



AMERICAN
BOLOGNESE
CLUB

STANDARD OF THE BOLOGNESE

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Bolognese, a member of the Bichon family, is an enchanting small, white companion dog with a compact and sturdy, square body. Known for its long floes of wavy open ringlets all over the body, with the hair shorter on the face. Against the solid white fur is a dark all black nose and dark eyes with notable black eye rims. The Bolognese is a rather serious dog and generally not high energy but is intelligent and witty. They are known for their moments of playful expression displayed by the “Bolo Dance”. They are slightly more reserved and shyer than their cousin, the Bichon Frise. Known as an ancient breed of the Italian aristocracy, they were considered the breed of the European nobility.

SIZE PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE

Size: The ideal height for dogs is 9 ½ to 11 inches and 9 to 10 1/2 inches for bitches. A tolerance of ½ inch above or below the ideal height is allowed but not preferred. Severe fault includes any dog under 9 inches or over 11 1/2 inches and any bitch under 8 1/2 inches or over 11 inches. The minimum height does not apply to puppies under 12 months of age.

Proportion: The Bolognese has a square build; the length of the body, measured from the point of the shoulder to the point of the buttock bone, is equal to that of the height at the withers. The length of the head reaches 1/3 of the height at the withers. The depth of the chest is almost half of the height at the withers. Correct proportions are very important in this breed.

Substance: The breed should be compact and of medium bone, with well sprung ribs. The sternum protrudes moderately in front of the point of the shoulder. The back is level to the loin. The croup is very broad and slightly sloping. There is a slight tuck up. Weight: The ideal weight is not to exceed 10 pounds.

HEAD

The width of the skull, measured at the level of the zygomatic arches is the same as the length. The skull is flat. Nose to stop is slightly shorter than from stop to occiput. The stop is accentuated. Nose is large and black.

Expression: Happy, intelligent, and rather serious.

Eyes: The correct position of the eyes is sub frontal. This is essential for the correct expression. The large, round eyes are ochre in color, not black. They have well pigmented black rims and dark iris; the eyeball must not be prominent; the white of the eye is not visible. Disqualification complete lack of pigmentation of the eye rims.

Ears: High set; they are long and hanging but rather rigid at their base; carried away from the head giving a broad appearance to the head.

Skull: The skull is flat and slightly oval in shape in the sagittal direction with rather convex sides. The protuberances of the frontal bones are well developed the frontal furrow is only slightly accentuated, as is also the occipital protuberance. The length of the skull is slightly more than that of the muzzle.

Stop: Rather accentuated.

Muzzle: Nose to stop is slightly shorter than from stop to occiput. The topline of the muzzle is straight and the sides of the muzzle are parallel, so that the forepart of the muzzle is almost square. The lower orbital region is well chiseled.

Planes (Muzzle and Skull): The longitudinal axes of the skull and muzzle are parallel. Nose: Large and set on the same line as the topline of the muzzle. Seen in profile the front is vertical. Must be black; complete lack of pigment or any color other than black is disqualifying.

Lips: Upper lips being only slightly developed in depth, they do not cover the bottom lips, and the lower profile of the muzzle is determined by the lower jaw.

Bite: Jaws normally developed. An undershot or overshot jaw is a disqualifying fault.

Teeth: White and evenly aligned with strong and complete dentition. Articulation of incisors as scissor bite; level bite is tolerated. P1 missing is tolerated.

NECK, TOPLINE, BODY

Neck: The length of the neck is equal to the length of the head and is without a dewlap. A good length of neck is appreciated but should not be too long. This gives elegance to the breed.

Topline: The straight profile of the back and that of the loin are slightly convex and merge harmoniously in the line of the croup. Withers only slightly prominent above the top line.

Body: The dog should be of a square construction. The length of the body, measured from the point of the shoulder to the point of the buttock bone is equal to that of the height at the withers. A compact body with a lot of substance is very important in the breed.

Chest: Ample, let down to level of elbows, with well-sprung ribs, the depth reaching almost half of the height at the withers. The sternum protrudes moderately in front of the point of the shoulder.

Ribs: Well-sprung ribs

Underline and belly: Following the profile of the sternum, then rises slightly towards the belly.

Back: Straight.

Loin: Short and strong. The straight profile of the back and that of the loin are slightly convex and merge harmoniously in the line of the croup. Withers only slightly prominent above the top line.

Croup: Very broad and only slightly sloping.

Tail: Set in the line of the croup and is curved high and graceful over the back. It should not be flat on the back nor curly. The correct carriage of the tail gives a pleasant outline. Disqualifying fault is a tail less Bolognese.

FOREQUARTERS

Shoulders – The shoulder blades, upper arm and forearm are approximately the same length. The shoulders are laid back to approximately a 45-degree angle. The upper arm extends back so the elbow is placed directly under the withers when viewed from the side. Legs above the pasterns are straight. Pasterns are slightly sloping. The elbows are held close to the body.

Pasterns: Seen from the front, the pasterns continue the vertical line of the forearm. Seen in profile, they are slightly slanting.

Dewclaws: Declaws may be removed.

Feet: Oval shaped.

Toes: Well arched.

Pads: Well cushioned dark pads.

Nails: Very hard black nails.

HINDQUARTERS

Viewed from behind, the hind legs must follow from the point of the buttock bone to the ground in a perfectly vertical line. The legs are parallel to each other.

COAT

Hair: There are two hair types. One on the body, the other on the ears and tail. Long flocks of wavy open ringlets, which appear as crinkles, are all over the body from the top line to the feet. Hair never lies flat. The hair is longer and silkier on the tail and ears. It is shorter on the muzzle. Coat texture ranges from course to smooth; coat curl ranges from loose to tight. Correct coat is essential in the breed.

COLOR

Pure white. Young dogs often have a champagne tone on the ears until 18 months of age which is perfectly acceptable. Disqualifying faults are any color other than white, or patches and flecks of any color anywhere on the head or body; this does not apply to the champagne tone on ears or body of puppies under 18 months of age.

GAIT

Movement at a trot is free, effortless, and smooth with a noble and distinguished head carriage. In profile, the forelegs and hindlegs extend equally with an easy reach and drive that maintain a steady topline. Moving away, the hindquarters travel with moderate width between them and the foot pads can be seen.

TEMPERAMENT

Happy yet calm and serene. Not very active. Extremely bonded to his master and his entourage.

DISQUALIFICATION

- Complete lack of pigmentation of the eye rims
- Complete lack pigment of the nose.
- Nose of any color other than black
- Overshot bite
- Undershot bite
- Tail less
- Any other color than white; exceptions made for champagne tone in puppies under 18 months of age
- Patches and flecks of any color on the head or body; exceptions made for champagne tone in puppies under 18 months of age.

The foregoing description is that of the ideal Bolognese. Any deviation from the above-described dog must be penalized to the extent of the deviation.

Approved May 18, 2023

Effective June 26, 2024