

## The Silhouette: Standing and Moving

In silhouette a great dog should look balanced standing and moving.

Importantly, the dog should show an outline that is correct for the breed both on the move and on the stack.

There are several moving parts that make up a silhouette. The topline on the trot should be flexible and somewhat elastic. A rigid topline is inefficient and would hinder the ability of the hound to have the double-suspension gallop, a hallmark of this breed. When viewed from the side the topline should never sag or appear weak. A topline that can flatten out is perfectly acceptable, but it should never dip below the shoulders or hips when viewed on the move.

It is important to see the entire topline from head to tail as a fluid set of curves. Right angles or angles set at extremes are incorrect for the Borzoi at the trot. Different hounds have different head carriage. An Afghan's head may be held higher than a Borzoi's head, which should be level or slightly above level on the move.

Set on a neck that is strong and supple, the head of a correct-moving Borzoi should be held high enough to be indicative that he is a gazehound. Picture a hound who on a full-out run can reach down and capture a hare or take down a coyote by the hindquarters. An ewe-neck lacks the proper structure needed of this powerful hound.

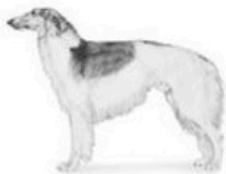
The legs at a trot should form an upside-down "W," with equal extension front and rear. The legs should move in an arc, matching front and rear, with hocks that flex and extend well out behind. A common fault in the breed is a front that lifts and a rear without drive, resulting in the whole dog being at an odd angle to the ground. Shoulders and hips should be parallel on the move—never higher or lower, but balanced in motion.

Years ago, while she judged a large

entry of specials at a specialty in Detroit, Dr. Gerda Kennedy asked each dog to step out of line and walk in a small circle. On the stack, most looked quite correct; when stepping out of the stack, however, some of the profiles changed shape.

There is an art to stacking a dog, and many handlers can take a bad dog and manipulate him into a perfect stack. Left on his own merit, a whole new set of faults can come to light when the dog is walked.

While I ring-stewarded for the late Chuck Herendeen one day, he insisted that I stand on the opposite side of the gate entrance to check armband numbers as the dogs entered the ring. I asked why, and he replied that he wanted to see each dog walking in unobstructed.



Often an entire class could be evaluated this way as they entered the ring.

A great-moving Borzoi should look as elegant on the move as standing, neither low in the shoulders nor high in the hips, with good reach in front and a strong drive off the rear. In Richard Beauchamp's book *The Mysteries of Breed Type*, silhouette is considered one of the five elements of breed type. Borzoi breed type is a graceful set of curves in silhouette both standing and moving, showing a balance of power, elegance, and sound running gear. —Jon Steele, Hemlock, Mich.; auroral@tm.net ♦