

Head



The head properties are of great importance. When considered in proportion to the size of the dog the head is inclined to lightness and never appears massive. A heavy-headed dog lacks the necessary bright, alert, full-of-sense look that contributes so greatly to expression. Both in front and profile view the head bears a general resemblance to a well-blunted lean wedge, being smooth and clean in outline and nicely balanced in proportion. On the sides it tapers gradually and smoothly from the ears to the end of the black nose, without being flared out in backskull (cheeky) or pinched in muzzle (snipy). In profile view the top of the backskull and the top of the muzzle lie in two approximately parallel, straight planes of equal length, divided by a very slight but perceptible stop or break. A mid-point between the inside corners of the eyes (which is the center of a correctly placed stop) is the center of balance in length of head. The end of the smooth, well-rounded muzzle is blunt but not square. The underjaw is strong, clean-cut and the depth of skull from the brow to the under part of the jaw is not excessive. The teeth are of good size, meeting in a scissors bite. Overshot or undershot jaws are undesirable, the latter being more severely penalized. There is a very slight prominence of the eyebrows. The backskull is flat, without receding either laterally or backward and the occipital bone is not highly peaked. The proper width of backskull necessarily depends upon the combined length of skull and muzzle and the width of the backskull is less than its length. Thus the correct width varies with the individual and is dependent upon the extent to which it is supported by length of muzzle. Because of the importance of the head characteristics, prominent head faults are very severely penalized.



Just as in the judging of Collies in the show ring, one must start evaluating the puppies in a litter by considering first the head. The Collie Standard is based upon the consideration of the head first because so much of the beauty of the breed lies in the closeness to perfection of the head qualities."

Gustave Sigritz, Cherrivale



“The Collie is a herding dog, and we want a sound animal which is built right and moves effortlessly. However, the Collie is called a head breed for a reason. The Standard is emphatic that head properties and expression are important, and prominent head faults are to be severely penalized - so to evaluate the Collie, you must pay attention to head and expression.”

Marcia Keller, Marnus

“When judging the Collie, or any breed for that matter, the overall picture, type or outline is of primary importance. Being able to understand how the parts go together is more important than any one part. Having said that, it is important to note that the Collie is a breed with major emphasis on head characteristics. The head is what sets the Collie apart from other dogs. The round, smooth muzzle, flat backskull, almond eyes and semi-erect ears combine in a unique expression, which is initially important.”

George Horn, GinGeor

“It follows, then, that judges must emphasize head and expression qualities in their evaluation. The Collie Standard insists that Collie judges be ‘head hunters.’ Alva Rosenberg understood this perfectly; to watch him go over a head was no different than watching Bobbee Roos or Mrs. Long do so. Unfortunately, today few who adjudicate our breed know how to examine the head properly or take the time to compare expression.”

Dr. William K. Brokken, MD, Foremost

“All the parts of the Collie head are important to the whole. The good breeders of today, and the good judge, will not tolerate extreme faults, or defects, in head structure. The best heads are those which belong to the best producers, and these are the specimens we are seeking to select in the show ring. The head is the feature which distinguishes the superior from the ordinary. In no other breed of dogs is the head as important in evaluating superiority as it is in Collies.”

Trudy B. Mangels, Brandwyne

