

# AMERICAN *Pit Bull Terriers*

## CLASSIC PIT BULL PERSONALITY



**An American Tradition:** This hardy, vibrant and highly social little working dog loves a good challenge as much as he loves a good belly rub. Strength, confidence, a sense of humor and a zest for life are all hallmarks of the breed.

**The Standard:** Real American Pit Bull Terriers are outgoing and people loving. Properly socialized dogs are extremely friendly, even with strangers, and therefore do not make good guard dogs. They're intelligent and eager to please and tend to remain playful throughout their lives. While some can be low key 'couch potatoes,' many others need a job to do to channel their enthusiasm and energy. They excel in dog sports, search and rescue work, drug and bomb detection work, and as therapy dogs. Severe shyness, fearfulness or human-directed aggression is not characteristic of the breed and highly undesirable in any dog. APBTs should be medium sized dogs, with males no more than 65 lbs. They're frequently misidentified and confused with other short-haired breeds and breed mixes.

**True to their terrier natures,** American Pit Bull Terriers should be managed around other animals, although most can enjoy affectionate friendships with select dogs and even cats given proper introductions and supervision. Adult dog behavior in all dog breeds results from a combination of nature and nurture and is influenced by a dog's genetics, socialization, training and owner management.

**The Challenges:** As charming as they can be, today's anti-pit bull climate can make it difficult to own an APBT. Breed myths are widespread and can force owners to wear thick skins while defending their pets from hurtful biases and breed discrimination. Finding breed-friendly rental properties requires persistence. Dog tolerance levels vary, so stewards are obligated to understand terrier traits and stay realistic about their duties as responsible dog owners. Meeting their exercise needs can be a challenge in urban areas (Small play groups with known dog friends are preferred over chaotic, problem filled dog parks). The exuberance of younger dogs can test a passive dog owner's patience. As with all dogs, obedience training is recommended.

### AMERICAN TEMPERAMENT TEST (ATTS) SCORES MARCH 2011 \*

	Number Tested	Number Passed
<b>PIT BULL DOGS</b>		
American Pit Bull Terriers	804	86.4%
American Staffordshire Terrier	627	84.2%
Staffordshire Bull Terrier	117	89.7%

\* The ATTS test simulates a casual walk in a neighborhood and rates a dog's response to every day life situations.



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