

COMPARISON OF 1906, 1925, 1941, 1986 CHOW CHOW STANDARDS

GENERAL APPEARANCE

1906 A Lively, compact, short-coupled dog, well knit in frame, with tail curled over the back. Smooth Chows are governed by the same description except that the coat is smooth.

1925 Lion-headed, scowling, compact, muscular, short-coupled, dignified, and powerful with heavy off-standing coat.

1941 A massive, cobby, powerful dog, active and alert, with strong, muscular development and perfect balance. Body squares with height of leg at shoulder; head broad and flat, with short, broad, and deep muzzle, accentuated by a ruff. The whole supported by straight, strong legs. Clothed in a shining off-standing coat, the Chow is a master piece of beauty, dignity, and untouched naturalness.

(Note: The word "massive" was added to the 1941 standard. From this point forward we began to see Chows with more substance, larger heads, larger bone.)

1986 An ancient breed of northern Chinese origin, this all-purpose dog of China was used for hunting, herding, pulling and protection of the home. While primarily a companion today, his working origin must always be remembered when assessing true Chow type. A powerful, sturdy, squarely built, upstanding dog of Arctic type, **medium** in size with strong muscular development and heavy bone. The body is compact, short coupled, broad and deep, the tail set high and carried closely to the back, the whole supported by four straight, strong, sound legs. View from the side, the hind legs have little apparent angulation and the hock joint and metatarsals are directly beneath the hip joint. It is this structure which produces the characteristic shorter, stilted gait unique to the breed. The large head with broad, flat skull and short, broad and deep muzzle is proudly carried and accentuated by a ruff. Elegance and substance must be combined into a well balanced whole, never so massive as to outweigh his ability to be active, alert and agile. Clothed in a smooth or an off-standing rough double coat, the Chow is a master piece of beauty, dignity and naturalness. Essential to true Chow type are his unique blue-black tongue, scowling expression and stilted gait.

(Note: The word "massive" was replaced with the word "medium" when referring to size.)

EXPRESSION

1906 No reference made to Expression

1925 No reference made to Expression

1941 Essentially dignified, lordly, scowling, discerning, sober and snobbish - one of independence.

1986 Essentially scowling, dignified, lordly, discerning, sober and snobbish, one of independence. The scowl is achieved by a marked brow with a padded button of skin just above the inner, upper corner of each eye; but sufficient play of skin to form frowning brows and a distinct furrow between the eyes beginning at the base of the muzzle and extending p the forehead; by the correct eye shape and placement, and by the correct ear shape, carriage and placement. Excessive loose skin is not desirable. Wrinkles on the muzzle do not contribute to expression and are no required.

SIZE, PROPORTIONS, SUBSTANCE:

1906 No reference made to size

1925 Chows should be massive and well proportioned.

1941 General Appearance states "A massive, cobby, powerful dog...."

1986 The average height of adult specimens is 17 to 20 inches at the withers, but in every case consideration of overall proportions and type should take precedence over size.

Proportions - Square in profile and close coupled. Distance from forechest to point of buttocks equals height at the highest points of the withers. Serious Fault - Profile other than square. Distance from tip of elbow to ground is half the height at the withers. Floor of chest level with tips of elbows. Width viewed from the front and rear is the same and must be broad. It is these proportions that are essential to true Chow type. In judging puppies, no allowance should be made for their failure to conform to these proportions.

Substance - Medium in size with strong muscular development and heavy bone. Equally objectionable are snipey, fine-boned specimens and overdone, ponderous, cloddy specimens. In comparing specimens of different sex, due allowance must be made in favor of the bitches who may not have as much head or substance as do the males. There is an impression of femininity in bitches as compared to an impression of masculinity in dogs.

HEAD

- 1906 Skull flat and broad with little stop, well filled out under the eye.
- 1925 Large and *massive*, with broad flat skull, well filled under the eyes, moderate stop, proudly carried, with characteristic scowl.
- 1941 Large and massive in proportion to the size of dog, with broad, flat skull; well filled under the eyes; moderate stop; and proudly carried
- 1986 Proudly carried, large in proportion to the size of the dog but never so exaggerated as to make the dog seem top-heavy or to result in a low carriage.

The top skull is broad and flat from side to side and front to back. Coat and loose skin cannot substitute for the correct bone structure. Viewed in profile, the top lines of the muzzle and skull are approximately parallel, joined by a moderate stop. The padding of the brows may make the stop appear steeper than it is.

