

Maine Coon (MCO) Standard of Points – Draft Version Feb 2025



Scale of Points

Head: Including general shape and proportions: shape, size, and ear set; shape, size, set and colour of eyes; nose length and profile; cheeks, muzzle, and chin	40
Body: Including shape and proportions; size, bone structure, muscularity and condition, height, and thickness of legs; shape and size of paws; shape and length of tail	30
Coat: Including length and texture; frontal ruff; ear feathering and tufting; tail furnishings; paw furnishings	20
Colour and pattern	10

General Type description

The Maine Coon is a semi-longhaired cat and is distinguished by its large size, bone structure, rectangular appearance, and flowing coat. The Maine Coon evolved as a working domesticated cat in a rural environment; this role is reflected in a muscular cat of rugged outdoor appearance with a characteristic weatherproof coat and the demeanour of an alert capable hunter. Good muscle tone and density give the cat the appearance of power and robustness.

HEAD	
Head Shape	Medium in length, the nasal bridge being equidistant from the ear line and the tip of the nose, with the width being slightly less than the length of the head. Allowance should be made for additional breadth or jowls in mature entire males.
Muzzle/Chin	The muzzle should be square with firm, strong chin: chin, upper lip and nose leather should fall in a perpendicular line. When viewed in profile the chin depth should be observable and give the impression of a square, 90-degree angle. A chin lacking in depth is not considered strong, firm or desirable. Length and width of muzzle should be proportionate to the rest of the head and present a pleasant, balanced appearance. Cheeks fairly full, with high cheekbones. Bite level.
Profile	

	Nose of uniform width with shallow concave curve at the nasal bridge when viewed in profile. It should be proportionate to the length of the head. It should be smooth and free from pronounced bumps. A profile that is straight from the brow line to the tip of the nose is not acceptable, nor should the profile show signs of having a sharp break or stop.
Ears	Large, well furnished, (the ear furnishings should extend beyond the outer edges of the ear) wide at base and tapering to appear pointed at the tip, Taller than the width of the base but still in balance with head length. Outer base just above the level of the top of the eye. Set high but well apart (one ears width). Lynx tips are desirable but should maintain the balance of the ear without heaviness or droop.
Eyes	Large, expressive, oval shape, spaced wide apart (approximately one eye-width apart) with a slightly oblique aperture and, slanted towards the outer base of the ear. Appear round when wide open. Shades of green, gold or copper; coat and eye colour may be unrelated. Odd or blue eyes are permissible only in pure white cats.
BODY	
Body and neck	Body large to medium size, solid and muscular with breadth of chest. Long body with proportionate limbs to create the characteristic rectangular appearance, square rump with no part of the anatomy being so exaggerated as to foster weakness. Neck moderately long; particularly thick and muscular in mature males. Allowance must be given for slow maturation and acknowledge that females are generally much smaller than males.
Legs and paws	Substantial legs, wide set if medium length, in proportion to body to complete a rectangle. All legs are straight with no cow-hocking or toeing out. Large round paws, well tufted with long tufts emanating from under the paws, extending backwards to create a snowshoe effect. Toes carried close, five in front, four behind, with all toes touching the floor
Tail	Long, at least the length of the back, (to shoulder blades) wide at the base and tapering towards the tip with full flowing fur.
COAT	
Coat	All weather coat, consisting of an undercoat covered by a more substantial glossy topcoat. An uneven coat, with fur shorter on the head, neck and shoulders increasing in length down the back, flanks, and tail. A fluffy appearance is undesirable. Breeches and belly fur full and shaggy. Frontal ruff beginning at the base of the ears; heavier in males than females. Texture should be silky with coat falling smoothly.
Coat colour and pattern	The Maine Coon is recognised in a variety of solid colours (including white in all eye colours, except blue eyes which can only be seen with full whites); tortoiseshell; tabby colours (classic and mackerel patterns) with or without silver; shaded and smoke colours; bi-colour and parti-colour (e.g., solid/tabby/tortoiseshell/shaded/smoke colour and white).

Notes:

1. The standard favours the male, Allowance should be given for significant difference between male and female. Type should not be sacrificed for size.
2. Since the Maine Coon is slow to mature (taking up to 4 years), allowance should be made as to their size when judging younger cats. The balance of the cat is of uppermost importance.

