

Conducting Oral Exams – Prepared by the CDJA

The preparation of this CDJA guide to the conduct of oral exams in breeds approved by the Canadian Kennel Club was inspired by the similar guide published by the American Kennel Club (http://images.akc.org/pdf/events/conformation/Oral_exams.pdf). To paraphrase the introduction to that guide: The proficient judge alters his or her examination technique from breed to breed based on the priorities as defined by the breed standards. To do so requires interpretation as to what the standard is attempting to convey to the judge. Close inspection of a breed's standard will determine the appropriate oral exam to conduct when judging that breed, which is an essential component of the breed specific exam.

Oral exams can be generally divided into four (4) categories which individually or in combination will constitute the correct oral exam for a breed:

1. **Bite** – checking the front
2. **Teeth** – checking the front and sides
3. **Mouth** – involves opening the mouth to count teeth or check pigment. Always used in combination with a “bite” or “teeth” exam depending on the breed
4. **Thumb** – Thumb exam is used for smaller, short muzzled breeds that call for an undershot jaw

1. **Bite** – This exam is proper when the standard only refers to the alignment of the bite (scissors, level, undershot or overshot) as a preference, fault or disqualification. This procedure also complies with the examination procedure required by the CKC in those cases where a standard does not mention teeth or mouth (e.g. *Irish Wolfhound*) or where the standard includes language that references all teeth in a general way (e.g. *Teeth – white, sound and strong or even and set squarely*).

This requires the judge separating the front of the lips to display the meshing of the incisors and canines or asking the exhibitor to “Show the bite, please”.

2. **Teeth** – This exam is required for any breed whose standard references missing teeth or dentition. This includes any disqualification for missing teeth **other than M3s**, or any reference to full dentition or a full complement of teeth as a preference or fault due a lack thereof.

This requires the judge to separate the front of the lips to display the meshing of the incisors and canines AND the flews on each side of the mouth, so the judge may observe the pre-molars and molars on the upper and lower jaw for each or asking the exhibitor to “Show the teeth, please”.

3. **Mouth** – Required for any breed that includes a standard disqualification (DQ) for pigmentation or missing teeth **that requires checking the M3s**. If the M3s are excluded from the disqualification by the standard (e.g. *Leonbergers*), opening the mouth is not required. It is used in combination with the bite and/or teeth exam depending on the language of the standard.

Breed standards that include a DQ for pigmentation of the mouth but do not reference missing teeth or full dentition would require examining the “bite” and then opening the mouth to check for pigment of the mouth and/or tongue. An example would be the Saint Bernard, whose standard calls for a scissors or even bite with the scissors bite being preferred but also states that a black roof to the mouth is desirable.

Breeds for which the standard includes a DQ for missing teeth will require that the front and sides be displayed in addition to opening the mouth so the judge can effectively observe the molars. The judge to ask the exhibitor to ‘Open the mouth, please’.

4. **Thumb exam** – Involves the judge running the flat of his or her thumb outside of the top lip OR inside the lips of the dog to feel for the proper alignment of the jaw. This procedure is appropriate in smaller, undershot breeds with short muzzles. This is the preferred means to conduct the oral exam for these breeds as it is not necessary to open the mouth. It is recommended that the thumb exam be conducted at the end of the individual examination. Examples of where this procedure is used would be the Japanese Chin, Pugs and Pekingese.

Please keep in mind that Conformation Show Rule 4.4.1 calls for dentition to be displayed by the exhibitor but allows the judge to proceed if the dentition is not automatically displayed by the exhibitor. In practice, the exhibitor should be asked to “show the bite” or “show the teeth” depending on the requirements of the breed standard. The exhibitor may additionally be asked to “open the mouth” when necessary to complete the oral exam. In breeds where this is appropriate, the judge will personally conduct a thumb exam.

