

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. It is perfectly acceptable to see a topline that can flatten out - but 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. Angles set at extremes or right angles are incorrect when observing the borzoi on 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. With a neck that is strong and supple, the head on a correct moving Borzoi should be held high enough to be indicative of a gazehound. Picture a hound that on a full out run can reach down and capture a hare or take down a coyote by the hind quarters. A 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 extending well out behind. A common fault in the breed is a front that lifts and a rear without drive resulting with the whole dog 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 at a Specialty in Detroit, Dr. Gerda Kennedy judging a large entry of Specials asked each dog to step out of line and walk in a small circle. On the stack most looked quite correct, but stepping out of a stack some of the profiles changed shape. There is an art to stacking a dog, and many handlers can take a bad dog and manipulate a perfect stack. Left on the dogs own merit, when walked, a whole new set of faults can come to light.

While ring stewarding for the late Chuck Herendeen, he insisted I stand on the opposite side of the gait entrance to check the 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 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 Mysterious of Breed Type*, one of the five elements of breed type is silhouette. Borzoi breed type is a graceful set of curves in silhouette both standing and moving showing balance of power, elegance and sound running gear.

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