

HERITABLE TRAITS & HEALTH ISSUES, CONTINUED

are committed to using health screening tests, as well as selecting breeding stock with stable temperaments. They should be able to explain to you their breeding decisions as they relate to health testing and temperament selection. The breeder should be willing to discuss these issues openly and honestly with you. If someone suggests they're not concerned with these issues in their breeding stock, they are either very new and unknowledgeable, or simply ignoring BTCA recommended veterinary guidelines. Generally, this breed is a pretty healthy one, and conscientious BTCA-member breeders are working to make it more so. At present Bull Terriers have four recommended health test areas for which breeders should provide documentation:

- Hearing - BAER testing
- Kidneys- UPC ratio (urine protein/creatinine ratio)
- Heart - auscultation by cardiologist and/or echocardiogram
- Patella Luxation - palpation by veterinarian

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

Perhaps the best way to know if a Bull Terrier is right for you is to meet one in person. Contact information for regional clubs and shows can be found on the BTCA website. This is also a good source for more detailed information and guidance in making this important decision.

Bull Terriers are wonderful clowns and companions, devoted to their owners. They love to be the center of attention and require a fair amount of interaction and exercise daily. For those who have the time and energy, this breed pays back terrific dividends in love, humor and companionship.

Bull Terrier Club of America

Please Visit Online

www.btca.com
or
www.btca.com/RescueNetwork/index.htm

for more information.

**BTCA Education Committee
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Bull Terriers

**Is a Bull Terrier right for you
and your family?**

**Some comments and answers
to help you decide.**



SO YOU THINK YOU'D LIKE TO OWN A BULL TERRIER ?

We're glad that you are attracted to Bull Terriers and we'd like to help guide you to the right dog for you. Most people first notice their unique appearance, and we've certainly fallen in love with their distinctive look. But there is a lot more to this breed than most people understand. All dogs were originally bred for particular purposes, and many of those early characteristics remain. Be sure that your interests, activity level and lifestyle are a close match to those of the dog so you can better decide if a particular breed is right for you. If you make a poor match, you will undoubtedly experience disappointment and frustration beyond your imagination. If you make a good one, a lifelong bond between you and your dog will bring many rewards.

BULL TERRIER – TRAITS & CHARACTERISTICS

The Bull Terrier, like all terriers, is active, strong-willed and full of fun. First introduced as a breed in the 1800's, the Bull Terrier was a companion and contributing member of the family, ridding the household of vermin. Many continue to be independent thinkers with a strong prey drive and a desire to please themselves. If asked, Bull Terriers might say that their goal is to make one laugh and leave the serious work to other breeds better suited for it.

Bull Terriers can range from 45 lbs. to 80 lbs. or more. Males and females make equally loving companions, and while the males are generally a little bigger, both sexes have strength and intensity that is surprising to most new owners. Bull Terriers come in two varieties, white and colored, and the standard for structure and body type is the same for both varieties. Acceptable markings on a white bull terrier include any marking on the head, including the ears. Colored dogs can include brindle, black brindle, red, fawn (all with or without white markings), and tri-colored (black, tan and white). Bull Terriers of any color may be bred together; however, white dogs bred to white only produce white puppies, but most other color combinations can produce either a white or a colored puppy.

Puppies (up to the age of about 3 years) are often substantially more active and busy than the adults. Consistent and patient, yet firm, handling is necessary to shape this young, strong and vibrant character. Bull Terriers learn best with positive reinforcement and other training techniques that motivate. Most Bull Terriers are very strong willed, and are often described as being like bright, energetic, inquisitive, strong, stubborn "children". Some can be quite possessive of both food and toys resulting in guarding behavior. These traits all must be recognized early and corrected appropriately. If they are not, the dog is likely to develop very difficult and undesirable behaviors. A human who brings a bull terrier home must be as committed to shaping the dog into a positive companion as the Bull Terrier is committed to doing things his own way. The best recipe for success combines socialization, family time and plenty of exercise. Without these essential elements,

you may find life frustrating for both dog and human.

If you decide that a Bull Terrier is for you, purchase a puppy from experienced breeders who produce puppies only when they are looking to improve the breed, rather than for monetary gain. BTCA-member breeders are most often motivated by a love for the breed and carefully consider each mating and are excellent sources from which to obtain a dog. Those interested in a puppy should request health screening paperwork on at least the sire and dam. If an older dog seems like a better fit for you, please consider Rescue or a retired show/breeding animal from a breeder. You can get more information from BTCA-member breeders or the BTCA Website.

HERITABLE TRAITS & HEALTH ISSUES

Many characteristics are strongly influenced by genetics. These include not only how the dog looks (including color, size and structure) but also issues of temperament and health. In this country, most BTCA-member breeders have made a sincere effort to select milder temperaments in their breeding stock. This is not always true with all Bull Terrier breeders. In some countries, a "sharper", less friendly temperament is considered desirable for breeding. This can result in dogs that are difficult to live with and potentially unfriendly to other animals in your house and neighborhood. Shop carefully and do not be afraid to ask questions about health and temperaments of the pup's parents and grandparents. Most BTCA-member breeders