

Judging the Yorkshire Terrier by Dr. E. Carolyn Hensley

To begin to judge the Yorkshire Terrier one must keep in mind the original function, which was of a toy-sized terrier, a ratter, which covers all the small prey of similar size. Despite which opinion of the antiquity origination of the breed you choose to believe the one common thread is that the breed was founded on terriers with all that word entails to judges. You will do the breed and yourself a favor if you challenge those exhibiting to you to present the same soundness in body and movement along with alert personality in this toy breed as you would want to see in any of the terrier breeds. But keep in mind, it is a TOY-TERRIER which means it is middle ranged toy, not as tall or large as the Cavalier or Crested not as small as the Chihuahua.

A key to keep in mind is the dog is a terrier, albeit a toy one, so instead of saying "it's only a toy" and rewarding bad structure, poor temperament, lack of fire, bad mouths and so forth justified by the mantra of "the coat is of prime importance" a judge should have expectation of a terrier with the sparkle, fire and working ability of one. Your adjudication will do the breed a great service by challenging the breeders to present this too you.

The challenge to the breeder of this breed is the attempt to get it all correct in one animal, which is why so many take short cuts in trying to achieve what is so daunting to so many, that being a toy-terrier, silk coat of specificity in color and texture, sound body, sound mouth, sound movement. With that said, keep in mind the standard lists no fault or disqualification.* October of 2007 the Yorkshire Terrier Club of America, the parent club in the United States for the Yorkie, did establish a disqualification based upon coat coloration. [\[1\]](#)

And one of the biggest misconceptions affecting this breed, the standard is a description of an adult animal. If in doubt ask the age, permitted under AKC rules; don't expect the clear, precise coloration of the adult in the young animal. This is the reason so many of the breed are too light and not holding correct coloration to their old age.

A puppy is born looking and colored similar to a Dobe or Rottie but in a smaller package. Learn the difference in the feel of the coats and don't go on the color alone! A soft coated black dog is precisely that! A lighter colored dog holding the correct blue coloration in a coat having the correct quality and texture is to be more highly prized than a soft coated black that though it may fade to a grey never contains the correct blue hue.

The Yorkshire Terrier does not go through significant coat changes as do many other breeds, it is a single coated breed at birth through senior years. One of the easiest checks for the quality and texture in a Yorkie puppy is to check the feet. This is one of the first places that changes on the Yorkie. A soft coated puppy will have a fluffy foot in which the hair stands full and away from the foot. This coat quality and texture will not change as an adult and even if it changes will be what is referred to as a clerical grey. This coat will also not reflect a metallic like sheen back at you no matter how many products are put on the coat. The correct silk coat will lie flat to the foot with little volume and this occurs at a young age.

For color on the Yorkie puppy, the foot again will tell you everything as it will typically begin to show the correct golden tan at its root by the age of 6 months as will the base of the ear.

Hint to judges of this breed: Get yourself a wide, flat black watch band and compare it to the adult coat in the ring; if it matches you know they don't have the correct blue in their coat but are instead a black and incorrect!

The Yorkshire standard is often one of the most misinterpreted by judges of the breed. You have to understand the words and meaning to understand that a clear picture is actually given on the breed. As judges you will find that everyone will give you a different interpretation of what a silk coat truly is, what the correct color is in both the tans and the blues, often times telling you at seminars that their animals are correct and others are not. It is not without reason many a judge gives up trying to find the correct and thinking all the dogs are colored will only try to go for what appeals to them regardless of correction to the standard.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

ABSOLUTE RIGHT AND WRONG DOES NOT EXIST!

The Yorkshire Terrier AKC standard defines a range, not a point, on a spectrum of correct breed type. Reasonable people can and do disagree about the meaning and interpretation of the Standard. Even if they agree on the general provisions in the Standard, they argue about how to apply the standard to particular dogs that may not meet their vision of the "ideal". Do not let this confuse and discourage you. Honest up front discussible disagreement renders the whole experience interesting, exciting, challenging and immensely pleasurable. Except for direct experience with the Yorkies themselves, some of the best Yorkshire Terrier memories should include those of heated discussions about the meaning and interpretation of the written word on the drop coated silk terrier that typifies this breed. These discussions will immeasurably enhance your understanding of true breed type. Do not trust your eye or your hand to measure /weigh the breed (it's probably incorrect anyway) as they have no disqualification so judge on your opinion of the standard. Inform your judgment, but in the end remember it is your day to pick the dogs that fall within the range the Standard defines.

SIMPLE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE YORKSHIRE TERRIER DO NOT EXIST!

Some people believe a simple, straight forward, single formula exists for judging, showing, breeding, rearing and living with Yorkshire Terriers. Anyone who believes this is simple minded, as unfortunately we do not yet know many things; things exist in the history that we can surmise but will probably never know as well. To complicate matters further, our supposed knowledge may greatly benefit one dog while wreaking havoc on another to the breeds' detriment. To most questions about Yorkshire Terriers truth be told we can only answer an unsatisfactory "We don't know. It might be A, but could be B or C or even A, B, C and X!" No one likes vague answers to questions that we want answered desperately. Nevertheless, that does not make any answer you may get wrong; just many will purport knowledge that they do not possess rather than to say, "I don't know for sure".

KEEP AN OPEN MIND!

Recognize that other judges have reasonable points of view but are human just as you. A different point of view is not always wrong. On the one hand, judges who place dogs in a somewhat different order within an acceptable range are not necessarily either stupid, blind or totally ignorant of the written standard. On the other hand, placing the dogs in exactly the order you would have placed them does not automatically render these judges brilliant and knowledgeable about the breed. Try to understand WHY others might honestly disagree with your assessment and then look for the merit in their decisions and opinions.

JUDGING REQUIRES FINDING DOGS WHO APPROXIMATE AN IDEAL!

No dog is perfect; no living creature is! Judging, therefore, must always compromise reality and an ideal. In the end, you must choose the best dogs in real life, not the non-existent perfect one in your minds' eye. The dog, in living flesh, that is the closest to your mind's eye picture of the perfect dog, deserves the prize. Remember as a judge you must measure those in front of you against the breed standard, a standard open to various interpretations, rightly so!

The following paragraphs represent but one of several acceptable approaches to judging the Yorkshire Terrier. Experienced judges may wish immediately to alter it to suit their personal style and procedure. New judges for the breed should find it useful as a start that they might modify as their experience develops. However, ALL those adjudicating the breed should follow its general ideas in order to find the dogs that best conform to the Yorkshire Terrier Standard.

OVERALL IMPRESSION

Gain an overall impression of the dogs as a group at the outset. Most people may think that this includes only an impression of the dogs as they stand in a line. I believe it also encompasses the impression they create in motion. Hence, I recommend that you gain your overall impression by observing the dogs both standing and in motion. Have them come into the ring moving and stopping on the far side, to be hard stacked, prior to individual adjudication, Break up the lines, if required, to give each a fair first impression.

