

ARHA BEAGLE BENCH RULES AND PROCEDURES
ALL DIVISIONS EFFECTIVE 09/01/01
Revised 01/09

I. Bench Shows

A. Policy Statement

The ARHA believes that proper conformation is essential to the betterment of the beagle breed. To this point, we will sponsor Bench Shows to encourage the best possible conformation in a true hunting beagle. The Judge is reminded that as hunting dogs they may show scars, cuts, and other signs of being in the field.

- B.** The Bench Judge shall not judge his/her own hounds, or any hounds that he/she has owned in the six months, prior to the show he/she is judging. Further, he/she shall not judge a hound that is owned by a member of his/her immediate family. Definition of immediate family: husband, wife, mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, or spouses of any of the above.

Note: The date on the ARHA transfer papers is the official ownership date.

- C.** All Bench Shows shall be judged by ARHA certified bench show judges who have been certified by passing the ARHA bench show qualifying test.
- 1.** The Bench Judge must be certified by ARHA for it to be a licensed Bench Show. Any handler has the right to ask the Master of Hounds to have the Bench Judge produce his/her ARHA Bench Judge license. If the license is not produced the handler may file a protest with the Master of Hounds.
 - 2.** At regular sanctioned hunts, the head to head format is to be used for all classes (Open, Champion, Grand). All hounds will be judged against the official breed standard, as adopted by the ARHA. Hounds shall be judged by standing all hounds in a class at the same time. In the Open class, the first place – male, female, and puppy are to show against each other for Best of Show.
 - 3.** The club shall keep the Bench Show Official Score Sheet for a period of 30 days after the hunt.
 - 4.** There shall be only 1 Bench Judge for each class (Open, Champion, Grand) at each hunt. (Example: The same Bench Judge must judge all of the Open Class. A different Bench Judge can be used to judge all of the Champion Class & Grand Champion class and so on).
- D.** Clubs must give awards to First Place Hounds and Best of Show Hounds in each class judged. They may give other awards. Second place awards for Champion and Grand Champion Class Show must be awarded at all Big Four hunts. All points earned toward championship while dog is a pup shall be carried over after dog is one year old.
- E. Classes shall be divided into:**
- 1. Puppies six months to under one year old**
Classes 1 year and over:
 - a. Open: Male/Female
 - b. Champion
 - c. Grand Champion

F. Puppy Bench Shows

- 1.** All puppies **six months to under one year** shall be shown against each other regardless of sex.
- 2.** The Best Puppy shall compete against the Best Male Open and the Best Female Open for Best of Show Open Class.

Note: A puppy that receives the necessary points and wins to be Bench Champion will show against other Bench Champions. This is also true for puppies that are Grand Bench Champions.

- 3.** Points shall be awarded as follows:

a.	Best Puppy	20 points
b.	Second Best Puppy	10 points

G. Bench Show - Open Class

- 1.** Hounds shall be shown by sex
- 2.** Points shall be awarded as follows:

a.	Best Male	20 points
b.	Second Place Male	10 points
c.	Best Female	20 points
d.	Second Place Female	10 points
e.	Best of Show	20 additional points

3. Only First Place Hounds shall be considered for Best of Show.
4. A Bench Show Champion hound that has scored 100 points in A.R.H.A Bench Show competition and has received a minimum of 1 Best of Show Award.
Not more than 50 points may come from one club.

H. Bench Show Champion and Grand Champion

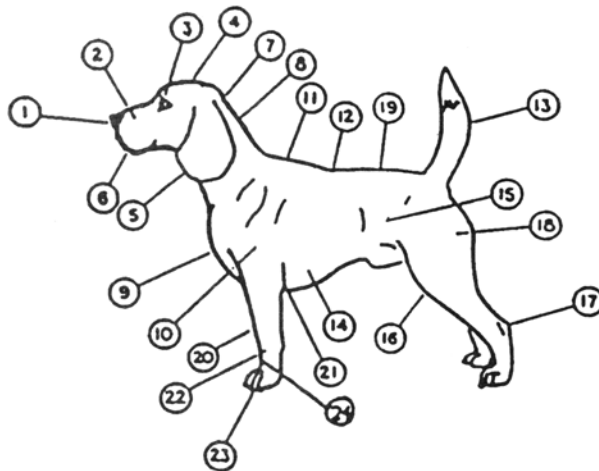
1. Since only Best of Show counts, Best of Show shall be the only place awarded with the exception of Big 4 or Big 6 Hunts.
2. A Grand Bench Show Champion is a hound that has 3 Best of Show wins in Champion Bench Show competition. One of these wins must be a State or Big Four or Big Five Championship.
3. A hound may also become a Grand Bench Show Champion by gaining 5 Best of Show awards with no more the 2 coming from any one club.

