The British Shorthair

• General
  • The British Shorthair is compact, well-balanced and powerful, showing good depth of body, a full broad chest, short to medium strong legs, rounded paws, tail thick at base with a rounded tip. The head is round with good width between the ears, round cheeks, firm chin, medium ears, large round and well-opened eyes, and a medium broad nose. The coat is short and very dense. Females are less massive in all respects, with males having larger jowls. This breed takes a full 3-5 years to reach full maturity and development. Individuals should convey an overall impression of balance and proportion in which no feature is exaggerated to foster weakness or extremes.
Point Score

• HEAD (25)
  • Muzzle and Chin ................................................................. 5
  • Skull ..................................................................................... 5
  • Ears ..................................................................................... 5
  • Neck ..................................................................................... 5
  • Eye shape ............................................................................. 5

• BODY (35)
  • Torso ................................................................................... 20
  • Legs and Paws. ................................................................. 10
  • Tail ..................................................................................... 5

• COAT (20)
  • Texture, length, and density .............................................. 20

• COLOR (20)
  • Eye color ............................................................................. 5
  • Coat color ........................................................................... 15
Total Point Score – 100 Points

- **Head**: 25 points
- **Body**: 35 points
- **Color**: 20 points
- **Coat**: 20 points
  - Coat texture, length, density
  - Eye color
  - Eye shape
  - Neck
  - Ears
  - Skull
  - Muzzle and Chin
  - Legs and Paws
  - Tail
Head – 25 Points

- Muzzle and Chin: 5 points
- Skull: 5 points
- Ears: 5 points
- Neck: 5 points
- Eye shape: 5 points
- Torso: 5 points
- Legs and Paws: 5 points
- Tail: 5 points
- Coat color: 5 points
- Eye color: 5 points
- Coat texture, length, density: 5 points
- Color: 5 points
British Shorthair Head – 25 Points

- **Muzzle and Chin (5 points)**
  - Distinctive, well-developed, definite stop beyond large, round whisker pads

- **Skull (5 points)**
  - Round and massive, forehead rounded with a slight flat plane. Forehead should not slope.

- **Ears (5 points)**
  - Medium-sized, broad at the base, rounded tips. Set far apart, fitting into (without distorting) the rounded contour of the head.

- **Neck (5 points)**
  - Short, thick

- **Eye Shape (5 points)**
  - Large, round, well opened. Set wide apart and level.
Head: Muzzle and Chin – 5/25 Points

- **Muzzle:** distinctive, well-developed, definite stop (not to be confused with a nose stop) beyond large, round whisker pads.

Look at the head from the top. How does the muzzle fit into the round?

Nose and upper lip not in line with the chin. Nose stop?

Muzzle protrudes from the round.

Muzzle elongates the round.
Head: Muzzle and Chin – 5/25 Points

- Muzzle: distinctive, well-developed, definite stop (not to be confused with a nose stop) beyond large, round whisker pads

Look at the head from the top and front. How does the muzzle fit into the round?
Head: Muzzle and Chin – 5/25 Points

• Chin: firm, well-developed, in line with nose and upper lip. Penalize weak chin, such as those below.

Look at the head from the front. Does the chin complete the round?

A Brit with a weak chin may have a droopy muzzle.
Head: Muzzle and Chin – 5/25 Points

- Chin: firm, well-developed, in line with nose and upper lip. Below are firm, well-developed chins.

A strong chin enhances the muzzle and completes the round.
Head: Muzzle and Chin – 5/25 Points

- The nose is medium, broad. In profile there is a gentle dip. Penalize definite nose stop (break).

A small nose closes the expression.

Eeek, a nose stop!
Head: Skull – 5/25 Points

- Skull is round and massive. Forehead should be rounded with a slight flat plane on the top of the head. The forehead should not slope.

The head structure should shout, “Round!”

No slight flat plane, whispering, “Pointy-headed.”

Now, that’s round.
Head: Neck – 5/25 Points

- Neck should be short and thick

Short and thick

Short and thick

Not thick, a little long, but some allowance for a younger female.
Head: Ears – 5/25 points

- Ears are medium in size, broad at the base, rounded at the tips, set far apart, fitting into, without distorting, the rounded contour of the head.

