



EBBASA Breed Standard
South African Boerboel
Standard Provided by ABIDS

General Appearance: The Boerboel is a wide-mouthed Mastiff type dog originating from South Africa. The dog should be strong and muscular in appearance

Size: Must be large but weight is not an indicator of potential functionality. Adult, well balanced and completely grown **males** should ideally be 66 - 70 cm in height measured at the top of the withers. *Adult males smaller than 60 cm will be disqualified.* Adult, well balanced and completely grown **females** should ideally be 60 - 65 cm in height measured at the top of the withers. *Adult females smaller than 55 cm will be disqualified.*
Size must be in relation to weight (see description under General Condition)

General Proportion: The main structural components of the dog should show acceptable proportions to each other. Dog must not be “square” and should have a greater total length than total height and the relation between length and height should ideally be 10:9

Conformation: Sturdy, compact conformation to achieve the highest degree of mobility. See notes on General Appearance and Size

Head: The head is one of the most important aspects of the Boerboel breed and represents the character of the dog. The head should be short, broad, block shaped, muscular and a slight frown must be visible on the dog’s forehead when its interest is aroused

Proportion: The length of the roof of the skull, measured from the middle of the eye to the end of the occiput) must be relative to the length of the nose bone in a relation of 1:1.5 as the ideal relationship. The head must widen slightly from the nose to the eyes.

Dome of skull: The dome of the skull must be broad and flat on top. The general rule is to attract the dogs attention to get it to lift its ears to the “attention” position and then to gauge the “flatness” of the dome of the skull.

Profile: Both the head and the muzzle must be cube shaped. In profile, the dome of the skull should be on the same parallel plane as the nose bone.

Eyes: Expression: Intelligent, attentive and “guarded”. **Iris colour:** Yellow to brown coloured iris allowed. *Blue colour iris is a disqualification.* **Positioning:** The eyes should be horizontal and *any slant will be penalised.* The eyes must be widely spaced and look straight ahead. **Eyelids:** Eyelids must be firm and well pigmented. **Spectacle area:** The hair in the spectacle area should show adequate pigmentation. **General:** The area between the eyes must be well filled and show a gentle depression. Eyes must not protrude (bulge). Eyes must not be deep-set. Third eyelid (haw) must not be visible

Stop: Defined as the drop or break in the plane from the frontal bones of the skull to the nasal bones of the muzzle. The size or degree of the stop is an important element in analyzing head shape. The stop must be physically present and must be typical of the Boerboel head. The average between the extremes in variations in the stop between a typical Bull Terrier and a typical Boxer stop could be used as a measurement.

Ears: Shape and size: The ears must be medium sized (the tip must just reach the corner of the dog’s mouth), V-shaped and of medium thickness. **Positioning:** Must be high set but must still be on the sides of the head. Must fall away sideways and to the front, but remain against the cheek. **General:** Deformity of one or both ears, as a result of a viral infection or earlier injury, is acceptable. *Excessive rose ears are a disqualification. Any cosmetic procedure not allowed under local law such as cropped ears are a disqualification*

Nasal bone: The nasal bone should ideally be between 8 and 10 cm long. The roof of the skull must be in relation to the nasal bone (1:1.5). The nasal bone must be straight and narrow slightly from the eyes to the mouth. The nasal bone must be on the same plane as the roof of the skull. A black mask on the nasal bone is optional

Nose: The leather of the nose must appear black with wide nostrils that are widely spaced. *A liver coloured, pink or white nose leather is a disqualification.*

Lips: The upper and lower lips must be loose and fleshy and show adequate pigmentation. Under the nose, the end of the upper lip must touch the top of the bottom lip but must not substantively overlap the bottom lip. Viewed in profile, the flews must not extend below the lowest level of the jawbone. The spittoons must not hang open but cognizance must be taken of the effects of heat on the size, shape and openness of the spittoons

Palate: The palate should show adequate pigmentation. *The palate should not be deformed (cleft palate)*

Cheeks: The cheeks must be well filled and should create the fusion between the muzzle and the skull.