I. A hound must, be entered in the hunt to qualify to enter the Bench Show.

1. **Exceptions:**
 - a. Puppies
 - b. Rabbit Champions and Grand Rabbit Champions may be shown on the bench without being entered in the field if no field class is established for them at that hunt.
2. A Handler may not pay fees and scratch the hound in order to compete in the bench. The hound must take part in the field. **If a hound is scratched by the Judge in the field, the hound is still eligible to be shown on the Bench. No female in heat may be shown on the Bench.**

J. Class Sizes

1. A minimum of 3 hounds must be entered **and shown head to head** in Open Class in order to award A.R.H.A Bench points.
2. Open Class shall be divided by sex. Example: 3 males are entered **and shown**, but only 2 females **are entered and shown**. Points are awarded to the male class, but not to the female class even if they are judged and trophies awarded. The Male winner or Puppy winner must receive Best of Show. If only 1 class of 3 hounds are shown, no Best of Show will be awarded.
3. A Bench Champion Class shall be 3 or more hounds, regardless of sex, **entered and shown**.
4. A Grand Champion Class shall be 2 or more hounds, regardless of sex, **entered and shown**.
5. There shall be a Bench Champion and Bench Grand Champion Class at all State and Big four hunts if there are enough entries.
6. A minimum of 3 puppies, **shown head to head**, constitutes a puppy class.



K. Names of the Different parts of a beagle:

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|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Nose/Nostril | 7. Occiput | 13. Tail | 19. Hip |
| 2. Muzzle | 8. Neck | 14. Rib Cage | 20. Foreleg |
| 3. Eyes | 9. Chest | 15. Loin | 21. Elbow |
| 4. Skull | 10. Shoulders | 16. Stifle | 22. Knee |

5. Ears
6. Lips

11. Withers
12. Back

17. Hock
18. Rump

23. Feet
24. Pastern

L. Bench Show entries shall close with Field entries.

M. Time for Bench Shows

1. If possible, a time will be designated during the day when all bench hounds shall be present and shown at one time.
2. This time shall be announced at the cast drawing.

N. Licensed hunts only may award points toward a championship in any class.

O. All protests from the Bench Show shall be handled by the Master of Hounds.

1. Handlers are reminded that protests shall be over rule infractions only. The judging itself is all subjective and not open to protest.
2. Hound size shall be protested to the Master of Hounds.

P. Any hound that has been neutered (castrated or spayed) shall be ineligible to be shown. A male beagle must have 2 testicles of approximately the same size or it is ineligible to be show. Note: The two-testicle requirement does not apply to male puppies.

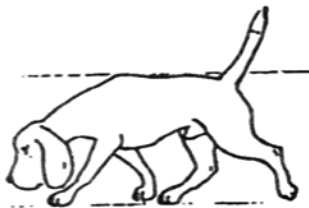
II. Bench Show Area

- A. ARHA Clubs should attempt to provide a large enough area to properly gait the hounds.
- B. ARHA Clubs should provide a stable bench. The bench on which the hounds are shown shall be at least 2 feet high and 18 inches wide, with the top covered with a non-slippery surface. The length of the bench should be of suitable length to hold a hound in a show position. If the bench does not meet the standard the judge shall allow the show to be held, but should instruct the Master of Hounds to have the situation corrected and notify the ARHA office that the bench does not meet the standards.

