The Illustrated Extended Whippet Breed Standard



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Top winning Whippet.

A perfect illustration of the General Appearance. Balanced combination of muscular power and strength with elegance and grace of outline. Built for speed and work.

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Introduction

This Illustrated Expanded Whippet Breed Standard has been produced to assist you in your training to be a judge of our Breed, 'The Whippet'. Pam Marston-Pollock produced this resource during her time as Breed Education Coordinator It is intended only for your use, copying, publishing or otherwise circulating this document is strictly forbidden. **This version is available for download from Breed Council's website.**

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Quoting from the Standard - Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed.

This is where Breeders take the first responsibility, apart from the basic welfare and care we expect,

The true Whippet was bred to be a sporting dog and little else, so it is vital that the breed is preserved both in type, construction and soundness.

Much is said of the Judge's responsibility to award accordingly the best specimens in accordance with the breed Standard. A judge is reminded not to award, and to withhold due to lack of merit.

Breed Watch is now one of the main tools of the KC to ask judges to monitor health and this should be a document all breeders should read. Fortunately, the Whippet is not one of the breeds on Breed watch, but it makes interesting reading to see what may happen if these conditions and exaggerations are ignored in other breeds.

Quote**: 'If a feature or quality is desirable it should be present in the right measure.'**

The Whippet is a moderate dog in all departments.

However, if a dog possesses a feature, characteristics or colour described as undesirable or highly undesirable it is strongly recommended that it should not be rewarded in the show ring.

The Whippet Breed Standard

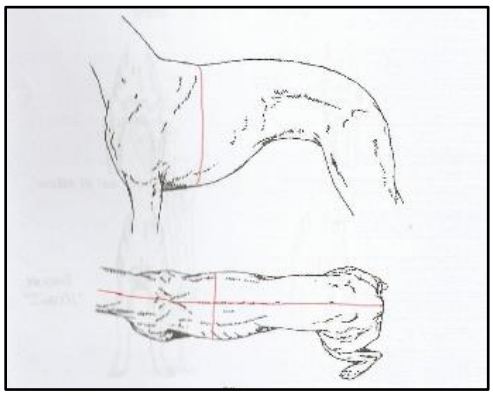
General Appearance

Balanced, combination of muscular power and strength with elegance and grace of outline.

Built for speed and work. All forms of exaggeration should be avoided.

Balance is actually the first and final overview when an assessment on construction and movement is done.

Imagine looking down from a bird's eye view on the Whippet. Draw a line from the centre of the nose straight along the length of the body through the centre of the tail. Each side of that line should be a mirror image. The Whippet being a running dog starts at the nose with an ever increasing broadening through to the hindquarters, where the powerful muscles are. Imagine the shape of an arrow from nose to tail.



When viewed in profile from the side, the centre of balance in a Whippet should be midway on the ribs, behind the heart area. This is because to gain speed the neck lengthens. A line when passed over the back and through the longitudinal line splits the dog into four. This is the balance of the Whippet.

So having now established the balanced dog, we can now see if in each of the four quarters if the amount of muscular development and strength that is called for in the standard is equal. **Muscular power** - to enable the dog to run as required. Muscles are developed with correct exercise on a correctly constructed skeleton.

Strength - is necessary to be able to travel over terrain at speed, without injury and to bring down game.

Elegance and grace of outline – Remember Mr. Hammond introducing his Italian Levrier, his dogs became a different type from his terriers. They were the best at running and were much more curvy than the common dogs. They inherited elegance and grace of outline which was quickly identified as necessary component of a fast dog and thus :'Built for speed and work.

All forms of exaggerations should be avoided. Remember the Whippet is a moderate dog.

Characteristics

An ideal companion

Highly adaptable in domestic and sporting surroundings. The combination of both domestic and sporting surroundings takes a little bite of history of the breed, the snap or rag dog or poor man's greyhound.

Bred by working men as an adaptable handy sized and cheap to feed, able to catch one for the pot and earn the winning bet, but also the family pet. Adaptable, on one hand happy to be curled up on the sofa, but out and about a big hearted, fearless and gutsy little dog. Capable of taking part in lots of sport successfully.

Temperament – **Gentle, affectionate** – this adaptability stretches now into the domestic surroundings and we see they are an ideal companion. **Even disposition** – with these aforementioned traits it would be expected this phrase meant quiet and meek.

Of course, we have to remember the sporting side which is far from this, however, it is necessary for the evenness of the temperament to allow the Whippet to behave appropriately in the correct environment and this not to cross over. It is also the responsibility of the handler to understand this legacy and expect the unexpected!

Head and Skull

It is important that breed type is recognised. Nowhere more so than in the head properties. The Head indicates quality not only of the individual dog but of its bloodlines, it is the first indicator that the rest of the body will probably be good and of a type. If there is a lack of quality and the characteristics and proportions of the head are incorrect or lacking, there is little or no breed type and it is usual that the rest of the dog will lack type.

There are no indications of the proportions of the head in the standard, but it is generally accepted that the head should be balanced of equal length in backskull and muzzle.



Long and lean – this tells us the head is longer than it is wide and doesn't carry any excess, either in skin or muscle development or bone structure.

