

American Pit Bull Terrier Breed Standard

Head

The APBT head is unique and a key element of breed type. It is large and broad, giving the impression of great power, but it is not disproportionate to the size of the body. Viewed from the front, the head is shaped like a broad, blunt wedge. When viewed from the side, the skull and muzzle are parallel to one another and joined by a well defined, moderately deep stop. Arches over the eyes are well defined but not pronounced. The head is well chiseled, blending strength, elegance, and character.

SKULL

The skull is large, flat or slightly rounded, deep, and broad between the ears. Viewed from the top, the skull tapers just slightly toward the stop. There is a deep median furrow that diminishes in depth from the stop to the occiput. Cheek muscles are prominent but free of wrinkles. When the dog is concentrating, wrinkles form on the forehead, which give the APBT his unique expression.

MUZZLE

The muzzle is broad and deep with a very slight taper from the stop to the nose, and a slight falling away under the eyes. The length of muzzle is shorter than the length of skull, with a ratio of approximately 2:3. The topline of the muzzle is straight. The lower jaw is well developed, wide and deep. Lips are clean and tight.

Faults: Snipey muzzle; flews; weak lower jaw.

TEETH

The American Pit Bull Terrier has a complete set of evenly spaced, white teeth meeting in a scissors bite.

Fault: Level bite.

Serious Faults: Overshot bite; wry mouth; missing teeth (this does not apply to teeth that

have been lost or removed by a veterinarian).

NOSE

The nose is large with wide, open nostrils. The nose may be any color.

EYES

Eyes are medium size, round to almond-shaped, and set well apart and low on the skull. All colors are 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

Ears are high set and may be natural or cropped without preference. If natural, semi-prick or rose are preferred. Prick or flat, wide ears are not desired.

Neck

The neck is of moderate length and muscular. There is a slight arch at the crest. The neck widens gradually from where it joins the skull to where it blends into well laid-back shoulders. The skin on the neck is tight and without dewlap.

Faults: Neck too short and thick, thin or weak neck, ewe neck, or dewlap.

Forequarters

The shoulder blades are long, wide, muscular, and well laid back. The upper arm is roughly equal in length to the shoulder blade and joins it at an apparent right angle.

The forelegs are strong and muscular. The elbows are set close to the body. Viewed from the front, the forelegs are set moderately wide apart and perpendicular to the ground. The pasterns are short, powerful, straight, and flexible. When viewed in profile, the 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.

Chest

The chest is deep, well filled in, and moderately wide with ample room for heart and lungs, but the chest should never be wider than it is deep. The fore chest does not extend much beyond the point of shoulder. The ribs extend well back and are well sprung from the spine, then flattening to form a deep body extending to the elbows. The back is strong and firm. The topline inclines very slightly downward from the withers to a broad, muscular, level back. The loin is short, muscular and slightly arched to the top of the croup, but narrower than the rib cage and with a moderate tuck-up. The croup is slightly sloping downward.

Hindquarters

The hindquarters are strong, muscular, and moderately broad. The rump is well filled in on each side of the tail and deep from the pelvis to the crotch. The bone, angulations, and musculature of the hindquarters are in balance with the forequarters. The thighs are well developed with thick, easily discerned muscles. Viewed from the side, the hock joint is well bent and the rear pasterns are well let down and perpendicular to the ground. Viewed from the rear, the rear pasterns are straight and parallel to one another.

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

The feet are round, proportionate to the size of the dog, well arched, and tight. Pads are hard, tough, and well cushioned. Dewclaws may be removed.

Fault: Splayed feet.

Tail

The tail is set on as a natural extension of the topline, and tapers to a point. When the dog is relaxed, the tail is carried low and extends approximately to the hock. When the dog is excited, the tail may be carried in a raised, upright position (challenge tail), but never curled over the back (gay tail).

Fault: Long tail (tail tip passes beyond point of hock).

Serious faults: Gay tail (not to be confused with challenge tail); kinked tail.

Disqualification: Bobbed tail

Coat

The coat is glossy and smooth, close, and moderately stiff to the touch.

Faults: Curly, wavy, or sparse coat.

Disqualification: Long coat.

Color

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

Disqualifications: gray, merle or any shad blue.

Height and Weight

The American Pit Bull Terrier must be both powerful and agile so actual weight and height are less important than the correct proportion of weight to height. Desirable weight for a mature male in good condition is between 30 and 60 pounds. Desirable weight for a mature female in good condition is between 25 and 50 pounds. Lets not forget, these

are Terriers.

Gait

The American Pit Bull Terrier moves with a jaunty, confident attitude, conveying the impression that he expects any minute to see something new and exciting. When trotting, the gait is effortless, smooth, powerful, and well coordinated, showing good reach in front and drive behind. When moving, the backline remains 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. As speed increases, feet tend to converge toward center line of balance.

Faults: Legs not moving on the same plane; legs over reaching; legs crossing over in front or rear; rear legs moving too close or touching; rolling; pacing; paddling; side winding; hackney action; pounding.

Disqualifications: Unilateral or bilateral crypt orchid, Viciousness or extreme shyness, Unilateral or bilateral deafness, Bobbed tail, Albinism.