

# Restricted Breed Dogs

## Guidelines for identification

December 2019

### Introduction

The Dog Control Act 2000 sets out the requirements for the keeping of restricted breed dogs

The identification of restricted breed dogs is integral to the ability of local government to enforce the legislation. The Local Government Division has developed these guidelines to assist councils to carry out this task.

The guidelines are designed to enable authorised officers to become familiar with the physical characteristics of restricted breeds and to differentiate between restricted breeds and similar, non-restricted breeds.

If an authorised officer is of the opinion that a dog is a restricted breed dog, the authorised officer may make a declaration to the effect that the dog is a restricted breed dog.

Local governments are not obliged to use the Guidelines. The Guidelines are provided for information purposes only and are not intended to be used as the only means of identifying a restricted breed dog. The Guidelines are provided on the basis that users will make their own independent assessment of the accuracy, completeness and currency of the information contained in the Guidelines.

### Disclaimer

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate, the Department of Premier and Cabinet will not accept any liability for any errors or omissions in these Guidelines for Identification or for any loss or damage suffered by any person arising directly or indirectly from the use of the Guidelines.

### For more information

If you have a question about the Guidelines, or the restricted breed dog legislation generally, contact:

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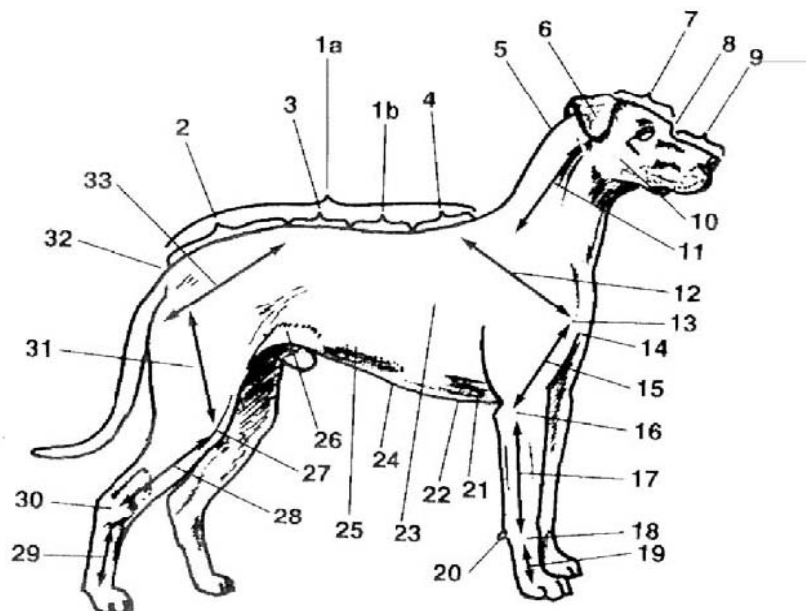
## **RESTRICTED BREEDS**

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## Glossary of canine terms



### Reference

|    |                                   |    |                              |  |
|----|-----------------------------------|----|------------------------------|--|
| 1a | Back (Refer to Glossary of Terms) | 17 | Forearm                      | "Glossary of Canine Terms" –<br>Australian National Kennel<br>Council, Third Edition |
| 1b | Back (Refer to Glossary of Terms) | 18 | Wrist                        |  |
| 2  | Croup                             | 19 | Pastern                      |  |
| 3  | Loin                              | 20 | Stopper pad                  |  |
| 4  | Withers                           | 21 | Brisket                      |  |
| 5  | Crest of neck                     | 22 | Sternum (extends from 14-24) |  |
| 6  | Ear leather                       | 23 | Ribcage                      |  |
| 7  | Skull                             | 24 | Rearward end of sternum      |  |
| 8  | Stop                              | 25 | Belly                        |  |
| 9  | Foreface                          | 26 | Flank                        |  |
| 10 | Cheek                             | 27 | Stifle                       |  |
| 11 | Neck                              | 28 | Second or lower thigh        |  |
| 12 | Shoulder                          | 29 | Rear pastern                 |  |
| 13 | Point of shoulder                 | 30 | Hock (Joint)                 |  |
| 14 | Prosternum                        | 31 | First or Upper Thigh         |  |
| 15 | Upper arm                         | 32 | Set on of tail               |  |
| 16 | Elbow                             | 33 | Pelvic area                  |  |

## Restricted breed: American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier)

### Background

After the United States Civil War a number of Staffordshire bull terriers were imported into North America from England.

