



# Bulldogs

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# Bulldogs: From Youth through the Golden Years

## Introduction

Bulldogs have a very controversial background among cynologists and naturalists. They have been described as a vast, huge, stubborn, ugly and eager dog. In earlier times, Romans used these dogs for bull baiting as a sport. As bull baiting declined, the number of purebred bulldogs diminished as well. Today, the bulldog has evolved into a great dog for companionship and protection. To their owners they have become very forgiving and loving.

As a prospective bulldog owner, this e-book will provide a clear idea of the breed you are about to purchase. This information will provide valuable tips for your first time purchase, which will include basic needs and health care of your bulldog. You should be warned though: the bulldog is not recommended for first time pet owners.

## General Bulldog Characteristics

Bulldogs are a unique type of dog. They are patient with children, very calm and of a quiet demeanor. Their normal life span is about 8 years. Bulldogs are ranked among the top 24 breeds in popularity. Buyers are fascinated by their charm and status symbol. One of the greatest drawing factors of the bulldog is the fact that they are so great with children and the elderly for companionship. Bulldogs clown around and make you laugh when you see their wrinkles, eyes, flat faces and tail. They are compassionate and very sensitive to your moods. You have to choose carefully if you are looking for a guard dog, since each dog's personality varies. Bulldogs mature very slowly. They usually remain playful and unpredictable up to 24 months of age. Bulldogs often appear lazy and stubborn. As an owner, you must understand the nature of the bulldog – it needs more time to learn to prioritize commands before moving or taking action. Summary of bulldog's general characteristics:

Average Weight	40 – 55 pounds	Temperament	Usually peaceful with other dogs, seldom barks, compassionate, playful, loyal
Average Height	14 – 15 inches	Good with children	Very patient, great companion
Coat	Smooth short coat, plenty of loose skin, wrinkled eyes, flat face	Health concerns	Hip, heart and skin problems



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## Selecting Your Bulldog Puppy – Adoption or Breeder?

When a family purchases or adopts a bulldog, the amount of time, dedication, and care for the pet should be carefully considered. Oftentimes bulldogs are abandoned, taken to animal shelters and surrendered when the owner discovers the special needs and attention that are required.

Owners should make sure that they would be able to provide suitable accommodations and care for the next 8 to 15 years.

### Adoption

If you are considering adoption, be mindful that questions may be asked of you. You must remember that adoption centers may be operated by local or county agencies. Before considering adoption, the prospective owner should research information about the center, as well as the type of pet you are considering to adopt. There may be adoption charges to cover for vaccination or license fees. Remember that some pets may require more attention than others even after adoption. If you are not financially sound, please consider the costs.

### Breeders

Before purchasing a bulldog, it is highly recommended that you choose a reputable breeder. You may obtain information concerning breeders from bulldog owners or breeder clubs. Find out if the breeder is a member of the American Kennel Club's Limited Registration Certificate and/or provide spay and neuter agreements. Check the sanitary conditions of the dog's quarters and inquire about health records of all mating pedigrees. It may not be a good idea to buy a bulldog if the breeder does not provide any follow-up service, especially if you are a first time owner.

## How To Choose Your New Bulldog Puppy

When choosing a dog, the environment he was raised in has an impact on its personality traits and training. You must determine whether you are interested in a guard dog or a watchdog. The socialization of the dog as a puppy should be tested for adaptability in your home environment. Even after testing the puppy, sometimes it does not work out with your own temperament. The following are some desirable characteristics you should look for in a bulldog puppy:

- General appearance is stocky, compact, bold, and massive in proportion to dog size.
- Coat is short, smooth and close in texture.
- Tail may be straight or curled.
- Ears are far apart, small, thin, rose-shaped.
- Body is low, short and broad shoulders, belly tucked up and forelegs widely set apart.



