



## **American Dog Breeders Association Inc. American Bully Breed Standard**

### **American Bully History**

The American Bully was developed in the mid 1990's by breeders on both the East and West coasts of the United States. They used, as their foundation stock, United Kennel Club (UKC) and American Dog Breeders (ADBA) registered American Pit Bull Terriers mated with American Kennel Club (AKC) registered American Staffordshire Terriers; different varieties of the same breed based on bloodline history. These dogs were first known as "bully type" American Pit Bull Terriers. For the past 25 years, these dogs have been bred, bloodlines refined, and promoted across the U.S and overseas. The breeders of these dogs have developed this breed for a specific build and temperament so unique that they have been recognized as a breed separate from the American Pit Bull Terrier. These dogs were first registered as the American Bully with their own kennel club in 2004. Recent speculation that the breed was influenced by the blending of other bull breeds into their gene pool prompted the UKC to recognize the American Bully as a separate breed on July 15, 2013. Beginning in March 2015, dogs exhibiting these physical characteristics unique to the American Bully breed, or being bred from brood stock that consistently produce dogs with these unique physical characteristics, are being registered with the American Dog Breeders Association Inc. as the American Bully.

### **American Bully: Breed Type**

Because the American Bully was developed from the blending of select strains of the American Pit Bull Terrier along with a major influence of the American Staffordshire Terrier for size and temperament, the attributes of these foundation breeds of overall balance, health and soundness are essential for quality specimens within the American Bully breed. Any excessive physical or temperament extremes within the American Bully breed that overshadow these essential qualities should not be used in a breeding program and will not be rewarded in the ADBA show ring.

The American Bully, in overall appearance, should reflect their American Pit Bull Terrier/American Staffordshire Terrier foundation. The dogs should appear solid, powerful and heavily muscled with a blocky head, short and wide muzzle with a deep stop and prominent cheeks. The dog's ears can be trimmed or natural. Dogs with any terrier refinement of head or body should not be rewarded in the ADBA American Bully show ring.

The body shape of the American Bully is rectangular with wide shoulder and hips, a wide barrel chest, and heavy bone with compact feet. The American Bully is a short coated breed with a

smooth, glossy, slightly bristled coat of any color or combination of colors, excluding the merle color pattern. Dogs with the merle color pattern will not be accepted for registration due to the associated detrimental health issues related to this color pattern.

This breed was developed for a unique temperament. Dogs being accepted as an American Bully must exhibit the temperament of confidence, vitality and alertness, along with a strong willingness to please and bond with their owners. Dogs will be friendly with children, strangers and other animals. Human or canine aggression of any degree or extreme shyness is uncharacteristic and is highly undesirable within this breed.

There is no weight limit imposed within the American Bully breed standard. Two varieties will be recognized within the ADBA breed standard. The **Classic** and the **Standard**. Height of the **Classic** variety should ideally be 17 to 22 inches at the withers, and height for the **Standard** variety can range from 16 to 20 inches at the withers.

## **Conformation Standard**

### **Overall Appearance - 20 pts**

The Breed is characterized as solid, powerful and thick-set. The breed is heavy boned, stocky with muscles well developed, and toned. It is a dog that possesses great power for its size. Head is in proportion to the body set upon a thick neck that transitions into the back with a slight arch. Although quite muscular, the breed is active and has the willingness and ability to compete in performance events. The American Bully was bred as a companion dog so its temperament as being friendly, confident, full of vitality with a willingness to please its owner is paramount. Dogs should be socialized showing alertness and interest in it's surrounding, but showing no aggression to other canines, or humans, in the ring.

***Faults:** Terrier refinement in head or body. Rangy or fined boned. Lack of muscle development.*

***Serious faults:** Any exaggerations of any body part that would compromise the dog's health such as breathing, movement or the active functioning of the dog. Canine aggression. Any color or any combination of colors known with an associated health issue- merle color pattern or albinism.*

***Disqualification:** Human aggressive, one sided or both sided cryptorchid, spayed or neutered dogs.*

### **Head, Neck and Teeth – 25 pts**

The head of the American Bully is a key characteristic of the dog. As this breed is heavier boned with more body mass, the head also will be large and broad, but always in proportion to the rest of the dog. In an otherwise well proportioned dog, the head will appear to be 75% the width of the shoulders. The head should have depth and the stop is deep and well defined. Cheeks are prominent and free of wrinkles.

Ears should sit high on the corners of the skull, cropped or natural without preference. Natural ears should be small and carried in a rose or half prick.

The muzzle is broad and well developed which will make the area under the eyes wider than the width of the head between the ears. This development or 'fill' gives structural support to the canine teeth. The muzzle is square with the length from the stop to the tip of the nose 65% to 75% the length of the head from the stop to the back of the head. The top of the muzzle is straight, the lower jaw well developed, wide and deep. Flews are loose and may descend slightly below the lower jaw, yet clean and without wrinkles.

The American Bully should possess a complete set of evenly spaced teeth with none missing. Canines should be wide at the base tapering to the tip. Canines should slip tightly together the top canine behind the bottom with incisors meeting in a scissor bite.

Eyes are medium in size, oval or slightly round. Eyes are set wide and low on the skull. Eye color should match and compliment the color of the dog. Haw should not be visible.

Neck is thick- heavily muscled to the base of the skull, moderate in length. The neck transitions into the dog's back with a slight arch. Skin around the neck should be thick and loose, but without extensive Dewlap (longitudinal folds of skin that hang on both sides beneath the lower jaw).