Flat on top – the skull is not domed or apple shaped, it should be noted here that actually the back skull is usually covered in muscle which gives it a smooth rounded look, so is not flat and angular.

Tapering muzzle with slight stop – the long head is now finely grading down to the nose. The stop is not well defined as it must keep the streamlined look of the head and with a deep stop the features of the head are heavier and often lacking strength of muzzle, the eye set may also be incorrect.



This shows a male heavier in skull in relation to his muzzle. The skull has a flatter look and the ear is lower set and heavy in texture. Note the heaviness and roundness in the cheek. There is too much definition of stop and although the muzzle is of good depth it is slightly short and if it was to balance the skull it would be much heavier and lack type.

This bitch has a much smoother rounded look to the backskull, is much 'cleaner' in cheeks. The ear is set higher in line with the eye. The stop is less defined but still evident and the head tapers down through the muzzle which still shows depth of chin. Also note the shape and setting of the eye. Rather wide between the eyes – this width dictates where the eye is set. The Whippet is a sighthound and needs good all-round vision, so the eyes are set towards the outside edge of the skull.

Here is a rounder skull, the ears and of good shape but a little too high set, not being in line with the eye. The skull shaped is much rounder and stronger and the eyes are set

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much closer together, not ‘rather wide between the eyes. Without width here, the eyes are set with a forward view and the eye shape becomes round. The length of muzzle looks correct but there is a slight lumpiness just in front of the eyes.



Here a quality head with correctly shaped back skull and eye. There is a slight stop but the muzzle is too long in relation to the back skull.



These typical heads for a male (left) and female (right)show the slight difference in the two sexes. There is no difference in the head properties, showing the head shape, eye set and shape, width between the eyes, the gently tapering head to the muzzle and strength of muzzle with the depth of chin evident. Jaws powerful and clean cut – the tapering muzzle grading down to the nose but with sufficient width and strength to house a strong underjaw which is essential to hold game. Clean cut, lean no excess of skin or exaggeration of muzzle shape.

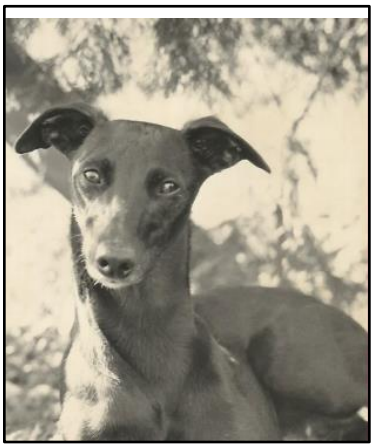


Nose black or blue depending on coat colour. Nose liver in creams. In whites or parti colour a butterfly nose is permissable. – For those interested in the colour breeding of Whippets or more specifically blacks, blues and creams this is a pigmentation colour in keeping with these dominant and recessive colours. Here you can see a blue, black and liver nose, all correct.

Eyes – **Oval** - the setting of the eyes already explained by the width between the eyes allows the surrounding area to form an oval shape.

With a stronger, incorrect skull the eyes become round as seen above.

Bright – nowhere does the standard say what colour the eye is and it is normally accepted that it is in keeping with the coat colour of the dog. Of course, we often prefer a darker shaded eye as it gives a depth to the expression of the eye and looks more pleasing. A yellow eye is very piercing and staring.



Too small - remember the Whippet is a Sighthound using its eyes to spot prey. Small or Chinese eye alters the whole expression, shown here in an otherwise nice head. Also incorrect is an almond shaped eye which is deeper set than the oval eye, this type of eye is seen in the Borzoi where the skull shape is very much flatter.

Expression very alert – a Whippet with no alert expression, has no personality!

Ears

To finish the head off, the ears also indicate quality. Above this dog has a good ear shape. The **rose shaped** ears are a very strong breed feature, the ‘rose’ is the full part of the ear fairly round in shape, it is edged with a fold, and the outer ear lies neatly away from the head. The key words are **small and fine texture**. The size should be in proportion to the size of the head, set neatly on the side of the skull in a line with the corner of the eye. The fine texture is like silk to touch, not thick and heavy.

When erect the typical rose ears becomes apparent, in repose the ear should fit tightly back. Of course, in the sporting field excitement can make the ear stand pricked eared, but the fold is still evident, and the main point is they are fine in texture and should return to the folded ear.



This untypical head shows a rounded apple skull, note the rise of brow above the eyes. The ears are heavy in texture, lack the characteristic rose shape and are low set. The skull is heavy, note the line of the zygomatic arch from the outer corner of the eye to the ear. The eye shape is round. The stop is too well defined and the muzzle does not taper gently

