

General Anatomy of the Havanese

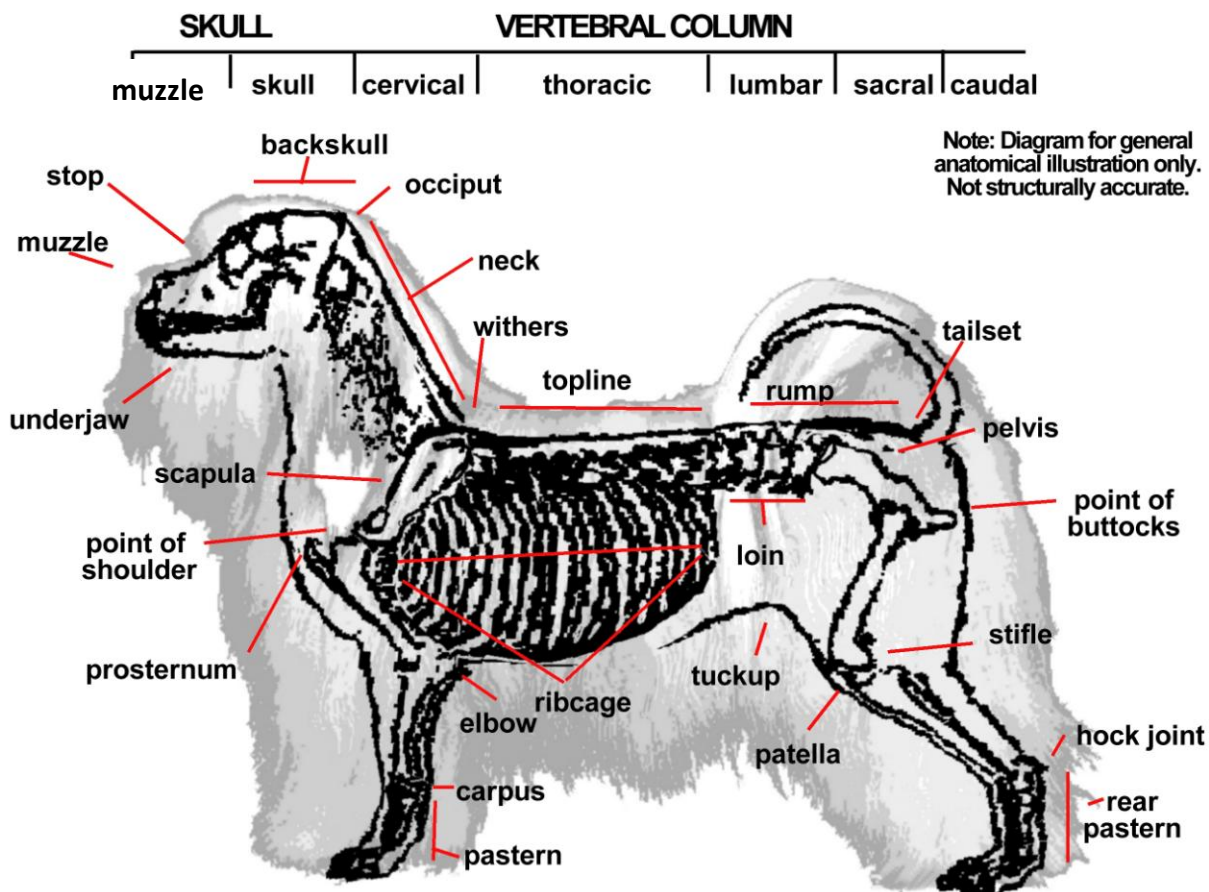


Figure 1: Structural illustration (for general identification only not structural accuracy)

The canine spinal anatomy is very similar to ours, with the exception of one additional thoracic vertebra and two additional lumbar vertebra and a variable number of coccygeal (caudal) vertebrae.

- The skull or head is comprised of two parts: the muzzle which includes from the tip of the nose to the stop and the backskull or cranium which is from the stop to the occiput.
- The spinal column is made up of five major vertebral regions: cervical (neck), thoracic (upper/mid back), lumbar (lower back), sacral (pelvic) and coccygeal (tail).
- 7 cervical vertebrae form the neck from the occiput to the withers. The last of the cervical vertebrae and the first of the thoracic vertebrae are down between the shoulder blades. The withers is a transition stage between the neck's relatively upright carriage and the more horizontal back area.
- 13 thoracic vertebrae form the main part of the torso support and are attached to the rib cage.
- 7 lumbar vertebrae form the lower back area. These vertebrae are very sturdy in construction, as they support more weight and movement than other vertebrae. They allow for supple flexion and extension, lateral flexion (side bending), and also some rotation.
- 3 sacral vertebrae form the rump/croup of the dog from the front of the pelvis to the tail set.
- The coccygeal vertebrae are the bones forming the tailbone and tail. Many animals, including dogs have a greater number of "tail vertebrae" than humans and they are more commonly known as caudal vertebrae. The canine tail consists of a variable number (6 to 24) highly mobile vertebrae.

