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.
- Use a well-defined system of exposure determination, such as a technique chart based on patient measurements, for accurate, repeatable, and optimal exposures. Include laterality markers.

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**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.*

**Skull**

**Lateral skull**

**Dorsoventral skull**

**Bulla/other oblique**
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**

- ar: Anesthesia required
- as: Anesthesia or heavy sedation suggested
Spine

Lateral cervical spine  

Lateral thoracic spine  

Ventrodorsal cervical spine  

Lateral lumbar spine  

Pelvis and hind limbs

Ventrodorsal pelvis  

Dorsoplantar tarsus  

Lateral stifle  

Caudocranial stifle  

Oblique lateral digits  

Lateral tarsus
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**

**Craniocaudal elbow**

**Dorsopalmar carpus**

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