

MPCA Judges' Education - Glossary of Terms

- Angulation - The angles formed by a meeting of the bones; mainly the shoulder, upper arm, stifle and hock.
- Back - The vertebrae between the withers and the loin.
- Balance - The pleasing, harmonious, and well-proportioned blend of an animal's parts and features. A symmetrical appearance.
- Cheeky - Cheeks prominently rounded; thick, protruding.
- Chiseling - Clean-cut lines and contours about the head, particularly beneath the eyes.
- Coupling - The part of the body between the ribs and the pelvis; the loin.
- Coarse - Too heavy or overdone with bone, lack of refinement; lacking in quality.
- Crossing over - Unsound gait which starts with twisting elbows and ends with crisscrossing and toeing out. Also called "knitting and purling" and "weaving".
- Croup - The muscular area just in front of and around the set-on of the tail. Rump.
- Drive - A solid thrusting of the hindquarters, denoting sound locomotion.
- East-West front - Incorrectly positioned pasterns that cause the feet to turn outwards.
- Even bite - Meeting of front teeth at edges with no overlap of upper or lower teeth.
- Ewe neck - The topline of the neck is concave rather than convex.
- Foreface - That portion of the head from the stop forward. Muzzle.
- Goose step - Accentuated lift of the forelimbs, with no bend of wrist.
- Hock - The joint of the hind leg between the lower thigh and the rear pastern. The dogs true heel.
- Hocks well let down - Hock joints close to the ground.
- Layback - The angle of the shoulder blade as compared with the vertical.
- Loaded shoulders - Shoulder blades shoved out from the body by overdevelopment of the muscles.
- Loin - The lumbar area extending from the end of the ribcage to the start of the pelvis.
- Moving straight - Balanced gait in which angle of inclination begins at the shoulder, or hip joint, and limbs remain relatively straight from these points to the pads of the feet, even as the legs flex or extend in reaching or thrusting.
- Muzzle - The head in front of the eyes. Foreface.
- Overshot bite - A bite in which the upper incisors (front teeth) protrude over the lower.
- Pastern - Region of the foreleg between the carpus (wrist) and the digits.
- Penciling - Black lines dividing the rust-red on the toes.
- Reach (of front) - Length of forward stride by forelegs without wasted or excessive motion.

- Roach back - A convex curvature of the back toward the loin.
- Scissors bite - A bite in which the outer side of the lower incisors touch the inner side of the upper incisors.
- Shelly - A shallow, narrow body lacking the correct amount of bone.
- Single tracking - All footprints falling on a single line of travel; incorrect in the Min Pin.
- Snipy - A pointed, weak muzzle.
- Squirrel tail - Carried up and curving forward.
- Stifle - The joint of the hind leg where the upper and lower thighs meet. The dog's knee.
- Stop - The setup up from muzzle to skull; indentation between the eyes where the nasal bone and skull meet.
- Straight or steep shoulders - A more upright placement of shoulder blades than is preferred; as opposed to sloping or "well laid back".
- Swayback - Back line that sags or is concave between the withers and the hipbones.
- Terrier front - Straight front as found on Fox Terriers.
- Topline - The dog's outline from just behind the withers to the tail set.
- Tuckup - The underline of the abdomen as it sweeps upward toward the flank. Small waisted.
- Undershot bite - A bite in which the lower incisors (front teeth) protrude over the upper.
- Weedy - An insufficient amount of bone.