Look at the back of the head. Do the ears fit into the round of the head?

Small and don’t fit the round.

Close and a little large.

Set close.

Don’t fit the round.

Too narrow at the base.
Head: Ears – 5/25 points

- Ears are **medium** in size, broad at the base, rounded at the tips, set far apart, fitting into, without distorting, the rounded contour of the head.

Look at the back of the head. Do the ears fit into the round of the head?

Into the head, not jowls.
Head: Eye Shape – 5/25 Points

- Eyes are large, round, well-opened, set wide apart and level*

*Note: The use of the word “level” in the British Shorthair standard is not the same as the Persian standard. The intent that the eyes are on the same plane.
Head: Eye Shape – 5/25 Points

- Eyes are large, round, well-opened, set wide apart and level*

*Note: The use of the word “level” in the British Shorthair standard is not the same as the Persian standard. The intent that the eyes are on the same plane.
Body – 35 Points

- Coat: 20 points
- Legs and Paws: 10 points
- Tail: 5 points
- Color: 10 points
- Coat texture, length, density: 5 points
- Eye color: 5 points
- Muzzle and Chin: 5 points
- Skull: 5 points
- Ears: 5 points
- Neck: 5 points
- Eye shape: 5 points
Body – 35 Points

• Torso (20 points)
  • The Torso is medium to large, well-knit and powerful, level back, deep broad chest. Note: In silhouette, the British Shorthair should be a short rectangle, not the long rectangle of a Maine Coon, nor the square of a Persian.

• Legs (10 points)
  • Legs are short to medium, well-boned and strong, in proportion to the body, forelegs are straight. Paws are round and firm.

• Tail (5 points)
  • Tail is medium length, in proportion to the body, thicker at the base, tapering slightly to a rounded tip. (5 points)
Body: Torso – 20/35 Points

• The Torso is medium to large, well-knit and powerful, level back, deep broad chest.*

Look for compact, broad, well-knit, good depth of flank - well balanced.

Torso is long and high on legs, likely not balanced.

*Note: In silhouette, the British Shorthair should be a short rectangle, not the long rectangle of a Maine Coon, nor the square of a Persian.
Body: Torso – 20/35 Points

• The Torso is medium to large, well-knit and powerful, level back, deep broad chest.*

*Note: In silhouette, the British Shorthair should be a short rectangle, not the long rectangle of a Maine Coon, nor the square of a Persian.
Body: Legs and Paws – 10/35 Points

- Legs are short to medium, well-boned and strong, in proportion to the body, forelegs are straight
- Paws are round and firm.
Body: Tail – 5/35 Points

- Tail is medium length, in proportion to the body, thicker at the base, tapering slightly to a rounded tip.
Body, generally

• Females are less massive in all respects, with males having larger jowls. This breed takes a full 3-5 years to reach full maturity and development. Individuals should convey an overall impression of balance and proportion in which no feature is exaggerated to foster weakness or extremes.
Coat – 20 Points

- Coat texture, length, density: 20 points
- Color
- Head
  - Skull
  - Ears
  - Neck
  - Eye shape
- Body
  - Torso
  - Legs and Paws
  - Tail
- Eye color
- Coat color
- Muzzle and Chin

Coat
Coat – 20 points

- Coat is judged on Texture, Length and Density
- Although dense, the coat must have texture and should stand away from the body, not lie flat.
- The coat is short, very dense, well-bodied, firm to the touch, not double coated or woolly.
- Compare the coat to velvet or velour. It is firm, yet soft. It has been described as “lively.”
- A soft, dense coat and a textured, less-dense, coat are similarly desirable.
- A longer or shorter textured coat is more desirable.
- A longer or shorter soft coat is less desirable.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dense</th>
<th>Longer</th>
<th>Shorter</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soft</td>
<td>Better</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textured</td>
<td>Best</td>
<td>Better</td>
<td>Better</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coat – 20 points

• Density and Texture must be felt. However, there is visible difference in textured and less-textured coats.
• The coat types illustrated below, both from National Winning cats, were highly praised by judges.
• All other aspects being equal, the textured coat is more desirable.