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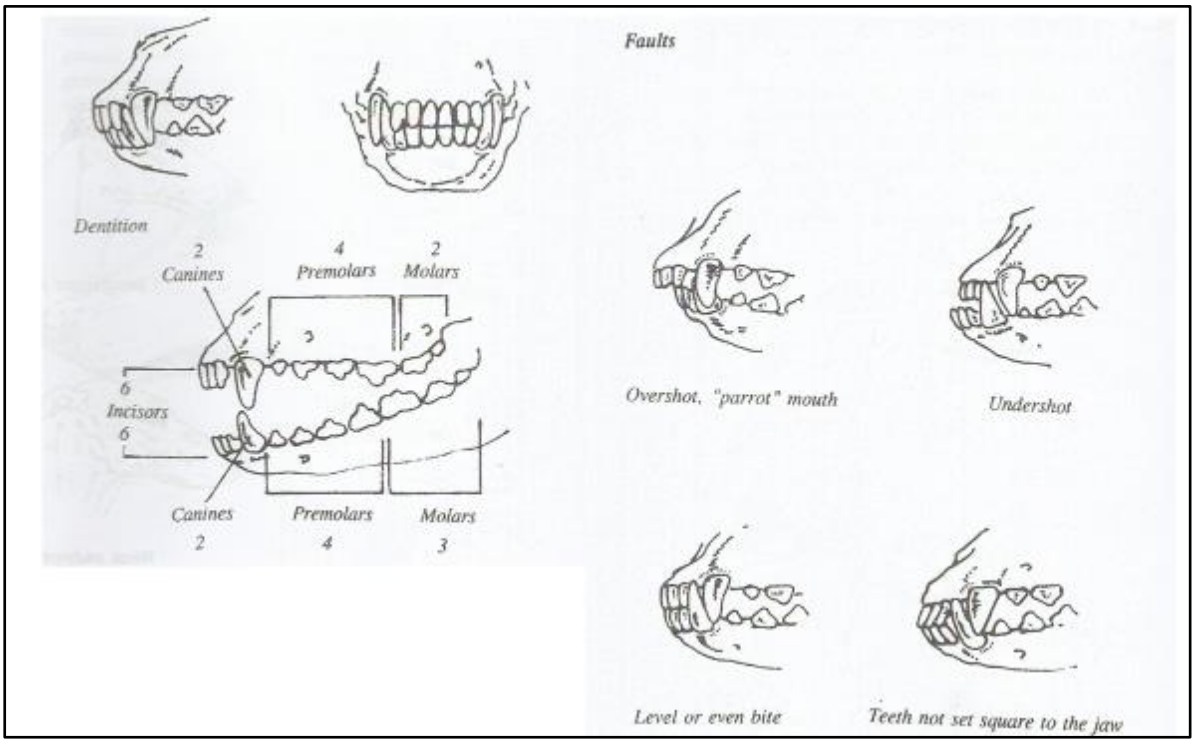
but has a ‘roman’ look with a dropping down of the top of the muzzle to the nose.

Mouth – Jaws strong with a perfect, regular and complete scissor bite.ie the upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaw.

Teeth are essential for function; no dog can hold game without a full set of teeth.

Regular, this includes the size as well as the regularity. A scissor bite is essential for function and being set square to the jaw gives the required strength.

Correct dentition and mouth faults.



Perfect – Nothing is perfect. A scissor bite with good size and regular teeth often get chipped or lost and broken, they are a working dog of spirit.

Hereditary missing teeth, however, are different. The Whippet is a working dog, and teeth are the tools of his trade. Any missing premolars or molars that are clearly not as a result of injury must be considered a concern although this is not normally seen.

There sometimes may be dogs with a split tooth, this is not a fault, but the tooth should be sound in structure and size. If in any doubt as to the bite being correct always check the set of jaw.



Neck

Long – it traditionally accepted that the length of a normal sloping neck from the occiput point to the withers is the same as the length of the head. By stretching the neck when galloping at speed it allows a forward thrust of the centre of gravity to increase speed, sufficient to allow the head to come down and catch game.

A short neck unbalances the dog, and it would have to slow down to pick up, as it restricts the freedom of movement of the head in relation to the body.

In contrast, a neck that is too long lacks the strength as the muscles are stretched and the dog would not be able to carry for any length of time for this reason, the standard asks for the neck to be muscular.

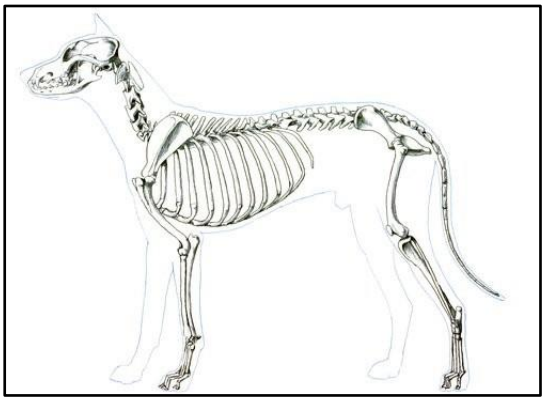
Elegantly arched – taking into consideration the exaggerations, this is not to be confused with a swan like neck which is weak and thin. There must be depth to the neck for strength. The arch effect comes from the angle that the head is positioned on the neck and the underlying spine and of course the muscular outer sheath.



The way the neck is set into the shoulders gives an indication if the front construction is correct.

The top image shows the neck set correctly into a correctly angulated front. The width of the neck is strong, the lines are gently sloping.