***Faults:** Head out of proportion to the body, muzzle too short, excessive flews, underdeveloped jaw, undershot, overshot or wry mouth, mismatched eye color, blue eyes, overly short or excessive length of neck, lack of muscle development of the neck.*

### **Front End – 15 points**

The American Bully should have a chest that is as wide as it is deep with a ribcage that is well sprung and round. The fore chest does not extend forward beyond the point of the shoulder with a flat pro-sterum. The shoulder blades or scapulae are broad and flat with a layback of 45-60 degree to the ground. This will provide an adequate surface area for the muscle attachment necessary for the heavily muscled front end of the dog.

The upper arm or humerus should be at an equal angle in the opposite direction and equal in length to the scapula so the elbow comes to the bottom of the ribcage. The elbows should lie flat, the humerus running almost parallel to the spine.

The forearm is heavy boned and solid. The length of the forearm will vary between the *Classic* and *Standard* varieties of the breed. The length of the forearm in the *Classic*, being equal to the length of the humerus, and the length of the forearm in the *Standard*, being shorter than the length of the humerus. Viewed from the front, the forelegs are set moderately apart and are straight setting perpendicular to the ground. The pasterns are short, strong and set upright at a slight angle. Dew claws are normal on the front legs. The ideal feet of an American Bully should be a tight cat foot with thick pads.

Shoulder blades are wide set on the back and the ribcage is well sprung extending back into the loin. The loin is broad, well muscled and relatively short to provide a strong bridge for the transmission of the power of the rear assembly forward.

***Faults:** Narrow chest, chest too wide to interfere with normal movement, bowed front legs, splayed feet or down in pasterns, out at elbows*

### **Back End - 15 points**

The pelvis of the American Bully should be wide, moderately long and set at a slight downward angle to the base of the tail. The femur is long, almost equal to the length of the tibia- fibula and moderately angulated providing the bone necessary for the muscle attachment needed for the heavy muscling desired in the backend of the dog. Hocks are thick and short in length, with the joint well bent. When moving, the hocks are straight and move parallel to one another. Muscling of the back end across the pelvis and femur to the tibia-fibula is thick, well developed and prominent in appearance. The hocks should be free of dew claws.

***Faults:** Back end higher than the withers, narrow hind quarters, short flat pelvis, underdeveloped muscling, straight stifle, long hock, cow hocks or sickle hocks, bowed legs.*

### **Top Line - 10 points**

The smooth transition of the neck into moderate layback of shoulders, and the strong broad back flowing into the wide short loin transitioning into a broad and moderately long sloped pelvis gives the American Bully the appearance of a level top line with a slight downward slope of the croup (pelvis) to the base of the tail. Any alterations of the level top line will indicate to the judge where to focus his attention to identify structural faults in the dog being evaluated.

***Faults:** Dip in the top line behind the shoulders, roach back, rise in the pelvis above the level of the withers.*

### **Coat and Tail - 5 points**

The coat of the American Bully is thick and loose around the neck and chest and tight fitting everywhere else. Excessive dewlap (longitudinal folds of skin that hang on both sides of the neck beneath the lower jaw) or wrinkles of the face are discouraged. The coat is short and slightly bristled to the touch, the gloss showing the overall health of the dog. Any color or any combinations of colors are acceptable for the coat and leather of the nose and pads except for colors known to be genetically linked to health issues (merle or albinism)

The tail is thick at the base straight without any curl or kinks and tapering to its point. It should hang down like a pump handle when relaxed. Its length should have the tail extending to the point of the hock. When moving, the dog's tail can be carried level with the top line. When excited the tail may be carried slightly higher, but never carried over the back.

***Faults:** Excessive dewlap, wavy or sparse coat, kinked or cane tail (tail carried over the back) bobbed tail.*

***Serious Faults:** Merle color pattern or albinism (white coat, pink leather, blue eyes).*

### **Gait - 10 points**

At the trot, the gait of the American Bully is powerful and well-coordinated with good reach in front and drive from the rear. Because of the broad width of the American Bully we would expect the dog to double track, legs moving straight in both front and rear. As the dog's speed increases, feet may tend to converge toward center line of balance without excessive rolling or bouncing at the shoulder.

***Faults:** Back legs overreaching the front, legs crossing over in front or rear, rear legs moving close, paddling, crabbing or sidewinding.*

### **Classic and Standard Variety Breakdown**

The **Classic** variety of the ADBA American Bully is taller and more moderate in build than the **Standard** variety. Dogs of the **Classic** variety conform to the ADBA American Bully conformation standard but tend to be less in mass, more agile and athletic than dogs of the **Standard** variety with their increased muscle mass. Height of a mature dog of the **Classic** variety should be 17 to 22 inches at the withers and a mature dog of the **Standard** variety being 16 to 20 inches at the withers. Females may be slightly smaller in height but with adequate bone and mass. Both varieties should have all body parts in proportion for their individual size for the active functioning and longevity of life free of injury. Overall balance and the correct proportion of weight to height are far more important than the dog's actual weight and/or height.

***The American Dog Breeders Association Inc. American Bully Breed Standard is not to be used as a breed identifier for legislation or any general public use. It may only be used to judge the standards of quality of the American Bully, as set forth. It's purpose is for use by ADBA breeders and sanctioned***

*judges in determining the quality of each ADBA registered dog being judged at ADBA sanctioned shows or events and for awarding titles of excellence based on placements at sanctioned events. The breed standard may also be used as a guideline to evaluate the quality of breeding stock by breeders of ADBA registered American Bullys, and to evaluate the quality of individual puppies from ADBA registered American Bully litters.*