Radiography positioning guide

Brought to you by IDEXX Diagnostic Imaging and IDEXX Telemedicine Consultants

**Tips**

- Take at least **two views** of each anatomic region—remember, you’re capturing a three-dimensional object.
- **Center** the x-ray beam directly over the area of interest.
- Visualize how the image would look on a monitor. **Move the patient** and position the area of interest along the long axis of your collimated field, rather than rotating the collimator.
- **Collimate** to the area of interest to reduce scatter radiation and to improve image quality.
- Be safe—always use **protective lead gloves, aprons, and thyroid shields** to protect yourself from scatter radiation, stay as far away as possible from the primary x-ray beam, and use positioning devices.
Skull and spine

Lateral skull

Lateral cervical spine

Lateral thoracolumbar spine

Frontal sinus view
Position hard palate perpendicular to table surface with nostrils pointing straight up.

Bullae, open mouth

Shoulder and front limbs

Lateral shoulder
Limb to be examined must be down and extended cranially and ventrally. Pull opposite limb caudally and ventrally (not over the back).

Lateral elbow

Lateral carpus
Anesthesia or heavy sedation suggested

Temporomandibular oblique $a^+$
Mouth is opened, with hard palate parallel to table surface. Pull mandible caudally and secure it. Secure endotracheal tube and tongue to center of mandible or pull the tube and tongue caudally to one side of the mandible. Angle x-ray beam 20° from perpendicular (if possible).

Bulla/other oblique $a^+$
Rotate the mandible up or down depending on the area of interest. The larger image depicts positioning for bulla and mandible. The smaller image indicates positioning for frontal bone and maxilla.

Key

$a^+$ Anesthesia required

$a <$ Anesthesia or heavy sedation suggested

Ventrodorsal maxilla, open mouth $a^+$

Ventrodorsal cervical spine $a^+$

Caudocranial shoulder

Craniocaudal elbow

Dorsopalmar carpus
Pelvis and hind limbs

**Ventrodorsal pelvis**

**Lateral stifle**

**Lateral tarsus**

**Dorsoplantar tarsus**

**Lateral stifle**

**Lateral tarsus**

**Oblique lateral digits**

**Caudocranial stifle**

---

**Thorax**

**Lateral thorax**

Stemum and thoracic spine must be in same plane. Extend forelimbs maximally. Extend hind limbs, but do not rotate patient. Extend collimation caudally to top of last rib. Make exposure at peak inspiration.

**Abdomen**

**Lateral abdomen**

Position animal as for lateral thorax, but center on middle of last rib. Exception: For cats and dachshunds, center 1 inch behind last rib.