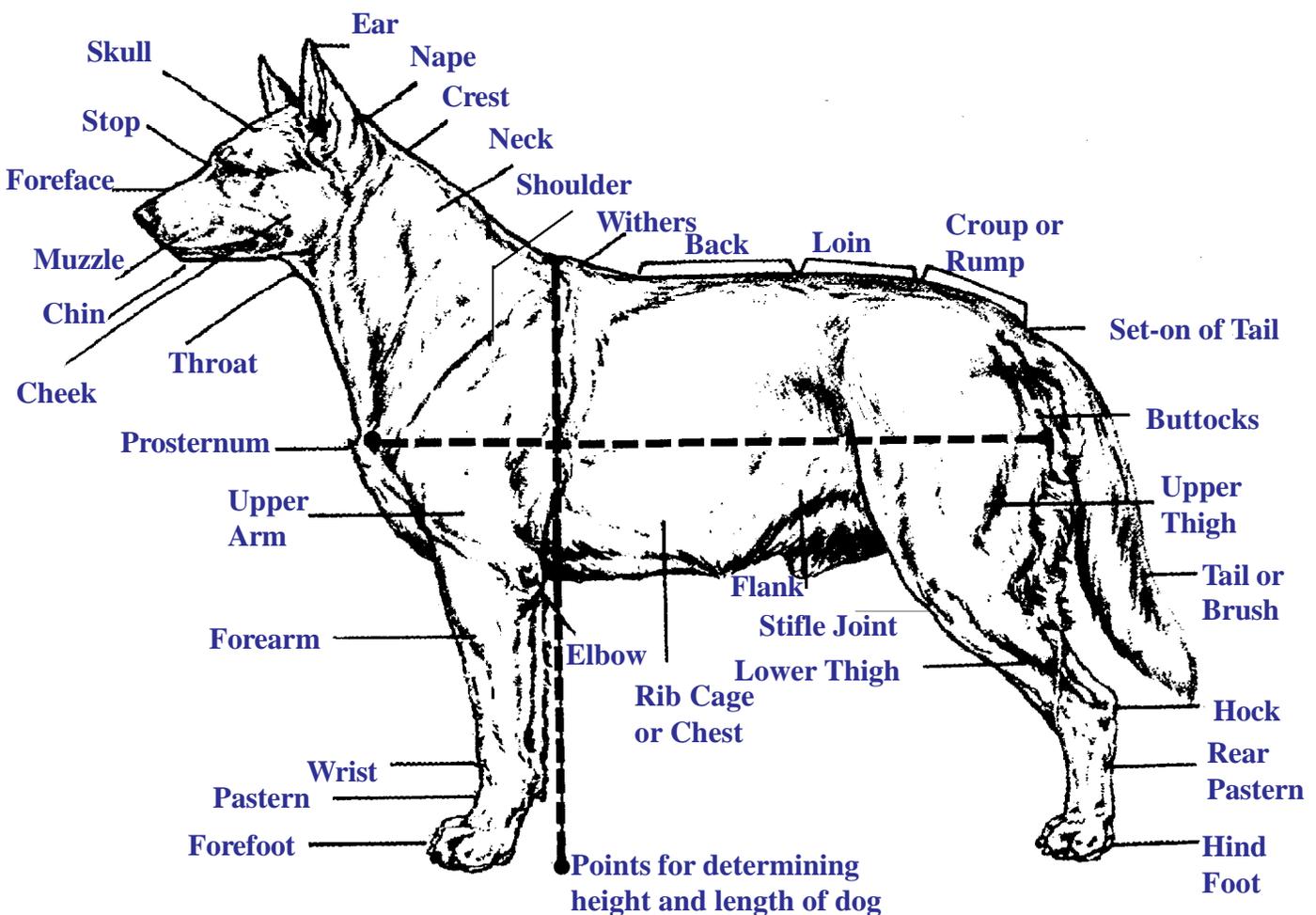


SAY IT RIGHT (Or let everyone know you're a novice!)

Every profession has its own specialized language. Call it jargon, if you will! The dog game is no exception. Old-time breeders of livestock, particularly horses, developed a language that served their needs for clarity and precision in defining the faults and virtues of their stock. The same terms with only minor changes carry over to the description of canine anatomy.

In addition, livestock breeders used certain terms to have special meanings that they each understood. A sire, of course, is the father of the dog, while the dam is the mother. The offspring of the male are his "get" while the offspring of the female are her "produce". But, both males and females can be notable "producers" of champions. The parentage of a dog is described as "out of the dam" and "by" the sire. Tell someone that your dog was a result of a mating "by" that well-known bitch and you will hear muffled chuckles in the background.

Even the so-called experts are prone to overlook the esoterica in the use of anatomical terms. Take the word "hock", for example. The hock is a joint on the hind limb located between the lower thigh and the rear pastern. Some breed standards, however, incorrectly use the term to mean the rear pastern, thus such phrases as "short in hock" or "long in hock", which are technically incorrect. To say that the hocks are "well let down" or "set low" is correct and implies short rear pasterns.



As time and space permit, we will insert some anatomical terms and the definitions that are most relevant to the dog hobbyist. We start this series with a diagram of a dog and point out the major features with their proper names and locations. The source for these diagrams is the book, *Canine Terminology*, by Harold R Spira. This book is generally considered a primary reference in the development of breed standards.