

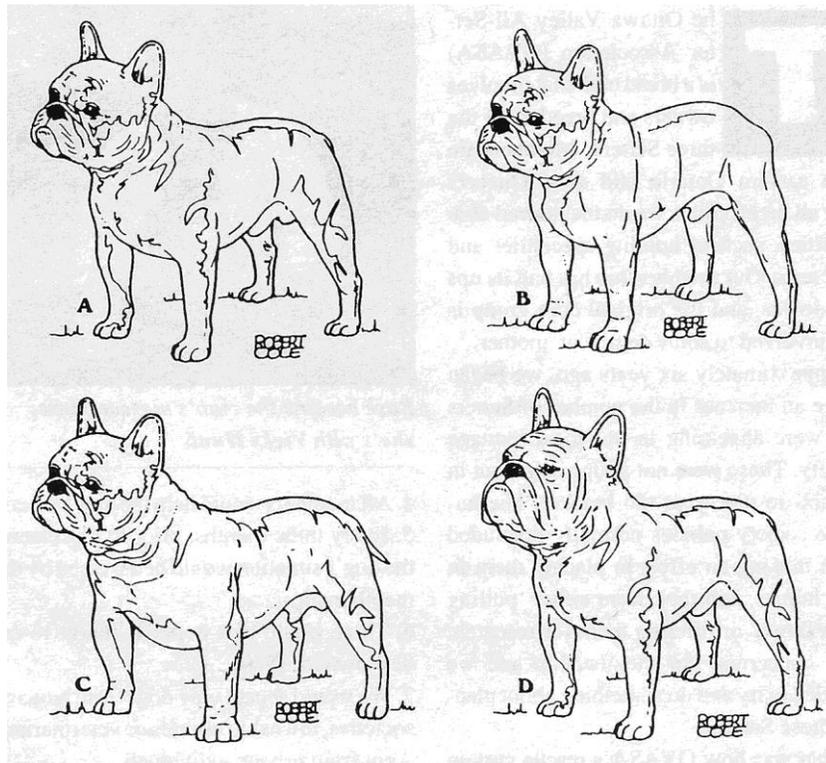
YOU BE THE JUDGE

By Robert Cole

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THE FRENCH BULLDOG

Which of the four Frenchies gets your vote?



Out of a possible 100 points, almost half are allotted to the French Bulldog's head. With this amount of emphasis accorded to the head, I have drawn six: one good head and five poor ones. I have drawn the good heads on three of the four stacked examples, and given one of the poor heads to the fourth example. Place them in stacked order of preference.

To place these examples in order of preference, you have to decide if you can forgive the example with the poor head in consideration of its good body. If you can, there is still the question as to whether you will place the poor head second or third. Also, soundness as well as type have to be taken into consideration.

DOG A

This 21 pound example approaches typical as I interpret the CKC standard. His head (number one) is large, square and broad, but in proportion to his body. The skull is almost flat between the ears, the forehead is domed, the loose skin forms symmetrical wrinkles. The muzzle is broad, deep and well set back, the muscles of the cheeks are well developed. The nose and lips are black.

The stop is well defined, causing a hollow or groove between the eyes. The muzzle is short, the black nose is wide with open nostrils and the line between the nostrils is well defined. The lower jaw is deep, square,

broad, slightly undershot and well turned up. Lips are thick, meeting each other in the centre, completely hiding the teeth. The upper lip covers lower on each side with plenty of cushion; it is never so exaggerated as to hang too much below the level of the lower jaw.

The dark eyes match (eyes of different colour disqualify), are round, of moderate size, neither sunken nor prominent. I have set them wide apart and low down in the skull. No white is visible (looking straight forward). The bat ears are medium in size, wide at the base, rounded at the top, set high, carried upright and parallel.

The powerful neck is well arched and thick. The skin is loose at the throat but not exaggerated. The muscular body is short and cobby. The body is well rounded with a deep, wide brisket, wide at the sloping shoulders and narrowing at the loins. The back is roached with a slight fall close behind the shoulders.

The front legs are set wide apart, are straight-boned, strong, muscular and short. The strong, muscular hind legs are longer than the forelegs, thus raising the loins above the shoulders. The hocks are well let down.

The hind feet are rather longer than the small, compact front feet. Nails are short, thick and black. The undocked tail is about 3 ½ inches long, set low, thick at the root, straight (may be screwed) and fine at the tip.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Dog C weighs 28 lbs. If he weighed over 28 pounds, he would have to be disqualified. A nose other than black (except in the case of lighter coloured dogs, where a lighter nose is acceptable) is a disqualification. A hare lip disqualifies. Any mutilation disqualifies. As for colour, black and white disqualifies, as does black and tan, liver, mouse, or solid black (black means black without any trace of brindle).

Among the five poor heads, one is handicapped by two disqualifications, two others by one disqualification each. These four involve the eyes, ears and lips.

