

JUDGING THE BOSTON TERRIER

By Ken Roux

Judging a Boston Terrier requires a good depth of knowledge of the standard and an eye for correct breed type. It is not a bully breed, isn't a toy nor fine-boned. It is somewhere in the middle. *A Boston Terrier should be a sturdy dog never appearing spindly or coarse. Fault: Blocky or chunky in appearance.*

The Boston Terrier standard is one of the few breed standards that offer a scale of points to assist in judging. It simplifies the components and helps to develop a good grasp on the breed. This is one of the most significant features in the standard and is too often forgotten. After examining the scale of points it becomes apparent the Boston Terrier is a "head" breed first and foremost.

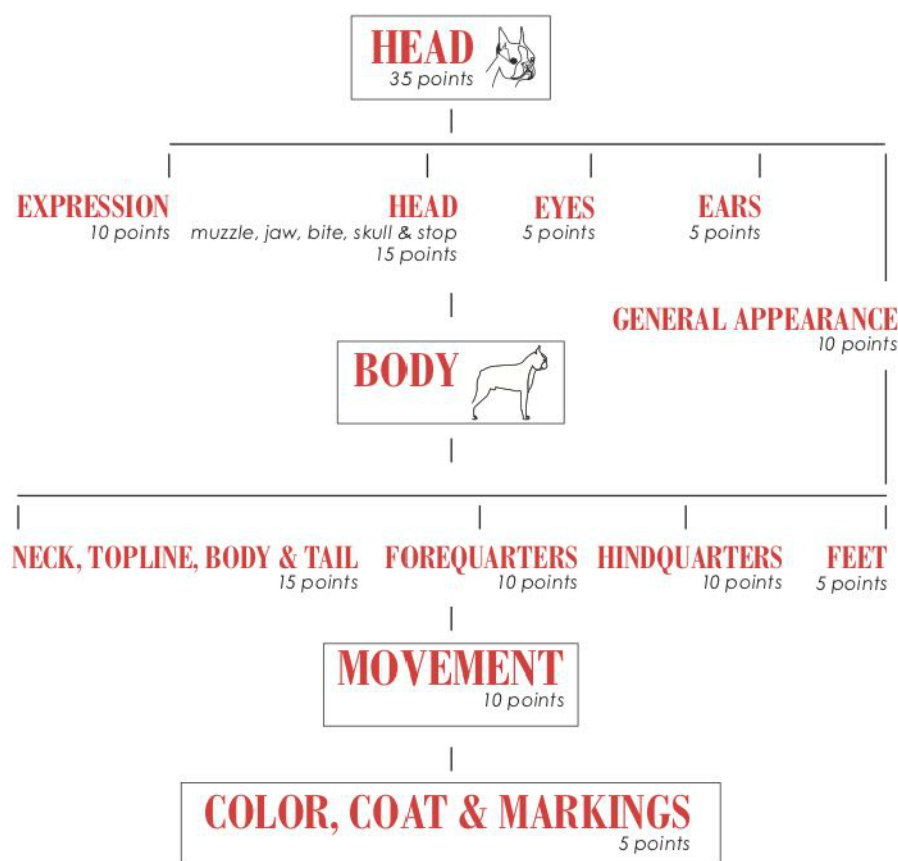
SCALE OF POINTS

General Appearance.....	10
Expression.....	10
Head (Muzzle, Jaw, Bite, Skull & Stop).....	15
Eyes.....	5
Ears.....	5
Neck, Topline, Body & Tail.....	15
Forequarters.....	10
Hindquarters	10
Feet.....	5
Color, Coat & Markings.....	5
Gait.....	10
Total	100

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Eyes blue in color or any trace of blue.
- Dudley nose.
- Docked tail.
- Solid black, solid brindle, or solid seal without required markings. All other colors are a disqualification.

Without type as the priority, Boston Terriers are a hard breed to judge. If the only focus is on movement, a good down and back or clean go-around, a common dog will often win. An ignorant judge will place the dogs on the go around. Movement has some importance in the breed



Keep a good grasp on the priorities of the breed and how the standard by following the prioritization chart above.

but it is a low priority for the Boston Terrier. **Final consideration between specimens should always be re-tabled for head evaluations.** The Boston Terrier is neither a sporting, working or hound dog. The Boston Terrier is a companion. A Boston Terrier better look up with a beautiful head and expression from the couch.