3. Slightly larger and/or tighter ear set in kittens. Lower ear set in heavily jowled, fully mature males.
4. The coats can be seasonal.
5. Different coat colours may have different textured coats.

Withhold all awards for:

1. Wrongly registered adults, kittens, or neuters. NOTE: These should be marked as wrong colour on judge's slips and disqualified.
2. Blue or odd eyes in cats of a colour other than pure white
3. Non-permissible colours/patterns (spotted, ticked, van or pointed)
4. Muzzle length and size disproportionate to head, narrow or triangular shaped and prominent whisker pads.
5. Heavy brow detracting from the open expression of the eye.
6. Almond shaped eyes, flattened upper lid (hooded), protruding, small or deep-set or excessive angle/slant (oriental) or level.
7. Straight profile from brow-line to nose tip, break, stop, roman nose or a pronounced bump.
8. Chin lacking depth, triangular shaped rather than square, pronounced, receding or excessive depth (more than 50% of the profile)
9. Narrow base/upright set ears with vertical parallel appearance (less than one ears width) overly rounded, small, flared, lacking furnishings, lynx tips that detract from the set and shape of the ear.
10. Lockets or spots in without white cats.

Withhold Certificates or First Prizes in Kitten Open Classes for:

1. Cobby body shape and/or fine bone structure
2. Bi-Colour or Parti-colour cats that do not exhibit some white on all four paws, belly, and chest
3. Definite nose break or stop
4. Straight profile or pronounced nose bump
5. Untufted paws
6. White markings (including buttons, loquets, or spots) anywhere other than those referred to in the SOP
7. Overall even coat length
8. Persian like coat texture
9. Serious colour or pattern faults
10. Any defect as listed in the preface to this SOP document

Faults

1. Unsound base coat in Solid or Tortoiseshell coloured cats
2. Tabby markings in adult Smoke/Solid coloured cats
3. Heavy tabby markings in Shaded coloured cats
4. White extending beyond the throat in non-silver Tabby cats registered without white
5. Tarnishing in Silver Series cats
6. Heavily brindled coat in Tabby cats

COAT COLOURS

Chocolate, Lilac, and Siamese Points are not allowed.

SOLID COLOURS

The fur should be sound to the roots in colour and free from any shadings, markings, and patches of white hairs, except that red series solid cats may well show tabby markings. Nose leather, Paw pads and eye rims to tone with the body colour.

(MCO w 61) White - Blue Eye

(MCO w 62) White - Orange Eye

(MCO w 63) White - Odd Eye

(MCO w 64) White - Green Eye

(MCO n) Black

(MCO d) Red

(MCO a) Blue

(MCO e) Cream

TORTOISESHELLS

The patterning should extend throughout the coat including the limbs, tail, and face, blaze desirable. Base colour should be sound to the roots.

(MCO f) Tortoiseshell - Black and shades of red. Nose leather, paw pads and eye rims pink and/or black, depending on the distribution of the red.

(MCO g) Blue Tortie - Blue and shades of cream. Nose leather, paw pads and eye rims pink and/or blue depending on the distribution of the cream.

SMOKE COLOURS

Any solid or tortoiseshell colour accepted. The undercoat should be silvery white with deep tips shading to the basic colour. The cat appears darkest on the back, head, and feet. In a smoke cat the silvery white undercoat, which is next to the skin, should not be clearly visible when the cat is in repose. However, this can be seen when fur is parted or when the cat is moving. This is a genetically silver non-tabby variety of Maine Coon. The appearance of clear tabby markings in the coat is undesirable. However, it is accepted that Red Series Smoke colours may exhibit some faint markings which should not be unduly penalised in an otherwise good example of the breed. It should also be noted that kittens of all Smoke colours may well show ghost tabby markings on the body for which they should not be too heavily penalised. The presence of tabby markings in adults is undesirable.

(MCO ns) Black Smoke

Silvery white undercoat deeply tipped with black, and free from tabby markings. In motion, the silvery white undercoat is apparent; cat in repose appears black with no other markings. Extremities and face black, narrow band of silvery white at base of hair, next to skin, which may only be seen when the fur is parted. Nose leather and paw pads black.

(MCO as) Blue Smoke

The above is also the Standard for blue smoke except that, where the word 'black' occurs, 'blue' should be substituted. Nose leather and paw pads blue.