STANDING

At the start of every class, look up and down the line of dogs in order to assess four critical features:

1. Shape or Outline

Looking at the row of dogs creates your first opportunity to determine which dogs fit the image of the longhaired toy TERRIER the Standard calls out. Look for the curves, depth of chest, length of neck, body and leg that combine to produce an outline or silhouette of a body neat, compact and well proportioned with high head carriage giving an air of self-importance. Remember the standard first and foremost calls out for a longhaired toy TERRIER. Reward it highly when you see it, avoid rewarding ribbons to those who do not possess it. If in doubt of this meaning, I suggest observing and hands on the terriers applying that knowledge to the meaning of these words.

2. Presence

Do not confuse presence with quality! A dog with presence bears itself as if to say, "I am THE one!" This dog does not plead for recognition. It knows it is best and has no doubt that you must agree. If you do not, that is your loss in its eye. This dog conveys an "air of self importance" or in terrier, language "stands over its ground". Remember the Standard demands not only the coat in its distinctive blue and tan shades BUT gives precision in the body to be neat, compact and well proportioned, high head carriage and confident manner.

Equally important, do not mistake the dog with its head held highest in the air as the one with the most presence. In many cases, the head held high may reveal presence but it can also reveal a serious fault, the column or steeple front. Dogs with this fault, often seen in conjunction with ewe-necks, may impress the novice, but their strained, uncomfortable stance and movement belies the more relaxed proud bearing of the correctly structured Yorkshire Terrier exhibiting presence.

3. Quality

An experienced judge said she could not define quality; it speaks for itself. Therefore, it does. Dogs that possess it stand away from the others as if they were cast in a special mold. Look for overall quality and

reward it.

4. Balance

Lack of balance greatly diminishes shape, presence and quality. All the parts of a balanced Yorkshire Terrier fit together. Curves and length, breadth and depth, substance and shape hang together. A balanced dog rests there, just as the word balance conveys and implies. Unbalanced dogs make you feel awkward; even the most skilled handlers cannot bend them into balance no matter how cleverly they try. Some examples of unbalance in a Yorkshire Terrier includes: a long backline set onto short legs; a very steep shoulder set on with curving stifles; long legs and neck with no fore chest or depth of chest or a lack of sternum and so forth. Caution, a dog may possess balance and yet lack correct type! Example: a dog with a short neck, short body, straight shoulders and straight stifles may appear balanced but it lacks correct breed type as set out in the Standard.

IN MOTION

After you gain an initial impression from the dogs standing still, ask their handlers to take them around the ring all together. At this time, do not attempt to assess sound movement. That will come later as you individually examine the dogs. At this point, look for overall shape, presence, quality and balance in motion. This step will frequently surprise you. The dogs that looked best standing still in a hard stack may not remain so in motion. The straight dog's shape standing can suddenly transform into all the right soft curves required for a smooth moving action. The balanced Yorkie standing can in motion look as if its many parts came from different dogs all just stuck together in one animal.

Many judges omit this critical step of assessing shape, presence, quality and balance in motion. Yet, experience will demonstrate to you that dogs standing change substantially when in motion. This occurs not simply because motion uncovers unsound movement but in addition because it exposes faults in type. You will find it difficult to choose between the dog that possesses shape, quality, presence and balance standing but loses them in motion and the one who possesses them in motion but not in standing. The best Yorkies, of course, excel in both, reward it when you find it as the breed needs its majority to possess it as too long has it been sacrificed to the ode of coat being prime importance. The founders assumed all knew the coat to be the icing on an otherwise sound dog meeting the other requirements as set forth in the Standard.

Watch for reach and drive! On the long legged style, you should see an easy reach through the coat with no sign of crossing over and no break or other sign of hackney-like movement. As well, you should be able to see the rear kick and the bottom of the pad seen as the dog pushes off, on no account should it appear that the dog is single tracking or that it appears to have the rear legs moving out of the same socket/hole. This should be at an easy trot NOT the high speed some handling them will move them in an effort to fool you! In the shorter legged style you should see movement similar to that of the shorter legged terriers and while stiffer in movement then the long legged you should still see an ease in movement just not as much reach or drive.

JUDGING INDIVIDUAL DOGS

Judges differ in the extent to which they rely on two critical elements in adjudication of individual dogs: (1) looking at the dog and (2) feeling, or "getting your hands on the dog". What should you be looking and feeling for? Only by looking and then touching can you ascertain 5 (five) basic characteristics of the Yorkshire Terriers:

1. Substance

Proper substance means the dog has sufficient bone, muscle, breadth and depth. Think always of two characteristics of substance:

Put your hand around a dog's forearm at the elbow and run it down through the pastern. You should feel thick bone covered with plenty of hard muscle. The legs should have shape, somewhat broader near the elbow than at the pastern. They should not curve too much; particularly they should not twist. However, forelegs should not resemble tubes or Coke cans; that is to say, they should not appear round without any curve.

Looking down, does the body resemble donuts stacked end to end in an unopened box? Feel the ribcage to determine both the breadth and the depth of chest. Think of an egg shape or oval when feeling the chest. Avoid when possible rewarding dogs with either a barrel chest, slab sides or shallow sternum.

Take special care to look over and feel the hindquarters. The croup should neither fall steeply away nor run flat to the base of the tail. Judges frequently overlook the importance of the croup. Learn to identify the properly slightly sloped croup. It contributes to the correct tail set; it enhances the dog's movement. The tail set on the Yorkie is very important, a low tail set is to be penalized more than a gay tail although both are incorrect as the Standard calls for the Yorkie tail to be carried slightly higher than the backline; i.e. a one o'clock angle.

Do not forget that under FCI rules a Yorkie tail is no longer docked; however, there has been no statement made as to how the natural tail should be carried. Under AKC governance, a judge has the full option of dismissing or of judging a dog with a natural tail and will be supported. [2]

Make sure that you assess the amount and quality of critical muscle in both thigh and second thigh. (See below for more detail on these points). Again, many keep this breed on wire to protect the coat and you will find many have limited muscle tone as the owners/handlers have somewhere forgotten that soundness requires good muscle tone.

Some dogs have too much bone and muscle-they are what are called coarse. Hence, they, like the highly refined "toy" dogs, lack correct type. However, coarseness is not, for the most part, a breed problem. Indiscriminate breeding leads to refinement, not coarseness, in succeeding generations. Dogs with too much substance occur sometimes; refinement appears too often. It is much easier to correct coarseness than refinement in breeding and you are judging breeding stock. Therefore, if in doubt prefer a dog/bitch with too much substance rather than one with far too little.

NOTE WELL: Never take this necessary preference for coarseness over refinement to mean that the biggest dog with the most bone and muscle should always win! Substance must be reckoned in concert with all other important breed characteristics! Think always of the balance between a toy and terrier and required strength.

2. Structure

Assessing structure requires you to determine whether the dog is properly put together! Dogs with the proper structure feel both good and right; your hands should not encounter improperly placed lumps and bumps of bone and muscle as they move down and over a dog's body. Instead, the hands ought to glide smoothly from the head over the neck to across the shoulder area then over the back to the croup and hindquarters. Evaluating structure also requires specifically examining with eyes and hands. Proper structure does not give you a view of a steeple front with the legs being a direct drop from the ears.

