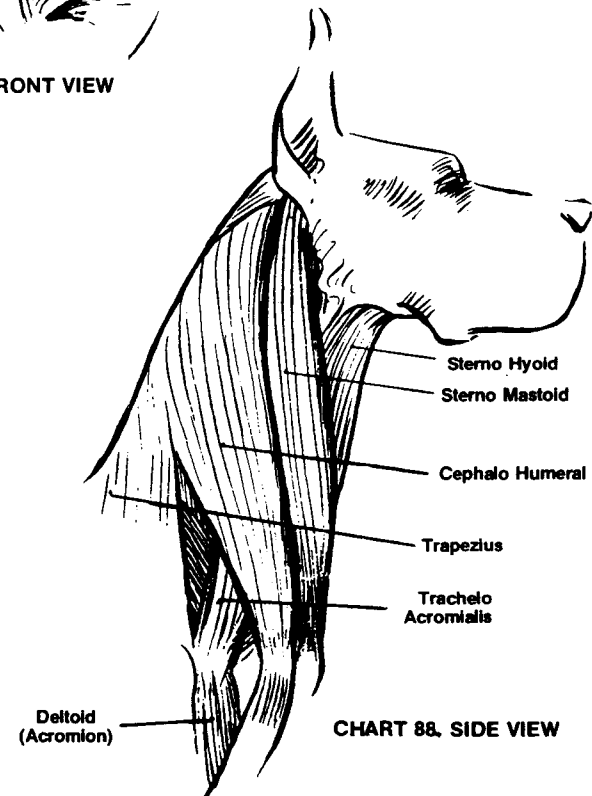


CHART 88. SIDE VIEW

**(b) LOIN AND BACK.** The withers forms the highest part of the back which slopes downward slightly toward the loins which are imperceptibly arched and strong. The back should be short and tensely set. The belly should be well shaped and tightly muscled, and, with the rear part of the thorax, should swing in a pleasing curve (tuck-up).

**Faults**—Receding back; sway back; camel or roach back; a back line which is too high at the rear, an excessively long back; poor tuck-up.