These hairs are from a dense, soft coat.
These hairs are from a dense, textured coat.
Color – 20 Points

Coat color

Eye color

15

5

Coat texture, length, density

Muzzle and Chin

Skull

Ears

Neck

Eye shape

Legs and Paws

Torso

Tail

Body

Head
Color – 20 Points

- **Eye Color (5 points)**
  - Eye color is gold to copper (except as noted for certain colors), with no difference in points between gold and copper

- **Coat Color (15 points)**
  - Coat color varies by color class. For Blue color: Light to medium blue, lighter shade preferred, with sound medium shade more acceptable than an unsound lighter shade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Unsound</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Light Blue</td>
<td>Best</td>
<td>Less Better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Blue</td>
<td>Better</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Color: Eye Color – 5/20 Points

- Eye color is gold to copper (except as noted for certain colors), with no difference in points between gold and copper.
Color: Coat Color – 15/20 Points

- Coat color varies by color class. For Blue color: Light to medium blue, lighter shade preferred, with sound medium shade more acceptable than an unsound lighter shade.

Note: Shadow tabby markings in (solid color, smoke, shaded, shaded golden, bi-color, or calico) kittens are not a fault.
Solid

- White, Black, Blue, Red, Cream
  - Red and cream are most often “Selfs;” their tabby markings fade as adults.
Tabby
Parti-Color & Bi-Color
British Shorthair Penalties

- Definite nose stop
- Over-long or light undercoat
- Soft coat
- Rangy body
- Weak chin
- Other penalties as associated with various colors
British Shorthair Disqualifications

- Incorrect eye color
- Green rims in adults
- Tail defects
- Longhair or fluffy coat
- Incorrect number of toes
- Locket or button
- Improper color or pigment in nose leather and/or paw pads, in total or part
- Any evidence of illness or poor health
- Any evidence of wryness of jaw, poor dentition or malocclusion
- Evidence of hybridization, resulting in the colors chocolate, lavender, Himalayan pattern, or these in combination with white
- Other disqualifications associated with the various colors in the British Shorthair Standard
Handling British Shorthairs

• British Shorthairs do not like their legs to dangle. They prefer to stand, rather than be held.

• A strong, supportive “full body hold” will often be all it takes to calm an uncertain British Shorthair.

• Support the cat’s body lengthwise.

• Most British Shorthairs prefer to stand alone on the judging table, showing themselves off to you. They do not show themselves well when held down on the table.
Handling British Shorthairs

- British Shorthairs do not like their head tilted back. Using a toy to achieve the head position desired is their desire.

- British Shorthairs are built for catching mice rather than birds. Allowing the Brit to focus for a moment on the toy before moving the toy will elicit a better response than a quick flit of the toy.
British Shorthair Lore

• A British Shorthair was awarded “Best in Show” in the very first cat show, in England in 1871.

• Tracing their history back to the domestic cats of Rome, in England British Shorthairs were valued as barn or street cat. Protected by their dense, water-repellent coats and gifted with hunting prowess and a calm nature, they were a favorite of farm and city-dwellers.

• Some say, British Shorthairs were used for soup during the very difficult days in England during World War II.

• After World War II, British Shorthairs were bred with Persians, to bring back the breed.
British Shorthair Lore (continued)

• The British Shorthair is considered to have been the model for the Cheshire Cat, of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, as the cat with the smile or “grin.”

> Well, I've often seen a cat without a grin, but a grin without a cat! It's the most curious thing!
British Shorthair Lore (continued)

- Although British Shorthairs can be found in every color and pattern found in the show hall, they never appear in purple tabby, as the Cheshire Cat in Disney’s Alice in Wonderland.
Acknowledgements

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• The presentation was updated in 2009 by Cathy Dunham, Erin Vosburgh and Barbara Sinbine. In 2016, the presentation was again updated by Cyndy Byrd, with photographic contributions from many of our Breed Council members, and edited by Drs. Ginger and Paul Meeker, Jo and Colin Cornwall, Karen and Scott Beyl, Erin Cutchen and Barbara Sinbine.

• We would like to thank all the professional photographers, for without their dedication to capturing our cats on film and digitally, this project would not be possible.
Questions???????