

## **A Letter from the Poodle Club of America, Inc.**

### **The Color of a Poodle's Coat**

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**THE POODLE CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.**

Since the early 1900's, published standards for the Poodle have stated-color: All White, all Black, all Blue, etc.

From that time forward all the approved AKC Standards have stated that the Poodle is a one colored animal.

Our present Standard states-color: The coat is an even and solid color at the skin. In Blues, Grays, Silvers, Browns, Cafe-au-laits, Apricots and Creams the coat may show varying shades of the same color. This is frequently present in somewhat darker feathering of the ears and tipping of the ruff. While clear colors are definitely preferred, such natural variation in the shadings of the coat is not to be considered a fault. Brown and Cafe-au-lait Poodles have liver colored noses, eye-rims and lips, dark toe-nails and dark eyes. Black, Blue, Gray, Silver, Cream and White Poodles have black noses, eye-rims and lips, black or self-colored toe-nails and very dark eyes. In Apricots while the foregoing coloring is preferred, liver colored noses, eye-rims and lips are permitted but not desirable. Major fault: Color of nose, lips, and eye-rims incomplete, or of wrong color for color of dog.

Parti-colored dogs shall be disqualified. The coat of a parti-colored dog is not an even solid color at the skin but is of two or more colors.

This is the end of the quote from the AKC approved standard.



We are used to seeing the varying shades in a Poodle coat in the colors other than Black or the White, i.e. the clearing of the Silvers and Blues as they change from their birth color of black to the gamut of colors from palest Platinum to deep Gunmetal Blue. The Browns tend to fade as they age, and lighter hairs intermix with the darker Brown ones— perfectly acceptable. Apricots tend to lighten with age from their dark birth color — sometimes the feathering on the ears remains of the dark shade. Reds tend to remain

a deep color. Deep Creams tend to have darker shading on the ears.

With the paler colors, if there is an injury, or a hot spot, the new coat comes in the original color and then clears to match the mature color. If a coat is going through this

process it is best not to show the Poodle as the condition may be mistaken for a coat of two colors, a parti-color, and therefore must be disqualified. Safer to wait until the correct color of the hair growing out from the trauma has appeared, so that the coat is an even color at the skin.

Not described in depth in the approved standard, is a color referred to in the Poodle fraternity as a Phantom. A Phantom is a Poodle of any color that is born with the tan point pattern. This is the marking that appears in all of the known tan marked breeds- such as Dobermans, Dachshunds, Black and Tan Coonhounds, Black and Tan and Liver and Tan Spaniels, Yorkshire Terriers, Manchester Terriers. Any breed that specifies that the base color be a solid one- Black, Silver, Gray, Blue, Liver, Red, Brown, etc. and that there shall be a spot of a different color- normally tan - in the following places:

1. Over each eye.
2. On the sides of the muzzle and cheeks.
3. On the undersides of the ears.
4. On all feet and or legs.
5. Under the tail.
6. Generally found also on the chest.

This in Poodles is a recessive color, and has existed in the breed for as long as I have been in the breed- and that is somewhat more than 50 years! (Anne Clark)

The puppies are born with the markings, or may have them to a greater or lesser extent. Many beginning breeders do not even realize that their puppies are so marked, and are amazed that as the pups grow, that the markings become more and more apparent. It is a Poodle with colors in it's coat. When examined, the coat and skin on the body of the Poodle is one color, and the markings are another and the Poodle must be disqualified.

On a Silver puppy, when the face is trimmed at six weeks, the entire face shows the Silver color. When examining the color at the skin it may appear Black, but when the coat is parted the color at the skin is also changing to Silver. On a Black, Brown, or Apricot puppy with the tan point problem, when the face is trimmed the tan or very light color is only apparent on the sides of the muzzle and the cheeks, not over the entire face and throat. Explore further for markings or traces on the markings in all of the other locations. If markings are found you must disqualify.

Of course if a basically White, Black, Brown, Gray, Red, Apricot or Silver Poodle is shown and it has apparent areas of another color or two broken or splashed over it's body, legs, head, etc. this is also a disqualifying fault, and a much easier one to spot!

There is a place for the mis-marked (Phantom marked) and parti-colored, healthy , well raised Poodle in our dog world - but not in the conformation ring. The Poodle is a one colored dog. Let us be vigilant about this disqualification.