Head: In order to judge heads completely, you must take into account its overall shape and then more particularly the eyes, mouth, teeth and jaws, ears and whiskers. We do not want either too refined, narrow heads that resemble too much either the Lakeland on one extreme or the broad, thick, longer muzzled Silky OR the short muzzled Chihuahua head with pronounced stop at the other end of the spectrum. We should see a head similar in balance and proportions to that of the Westie but smaller with

a flat skull on top, not too prominent or round and the muzzle not too long. The head should balance to the rest of the body with good flow from the back skull to neck to shoulder with no straight lines but in a nicely curved manner befitting a small varmint hunter and killer.

Face furnishings, particularly whiskers, ordinarily enhance a dogs' head; they can also conceal weak and exaggerate strong heads serving to camouflage the weak underjaw or lack of chiseling in the face. Furthermore, they can soften the undesirable hard expression in some Yorkshire Terriers. The proper adult Yorkshire Terrier head, combined with an eager and inquisitive eye substantially contributes to correct breed type. Do not overrate it, as the Yorkie is NOT a head breed, but give it its due.

Unfortunately, you will often find unattractively plain or improper heads on dogs that otherwise excel in type. The reverse is also true; beautiful heads filled with type appear on dogs lacking in other respects. As in life generally, do not allow the beautiful face to mar your judgment or the unattractive one to cause you to miss an otherwise outstanding specimen. Moreover, always check for and reward the proper dark pigmentation, while many may try to fool you by applying eye rims, the lips of the mouth will always tell you real or not.

Front Assembly: Is made up of the neck, shoulder, upper arm, foreleg, pastern and feet. Relatively long, powerful, arched necks should set into shoulders laid well back that slope inward at the withers. Penalize: short necks set on too far to the front, stuffed into loaded upright shoulders and short upper arms; steeple fronts (also referred in some instances as cathedral fronts) with straight shoulder appearing to have a direct line from the bottom of the ear. Those Yorkies with narrow, weak giraffe-like necks set on too high; the ewe-necked toy terriers that stand with heads uncomfortably high and necks that break abruptly into the shoulders. Again, this is a ratter and keep in mind one of the areas a rat would immediately sink its teeth into in a fight, reward accordingly.

Upper Arms: Should balance the shoulder in length and angle; they ought also to balance length and angle of the thigh and stifle. You should penalize Yorkshire Terriers with straight, short upper arms, a fault much too prevalent today. Look for, and reward, shapely, strong forearms and round, strong, tight feet. Look for well filled fore chests over the hollow, narrow forechests revealed through front legs that do not allow you easily place a hand comfortably between them is a serious fault. Lack of sternum is also something prevalent today with the trend to the one dimensional creatures that look wonderful going around but are little more than a stick model to hold the coat.

Overall, consider the column front, a line that runs straight down from the base of the skull through the withers, shoulder, upper arm, and forearm to the pastern a fault of the most serious kind in the Yorkshire Terrier as they were a ratter and hunter of similar varmints long before they became a toy companion.

Body: The proper Yorkshire Terrier body contains a chest with both depth and spring of rib. A back that is rather short over long with sufficient muscle throughout and a backline level over the loin. Both sway backs, fortunately not as frequently seen, and roached backs, unhappily more prevalent, are incorrect. Flat toplines deserve special attention, always assess on the move as hard stack allows for manipulation to fool the inexperienced! Flat backlines the same height at shoulder and rump both standing and moving will please both the experienced and inexperienced judge of this breed.

The underline should reveal a long brisket with good tuck up but no wasp waists please. Look for dogs well ribbed; ideally, the space from the last rib to the front of the stifle should not contain more than roughly the average sized adult humans' three fingers.

Rear Assembly: The croup, thighs, second thighs, hocks and feet. The proper Yorkshire Terrier croup does not appear to slope, penalize steep croups which detract from the proper Yorkie type and which indicate weakness in the power, drive and movement of the rear. Heavy muscle should cover the thighs and

second thighs, the latter too often not given sufficient weight. Looking at a dog from the rear, its assembly and musculature should resemble the working terrier like that pictured in the great Victorian authority Stonehenge's book. Stifles should bend moderately; not nearly so much as the Italian Greyhound however, nor should they be straight with a longer hock, the latter more prevalent and a more serious fault. Look for strength, substance and shape throughout the rear assembly. Penalize the Yorkie with heavy boned and muscled thighs followed by weak spindly second thighs without the adequate muscle to balance the thighs above.

Tail: Be sure to consider both the structure and the carriage of tails. Yorkshire Terriers should possess docked, thick, full-coated tails. The thin or too long, or worse the thin and too short tail detracts significantly from the balance and type. As more breeds ban docking expect more with natural tails in your ring, know the AKC "opinion" on the subject prior to adjudication. Tails should set neither too high nor too low. The high-set tail, often accompanying a flat back and croup, inevitably makes the Yorkie who possesses it carry a gay tail. Under ordinary circumstances, they ought never to stand or move with their tails either between their legs or tipped over their bodies like a Maltese.

Using the standard as a guide, if a Yorkie with a full length natural tail appears in your ring, treat the natural tail as a fault weighing that fault against the other virtues already identified in the animal in front of you. Do not overly penalize nor under any circumstance overly reward a natural tail. In this instance, the set is the overriding importance and should be weighted as such. Per the standard, the correct tail carriage is that of slightly higher than the backline. Therefore, the correct tail set should never swing over or to the side touching the back ala the Maltese. Instead, you should see a continuation of the spine with the tail, after the first two or three joints, being carried in a manner that does not interfere with or distract from the beauty and identity of the breed in front of you.

Coat: Three statements in the standard cover coats in the breed. Hair is glossy, fine and silky in texture. Quality, Texture and Quantity of the coat are of prime importance, all 3 statements not just one. However, when faced with the unhappy choice, prefer too little to too much coat provided the Texture and Quality are the better examples in the too little coat. Recognize that this is one of the most difficult and most important aspects to learn on the breed. ^[3]

3. Soundness:

Typical Yorkshire Terriers possess both sound minds and sound bodies. That is, they must move properly and exhibit correct temperament. The latter we too often overlook.

A Yorkie possessing sound body moves correctly holding its topline on the go around, no crossing or hackney-like appearance on coming at you with a nice kick showing the pads of the foot going away. Avoid fiddle-fronts and weak pasterns (if you hear a click when doing a simple examination on the rear recognize it for what it is - there is no need for undue contortions by a judge of the rear or front while on the table). Soundness includes having a spring of rib along with a nice sternum easily felt. Too many are becoming slab-sided one dimensional dogs who look great on the go around with the elegant long neck and long legs, which are not correct for this breed.

4. Temperament:

Perhaps nothing detracts more from the Standard's requirement of commanding appearance than a timid, frightened Yorkshire Terrier. Furthermore, shyness, as a well-respected English breeder/judge once told me, is one-step away from viciousness. The Standard calls out for and the breeds' well being demands inquisitive nature and a terrier stand over the ground fortitude. Edgy Yorkshire Terriers are presently kept under control by the strangle hold of their handlers (easily seen) and without this would surely retreat or perhaps manifest worse characteristics of a weak temperament which includes fear biters!