It was determined that a larger dog was required for farm work, which included confrontation with coyotes, wolves and larger predators. The breeds used to develop the resulting American pit bull terrier are not all recorded, but the now extinct fighting bulldog is mentioned.

The United Kennel Club (UKC) was formed by a group of American pit bull terrier owners in order to register their dogs and maintain breeding records.

Any pure-bred American pit bull terrier in Australia would either carry a registration/pedigree from the UKC or their own club or association register in Australia. This breed is not recognised by the Australian National Kennel Council and has been banned from importation into Australia.

Useful site on American pit bull terrier conformation and photos:

[http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/AMERICAN\\_PIT\\_BULL\\_TERRIER.htm](http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/AMERICAN_PIT_BULL_TERRIER.htm)

<http://www.pitbulllovers.com>

### *American Pit Bull Terriers*



## Restricted breed: American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier) – physical characteristics

- Height:** 43 – 53 cm measured from the withers to the ground with the dog standing upright.
- Weight:** 14 – 36 kgs, however weight may vary depending on whether the dog is lean or obese.
- Coat:** High gloss, short single coat, stiff hair without undercoat.
- Colour:** All colours (but not pure white). Pied (white with any other colour). Particoloured (two or more colours). White feet on coloured dogs is common.

### Facial features

- Ears:** Set high on the flat skull, can be pricked, cropped or dropped (button) but rose shaped (like a greyhound) are the most common.
- Teeth:** Should close like a scissor, the top teeth overlapping the bottom. The canines should be large.
- Eyes:** Can be any colour, medium-sized and not prominent. Honey-colour eye and the matching eye rims and nose and lips are a strong indication of a particular strain of a pure Pit bull terrier.

### Body features

- Body:** Powerfully built with strong bone in the legs and well-bunched feet bigger than the circumference of the leg bone. The back feet are normally smaller. Always smooth coated with harsh glossy coats with obvious well-developed musculature. There are no long coats, wire coats or coatless varieties.
- Head:** Normally the same length of skull from occiput (back of head) to stop as from stop to end of nose. Its zygomatic arch (jugal bone) and cheek muscle are very pronounced.
- Tail:** Low set on the end of the back and the carriage never exceeds the level of the back. The point of the tail can be slightly curved but never points skywards. Usually does not reach further than the point of the hock.





## Non-restricted breeds similar to the American Pit Bull Terrier

There are two dogs that are similar to the American Pit Bull Terrier – the American Staffordshire Terrier and the Staffordshire Bull Terrier. The major distinguishing features between these breeds relate to height, shoulder width and nose and eye pigmentation.

The American pit bull terrier is the taller and leaner of the three breeds. The American Staffordshire terrier is generally shorter and wider at the shoulders, tail reaches further than the hock and the Staffordshire bull terrier shorter again with even wider shoulders.

Only the American pit bull terrier will be found with a red nose and red pigment around the eyes or with yellow eyes. It is very unlikely this colouration will be found in the American Staffordshire or the Staffordshire bull terrier.

### I. American Staffordshire Terrier

Registered breeders and owners of this breed are making every effort to avoid confusion between their breed and the American pit bull terrier.

All pure bred dogs of this breed should be registered with a state controlling body. Most imported dogs will come from America and will have an export certificate from the American Kennel Club. All imports are also micro-chipped.

Possible websites containing American Staffordshire terrier conformation and photos:

[http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/AMERICAN\\_STAFFORDSHIRE\\_TERRIER.htm](http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/AMERICAN_STAFFORDSHIRE_TERRIER.htm)

<http://www.ankc.org.au/>

#### Physical characteristics

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Height:</b>          | 43 – 48 cm at the withers   |
| <b>Weight:</b>          | 18 – 23 kgs   |
| <b>Coat:</b>            | Short, glossy and stiff to touch  |
| <b>Colouration:</b>     | All colours   |
| <b>Facial features:</b> | Ears set high on skull<br>Broad between cheeks<br>Nose black<br>Eyes are dark and round |
| <b>Body features:</b>   | Body not square.  |



## 2. Staffordshire Bull Terrier

This breed originated in Staffordshire, Great Britain. The ancestry comes from crosses of the thickly muscled bull-baiters and the agile, lithe and feisty local terriers. When dog fighting was outlawed in Britain in the 1800s many were exported to America. They became the basis of the American pit bull terrier and the American Staffordshire terrier.

