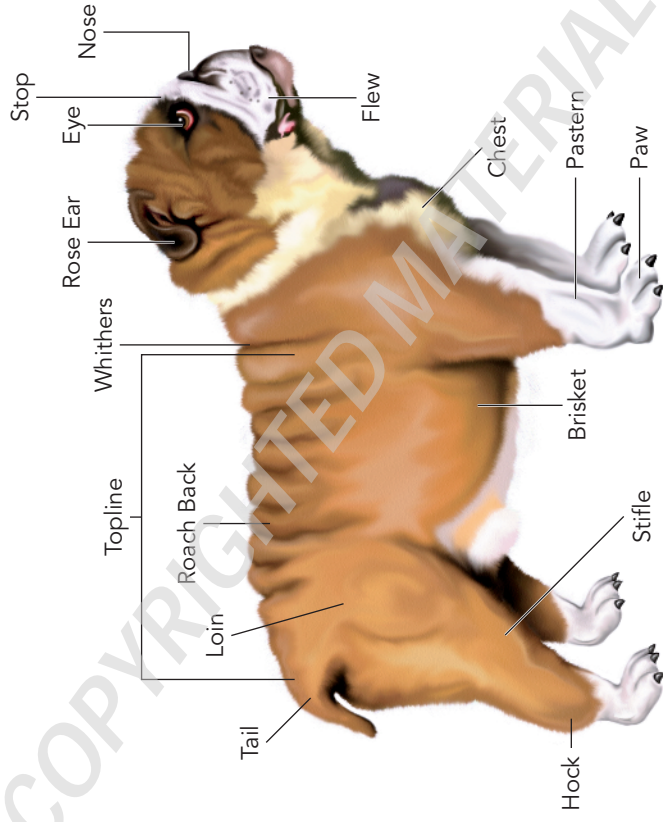


# The Bulldog





## Chapter 1

# What Is a Bulldog?

One of the most popular mascots for colleges, universities, and sporting teams in the world is the Bulldog. Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and California State University, Fresno, both have Bulldog mascots, as does the University of North Carolina in Asheville. James Madison University's Bulldog mascot is called the Duke Dog, Mississippi State University's Bulldog is Bully, and the University of Puerto Rico's mascot is Tarzan.



Bulldogs are also popular with sporting teams. Great Britain's Rugby League has a team called the Batley Bulldogs. In South Africa, another rugby team is called the Border Bulldogs, and in Denmark, an ice hockey team is called the Odense Bulldogs.

The most popular Bulldog mascot of all has to be the U.S. Marine Corps' Chesty. During World War I, the Germans called the U.S. Marines *teufel-hunden*, which means "devil dogs." *Teufel-hunden* were fictitious ferocious dogs of German folklore. The Marines, of course, took this as a compliment. The first Bulldog to serve as a U.S. Marines mascot was Pvt. Jiggs in 1922, and he has been followed by numerous other Bulldogs—all serving in the image of the *teufel-hunden*.

Why are Bulldogs so popular as mascots? They are tenacious and single-minded; they are courageous and fearless; and they are devoted and loyal. All of these characteristics are admired by sports competitors, fans, and warriors alike.

Although a Bulldog is a symbol of tenacity, courage, and strength, he is also more than that. If given half a chance, he will be one of the best friends you will

ever have. He accepts you as you are, whether you are a success or a failure, happy or sad, lazy or energetic, young or old.

## English or American?

The Bulldog discussed in this book is the breed that is called simply *Bulldog*. Years ago, when the breed originated in Great Britain, it was known as the English Bulldog. Although many enthusiasts still call the short, stocky dogs by this name, the breed's correct name as it is recognized by the American Kennel Club is simply Bulldog.

The American Bulldog is a completely different breed. Although the American Bulldog has a shared British heritage with the original Bulldog, today it is a taller, longer-legged dog who looks little like the Bulldog of today. This breed developed in the American colonies with early settlers and was used as a hunting dog, herding dog, and companion.

The dogs now known as Old English Bulldogge are yet another breed that shares a heritage with the English Bulldog. Enthusiasts have tried to re-create the Bulldogs of yesteryear—a short, stocky dog with a wide chest—but without the exaggerated features of the Bulldog of today.

All of these breeds have their own unique characteristics, and people enjoy them for what they are. However, in this book, we're talking about the Bulldog who is called just that: the Bulldog.

## The Bulldog's Physical Appearance

The Bulldog has a very unique appearance—so unique that there are very few people who would not instantly recognize a Bulldog. Let's take a look at this breed and see what makes it so different from other breeds. This physical description is based on the breed standard (see the box on page 15).

### Appearance and Attitude

The perfect Bulldog must be medium size with a heavy, thick-set, low-slung body, a massive short-faced head, wide shoulders, and strong legs. The general appearance and attitude should suggest great strength, stability of temperament, and the ability to get the job done. Most males will be in the 55- to 65-pound range, and females will be in the 45- to 50-pound range.