PLEASE NOTE WELL: Do not include young, misbehaved, untrained or inexperienced dogs in this category of weak temperaments. While all of these may distract from a young dog, they do not bespeak poor temperament without additional considerations. Most important, a Yorkshire Terrier with poor temperament possesses neither soundness nor correct type; it cannot possibly show high head carriage and confident manner that gives the appearance of vigor and self-importance with a weak nature.

5. Movement:

Four aspects are critical to judging movement. They are fore, aft, reach and drive (or stride), and overall easy and active. All are important, but a long, easy and active stride should take precedence over the others. Forgive some faulty movement coming toward you and going away in a dog with long low strides that covers the ground with grace and economy. The much over criticized cow hocks and flapping fronts are as serious as the belabored, mincing, short strides more often seen. Reward the animal who is striding out with the natural easy stride showing a grab of the ground in front and a kick to push off behind. Under no circumstances, reward the hackney stride, which many judges unfortunately interpret as being meant by the term lively; this is after all a TERRIER and a killer of small creatures that requires speed and agility to accomplish the kill.

6. Fine Points:

After using the foregoing criteria now is the time to consider the "finishing touches" not before. The following add to quality:

Face: EYES are medium in size and not too prominent; dark in color and sparkling with a sharp, intelligent expression; head is small, not too prominent (in balance to body) or round, does not have a pronounced stop and is not too long in muzzle (this does not mean short); dark pigmentation (the lips, nose and eye rims should all be black or close.

Ears: Well set, small and V shaped.

Feet: Round, toes tight and well arched with black nails.

Condition: Healthy coat, good weight and muscle tone, overall thrifty with a strong constitution.

Coat: Dark steel blue, shaded gold (or tan). Natural coat color is shaded in all aspects. Standard is a description of an adult animal and should not be literally interpreted on a dog under the age of two years. 3 (THREE) references to coat descriptors all of equal importance: quality, texture and finally quantity). If

taken in order then quality and texture are more highly prized and desired than quantity. ^[4]

THE FINAL JUDGEMENT

After you have examined each dog individually, divide your final judgment into two phases. During the first, tentatively arrange the dogs in the order you prefer them, according to decisions made in your overall impressions and assessments of individual dogs. Keep in mind that the overall impression while important is not everything. The beautiful silhouette is sometimes weak, overly refined, in poor condition and can suffer from important structural problems. These latter will always discount to superior shape and soundness.

Secondly, ask the dogs to go around the ring together one (or at most two) last times(s). This is no mere formality; neither is it a staged action to increase suspense and test the exhibitor's endurance. You will often rearrange dogs on this final go around. Why, it is not for movement as such. Instead, in this last go around you will often find the dog who excels in shape, quality, presence and balance both standing and in motion. Hopefully, the dog you put tentatively at the front of the line will retain the best shape, display the same quality, possess the same presence and demonstrate equal balance in motion that it did standing still. If not, then do not hesitate to replace it in your placement. In the end, the winning dog should best fit the description:

THAT OF A LONGHAIRD TOY TERRIER WHO'S BLUE AND TAN COAT IS PARTED ON THE FACE AND FROM THE BASE OF THE SKULL TO THE END OF THE TAIL AND HANGS EVENLY AND QUITE STRAIGHT DOWN EACH SIDE OF THE BODY. THE BODY IS NEAT, COMPACT AND WELL PROPORTIONED. THE DOG'S HEAD CARRIAGE AND CONFIDENT MANNER SHOULD GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF VIGOR AND SELF IMPORTANCE.

Understanding the foregoing, let us proceed to the actual examination.
EXAMINATION NOTES FOR JUDGES

- *A Yorkshire should show interest and sparkle, as with the terriers, this should not be a shy dog.
- * Most exhibitors will walk in, drop to their knees and hard stack the breed. Recognize that this does not allow the animals in the ring to build up in excitement but causes them to do the proverbial up/down that wears them down quickly and does not allow for the response when the reward is on the line. I strongly encourage judges to ask the exhibitors to stand and allow the dogs to stand natural; this will give you a much clearer idea of the dog in front of you.
- * Do not reward one who attempts to bite a human but do not punish an attempt to spar with another dog. Think terrier attitude very different from aggression.
- * This breed is shown on a table and does require a hands on examination to "see" beneath the coat, do not be afraid of putting your hands on the dogs (and into the topknot if questionable) but gentleness in touch will allow a more natural stance than using the heavy hand that many do. The dogs learn early on to move out of the way of feet and while fearless with other animals are aware with human touch of their miniature size
- * First, look at the dog on the table to see if it is presenting an alert interest in what is going on in the ring and around them. Does the action of the dog show it is "standing over its ground" on the table? Head should be up with a keen eye looking at you with interest. Walk up to them confidently, not too slowly, and go over them impersonally. While gentle is appreciated, do not be afraid to touch.
- * On the table recognize the breed overall is taught to be hard stacked, give a bit of time to allow this but do not encourage the regrooming of the dog on the table. Many exhibitors, knowing judges are taught coat of prime importance, spend extraordinary amounts of time grooming the coat rather than checking the stance of the dog.
- * Many of the breeds object to having their vision blocked during the exam of the mouth, Yorkshire's are no different; these dogs can have their lips raised from beneath the chin and since there is no disqualification or fault for teeth and mouth, a short exam is all that is needed. However, again remember a sound dog and the teeth should be clean and should be enough to allow to assess the real bite of the dog.
- * Hands-on is necessary to evaluate structure and muscle tone. Lift or part the coat to see the feet as many of the breed will show broken pasterns and flat feet from the time spent on wire to protect the coat. Recognize that this will cause some of the topline faults you may see. Remember the standard states sound animal!
- * Do not go overboard on the noises, while you may get a response the first time this intelligent breed quickly gets your number. A better trick is to see how they respond to a furry toy tossed a bit away from

them, but only use this for a final decision if needed.

* Most will respond to bait if used correctly; unfortunately, many feed the dogs rather than bait/tease the dog. As a judge, you control the ring and can put a stop to this and to the running up on other exhibitors, crowding the line up and so forth.

*If you judge terriers, do not be afraid to spar these toy ones. However, make sure you know what and how to spar prior to attempting such. You do not want to see aggression but an interest with ears tipped forward and up on their toes.

* You will find a common theme on examining Yorkshire is that they refuse to put all 4 feet on the table at the same time, it is very typical for them to lift one of their front legs. Expect it and go on. It is also typical that they find the goings on elsewhere much more important than your examination, expect it and move on.

* Do not be surprised by wild excitement at the examination, this breed is not reserved for the most part. Expect a Yorkshire to like you, they do, they really do!

* Be aware of the faults profuse coat can hide, you need experienced eyes that can "see" through the coat some of the faults are flat feet, long or big ears, shallow chest, lack of sternum, rears that look like both legs come from the same hole. Alternatively, the illusions of faults it can create elbowing out, flipping pasterns, bad rear, ewe neck and so forth. While some watch the coat, with "experienced" eyes you will see the actual movement and should see the pads push in the rear and the front reach out towards you through the coat.