The bottom image shows a short neck set at a much steeper angle than above. The reach of neck is compromised and is slightly rounder in muscle than the flatter muscle of the bitch above. This shoulder placement is upright and lacks length of upper arm. A bulbous muscle has built up on the shoulder.



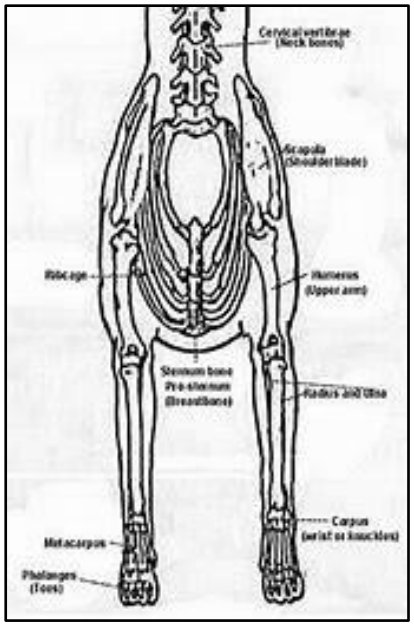
Forequarters - Shoulder well laid back with flat muscles.

Firstly, if the shoulder placement is correct, the muscle will be flat, not bulbous, overloaded and coarse. The shoulder blade sits on the body skeleton and is attached with muscle. Secondly, the shoulder blade must be of sufficient length before it can sit correctly.

Moderate space between shoulder blades at withers.

When the head is lowered to pick up game the top of the shoulder blades come closer together, there has to be sufficient space for this to happen.

The upper arm is approximately of equal length to the shoulder, placed so that the elbow falls directly under the withers when viewed in profile. Without the layback of shoulder, the necessary angle to seat a return of upper arm is reduced, the forward reach is restricted.



The angle at which it sits is two-fold. Not only the angle of layback but also the angle at which it sits on the ribbing. Without the layback of shoulder, the necessary angle to seat a return of upper arm is reduced, the forward reach is restricted. Without the shoulder blade being angled to the withers the front legs cannot be positioned correctly for forward movement.

Three different fronts:



The far-left dog has an upright front. The head and neck are set upright. There is a bump on the top of the shoulder. The angulation is too steep with no length to the shoulder blade nor upper arm. There is no fill in between the front legs seen even from the side view, this lack of depth carries through, and the brisket doesn't reach down to the elbow. This front when viewed from the front is a 'cathedral front', arched like a church window. Note the shallow ribcage behind the front is lacking heart and lung room.

The centre dog shows a well angulated front with the neck rising correctly out of the shoulders. There is a correct amount of fore chest showing and the fill in between the legs is of the correct width, this width is carried down to the feet. The elbows are well tucked in, unlike the dog on the right. The muscle development on the shoulder is flat but well developed, in comparison, the dog on the right is heavier in shoulder, this muscle will develop and become overloaded. Note the more oval shape of the ribcage and the defined tuck up.

The right-hand dog in comparison is over angulated in front with too much length in the shoulder blade and upper arm. The shoulder blades at the withers are set too far apart and the neck is set too low giving a 'ewe neck', bending out from the front before it rises. The fore chest is a little too prominent. There is a lot of fill in to the front, the brisket (chest) will reach below the elbows. This over angulated front forces the elbows to stick out instead of pointing backwards. Note this dog also shows a more rounded ribcage.

Hence: **Moderate space between the withers** (the set of the top of the shoulder blades).



The upper arm is approximately of equal length to the shoulder (blade), placed so that the elbow falls directly under the withers when viewed in profile. - This can only happen if both the shoulder blade and the upper arm are of equal length and are set correctly onto the ribcage. Otherwise, the dog has to compensate in some way and this affects correct movement in different ways. It is imperative that both the cause and effect can be identified.

This dog shows a correct shoulder placement and length of upper arm. The fore-chest is evident, and the depth of chest reaches the elbow.



This dog has an upright shoulder with a short shoulder blade; his upper arm length is very short in comparison and therefore sits in an even more upright position. His front leg appears to twist forward and he stands with his foot turning inwards. When moving the knees would be lifted as there is no possibility of forward reach. There is no fore-chest evident or fill in of fore chest with a gap between the front legs.



This dog also has an upright shoulder with a short shoulder blade but has more length of upper arm than the dog above. The front legs are set more under the body. The shoulder blades are so short they are set wide apart at the withers; there is a gap between the top of the shoulder blade and the back. This dog would move wider in front.



This shoulder blade is slightly longer and has more layback than the two above but is still not quite reaching the withers. The length of upper arm is also longer but the elbows are not tucked in as there is a gap between the elbows and the brisket. This dog has more forward reach than the two above but viewed from the front forms the shape of an A when moving.





These two dogs are of different colours and types but they both have the required front angulation. The shoulder has a good layback and the top of the shoulder can just be seen at the withers. The length from the top of the shoulder to the point of shoulder on the front is equally balanced by the length of the upper arm. The elbows are tucked in and if a line was drawn down from the withers it would fall in line with the elbows and down the back of the foreleg.



