

## MAINE COON BREED GROUP (MC/MCP)

This Breed Group is comprised of the Maine Coon (MC) and the Maine Coon Polydactyl (MCP). Overall balance and proportion are essential to the Maine Coon and no one feature should dominate the eye's attention over any other.

This Breed Group is comprised of the Maine Coon (MC) and the Maine Coon Polydactyl (MCP). Overall balance and proportion are essential to the Maine Coon and no one feature should dominate the appearance of the cat.

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION:**

The Maine Coon is America's native longhaired cat. The breed, with its essentially amiable disposition, developed through a natural selection process where only the fittest survived. It should always be remembered that the Maine Coon developed basically as a "working cat" able to fend for itself in rough, woody terrain and under extreme climatic conditions. The Maine Coon is a large breed with big ears broad chest, substantial boning, a long, hard-muscled, rectangular body and a long, flowing tail, and large feet with tufts. Maine Coons originated in the Northeastern part of the United States and are generally regarded as native to the state of Maine. The breed, with its essentially amiable disposition, developed through a natural selection process where only the fittest survived. It should always be remembered that Maine Coons developed as "working cats", able to fend for themselves in a harsh climate of rough and woody terrain. The Maine Coon is a large breed with substantial boning, a broad chest, and a long, hard-muscled, rectangular body. The tail is long and flowing. Whether polydactyl or regular, the paws are large and well-tufted. The Maine Coon reaches full maturity at four to five years of age.

Legend has it that Maine Coon cats likely originated from domestic cats in New England that were descendants of cats that came on merchant and colonizing ships from western Europe. Over the years, those cats' descendants evolved to survive the hostile New England winters by developing keen hunting skills valuable for vermin control, strong muscular bodies, shaggy coats, and tufting on ears and feet. Polydactyl paws were common in the original Maine Coon population although it is unknown whether the trait was introduced from overseas or developed in North America. First recorded in cat literature in 1861 with a mention of a black and white cat named "Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines," Maine Coons were popular competitors at early cat shows in Boston and New York. A brown tabby female named "Cosie" won Best Cat at the 1895 Madison Square Garden Show. The Maine Coon was accepted for championship status in TICA when the Association was established in 1979. In 2015, polydactyl Maine Coons were assigned their own breed name (MCP) and accepted for Championship in a separate class from non-polydactyl MCs. The MC Breed Section then became the MC/MCP Breed Group.

**CATEGORY:** Traditional ONLY (Sepia, Mink, and Pointed not allowed)

**DIVISION:** All.

**COLOR:** All.

Only dominant black-based (B/-) colors including the result of the sex-linked red allele (Xo). Nondominant black-based (b/-, b1/-) modified colors such as chocolate, lilac, cinnamon, fawn, and caramel are not allowed.

**PERMISSIBLE OUTCROSSES:** None.

### **HEAD:**

**Shape:** Broad, modified wedge. Size in proportion to body. Slightly longer than wide. Distinct muzzle break can be seen under high prominent cheekbones.

Slightly longer than wide, as measured from back of head to tip of muzzle, while still in proportion to body. Viewed from the front, a square muzzle under high and broad cheek bones give the appearance of an overall broad modified wedge-shaped head.

**Eyes:** Large, slightly oval, appear round when wide open. Outer corner of eye points toward outer base of ear. Wide-set. Color: Any shade of green and/or gold. No relation to coat color. Blue and odd-eyes accepted in whites and particolored.

Large and oval. Appear almost round when wide open. Slight oblique set where outer corner of eye points toward outer base of ear. Distance between the eyes is approximately one eye-width apart.

**Color:** Any shade of green and/or gold. No relation to coat color. Blue and odd eyes accepted only in white and with white.

**Ears:** Large, wide at base with outer base set just slightly farther back than inner base. Outer base just above the level of the top of the eye. Outside edges have a very slight outward tilt that is not past eleven and one o'clock. Set fairly high on head with inner edge of bases no more than one ear's width apart. Taller than the width at base but still in balance with head length. Moderately pointed ears appear taller due to lynx tips. Furnishings extend beyond outer edge of ear.

Large, well furnished, wide at base, tapering to appear pointed by the enhancement of lynx tips. Taller than the width at base but still in balance with head length. Outer base just above the level of the top of the eye. Outside edges have a very slight outward tilt, not past 11 and 1 o'clock. Distance between inner ear edges is approximately one ear's width apart and forms a rectangle with outer edge of the muzzle. Furnishings extend beyond outer ear edge. Lynx tips maintain the balance of the ear without excessive heaviness or droop.