(MCO ds) Red Smoke

The above is also the Standard for red smoke except that, where the word 'black' occurs, 'red' should be substituted. Nose leather and paw pads pink.

(MCO fs) Tortie Smoke

Silvery white undercoat, deeply tipped with black and shades of red, which are clearly visible on both body and extremities. Cat in repose appears tortoiseshell. Extremities and face black and shades of red with narrow band of silvery white at base of hair next to skin, which may only be seen when the fur is parted. Red markings on the face are desirable. Nose leather and paw pads to conform to requirements for coat colour.

(MCO es) Cream Smoke

The Standard for Black Smoke is also the standard for cream smoke except that, where the word 'black' occurs, 'cream' should be substituted. Nose leather and paw pads pink.

(MCO gs) Blue Tortie Smoke

The Standard for Tortie Smoke is also the Standard for Blue Tortie Smoke except that, where the words 'black and shades of red' occur, 'blue and cream' should be substituted

and, where the word 'red' appears, 'cream' should be substituted. Nose leather and paw pads blue or pink to conform to requirements for coat colour.

TABBY PATTERNS

Allowances to be made for diffusion of tabby markings in cats showing long or full flowing coats.

Recognised coat patterns are Classic and Mackerel pattern.

There is a tendency for tabbies to show white around the immediate area of the lips and lower jaw area. It is a serious fault if this extends beyond the throat in non-silver tabbies or tabbies registered without white. Silver- white colour on the throat and muzzle of silver tabbies/silver tortie tabbies is not a fault and the base colour may be diluted by the gene producing silver.

Classic Pattern:

Markings should be clearly defined and dense in colour. On the forehead there should be a letter 'M'. There should be an unbroken line running back from the corner of the eye, with pencillings on the cheek, and lines running over the back of the head extending to the shoulder markings, which should be shaped like a butterfly. On the neck and chest there should be unbroken necklaces, the more the better. There should be a line running down the spine from the butterfly to the tail with a clear line running parallel to each side of this line; these three stripes down the back to be separated from each other by stripes of the ground colour. Each flank should have an oyster marking, preferably identical. The abdominal area should be spotted. Legs should be barred with bracelets going down from the body markings to the feet. Tail should be well ringed. Allowances to be made for diffusion of tabby markings in cats showing longer or full flowing coats.

Mackerel Pattern:

All markings to be clearly defined and dense. On the forehead, there should be a letter 'M' giving the impression of a frown. There should be an unbroken stripe running from the outer corner of the eye and narrow lines on the cheeks. On the neck and upper chest there should be unbroken necklaces, the more the better. The edges of the ears to be the same colour as the markings with a central patch of colour resembling a thumb print. A series of lines run from above the 'M' marking, over the top of the head and extend to the shoulder markings. There should be one narrow, unbroken central spine line on either side of which is a broken spine line from which the narrow lines which form the Mackerel pattern run vertically down the body. These lines should be unbroken and as narrow and numerous as possible. The tip of the tail should be the same colour as the markings.

(MCO n 22) Brown Classic Tabby Black markings on a warm copper agouti ground colour. Nose leather brick red, paw pads and eye rims black or brown.

(MCO n 23) Brown Mackerel Tabby Black markings on a warm copper agouti ground colour. Nose leather brick red, paw pads and eye rims black or brown.

(MCO a 22) Blue Classic Tabby Blue markings on a cool beige agouti ground colour. Nose leather solid blue or pink edged with blue, paw pads and eye rims blue.

(MCO a 23) Blue Mackerel Tabby Blue markings on a cool beige agouti ground colour. Nose leather solid blue or pink edged with blue, paw pads and eye rims blue.

(MCO d 22) Red Classic Tabby Rich red markings on a bright apricot agouti ground colour.

(MCO d 23) Red Mackerel Tabby Nose leather, paw pads and eye rims deep pink.

(MCO e 22) Cream Classic Tabby Rich cream markings on a cooler cream agouti ground colour. Nose leather, paw pads and eye rims pink.

(MCO e 23) Cream Mackerel Tabby Rich cream markings on a cooler cream agouti ground colour. Nose leather, paw pads and eye rims pink.

(MCO f 22) Tortie Classic Tabby Black markings on a warm copper agouti ground which has been overlaid with shades of red. Nose leather brick red. and/or pink depending on the distribution of the red.