The Staffordshire bull terrier is in large numbers in Australia. There is a very strong possibility that many dogs do not have papers.

Possible websites containing Staffordshire bull terrier conformation and photos:

[http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/STAFFORDSHIRE\\_BULL\\_TERRIER](http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/STAFFORDSHIRE_BULL_TERRIER)

<http://www.ankc.org.au/>

### Physical characteristics

**Height:** 35 – 40 cm at the withers

**Weight:** 11 – 17 kgs

**Coat:** Smooth, short and close

**Colouration:** All colours

**Facial features:** Ears rose-shaped or half-pricked; not large or heavy

Black nose

Broad between cheeks

Eyes are dark and round and may bear some relation to coat colour

Eye rims are dark.



## Restricted breed: dogo Argentino

Also known as the Argentinean mastiff.

This breed was developed in South America to create a bullish and fearless hunter with great stamina and a light coat capable of deflecting, rather than absorbing heat.

The breeding program undertaken in the 1920s used the old type of Spanish fighting dog, great dane, old style bull terrier, bulldog and boxer. They were bred to hunt, in packs, for big game of wild boar, mountain lion and jaguar.

The skull is massive and the jaws strong and tenacious. The breed has been banned from importation into Australia.

Possible websites containing dogo Argentino conformation and photos:

[http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/DOGO\\_ARGENTINO.htm](http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/DOGO_ARGENTINO.htm)

<http://www.dogousa.org/>

### Physical characteristics

- Height:** 60 – 65 cm at the withers
- Weight:** 37 – 43 kgs
- Coat:** Short, smooth, thick and glossy
- Colouration:** Always white
- Facial features:** Ears carried close to the head, folded  
Pronounced cheek muscles  
Black nose  
Eyes are dark or hazel  
Eye rims are dark or pink or a combination of both.

## Restricted breed: fila Brasileiro

Also known as the Brazilian mastiff, Brazilian guard dog or Cao de Fila.

This breed was developed in Brazil in the late 1800s. It was developed from Spanish and Portuguese mastiffs and bloodhounds. It is massive and daunting in appearance and a bold breed. Its bloodhound ancestry is apparent in its long muzzle.

The fila Brasileiro has a docile nature and is devoted to its master. However, it is also suspicious of strangers and does not permit the slightest familiarity. Due to its size and potential for aggression, it is banned from some countries and has been banned from importation into Australia.

Possible websites containing the fila Brasileiro conformation and photos:

[http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/FILA\\_BRASILEIRO.htm](http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/FILA_BRASILEIRO.htm)

[http://www.filabrasilassn.com/breed\\_standard.shtml](http://www.filabrasilassn.com/breed_standard.shtml)

### Physical characteristics

**Height:** 61 – 75 cm at the withers

**Weight:** 56 – 82 kgs

**Coat:** Short, smooth, dense and tight to the body. However, the breed has thick, loose skin over the whole body, particularly at the neck, forming pronounced dewlaps.

**Colouration:** Solid colours and brindles

May have white markings on feet, chest or tail or a black mask.

**Facial features:** Ears pendant, large, thick and v-shaped

Head is big and heavy

Black nose

Eyes medium to large, almond-shaped

Eyes coloured from dark brown to yellow.

## Restricted breed: Perro de Presa Canario (or Presa Canario)

The Perro de Presa Canario was born out of a cross breed of a fierce native dog from the Canary Island, mastiffs and old style bulldogs brought by English settlers during the 18th century, this type of dog was bred specifically for organised fights until 1940 when dog fighting was outlawed.

Although almost extinct in the 1970s, interest in the breed increased and pure specimens of the breed were found on farms and in the rural and remote areas of the island. With the help of breeders they are now publicly available.

Due to its size and potential for aggression this breed has been banned from importation into Australia.