Jaws: The jaws must reflect the characteristics of the Boerboel breed, strong and show good muscular development. The jaws must not be lacking in depth and must not be “pointed”

Teeth: The teeth must be white, well formed and correctly spaced. The dog should ideally have a complete set of 42 teeth and missing teeth can lead to penalisation. Ideally, the dog should have a “scissor” bite (Outside of bottom teeth fits flush against the inside of the upper teeth). An under bite, where the lower jaw protrudes further than the upper jaw, of less than 1cm is acceptable. *Should it exceed 1 cm, the dog will be disqualified. Any visible sign of an overbite, where the upper jaw protrudes further than the lower jaw, will lead to disqualification.*

Neck: The neck must gradually increase in width from the head to the shoulders and be muscular to the extent that it shows a visible crest. The dewlap and scruff should be loose but the skin across the chest, especially between the front legs, should be tight. *The neck must be in proportion to the rest of the dog and an excessively long or short neck must be seen as a serious flaw which could lead to disqualification*

Torso: Ribcage: The ribcage is defined as the area from the first chest vertebrae to the last rib bone. The ribcage must ideally have a length proportion of 2:1 to the loin.

Front legs: The **front legs** should be thick (substantive girth), strong and muscular. Seen from any angle, the front legs must be as straight as possible and vertical to the plane of the ground. The elbows, wrists and paws must not turn inwards or outwards. The **elbows** should ideally be certified by an acceptable authority (see implementation date) as being free from dysplasia or at least be within acceptable norms. The **pasterns** must be short, sturdy and form a slight angle to both the pastern joint and the front leg. The distance between the knee joint and hock joint must not be too long to allow a well balanced dog, supple, fluid movement. The **upper arm** must show good, visible muscular development. **Front feet:** The front feet should be large, well cushioned and rounded in shape. The dog must have strong, short nails of any colour but light coloured nails could be interpreted as a sign of inadequate pigmentation. The front feet must be aligned close to straight to the front but it is recognised that most large dogs breeds show a slight turn-out of their front feet.

Shoulders: The shoulders must not be too erect and show good, visible muscle definition. *“Loose” shoulder blades are a fault and will be penalised.* The lay to, or distance between the withers, determines the motion and flexion of the neck and head and can seriously influence balance and movement and should therefore ideally not be less than 70mm but should be in proportion to the rest of the dog.

Chest: The chest must be strong and broad. Viewed in profile, the chest should have a depth that extends below the elbow joints of the dog. The ribs should be well formed and well rounded

Back (total span): The back is defined as starting from a point between the scapula to the top of the tail attachment. The **top line** of the back must not be a “table top” but must show a slight indentation behind the shoulders. A too prominent or deep indentation is a sign of inadequate rib and back development. The **back** of all dogs should show prominent back muscles whilst adult males should show a “saddle” behind the shoulder blades consisting of muscle. The back must not be “round”. A rounded back is a sign of inadequate rib and back development. Viewed from the front or the rear, the back should be straight, broad and in proportion to the rest of the dog

Loin: The loin is defined as the area from the rib cage to the pelvis. The loin must be short and ideally have a length proportion of 1:2 to the ribcage

Croup: The croup of the dog, defined as the last section of the back above the rear legs must be firm, strong and show visible muscular development. The croup must not droop excessively in adult dogs but it is accepted that the croups of younger dogs have a tendency to slope and will not be penalised. The ideal slope of the croup should be 23°

Hips: The hips should ideally be certified by an acceptable authority (see implementation date) as being free from dysplasia or at least be within acceptable norms

Belly: Bitches should ideally have at least 6 nipples

Upper hind leg: The upper hind leg must be well developed with prominent, visible musculature

Lower hind leg: The lower hind leg must be well developed with prominent, visible musculature both on the inside and the outside of the leg.

Knees: The knees should be strong, firm and show correct angulation

Hocks: Hock joints to be strong, firm, relatively short, strong, thick and parallel to each other. Hock joints should be bent at an angle of 45°

Hind paws: Dew claws should ideally be removed. The hind paws must be slightly smaller than the front paws, well cushioned, rounded and point straight forward. The nails must be short and strong with a slight curve. The nails may be of any colour but light coloured nails could be interpreted as a sign of inadequate pigmentation

Tail: The tail must be positioned high and must be straight. In countries where the practice is allowed, the tail should ideally be docked at the third joint. *Kinked, corkscrew or deformed tails are disqualifying factors.* Long tails should be sabre shaped and of adequate girth and length.

