

# Evaluating White on the Beauceron Chest

“How should I judge the white spot? Is it the area created by fur or should I judge skin pigmentation?” I have been approached by several judges lately, who have voiced concerns about how they should evaluate white on the breed’s forechest. There has also been some social media discussion on the subject.

First, while white does not affect the dog’s ability to work, it should be noted that the Beauceron is genetically a black dog and white is the single most undesirable outcome – a lack of pigmentation. Some discreet white is generally permissible as there are varied reasons for why lack of pigmentation can occur. However, breeders should pay attention in their breeding stock, as the cause for prominent spots or patches is genetic and far more common in our breed than one should want; worse, the trait can express itself drastically from one generation to the next. Using hair dyes to hide such faults is neither permitted in the show ring nor does it aid in maintaining a quality breeding program.

What is too much? What amount of white is permissible?

The standard states: *Disqualification: Any color other than Black and Tan or Harlequin. Complete absence of markings. Well-defined, quite visible white spot on the chest 1" in diameter or larger.*

When some white is present, the spot must remain discreet, and should be faulted with increasing prominence. White in the form of a spot is easily sized – if it fits under a US quarter coin it does not exceed the standard. However, we often see stripes running from the forechest to the sternum. A slender

strip on the forechest – the width of a pencil or less – may be 3 inches long and still be considered discreet. Such marking is more obvious in a black and tan dog than a harlequin; however, both coat colors must be treated equally and judges should pay attention to it. Any white on the chest should be penalized. the thicker a stripe becomes the more (severely) it must be penalized, up to, and including, a disqualification (at 1" width).

When judging the Beauceron, presence of white must be considered when deciding between two dogs of equal quality and preference must be given to the dog with the least amount of white.