



GROUP III: WORKING DOGS

CANE CORSO

RECOGNIZED: N/A

Effective: January 2007

The breed standard outlines the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance of a breed, and ensures that a dog can carry out its original purpose. Breeders and judges should be mindful to prioritize dogs that are healthy and sound in both mind and body.

ORIGIN & PURPOSE

The Cane Corso is the direct descendant of the ancient Roman Molosser dogs. In the past, the breed was common throughout Italy, but is now found in the provinces of Foggia and Bari. His name derives from the Latin “cohors”, which means “protector, guardian of the farms, courtyards and enclosed property. The breed first appeared in the sixteenth century and was used for hunting and guard duties.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Medium- to large-sized dog. Robust and sturdy, nevertheless elegant. Lean, with powerful long muscles.

TEMPERAMENT

Guardian of property, family and livestock; extremely agile and responsive. In the past, it has been used for herding cattle and hunting big game.

SIZE

Height at the withers: Dogs, 64-68 cm (25.25-26.75 in); bitches, 60-64 cm (23.5-25.25 in)

Tolerance of 2 cm (0.75 in) more or less.

Weight: Dogs, 42 to 50 kg (92.5 to 110.25 lb); bitches, 38 to 45 kg (83.75 to 99.25 lb)

Important proportions: The length of the head reaches 36% of the height at withers. The dog is somewhat longer than high.

COAT

Short (not smooth), shiny, very thick with a light undercoat.

COLOUR

Black, lead grey, slate, light fawn (yellowish), stag red, brindle; black mask is present in fawn-coloured dogs.

HEAD

Large and typically molossoid. The upper longitudinal axes of the skull and muzzle converge slightly. **Skull:** Wide; at the zygomatic arch its width is equal to or greater than its length. Convex in front, it becomes fairly flat behind the forehead as far as the occiput. The mediofrontal furrow is visible. **Stop:** Marked. **Nose:** Black and large with ample, open nostrils on the same line as the nasal bridge. **Muzzle:** Noticeably shorter than the skull (ratio : skull 62 to 64%, muzzle 36 to 38%), strong, extremely square, with a flat front face and parallel nearly as wide as long lateral surfaces. The profile of the nasal bridge is rectilinear. **Lips:** The upper lips hang moderately and cover the mandible, so that the lower profile of the muzzle is determined by the lips. **Jaw/teeth:** Jaw very large, thick and curved. Lightly undershot. Level and scissors bite acceptable. **Eyes:** Medium-sized, ovoid, looking directly forward, slightly protruding. Eyelids close fitting. Colour of the iris as dark as possible, depending on the colour of the coat.

Expression keen and attentive. **Ears:** Triangular, drooping, with a large set on high above the zygomatic arch. May be cropped in the shape of an equilateral triangle.

NECK

Strong, fairly thin, muscular, as long as the head.

FOREQUARTERS

Shoulder: Long, oblique, very muscular. **Upper arm:** Strong. **Forearm:** Straight, very strong. **Carpal joint/pasterns:** Elastic. **Forefeet:** Cat-feet.

BODY

The body is somewhat longer than the height at the withers. Sturdily built, but not squat. **Withers:** Pronounced, rising above the level of the croup. **Back:** Rectilinear, very muscular and firm. **Loins:** Short and solid. **Croup:** Long, wide, slightly inclined. **Chest:** Well developed in three dimensions, reaches to the elbow.

HINDQUARTERS

Upper thigh: Long, wide, posteriorly convex. **Lower thigh:** Thin, strong. **Hocks:** Moderately angulated. **Metatarsals:** Thick and narrow. **Hind feet:** slightly less compact than the forefeet.

TAIL

Tail set is an extension of the backline. It is thick at the root with not much tapering at the tip. When not in action carried low, otherwise horizontal or slightly higher than back, not to be carried in a vertical position, it may be docked at the fourth vertebrae. In the case of natural tails, the tip reaches the hock but not below. Carried low, it is neither broken nor kinked but supple. Hanging when the dog is in repose; generally carried level with the back or slightly above the level of the back when the dog is in action, without curving over the back or being curled.

FAULTS

Any departure from the aforementioned ideals shall be considered faulty to the degree in which it interferes with the health and well-being of the dog and the breed's traditional purpose.

- Accentuated parallelism or very marked converging of the axes of the muzzle and the skull; converging side lines of the muzzle
- Pronounced and disturbing undershot mouth
- Nose: Partial depigmentation
- Tail: Ring tail, tail in vertical position
- Size: Oversize or undersize
- Movement: Continuously ambling

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Axes of the muzzle and the skull diverging
- Overshot mouth
- Bridge of nose resolutely hollow, ram's nose
- Nose: Total depigmentation
- Eyes: Partial and bilateral palpebral depigmentation, walleye, bilateral strabismus
- Tail: A natural tail that is atrophied or a natural tail that is knotted and laterally deviated or twisted
- Hair: Semi-long, smooth, fringed
- Colour: All colours not indicated in the standard; white patches too large

Note: Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.