

# Pocket Guide to the Basset Hound

## An Aid for Judges



Prepared by the 2010 BHCA Judges' Education Committee

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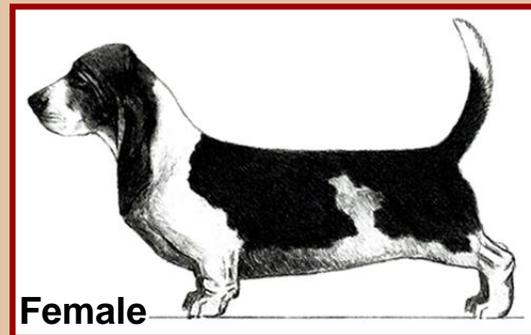
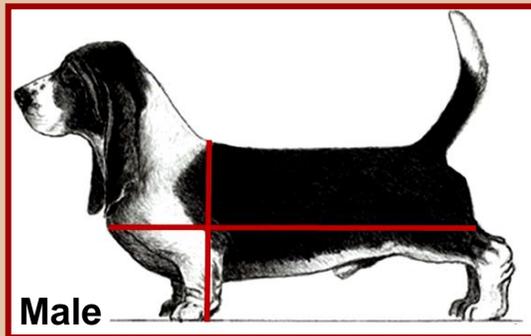
### General Appearance

**Original Purpose:** A long, low scenting dog with short legs bred to follow a trail through difficult terrain. **Effortless, deliberate mover – never clumsy.**

**Proportion and Substance:** **2:1 rectangular outline.** About twice as long as tall measured from forechest to point of buttocks. **Heavily boned.** Chest reaches **below elbow.**

Look for **balance and proportion.** In addition to the stacked picture, **side** and **down and back movement** should determine final placements.

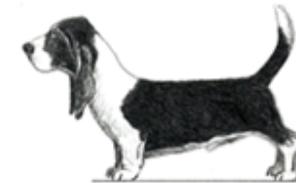
### Correct Outline, Proportion & Substance



Some females can weigh 5 to 10 pounds less than males.

### Faulty Outlines

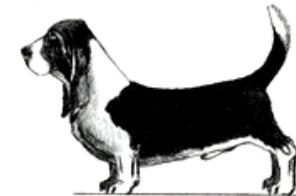
Desired front and rear angulation is **90 degrees.** Steep shoulders & hindquarters are **serious faults.** **Forechest should be prominent.**



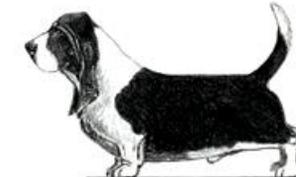
Straight front & rear; lacks forechest



Straight front; lacks forechest; good rear



Straight rear; good front; saggy topline



Too heavy & close to ground



Too leggy; 2<sup>nd</sup> thigh too short



Cobby; lacks length

J. H. Foster



# Forequarters Crook'd Forelegs & Wrap-Around Front

A dwarf breed with short legs



Forelegs are crook'd, heavily boned with wrinkled skin and wrap around the ribcage to support the heavy forequarters (A). The wrap-around structure resembles an egg nesting in a cup (B). Wrists are closer together than the shoulder joints (C). Paw is well-rounded and massive.

## Mismatched Fronts

The wrap-around front is prone to being mismatched, setting the stage for unsoundness. Front feet should be matched as shown below left. A mismatched front should be penalized based on the severity of the mismatch.



**Matched  
(Correct)**



**Slightly**

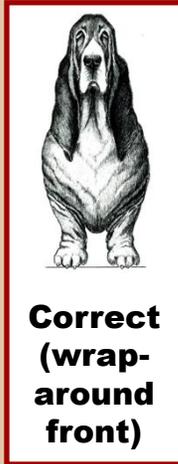


**Very**

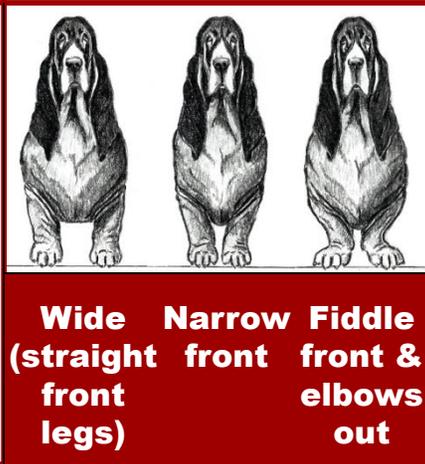
mismatched mismatched

# Breed Hallmarks Wrap-Around Front and Prominent Forechest

Incorrect fronts



**Correct  
(wrap-around front)**



**Wide (straight front legs)** **Narrow front** **Fiddle front & elbows out**



### Wide is Incorrect

Bassetts with **straight front legs** are called "**wide**" in front. A wide front is incorrect.

## Prominent Forechest

Prominent forechest is part of a long smooth ribcage and should show clearly in front of forelegs. Lack of forechest may be due to a short upper arm.