This dog has a very good length of upper arm, with elbows well tucked in.The shoulder blade is of good length but it doesn't have the layback causing the top of the shoulder blade, at the withers, to stand above the neckline.If a line is drawn down from the top of the shoulder blade it would fall in front of the elbow,down the centre of the foreleg.

Compare the smooth appearance of the shoulder on the dog above right and the rougher appearance of this dog over the shoulder.

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Here shown in the top image is a bitch with a good strength and length of neck which are correctly set into the shoulders. The shoulder blade can be seen sitting with a good layback sitting on the top of the ribs. The top of the shoulder blade (withers)is sitting in a direct line above the elbow. There is a good length of upper arm from the point of the shoulder back to the elbow. The strength and depth of the bladed bone can be seen below the elbow. Note the slight spring of pastern above the foot.

In comparison this bitch has a thin neck that is too long and is not set into the shoulders at the same angle. The layback of shoulder is not set as far back as above and the angle from the withers to the point of shoulder is steeper i.e. upright. The length of upper arm from the point of shoulder to the elbow is much shorter. This is an upright shoulder with a steep upper arm angulation. The front legs are placed much further forward on the body, so will not have the required forward reach. The forearm bone is much finer and weaker, and the pastern is upright with no spring.



Forearms straight and upright with moderate bladed bone – showing strength by their shape and structure. A bladed bone, one of the strongest structured bones that retains fineness and is common to a number of sighthounds.

Front not too wide. **Pasterns strong with slight spring** – the same width from body down to the ground, echoed when moving. Here the pasterns show the slight spring, and the strength of bone is carried through. The foot is oval with well arched knuckles and the pad under the foot can be seen.

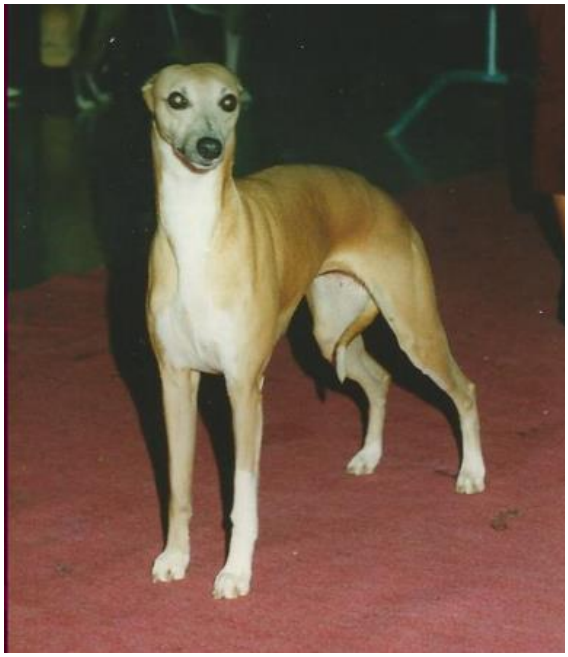


This bone is not as strong down the foreleg and the pasterns have too much spring. The weaker pastern also shows the weaker foot. Although it is has rise of knuckle, the length of the foot is too long and there is no evidence of any padding to the underside of the foot. From the front view, this foot may be more open



Here the foreleg is very fine, lacking the blade. The pastern is very straight with no spring and the feet although knuckled are thin padded and the toes are spreading.

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Here is a front view of a bitch in full maturity. The shoulder muscle although flat is developed but not heavy and bulbous.

Body – Chest very deep with plenty of heart room. Well filled in front. Brisket deep. The front is well developed with a good fill in of fore chest between the front legs. This depth is carried back as the depth of brisket. The elbows are well tucked in. The front is the correct width, in keeping with the body and carries on down to the ground, looking strong and stable.

The shape of the medium bladed bone can be seen. The pasterns are strong with a slight spring; however, they could have slightly more spring.

Broad, well-muscled back, firm, somewhat long, showing graceful arch over the loin but not humped. Ribs well sprung. Loin giving impression of strength and power. Definite tuck up.



Chest very deep with plenty of heart room. Ribs well sprung. - The shape of the ribcage is oval. This is the most efficient way of housing the heart and lung room necessary for a running dog. The ribcage is fronted by the fore chest which is evident when viewed from the front.

Hence a well filled in front – the depth of the ribcage is measured to the elbow – **Brisket deep**

Broad, well-muscled back, firm, somewhat long, showing a graceful arch over the loin.

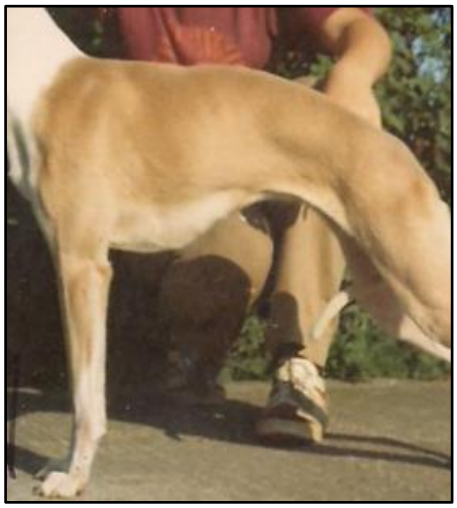
The strongly muscled back allows the dog to spring and flex when galloping. The length is proportionate to the balance of the dog, sufficient length to enable both the front and rear to operate without clashing, however, too long and the muscles weaken, it may look perfectly shapely standing, on the move the topline lengthens and flattens and becomes unstable. The gait becomes too exaggerated. This is not a good running dog.