Glossary of Canine Terminology

Abdomen: body cavity between the chest and pelvis

Angulation: angle which is formed by the meeting of bones at a joint; most commonly used to refer to the shoulder/upper arm angle in the front and stifle/hock angle in the rear

Back: region between the withers and root of tail

Bad mouth: crooked or misaligned teeth; bite overshot or undershot outside of breed specifications

Balanced: symmetrical, proportionate, overall consistency

Bite: relative position of the upper and lower teeth when the mouth is closed

Bone: substance

Canines: The fangs; the two upper and two lower sharp pointed teeth next to the incisors

Carpals: bones of the pastern joint

Chest: the part of the body or trunk enclosed by the ribs

Coarse: rugged physique lacking refinement. Also term for a rough or harsh coat texture.

Coat: The dog's hair covering

Condition: health as shown by the coat, state of flesh, general appearance and deportment

Conformation: The form and structure, make and shape; arrangements of the parts in conformance with the breed standard demands

Croup: lower spinal region, from the hip bones to the tail set. Some use the terms rump and croup interchangeably

Dentition: number and arrangement of the teeth

Dewclaw: An extra claw or functionless digit on the inside of the leg; a rudimentary fifth toe

Drive: thrusting of the hindquarters providing impulsion

Elbow: joint between the upper arm and the forearm

Elbows out: turning out or off from the body; not held close

Eye shape: (i.e. almond) refers to contour of the tissue surrounding the eye. The eye itself is always round

Fall: hair overhanging the face

Feathering: longer fringe of hair on ears, legs, tail or body

Fiddle front: forelegs out at elbows, pasterns close, and feet turned out; French front

Flank: side of the body between the last rib and the hip

Floating rib: last rib (13th) which is unattached to other ribs

Forearm: The bones of the foreleg between elbow and pastern

Forechest: front part of the chest

Forequarters: front of the dog, excluding the head & neck

Fragile: dainty and slight, lacking substance

Front: Forepart of the body as viewed head on

Gait: movement, manner in which a dog walks, trots or runs

Height: vertical measure from the withers to the ground

Hindquarters: rear part of dog from the loin

Hock: tarsus or collection of bones of the hind leg forming the joint between the second thigh and the metatarsus; the dog's true heel

Incisors: upper and lower front teeth between the canines

Layback: angle of the shoulder blade as compared with the vertical (when viewed from the side)

Leather: ear flap, outer lobe of the ear

Loin: region of the body either side of the vertebral column, unsupported by ribs, between last ribs and the hindquarters

Mesocephalic: moderate head/facial shape; medium width and length with approximately equal muzzle/top skull

Muzzle: foreface; head in front of the eyes which includes the nasal bone, nostrils & jaws

Neck: the part between the occiput and the withers

Occiput: upper, back point of the skull

Pastern (front): region of the foreleg between the carpus (wrist) and the foot

Pastern (rear): region of the hind leg between the tarsus and the foot; often incorrectly called the "hock"

Patella: kneecap, in front of the stifle joint

Pelvis: a framework of bones formed by the pelvic arch

Point of buttock: rear most point of the buttocks

Point of hip: front most point of the hip and pelvis

Point of shoulder: joint where the upper arm meets the scapula (shoulder blade)

Plume: feathery tail carried over the back

Profile: Side view of the whole dog or of the head

Prosternum: front most upper point of the sternum

Reach: Distance covered in a forward stride

Roach back: convex curvature of the spine towards the loin

Rump: rear part of the back from front of the pelvis to root of the tail. Some consider it to be the entire fleshy area from front most point of the hip to rearmost point of the buttocks

Scapula: shoulder blade

Scissors bite: bite in which the outer side of the lower incisors touches the inner sides of the upper incisors

Skull: bony regions of the head. Cranium or backskull: section of head from stop to occiput

Snipey: a pointed, weak muzzle

Spring of ribs: curvature of the ribs

Sternum: breastbone

Stop: depression between the eyes where the nasal bone and skull meet

Stifle: joint of the hind leg; the dog's knee

Tail Set: how the base of the tail sets on the rump

Tarsus: bones of the ankle

Texture: quality or feel of the coat

Topline: outline of the back from just behind the withers up to the tail set

Trim: to shape or shorten the length of the coat by plucking, clipping, scissoring or any other means

Tuck Up: concave underline of the body curving up from the end of the ribs beneath the loin; the waist

Type: The characteristic qualities distinguishing a breed; the embodiment of a standard's essentials

Upper Arm: humerus, bone of the foreleg between the shoulder blade and the elbow

Withers: the peak of the dorsal vertebrae and the point at which height is measured