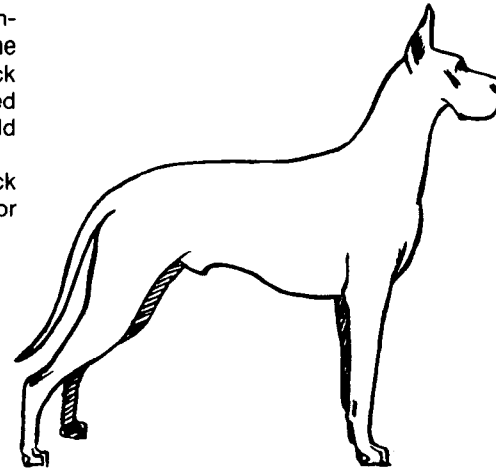


CHART 89. CORRECT CHEST AND TRUNK

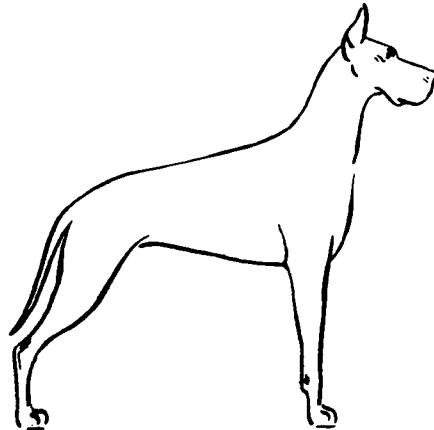


CHART 90. RECEDING BACK

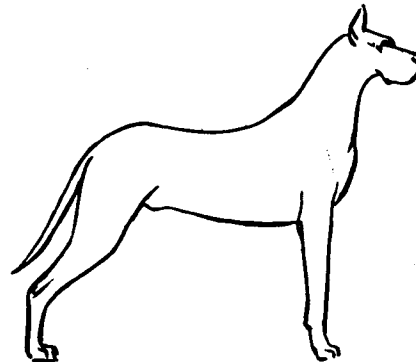


CHART 91. SWAY BACK, BACK TOO LONG

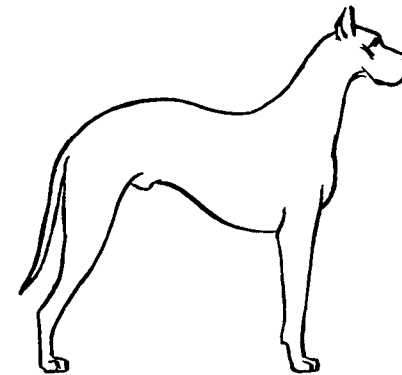


CHART 92. CAMEL BACK

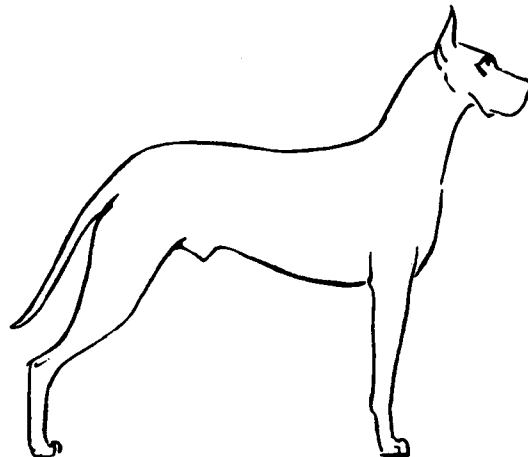


CHART 93. BACK TOO HIGH AT REAR

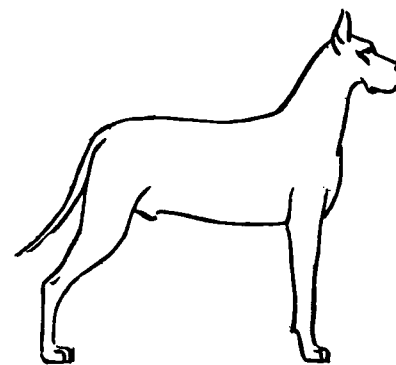


CHART 94. NO TUCK-UP

**(c) CHEST.** Chest deals with that part of the thorax (rib cage) in front of the shoulders and front legs. The chest should be quite broad, deep and well muscled.

**Faults**—A narrow and poorly muscled chest; strong protruding sternum (pigeon breast).



CHART 95. CORRECT BREAST



CHART 96. PIGEON BREAST

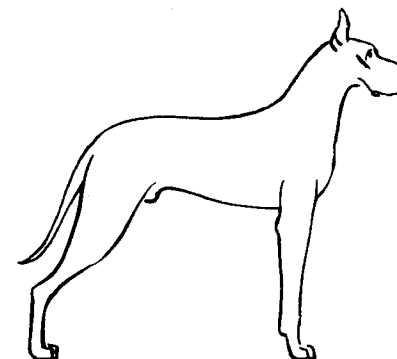


CHART 97. SHALLOW CHEST

**(d) RIBS AND BRISKET.** Deals with that part of the thorax back of the shoulders and front legs. Should be broad, with the ribs sprung well out from the spine and flattened at the side to allow proper movement of the shoulders extending down to the elbow joint.

**Faults**—Narrow (slab-sided) rib cage; round (barrel) rib cage; shallow rib cage not reaching the elbow joint.

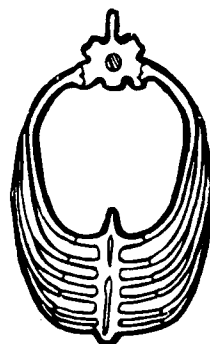


CHART 98. CORRECT RIB CAGE



CHART 99. RIB CAGE AND SHOULDER BLADE STRUCTURE



CHART 100. NARROW RIB CAGE

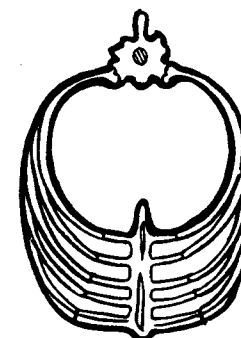


CHART 101. BARREL RIB CAGE

## 5. TAIL

Should start high and fairly broad, terminating slender and thin at the hock joint. At rest, the tail should fall straight. When excited or running, slightly curved (saberlike).

**Faults**—A too high, or too low set tail (the tail set is governed by the slope of the croup); too long or too short a tail; tail bent too far over the back (ring tail); a tail which is curled; a twisted tail (sideways); tail carried too high over the back (gay tail); a brush tail (hair too long on lower side). Cropping tails to desired length is forbidden.