* Exhibitors should be encouraged to show on a loose lead in order to assess natural head carriage and movement. However, many of the breed will stride out in confidence ahead of the handler, be aware that a tight lead may be due to the dog itself rather than "stringing" up to cover a fault. Know the difference in the look. Exhibitors should be encouraged to move at a natural and easy stride for the breed. Many top handlers and knowledgeable exhibitors seem to think the ring is for speed or a foot race. Do not be fooled, make them slow down to a jaunty walk for the dogs.

* The gait of this toy terrier is best assessed at a medium speed; however, few exhibitors will believe you really mean it when you ask them to go slowly. Alternatively, they will be shocked when you ask them to stand naturally allowing you to assess the natural dog.

On to discussion of the AKC standard, You will find that I moved some of the General Appearance terms to the box of what is being described:

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GENERAL APPEARANCE

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Yorkshire Terrier
AKC Standard

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That of a longhaired toy TERRIER whose blue and tan coat is parted on the face and from the base of the skull to the end of tail and hangs evenly and quite straight down each side of the

body. The body is neat, compact and well proportioned. The dog's high head carriage and confident manner should give the appearance of vigor and self – importance.

Weight- Must not exceed 7 pounds.

Judging Interpretation of the Standard

This statement conveys a lot to a judge. You should expect terrier characteristics in the body of a toy. The head should be carried high, confident, vigorous and self important. All these fit the terrier breeds whose many standards talk to similar by stating stand over their ground and so forth. This breed should convey all of that too you. A great test is to ask the exhibitor to save their prayers for religious services and for them to stand up letting the dogs stand naturally.

The body is neat – look up this word in the dictionary, the old English term is neat and means: Orderly and precise in procedure; systematic.

Compact again going to the old English term means: closely and firmly united or packed together; heavy and compact in form or stature; "a wrestler of compact build"; "he was tall and heavysset"; "stocky legs"; "a thick middle-aged man"; "a thickset young man" [syn: heavysset, stocky, thick, thickset] .

Well proportioned, not one area should stand out from the other it means: Agreeable or harmonious relation of parts within a whole; balance or symmetry.

Coloration should be blue and tan, this does not mean grey and blonde or white and gold and most assuredly not purple like cast to the body.

Must not exceed 7 pounds. Since this is not a fault or disqualification you cannot scale the dogs, therefore concentrate on proportions and symmetry. No where does it state that the smaller the better or that any size is to be preferred over the other.

SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE

Yorkshire Terrier
AKC Standard

The body is neat, compact and well proportioned. Well proportioned and very compact. The back is rather short

Judging Interpretation of the Standard

. This is as key in judging this breed as with the coat is you need to recognized that this same language is repeated in the General Appearance portion of the standard as well as in the description of the size, proportion, substance.

. Again is stated: The body is neat – look up this word in the dictionary, the old English term is neat and means: Orderly and precise in procedure; systematic.

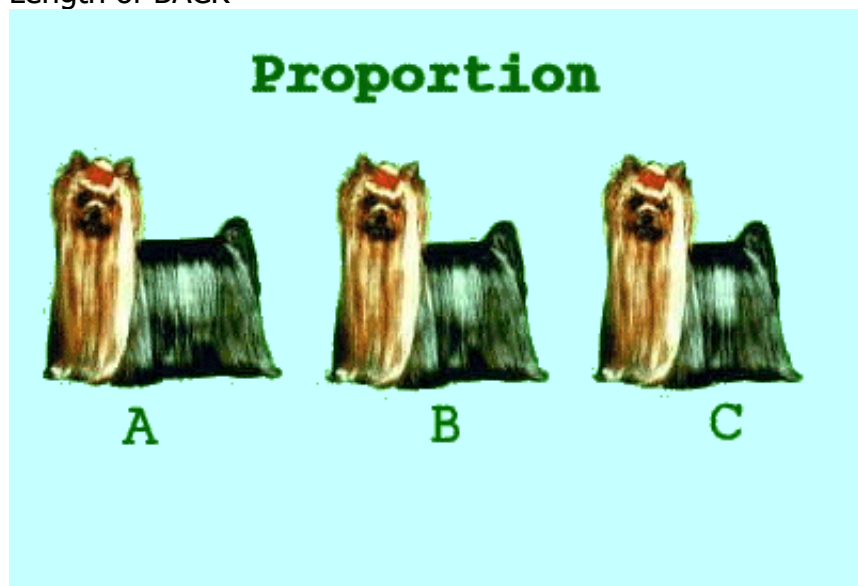
. Compact again going to the old English term means: closely and firmly united or packed together; heavy and compact in form or stature; "a wrestler of compact build"; "he was tall and heavyset"; "stocky legs"; "a thick middle-aged man"; "a thickset young man" [syn: heavyset, stocky, thick, thickset] .

. Well proportioned, not one area should stand out from the other it means: Agreeable or harmonious relation of parts within a whole; balance or symmetry.

. However, here introduced for the first time is that the back should be rather short. Does this mean short-backed, no, although it is interpreted that way by many. The precedence is on proportion, neat and so forth as descriptors. However, preference should be that the back is RATHER short over the longer backed animals.

. These statements take an understanding of canine structure to put into the proper framework.

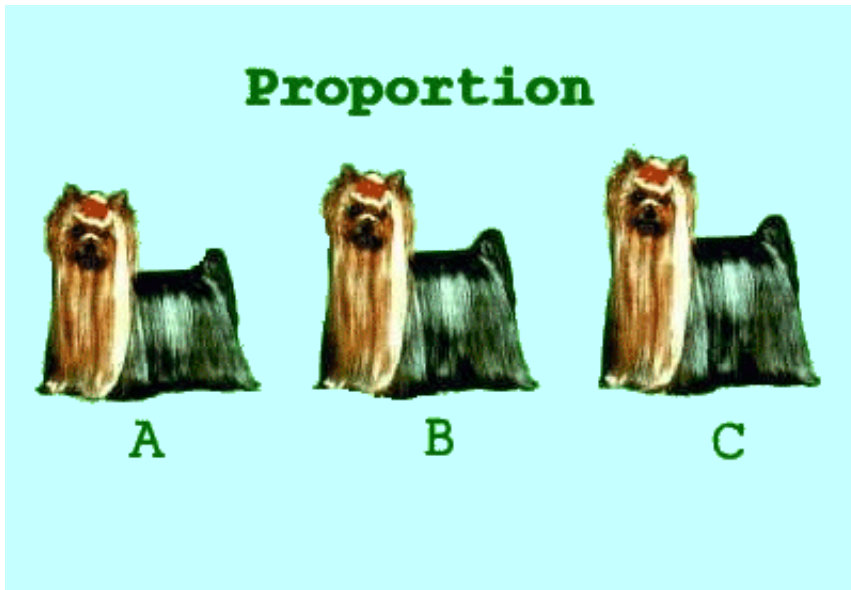
Length of BACK



B had the correct length of back.

A is too long and C is too short.

. PROPORTION



B is the best proportioned.
A is too short in leg, C is too long in leg.