On the other hand, too short with a short back will have to compensate and often results in a wheel back. The arch being too far forward and being too accentuated, this is equally incorrect and non-functional.

Loin giving impression of strength and power, definite tuck up.

The arch over the loin is pure muscle and will continue to develop with maturity.

Definite tuck up, ensuring the curvy topline and underline allow the Whippet to run at top speed with plenty of ground clearance. The underline should show an curvy 'S' shape.



Along with this upright shoulder, the lack of fill in of fore chest is carried back onto the brisket. Here the ribcage is very shallow in both width and depth. There is little spring to the rib, which gives the wider part of the oval shape, the length of the rib is too short not reaching to the elbow and the under part of the rib (brisket)has no depth or width. The length of the ribbing, from the shoulder area to the loin, is short and restrictive. There is a definite tuck up but because of the shortness of the rib, the tuck up starts too early. The loin is also short and narrow and falls away too steeply towards the hindquarters. This dog could not be described as having a somewhat long back. You can see the dog is tall and short.



This dog has an over angulated front, the forecast is evident, and the depth of brisket reaches the elbow. The rib shape compared to the dog above is much more rounded and deep. The ribbing is carried further back, the tuck up starts further back and is not as 'definite'

The dog, however, as above, has a short loin resulting in the topline dropping too steeply.



The oval shape is shown by the spring half way down the rib, it narrows slightly down to the brisket in the bottom one third of the depth. The rib is carried much further back, and the loin is much stronger and well-muscled. The topline is more of a graceful arch going towards the hindquarters. There is a definite tuck up.

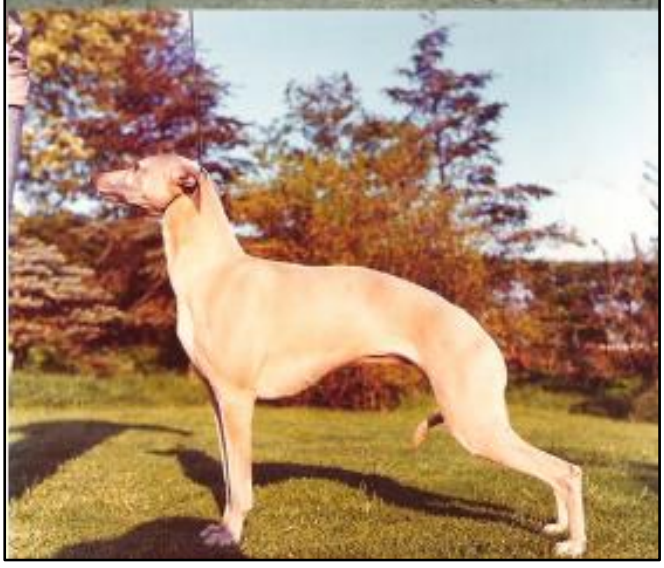
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Here the ribcage has good depth (down to the elbow) and a smoother, but still definite, tuck up. The ribcage is carried well back but lacks slight spring although it is evident, it would be acceptable in this yearling dog as the body will still mature in comparison to the mature body above. The topline is much more gently sloping. Note that the length of loin is longer than the dog above and therefore the topline is not as arched, but it would be described as having a firm, but somewhat long back. In maturity often muscling develops and the rise over the loin improves. It should never be level or flat at any stage of development.



This dog looks to have a reasonable front angulation and the rib has depth to the elbow but there is no tuck up, this is a straight line with no curviness. The ribbing is short, not carried back, and the topline suddenly rises corresponding to the end of the ribbing. This is a faulty wheelback, suddenly dropping to the hindquarters. The loin is short and will not be able to flex as the dog is running. Overall, the dog stands over a square.



This bitch over angulated in front and heavy in shoulder has a depth of brisket below the point of elbow. Her ribcage looks very round not oval. Her sternum or breastbone is too pronounced. The ribbing is carried well back, but at the end of the ribbing note how the topline suddenly drops. The loin is short in comparison to the length of the body to this point. The hindquarters are over angulated and weak.

Hindquarters

Strong, broad across the thighs, with well-developed second thighs. Stifles well bent without exaggeration with hocks well let down. Able to stand naturally over a lot of ground.

Strong, broad across the thighs – Strength of muscle is fundamental as this is now the powerhouse of the galloping dog, this should be wide – a continuation of the broad loin, now we are at the business end. In profile, the thighs should also be broad and have depth from front to back to allow maximum development.



Compare the hind legs of these bitches:

The broadness of the loin can be seen here and how that is carried down into the hindquarters, this gives width to the hindquarters when viewed from the rear. The strength and width across the upper thigh which can be seen here in profile gives the base for the strong, thigh muscle to develop. The second thigh is balanced and the hocks are well let down.