GROUP ONE

BREED	Front	Side	Open	Thumb	DQ
Barbet	F				DQ
Braque français (Gascogne)	F				
Braque français (Pyrénées)	F				
Griffon (Wire-Haired Pointing)	F	S			DQ
Pointer	F				
Pointer (German Long-Haired)	F				
Pointer (German Short-Haired)	F	S			
Pointer (German Wire-Haired)	F				
Pudelpointer	F				
Retriever (Chesapeake Bay)	F				DQ
Retriever (Curly-Coated)	F				
Retriever (Flat-Coated)	F				
Retriever (Golden)	F	S			DQ
Retriever (Labrador)	F				
Retriever (Nova Scotia Duck Tolling)	F	S			DQ
Setter (English)	F	S			
Setter (Gordon)	F				
Setter(Irish)	F				
Setter (Irish Red & White)	F				
Spaniel (American Cocker)	F				
Spaniel (American Water)	F				
Spaniel (Blue Picardy)	F				
Spaniel (Brittany)	F				
Spaniel (Clumber)	F				
Spaniel (English Cocker)	F				
Spaniel (English Springer)	F				
Spaniel (Field)	F				
Spaniel (French)	F				DQ
Spaniel (Irish Water)	F				
Spaniel (Sussex)	F				
Spaniel (Welsh Springer)	F				
Spinone Italiano	F				DQ
Vizsla (Smooth)	F				
Vizsla (Wire-Haired)	F				DQ
Weimaraner	F	S			
Braque d'Auvergne	F	S	O		DQ
Kleiner Munsterlander	F	S			DQ
Lagotto Romagnolo	F				DQ

GROUP TWO

BREED	Front	Side	Open	Thumb	DQ
Afghan Hound	F				
Azawakh	F	S			
Basenji	F				
Basset Hound	F				
Beagle	F				
Bloodhound	F				
Borzoï	F	S			
Coonhound (Black & Tan)	F				
Dachshunds (Miniature & Standard – all coat types)	F				
Deerhound (Scottish)	F				
Drever	F				
Finnish Spitz	F	S			
Foxhound (American)	F				
Foxhound (English)	F				DQ
Greyhound	F				
Harrier	F				
Ibizan Hound	F	S			
Irish Wolfhound	F				
Norrbottenspets	F				
Norwegian Elkhound	F				
Norwegian Lundehund	F				
Otterhound	F				
Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen	F				
Pharaoh Hound	F				
Rhodesian Ridgeback	F				
Saluki	F				
Shikoku	F				DQ
Whippet	F				DQ

GROUP THREE

BREED	Front	Side	Open	Thumb	DQ
Akita	F		O		DQ
Alaskan Malamute	F				
Bernese Mountain Dog	F	S			
Boxer	F	S			
Bullmastiff	F				
Canaan Dog	F	S			
Canadian Eskimo Dog	F				DQ
Doberman Pinscher	F	S	O		DQ
Entlebucher Mountain Dog	F				
Eurasier	F	S			DQ
Great Dane	F	S			
Great Pyrenees	F				
Greater Swiss Mountain Dog	F	S			DQ
Greenland Dog	F				
Hovawart	F	S	O		DQ
Karelian Bear Dog	F	S			DQ
Komondor	F				
Kuvasz	F	S			
Leonberger	F	S			DQ
Mastiff	F				
Neapolitan Mastiff	F	S			DQ
Newfoundland	F				
Portuguese Water Dog	F				DQ
Rottweiler	F	S	O		DQ
Saint Bernard	F		O		
Samoyed	F				
Schnauzer (Giant)	F	S			DQ
Schnauzer (Standard)	F	S			
Siberian Husky	F	S			
Anatolian Shepherd Dog	F	S			
Black Russian Terrier	F	S	O		DQ
Cane Corso	F				DQ
Dogue de Bordeaux	F				DQ
Tibetan Mastiff	F				DQ