. HEAD

. Yorkshire Terrier
AKC Standard

. Small and rather flat on top, the skull not too prominent or round, the muzzle not too long, with the bite neither undershot nor overshot and teeth sound. Either scissors bite or level bite is acceptable. The nose is black. Eyes are medium in size and not too prominent; dark in color and sparkling with a sharp, intelligent expression. Eye rims are dark. Ears are small, V-shaped, carried erect and set not too far apart.

Judging Interpretation of the Standard

. Again, relative proportion comes into play here. The head small, which is a relative term, it would be clearer to judges if the term "in proportion to the body" were to be introduced into the language.

. The skull not too prominent or round. This would tell you that

the dog needs a moderate stop or the skull can become prominent or round appearing. And why the encouragement of the helmet like poufs on the head? Encourage a more natural look when judging the breed and perhaps some brave soul will do the twin top knots ala the Maltese and show off a good Yorkshire head.

.
The muzzle not too long. Again in proportion. It also does not state the muzzle should be short just not too long, major difference.

.
Teeth sound. My goodness the dogs that finish or are specialed in this breed with misshapen, dirty and so forth teeth is amazing and goes totally against the word sound. However, recognize that this breed is prone to losing teeth at an early age, further they build tarter at tremendous speed due to the levels of calcium and similar minerals in their saliva. It goes on to state the bite is neither undershot nor overshot with no preference to scissors or level bites.

Don't overly penalize an otherwise strong specimen due to missing teeth!

.
Nose black. Eye rims are dark. If you stop to consider this it is to encourage the pigmentation a requirement if this breed is going to hold correct color.

.
Eyes are medium in size and not too prominent. This contradicts the tendency to what is commonly called a baby-doll face as in that look with the short muzzle the eye is large and round. Dark in color does not say black does not say hazel or any other shade other then dark. However, again the attitude of sparkling with a sharp intelligence; I want to remind you this is a toy terrier think of that expression in the bulk of the terrier breeds.

.
Ears small, v shaped, carried erect and not too far apart. This does not mean they are to touch on top of the head, they should be set apart or why would the standard state not too far apart? Small, in proportion again as it does not give you a reference to the word small. V shaped gives you a good visual of a prick ear coming to a point on the end.

HEAD CARRIAGE

Head Carriage



B is the correct head carriage. A is too short and C is too long of a neck.

..

MUZZLE LENGTH

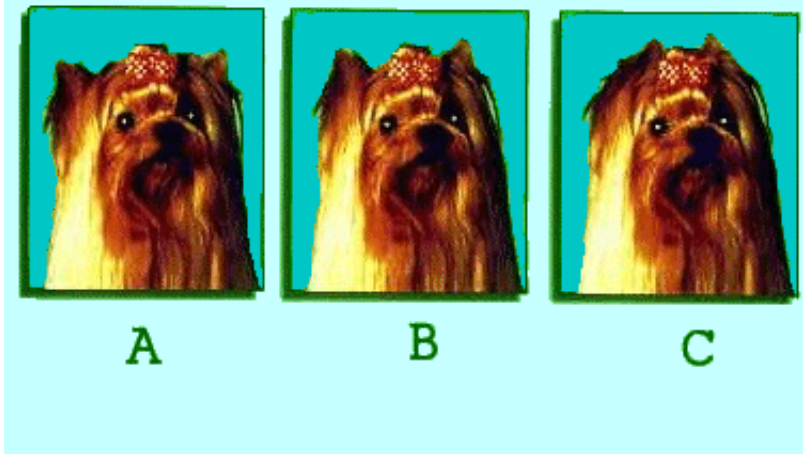
Muzzle



B is the correct muzzle.
A is too down faced, C is too short.

EAR SET

Ears



B is the correct ear set.
A's ears are too wide, C's ears appear to be tied up.

NECK, TOPLINE AND BODY

Yorkshire Terrier
AKC Standard

Well proportioned and very compact. The back is rather short, the back line level, with height at shoulder the same as at the rump. The dog's high head carriage and confident manner should give the appearance of vigor and self – importance. TAIL-docked to a medium length and carried slightly higher than the level of the back.

Judging Interpretation of the Standard

Once more is repeated: The body is neat – look up this word in the dictionary. Compact again going to the old English term means: closely and firmly united or packed together; heavy and compact in form or stature; "a wrestler of compact build"; "he was tall and heavysset"; "stocky legs"; "a thick middle-aged man"; "a thickset young man" [syn: heavysset, stocky, thick, thickset] .

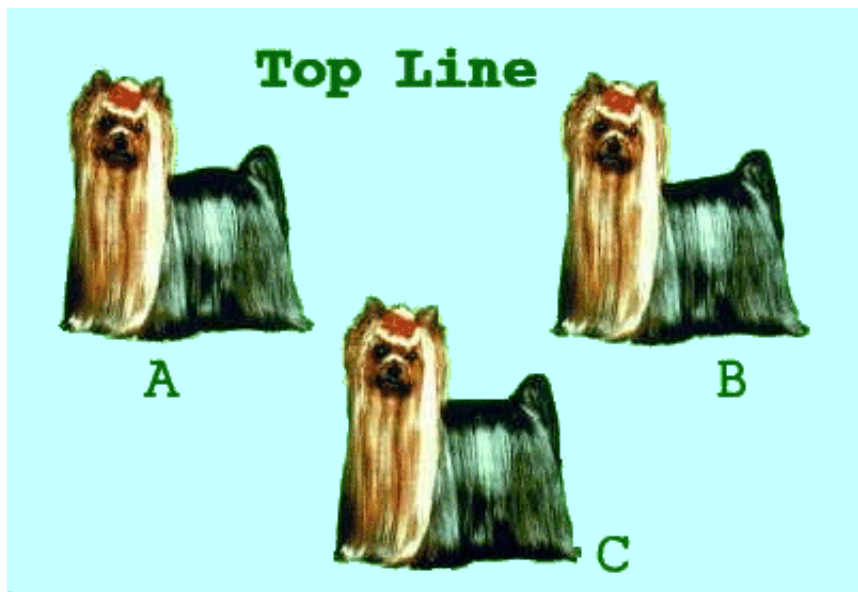
Well proportioned, not one area should stand out from the other it means: Agreeable or harmonious relation of parts within a whole; balance or symmetry.

However, here again is introduced is that the back should be rather short. Does this mean short-backed, no, although it is

interpreted that way by many. The precedence is on proportion, neat and so forth as descriptors. However, preference should be that the back is RATHER short over the longer backed animals.

The backline level. Note it does not say the back, nor does it say the spine, it states the backline with the height at the shoulder the same as at the rump. Unfortunately, this is many times achieved in the ring by a straight shoulder and tilted pelvis. Do not judge the topline with the exhibitor on the floor holding the dog straight and pushed together, let the dog stand natural and look at the topline on the go around!

TOPLINE



C has the correct topline.
A is roached back, B is down in the shoulders.



Tail is docked under AKC rules. However docked or undocked the carriage is important. Note it states carried slightly higher the back, this does not mean high up on the pelvis creating a gay tail.