Several weeks back I asked a judge the priorities in which they were placing the dogs. Without delay, I interrupted and asked, "Isn't the Boston Terrier a head breed?" She rolled her eyes and said, "If it peeks its head over a fence and looks like a Boston, then that's a good enough head for me." That is not the correct way to judge a Boston Terrier. Judging without head type as the highest consideration is an injustice to the breed.

The head of a Boston Terrier is the top of the priority chart. What makes a good

head? As a judge, I put the most weight on the head, eyes and expression. Why? The standard is crystal clear on this. In the standard it states, *Expression is the most important characteristic of the breed.* This phrase alone sets the precedents in judging the Boston Terrier.

The prominent part expression is the eyes. The standard states the eyes are *wide apart, large and round, dark in color.* I would estimate less than 20 percent of the dogs I see in the ring have the desired eye described in the standard. When examining the eyes focus on a round opening. Any trace of blue in the eye is a disqualification; look carefully to be certain there are no hidden blue flecks. There should be very little, if any, white showing in the eyes as well.

Ears are also an important component of expression. They should be small, carried erect and can be natural or cropped

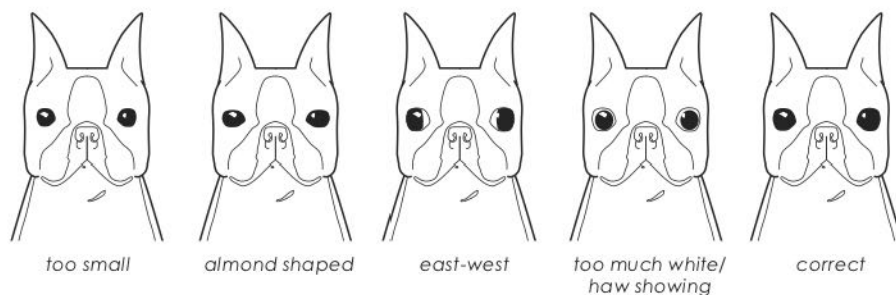
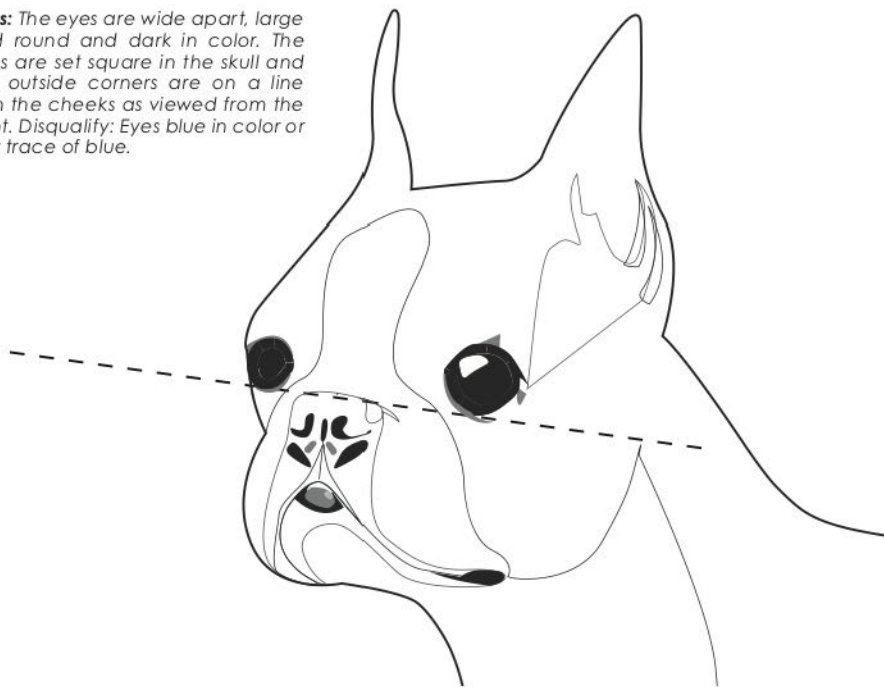
to conform to the shape of the dog's head. They should be situated as close to the corners of the skull as possible. The standard says the Boston Terrier is to appear lively and highly intelligent. The ears reveal a lot when looking for a dog to fit this description. An incorrect ear placement and shape will detract from the desired appearance that is called for in the standard. Be impartial to cropped or natural ears. Whether they are cropped or natural, they should be set high on the skull and at a position of 11 and 1, not lower. They should be in proportion to the shape and size of the head.