CHART 102. CORRECT TAIL AT REST



CHART 103. CORRECT TAIL ALERT



CHART 104. TOO HIGH SET TAIL



CHART 105. TOO LOW SET TAIL



CHART 106. TOO LONG A TAIL



CHART 107. TOO SHORT A TAIL



CHART 108. RING TAIL



CHART 109. CURLY TAIL



CHART 110. TWISTED TAIL

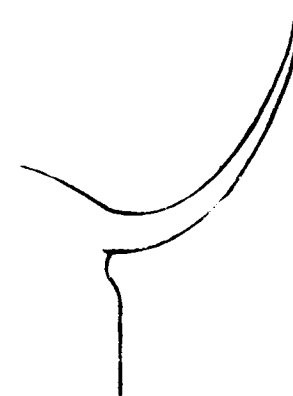


CHART 111. GAY TAIL



## **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

- Danes under minimum height.
- White Danes without any black marks (albinos).
- Merles, a solid mouse-gray color or a mouse-gray base with black or white or both color spots or white base with mouse-gray spots.
- Harlequins and solid-colored Danes in which a large spot extends coatlike over the entire body so that only the legs, neck and the point of the tail are white.
- Brindle, fawn, blue and black Danes with white forehead line, white collars, high white stockings and white bellies.
- Danes with predominantly blue, gray, yellow or also brindled spots.
- Any color other than those described under "Color and Markings."
- Docked tails.
- Split noses.

**The Standard Committee recommends for further information the Great Dane owner acquire a copy of the AKC book, Rules Applying to Registration and Dog Shows.**

**GREAT DANE CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.  
STANDARD COMMITTEE**

**NANCY-CARROLL DRAPER, CHAIRMAN**

**DONALD BOOXBAUM  
GERRI KELLY  
KENNETH PETERSON  
ROSEMARIE ROBERT  
ROSE SABETTI  
CHARLES C. STAIGER**

**BOOKLET DESIGN BY  
CHARALYN BISHOP  
JULY, 1978**



## BREEDERS CODE OF ETHICS

as endorsed by  
THE GREAT DANE CLUB OF AMERICA

There are only five recognized colors; all these basically fall into four color strains: 1. FAWN and BRINDLE, 2. HARLEQUIN and HARLEQUIN BRED BLACK, 3. BLUE and BLUE BRED BLACK, 4. BLACK. Color classifications being well founded, the Great Dane Club of America, Inc. considers it an inadvisable practice to mix color strains and it is the club's policy to adhere only to the following matings:

Color of Dane	Pedigree of Sire and Dam	Approved Breedings
1. FAWN	Four (4) generation Pedigrees of FAWN or BRINDLE Danes <i>should not</i> carry BLACK, HARLEQUIN or BLUE upon them.	1. FAWN bred to FAWN or BRINDLE only.
1. BRINDLE		1. BRINDLE bred to BRINDLE or FAWN only.
2. HARLEQUIN	Four (4) Generation Pedigrees of HARLEQUIN or HARLEQUIN BRED BLACK Danes <i>should not</i> carry FAWN, BRINDLE or BLUE upon them.	2. HARLEQUIN bred to HARLEQUIN, BLACK from HARLEQUIN BREEDING or BLACK from BLACK BREEDING only.
2. BLACK (HARLEQUIN BRED)		2. BLACK from HARLEQUIN BREEDING bred to HARLEQUIN, BLACK from HARLEQUIN BREEDING or BLACK from BLACK BREEDING only.
3. BLUE	Four (4) Generation Pedigrees of BLUE or BLUE BRED BLACK Danes <i>should not</i> carry FAWN, BRINDLE or HARLEQUIN upon them.	3. BLUE bred to BLUE, BLACK from BLUE BREEDING or BLACK from BLACK BREEDING only.
3. BLACK (BLUE BRED)		3. BLACK from BLUE BREEDING bred to BLUE, BLACK from BLUE BREEDING or BLACK from BLACK BREEDING only.
4. BLACK (BLACK BRED)	Four (4) Generation Pedigrees of BLACK BRED Danes <i>should not</i> carry FAWN, BRINDLE, HARLEQUIN or BLUE upon them.	4. BLACK from BLACK BREEDING bred to BLACK, BLUE or HARLEQUIN only. (See note below.)

*Note: Black Bred Great Danes may be bred to Blacks, Blues or Harlequins only; Puppies resulting from these breedings will become Blacks or Harlequins from Harlequin breeding (category 2 above), Blacks or Blues from Blue breeding (category 3 above) or Blacks from Black Breeding (category 4 above).*

It is our belief that color mixing other than that set forth above is injurious to our breed.

ALL COLORS SHALL BE PURE COLOR BRED FOR FOUR (4) GENERATIONS