**Chin:** Wide and deep enough to complete square look of muzzle; firm, in line with upper lip (see Profile).

**Muzzle:** Square.

Well-defined, square, with a definite box. Viewed from above, left and right edges are parallel, with muzzle size in balance with the rest of the head. Distinct transition between muzzle and cheek bones.

**Profile:** Gently curving forehead. Gentle concave curve at bridge of nose flowing into a smooth nose line. Slight nose bump allowed in kittens.

In profile view of entire head structure (back of head to tip of nose), balance is critical. Gently curving forehead flows into a slight concave curve at the bridge of the nose and continues into a smooth nose-line free of humps and/or bumps. Straight, vertical line extends from the tip of nose, through upper lip to bottom of chin. Depth of chin is approximately 1/3 of overall depth of the muzzle.

**(Add) Neck:** Medium long, substantially thicker in mature males as compared to adolescent males and/or females.

## **BODY:**

**Torso:** Large, long, substantial, rectangular, equal in breadth from shoulders to hips. Broad chest. Level back. Females may be noticeably smaller than males.

Large, substantial, muscular, and rectangular. Females generally smaller than males. Body is relatively long with all parts in proportion, to create the appearance of a well-balanced rectangle. Broad, deep chest. Equal width from shoulders to hips, with depth of body. Allowance for slow maturation. Breed is considered “large” in size, but balance and proportion are of equal importance.

**Boning:** Substantial.

Musculature: Substantial, powerful.

Boning & Musculature: Substantial boning adequate to support structure and size of the cat. Firm musculature, without flab. Allowance for females and immaturity.

**Legs:** Medium length to form a rectangle with the body

Substantial, medium length, in proportion to body to complete a rectangle. All legs straight without cow hocking or toeing-out.

**Feet:** All toes, excluding dewclaws, touch the floor. Tufts start between the toes and are visible beneath the pads where they extend outwards.

MC: Large, rounded and well-tufted.

MCP: Large, well-tufted. Additional toes allowed on either fore or hind paws or both. Paws may be mitten or patty foot. Symmetrical expression preferred. Maximum of 7 toes on any one foot.

MCP: Large and well-tufted. Additional toes allowed on either fore or hind paws or both. Mitten or patty foot acceptable. Symmetrical expression preferred. Maximum 7 toes per foot.

**Tail:** At least as long as the body. Wide at base and tapering to tip with full, flowing fur.

Tail as long as body (from tail-base to shoulder blades). Wide base tapers to tip with full flowing fur.

## **COAT/COLOR/PATTERN:**

**Length:** Uneven; shorter on shoulders, gradually lengthening down the back and sides. Long, full, shaggy belly fur and britches. Tail fur long, full, flowing. Frontal ruff becomes more developed with age..

Uneven; shorter on shoulders, gradually lengthening down back and sides. Frontal ruff, belly shag and britches (more apparent with age). Tail fur long, full, flowing.

Texture: All-weather coat. Not cottony.

All-weather coat often with silky texture. Slight undercoat provides body, but coat falls smoothly.

Color: Particolors must have some white on all four feet.

Color & Pattern: Clear pattern and color, as described in the UCD. Acceptable patterns are ticked, classic, spotted, mackerel, and shaded/chinchilla. Some white on all four feet of cats with white.

## **ALLOWANCES**

- Standard favors the male. Allowance MUST be made for a significant size difference between the male and the female. Type should not be sacrificed for size. Breed is slow to mature.
- Allow for tight ear set in kittens and wider ear set in mature adults.
- Polydactyly is a trait with variable expression and may produce anything from a single extra dewclaw to extra toes on each foot. Any of these expressions are acceptable and there is no preference for more rather than fewer additional toes. Polydactyl mitten paws may appear to toe out.
- Standard favors the male. Allowance MUST be made for significant size difference between male and female. Type should not be sacrificed for size. Breed is slow to mature.
- Slightly larger and/or tighter-set ears in kittens. Lower ear set in heavily jowled, fully mature males. Wider ear set in fully mature adults.
- Polydactyly is a trait with variable expression, from a single extra dewclaw to extra toes on each foot. All expressions are acceptable, without preference for more rather than fewer additional toes (up to the allowed maximum). Polydactyl mitten paws may appear to toe out.
- Ghost markings in smoke and solid-colored kittens and adults less than 18 months.