The muzzle, jaw, bite, skull and stop total 15 points in the standard. The skull is square, flat on top and free from wrinkles. Do not confuse cushion for wrinkles; they are not the same. Cushion is a term used to describe the fill under the eyes and muzzle area often times confused as a wrinkle or crease under the eye. Wrinkles on the skull and muzzle should be penalized, but cushion should be rewarded, as it is extremely difficult to breed for and is a rare find in the breed today. The muzzle is short, square, wide and deep and in proportion to the skull. It is imperative to remember the muzzle area should be shorter in length than in width or depth; never should the muzzle exceed one-third the length of skull. The nose on a Boston Terrier should be solid black with a well-defined line between the nostrils. Nostrils that are constricted or wide are to be faulted. A butterfly nose is undesirable while a dudley nose is a disqualification. Be sure to know difference. The jaw should be broad and square with short regular teeth. A wry jaw or teeth and tongue showing when the mouth is closed are serious faults. The bite of a Boston Terrier is to be even or sufficiently undershot to square up the muzzle. At no time should the bite be overshot. The muzzle is short and wide; too many specimens in the breed ring today are long-muzzled and give the appearance of being pinched. The flews or jowls of a Boston Terrier shouldn't be pendulous; they should have a clean, tight lip line.

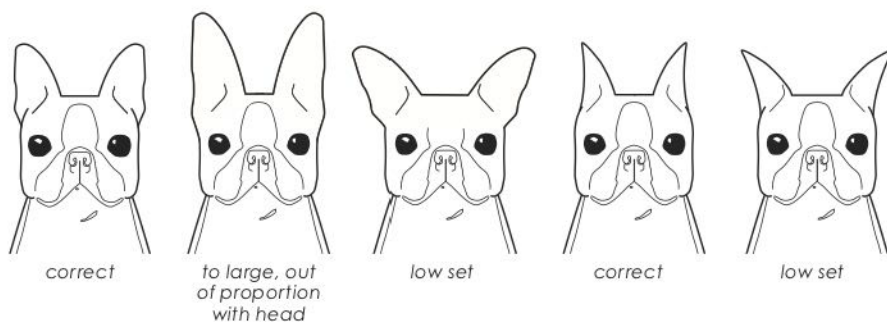
Although no points are assigned to the cheeks of a Boston Terrier, it is important to note the square look that is desired requires a flat cheek line.

The standard allocates 15 points to the neck, top line, body and tail.

Eyes: The eyes are wide apart, large and round and dark in color. The eyes are set square in the skull and the outside corners are on a line with the cheeks as viewed from the front. Disqualify: Eyes blue in color or any trace of blue.



Eyes: Although eyes are only worth 5 points in the standard, they also attribute to correct expression and general appearance. The standard states, The ideal Boston terrier expression is alert and kind, indicating a high degree of intelligence. This is a most important characteristic of the breed.



Ears: The ears are small, carried erect, either natural or cropped to conform to the shape of the head and situated as near to the corners of the skull as possible.

The length of neck must display an image of balance to the total dog. It is slightly arched, carrying the head gracefully and setting neatly into the shoulders. A short or ewe-neck is undesirable.

The topline is level and the rump curves slightly to the set-on of the tail. A proper topline is a rare find. There should be no dip at the withers or sway or roach, which are serious body faults.

The back is just short enough to square the body. This gives a striking square outline. The chest should be deep with good width and the ribs should be well sprung, carried back into the loins. A slab-sided rib is a serious fault.

The tail is set on low, short, fine and tapering, straight or screw and must not be carried above the horizontal. Although the standard allows for a very short tail,



“...the required markings are for the breed,
**A WHITE MUZZLE BAND, WHITE
 BLAZE BETWEEN THE EYES, AND
 WHITE FORECHEST. THAT’S IT.”**

Boston Terriers should have a tail. A docked tail is disqualification.

