

Sickle Hocks Explained

Monique Hodgkinson – April 2009

With regards the hindquarter, the FCI Boxer Standard states “**Hock: Strong and well defined but not exaggerated. Angle approximately 140 degrees.**” and “**Metatarsus (rear pastern): Short with slight inclination, 95 – 100 degrees to the ground.**” This means that there should be a fairly wide (obtuse) angle through the hock joint and the rear pasterns should slope slightly so that the back foot stands further back than the actual hock joint. The 2 photos below show sickle hocks. The first photo (Photo 1) shows the rear pastern slanting in the wrong direction – the hock stands back further than the rear foot, while the angle of the hock joint is closer to 90 degrees (green lines) than the required 140 degrees. With the second photo (Photo 2), the rear pastern is almost vertical to the ground (not the required 95 – 100 degrees) and the angle through the hock joint is closer to 95 degrees instead of 140 degrees. The fact that the rear pastern is almost vertical to the ground is not the issue here. The fact that the angle of the hock joint is too acute (way less than 140 degrees) is the problem.

Photo 1

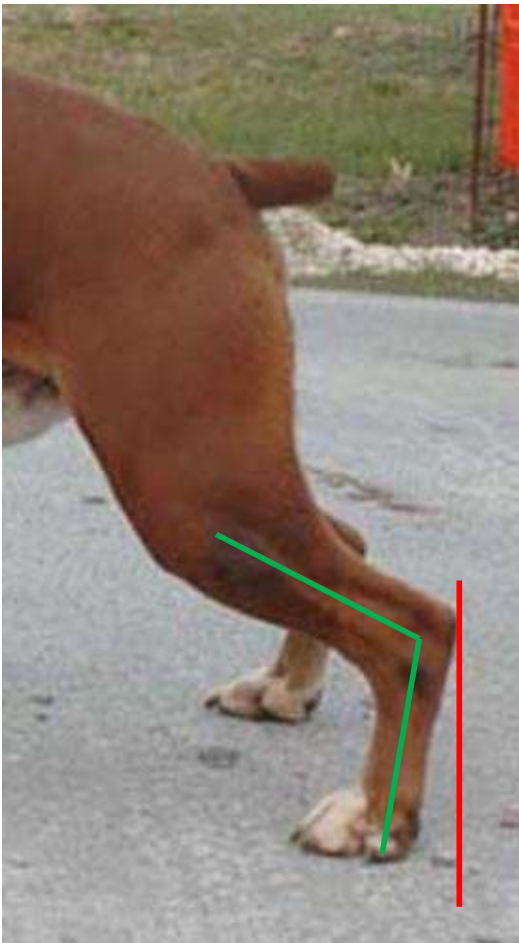


Photo 2



In the next 2 photos, correct hindquarters are illustrated. Photo 3 shows a hindquarter where the rear pastern is sloping at approximately 100 degrees, as required by the Standard. The foot stands behind the hock joint, with the rear pastern sloping up from the foot to the hock. The hock joint is an obtuse angle of 140 degrees, while there is still angle through the stifle, as required. In photo 4, the rear pasterns are almost perpendicular to the ground like Photo 2 above, but unlike Photo 2, the hock joint is still approximately 140 degrees.

Photo 3



Photo 4