HEAD 1

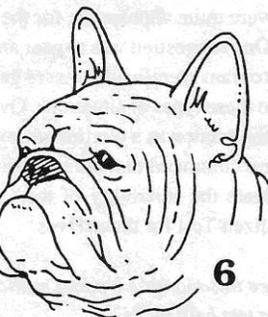
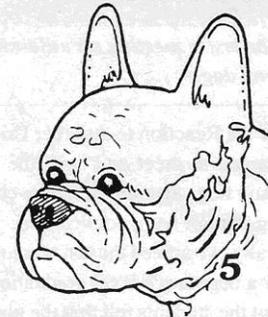
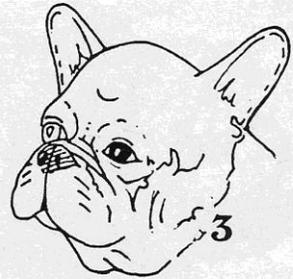
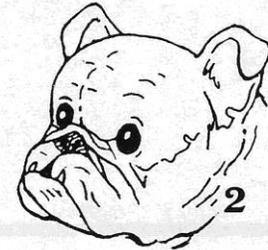
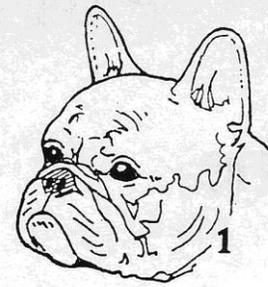
This head approaches typical. Having described the head of Dog A in detail, further appreciation can be gained by comparing his head to the remaining five poor heads. Combined, almost every conceivable Frenchie head feature receives consideration.

HEAD 2

In addition to drop ears and hare lip (both disqualify), this dog's skull is too round – it should be flat between the ears. His unsatisfactory eyes are large and round. He is too undershot and his teeth are exposed. (Note: a protruding tongue might suggest a wry mouth).

HEAD 3

The skull is domed instead of the forehead, and this places the ears too low and off to the side of the head (the orifice should face forward). He is disqualified because his eyes are not the same colour. The visibility of the whites of the eyes is a further fault. His lower jaw does not turn up, and his upper and lower lips do not meet in the centre. The loose skin at the neck is excessive.



HEAD 4

Pointed ears disqualify this example. The forehead is flat, rather than slightly rounded. A faulty deep furrow both broad and deep extends up the middle of the skull. The eyes are small and triangular. The underjaw is straight, lacking upward curve, lessening the depth of the muzzle and making the lips hang excessively low over the sides of the jaw.

HEAD 5

The ears are too far back on the skull. The eyes are set close together. The nose is not set back. The muzzle is long and not laid back. The flews lack thick cushion. To further remove this head from typical, I could have slanted the nose down, a serious Frenchie malformation.

HEAD 6

This head, without the ears, is very much a Bulldog head, especially the pronounced upsweep of underjaw and length of skull. Like the bulldog, the eyes are placed wide apart, slightly oblique and their shape changed.

DOG C

The French Bulldog's ancestor is the British Bulldog, probably one of the toy variety. As such, he resembles his ancestor, yet their heads and bodies are quite different. This bully example combines a Frenchie's head and a very Bulldog-ish body. He weighs 28 pounds and illustrates how much more ponderous and pronounced the Bulldog-type body can be compared to a Frenchie of the same height. (A 28 lb., taller Frenchie presents an entirely different balance and warrants a different reaction.)

Compared to unsound Dog B and the incorrect head possessed by Dog D, I have forgiven much and given Dog C second place. His bone is heavier than Dog A's and his chest is wider, rounder and deeper, his bully sloping shoulders appear tacked on, his front feet turn out slightly and his elbows stand well out and loose from the body, but, in my opinion, he is still a better Frenchie than the following two examples.

DOG B

This dog has a good head, but it is short in neck and steep in shoulder. The body is deep but narrow, the front legs too close together. The ribcage is too short, not well rounded, and the loin is too long. Roach more resembles a wheel-back, partly because the pelvis is steep. There is too much tuck up. The steep pelvis causes the bones of the hind leg to straighten, reducing angulation at the stifle and hock. The front pasterns are weak. Would you give this dog third place?

DOG D

This example is identical to Dog A except for the head. The opposite to Dog C, he has a good Frenchie body but a poor Frenchie head. His head is too bully.

The question is, to promote his good Frenchie body, how much, compared to Dog B and Dog C, are you willing to forgive his head departures? Would you be willing to put him up over Dog C? What about over Dog B? I would put him up over Dog B.

MOVEMENT

Whereas the Bulldog's movement is peculiarly heavy and constrained, the French Bulldog's action is free and flowing. This is reflected in the Frenchie's compactness, balance, size and weight. Dog D moves better than Dog C.

If the French Bulldog was intended, like the Dalmatian or the Golden Retriever, to excel at the trot, Dog D's superior movement could be a major factor. Since almost half the scale of points has been allotted to the Frenchie's head, however, and only four points to his movement, my choice for second place is still Dog C.