Pencil Drawing of a German Shepherd: Breed-Specific Head, Coat, and Stance

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

A head study has total head length 8 cm. The muzzle is drawn 5 cm long. Is this within the breed proportion guide? Give the corrected muzzle length.

Answer: No. The muzzle should be about half the head length, so 4 cm. The drawn 5 cm is too long by 1 cm.

Reason: The guide states muzzle is roughly half of nose-to-occiput length. Half of 8 cm is 4 cm. Compare 5 cm to 4 cm.

Check: Measure the muzzle line and the full head line on your drawing; divide head length by two and compare.

Task 2

A side-view body box has a horizontal distance from withers to croup of 12 cm. The croup is marked 3 cm below the withers. Calculate the slope drop per horizontal unit and state whether it is steeper than one unit per four units. Separately, if the withers height is 12 cm, is the croup drop consistent with the one-quarter-of-withers-height guide?

Answer: Drop per unit is 3 divided by 12, which is 0.25 units per unit, or one per four. This equals the suggested ratio, so it is not steeper than one per four. The one-quarter guide gives 12 divided by 4, which is 3 cm, so the 3 cm croup drop also matches that check.

Reason: Slope ratio is vertical drop divided by the withers-to-croup horizontal run. 3/12 equals 0.25. One per four is also 0.25, so the slope matches the guide. The croup-drop guide is withers height divided by four: 12/4 equals 3 cm, matching the marked drop.

Check: Measure the drop from withers to croup and the horizontal distance from withers to croup (not the full body length); divide drop by run and compare to 0.25. Then measure withers height, divide by four, and compare to the croup drop.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

You draw ten coat strokes on the back. Six run from withers toward tail, three run sideways, and one runs upward. Using the 30-degree flow rule, how many strokes violate the rule?

Answer: Four strokes violate the rule: the three sideways and one upward. Only the six withers-to-tail strokes follow the back flow.

Reason: Back flow runs from withers toward tail. Sideways and upward strokes exceed 30 degrees from that direction.

Check: Draw a flow arrow on the back; for each stroke, estimate its angle to the arrow and count those over 30 degrees.

Task 4

An ear triangle has height 2 cm and base 1.5 cm. The head length is 7 cm. Is the ear height within the one-third guide? What is the suggested ear height range if you allow plus or minus 0.5 cm? Also state whether the 1.5 cm base is consistent with the one-ear-width spacing guide when the ear height is about 2 cm.

Answer: One-third of 7 cm is about 2.3 cm. The 2 cm ear is within 0.3 cm of that, so it is acceptable. With plus or minus 0.5 cm, the range is about 1.8 to 2.8 cm. The base of 1.5 cm is close to the ear height of 2 cm, so it is consistent with the one-ear-width spacing guide within a reasonable range.

Reason: Divide head length by three: 7/3 is about 2.33. Compare 2 cm to 2.33 cm. Add and subtract 0.5 cm for the range. The base spacing guide says bases are about one ear-width apart; with an ear height near 2 cm, a 1.5 cm base is close enough to be a valid alternative.

Check: Measure ear height and head length; compute head length divided by three; check the difference is within 0.5 cm. Then compare the ear base width to the ear height and confirm they are close, allowing for valid variation.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Ears are erect, triangular, with slightly rounded tips and bases about one ear-width apart.
- [ ] Muzzle length is approximately half the total head length.
- [ ] Backline slopes gently downward from withers to croup; croup is lower than withers.
- [ ] Coat strokes follow mapped flow directions within 30 degrees.
- [ ] Practice plate includes four labeled zones and three studies per zone.
- [ ] Labels use the defined x-height convention; valid alternatives in ear tip roundness, tail curve, and ear base width are accepted.

Reflection: What did you check, what did you change, and what will you try next?