



BULLDOG ETCHING, 1800's

THE BULLDOG CLUB OF AMERICA

GETTING STARTED IN BULLDOGS

*Presented by the Education
Committee
of the Bulldog Club of America –
2000 - 2001*

Bulldog History



The Bulldog is one of the few breeds of dogs that are symbolic of a nation. It may perhaps be claimed, with some justice, that he represents more truly and aptly the English spirit, than does the traditional figure of John Bull.

Authorities differ so completely about the origin of the Bulldog that the name itself is in dispute. While some feel the breed may derive its name from the bull-like shape of the head, others maintain it came from the ancient English custom of using Bulldogs in the sport of bull baiting.

There appears to be little doubt, however, than an early canine species resembling the Bulldog came into existence in the 1500's.

Because of their courage and apparent capacity to endure pain, Bulldogs were shamelessly exploited for many years in the sports of bull baiting, bear baiting and dog fighting. Bull baiting was made illegal in England in 1835 and eventually dog fighting of all kinds was prohibited, resulting in a steady decline in the breed.

Happily enough, the beginning of the dog-show era in 1859 saved this fine old breed. Because of the interest and untiring efforts of a small group of sincere experienced fanciers, this small number of bulldogs served as a nucleus for the dogs of today. Fortunately, this group of

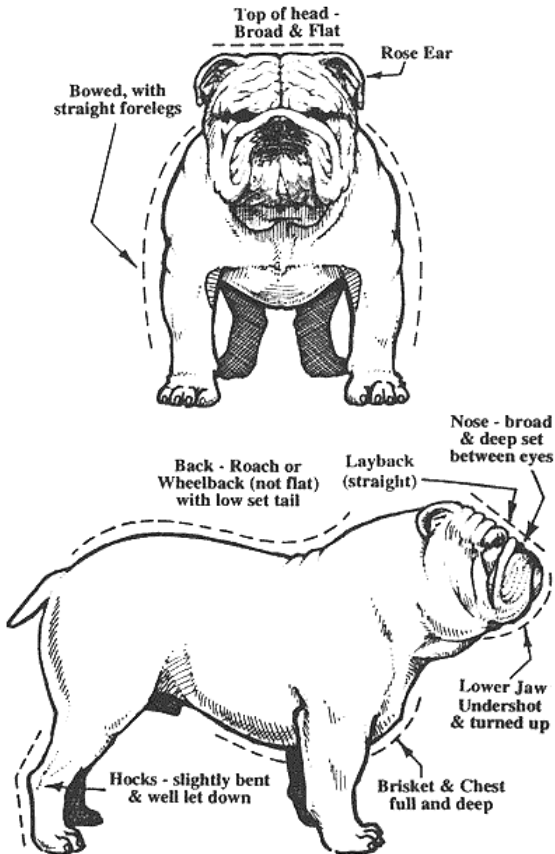
fanciers was determined to preserve the fine characteristics and just as determined to eliminate all fighting and viciousness.

The first written Bulldog standard was drafted in 1864. A Standard of Perfection was formulated and published in England in 1875.

Bulldog Characteristics

The Bulldog's general appearance should "...suggest stability, vigor and strength. The disposition should be equable and kind, resolute and courageous (not vicious or aggressive)..." (From the Bulldog Standard.)

KEY ATTRIBUTES OF BULLDOG CONFORMATION



- *The body is slightly longer than the height of the bulldog at the withers.*
- *From the ground to elbow is approximately half the height of the bulldog at the withers.*
- *From the ground to the chest and between the straight forelegs should be a near square.*
- *Proportion and Symmetry - Balance between all parts such that each feature bears good relationship with all other features.*

The Bulldog loves people and the attention people give him. As a rule, he is a good, quiet companion. They are not good watch dogs although their looks alone tend to deter any potential intruder.

A Bulldog does best in a loving environment, free from fear and neglect. They are happiest when there are people around. Left alone, a Bulldog (like any other breed) can be destructive. A dog crate is a good investment. Not cruel, a crate provides security for your Bulldog both when you are at or not at home -- as long as it is not used for a long period of time. A crate serves well for house training too. A Bulldog should never be chained. Not only is it dangerous for your Bulldog's well being, but makes him a target for "dognappers".

The Bulldog is a docile even-tempered animal. But he must be taught proper behavior. He isn't born knowing manners. However, today Bulldogs are successfully competing in Obedience competition as well as Agility and Tracking. He is not a robot that you wind up & turn on. He is an intelligent competent animal with his own mind. Sometimes he will do exactly what you ask him to and sometimes he won't, simply because he doesn't want to. I repeat, he is not a robot!

Bulldog Health

As with other short nosed breeds, it is necessary to keep a watchful eye on your Bulldog in hot weather or in any stressful situation, making sure he has shade and clean water. Exercise is important for a Bulldog to build stamina and prevent obesity, but don't overdo it, particularly when it is hot or humid.

