

Bull Terrier Breed Standard

10-May-06

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General Appearance

Strongly built, muscular, well balanced and active with a keen, determined and intelligent expression.

Characteristics

Courageous, full of spirit, with a fun loving attitude. A unique feature is a downfaced, egg-shaped head. Irrespective of size dogs should look masculine and bitches feminine.

Temperament

Of even temperament and amenable to discipline. Although obstinate is particularly good with people.

Head and Skull

Head long, strong and deep right to end of muzzle, but not coarse. Viewed from front egg-shaped and completely filled, its surface free from hollows or indentations. Top of skull almost flat from ear to ear. Profile curves gently downwards from top of skull to tip of nose which should be black and bent downwards at tip. Nostrils well developed and under-jaw deep and strong.

Eyes

Appearing narrow, obliquely placed and triangular, well sunken, black or as dark brown as possible so as to appear almost black, and with a piercing glint. Distance from tip of nose to eyes perceptibly greater than that from eyes to top of skull. Blue or partly blue undesirable.

Ears

Small, thin and placed close together. Dog should be able to hold them stiffly erect, when they point straight upwards.

Mouth

Teeth sound, clean, strong, of good size, regular with perfect, regular and complete scissor bite, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws. Lips clean and tight.

Neck

Very muscular, long, arched, tapering from shoulders to head and free from loose skin.

Forequarters

Shoulders strong and muscular without loading. Shoulder blades wide, flat and held closely to chest wall and have a very pronounced backward slope of front edge from bottom to top, forming almost a right angle with upper arm. Elbows held straight and strong, pasterns upright. Forelegs have strongest type of round, quality bone, dog should stand solidly upon them and they should be perfectly parallel. In mature dogs length of foreleg should be approximately equal to depth of chest.

Body

Body well rounded with marked spring of rib and great depth from withers to brisket, so that latter nearer ground than belly. Back short, strong with backline behind withers level, arching or roaching slightly over broad, well muscled loins. Underline from brisket to belly forms a graceful upward curve. Chest broad when viewed from front.

Hindquarters

Hindlegs in parallel when viewed from behind. Thighs muscular and second thighs well developed. Stifle joint well bent and hock well angulated with bone to foot short and strong.

Feet

Round and compact with well arched toes.

Tail

Short, set on low and carried horizontally. Thick at root, it tapers to a fine point.

Gait/Movement

When moving appears well knit, smoothly covering ground with free, easy strides and with a typical jaunty air. When trotting, movement parallel, front and back, only converging towards centre line at faster speeds, forelegs reaching out well and hindlegs moving smoothly at hip, flexing well at stifle and hock, with great thrust.

Coat

Short, flat, even and harsh to touch with a fine gloss. Skin fitting dog tightly. A soft textured undercoat may be present in winter.

Colour

For White, pure white coat. Skin pigmentation and markings on head not to be penalised. For Coloured, colour predominates; all other things being equal, brindle preferred. Black, brindle, red, fawn and tricolour acceptable. Tick markings in white coat undesirable. Blue and liver highly undesirable.

Size

There are neither weight nor height limits, but there should be the impression of maximum substance for size of dog consistent with quality and sex.

Faults

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog.

Note

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

Last Updated - September 2007

[Glossary of Canine Terms](#)

Health Information

The Kennel Club operates [health screening schemes](#) with other organisations. Some are clinical veterinary screening schemes and some are [DNA screening schemes](#), which may be relevant to this breed.

The current [health screening requirements and recommendations](#) for Kennel Club Accredited Breeders of this breed show what is required and recommended for the sire and dam of any litter of this breed bred by an Accredited Breeder.

Breed specific summary results from the [Purebred Dog Health Survey](#) in 2004 are available. Individual summaries are only available where the breed response rate was greater than 15%.

Recommended Reading

All the below publications are available from the [Online Shop](#).