The word “massive” head was inserted into the 1925 revision and remained in the 1941 revision. The word “massive” was removed in the 1986 revision. The belief was that the word “massive” was responsible for the Chow trending towards being seen as a head breed.

Decades later in the 1980’s, the Chow Standard needed to be rewritten from the ground up, to emphasize the importance of evaluating all points of the animal equally, including balance, soundness and correct breed type.

The additional statement “...but never so exaggerated as to make the dog seem top-heavy or to result in a low carriage.” was added in 1986 to reinforce the change from “massive” head to “large”.

MUZZLE

- 1906 Moderate in length, broad from the eyes to the point (not pointed at the end like a fox).
- 1925 Short in comparison to length of skull; broad from eyes to end of nose, and of great depth. The lips should be full and overhanging. **
- 1941 Short in comparison to length of skull; broad from eyes to end of nose, and of equal depth. The lips somewhat full and overhanging.
- 1986 The muzzle is short in comparison to the length of the top skull but never less than one-third of the head length. The muzzle is broad and well filled out under the eyes. Its width and depth are equal and both dimensions should appear to be the same from its base to its tip. This square appearance is achieved by the correct bone structure plus padding of the muzzle and full cushioned lips. The muzzle should never be so padded or cushioned as to make it appear other than square in shape. The upper lips completely cover the lower lips when the mouth is closed but should not be pendulous.

NOSE

1906 Black, large and wide. In cream or light coloured specimens a pink nose is allowable. **

1925 Large, broad and black in color. *Note: Reference to pink nose is eliminated.*

1941 Large, broad, and black in color.

1986 Large, broad and black in color with well opened nostrils.

TONGUE

1906 Black

1925 A blue-black. The inside of the mouth should be of the same color.

1941 A blue-black. The tissues of the mouth should approximate black.

1986 Mouth and tongue - Edges of the lips black, tissues of the mouth mostly black, gums preferably black. A solid black mouth is ideal. The top surface and edges of the tongue a solid blue-black, the darker the better.

TEETH

1906 Strong and level.

1925 Strong and Level.

1941 Strong and level, with a scissors bite. Should neither be overshoot or undershot.

1986 Strong and even with a scissors bite.

Note: Reference to level meant 6 incisors straight across, not a level bite.

EYES

- 1906 Dark and small. (In a blue dog light colour is permissible.)
- 1925 Dark, deep-set, and of moderate size, and almond shaped.
- 1941 Dark, deep-set, of moderate size, and almond-shaped.
- 1986 Dark brown, deep set and placed wide apart and obliquely, of moderate size, almond in shape. The correct placement and shape should create an Oriental appearance. The eye rims black with lids which neither turn in nor droop and the pupils of the eyes clearly visible. *Serious Faults: Entropion or ectropion, or pupils wholly or partially obscured by loose skin.*

EARS

- 1906 Small, pointed and carried stiffly erect. They should be placed well forward over the eyes, which gives the dog the peculiar characteristic expression of the breed -- viz. a sort of scowl.
- 1925 Small, pointed, stiffly carried. They should be placed wide apart, on top of the skull, and set with a slight forward tilt.
- 1941 Small, slightly rounded at tip, stiffly carried. They should be placed wide apart, on top of the skull, and set with a slight forward tilt.
- 1986 Small, moderately thick, triangular in shape with a slight rounding at the tip, carried stiffly erect but with a slight forward tilt. Placed wide apart with the inner corner on top of the skull. An ear which flops as the dog moves is very undesirable.

NECK

- 1906 Strong, full, set well on shoulders and slightly arched.
- 1925 Strong, full, set well on the shoulders
- 1941 Muscular, slightly sloping.
- 1986 Strong, full, well muscled, nicely arched, and of sufficient length to carry the head proudly above the top line when standing at attention.

BODY

- 1906 No reference made to body. (*Refer to General Appearance*)
- 1925 Short, compact, well ribbed up, and let down in the flank.
- 1941 Short, compact, with well-sprung ribs, and let down in the flank.
- 1986 Body short, compact, close coupled, strongly muscled, broad, deep and well let down in the flank. The body, back, coupling and croup must all be short to give the required square build.

