

Gay or gaily carried tail

By simple definition, a “gay tail” is one carried above the horizontal line of the back. However, the actual application of this term varies in interpretation with individual breeds. It is normal carriage in many breeds, *e.g.*, Fox Terrier, in others it is a requirement. In some breeds, *e.g.*, German Shepherd Dog, a “gay tail”, standing or working, is considered a fault.
(Spira, ***Canine Terminology***, p. 132.)

Kink or kinked tail

One that is sharply bent, acutely angled or broken somewhere along its length. Kinked tails may be due to the presence of foreshortened tendons on one side, forcing the tail sideways, or to actual vertebral deformity caused by inherited factors and /or accidental injury.
(Spira, ***Canine Terminology***, p. 132.)

COAT COLOR

Normal Coat

The coat is thick, moderately long and slightly wavy or straight. It has a bright natural sheen. Extremely curly or extremely dull-looking coats are undesirable. The Bernese Mountain Dog is shown in natural coat and undue trimming is to be discouraged. The ground color is jet black.
(BMDCA Breed Standard)

Not a black coat

Any ground color other than black is a disqualification.
(BMDCA Breed Standard)

UMBILICAL HERNIA

This is a small protrusion through the abdominal wall in the area of the umbilicus (“belly button”). They are common in Bernese. While these can be hereditary, in most cases in Bernese they are the result of delayed closure or trauma and are not usually serious. In some cases, they may repair themselves. Surgical correction is generally considered cosmetic and may be done at castration. Your breeder or veterinarian can advise you of this condition. You can feel in the area of the “belly button” to see if there is protrusion. Umbilical hernias are distinguished from inguinal hernias, which are generally more serious. *(For more information see Julia Crawford’s AKC Gazette article reproduced at www.shihtzu.org/Articles/article.asp?ART_ID_NUM=20 or the article on umbilical hernias by Mary Wakeman, DVM, at www.showdogsupersite.com/kenclub/breedvet/umbilical.html).*

SOURCES

BMDCA. Illustrated Standard of the Bernese Mountain Dog, available at BMDCA Store at www.bmdca.org.

Spira, Harold R. ***Canine Terminology***. Dogwise Publishing, 2001 (Originally published by Harper & Row, 1982).



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A QUICK GUIDE TO THE BERNER-GARDE HEALTH DATABASE

***Prepared by Nancy Melone, Ph.D.
Thorn Creek/Dornbach Bernese***

This Guide makes entering your Berner’s data in the Berner-Garde Foundation (BGF) Health Database (and updating it) as painless as possible. You quickly learn how to enter a dog for the first time into the BGF Database, to access and update an existing dog record and to add a photo to a dog’s record. In addition, the Guide explains essential dog jargon. Many of the terms found in the Berner-Garde Database’s online submission form (located at www.bernergarde.org) are unique to the dog world and not a part of the average person’s vocabulary. To successfully and completely fill out your dog’s Berner-Garde record, you need to know the meaning of a few of these terms. For that reason, I wrote this short Guide to help you through the data entry process. It is hoped that once your dog’s main record is entered into the database, you will take time once a year (on your dog’s birthday) to update the record, entering major health or other events that have taken place during the previous year.

The information that you enter over the life of your Berner aids the national breed Club in identifying major health issues affecting the breed and in supporting research on cures or therapies for the most critical health issues. In addition, the data help breeders track health issues in their lines such that their breeding decisions can be improved in the future. Your Berner’s data can also help future puppy buyers. By entering data, your Berner leaves a data legacy that improves the lives of ALL Berners. Please help your dog leave this legacy!

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BERNER-GARDE DATABASE BASICS

HOW TO ENTER A DOG FOR THE FIRST TIME

Begin by going to the Berner-Garde website at www.bernergarde.org
Click on “**Submit Data**” (at left)
Click on “**Individual Dog Submission Form**” (on main part of page)
Complete the form
Click on “**Submit Data**” (at bottom of page)