.
*AKC Judges Newsletter: Fall 2002

In accordance with Chapter 7, Section 15 of the Rules Applying to Dog Shows, A judge's decision shall be final in all cases affecting the merits of the dogs. Full discretionary power is given to the judge to withhold any or all prizes for want of merit.

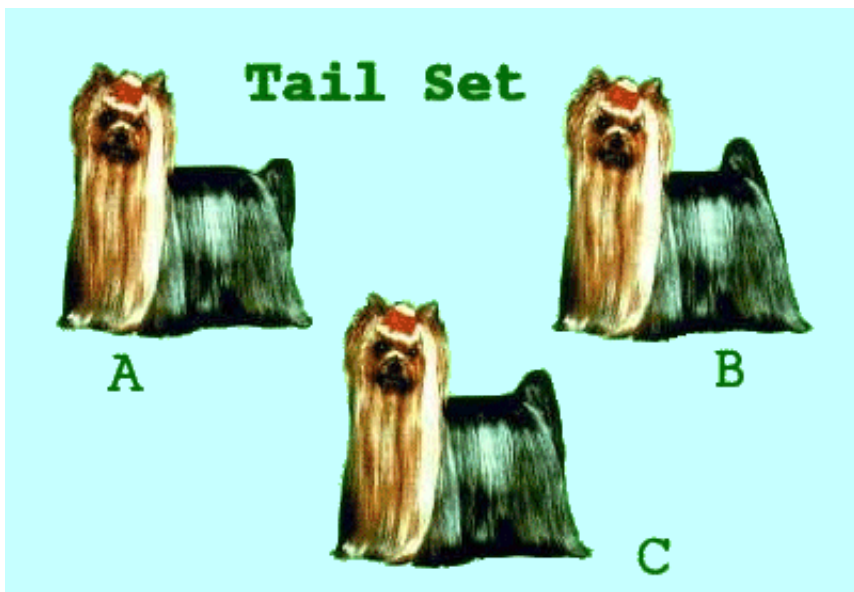
.
It is the judge's interpretation of the breed standard on the day. In each of these situations you may judge the exhibit and place the dog you feel appropriate based on its quality in comparison to the other dogs being exhibited. Or, you may excuse the dog from the ring noting that the exhibit is not consistent with the breed standard, natural tail, natural ears, etc.

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TAIL CARRIAGE



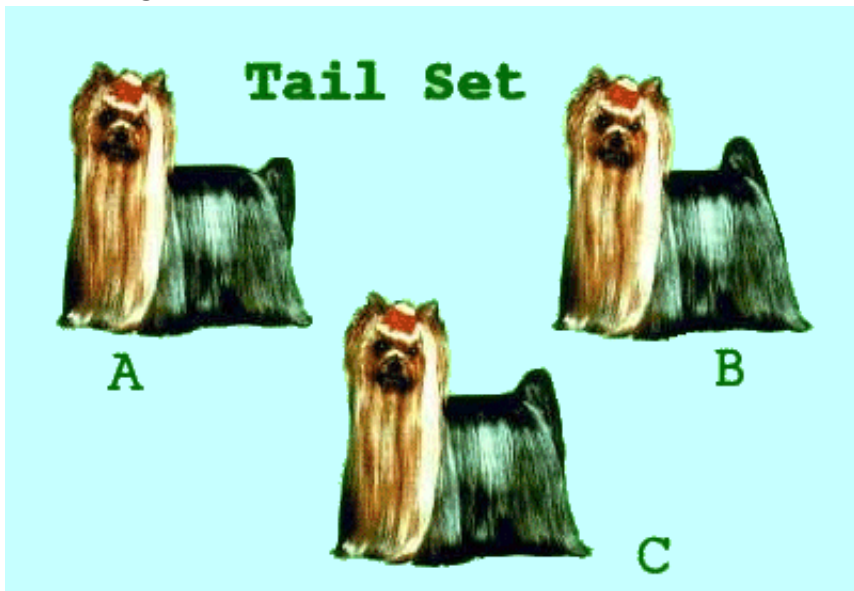
B has the correct tail carriage.
A is too far forward, C is down.

.
TAIL SET



C is carried at a 45 degree angle which is the correct tail set. A is too low, B is too gay (high)

TAIL LENGTH



A has the correct tail length. B is too short, C is too long.

FOREQUARTERS, HINDQUARTERS, LEGS AND FEET

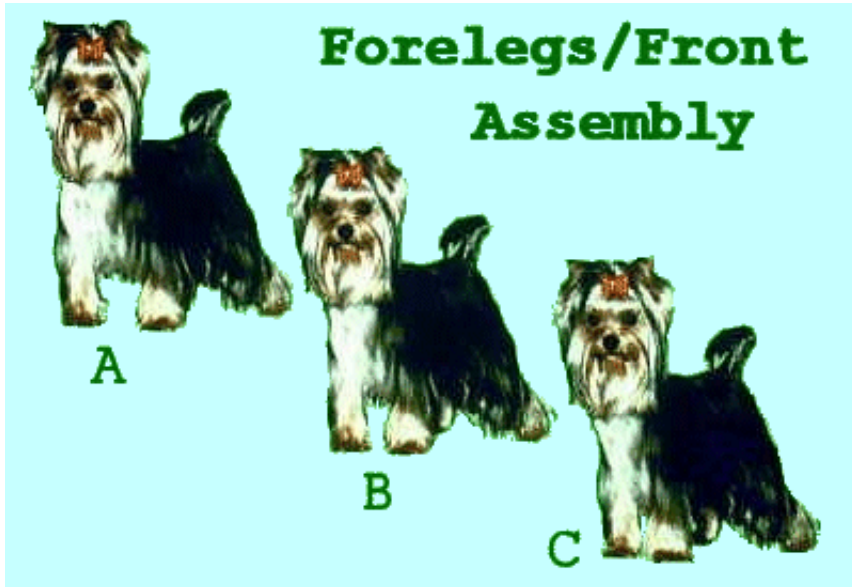
Yorkshire Terrier
AKC Standard

Forelegs-should be straight, elbows neither in nor out.
Hind legs-straight when viewed from behind, but stifles are moderately bent when viewed from the sides. Feet-are round with black toenails. Dewclaws, if any, are generally removed

from the hind legs. Dewclaws on the forelegs may be removed.

Judging Interpretation of the Standard

FRONT



B has the correct front assembly.
A is too wide, C is too narrow.

This section is very self explanatory but I have introduced it again in my interpretation of Gait.

GAIT



Judging Interpretation of the Standard



There is nothing in the standard to describe a Yorkshire's gait. But go back to general appearance, go to the description of the body and this tells you the type of gait one should expect.

Here is my interpretation of what it should be, taking my cue from my terrier knowledge and exposure.



Should be free, light-footed, lively and straightforward. Hindquarters should have strong propelling power. Toeing in or out is to be faulted. As seen from the front and from the rear, the legs are straight from the shoulder and hip joints to the pads, and move in parallel to the centerline of travel. The rear legs move in the same planes as the front legs. As the dog moves at a faster trot, the front and rear legs and feet may tend to converge toward the centerline of travel, but the legs remain straight even as they flex or extend. Viewed from the side, the legs move in a ground covering stride. The rear feet should meet the ground in the same prints as left by the front feet, with no gap between them. Topline remains firm and level, without bounce.