GROUP FOUR

BREED	Front	Side	Open	Thumb	DQ
Airedale Terrier	F				
American Staffordshire Terrier	F				
Australian Terrier	F				
Bedlington Terrier	F	S			
Border Terrier	F				
Bull Terrier	F	S			
Bull Terrier (Miniature)	F	S			
Cairn Terrier	F				
Cesky Terrier	F	S			
Dandie Dinmont Terrier	F				
Fox Terrier (Smooth)	F				DQ
Fox Terrier (Wire)	F				
Irish Terrier	F				DQ
Kerry Blue Terrier	F				
Lakeland Terrier	F				DQ
Manchester Terrier	F				
Norfolk Terrier	F				
Norwich Terrier	F				
Schnauzer (Miniature)	F				
Scottish Terrier	F				
Sealyham Terrier	F				
Skye Terrier	F				
Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier	F				DQ
Staffordshire Bull Terrier	F				
Welsh Terrier	F				DQ
West Highland White Terrier	F	S			
Glen of Imaal	F				
Parson Russell Terrier	F				
Rat Terrier	F				
Russell Terrier	F				DQ

GROUP FIVE

BREED	Front	Side	Open	Thumb	DQ
Affenpinscher	F				
American Eskimo Dog (Toy)	F	S			
Cavalier King Charles Spaniel	F				
Chihuahua (Long & Short Coat)	F				
Chinese Crested Dog	F				
Hairless Powderpuff	F	S			
English Toy Spaniel				T	
Griffon (Brussels)				T	DQ
Havanese	F	S			DQ
Italian Greyhound	F				
Japanese Chin	F				
Maltese	F				
Miniature Pinscher	F				
Papillon	F				
Pekingese				T	
Pomeranian	F				
Poodle (Toy)	F	S			
Pug				T	DQ
Silky Terrier	F				
Toy Fox Terrier	F	S			DQ
Toy Manchester Terrier	F				
Xoloitzcuintli (Toy)	F				
Hairless Coated	F	S			
Yorkshire Terrier	F				
Coton de Tulear	F	S			DQ
Russkiy Toy	F				DQ

GROUP SIX

BREED	Front	Side	Open	Thumb	DQ
American Eskimo Dog (Miniature & Standard)	F	S			
Bichon Frise	F	S			
Boston Terrier	F				
Bulldog	F				
Chinese Shar-Pei	F		O		DQ
Chow Chow	F		O		DQ
Dalmatian	F				DQ
French Bulldog	F				DQ
German Pinscher	F	S			
Japanese Spitz	F				
Keeshond	F				
Lhasa Apso	F	S			
Lowchen	F				
Poodle (Miniature & Standard)	F	S			
Schipperke	F				
Shiba Inu	F	S			DQ
Shih Tzu	F				DQ
Tibetan Spaniel	F	S			
Tibetan Terrier	F				
Xoloitzcuinli (Miniature & Standard) Hairless Coated	F				
	F	S			

GROUP SEVEN

BREED	Front	Side	Open	Thumb	DQ
Australian Cattle Dog	F				DQ
Australian Shepherd	F	S			DQ
Australian Stumpy Tail Cattle Dog	F				
Bearded Collie	F	S			
Belgian Shepherd Dog	F	S			
Berger Picard	F	S	O		DQ
Berger des Pyrenees	F	S			DQ
Bouvier des Flandres	F				
Briard	F				
Collie (Rough & Smooth)	F				
German Shepherd Dog	F	S			
Iceland Sheepdog	F	S			
Norwegian Buhund	F				
Old English Sheepdog	F				
Polish Lowland Sheepdog	F				
Puli	F				
Schapendoes	F				
Shetland Sheepdog	F	S			
Swedish Vallhund	F				
Welsh Corgi (Cardigan)	F				
Welsh Corgi (Pembroke)	F				
Australian Kelpie	F				
Beauceron	F	S	O		DQ
Border Collie	F				
Finnish Lapphund	F				DQ
Lancashire Heeler	F				
Miniature American Shepherd	F	S			DQ
Mudi	F	S			DQ
Portuguese Sheepdog	F				DQ
Spanish Water Dog	F				DQ
Tatra Sheepdog	F	S	O		DQ