III. Bench Show Judging

A. **Gait** - A hound's gait is a valuable tool in locating possible faults. However, since points will be awarded in each specific area, no points are to be scored on gait. It is simply a recommended procedure for the judge to use to begin his assessment of the hound. With the head down in the trailing position, the back should be level; with the front legs moving straight forward with smooth minimal effort: Have the handler walk the hound at a comfortable pace the circle allowing the hound's nose to contact the ground in order that the hound may be observed in its natural trailing position. (Caution should be used here - the handler may be keeping too short a lead on the hound forcing an unnatural gait) This allows the judge to screen for the following:

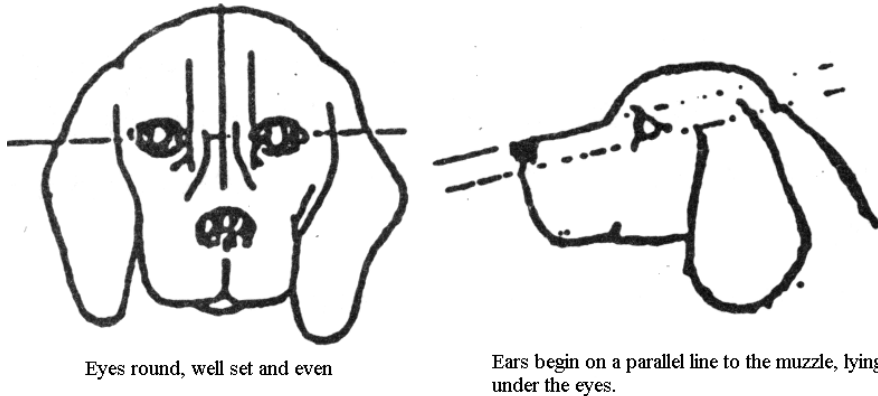
1. **Level Back** (in the trailing position)
 - a. A hound that is crouching will appear high in the back end while lower in the front. This points to possible flaws such as a short neck and/or too long front legs.



- b. A hound that is roach backed will appear to be bowed up. This points to possible flaws such as disproportionate neck or front legs.
2. **Swinging Front Legs** - A hound that is swinging its front legs in a semi-circle points to possible flaws such as a chest that's too broad.
3. **Bowed Legs** - A hound that appears bow legged will have its elbows pointing outward while its toes point inward. (Bulldog look)
4. **Bouncing Motion** - A hound will appear to bounce up and down excessively. This points to foot and/or coordination problems caused by:
 - a. A weakness in the rear end such as thin hips or loin
 - b. Being cow-hocked
 - c. Being cat-footed (too high on toes)

- d. Being splay-footed (too flat on the toes)
- 5. **Tottering** - A hound will appear to be moving excessively from side to side. This points to a hound having its feet placed too far out from the body or too far under the body.

B. Head



1. **Eyes** - A hound's eyes should be clear, responsive, friendly, round and well set (even from side to side balanced).
2. **Muzzle** - A hound's nostrils should be open having large air passages. The sensory nerves, being located in this area, furnish information to the brain and in turn direct all body responses.
 - a. **Teeth** - No overbite, underbite, or crooked teeth should be detectable. Teeth should be a scissor bite, although a matched, smooth meeting of the teeth is acceptable. Overshot or undershot bite is defined as having a visible gap between the upper and lower teeth.
 - b. **Lips** - This area should appear tight with no loose hanging skirt.
 - c. **Length/Width** - The muzzle should be of medium length, straight, and square cut with a definite stop (where muzzle meets the skull).
3. **Skull** - The skull should be slightly rounded at the occiput (back of the head where the neck meets skull), and the cranium should be broad and full (not domed or flat).
4. **Ears** - Measure the location of the ears by laying your thumbs along the dog's muzzle under the eyes and pointing straight back. The top of the ears should be at the end of side of the head to keep out dust and debris. Measure the length of the ears by stretching them toward the muzzle. Ears should be long enough to reach the back of the nose, but not excessively long.

C. Neck

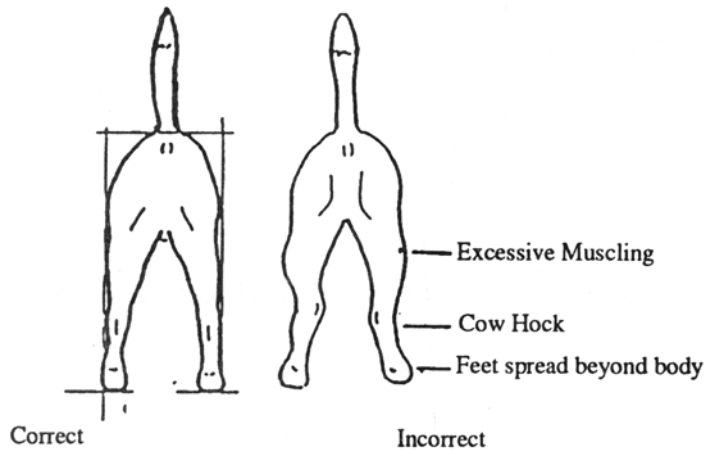
1. **Dew Lap** - Excessive skin hanging loosely under the neck is a fault.
2. **Length** - The neck should balance with the tail. The judge can check this by holding the head and



tail up in a posed position.

