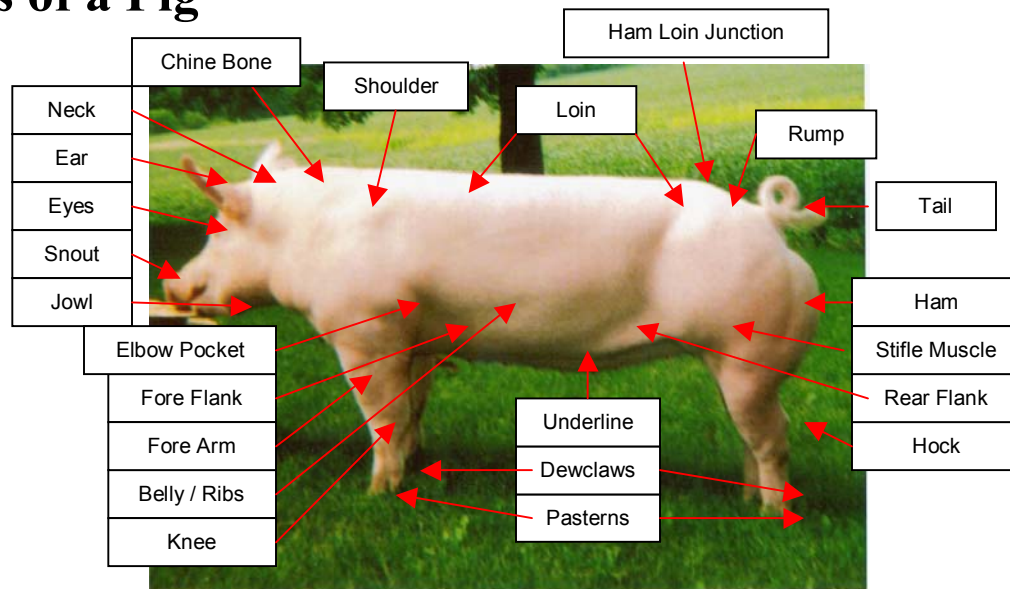


Parts of a Pig



Neck – The neck is located just behind the ears and in front of the shoulder. The neck is the proper location to give most injections to pigs. This portion of the body is usually discarded during harvest.

Ears- The ears are located just above the eyes and in front of the neck. The pigs ears can vary in shape and size. They are used predominately for identification purposes through the use of ear notches.

Eyes- The eyes are located on the face and below the ears. The pig usually sees in shades of black and white.

Snout- The snout (also called the nose) of the pig is located by the mouth. The snout is used by the pig to move, turn, and lift objects; as well as to assist in eating and smelling. The size and length of the snout varies from breed to breed.

Jowl – The jowl is located underneath the snout and is sometimes referred to as the pig’s chin. A trimmer or cleaner jowl on the pig is more desirable, while a larger jowl is less desirable.

Elbow Pocket – The elbow pocket is located above the fore arm and behind the shoulder. It is the elbow of the front leg and serves as a depot for fat storage. Over conditioned or fatter pigs will have a more defined elbow pocket.

Fore Arm – The fore arm is located above the knee and is the thickest part of the front leg before entering the chest.

Fore Flank or Fore Rib – The fore flank or fore rib is located the front portion of the ribs. This portion of the chest cavity should be one of the widest parts of the pig’s chest. The pig’s heart and lungs are located under the fore rib.

Belly / Ribs – The belly and ribs are located just behind the shoulders and elbow pocket. The ribs need to be boldly sprung when you are judging pigs. The belly is the location where bacon comes from on the pig. Both the belly and the ribs play an important role in gilts during pregnancy. A gilt must have ample capacity in order to carry large litters of pigs.

Knee – The knee is located just above the dewclaws and just below the elbow pocket. A pig needs to have ample flexibility to their knee in order to maintain structural soundness.

Underline – The underline is the collection of teats where a litter of pigs will nurse their mother. Underline quality can vary from breed to breed and pig to pig. Underlines should be evaluated on breeding stock. The ideal underline is free of uneven spacing, nonfunctional teats, and has plenty of teats to nurse.

Dewclaws – The dewclaws are the smaller appendages on the back of the pig's legs, located above the hooves. The pig should not be walking down on its dewclaws. Certain breeds are ineligible for registration if they possess extra dewclaws.

Pasterns – The pasterns are located just below the dewclaws and above the pig's hooves. The pasterns should be strong and the pig should walk on its toes. Pigs that have poor structure might walk down on their pastern, which allows their dewclaws to touch the ground.

Hock – The hocks are located on the rear legs and are located just below the stifle muscle. A proper angle is needed from stifle muscle to the hock, and then to the ground in order for the pig to have structural correctness. Slatted flooring or cement can cause the hocks on a pig to swell.

Rear Flank – The rear flank is located past the ribs and in front of the stifle muscle. When evaluating a pig for balance, the rib and rear flank should be level with each other. Pigs that possess shallow flanked usually exhibit less capacity and are less desirable as replacement gilts.

Stifle Muscle – The stifle muscle is the muscle used to move the pig's rear legs. Its placement is determined by the pig's rump structure. This muscle must be positioned correctly for proper movement. When the stifle muscle is placed farther up on the leg, the pig will take shorter strides off their rear legs. When the stifle muscle is placed more forward towards the flank, the pig will walk with their legs tucked underneath them.

Ham – The ham is the cut of meat located on below the tail and above the hocks. The overall size of the ham can be evaluated during judging and varies breeds. A bigger, fuller ham usually means the pig will track wider when viewed from behind.

Tail – The size and placement of the tail can vary from breed to breed and pig to pig. Tail docking is used in confinement operations to reduce tail biting.



Rump – The rump is a general term used to describe the region of the pig's body that lies behind the hip bones. The rump includes the hip bones, tail, and portions of the ham. The slope of the rump is determined by the tail setting. The slope of the pig's rump will determine how well it can move off its rear legs.

Ham Loin Junction – The ham loin junction is the place where the ham and loin comes together. This junction can be very descript or less prominent depending on the amount of fat and muscle.

Loin – The loin muscle is located along the pigs back, on each side of its spine. The loin is located in front of the rump and behind the rib cage.

Shoulder – The shoulder is located behind the neck and in front of the ribs. The angle of the shoulder helps determine structural correctness and soundness. The pork shoulder is the location of the boston butt and the picnic wholesale cuts of meat.

Chine Bone – This is the bone located between the shoulder blades of the pig. This bone is an extension of the neck bone. In older or stale appear pigs the chine bone stand up above the shoulder blades. The chine bone is a good indicator of the age of a pig.

