

# Pit Bull Factsheet

We must do our utmost to rehabilitate the reputation of these proud dogs, who want only to love and serve their masters with all their hearts.

**Breed Names:** Pit Bull is not an official breed. It's a common blanket term used to describe a certain type of dog or dog that looks like any of the included breeds. There are actually many breeds of dog that are typically grouped together under the umbrella term of "pit bull". They are:

- **American Pit Bull Terrier (APBT)** - Recognized by the ADBA and UKC
- **American Staffordshire Terrier (AmStaff or AST)** - Recognized by the AKC
- **Staffordshire Bull Terrier (SBT)** - Recognized by the AKC and UKC
- **American Bulldog (ABT)** – Recognized by the AKC and UKS

The United Kennel Club was the first registry to recognize the American Pit Bull Terrier. U.K.C. founder C. Z. Bennett assigned U.K.C. registration number 1 to his own APBT, Bennett's Ring, in 1898.

Note that there are 25+ breeds that look like pit bulls and are commonly identified incorrectly. See <http://www.pitbullsontheweb.com/petbull/findpit.html> to test your accuracy.

**Characteristics:** The essential characteristics of the pit bull breeds are strength, confidence, and zest for life. These breeds are eager to please and brimming over with enthusiasm. They make excellent family companions and have always been noted for their love of children. Because of its powerful physique, a pit bull requires an owner who will carefully socialize and obedience train the dog. These breeds' natural agility makes them excellent climbers so good fencing is a must. According to the UKC breed standard, American Pit Bull Terriers are "not the best choice for a guard dog since they are extremely friendly, even with strangers". Aggressive behavior toward humans **is uncharacteristic of the breed**. They wiggle waggle up to everyone they meet offering kisses and love. Pit bulls do very well in performance events or as search and rescue dogs because of their high level of intelligence, high pain threshold, intense focus and willingness to work.

**Socialization:** Supervised doggie play dates are a must for the pit bull since they have so much enthusiasm and love to wrestle, chase balls and interact with other dogs. Socialization is extremely important with this breed and as soon as a puppy has had all his/her shots, that puppy should be put in situations with other dogs often. As with all dogs, constant supervision is key.

**Truths:** There is no such thing as a "locking jaw" in any breed of dog. Pit bulls pass temperament tests at a rate of 87% (see [www.atts.org](http://www.atts.org))

**Links:** Some other links with true info are: [www.badrap.org](http://www.badrap.org), [www.pbrc.net](http://www.pbrc.net), [www.spbr.org](http://www.spbr.org), [www.forpitsake.org](http://www.forpitsake.org), [www.lawdogsusa.com](http://www.lawdogsusa.com), [www.spindletoppitbullrefuge.org](http://www.spindletoppitbullrefuge.org), [www.thepassionofthepit.org](http://www.thepassionofthepit.org), [www.roverlution.org](http://www.roverlution.org), [www.understand-a-bull.com](http://www.understand-a-bull.com), [www.pitbullpress.com](http://www.pitbullpress.com), [www.advocatesfortheunderdog.com](http://www.advocatesfortheunderdog.com), [www.wallacethepitbull.com](http://www.wallacethepitbull.com), [www.chloethepitbull.com](http://www.chloethepitbull.com)

## More FACTS:

**History:** In the 1800s, pit bulls were bred to be a dog embodying the virtues of strength, indomitable courage, and gentleness with loved ones. Pit bulls enjoyed wide popularity during the period of 1840 - 1950 as a family pet and farm dog. The trusted "nanny dog" was a common mascot. Pete the Pup on the Little Rascals Our Gang comedies was a purebred, registered American pit bull. In the early part of the 1900s, pit bulls were used as symbols of American courage and tenacity on World War I and II posters.

**Bad Owner/Bad Dog:** Unfortunately, today, they are popular with an irresponsible type of owner and are facing media hysteria that is unfounded. Because pit bulls take training well and have a huge desire to please their humans, the owner can teach them almost anything, including aggression. Those old enough might remember the media focus on the negative side of other breeds that have been favored by aggressive people including German Shepherds in the 1970s, Rottweilers in the 1990s.

**Famous Friends:** Many famous people such as Fred Astaire, President Roosevelt, Jack Dempsey, Thomas Edison, Madonna, Michael J Fox, Brad Pitt, Bernadette Peters, Sinbad, Alicia Silverstone, Linda Blair, Humphrey Bogart, Usher, Mel Brooks, Ann Bancroft, John Stuart, Jan Michael Vincent, Pink, Ken Howard (Father in Crossing Jordan - his Pit, Shadow, saved his life), Malcolm Jamal Warner, Stephan Jenkins, Rosie Perez, Ananda Lewis, Amy Jo Johnson, Mary Tyler Moore, Steve and Terrie Erwin (Croc Hunters), Jack Johnson (Hawaiian singer), Bill Berloni (Broadway show dog trainer who has said that that pit bulls are the breeds of

choice for training), Anthony Robbins, Molly Price (Actress from Third Watch), President Woodrow Wilson, Frankie Muniz, AJ Mclean, Barbara Eden, Brett Favre, Rachael Ray and even **Helen Keller** have been lucky enough to own this magnificent animal.

#### **The Most Famous Pit Bull:**

America's first war dog, **Sergeant Stubby**, served 18 months overseas and participated in 17 battles. He saved his regiment from surprise mustard gas attacks, located and comforted the wounded, and once caught a German spy by the seat of his pants. After the Armistice was signed, Stubby returned home and his popularity grew. He became a nationally acclaimed hero and was received by presidents Harding and Coolidge. Afterwards, Stubby later became Georgetown University's mascot in 1921. By invitation, Stubby toured the country, leading more parades than any dog in American history. The Army promoted him to honorary sergeant. The American Red Cross, the American Legion and the YMCA all clamored to make him an honorary member.