## **PENALTIES**

**Eyes:** Slanted, almond-shaped Flat tops on openings.

**Eyes:** Overly rounded. Almond shaped. Flattened upper lid (hooded). Protruding. Small or deep-set. Excessive angle/slant (Oriental set) or level. Excessive size.

**Ears:** Very close, set straight up. Narrow bases. Wide-set, flared.

**Ears:** Overly rounded/without taper. Small. Flared. Lacking furnishings or lynx tips. Lynx tips that detract from the set and shape of the ear.

**Chin:**-Weak or receding, narrow, lack of depth.

**Chin:** Narrow, not full. Diamond or triangular rather than square shape. Pronounced or receding. Excessive depth (50% of the profile or more).

**Muzzle:** Prominent whisker pads.

**Muzzle:** Narrow and/or triangular shape. Prominent whisker pads. Rounded nose tip.

**Profile:** Straight. Roman nose. Pronounced bump.

**Profile:** Straight from brow line to nose-tip. Break, stop or Roman nose. Pronounced bump.

**Torso:** Narrow.

**Torso:** Tubular, narrow or foreign body. Short body. Overweight. Excessive length (sway backed).

**Tail:** Short tail.

**Tail:** Too short to balance body length.

**Feet:** Toes (excluding dewclaws) not touching the table.

**Feet:** Toes not touching floor. Untufted paws.

**Coat:** Lack of slight undercoat or belly shag . Overall even coat. Color: Obvious lockets.

**Coat Length:** Equal overall, without shag. Short. Too close-lying.

**Coat Texture:** Woolly or cottony.

**Coat Color:** Lockets. Shaded with heavy tabby markings on body. Silver series with heavy tarnishing.

**(add)Head** : Round, narrow, or unmodified wedge shape. Muzzle length disproportionate to head.

**(add) Neck**: Too short or too long. (Add) Legs: Cow hocked or toed-out.

### **WITHHOLD AWARDS (WW)**

**Head**: Heavy, massive muzzle out of balance with the rest of the head. Heavy brow detracting from the open expression of the eye.

**Eyes**: Small, beady, or deep-set.

**Ears**: Narrow-base/upright set with parallel appearance.

### **DISQUALIFICATIONS (DQ)**

Nonpermissible Colors

Blue or odd-eyes in any colored cat other than solid white or with white Fine boning

Cobby body

Tail fault

Tail length significantly out of balance with body.

Significantly too small for age or gender.

### **POINTS**

**HEAD** ..... 40 35 points

Shape.....8-10

Eyes . .....5 6

Ears.....10 6

Muzzle and Chin.....10 6

Profile .....7 6

Neck .....1

**BODY** .....35 35 points

Torso .....10

Legs and Feet .....3 4

Tail.....5 6

Boning .....7

Musculature ..... 10

Boning & Musculature.....15

**COAT/COLOR/PATTERN** .....25 20 points

Length & Texture.....10 12

Color & Pattern.....5 8

Texture.....5

**BALANCE**.....10 points

Temperament must be unchallenging; any sign of definite challenge shall disqualify. The cat may exhibit fear, seek to flee, or generally complain aloud but may not threaten to harm. In accordance with Show

Rules, ARTICLE SIXTEEN, the following shall be considered mandatory disqualifications: a cat that bites (216.9), a cat showing evidence of intent to deceive (216.10), adult whole male cats not having two descended testicles (216.11), cats with all or part of the tail missing , except as authorized by a board approved standard (216.12.1), cats with more than five toes on each front foot and four toes on each back foot, unless proved the result of an injury or as authorized by a Board approved standard (216.12.2), visible or invisible tail faults if Board approved standard requires disqualification (216.12.4), crossed eyes if Board approved standard requires disqualification (216.12.5), total blindness (216.12.6), markedly smaller size, not in keeping with the breed (216.12.9), and depression of the sternum or unusually small diameter of the rib cage itself (216.12.11.1). See Show Rules, ARTICLE SIXTEEN for more comprehensive rules governing penalties and disqualifications.

**Committee Comments:**

Rules Committee comment of approval: "Rules Committee has reviewed the proposed MC/MCP Breed Standard and has approved this Standard for polling by the Breed Group."

Genetics Committee statement of approval: "Genetics Committee has reviewed the proposed MC/MCP Breed Standard and has approved this Standard for polling by the Breed Group."