

FAQ on Color

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There have been requests for specific information regarding the Color section of the English Cocker breed standard. Below are answers to the most frequently asked questions.

1. Can a sable English Cocker be shown?

Yes.

2. In Judges Education presentations, are the participants advised to excuse sables?

No. Judges education presenters, if asked, will simply state that there is a difference of opinion on whether the Color section of the standard is “Various” to include all colors or “Various” and the acceptable various colors are stated in the sentences following.

3. Has the ECSCA Board of Directors ever voted specifically on whether the color sable is considered an allowable color for conformation competition?

No.

In preparation for a Board conference call in October of 2010, the Corresponding Secretary, Kate Romanski researched previous ECSCA Board minutes for any motions concerning color. There was one regarding the classification of the Open Solid Class:

“Open Solid Class – to include any solid color with tan points.”

1-6-1980 – Motion made, seconded and carried approving said definition.

This definition was tweaked further in 1998 when AKC suggested it be expanded to:

“Open Solid Color, to include any solid color, except white, with tan points.” This is the current definition.

There are extensive notes on AKC correspondence regarding the classification of colors for individual dog registration papers (blue slips) and which clubs may offer a divided Open class, however these do not relate to the topic of judging.

At a Board meeting on 6-12-1990 there is reference to a specific situation regarding the judging of a sable English Cocker Spaniel at an AKC event in April of 1990.

Following is Mr. Mandeville's letter in its' entirety:

It is dated May 28, 1990 and it is addressed to Mrs. E. Irving Eldredge, President

"Dear Anne:

This letter is inquiring about "sable" color in English Cocker Spaniels. Our inquiry is prompted by a letter we have received from Richard Squier. A copy of Mr. Squier's letter is enclosed. Simply put is "sable" an acceptable English Cocker Spaniel color?

The English Cocker Spaniel standard describes color as "Various," then gives an extensive description. Does the "various" description permit sable? One interpretation is that the extensive descriptions given define the "various" colors, and therefore, sable is not permitted.

Please be aware of the following policy on color in standards, "In breeds where multiple colors or color combinations are acceptable, but not all colors are permitted, the complete list of all acceptable colors and color combinations must be included in the standard. In such cases, any color or color combination not mentioned are unacceptable, and judges are to pass judgment on this basis."

Thanks for your review of this matter, and I hope this letter finds all well with you.

Signed – John Mandeville
Director – Judging Research and Development

Mrs. Eldredge's letter of response in its' entirety.

It is dated June 26th, 1990.

Dear John:

After a meeting of the board of the ECSCA it has been decided that we will not change the standard on color – we feel that “varions” (sic) and “liver or shades of red” should cover the sable.

As far as I know Mr. Squier is the only one breeding the color as of now and hopefully the judges will accept the coverage we have set down in our revised standard.

It was nice to talk with you the other day. I miss hearing about the people at A.K.C.

Thank you for all your trouble. Hope this helps.

Signed – Sincerely, Mrs. E. Irving Eldredge

The following is quoted from the Précis of Minutes published in the ECSCA News-Review (newsletter at that time).

“Letter from John Mandeville, AKC re sable color in English Cockers, implying that the ECSCA should list acceptable colors as part of the breed standard. Discussion followed; consensus was that the wording ‘Color: Various’ and later in the same section, ‘shades of red’ covered sable satisfactorily. What judges do with the sable color is their decision, but the breed standard has no disqualifications and will not be changed to include any for color or other part. Mrs. Eldridge to write to Mr. Mandeville re this matter.”

There was not a vote, either by the Board members present or the membership on this interpretation.

4. Does the breed standard have any disqualifications?

No.

5. Does a registerable color mean it is allowed in conformation competition?

Not necessarily – there are breeds that allow colors to be registered but they are not acceptable in the breed ring. Some standards will disqualify, others choose to have them “not place” or note the color as undesirable. Examples of each are shown below.

From the English Springer Spaniel breed standard:

”Off colors such as lemon, red or orange, are not to place...”

A listing of English Springer Spaniel registerable colors from the AKC website:

Colors

Description	Type	Code
Black & White	S	019
Black White & Tan	S	034
Liver & White	S	125
Liver White & Tan	S	127
White & Black	S	202
White & Liver	S	212
Lemon & White	A	115
Orange & White	A	134
Red & White	A	146

From the Boxer standard:

Disqualifications: Boxers that are any color other than fawn or brindle.

A listing of Boxer registerable colors from the AKC website.

Colors

Description	Type	Code
Brindle	S	057
Fawn	S	082
White	A	199

From the Tibetan Mastiff standard:

Black, brown, and blue/grey, all with or without tan markings, and various shades of gold.

All other coat colors, while accepted, are to be faulted.

A listing of Tibetan Mastiff colors from the AKC website.

Black	S	007
Black & Tan	S	018
Blue Gray	S	300
Blue Gray & Tan	S	503
Brown	S	061
Brown & Tan	S	262
Red Gold	S	152
Cream	A	076
Cream Sable	A	348
Red Gold Sable	A	502

The end