Like many other breeds, Bulldogs may be prone to a variety of health problems. Before you buy a puppy, ask the breeder about problems in his bloodlines. Hopefully he will be honest with you. Even if both parents are healthy, a puppy can develop any one of the more common health problems from several generations back. This is why buying a puppy should be done with care, and not on the spur of the moment.

Bulldog health problems that may be encountered: are elongated soft palate, small trachea, ectropian and entropian (eyelid anomalies), stenotic nares, and hip dysplasia problems. The average Bulldog life span is for 8 – 12 years.

Not all veterinarians care to treat Bulldogs. It is best that you use a veterinarian that your breeder uses.

A Bulldog must have no cosmetic surgery - he faces life as he is born. His ears remain un-cropped, tail undocked and dew claws intact. His toenails will require frequent trimming, his ears and wrinkles frequent cleaning and he will need an occasional bath.

As with any dog, always provide your Bulldog with clean water and a correct and nutritious diet.

Selecting your Bulldog Puppy

Before you buy a Bulldog – even if it is to be a pet – never to be shown or bred, read and re-read the Standard. Talk with reputable ethical breeders. Find out the advantages and disadvantages. The Bulldog has short hair – but he does shed. If his white hair gets on your navy blue suit and this is something you cannot accept – then don't buy a Bulldog. He can't help that nature has made shedding a part of his normal existence. If he is going to be alone all day and only "brought out" for a time on Saturday, this is not fair to your dog. Perhaps you should not have a dog at this time.



Do not feel pressured to buy any puppy with which you are not comfortable. Don't forget, you have the option to shop around and be totally confident with your purchase. If you are buying as a gift, let the eventual owner do the final selection.

Only buy from an ethical breeder with a good reputation. The breeder should provide you with a wealth of information as the puppy matures.

When you buy your puppy, you should get a sales contract and a receipt for your payment, a copy of the puppy's 3 or 4-generation pedigree, a copy of his medical records and his American Kennel Club (AKC) registration application or the actual signed AKC registration certificate. The puppy should be at least 8 weeks old and weaned, wormed and have at least its first set of immunization shots.

You will find that Bulldog puppies are expensive. It is costly to breed and raise a litter of Bulldog pups. Stud fees, brood bitch care, whelping (generally Cesarean section) and puppy shots and care are all expensive. Infant mortality is generally higher than in other breeds. Litters are often small. Do not buy a Bulldog puppy with the thought that you will retrieve your investment by breeding him or her a few times -- it seldom works out. Most Bulldog breeders are dedicated to the breed and are only breeding in an effort to create a superior animal. It is not uncommon for a breeder to sell a so-called "pet quality" puppy for a little less and with limited registration or without papers (so that his "pet qualities" will not be passed on to future generations).

Choose a puppy that is friendly, outgoing and not aggressive. Verify that his eyes and nose are free of discharge. Make an appointment with your veterinarian (or a recommended Bulldog veterinarian) as soon as possible to check the health of the puppy. Have your veterinarian contact the breeder's veterinarian for information about the litter. Make sure the contract has a clause for a return of the puppy within a reasonable specified time (say, 3 days) if the veterinarian finds a major health problem.

If you are purchasing a puppy for showing, it is most important to do research. Go to as many dog shows as you can and find a breeder that you trust who will work with you. Try to buy a puppy that is 5 to 8 months old so that you can better see what he might look like at maturity. A great deal of research is a must if you intend to show or use your Bulldog for breeding.

Remember; be sure you want the dog. He will be a part of your life and will not be expected to spend his time in a wire prison and only taken out to relieve himself. He wants to be with you!! And if your meticulous home is too good for him, then he is too good for you!



The Bulldog Club of America

The Bulldog Club of America was established in 1890 to promote the Bulldog breed and assist owners, breeders and exhibitors of Bulldogs as well as the public by providing educational information and exhibition opportunities. BCA is a member of the American Kennel Club.

A truly National organization, BCA operates with a National Executive Committee, which rotates to each of eight geographical Divisions around the country on a set two-year schedule. A legislative body, the National Council, which is made up of representatives from each of the eight Divisions, governs the BCA National Executive Committee. BCA publishes a very high quality quarterly magazine, *The Bulldogger*, which contains helpful and informative articles plus breeder and show advertisements. In addition, the BCA supports and annual National Bulldog Specialty Show, legislative concerns regarding dogs, Bulldog education programs and numerous other activities in support of the breed.

The eight geographic Divisions represent BCA in each of their geographic areas through a Division Board of Governors. The members of BCA join at the Division level. The Divisions all sponsor a Bulldog Specialty Show in their area and provide a news bulletin to Division members.

There are at least 57 local Bulldog Specialty Clubs located throughout the country that are members of the BCA. These local clubs provide support and assistance for the new and seasoned Bulldoggers, alike. They have their own membership and usually hold monthly meetings, one or two Bulldog Specialty Shows and puppy matches per year and publish a monthly bulletin for their members.

For information about a Bulldog Specialty Club near you, call the AKC Breeder Referral Service, 1-900-407-PUPS for the name and address of the BCA Breeder Referral person.