

## “COTON TAILS” AKC Gazette September, 2019

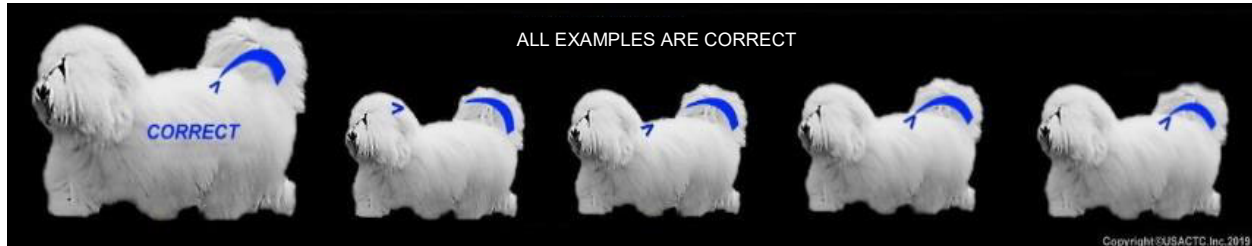
The distinctive tail set and carriage of the Coton de Tulear is a “Hallmark of the Breed.”

**AKC STANDARD-TAIL:** *The tail is low set in the axis of the spinal column. At rest it is carried below the hock with the tip being raised. On the move the tail is carried happily. It is curved over the back so that the hair of the tail rests on the back with the point towards the nape, the withers, the back or the loin. In specimens with abundant coat, the tip may rest on the dorsal-lumbar region. **Fault - A tail that does not reach the hock; a tail that has a complete curl loop; a gay tail; a tail that is carried completely flat over the body (snap tail). Disqualification - No tail.***

### TAIL CARRIAGE IN MOTION

#### RANGE OF CORRECT TAIL CARRIAGE

**KEY WORDS: CURVED TAIL CARRIED OVER BACK POINT OF TIP LOCATION**  
The correct, low set, Coton tail carriage in motion creates a **discernable curve** over the back. The **hair of the tail rests on the back** with the **point** towards the **nape, withers, back or loin**. On heavily coated dogs, the **tip** may rest on the **dorsal-lumbar region**, due only to the weight of the hair.



Graphic is designed to illustrate tail carriage only. It is not the representation of an ideal Coton or an ideal Coton in motion.



### FAULTS & DEVIATIONS FROM THE STANDARD

**KEY WORDS: STRAIGHT VERTICAL FLAT SNAP LOOP**

**FAULTS:** A tail that has a complete curl loop; a gay tail; a tail that is carried completely flat over the body (snap tail).

**AKC STANDARD:** *"Any deviation from the ideal described in the standard should be penalized to the extent of the deviation."*

**DEVIATIONS:** Coton tail carriage deviations include, but are not limited to, tails carried vertically without the required “curve (arc) in the skeletal structure of the tail.” Tails carried above the horizontal level of the back. Tails not rising to any ideally described standard positions while in motion.

**DISQUALIFICATION: No tail**

The abundant hair of a well feathered tail can visually obscure the required “arc” of the tail from view. Conducting a “hands on” examination, will allow you to feel its actual location. There will always be a discernable curve in a correct tail set. The arc will deviate in proportion according to the location of the point of tail tip, that point being to the nape, withers, back, loin or resting on the dorsal-lumbar region due only to the weight of the hair. A distinct separation of the tails’ skeletal system from the topline, in the form of a definite arc, must be present to be evaluated as correct.

**THE DISTINCTIVE TOPLINE OF THE COTON DE TULEAR IS A “HALLMARK OF THE BREED.”**



**AKC STANDARD** TAILS AT REST: *Carried below the hock with the “tip” being raised.*

**This Coton de Tulear exhibits the essential elements of the Hallmark “slightly convex topline,” featuring a slight rise over the loin, falling off to an oblique croup, resulting in a low tail set.**

**Correct points of conformation produce correct toplines, tail set and carriage.**

Incorrect level toplines, short backs, and/or toplines that are high in the rear, produce high set tails that are unable to achieve the standard requirements of proper tail carriage. A short tail, not reaching the hock is a standard described “**fault.**” This fault impedes the dogs’ ability to carry the tail as prescribed.

We will be discussing “The Key Elements of the Coton de Tulear Topline” in our next article.

The United States of America Coton de Tulear Club is your authoritative source for breed education and mentoring. We will be happy to assist you with the correct interpretation of the Standard. Our website Judges Education page features informative articles and a list of approved, knowledgeable mentors.

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