(MCO f 23) Tortie Mackerel Tabby Black markings on a warm copper agouti ground which has been overlaid with shades of red. Nose leather brick red. and/or pink depending on the distribution of the red.

(MCO g 22) Blue Tortie Classic Tabby Blue markings on a cool beige agouti ground which has been overlaid with shades of cream. Nose leather blue and/or pink depending on the distribution of the cream

(MCO g 23) Blue Tortie Mackerel Tabby Blue markings on a cool beige agouti ground which has been overlaid with shades of cream. Nose leather blue and/or pink depending on the distribution of the cream.

(MCO ns 22) Silver Classic Tabby Colour and markings as above on a silver agouti ground. Nose leather, paw pads and eye rims as above.

(MCO ns 23) Silver Mackerel Tabby Colour and markings as above on a silver agouti ground. Nose leather, paw pads and eye rims as above

(MCO as 22) Blue Silver Classic Tabby

(MCO as 23) Blue Silver Mackerel Tabby

(MCO ds 22) Red Silver Classic Tabby

(MCO ds 23) Red Silver Mackerel Tabby

(MCO es 22) Cream Silver Classic Tabby

(MCO es 23) Cream Silver Mackerel Tabby

(MCO fs 22) Tortie Silver Classic Tabby

(MCO fs 23) Tortie Silver Mackerel Tabby

(MCO gs 22) Blue Tortie Silver Classic Tabby

(MCO gs 23) Blue Tortie Silver Mackerel Tabby

Silver-white colour on the throat and muzzle of silver tabbies/silver tortie tabbies is not a fault and the base colour may be diluted by the gene producing silver. Tarnishing is undesirable.

SHADED COLOURS:

(MCO n 11) Black shaded.

(MCO ns 11) Silver Shaded

(MCO a 11) Blue Shaded

(MCO as 11) Blue Silver Shaded

(MCO d 11) Red Shaded

(MCO ds 11) Red Silver Shaded

(MCO f 11) Tortie Shaded

(MCO fs 11) Tortie Silver Shaded

(MCO e 11) Cream Shaded

(MCO es 11) Cream Silver Shaded

(MCO g 11) Blue Tortie Shaded

(MCO gs 11) Blue Tortie Silver Shaded

Both Standard (non-silver) and Silver Shaded colours are accepted in any solid or tortoiseshell colour. Shaded cats are genetically agouti. In the shaded cat the coloured fur should give the overall appearance of a mantle on the back. The body should be as free from tabby markings as possible in adults. Kittens may well exhibit ghost tabby markings on the body for which allowance should be made.

In Standard Shaded, the undercoat should be as pale as possible with the shaft of each hair pale at the root and darkening to the base colour at the tip.

In Silver Shaded, the undercoat should be as pale a silver as possible with shallow tips shading to the basic colour; the dark points being most clearly defined on the back, head and feet

and the lighter points on the flanks and ear tufts. Any tarnishing of the coat is undesirable. Nose leather, paw pads and eye rims in keeping with the basic colour.

BICOLOUR AND PARTICOLOUR:

(MCO n {03/02}) Black and white
(MCO a {03/02}) Blue and white
(MCO d {03/02}) Red and white
(MCO e {03/02}) Cream and white
(MCO f {03/02}) Tortoiseshell and white
(MCO g {03/02}) Blue Tortie and white

(MCO ns {03/02}) Black Smoke and white
(MCO as {03/02}) Blue Smoke and white
(MCO ds {03/02}) Red Smoke and white
(MCO es {03/02}) Cream Smoke and white
(MCO fs {03/02}) Tortie Smoke and white
(MCO gs {03/02}) Blue Tortie Smoke and white

(MCO n 22 {03/02}) Brown Classic Tabby and white
(MCO n 23 {03/02}) Brown Mackerel Tabby and white
(MCO a 22 {03/02}) Blue Classic Tabby and white
(MCO a 23 {03/02}) Blue Mackerel Tabby and white
(MCO d 22 {03/02}) Red Classic Tabby and white
(MCO d 23 {03/02}) Red Mackerel Tabby and white
(MCO e 22 {03/02}) Cream Classic Tabby and white
(MCO e 23 {03/02}) Cream Mackerel Tabby and white
(MCO f 22 {03/02}) Tortie Classic Tabby and white
(MCO f 23 {03/02}) Tortie Mackerel Tabby and White
(MCO g 22 {03/02}) Blue Tortie Classic Taby and white
(MCO g 23 {03/02}) Blue Tortie Mackerel Tabby and white

