



South African Black Mastiff Association

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Breed Standard

All dogs need to be reappraised with SABMA. Only previous registered dogs with a traceable pedigree will be accepted. When mating, the Sire or Dam should be Black.

The main goal is to improve the SABM

General Appearance

The South African Black Mastiff is a big, strong and intelligent working dog, is well balanced and Sturdy, with a strong skeleton. The dog is muscular and athletic, it moves with considerable ease and elegance. The dog should be impressive, and imposing.

Male dogs appear noticeably masculine and bitches feminine.



Temperament and characteristics

The South African Black Mastiff is reliable, obedient and intelligent, with a strong watchdog instinct. It is self-assured and fearless, but perspective to the needs of the family. He is docile and affectionate to his owner, loving with children and family.



The Head

The head is short, broad, deep, square and muscular with well-filled cheeks. The part between the eyes must be well filled.

- **Top-line of the head/occiput**

The top of the head is broad and flat, with prominent muscle development.

- **Muzzle**

The muzzle is black with large nostrils that are widely spaced. Very broad and deep, width is almost equal to its length, which reaches approximately one third of the total length of the head. 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, wider at the bottom. Muzzle is not overly narrow.

- **Nose**

Large with well-opened nostrils. 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.

- **Lips**

The upper lip is loose and fleshy, and should not hang lower than the lower jaw. The upper lip (beneath the muzzle) should cover the lower lip.

- **Jaws**

The jaws (mandibles) are strong, deep and broad, and narrows slightly to the front.



- **Teeth**

Teeth should be white, well developed, correctly spaced; a complete set (42 teeth), and should have a scissors bite.

- **Eyes**

The colour of the eyes can be any shade of brown, but darker than the pelt. Eyes should be horizontally set. It should be broad-spaced with firm, well-pigmented eyelids.

- **Ears**

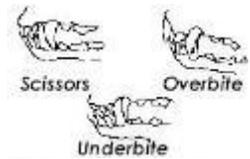
Set well above the cheekbones. Must be medium size, triangular in shape, held tight to the cheeks, and not extending beyond the jaw bone

- **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.



The Neck

- The neck is quite strong and muscular, firmly attached to the head and gradually broadens up to the point where it is attached to the shoulder. The neck, head and shoulder should form a unit.
- **The skin of the neck** is loose under the throat and becomes tight between the front legs.
- **The length of the neck** is approximately one third the height at the withers.



The Body

- **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 muscling
- **Tail** the tail is attached high to the body. It should be straight and preferably short (three joints). Long tails are acceptable.
- **Shoulder/withers** - The withers should be well attached, correctly angled and with good muscle development.
- **Upper arm** - The upper arm should have good muscle development. Front legs the front legs should be thick, strong, and muscular and should stand perfectly vertical.
- **Front pasterns** - The front pasterns are short, strong and a vertical extension of the front legs and pastern joints.
- **Front paws** - The front paws are big well padded and rounded and with strong dark and curved toenails. The paws should point straight forward.
- **Hindquarter** - The hindquarter should be strong, firm and in proportion to the rest of the dog, with the ability for effective propulsion.
- **Upper thighs** the upper thighs are broad, deep, well developed with prominent muscles.
- **Second thigh/gaskin** -The second thighs should be well developed with prominent muscles.
- **Knee stifle** -The knees are strong, firm and correctly angled
- **Hock joints** -The hock joints are firm with correct curving.
- **Hocks** -The hocks are relatively short, strong and thick. The hocks are parallel. (dew claws should not be present).
- **Hind paws** - The hind paws are slight smaller than the front paws. They should be well padded, rounded and should point straightforward. The nails are strong dark and curved.



Movement

Movement should be easy, smoothly powerful, by means of good propulsion of the hindquarter and parallel movement of the legs. In movement, a straight top-line should be maintained.



Coat

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

Colour

The ideal colour is black, acceptable colours are, lighter and darker shades of fawn, and red. Brindling is allowed on all of these colours. Solid fawn and red, including lighter and darker shades, with or without a mask. Irish Marked and Piebald. Powder dogs are also allowed in all of these colours. The dog must be well pigmented, especially on the lips, paws, toenails and genitals.



Please see our colour chart

Size

- **Male**

The ideal height for a male dog is 66 cm. (26 inches) at the withers. It can, however vary between 64 cm. (25 inches) and +70 cm. (+28 inches) at the withers.

- **Bitches**

The ideal height for a bitch is 61 cm. (24 inches). It can vary between 59 cm. (23 inches) and 65 cm. (26 inches).



Penalties

- A dog which is too small. / A dog which is too big.
- A noticeable over bite. / An under bite of more than 1cm.
- A sharp mouth. / A narrow mouth. / A long mouth.
- Cows hocks. / Straight hocks. / Sickie hocks.
- A head which is too small and nondescript.
- An overly aggressive dog.
- A narrow chest.
- A hollow back.
- Bandy legs.
- Erect ears.
- Blue eyes.
- A liver coloured muzzle.
- Any sign of another dog breed.
- Clumsy and unbalanced movement.



Fig. 3