The Bulldog is a decorous, self-respecting, confident animal. He does not pick fights, but if attacked, he will defend himself and protect the people he cares about. In the absence of his owner, the Bulldog might invite an intruder

in, show him around, and then lead him to the silverware. Because the Bulldog's general appearance belies his demeanor, the intruder may not accept the invitation and the silverware will likely remain safe.

In the beginning, Bulldogs were bred for bull-baiting and fighting (more on that in chapter 2). If the dog was to survive, he therefore had to be lean, agile, and athletic. When this inhumane, vicious sport was outlawed, the purpose of the dog changed and so did his appearance and temperament. He became shorter, chunkier, a companion, a gentle and loving friend, and something of a couch potato.

## The Head

The Bulldog, of course, has a very distinctive head. His skull is quite large. So large, in fact, that the circumference of the skull in front of the ears should measure at least as much as the height of the dog at the shoulders. The cheeks are well rounded and bulge sideways past the eyes. There is an indentation between the eyes, dividing the head vertically.

The eyes should be placed at the point where the forehead and the cheeks meet. They are round and very dark. If the eyes of humans are windows to our souls, the eyes of the Bulldog are certainly windows to his personality; they portray kindness, gentleness, and interest. They should be alert but not looking for trouble.

The Bulldog's expression depends greatly on the proper shape and carriage of the ears. The ears should be set high on the head and wide apart. They should be



*The Bulldog's head and face are his most distinguishing features.*



*The Bulldog's body is short, strong, and muscular. The topline dips a bit, with the lowest point at the tops of the shoulders.*

small and thin. The shape known as rose ear is considered the most desirable. The rose ear folds over and back, revealing the inside of the burr. Erect ears and button ears (where the ear flaps fold forward) are considered undesirable.

The face is short, with a broad, short muzzle that is turned upward. The nose is large, broad, and black, and the tip is set deeply between the eyes. Historically, this placement of the nose enabled the dog to breathe as he hung onto the bull. In addition, the wrinkle pattern on the face prevented any blood from getting into his nose.

The jaws should be massive, broad, square, and undershot—the lower jaw projects considerably in front of the upper jaw and turns up. This undershot bite makes it possible for the dog to hang on almost indefinitely.

## The Body

The Bulldog's chest is broad, and the front legs are short, muscular, and set wide apart. The calves of the legs are well developed. Because of this, the dog appears bow-legged, but the bones of the legs should not be curved. The body should be very capacious, with full sides and well-rounded ribs. It should be very deep from the shoulders down to its lowest part where it joins the chest, giving the dog a broad, low, short-legged appearance.

The back should be short and strong, very broad at the shoulders and comparatively narrow at the loins (the area just behind the ribs). The hind legs should be

## What Is a Breed Standard?

A breed standard is a detailed description of the perfect dog of that breed. Breeders use the standard as a guide in their breeding programs, and judges use it to evaluate the dogs in conformation shows. The standard is written by the national breed club, using guidelines established by the registry that recognizes the breed (such as the AKC or UKC).

Usually, the first section of the breed standard gives a brief overview of the breed's history. Then it describes the dog's general appearance and size as an adult. Next is a detailed description of the head and neck, then the back and body, and the front and rear legs. The standard then describes the ideal coat and how the dog should be presented in the show ring. It also lists all acceptable colors, patterns, and markings. Then there's a section on how the dog moves, called *gait*. Finally, there's a general description of the dog's temperament.

Each section also lists characteristics that are considered to be faults or disqualifications in the conformation ring. Superficial faults in appearance are often what distinguish a pet-quality dog from a show- or competition-quality dog. However, some faults affect the way a dog moves or his overall health. And faults in temperament are serious business.

You can read all the AKC breed standards at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org).

strong and muscular and longer than the forelegs, to elevate the loins above the shoulders. Along the topline, there should be a slight fall in the back, with the lowest point close behind the shoulders. From there, the spine should rise to the loins, then curve again more suddenly to the tail. This forms an arch, which is a very distinctive feature of the breed. This topline is called a roach back or wheel back.

The tail may be either straight or screwed, but never curved or curly. It is short and hung low on the back, with a thick root and a fine tip. The dog carries it down. The tail is never docked. It may appear too long at birth, but puppies grow faster than their tails.



## Skin

It almost seems like the Bulldog has more skin than he needs. Puppies, especially, seem to be able to turn around inside their skin. The skin on both puppies and adults is soft and loose, especially at the head, neck, and shoulders. His head and face are covered with wrinkles. At the throat, from jaw to chest, there should be two loose pendulous folds. These form the dewlap.