In comparison this bitch doesn't show the muscle strength over the loin. The upper (first)thigh is much narrower in width so the muscle development would be restricted. The length of the upper thigh is also too short down to the stifle(knee). To compensate for this shortness the second thigh has stretched in length and has become angled upwards more sharply. The hock joint is not as defined and is set higher, so not well let down as above.

Well-developed second thighs, this refers to the muscle development not the length. **Stifles well bent without exaggeration with hocks well let down.**

As a continuation of the top thigh, the second thigh should also be muscular. It is also important that the second thigh is of the correct length which is part of an unexaggerated bend of stifle. Too short, and the lack of bend of stifle indicates not sufficient hindquarters to extend in movement. Too long, which often looks flashy, is the worst option, as this is much more dysfunctional. The extra length from stifle to hock stretches the second thigh muscle and causes a weakness, shown by insecure hocks and bad hind movement. When running, a dog would not be able to turn sharply and have to turn over a large circle.



These hindquarters have little angulation. The croup is short and steep. The croup is measured from the hip bone to the point of buttock, near the root of the tail. The angle at which this sits affects how the upper thigh is angled from the point of buttock to the stifle. If the angle is open the hindquarters are steep and to get a bend at the stifle, the dog has to stand on the front of its foot. The second thigh is then set at a steeper angle and the hock joint is higher set and straight. Note the thinness of upper and second thighs, this would prevent a good muscle developing.



This dog has more bend to his stifle and definition of hock, both the upper and second thighs are equal in length. The angle of the croup is far too steep, note how the topline suddenly drops. The hock is too high, from the hock to foot is not straight.

Here the over hind angulation balances the front over angulation, but as already stated, the drop in topline is due to her short loin, not the croup. From the hip bone onwards the angles are equal, the upper thigh is broad but the bend of stifle is excessive and the length of the second thigh is very long. The hock is well defined and low set but it is far too far out behind the hindquarters and angular.

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Here the length of the croup allows a gentle slope from the topline into the hindquarters. The angle of the hindquarters allows a bend of stifle maintaining the broadness across the upper thigh. The length of the second thigh is equal to the upper thigh and the broadness of the second thigh allows muscle development. The hocks are well let down and from the hock to the foot is straight allowing the foot to stand correctly. If a line was drawn down from the point of buttock it should fall to the front of the hind foot.



There is a very similar length and slope to the croup to above. The strength and width of the upper and second thighs is very similar, however, this bitch has longer bones and although the stifles are well bent and the hocks are well let down as required, the bend of stifle is beginning to look exaggerated. The line drawn down would not fall just in front of the foot. This may look flashy but is incorrect.



Very similar in croup, although has more length from hip bone to haunch bone. Shorter from haunch bone to stifle then more length from stifle to hock. So unbalanced in hindquarters. This hock doesn't have the definition and has a slightly curved angle. This is a sickle hock. The hock joint is stiff and doesn't flex when moving. Note how the dog is standing on the back of its feet., in movement the hind pads are not seen when moving away and the foot shuffles and swings from the hip.

Feet – Oval, well split up between the toes, knuckles well arched, pads thick, nails strong.

An upright front with straight pasterns lacking spring often have a small, round cat foot. This type of foot lacks the necessary flexibility and is almost too small a foot to be the base of the dog.

The foot has to be able to open and close when covering the ground, **well split up between the toes, knuckles well arched**, a flat foot lacks spring and pad thickness and is weak and soft.

Nails should be strong as they also complete the foot and dig into the ground when running.

Tail - No **feathering** – an indication of impure blood

Long, tapering, reaching at least to the hock. When in action carried in a delicate curve not higher than the back.



If a Whippet tail is carried higher than the back it means that the angle at which the croup is set is too level and the tail is usually high set, often curling tightly. The tail is a continuation of the spine through the topline. It should be set fairly low and not be obvious when seen in profile.

In action the tail acts as a rudder as the Whippet twists and turns, so has a very important function.



The tail often shows how the Whippet is feeling and can be drawn up tightly under the body. In repose the tail should be in a more relaxed position under the body.

Gait/Movement -Should possess great freedom of action. In profile should move with a long, easy stride whilst holding topline. The forelegs should be thrown forward and low over the ground. The forelegs should be thrown forward and low over the ground. Hind legs should come well under the body giving great propelling power. General movement not to look stilted, high stepping or mincing. True coming and going.



Note that all these dogs shown maintain the arch over the loin **'holding their topline'**. Their forward reach shows the necessity for the front angulation being correct, **forelegs thrown forward, low over the ground. Hind legs well under the body giving great propelling power.**



If all the proportions and construction are correct, if all conditioning is correctly achieved, the Whippet should move exactly as described.

Of course, there is no perfect dog and there are many variations to movement because of many different factors. A Whippet that minces or short steps is as bad as one that overreaches.

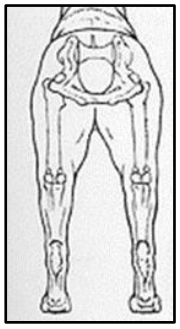


The dog shows how the rear foot, steps into the place where the front foot was lifted, this shows that the dog is moving forward correctly, and the dog is correctly balanced. Note the way that the hock is flexing on the back foot and the rear pad can clearly seen from behind the dog.