(MCO n 22 {03/02}) Silver Classic Tabby and white
(MCO ns 23 {03/02}) Silver Mackerel Tabby and white
(MCO as 22 {03/02}) Blue Silver Classic Tabby and white
(MCO as 23 {03/02}) Blue Silver Mackerel Tabby and white
(MCO ds 22 {03/02}) Red Silver Classic Tabby and white
(MCO ds 23 {03/02}) Red Silver Mackerel Tabby and white
(MCO es 22 {03/02}) Cream Silver Classic Tabby and white
(MCO es 23 {03/02}) Cream Silver Mackerel Tabby and white
(MCO fs 22 {03/02}) Tortie Silver Classic Tabby and white
(MCO fs 23 {03/02}) Tortie Silver Mackerel Tabby and white
(MCO gs 22 {03/02}) Blue Tortie Silver Classic Tabby and white
(MCO gs 23 {03/02}) Blue Tortie Silver Mackerel Tabby and white

(MCO n 11 {03/02}) Black Shaded and white.
(MCO a 11 {03/02}) Blue Shaded and white.
MCO d 11 {03/02}) Red Shaded and white.
(MCO e 11 {03/02}) Cream Shaded and white.
(MCO f 11 {03/02}) Tortie Shaded and white
(MCO g 11 {03/02}) Blue Tortie Shaded and white

(MCO ns 11 {03/02}) Black Silver Shaded and white.
(MCO as 11 {03/02}) Blue Silver Shaded and white.
(MCO ds 11 {03/02}) Red Silver Shaded and white.
(MCO es 11 {03/02}) Cream Silver Shaded and white.

(MCO fs 11 {03/02}) Tortie Silver Shaded and white.
(MCO gs 11 {03/02}) Blue Tortie Silver Shaded and white.

Any solid, tabby, tortoiseshell, shaded or smoke colour and white. The base colour is to be present on head, back (extending down onto sides) and fully coloured tail. On tabby cats, there should be sufficient base colour to show the pattern. The minimum white permitted is some white to all four paws, underbelly, and chest, with some colour allowed to these areas. Refer to the appropriate section for descriptions of coat markings.

Rationale for Standard of Point Changes

The Maine Coon BAC have decided to review the Standard of Points (SOP) and make suggestions for amendments for a couple of reasons.

1. The SOP has not been updated for well over 10 years.
2. The point of this SOP is to ensure that Maine Coons are in good balance with no one feature of the cat being exaggerated. These amendments hope to clarify certain parts of the standard where there may be too much room for interpretation, and where certain trends have led to the wrong direction and even to some health and welfare issues.

For this reason, we have reduced the number of points relating to coat colour, for which the any coat issues are covered under faults.

With these extra points for the head, we have broken down the head into its composite parts: Head Shape, muzzle/chin, profile, ears, and eyes.

Head Shape - We have emphasised the Box in a box shape of the Maine Coon head, where the upper part of the head is broader than the muzzle, unlike some of the Maine Coons we are now seeing that have longer, narrower heads.

Muzzle – Muzzle should be a square box sat on a square box. Currently we are seeing huge muzzles that push up the cheeks and result in slitty eyes many of which need to be treated for entropion. Recent trends in breeders pronouncing overemphasised muzzles and chins are leading to an increase in the number of cats being undershot.

Chin – Firm, broad and deep enough to complete the square outline of the muzzle.

Profile - Profile needs to be a gentle, shallow curve and previously we were concerned about straight profile but now there is a trend toward an overly exaggerated curve with a very full forehead, completely changing the outline of the Maine Coon head.

Ears – Should be large but not extreme, with one ear width between. Currently we are seeing cats with huge rabbit ears set tightly together. Whilst this may be acceptable in a kitten and will resolve as the head broadens it is not acceptable in an adult.

Eyes – Eyes should be oval, large, and expressive. Currently we are seeing cats with very slanted and deep-set eyes. These cats are at increased risk of entropion and many do have to undergo surgery for this condition.