3. **Loaded** - will be oversized, over muscled, and thick.
- D. Chest** - A hound's chest should be broad, deep and slightly wider than the rib cage when viewed from the front of the hound (looking toward the rear). However, it should not be so broad that it interferes with the movement of the shoulders. The breastbone should not protrude excessively (pigeon breasted) and the depth of the chest should be just below the elbows.
- E. Shoulders** - From the side view the shoulder bone should slope at a 45-degree angle (feel from the withers





downward to the point of shoulder). There should be a gentle slope from the withers downward to the shoulder, as seen from a front view. There should be a straight vertical line from the shoulder to elbow. The distance from the withers to the elbow and from the elbow to the bottom of the feet should be equal. Check the strength of the shoulder area by pushing firmly downward on the withers. The hound should resist. If the hound gives easily under this pressure, he is weak in the front end.

- F. Back** - The back should be straight, smooth, and level. Check this by running your hand down the back toward the tail from a side viewing. There should be no sway, roach, or sever drop off the base of the tail. When the hound is posed, a 45-degree angle should exist from the neck to the back. The length of the back should be in proportion to the rest of the body.
- G. Tail** - Check for knots or crooks by running your fingers down the tail. Measure the length by laying the tail along the curve of the back leg to the hock. A too-long tail is easily injured. A too-short tail is a balance problem.
- H. Rib Cage** - The rib cage should be well sprung and roomy. It should be slightly less than the shoulder width from a rear to head viewpoint. A small rib cage causes inadequate lung capacity. A too-large rib cage overexposes the hound to possible injury.
- I. Loins** - The loins should be strong and balanced, well muscled, but not muscle-bond.
- J. Back Legs** - The stifle should be strong and sloping to the pastern. There should be no excessive muscling or appearance of a cow hock. **(The feet should not be spread apart beyond the body.)**
- K. Testicles** - A male beagle should have 2 testicles of approximately the same size or it is ineligible to be shown. The judge should check this by gently mashing/squeezing the scrotum. **Note that this rule does not apply to puppies and puppies should not be judged by this rule.**
- L. Foreleg** - The foreleg should be straight from the elbow to the pastern and the pastern should show strength (short and strong).
- M. Feet** - should be closed and level (no toes sticking up or out). Pads should be firm and free of cracks and



should show no uneven wear (from a faulty gait). Hounds should not be excessively cat-footed, splay or spread-footed or hare-footed (middle toes longer than outside toes).

- N. Coat** - A hound's coat should be coarse, short, and thick. Hair should lie close to the body and not appear shaggy. **(Note: the coat is the hound's protection against outside elements. The general condition of the hound can be determined by an inspection of the coat -a poor quality coat could point to an overall health problem and effect overall performance.)**

IV. Scoring Procedures the following point system is to be used-

- A. Head (Total of 30 Points)**
 - 1. Skull 10 Points
 - 2. Ears 5 Points
 - 3. Eyes 5 Points
 - 4. Muzzle 10 Points

B. Body (Total of 40 Points).

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|----|-----------|-----------|
| 1. | Neck | 5 Points |
| 2. | Chest | 10 Points |
| 3. | Shoulders | 10 Points |
| 4. | Back | 10 Points |
| 5. | Loin/Rib | 5 Points |

C. Running Gear (Total of 20 Points)

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|----|----------|----------|
| 1. | Foreleg | 5 Points |
| 2. | Hip | 5 Points |
| 3. | Hind Leg | 5 Points |
| 4. | Feet | 5 Points |

D. Coat 5 Points

E. Tail 5 Points

V. Policy Statement – These ARHA Bench Show Rules can't be changed without the approval of the ARHA President and the re-convening of a Bench Show Committee.