

JUDGING THE PUG

By Donnelle Richards

I have had the pleasure of raising Pugs since 1965, and judging them since 1999. As I watch Pug judging around the country I would like to tell judges about our wonderful breed and how best to judge them.

There are many aspects to judging a pug:

1. The correct head is very important. Dr. Harry Smith once told me, "When judging Pugs, identify and prioritize the ones with the correct head."
2. A correct Pug is square and should appear cobby (the standard says, "Multum in Parvo"—meaning "a lot in a little").
3. Also important is a level topline, a curly tail, a slightly undershot bite (reverse scissors) and sound movement.

The Pug must have a large, round head with large, globular, dark eyes. The head of a Pug usually matures slowly and will not reach full size until after 2 years of age. A lot of pugs are shown as puppies, and therefore may not have as large a head as you might like. But dogs in Best of Breed should have a large heads with good wrinkle.

Pugs are a square breed (dog or bitch). Never too long in body nor too short on leg. A fat Pug is just that, FAT! Fat will not make him any more square in body. We measure from point of shoulder to point of rump and ground to top of withers. Pugs have almost no tuckup. Straight front legs when viewed from the front. There may be some muscling on the outside of the front legs. You may see some rather bowed front legs and that is what we don't want.

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The front legs are set well under when viewed from the side.

The standard says 14 to 18 pounds for a dog or bitch, but many of the Pugs in the ring today weigh over 20 pounds and are still nice and cobby. This is generally contributed to better diets than when the standard was first written.

The rather small ear should reach only to the middle of the eye when alert. There are two different types of ears with preference given to the button ear. The other is a rose ear (folded, but not like the Bulldog).

The dark eyes are set so that the middle of the eye is at the top of the nose

and the bottom of the alert ear. A light eye gives a much harsher expression to the face and they should be penalized to the degree of the fault.

Examining the Bite

The bite should be slightly undershot (reverse scissors) but there must be a chin—not mush-mouthed.

To examine, cup your fingers behind the Pug's ears. This gives you a good look at the beautiful wrinkles on the head as you to feel the head. As Pugs have a lot of skin on the head it is important to feel the bones underneath. So starting with your thumbs on the top

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Figs. 1-3: Examining the bite of a Pug. It is quick and easy.

“AFTER YOU HAVE FELT THE WIDTH OF MUZZLE (and you can feel for a wry bite also at this time), SLIDE YOUR THUMB TO THE FRONT OF THE LIPS...”

of the head slide them down and feel the good width of skull (see Figure 1) and on down to the muzzle which ideally would be in line with the outside of the eyes, not generally seen but should be at least to the middle of the eyes (see Figure 2). After you have felt the width of muzzle (and you can feel for a wry bite also at this time), slide your thumb to the front of the lips (see Figure 3). If the tip of your thumb bends forward slightly you will have a correct bite.

Your examination of the head is now over. Some judges prefer to judge the body of the pug first and come back to the head last—that is fine.

The neck of the Pug should be of sufficient length to hold the large head proudly. We do not want to see the head attached directly to the body with no neck. The straight topline should remain level moving or standing. A young puppy may be slightly higher standing, but should level out when moving.

The standard calls for a high set curly tail curled over the hip; however, you will see tails curled tight directly over the back and this certainly is acceptable. A double curled tail is perfection. A Pug with the tail down when moving is an unhappy Pug and should not win that day's competition.

The Pug has a double tracking gait with a slight convergence as speed increases.

This does not mean that a Pug should be run so fast that he single tracks, but rather that at a normal speed he will slightly converge but the front and rear legs should be doing the same thing. If you look at the rear going away, you should see only the rear and when coming at you only the front. This would be a true double track. I ask that the handler take the Pug down and back on as loose a lead as possible so that I can see the gait. If the Pug is strung up on a tight lead you will not see the proper double track.

The last thing you want to look at for your consideration in the ring is color. In 2008, we added a disqualification to our standard to say only Fawn or Black colors would be allowed to be shown. This was added to clarify that we only want these two colors in the ring. However, Fawn does consist of many different shades and they may have

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black hairs mixed in. Smuttiness in the Fawn coloring is just a minor fault. When the standard says clear color that is to say there is a clear delineation between the fawn and the black of the mask and ears on the Fawn dogs. Black Pugs are just that—black. What we don't want are Blue, Brindle or White Pugs—all of which have been seen around. By saying only Fawn or Black, this should eliminate any other off color. Just remember that Fawn does come with black hairs mixed in. Blacks sometime sunburn too. A small amount of white on the chest is acceptable in the Pug.

Judges of junior showmanship should ask the junior, "Please show me the bite and mouth as you do in the conformation ring" and I expect the junior with the Pug to explain (politely) that we do not open the mouth of the Pug and then proceed to show how it is done.

I hope that I have been helpful in getting you on the right track to enjoy judging our wonderful breed. We are very proud that our Pugs can say, 'Look at me' when you are judging them and you will laugh right along with all of us.

Remember: A PUG IS SQUARE WITH A LARGE ROUND HEAD AND CURLY TAIL. ■

BIO

My family raised Samoyeds when I was growing up. One day my father brought a pug to stay with us for awhile as he was showing it for a client. I fell in love and decided this was the breed for me. I showed several different breeds in junior showmanship while I was growing up, but never forgot the breed I wanted.

My husband, Del, and I got our first pug, Kim Su of Toyah Dell, CD, in 1965. This little black girl produced our first homebred Champion, CH. Donn-Del's Kyling, CD. We have owned and co-owned several different breeds throughout the years, but will always have a pug. Our current pug, "Howdy" is the result of frozen semen from CH Glory's Rowdy Moran, CD x CH Riversong's Miss Molly. He is the love our lives. He has his CD degree and 2 legs on his CDX in obedience and his RE degree in Rally. I was an AKC licensed professional handler until

I began judging in 1999. As a judge, I am approved to judge all Hound breeds, all Toy breeds, and all Non-sporting breeds, plus Samoyeds, Alaskan Malamutes, Siberian Huskies, all Miscellaneous breeds, Best In Show, and Junior Showmanship all breed. I have judged foreign assignments in Germany, Taiwan, Australia and in China.

I have been a member of the Pug Dog Club of America since 1970. As a member of the Pug Dog Club of America I am currently on the Board of Directors and I am the Judges Education Chairman. I was also the chairman for the National Specialty in 2008 and again in 2012. I am a founding member of the Northern California Pug Club, founded in 1988 and a lifetime member of the Gavilan Kennel Club, our local all-breed dog club.

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