



Official Standard of the Dalmatian

General Appearance: The Dalmatian is a distinctively spotted dog; poised and alert; strong, muscular and active; free of shyness; intelligent in expression; symmetrical in outline; and without exaggeration or coarseness. The Dalmatian is capable of great endurance, combined with fair amount of speed. Deviations from the described ideal should be penalized in direct proportion to the degree of the deviation.

Size, Proportion, Substance: Desirable height at the withers is between 19 and 23 inches. Undersize or oversize is a fault. Any dog or bitch over 24 inches at the withers is disqualified. The overall length of the body from the forechest to the buttocks is approximately equal to the height at the withers. The Dalmatian has good *substance* and is strong and sturdy in bone, but never coarse.

Head: The *head* is in balance with the overall dog. It is of fair length and is free of loose skin. The Dalmatian's *expression* is alert and intelligent, indicating a stable and outgoing temperament. The *eyes* are set moderately well apart, are medium sized and somewhat rounded in appearance, and are set well into the skull. Eye color is brown or blue, or any combination thereof; the darker the better and usually darker in black-spotted than in liver-spotted dogs. Abnormal position of the eyelids or eyelashes (ectropion, entropion, trichiasis) is a major fault. Incomplete pigmentation of the eye rims is a major fault. The *ears* are of moderate size, proportionately wide at the base and gradually tapering to a rounded tip. They are set rather high, and are carried close to the head, and are thin and fine in texture. When the Dalmatian is alert, the top of the ear is level with the top of the skull and the tip of the ear reaches to the bottom line of the cheek. The top of the *skull* is flat with a slight vertical furrow and is approximately as wide as it is long. The stop is moderately well defined. The cheeks blend smoothly into a powerful *muzzle*, the top of which is level and parallel to the top of the skull. The muzzle and the top of the skull are about equal in length. The nose is completely pigmented on the leather, black in black-spotted dogs and brown in liver-spotted dogs. Incomplete nose pigmentation is a major fault. The lips are clean and close fitting. The teeth meet in a scissors *bite*. Overshot or undershot bites are disqualifications.

Neck, Topline, Body: The *neck* is nicely arched, fairly long, free from throatiness, and blends smoothly into the shoulders. The *topline* is smooth. The chest is deep, capacious and of moderate width, having good spring of rib without being barrel shaped. The brisket reaches to the elbow. The underline of the rib cage curves gradually into a moderate tuck-up. The back is level and strong. The loin is short, muscular and slightly arched. The flanks narrow through the loin. The croup is nearly level with the back. The *tail* is a natural extension of the topline. It is not inserted too low down. It is strong at the insertion and tapers to the tip, which reaches to the hock. It is never docked. The tail is carried with a slight upward curve but should never curl over the back. Ring tails and low-set tails are faults.

Forequarters: The shoulders are smoothly muscled and well laid back. The upper arm is approximately equal in length to the shoulder blade and joins it at an angle sufficient to insure that the foot falls under the shoulder. The elbows are close to the body. The legs are straight, strong and sturdy in bone. There is a slight angle at the pastern denoting flexibility.

Hindquarters: The hindquarters are powerful, having smooth, yet well defined muscles. The stifle is well bent. The hocks are well let down. When the Dalmatian is standing, the hind legs,



viewed from the rear, are parallel to each other from the point of the hock to the heel of the pad. Cowhocks are a major fault.

Feet: Feet are very important. Both front and rear feet are round and compact with thick, elastic pads and well arched toes. Flat feet are a major fault. Toenails are black and/or white in black-spotted dogs and brown and/or white in liver-spotted dogs. Dewclaws may be removed.

Coat: The coat is short, dense, fine and close fitting. It is neither woolly nor silky. It is sleek, glossy and healthy in appearance.

Color and Markings: Color and markings and their overall appearance are very important points to be evaluated. The ground color is pure white. In black-spotted dogs the spots are dense black. In liver-spotted dogs the spots are liver brown. Any color markings other than black or liver are disqualified. Spots are round and well-defined, the more distinct the better. They vary from the size of a dime to the size of a half-dollar. They are pleasingly and evenly distributed. The less the spots intermingle the better. Spots are usually smaller on the head, legs and tail than on the body. Ears are preferably spotted. Tri-color (which occurs rarely in this breed) is a disqualification. It consists of tan markings found on the head, neck, chest, leg or tail of a black- or liver-spotted dog. Bronzing of black spots and fading and/or darkening of liver spots due to environmental conditions or normal processes of coat change are not tri-coloration. Patches are a disqualification. A patch is a solid mass of black or liver hair containing no white hair. It is appreciably larger than a normal sized spot. Patches are a dense, brilliant color with sharply defined, smooth edges. Patches are present at birth. Large color masses formed by intermingled or overlapping spots are not patches. Such masses should indicate individual spots by uneven edges and/or white hairs scattered throughout the mass.

Gait: In keeping with the Dalmatian's historical use as a coach dog, gait and endurance are of great importance. Movement is steady and effortless. Balanced angulation fore and aft combined with powerful muscles and good condition produce smooth, efficient action. There is a powerful drive from the rear coordinated with extended reach in the front. The topline remains level. Elbows, hocks and feet turn neither in nor out. As the speed of the trot increases, there is a tendency to single track.

Temperament: Temperament is stable and outgoing, yet dignified. Shyness is a major fault.

Scale of Points

General Appearance	5
Size, proportion, substance	10
Head	10
Neck, topline, body	10
Forequarters	5
Hindquarters	5
Feet	5
Coat	5
Color and markings	25
Gait	10
Temperament	<u>10</u>
Total	100



Disqualifications: *Any dog or bitch over 24 inches at the withers. Overshot or undershot bite. Any color markings other than black or liver. Tri-color. Patches.*

Approved July 11, 1989
Effective September 6, 1989