

AMERICAN PIT BULL TERRIER

GROUP: Terrier

SIZE:

Agility and powerfulness are more important than actual height and weight so long as there is a correct proportion of weight to height; desirable weight for a mature male in good condition is between 35 and 60 pounds; females, 30 to 50 pounds; dogs over these weights are not penalized unless they are disproportionately massive or rangy.

COAT:

Glossy and smooth, close, and moderately stiff to the touch. **Faults: Curly, wavy, or sparse coat. Disqualification: Long coat.**

COLOR:

Any color, color pattern, or combination of colors is acceptable.

HEAD:

Large and broad, giving the impression of great power and being unique is a key element of this breed type, but not disproportionate to size of body; viewed from front, the head is shaped like a broad, blunt wedge; viewed from side, the skull and muzzle are parallel to each other and joined by a well defined, moderately deep stop; supraorbital arches over the eyes are well defined, but not pronounced. The head should be well chiseled, blending strength, elegance, and character.

Skull: Large, flat or slightly rounded, deep, and broad between ears; viewed from the top, the skull tapers just slightly toward the stop; a deep median furrow diminishes in depth from the stop to the occiput; prominent cheek muscles are free from wrinkles; wrinkles form on forehead when dog is concentrating, giving the dog his unique expression.

Muzzle: Broad and deep with a very slight taper from the stop to the nose, and a slight falling away under the eyes; length of muzzle is shorter than length of skull with a ratio of approximately 2 to 3; straight topline of muzzle; well developed lower jaw, wide and deep; clean and tight lips. **Faults: Snipey muzzle; flews; weak lower jaw.**

Eyes: Medium size, round to almond-shaped; set well apart and low on skull; all colors equally acceptable except blue which is a serious fault; haw should not be visible. **Serious faults: Bulging eyes; both eyes not matched in color; blue eyes.**

Ears: Pendant and set on a level with the outside corners of eyes; heavily feathered and long enough to reach the corner of the mouth.

Nose: Any color is acceptable; nose should be large with wide open nostrils.

Bite: Full complement of large, evenly spaced, white teeth; scissor bite. **Faults: Level bite; excessively overshot; undershot.**

NECK:

Moderate length and muscular; slight arch at the crest; neck widens gradually from where it joins the skull to where it blends into well laid-back shoulders; skin on neck is tight and without dewlap. **Faults: Neck too short and thick; thin or weak neck; eye neck; dewlap.**

BODY:

Ribs extend well back and are well sprung from the spine, then flatten to form a deep body extending to elbows; strong and firm back; short and muscular loin is slightly arched to top of the croup, but narrower than the rib cage with moderate tuck-up; croup slopes slightly downward.

Topline: Inclines very slightly downward from withers to a broad, muscular, level back.

Chest: Deep, well filled in, and moderately wide with ample room for heart and lungs, but should never be wider than deep; forechest does not extend much beyond the point of shoulder;

FOREQUARTERS:

Long, wide, muscular shoulder blades, well laid back; upper arm is roughly equal in length to the shoulder blade, joining it at an apparent right angle; strong, muscular forelegs; elbows set close to body; viewed from front, forelegs are set moderately wide apart and perpendicular to ground; short, powerful, straight, and flexible pasterns; viewed from side, pasterns are nearly erect. **Faults: Upright or loaded shoulders; elbows turned outward or tied-in; down at the pasterns; front legs bowed; wrists knuckled over; toeing in or out.**

HINDQUARTERS:

Strong, muscular, moderately broad; rump well filled in on both sides of tail and deep from pelvis to crotch; bone, angulation, and musculature in balance with forequarters; well developed thighs, thick, easily discerned muscles; viewed from side; hock joint is well bent and rear pasterns are well let down and perpendicular to ground; viewed from rear, rear pasterns are straight and parallel to each other. **Faults: Narrow hindquarters; hindquarters shallow from pelvis to crotch; lack of muscle; straight or over angulated stifle joint; cow hocks; sickle hocks; bowed legs.**

Feet: Round, proportionate to size of dog, well arched, tight; hard, tough, well cushioned pads; dewclaws should be removed. **Fault: Splayed feet.**

Tail: Natural length, set on as a natural extension of topline, tapering to a point; carried low and extends to approximately to the hock when dock is relaxed; carried level with backline when dog is moving; when dog is excited, tail may be carried in a raised, upright position (challenge tail), but never curled over back. **Fault: Long tail with tip passing beyond point of hock. Disqualification: Bobbed tail.**

MOVEMENT:

Movement should be with a jaunty, confident attitude, conveying the impression that he expects any minute to see something new and exciting; when trotting, gait is effortless, smooth, powerful, and well coordinated, showing good reach in front and drive behind; backline should remain level with only a slight flexing to indicate suppleness; viewed from any position, legs turn neither in nor out, nor do feet cross or interfere with each other; feet tend to converge toward center line of balance as speed increases. **Faults: Legs not moving on same plane; legs over reaching; legs crossing over in front or rear; legs moving too close or touching; rolling; pacing; paddling; sidewinding; hackney action; pounding.**

TEMPERAMENT:

Eager to please; brimming over with enthusiasm; undesirable as guard dog because it is extremely friendly, even with strangers.

Any departure from this standard should be considered a fault, and the final score should reflect the seriousness of the deviation from the standard

Disqualifications:

Viciousness or extreme shyness.

Seriously overshot bite or undershot bite.

Albinism

Note: Although some level of dog aggression is characteristic of this breed, handlers are expected to manage the dog and prevent altercations with others. Judges may immediately disqualify any dog that exhibits aggression toward other dogs or humans.