CHEST

- 1906 Broad and deep.
- 1925 Broad, deep and powerful
- 1941 Broad, deep, and muscular. A narrow chest is a serious fault.
- 1986 Broad, deep, and muscular, never narrow or slab-sided. The ribs close together and well sprung, not barrel. The spring of the front ribs is somewhat narrowed at their lower ends to permit the shoulder and upper arm to fit smoothly against the chest wall. The floor of the chest is broad and deep extending down to the tips of the elbows. *Serious Faults - Labored or abdominal breathing (not to include normal panting), narrow or slab-sided chest.*

BACK

- 1906 Short, straight, and strong.
- 1925 Short, straight, and strong.
- 1941 Short, straight, and strong.
- 1986 **Topline** - Straight, strong and **level from the withers to the root of the tail.**

LOIN

- 1906 Powerful
- 1925 **Broad, deep, and powerful**
- 1941 Broad, deep, and powerful
- 1986 **Well muscled, strong, short,** broad and deep

Croup - short and broad with powerful rump and thigh muscles giving a level croup.

TAIL

- 1906 Curled tightly over the back.
- 1925 **Tail set well up and carried closely to the back, following the line of the spine at the start.**
- 1941 Set well up and carried closely to the back, following line of spine at start.
- 1986 Set **high** and carried closely to the back **at all times**, following the line of the spine at the start.

SHOULDERS

- 1906 No reference made to shoulders
- 1925 Muscular, slightly sloping
- 1941 Muscular, slightly sloping
- 1986 Strong, well muscled, the tips of the shoulder blades moderately close together; the spine of the shoulder forms an angle approximately 55 degrees with the horizontal and forms an angle with the upper arm approximately 110 degrees. Length of upper arm never less than length of shoulder blade.

FORELEGS

- 1906 Perfectly straight, of moderate length and great bone.
- 1925 Perfectly straight, with heavy bone and upright pasterns.
- 1941 Perfectly straight, with heavy bone and upright pasterns.
- 1986 Perfectly straight from elbow to foot with heavy bone which must be in proportion to the rest of the dog. Viewed from the front, the forelegs are parallel and widely spaced commensurate with the broad chest.

Elbow joints set well back alongside the chest wall, elbows turning neither in nor out.

Pasterns - short and upright. Wrists shall not knuckle over.

HINDLEGS

1906 Same as forelegs, muscular, and with hocks well let down. (*The standard is silent as to the straightness of hind legs and lack of bend at the stifle and hock joints, but this is nevertheless considered the proper formation of leg for the Chow.*)

1925 Straight hocked, muscular and heavy boned.

1941 Straight hocked, muscular, and heavy boned.

1986 The rear assembly broad, powerful, and well muscled in the hips and thighs, heavy in bone with rear and front bone approximately equal. Viewed from the rear, the legs are straight, parallel and widely spaced commensurate with the broad pelvis.

Stifle joint shows little angulation, is well knit and stable, points straight forward and the bones of the joint should be clean and sharp.

Hock joint well let down and appears almost straight. The hock joint must be strong, well knit and firm, never bowing or breaking forward or to either side. The hock joint and metatarsals lie in a straight line below the hip joint. *Serious Faults - Unsound stifle or hock joints.*

Metatarsals short and perpendicular to the ground.

FEET

1906 Small, round and cat-like, standing well on the toes.

1925 Compact, round and catlike

1941 Compact, catlike, with thick pads.

1986 Round, compact, catlike, standing well upon the thick toe pads.

COAT

- 1906 Abundant, dense, straight and rather coarse in texture, with a soft, woolly undercoat.
- 1925 Abundant, dense, straight **and outstanding**; rather coarse in texture, with a soft woolly undercoat. **In the smooth-coated variety, the topcoat should be of about one and half inches in length. (Note: Inclusion of the smooth chow)**
- 1941 Abundant, dense, straight, and off-standing; rather coarse in texture with a soft, woolly undercoat. *(The smooth coated variety was omitted from this version for reasons unknown. The smooth coated variety was returned to the standard during the rewrite in 1986.)*
- 1986 **There are two types of coat: rough and smooth. Both are double coated. Rough: In the rough coat, the outer coat is abundant, dense, straight, and off-standing, rather coarse in texture. The undercoat is soft, thick and wooly. Puppy coat soft, thick and wooly overall. The coat forms a profuse ruff around the head and neck, framing the head. The coat and ruff generally longer in dogs than in bitches. Tail well feathered. The coat length varies markedly on different Chows and thickness, texture and condition should be given greater emphasis than length. Obvious trimming or shaping is undesirable. Trimming of the whiskers, feet, ad metatarsals optional. Smooth: The smooth coated Chow is judged by the same standard as the rough coated Chow except that references to the quantity and distribution of the outer coat are not applicable to the smooth coated Chow, which has a hard, dense, smooth outer coat with a definite undercoat. There should be no obvious ruff or feathering on the legs or tail.**

Note: The smooth coated Chow is written back in to the standard.

