

AKC OFFICIAL STANDARD FOR THE GREAT DANE (revised 1929)

The Great Dane Dog's appearance should combine nobility, size, power and elegance to a degree not seen in other breeds. He is neither clumsy and ponderous like the mastiff nor as light and slender as the greyhound.

The Great Dane should combine the size and strength of the mastiff with much of the elegance of the greyhound. He should have a long, easy stride and noble, proud bearing. His head should be carried high on a long slender neck which arches slightly before joining the head. The tail hangs down almost straight when the dog is at rest, but when at attention it is carried up in a line with the back, the tip curving upward to that the tail resembles a saber.

HEAD:

The Great Dane's head should be decidedly long, rather than broad. It appears to have been pressed together from the great depth and flatness of the cheeks. In front of the eyes the muzzle is finely chiseled. In profile, a definite stop breaks the line of the forehead and the line of the muzzle. The line of the forehead is a parallel to the line of the muzzle. When standing in front of the dog, his skull should not be much wider than the bridge of his muzzle. Cheeks should be flat.

From every side the head should give an angular appearance with clean-cut lines. A bulging forehead is a fault. The muzzle, measured from tip of nose to the stop, should be exactly as long as the distance from the stop to the occiput. The bridge of the nose should be generally straight with a slight arch near the tip. The end of the muzzle should appear to have been "chopped off" square.

The lips should hang down covering the jaw, forming a blunt right angle with lines of the head. The folds at the corner of the mouth should be plainly defined. The eyes should be only medium in size, full almond shape, and of a keen, lively expression. Neither the inner eyelid nor the haw should be visible. The eyebrows should be plainly marked.

The ears should be set high on the skull, not too far apart, small and with the tips falling forward.

NECK AND SHOULDERS:

The neck should be long, muscular and powerful, at the same time it is lean, sinewy and beautifully arched where it joins the head. The neck should taper slightly as it rises from the shoulders and dewlap or folds of loose skin should not be noticeable at the throat. The shoulder blades should be long and slightly sloping.

CHEST:

The brisket should be of medium width and great depth. The ribs should be well sprung from the back-bone but flattened on the sides: they should reach far back and the chest should reach the elbow.

BODY:

The back should be moderately long. The length of body should be the same height at the shoulders, to form a square. The loins should arch slightly. The croup should be short and gently sloping, making a beautiful line as it joins the tail. Seen from above, the loins should be broad and strong. The underline of the body should be a graceful curve, well tucked up in the flank.

TAIL:

The tail should be of medium length, reaching no lower than the hock, very thick at the butt, set on high and tapering to a fine point at the tip. Even in moments of excitement it should not be carried high over the back. A ring tail is a most serious fault.

Docking to obtain proper length is not allowed.

FORELEGS:

The elbow is well dropped, so that the upper arm forms a right angle with the shoulder blade. The elbows should turn neither in nor out. The upper arms should be muscular and the legs powerful in every respect, although they appear to be slightly bent when seen from the front because of their pronounced muscles. However, in profile the forelegs should be perfectly straight from elbow as far as the knee.

HINDQUARTERS:

The hindquarters should be broad and well-muscled, the second thigh long and strong with hocks wide at the joints and well-bent. Seen from behind, the hocks should be perfectly parallel and turn neither in nor out.

FEET:

The Feet should be round like those of a cat, having thick pads and turning neither in nor out. The toes should be well-arched and close together. The nails should be very strong, curved, and dark in color. Dewclaws are not allowed.

COAT:

The coat should lie smooth and be very short, thick and glossy. It is a trifle longer on the underside of the tail.

COLORS:

FAWN: Varies from a lightest yellow to deepest golden tan; a shading of black on the muzzle and ears, together with black eyebrows is desired. White is tolerated only on the chest and toes, but is not desirable. The nose must be black. The eyes and nails should be dark.

BRINDLE: Brindles must be striped. The ground color may vary from lightest yellow to deepest golden tan; and a shading of black on muzzle and ears, together with black eyebrows is desired. The stripes must be pure black and strongly marked. White is tolerated only on the chest and toes, but is not desirable. The nose must be black. The eyes and nails should be dark.

BLUE: Varies from a light grey to deepest slate. White is tolerated only on the chest and toes, but is not desirable. The nose must be black. The eyes and nails should be dark.

BLACK: The color must be pure black and nothing else. White is tolerated on the chest and toes, but is not desirable. The nose must be black. The eyes and nails should be dark.

HARLEQUIN: Should be pure white ground on which are either all-black or all-blue patches of medium size distributed over the dog in a pleasing pattern. The white should predominate and a pure white neck is preferred. The patches should be sharply defined and of irregular shape. Speckles and small dots in the white are not desirable. In harlequins wall eyes, pink eyes or butterfly noses are tolerated, but dark eyes and nails and black noses are preferred.

SIZE:

Males should not be less than 30 inches at the shoulders and females not less than 28 inches.