Possible websites containing Perro de Presa Canario conformation and photos:

[http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/PERRO\\_DE\\_PRESA\\_CANARIO.htm](http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/PERRO_DE_PRESA_CANARIO.htm)

<http://www.justusdogs.com.au/dog-pages/dog-breeds/492/perro-de-presa-canario.cfm>

### Physical characteristics

**Height:** 53 – 69 cm at the withers

**Weight:** 38 – 50 kgs

**Coat:** Short, smooth but coarse to touch

**Colouration:** Brindle with a uniform mix of fawn, white and black hairs and may on occasion be solid brown.

**Facial features:** Ears medium-size, fine hair, set high on the skull and double-fold rose-shaped, or alternatively ears drop effortlessly to the side of the head.

Wide nose, strongly pigmented in black and base of muzzle is approximately 2/3 the width of the head.

Slightly oval eyes, medium to large in size, well-separated and dark in colour.

**Body features:** Straight-line body, it is approximately 20% longer than its height from ground to withers.

The depth of the chest should arrive at the minimum of the elbow.

Broad, massive head, square, powerful and covered with loose-covered skin.

Tail has a thick base narrowing at the tip and does not surpass the hock. In rest the tail hangs straight with a slight curve in the tip.

## Non-restricted breed: Mastiff (similar to the fila Brasileiro and Perro de Presa Canario)

Whilst the breeds can be similar in colour, the mastiff is a much heavier-boned dog than the fila. The fila also has a longer and narrower head and muzzle.

### Mastiff

Also known as the English mastiff.

The mastiff existed in Britain 2000 years ago and was exported to Rome as both a military dog and fighting dog. One of the largest dogs in the world, the mastiff is now a rare sight, both in its home country and abroad.

Possible websites containing Mastiff conformation and photos:

<http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/MASTIFF.htm>

<http://www.ankc.org.au/>

### Physical characteristics

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Height:</b>          | 70 – 76 cm at the withers  |
| <b>Weight:</b>          | 80 – 86 kgs  |
| <b>Coat:</b>            | The outer coat is moderately coarse; the undercoat is close-lying and dense  |
| <b>Colouration:</b>     | Apricot, silver-fawn or dark fawn-brindle  |
| <b>Facial features:</b> | Ears are small, v-shaped and rounded at the tips<br>Muzzle short and square<br>Mask is black and ever-present<br>Black nose<br>Eyes are set wide apart and medium in size. |

## Restricted breed: Japanese Tosa

Also known as the tosa Inu, tosa fighting dog or Japanese fighting dog.

This breed was developed solely for the purpose of fighting and through its size has rendered any other fighting dog in Japan obsolete.

The breed was brought about by crossing the German mastiff, bull terrier, St Bernard, bulldog, Spanish pointer and the great dane.

The tosa is banned from many countries. The breed is virtually unknown outside Japan and remains fairly rare in Japan. It is banned from importation into Australia.

Possible websites containing Japanese Tosa conformation and photos:

[http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/TOSA\\_INU.htm](http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/TOSA_INU.htm)

<http://www.hund.ch/rasse/tosa-inuuk.htm>

### Physical characteristics

**Height:** 62 – 65 cm at the withers

**Weight:** 89 – 91 kgs

**Coat:** Short, hard and dense

**Colouration:** Solid red (can have white markings), brindles, fawns or dull-black

**Facial features:** Ears are small, rather thin, set high on the skull side and hanging close to cheeks  
Muzzle moderately long with nasal bridge straight  
Black nose.

## Non-restricted breed: Bullmastiff (similar to the Japanese Tosa)

### Bullmastiffs

Whilst the breeds can be similar in colour, the distinguishing feature between these breeds is the muzzle. The muzzle of the bullmastiff is approximately 1/3 the length of the head, whereas the tosa has a much longer muzzle.

Bred in the 1800s, the foundation stock of the bullmastiff was 60% English mastiff and 40% bulldog, and was produced as a gamekeeper's assistant.

Possible websites containing bullmastiff conformation and photos:

<http://www.thebreedsofdogs.com/BULLMASTIFF.htm>

<http://www.ankc.org.au/>

### Physical characteristics

**Height:** 61 – 69 cm at the withers

**Weight:** 50 – 59 kgs

**Coat:** Short and dense

**Colouration:** Fawn, brindle or red

**Facial features:**

set wide and high on the skull

Muzzle is short

Black mask is common

Black nose

Eyes are of medium size, set wide apart the width of the muzzle

Ears v-shaped, folded back,