

# Cane Corso AKC Standard

## General Appearance

The Cane Corso is an ancient Italian breed, medium-large sized molossoid. Sturdy, with a strong skeleton, muscular and athletic. It moves with considerable ease and elegance. It has always been a property watchdog and hunter of difficult game such as the wild boar.

## Size, Proportion, Substance

A muscular, balanced, large-boned dog, rectangular in proportion. The length of the dog, measured from the point of the shoulder to the point of buttock, is 11% greater than the height of the dog measured from the highest point of the shoulder to the ground.

**Height:** Dogs: 25 to 27.5 inches, Bitches: 23.5 to 26 inches.

**Weight:** Proportionate to height.

## Head

Molossoid, large, its total length reaches 36% of the height at the withers. Planes of the skull and muzzle are slightly convergent; they are not parallel. The circumference of the head measured at the cheek bones is more than twice the total length of the head; skin is firm and smooth.

**Skull:** Viewed from the front is wide and slightly curved, width is equal to the length. From the side a prominent arch begins above the eyes and then flattens backwards towards the occiput; viewed from the top it has a square appearance due to the zygomatic arches and powerful muscles swathing it.

**Stop:** Well defined due to developed and bulging frontal sinuses and prominent arch above the eyes.

**Expression:** Very alert and attentive. Some wrinkling on forehead occurs when alert.

**Eyes:** Medium sized, almond shaped, not round or bulging, tight fitting rims preferred with only a minimal amount of haw being visible.

**Eye Color:** Dogs with black muzzles (black, fawn, red, and these colors brindled) dark brown eyes are preferred. Gray muzzles (gray, fawn, red and these colors brindled) lighter shades are acceptable. Pigmentation of the eye rims is complete, pigmentation of eye rim matches pigment color of dog. *Disqualification: Yellow bird of prey, blue eyes. Wall eyed.*

**Ears:** Set well above the cheekbones. May be cropped or uncropped; if cropped, it is in an equilateral triangle. If uncropped, they are medium sized, triangular in shape, held tight to the cheeks and not extending beyond the jaw bone.

**Nose:** Large with well-opened nostrils, pigment color to match pigment color of the dog. Dogs with black pigment have black noses, gray pigmented dogs have gray noses, and pigmentation is complete. The nose is an extension of the topline of the muzzle and does not protrude beyond nor recede behind the front plane of the muzzle.

**Muzzle:** Very broad and deep, width is almost equal to its length which reaches 34% of the total length of the head; the depth of muzzle is more than 50% of the length of the muzzle. The top and bottom muzzle planes are parallel and the nose and chin form a perpendicular line. Viewed from the front, the anterior face should look flat and form a trapezoid. Muzzle is not narrow or snipey.

**Lips:** Rather firm. Upper lips moderately hanging, they join under the nostrils to form an inverted "U". Pigmentation matches color pigment of dog, Dogs with black pigment have black lips, gray pigmented dogs have gray lips.

# Cane Corso AKC Standard

**Bite:** Slightly undershot (no more than 1/4 inch) and level preferred, scissor bite is acceptable if parameters of the head and muzzle are correct. The incisors are firmly placed in a straight line. Dentition is complete with no more than two missing teeth. *Disqualification: More than 2 missing teeth, wry mouth. Pronounced and undershot more than 1/4 inch.*

## Neck, Back and Body

**Neck:** Slightly arched, flowing smoothly into the shoulders with a small amount of dewlap. The length of the neck is 36% the height at the withers.

**Body:** Depth of the ribcage is equal to half the total height of the dog, descending slightly below the elbow. Ribs are long and well sprung. Moderate tuck up.

**Chest:** Broad, well muscled, strong forefront.

**Back:** Wide, strong, muscular. Highest part of shoulder blade slightly rising above the strong, level back.

**Loin:** Well-muscled, and harmoniously joined to the back.

**Croup:** Long, wide, slightly sloping. Rump should be quite round due to muscular development.

**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 is docked at the 4<sup>th</sup> vertebrae. Natural tails are accepted, though not preferred. 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. *Disqualification: A natural tail that is atrophied or a natural tail that is knotted and laterally deviated or twisted.*

## Forequarters

Strong and muscular, well proportioned to the size of the dog. Straight when viewed from the front or side, height of the limb at the elbow is equal to 50% of the height at the withers.

**Shoulders:** Muscular, laid back.

**Upper arms:** Strongly muscled, with good bone, powerful.

**Elbows:** Held parallel to the ribcage, turning neither in nor out.

**Forelegs:** Straight and with good bone well muscled.

**Pasterns:** Almost straight, strong but flexible.

**Feet:** Round with well arched, toes (cat-like). Lean hard dark pads and nails except in the case of white toes.

## Hindquarters

As a whole, they are powerful and strong, in harmony with the forequarters.

**Thighs:** Long, wide, angulated and well muscled.

**Stifle:** Should be moderately angulated, strong.

**Legs:** Strong bone and muscle structure.

**Hocks:** Wide, thick and clean, let down and parallel when viewed from behind.

**Rear pasterns:** Straight and parallel.

# Cane Corso AKC Standard

**Rear dewclaws:** Any rear dewclaws are removed.

**Hind feet:** Slightly more oval shaped and less arched toes than the front feet.

## Coat

The coat is short, stiff, shiny, adherent and dense with a light undercoat that becomes thicker in cold weather.

## Color

Acceptable colors are black, lighter and darker shades of gray, lighter and darker shades of fawn, and red. Brindling is allowed on all of these colors. Solid fawn and red, including lighter and darker shades have a black or gray mask; it does not go beyond the eyes. There may be a white patch on the chest, throat, chin, backs of the pasterns, and on the toes. *Disqualification: Any color with marking pattern as seen in black and tan breeds.*

## Gait/Movement

The movement is free flowing, powerful yet effortless, with strong reach and drive. As the dog accelerates, the feet converge towards a center line of gravity in a near single track. When viewed from the side, the topline remains level, with minimal roll or bounce.

## Temperament

The Cane Corso as a protector of his property and owners is unequalled. Intelligent, he is easily trained. Noble, majestic and powerful, his presence is impressive. He is docile and affectionate to his owner, loving with children and family.

## Summary

The overall confirmation of the dog should be well balanced and proportionate. The foregoing description is that of the ideal Cane Corso any deviation from the above described dog is penalized to the extent of the deviation.

## *Disqualifications:*

- *More than 2 missing teeth, wry mouth.*
- *Undershot bite more than ¼ inch.*
- *Yellow bird of prey, blue eyes. Wall eyed.*
- *Any color with marking pattern as seen in black and tan breeds.*
- *A natural atrophied tail or a natural tail that is knotted and laterally deviated or twisted.*