COLOR

- 1906 Whole-coloured, black, red, yellow, blue, white, etc., not in patches (the under part of the tail and back of thighs frequently of a lighter colour).
- 1925 **Any clear color, solid throughout, or with lighter shadings on ruff, tail and breeching.**
- 1941 It may be any clear color, solid throughout, with lighter shadings on ruff, tail and breechings.
- 1986 **Clear colored, solid or solid with lighter shadings in the ruff, tail and featherings. There are five colors in the Chow: Red (light golden to deep mahogany), black, blue, cinnamon (light fawn to deep cinnamon) and cream. Acceptable colors to be judged on an equal basis.**

GAIT:

1906 No reference made to gait

1925 No reference made to gait.

1941 Completely individual. Short and stilted because of the straight hocks.

1986 Proper movement is the crucial test of proper conformation and soundness. It must be sound, straight moving, agile, brief, quick, and powerful, never lumbering. The rear gait shorter and stilted because of the straighter rear assembly. It is from the side that the unique stilted action is most easily assessed. The rear leg moves up and forward from the hip in a straight, stilted pendulum-like line with a slight bounce in the rump, the legs extend neither far forward nor far backward. The hind foot has a strong thrust which transfers power to the body in an almost straight line due to the minimal rear leg angulation. To transmit this power efficiently to the front assembly, the coupling must be short and there should be no roll through the midsection. Viewed from the rear, the line of bone from hip joint to pad remains straight as the dog moves. As the speed increases the hind legs incline slightly inward. The stifle joints must point in the line of travel, not outward resulting in a bowlegged appearance nor hitching in under the dog. Viewed from the front, the line of bone from shoulder joint to pad remains straight as the dog moves. As the speed increases, the forelegs do not move in exact parallel planes, rather incline slightly inward. The front legs must not swing out in semicircles nor mince or show any evidence of hackney action. The front and rear assemblies must be in dynamic equilibrium. Somewhat lacking in speed, the Chow has excellent endurance because the sound, straight rear leg provides direct, usable power efficiently.

TEMPERAMENT

1906 No reference made to temperament

1925 No reference made to temperament

1941 No reference made to temperament

1986 Keen intelligence, an independent spirit and innate dignity give the Chow an aura of aloofness. It is a Chow's nature to be reserved and discerning with strangers. Displays of aggression or timidity are unacceptable. Because of its deep set eyes, the Chow has limited peripheral vision and is best approached from the front.

SUMMARY

1906 No reference to summary

1925 No reference to summary

1941 No reference to summary

1986 Faults shall be penalized in proportion to their deviation from the standard. In judging the Chow, the overall picture is of primary consideration. Exaggeration of any characteristic at the expense of balance or soundness shall be severely penalized.

Type should include general appearance, temperament, the harmony of all parts, and soundness especially as seen when the dog is in motion. There should be proper emphasis on movement which is the final test of the Chow's conformation, balance and soundness.

DISQUALIFICATIONS:

1906 Drop ears.

Red tongue

Red Nose, except in yellow or white specimens.

Tail not curved over the back

White spots on coat

1925 Drop ears.

Tongue red, pink or obviously spotted.

Nose spotted or distinctly other color than black except in blue colored Chows, which may have solid blue or slate colored noses.

1941 Ears - drop ear or ears. The drop ear is one which is not stiffly carried or stiffly erect, but which breaks over at any point from its base to its tip.

Tongue red, pink, or obviously spotted with red or pink.

Nose spotted or distinctly other color than black, except in blue Chows, which have may solid blue or slate noses.

1986 Drop ear or ears. A drop ear is one which breaks at any point from its base to its tip or which is not carried stiffly erect but lies parallel to the top of the skull.

The top surface or edges of the tongue red or pink or with one or more spots of read or pink.

Nose spotted or distinctly other color than black, except in blue Chows which may have solid blue or slate noses.