## Coat and Color

The coat is short, smooth, and fine. The preferred colors are red brindle, any other brindle, solid white, solid red, or fawn (brindle is a color pattern in which black alternates with another color to produce a striped effect). Piebald (a pattern with comparatively large patches of two or more colors, one of which is usually white) is also allowed. Only solid black is considered objectionable in the breed standard. But, like beauty, the preferred color is really in the eyes of the beholder. And Bulldogs can be found in many different colors and shades of color.

## Gait

The Bulldog has a unique way of moving with a loose-jointed, shuffling, side-wise motion giving the breed its characteristic roll. This distinctive gait is the



*Bulldog puppies seem to have way more skin than they need.*

result of the dog's heavy, wide shoulders, short front legs with longer hind legs, and narrow rear. In spite of all this, the Bulldog can move quickly and jump a reasonable height (such as up on your bed, or into the back of the van when it's time to go somewhere).

## The Bulldog's Character

Bulldogs, especially Bulldog puppies, can be silly creatures. With a perpetual smile on their faces, Bulldogs love to have fun. And when their owners laugh, Bulldogs get even sillier, wiggling the back half of their body, walking sideways, and panting with joy. But Bulldogs are also devoted, dedicated companions who know no fear and will protect their people at all costs.

## Friends and Companions

The Bulldog today is first and foremost a companion. This is not a dog to be left in the backyard for hours at a time. Rather, he deserves a spot on the floor at your feet, or better yet, a place on the sofa right next to you.

Bulldogs are loyal, affectionate companions who will greet you with a smiling face and wiggling body each time you come home—and it doesn't matter whether you've been gone five minutes or five hours. Bulldogs are great family dogs, and although puppies can be clumsy and rowdy, the breed is known to be very patient with children.

## Trainability

Bulldogs have a reputation for being difficult to train. This usually comes about because the owner or trainer tried to use very forceful or rough training techniques. Bulldogs have a very well-developed sense of what is fair, and rough training techniques will cause the dog to rebel or stop trying. If you try to gain the dog's cooperation instead and find out what motivates the dog (food rewards, toys, verbal praise, or a play session), you'll find out that Bulldogs are very trainable.

Many Bulldogs have competed successfully in many dog sports, including competitive obedience, agility, and flyball. Bulldogs have also served as wonderful therapy dogs.

If Bulldogs have a weakness, it is that they are not always as willing to please their owners as they are to please themselves. Bulldogs know what they want—comfort, a chance to snooze in the sunshine, food, or a favorite toy. Repeating obedience commands or exercises isn't always on the Bulldog's list of favorite





*Although they have a reputation for being tough to train, if you work with what motivates your dog, you can gain his cooperation.*

things to do. So it's the wise owner who learns how to motivate their Bulldog so they can gain his cooperation.

## Bulldog Mythology

There are many myths about Bulldogs. Some may have a basis in reality, while others do not. Many are rooted in the Bulldog's original occupation as a fighting dog. Let's take a look at some of the most common myths.

### Bulldogs Are Dangerous Around Livestock

This originated from the breed's ancestral job of fighting bulls and other large animals. As you will read in chapter 2, the breed was used for blood sports, but that was many years ago. Bulldogs today have no desire to attack larger animals. Most Bulldogs have probably never even seen a bull, and if they did, would have no idea what to do with it!

That said, if a large animal were to charge you while your Bulldog was with you, your dog would not back down from the challenge. Unfortunately, your Bulldog might get hurt in the process, because the breed we know today as a Bulldog is very different from the dogs who were used for fighting many years ago. So try not to put your Bulldog in a position where he might be faced with such a situation.

## Bulldogs Fight Other Dogs

During the era of the blood sports, dogs were used to fight many other animals, including other dogs. Dogfighting became even more popular when blood sports were made illegal and the fighting went underground. Today's Bulldog, however, is mellow and calm compared to those dogs of yesteryear. Bulldogs are usually more interested in playing than squabbling.

Bulldogs are very strong for their size, though, and can be quite physical. Many dogs of other breeds play much differently and may not like the way Bulldogs play. This can lead to disagreements—growling, raised hackles, and even dogfights. Even though a Bulldog will rarely begin a fight, if one is brought to him, he won't back down.

## Bulldogs Are Not Safe Around Children

As with the previous two myths, this probably originates with the breed's history. And although Bulldogs are great with kids, the sad fact is that many children are hurt or killed by dogs every year. Dogs of all breeds, even small breeds, have bitten children in a variety of situations.

It's important that parents teach their children the rules of interacting with dogs safely and teach their dogs to be calm and gentle with the kids. In addition, dogs and children should never be left alone together without parental supervision.

This said, Bulldogs are great with kids. They tolerate play that many other dogs will protest, and they are incredibly patient with kids' games. Numerous Bulldogs have been dressed in baby clothes, complete with frilly hats that look so wrong above that Bulldog face!

When dogs and children both are taught the rules for correct behavior with each other, Bulldogs can be great family pets.



*Bulldogs are very patient and gentle with kids.*