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### EXPERT TIP

#### Selecting a Crate

A dog should be able to stand and turn around inside a closed crate. If you have a Bulldog puppy, consider the average height and weight of an adult Bulldog and choose a crate based on those specifications. The average size of an adult Bulldog is 15 lbs and 16 inches tall. Choose a sturdy steel or plastic crate for medium sized breeds such as the Bulldog.

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## Before You Bring Your Bulldog Home

Before you bring your dog home, understand that bulldogs require a lot of attention. The lifespan of the bulldog is less than most breeds. Most veterinarians are unfamiliar with their care and treatment and it is recommended that the owner locate a veterinarian that can specifically cater to the special needs of the bulldog.

If you are someone who likes to take long walks, you should probably be cautious is bringing your dog with you - bulldogs are very sensitive to extreme temperatures and excessive exercise. If you decide to have the bulldog stay mostly indoors, you must be willing to endure the training for housebreaking and may become destructive due to their chewing habits that lasts a lifetime. When left unattended in your backyard, bulldogs are often subject to theft. It is recommended to crate the bulldog when left unattended, due to the popularity of the bulldog.

In order to ensure the well being of the bulldog, it is imperative that an owner remains conscious of the needs of his pet. Daily grooming should be exercised to prevent health and temperament changes. A special diet for your bulldog is desirable, that which is free from allergenic components such as poultry or lamb, fish, mixed with boiled pasta or rice and easily digested vegetables, or high-quality dry food.

## Your Bulldog Through the Years

### Your Bulldog Puppy

The puppy has to learn early on how to interact with humans. The age that you acquire your dog is very critical to behavioral development and relationship with you as the owner. It is recommended to wait until about a puppy's eighth week before acquiring it. Before this, the puppy remains limited in behavior and socialization.

In the puppy's early months, failure to allow extensive learning often leads to behavioral problems such as poor socialization, aggressiveness or anxiety. The average bulldog matures within 12–18 months. The dietary needs of the bulldog may change in relation to health, age, living condition, or exercise. A minimum amount of training should be given as the bulldog matures.

It is a good idea to select a puppy from a reputable small-scale breeder. You should pay close attention to smooth coat, plenty of loose skin, a short back, a large nose and open nostrils, tight feet and straight bones in the front legs. The position of the ears should be near a rose-shaped form. The dog should also have a well-fed appearance. Always pay attention to the overall temperament of the puppy.

### Your Bulldog Adult

The bulldog may be the perfect pet for you due to its average-sized built, short legs, low body to the ground, and short coat. The bulldog doesn't need much exercise. Normally, the bulldog is not a barking dog, but when aroused it can be unpredictable. But you might want to reconsider getting a bulldog if

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you do not want a pet that is stubborn – it can be aggressive when eating. It also sheds, snorts, wheezes, grunts, snores, slobbers and drools.

### Your Bulldog Senior

Bulldogs will mature psychologically in 36 months, but will show signs of aging at 7 to 8 years of age, depending on living conditions, nutrition, health conditions and genetic make-up. Deteriorating eyesight, hearing and stiffening of the joints are the most common problems of the aging bulldog. These dogs may be prone to vertigo, an inability to stand up and failing eyesight.

### Bulldog Medical Conditions

Some of the most common illnesses may include: elongated soft palate, small trachea, allergies, dermatitis, demodetic mange, eyelid anomalies, hip dysplasia, and heart problems. When itchy skin is severe, the bulldog may resort to self-mutilation. Thus, owners should be aware of signs of skin rashes and excessive scratching.

Due to the sensitivity of bulldogs, owners should regularly monitor changes in physical behavior. Bulldogs should have a spot-on product to kill flea eggs and larvae, rather than flea collars. Do not overfeed or make a sudden change in diet, because this may lead to diarrhea especially in puppies. Using elevated feeders seem to reduce bloating among bulldogs by reducing trapped air in the stomach.

Also, owners should take care not to cut their bulldogs' tails too short because this will result in a very tight screw. This in turn will cause the tail to become moist and irritated. Also during periods of high temperature, never allow the bulldog to be taken outside during the day.



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