The forequarters and hindquarters make up 10 points. This is a moderate breed. The front is well laid back. The forelegs are straight with short, strong pasterns. The feet are small, round and compact. Four toes should touch the ground. High outer toes are a deformity. The rear is moderately angled.

The Boston Terrier is a double tracking breed at any speed and shouldn't be run around the ring. The Boston Terrier should never move like that of a working dog or a sporting dog. There will be no rolling, paddling or weaving when gaited. They should not have a hackney gait. The legs should not converge. Crossing over in the front or rear should be heavily faulted.

Color, coat and markings are often a big topic when discussing the Boston Terrier. Keep in perspective that five points are assigned to this area, although one could argue it also pertains to the general appearance. When judging markings for the Boston Terrier, the most important

thing is to understand what the required markings are for the breed, a white muzzle band, white blaze between the eyes, and white forechest. That's it. Any specimen that does not possess these minimal markings are to be disqualified. After required markings the primary focus should be on type and structure. ■

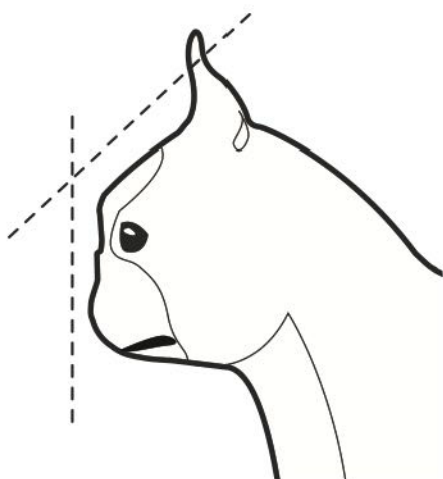
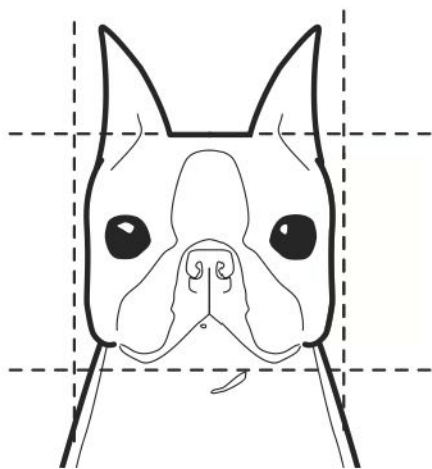
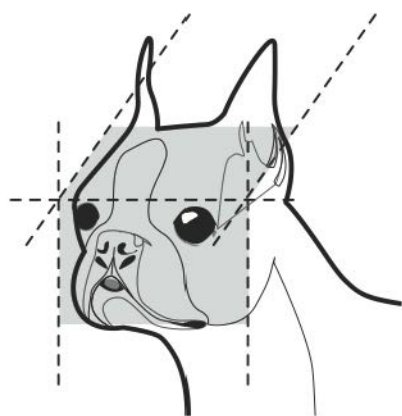
BIO

Ken Roux resides in a small rural town west of Chicago known to most as Ronald Reagan's hometown of Dixon, Illinois.

Roux is an American Kennel Club judge for Bichon Frise, Boston Terriers, Bulldogs, Dalmatians, French Bulldogs and Poodles. He has spent his life with Boston Terriers and Bulldogs. Since 1982, Roux has been breeding and exhibiting Boston Terriers; in the early 1990s he has been showing and breeding bulldogs.

Roux has finished many champions in both breeds but his expertise lies within Boston Terriers. His dogs are well-known all over the world for their correct breed type. His dogs are known for their classic head piece. Many of Ken's dogs have won the breed Westminster, Eukanuba and specialty shows throughout the country. In the last 20 years, many dogs from his breeding program have placed highly in the top 10 breed statistics as well.

Coming from a background in chemistry and genetics, Roux is very knowledgeable in breeding and judging dogs. In addition, growing up on a dairy farm with cows and other farm animals and attending the school of hard knocks has helped him understand structure, anatomy and how form and function go hand-in-hand. His seminars are well attended all over the country and he is a valuable mentor of both Boston Terriers and Bulldogs. He can be reached via email at kensbt@comcast.net.



Skull & cheek planes



Required markings