

Dog Bite Facts

- Approximately 1/2 of all children in the U.S. are bitten by a dog before their teenage years.*
- Most dog bites occur from a dog the person is acquainted with (own, relative, neighbor).
- The most common underlying reason for a dog bite is a person engaging in risky behavior around a dog, such as unintentionally provoking it while it is eating or sleeping, or teasing it.
- Seventy percent of dog bite fatalities in children occur when the child is unsupervised.*
- There are currently 74.8 million dogs in the U.S.^
Approximately 2% of the U.S. population is bitten each year (~4.7 million people).

* Kris Crawford's Safety Around Dogs

^ The American Pet Products Association

Important Note

There is a great deal of confusion when people talk about pit bulls and bully type breeds. The American Kennel Club does not recognize pit bulls as a breed. Many people get confused with the term "pit bulls." The following breeds are considered "bully" breeds, but are not in fact pit bulls:



American Staffordshire Terrier
American Bulldog (see photo)
Alapaha Blue Blood Bulldog
Staffordshire Bull Terrier

Boxer	Presa Canario
Tosa Inu	Dogue de Bordeaux
Old English Bulldog	Dogo Argentino
Bullmastiff	Cane Corso

Other Resources/Bibliography

- The American Pet Products Association (APPA) www.americanpetproducts.org
- The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) www.asPCA.org
- Boise Bully Breed Rescue
- For Pit's Sake www.forpitsake.org
- The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) www.humanesociety.org
- Kris Crawford's Safety Around Dogs www.safetyarounddogs.org
- The National Canine Research Council (NCRC) www.nationalcanineresearchcouncil.com
- Pit Bull Rescue Central (PBRC) www.pbrc.net
- Staffordshire Terrier Club of America (STCA) www.amstaff.org
- United Kennel Club (UKC) www.ukcdogs.com

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211 12th Avenue S
Nampa, ID 83651-3992
www.nampapolice.org

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Informational Brochure: AMERICAN PIT BULL TERRIERS & BULLY TYPE BREEDS- Myths & Facts



Breed Standard

The American Pit Bull Terrier is a medium-sized, solidly built, short-coated dog with well-defined musculature. Pit bulls can come in all colors and color patterns except merle. A healthy weight is between 35-60 pounds for both males and females. They require interactive owners who will spend time with them to carefully socialize and obedience train them. Pit bulls are not a good choice pet if they will receive little to no attention. They are strong, determined, and intelligent animals. If left to their own amusement and untrained, a pit bull can cause great damage to the yard or house, and be difficult to keep fenced in. Because of the breed's agility, it is an excellent climber and thus requires a more secure environment, including good reinforced fencing, to keep it in. Pit bulls do not make good guard dogs due to their friendly disposition with people. Aggressive behavior towards people is uncharacteristic and an undesirable trait for the breed.

Pit bulls excel at agility activities, including disc competitions, flyball, weight-pulling, freestyle and competition obedience.

Dog Fighting

Pit bull-like dogs are preferred in dog fighting rings for their strength and stamina. Because of their appearance, pit bull-like dogs are attractive to people looking for a macho status symbol, which has encouraged unscrupulous breeders to produce puppies without maintaining the breed's typical good nature with people.

Dog fighting today is a federal offense in all 50 states and carries a prison sentence up to three years, a \$25,000 fine and seizure of participants' property. It is illegal to participate in AND watch dog fights. Dog fighting is often associated with other illegal activities such as drugs, prostitution, gambling, and arms trade. According to the Humane Society of the U.S., dog fighting maims/kills more than 250,000 pit bull (and pit bull-like) dogs each year.



Pit Bull Myths

- Pit bulls have locking jaws → **FALSE!**

Pit bull jaw anatomy is no different than any other dog. Their fighting style, like that of any other terrier, usually involves grabbing and shaking. Rottweilers and German Shepherds actually have stronger biting pressure per square inch (psi) than pit bulls.

- If a pit bull attacks a dog, it's going to attack people next → **FALSE!**

Pit bulls are considered dog aggressive. This does not mean that they will go after people. Pit bulls, like any dog breed, do not exhibit aggressive behavior without reason or provocation. Aggressive behavior (for any dog) is the result of (1) improper handling; (2) disease; (3) lack of socialization; and/or (4) misreading the dog's behavior.

- If a pit bull was never trained to fight, it is safe around other dogs → **FALSE!**

A pit bull that will fight another dog if unattended is a normal pit bull. Even if a pit bull does not start the fight, it has the potential to seriously injure or kill a dog once in the fight. Socialize a pit bull slowly with new dogs, and never let them play unattended.



Good Dog Ownership

Since pit bulls are such a high energy breed, responsible dog owners should provide the following in order to prevent their pet from becoming destructive and aggressive:

- **Socialization:** taking a puppy to the dog park to interact with other dogs and people
- **Obedience training:** training **MUST** be consistent based on positive reinforcement
- **Lots of physical exercise:** daily aerobic exercise will help keep your dog healthy and prevent it from getting destructive
- **Lots of mental stimulation:** pit bulls are avid learners and require daily challenges to prevent boredom

It is important to realize that even though a breed may be characterized by certain behaviors, individuals of the same breed can vary greatly. Like people, all dogs have unique personalities. Seventy percent of dogs housed in shelters and euthanized in the United States are pit bull related breeds.

Examples of famous pit bulls in America include :

- Stubby- a decorated vet of World War I who warned soldiers of gas attacks and saved wounded soldiers.
- Petey- the loyal canine companion from the TV series "Little Rascals."
- Bud- the first canine to make a cross-county drive in 1903 with his owner. (See photo above.)



Famous people who owned pit bulls are Helen Keller, President Theodore Roosevelt, Humphrey Bogart, and Cesar Milan (*The Dog Whisperer*).

Special thanks to Boise Bully Breed Rescue for providing photos of some of their rescued dogs who are now happily family pets (see photos above and cover).