**Prominent  
(Correct)**



**Only moderate**

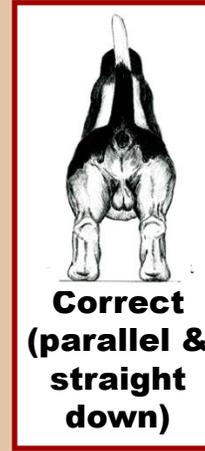


**No forechest**

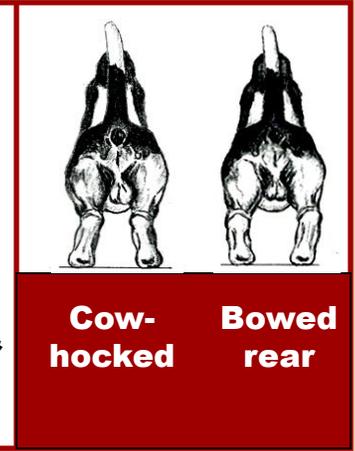


# Hindquarters Stifles well-let-down Rear angles are 90°

Serious faults



**Correct  
(parallel & straight down)**

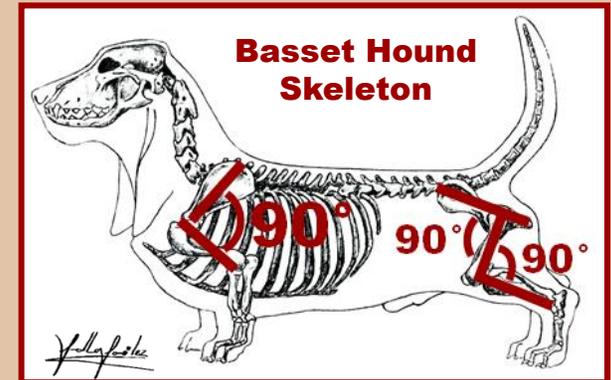


**Cow-hocked**

**Bowed rear**

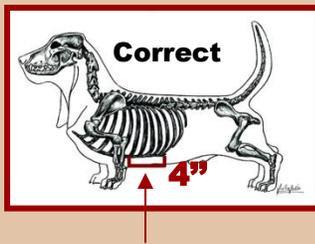
90° Angles Front & Rear are highly desired but not often seen.

Upper arm and shoulder blade of equal length and shoulder placement is well under dog. Angle between the shoulder blade and upper arm is 90°.



**Basset Hound Skeleton**

## Ribcage Long and Smooth



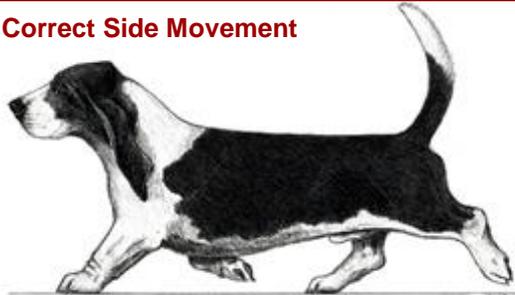
Posterior sternum should extend about 4" beyond forelegs.

Flanged ribs are not penalized as strongly as movement faults.

## Movement

Smooth, powerful, effortless, with good reach and drive and level topline in motion.

Correct Side Movement



Movement faults are similar to those in other breeds. Front feet don't paddle, weave or overlap. Hind feet follow in line with front feet. Hocks are well bent with no stiffness of action and are parallel going away. **Correct movement** should be given high priority in addition to the stacked picture.

## Down & Back Movement

Because of the unique wrap-around front, **down and back movement is as important as side movement.**

## Going Away Look for:

- Parallel hind legs (no single tracking)
- Hind feet following in line with front feet
- Hocks well bent and elbows close to chest

### Correct



Hind legs are parallel



Less

**Correct:**

Travels close going away

## Coming Back Look for:

- No paddling, weaving or overlapping
- No single tracking
- Prominent forechest with good fill

### Correct



Wrap-around & good fill

### Incorrect



Wide front



Lacks fill

Before placing your class, remember the **down & back** as well as the final go-round!

**Head** Large. Soft, sad expression. Well-domed skull, dark nose, long, low set, velvety ears. Slightly sunken dark eyes, pronounced dewlap and prominent haw.



Above: Correct heads



Broad, flat skull

Planes not parallel

Snipey



Stop too flat

Bulging, round eye

High set, flat ears

## SUMMARY

- 2:1 rectangular outline
- Smooth, deliberate, effortless movement
- Good reach and drive; 90° angles front and rear
- No paddling, weaving, overlapping
- Hind feet follow in line with front feet
- Hocks are parallel going away with no stiffness of action.
- Wrap-around matched front; feet turn out slightly
- Heavily boned forelegs with wrinkles
- Massive, well-rounded paw
- Prominent forechest
- 90° angle between upper arm and shoulder blade
- Long smooth ribcage; posterior sternum about 4" behind forelegs
- Elbows close to chest
- Forelegs intersect deepest part of chest; chest reaches below elbow
- Large, well-domed head, medium width, deep muzzle, moderate stop, slightly sunken dark eyes, pronounced dewlap, long, low set ears
- Temperament is mild – never sharp or timid
- Any hound color is acceptable; markings are of no importance.

**Breed Hallmarks:** Long, low body; prominent forechest; heavily boned forelegs with wrinkled skin; wrap-around front; 90 degree front and rear angles.

## JUDGING TIPS

*The ramp is to be used for Breed, Group & BIS judging of the Basset.*

- Do exam **quickly & gently!**
- **Don't pull skin** over the head or up on the back to check wrinkling & looseness
- **Never pick up** a Basset to drop its front
- **Do not push down** on the hindquarters
- **Never straddle** a Basset during the exam
- **Don't wear** long ties/scarves
- **Don't make sounds** to elicit expression
- Use the **ramp to re-examine an exhibit!**

### Fault Summary

**DISQUALIFICATIONS** Height over 15"; knuckling over; distinctly long coat.

**SERIOUS FAULTS** Steep front & rear angles, fiddle front, elbows out, feet down in pastern. Undershot or overshot bite. High set, flat ear.

**FAULTS** Incorrect head, ribcage or topline.

**PERMISSIBLE BUT NOT DESIRABLE** Liver nose and light eye.

To contact the BHCA Judges' Education Committee, go to [www.basset-bhca.org](http://www.basset-bhca.org)

Strictly speaking, with reference to judging terminology, the Basset is not a head breed. Correct angles and movement are given higher consideration.