Sexual organs: Sexual organs must be well developed. Males must have two well developed testicles. The vulva must be firm in female dogs. *Scars or related injuries limiting sexual performance will be penalised.* The skin and hair around sexual organs should show adequate pigmentation

Anus: The anus should show adequate pigmentation

Coat: The coat of the dog should be dense, smooth and short. *Long hair is a disqualification. Curly hair is a disqualification. Long and uncharacteristic whiskers such as those characterising other dog breeds are a disqualification*

Colour: All colour variations ranging are acceptable subject to the following:

1. Total area of pink (poorly pigmented) skin may not exceed 33%
2. Multi colour dogs will be accepted as long as the dominant colour of the skin is not pink and the dog shows adequate pigmentation, especially on the lips, palate, skin and hair around both eyes, anus and sexual organs.
3. "Powder blue" dogs will be disqualified as the blue shade is not possible as a variant of the Agouti colour gene group, very light yellow, very light fawn and other lightly pigmented dogs will be appraised based on the amount of pigmentation of the skin in all key areas; "spotted" dogs will be appraised based on the similarity of coat colouring to other dog breeds; tortoise-shell or calico coloured coats on the number and mix of colours; and black dogs will be appraised on the dog's Boerboel characteristics.
4. All possible disputes and cases where doubt exists regarding colour should only be appraised by a Senior Appraiser. Photographic evidence must be collected and in all such cases be referred to the Standards Officer for a final recommendation.

Pigmentation: A black mask on the nasal bone is optional. All dogs should ideally show dark pigmentation on their skin. *Weak or inadequate pigmentation will be heavily penalised and could lead to disqualification*

Appearance: Old scars resulting from declared, acceptable surgical procedures, accidents or work factors are irrelevant and will not be penalised as long as performance is not limited.

General Condition: The presented animal must be in a good general condition and should not be obese to the extent that muscular development and actual girth of the bone structure cannot be determined. In the case of the presentation of an underweight or obese dog, the dog will not be accepted for appraisal until such time as the problem is rectified. The weight of the presented dog must be in relation to size of the dog. *Any dog with a physical handicap, excluding deafness, which was not the result of an earlier injury, will be disqualified.*

Mobility: The mobility of a dog is the ultimate test for correct conformation. The hind legs of the dog should provide the main source of propulsion. The dog should show suppleness, nimbleness and agility. The dog should show the longest possible strides achievable considering its body length and have an effective ground-covering pace. The dog, and the handler, should be able to maintain an adequate pace for the appraiser to properly evaluate the dog.

Temperament: Boerboels are known for their fearless character and high intelligence. The dog must show loyalty to its master and obedience to commands (even if given by a handler). Boerboels are known for their threat perception and guarding instincts. Boerboels must accept children and not pose a threat to them or other persons that do not pose a threat to the dog, its owner or his property. Boerboels must have an intelligent and trainable nature. Temperament testing, as approved by the EBBASA Board, will be applied at any appraisal or special event for temperament evaluation and dogs can be either referred for obedience training or *disqualified as a result of aggression or disobedience.*

Penalisation (Faults):

Behaviour: *Disobedience*

Build and conformation: *Lanky built.*

Too short legs.

Male dogs over 70 cm in height measured at the top of the withers.

Female dogs over 65 cm in height measured at the top of the withers.

Square build where height and length is equal.

Not carrying the physical characteristics of their sex

Head: *Mild entropion, ectropion or distichiasis*

Bulging eyes

Deep set eyes

Third eyelid (haw) visible

Upper lip too long

Jaws lacking in depth

Pointy jaws
Excessively low set ears
Excessively highly set ears
Teeth: *An under bite of less than 1 cm*
Inability to keep tongue in mouth
Body: *“Loose” shoulder blades*
Too narrow chest
Back showing a prominent indentation behind the shoulders.
A round back
A hollow back
Drooping or hanging croup
Bandy legs
Dewclaws not removed
Cow hocks
Sickle hocks
Sickle or straight tail
Thin tail
Weak or inadequate pigmentation
Scars or injuries limiting movement
Obesity or under-weight relative to size

Disqualification:

Behaviour: *Aggressive and uncontrollable*
Exceptionally scared or timid
Build and conformation: *Any sign of any other dog breed*
Any visible fault that hampers proper mobility
Extremely short legs
Males lower than 60 cm
Females lower than 55 cm
Any serious deviation from the breed conformation
Head: *Blue eyes*
Serious entropion, ectropion or distichiasis
Excessive rose ears
“Peak” or upright ears
Liver coloured or pink nose leathers
A narrow, too long or sharply pointed muzzle
Excessively long or short neck
A noticeable overbite
Whiskers such as those characteristic of other dog breeds
Body: *Long hair*
Curly hair
Total white skin on dog exceeds 33%
Kinked, corkscrew or deformed tails
Males without two well developed testicles
Any dog with a physical handicap, excluding deafness, which was not the result of an earlier injury.