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## Blackhawk Labrador Retriever Club Understanding the Standard

The opening paragraphs of the UKC Standard for Labrador Retrievers state:

***The goals and purposes of this breed standard include: to furnish guidelines for breeders who wish to maintain the quality of their breed and to improve it; to advance this breed to a state of similarity throughout the world; and to act as a guide for judges.***

***Breeders and judges have the responsibility to avoid any conditions or exaggerations that are detrimental to the health, welfare, essence and soundness of this breed, and must take the responsibility to see that these are not perpetuated.***

### **Question:**

#### ***Why do we have a Standard?***

A Standard is the result of decades of cumulative knowledge from large numbers of very experienced breeders. It can be thought of as 'the law about the breed.' The Standard says what IS and what IS NOT a Labrador Retriever.

One of the aims of the UKC is to advance the breed to a state of similarity throughout the world. That dovetails completely with the collective knowledge aspect of the Standard. No one group or subgroup of breeders or fanciers can control or alter the Standard. Knowing and interpreting the Standard is a process for large groups of breeders banded together under the auspices of a National Breed Club or 'Parent Club' as it is often referred to. This insures that any changes to what is accepted in the breed are universally recognized as correct.

While the Standard is not sacred and did not come down the mountain carved on the tablets carried by Moses, the Standard is respected, cherished, and adhered to by judges, breeders, true friends and advocates of the breed. That is why it is referred to in capital letters – the Standard.





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Membership in a Parent or National Club usually carries with it the solemn assurance that you as an individual breeder WILL abide by the Standard and encourage others to do the same. The second paragraph of the UKC Standard emphasizes this:

***Breeders and judges have the responsibility to avoid any conditions or exaggerations that are detrimental to the health, welfare, essence and soundness of this breed, and must take the responsibility to see that these are not perpetuated.***

### **Question:**

***Why are there disqualifications under the Standard?***

Here is what the UKC Standard says about Disqualifications in the Labrador retriever:

*A dog with a Disqualification must not be considered for placement in a conformation event, and must be reported to UKC.*

Why are some things about a Labrador Retriever so incorrect that they warrant being a Disqualification?

**The purpose of Disqualifications is to identify the characteristics that are so AGGREGIOUS to the essence of the breed that dogs having these characteristics must be removed from the breeding pool,** and must be reported to the UKC who will take administrative action on their individual registrations toward this end. The things that ARE Disqualifications immediately eliminate a dog from being a breeding or conformation dog, and that is why they must be reported to UKC.

A dog who exhibits a Disqualification must NOT have that Disqualification perpetuated in the breed. The individual dog may be a wonderful companion. It must NOT be a breeding dog.

A dog who produces Disqualifying Traits must be removed from the breeding pool to help remove the Disqualifying Traits from the gene pool.

### **Question:**

***What are the Disqualifications for Labrador Retrievers in the UKC Standard?***

The Disqualifications in the UKC Standard for Labrador Retrievers are:

- Any color or combination of colors other than described in the "Color" paragraph.
- Nose completely unpigmented.
- Absence of pigmentation in eye rims.





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- Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchid.
- Viciousness or extreme shyness.
- Aggressiveness toward humans or other dogs.
- Albinism.

The first group is specific to the Labrador Retriever. The second group is included in all UKC breed Standards.

There is NO latitude within the Disqualifications.

As a breeder you should adhere to these Disqualifications.

Judges in the conformation ring will also be adhering to these Disqualifications.

**Question:**

***Why are the UKC Disqualifications different than in other Standards?***

Each Standard governing body or registry may be different from each other in delineating Disqualifications or Disqualifying Faults.

Since the Labrador retriever was first recognized as a breed in the United Kingdom, you should be concerned with the Kennel Club Standard and how our British counterparts interpret the Standard and the breed. If you are planning to enter AKC events, you should be familiar with the AKC Standard for Labrador Retrievers. In breeding, registering and exhibiting Labradors in UKC, your primary focus should be the UKC Standard.

**Question:**

**What if I disagree with the Standard? Don't I have the right of free speech in America? Can't I do what I want to in my breeding program with my dogs?**

As a citizen of the USA you are protected by the First Amendment for Freedom of Speech. And yes you do have right to make decisions regarding your dogs as Property in the State in which you live.





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However, if you choose to enter Dog Events held under the auspices of a Registry, then you agree to abide by the parameters of that Registry. Read your entry forms. You are agreeing.

If you choose to Register Dogs under the auspices of a Registry, then you agree to abide by the parameters of that Registry. Read your applications.

If you disagree with the Standard then the option left open to you is to work WITHIN the Registry's accepted process to make your disagreements known and to substantiate your reasons for them. Standards are not changed merely on the basis of opinion.

**Labrador Retriever Standards from major Registries around the world: are included in this packet.**