HOW TO ACCESS YOUR DOG’S RECORD

Begin by going to the Berner-Garde website at www.bernergarde.org
Click on “**Database**” (on left side)
Click on “**Click here to access database as a Guest**” (at lower center of page)
Click on “**People**” (on left side)
Type **your last name** (as entered on your dog’s record) in the box requesting it
You will see a **list of people** with similar last names.
Find your name in the list and click **VIEW** (to the left of your name)
You will see your “**People Detail Info**” record displayed.
At the bottom, you will see a **list of the dogs that you own**.
Click **VIEW** beside the name of the dog for whom you wish to see the record.
Explore the dog record by clicking various parts of the **gray bar** (e.g., Health Info)

HOW TO UPDATE AN EXISTING DOG RECORD

Begin by going to the Berner-Garde website at www.bernergarde.org
Click on “**Submit Data**” (at left)
Click on “**Individual Dog Submission Form**” (on main part of page)
Check the box at the end of “**Submitter Info**” (after blue type) indicating that you are **updating a dog record that is already in the database**
Enter your new information
Click on “**Submit Data**” (at bottom of page)

HOW TO ADD YOUR DOG’S PHOTOGRAPH

Begin by going to the Berner-Garde website at www.bernergarde.org
Click on “**Database**” (on left side)
Click on “**Click here to access database as a Guest**” (at lower center of page)
See instructions above to **access the record of the dog for whom you wish to add a photo**
Click on the gray “**Photo**” button on the right
Click on “**Submit Photo**”
Fill in the appropriate information.
Click “**Browse**” to find and select the photo on your computer system
Click “**Upload**”

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THE BERNER-GARDE DATABASE

This glossary provides what the Illustrated Standard for Bernese Mountain Dogs says is “correct” for the breed. The terms used in the Standard are then defined so that you understand how to accurately describe your dog. It should be noted that few dogs are perfect. If you have questions, ask a trusted Bernese breeder or fancier to help you.

BITES

Normal Bernese Mountain Dog Bite

See also www.bmdinfo.org/illustratedbmd/teeth.php

The teeth meet in a scissors bite. An overshot or undershot bite is a serious fault. Dentition is complete. (**BMDCA Breed Standard**)

Scissor bite

By far the most common arrangement, this is defined as one in which the outer surfaces of the lower incisor teeth engage with the inner surfaces of the upper incisors when the mouth is shut. For absolute perfection, the teeth forming a scissor bite should erupt at approximately 90 degree angles (*i.e.*, be set square) from jaws of equal length (*i.e.*, level jaws or level mouth). They should be strong and of normal size, evenly positions and uncrossed in their arrangement within the dental arches, plus have their cutting edges in horizontal alignment. (Spira, **Canine Terminology**, p. 24).

Overbite/overshot bite

A receding, often weakly constructed lower jaw. In this form of bite, the lower incisors are situated some distance behind their upper counterparts; hence no physical contact takes place between their outer surfaces and the inner ones of the upper incisors. Other names used to describe this condition are parrot-jawed, pig-jawed, shark mouth and swine mouth. (Spira, **Canine Terminology**, p. 24).

Underbite/undershot bite

An under jaw appreciably longer than the upper one and frequently turned up as well, *e.g.*, British Bulldog, resulting in a bite in which the lower incisors erupt well in front of those in the upper jaw. No physical contact occurs between the upper and lower incisor teeth in such a mouth. (Spira, **Canine Terminology**, p. 24).

Level bite

Some confusion exists in the interpretation of this type of bite. Many experts hold it to be synonymous with a pincer bite (one in which the horizontal or cutting surfaces of the upper and lower incisor teeth meet edge to edge when the mouth is shut). Yet some breed standards define it as being different (*e.g.*, the American Staffordshire Terrier, according to its breed standard, is required to have a level mouth and a reverse scissor bite). In all probability, the term “level bite” is intended to refer to upper and lower jaws of equal length, *i.e.*, level, rather than actual teeth positions. (Spira, **Canine Terminology**, p. 23).

Complete dentition

No missing teeth.

EYE COLOR

Normal BMD Eye

The eyes are dark brown and slightly oval in shape with close fitting eyelids. Inverted or everted eyelids are serious faults. Blue eye color is a disqualification. (**BMDCA Breed Standard**)

TAILS

Normal Tail

The tail is bushy. It should be carried low when in repose. An upward swirl is permissible when the dog is alert but the tail may never curl or be carried over the back. The bones in the tail should feel straight and should reach to the hock joint or below. A kink in the tail is a fault. (**BMDCA Breed Standard**)