Over reach may look flashy but is exaggerated and incorrect and would expend too much energy too quickly, if this movement is bred from consistently, eventually the skeleton or body will begin to compensate and health problems occur. Note the front foot is past end of the nose, the reach is coming from the elbow not from the shoulder and upper arm. The front foot is flexed out. The rear foot is stepping further forward than where the front foot has been lifted. The rear pastern, down from the hock, is much more stretched backwards and the back foot has hardly been lifted from the ground

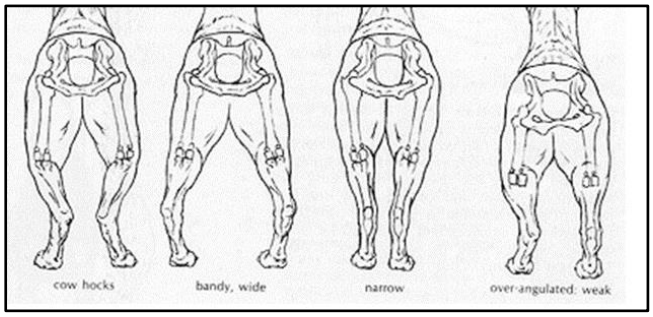
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When viewed from the rear, the width of the hindquarters should be easily seen. A line drawn down from the point of buttock should pass through the hock down to the foot. This gives the required width to the hindquarters in relation to the front legs, which are set closer. This allows the dog at full gallop, to pass its hindquarters either side of the front.

A Whippet should move with good width both in front and rear, proportionate to their build.

The forelegs thrown forward and low over the ground, sometimes called 'daisy cutting action'. There should be no lift to the forelegs from the knee nor a stilted 'goose stepping' action. This is an indicator of an incorrect front construction. A faulty wide or narrow front or unstable, open front can hinder speed, as can hind legs that are cow hocked, wide, too narrow or over angulated and weak.



This width is maintained when moving away and back i.e. **true coming and going.** The front width that is dictated by the set of the shoulders and upper arm on the ribcage and the rear width that is dictated by the width of the pelvis at the hip and buttocks.

Any deviation from this width is incorrect and should be questioned. Plaiting, crossing over, out at elbow or a narrow front, where the elbows are pinched in to the chest are incorrect.

The Breed Standard asks for movement to be True coming and going, it does not ask for converging movement, this is incorrect in a Whippet.

The rear movement should be strong and powerful with good width. The hind legs should move parallel to each other, slightly in from the standing position, but they should not be narrow or converging. Equally the hind movement should not be too wide, this causes the hindquarters to become stilted, lacking the drive and propelling power.

It is important this is not accepted as correct. Remember in full gallop the hindquarters have to pass either side of the front legs, so the front must be narrower than the rear.

In profile the hind **legs should come well under the body giving great propelling power.**

Coat – Fine, a rough coat detracts from the overall quality, however, it should still remain protective. **Short,** the length of the hair may vary in different colours but it should be smooth, never wavy or broken. **Close in texture** – indicates pure blood and is another protective quality.

Colour – Any colour or mixture of colours, except Merle i.e., those genetically possible. Permitting any colour and combination of colours, this includes Cream and Blues which are dilute, recessive colours. Colours not genetically possible are Black & Tan, Liver and Merle.

Size: Desirable height Dogs 47-51 cm (18 ½ - 20 ins): Bitches 44-47 cm (17 ½ - 18 ½ ins)

There is often debate on this subject and there can be a tendency for taller dogs now to be the norm particularly in bitches. It should be noted that the Whippet started out as a small, handy sized dog and within the sighthound family there is little between the maximum and minimum heights of different breeds and with that characteristics change. The very characteristics which give breed type can easily be lost as we discussed earlier in the History of the breed. If the breeders and judges ignore this fact the Whippet will disappear.

Faults –The standard says Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon health and welfare of the dog. **Note -Males should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended in the scrotum.**

A hereditary fault. In the past there have been problems with cryptorchidism (no testicles evident) or monorchidism (one testicle evident) in the Breed so it is important that this check is done. In young male puppies the testicles may not always be fully dropped as they can be drawn up if the puppy is anxious. You should use your discretion in this instance.



Here is a line-up of Championship show winners, left to right, Dog CC,Bitch CC & BOB, Best Puppy and Best Veteran.

This line up shows the typical shape of the Whippet.

It is clear to see the different Breeders' 'type', but all four show the requirements of the Breed Standard.

The two males, far left and far right, have masculinity but are not heavy, still retaining elegance.

The two females (centre) show the mature and puppy bitches, the older bitch has the depth of body and her ribs are well covered and shapely, where the puppy has the shape but has yet to 'fill out'.

Having looked at all the points within the Standard it is important to judge the Whippet as a whole and not fault judge. Each dog is an individual, so it is wrong to say a specific angle should be achieved for example. There may be some compromise on a certain point in an otherwise good specimen and as a judge it is for you to make an informed decision.

Remember, no dog is perfect, it should be judged on its overall merits and demerits.

However, it is vitally important that the Characteristics which dictate Breed Type are recognised.