



THE KENNEL CLUB
Making a difference for dogs

Obedience Heelwork Position

The description and explanatory notes for obedience tests state that:

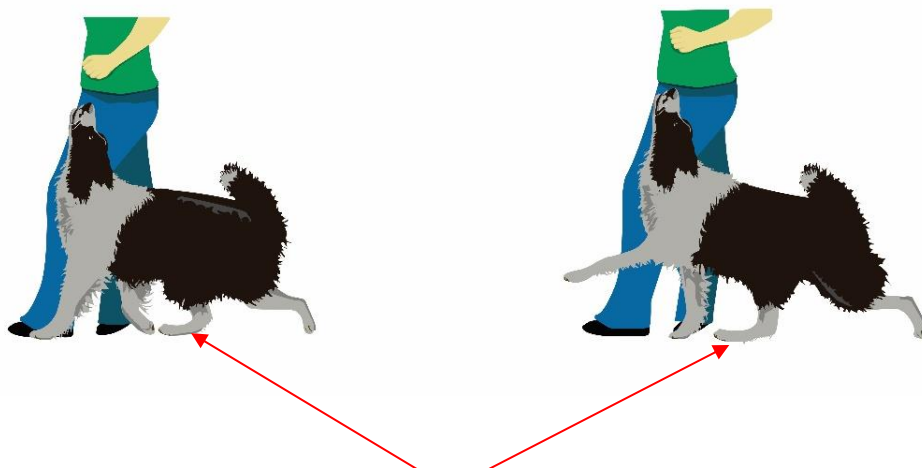
In all classes the dog and handler should work as a team. In all exercises the dog will work in a happy and natural manner whilst maintaining its natural topline. Its head position should in no way compromise its topline or impair the natural movement of the dog. At no time should the dog impede the handler's movement. The dog may be encouraged and praised except where specifically stated. The emphasis of all exercises is that the dog must be judged for accuracy.

The following additions to *Notes for Judges* have also been made:

- In some cases the tendency to work with almost horizontal rear pasterns (from hock joint to foot) is a result of trying to achieve an extreme head position. It should be noted that most dogs adopting a high head position can do so without compromising rear end movement and careful thought should be given to the difference.
- It is important to stress that this regulation should not be used as an excuse to mark any particular style that is not to the judge's individual taste.

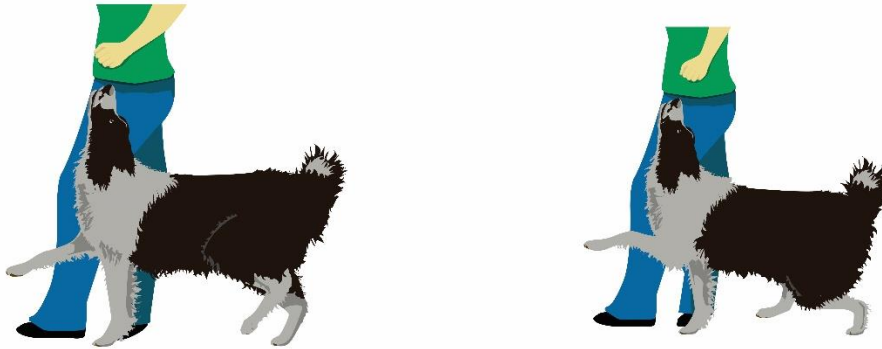
To assist judges the following images have been created

These dogs are not working in a natural manner, their topline is not natural and their hind limbs are too horizontal (hock joint almost touching the ground) and the dogs are not moving in a natural manner.

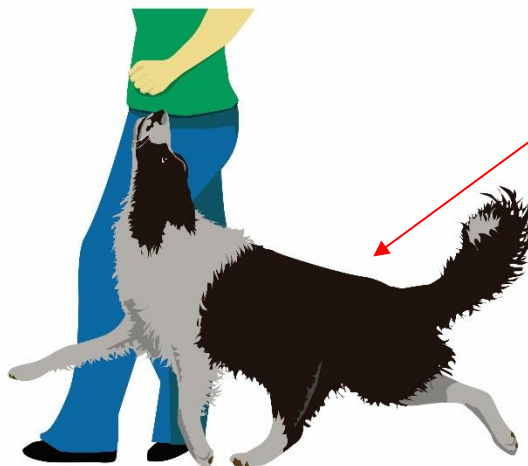


The hock joint to the foot of the back right leg is almost on the floor, whereas a dog in a more natural position would have a more vertical hind leg.

In the images below the dog's topline is more level and whilst its hind legs are very bent the judge would need to assess the complete round as this is mid stride, especially the 2nd image. However in this position the hind legs would be acceptable.



This dog should be marked. Whilst its hind limbs are in a more natural position, the dog's topline is not natural, with its hindquarters much lower than its shoulder. If a judge is in doubt as to whether the dog is working with a natural topline the non-heelwork exercises should be assessed to see how the dog moves naturally in and between other exercises.



The dog's back is not level, as you would expect for a Border Collie type dog and therefore it does not appear to be working in a natural manner, for this breed of dog.

This image is not a dog in a heelwork position but is used to show a dog moving naturally with a natural topline and correct foot placement.



These images show dogs working in an acceptable natural manner and would be acceptable under this Regulation.