COAT

Yorkshire Terrier
AKC Standard

Quality, texture and quantity of coat are of prime importance. Hair is glossy, fine and silky in texture. Coat on the body is moderately long and perfectly straight (not wavy). It may be trimmed to floor length to give ease of movement and a neater appearance, if desired. The fall on the head is long, tied with one bow in center of head or parted in the middle and tied with two bows. Hair on muzzle is very long. Hair on muzzle is very long. Hair should be trimmed short on tips of ears and may be trimmed on feet to give them a neat appearance.

Judging Interpretation of the Standard

Now begins the portion that confuses many. No where does it say the coat is of prime importance, it describes 3 (three) features of the coat that are of prime importance.

Quality- just what is meant by this word? Again I would go

to the dictionary and find what the word really means. To me it says that the whole overall condition of the coat and color is of importance.

.
Texture – this again emphasizes that the correct silk is of more importance than the color which supports that to reward a soft coated dog, even if the clerical grey in color over a lighter dog with the correct blue hue which says the correct structure is there, is very wrong and should be discouraged in judging.

.
Quantity – this says that the coat should have sufficient quantity with which to judge the texture and quality.

.
The further descriptions are again very self explanatory. However, when thinking of silk I would advise you to go to a high end store and place your hand fore and aft against and feel the true heavy silk, feel the coolness and let that sink into your memory so that when your hands are going over the Yorkshire that memory is there.

.
Also, please note that no where does it state the bow must be red, although traditional many colors are more flattering to different shaded heads than the traditional red. This should make no difference to a judge as you are not there to interpret bow size or color!

COLOR

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Yorkshire Terrier
AKC Standard

.
Puppies are born black and tan and are normally darker in body color, showing an intermingling of black hair in the tan until they are matured. Color of hair on body and richness of tan on head and legs are of prime importance in adult dogs, to which the following color REQUIREMENTS apply: Blue-Is a DARK steel blue, not a silver-blue and not mingled with fawn, bronzy or black hairs. Tan- All tan hair is darker at the roots than in the middle, shading to still lighter tan at the tips. There should be no sooty or black hair intermingled with any of the tan. Color on the body- The blue extends over the body from the back of neck to root of tail. Hair on tail is darker blue, especially at end of tail. Headfall- A rich golden tan, deeper in color at sides of head, at ear roots and on the muzzle with ears a deep rich tan. Tan color should not extend down on back of neck. Chest and legs-A bright rich tan, not extending above the elbow on the forelegs nor above the stifle on the hind legs.

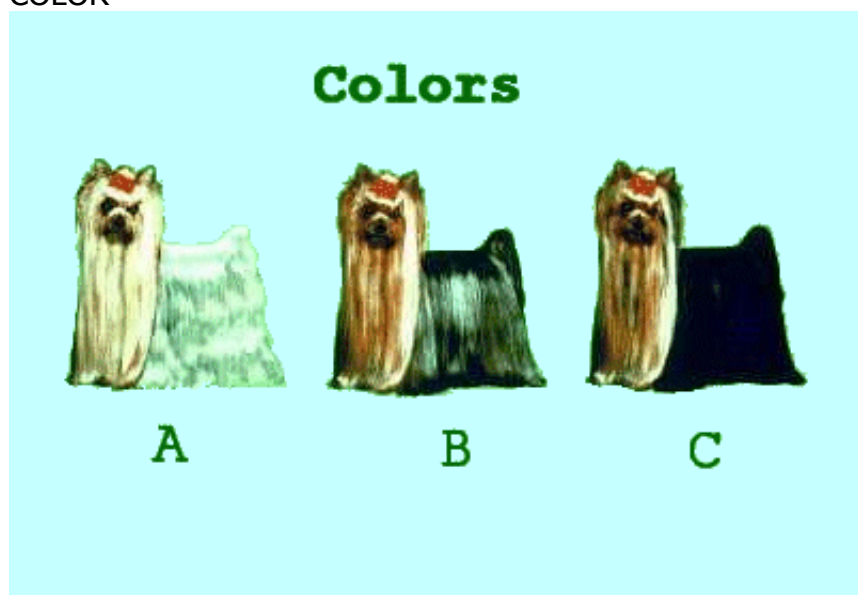
.
Judging Interpretation of the Standard

I don't know how anything could be more descriptive than this section of the standard. It again addresses that the coloration of the puppy is NOT that of the adult dog that is fully matured.

Note the color referenced is tan, darker at the roots, Dark steel blue and so forth.

Now how to judge the breed on color when so many are colored in the ring both on headfall and body? Learn correct texture and quality of a good coat and reward it. When judging part the coat at the front and rear leg, if it is colored most do not take the time and effort to check underneath. Learn the correct placement of the saddle and check where the tan ends and the blue starts, is a smudged line or a clear demarcation? The shading is always darker at the roots in the blue and the gold getting darker the further the shaft is away from the body, same color all the way and on a fully mature adult, question enhancements.

COLOR



B is the correct color.
A is too light, C is black.

Changes to the Standard:

October 2007 saw the introduction of a disqualification for coloring of the Yorkshire Terrier. It specifies:

Disqualification:

Any solid color or combination of colors other than blue and tan as

described above.

Any white markings other than a small white spot on the forehead that does not exceed 1 inch at its longest dimension.

Judging Interpretation of the Standard

Nothing could be clearer in the directions as given by the parent club and its members in passing this disqualification. As an approved AKC judge you MUST now disqualify any dog who enters the ring and does not meet the stated colors noted in the standard.

This new disqualification means that those Yorkies who appear with an overcoat of lighter blue and whiter hair underneath are to be disqualified.

You must now part the chest hair to ensure that the white is not larger than one inch at its longest dimension. Realize that often times young Yorkies will in fact have a blaze on their chest which extends longer than an inch, there is no exception in the disqualification for age so this animal must be disqualified.

With this disqualification coming into the standard, relatively unchanged for over 100 years, expect to see more of this breed colored in both the blues and the tans in your ring. As a judge it is up to you to interpret this and to act accordingly.

NATURAL and CORRECT COLORATION IN A THREE YEAR OLD ADULT YORKIE.

Note the thumb prints at the side of the head in front of the ears are not only acceptable but are in fact desirable at this age.

Note the shading of both the tans and the blues areas of this animal.

This will be a Yorkie who will hold their blues and golds well into old age.



This photo is not retouched in any manner.

[1] *October 2007 saw the introduction of a disqualification for coloring of the dog.*

Disqualification:

Any solid color or combination of colors other than blue and tan as described above.

Any white markings other than a small white spot on the forehead that does not exceed 1 inch at its longest dimension.

[2] *Review AKC Judges Newsletter, Spring 2005, for further information.*

[3] *October 2007 saw the introduction of a disqualification for coloring of the dog.*

Disqualification:

Any solid color or combination of colors other than blue and tan as described above.

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[4] *October 2007 saw the introduction of a disqualification for coloring of the dog.*

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