



American Staffordshire Terrier Standard

Recognized by the AMA in 2016

Background: The American Staffordshire Terrier was developed in the early 1800's as a result of crosses between the renaissance period bulldogs of that time and game terriers. The renaissance period Bulldog which, when crossed with game terriers, produced the first "Bull and Terriers". The renaissance period Bulldog was a fierce, courageous animal used in the sport of bull-baiting. When the sport fell from public favor and was outlawed, their supporters turned to dog fighting and sought to create a sporting dog that, while retaining the legendary courage and ferocity of the Bulldog, would incorporate the greater agility of the terrier. The extraordinary vitality of this breed is a direct result of breeding for successful fighting dogs. Selective breeding since the 1930's has been away from the fighting heritage. The early ancestors of the American Staffordshire Terrier came from England but the breed is an American development. This type of dog was instrumental in the success of farmers and settlers who developed this country. They were used for general farm work, hunting wild pigs, bears, and other large game, guarding the homestead, and general companionship. The American Staffordshire Terrier of today is a companion that also excel in many various performance/working venues. The talents that made the American Staffordshire Terrier a good all-purpose dog are still to be found in the breed.

General Appearance: The American Staffordshire Terrier should give the impression of great strength for its size, a well put-together dog, muscular, but agile and graceful, keenly alive to their surroundings. They should be stocky, not long-legged or racy in outline. Their courage is legendary.

Disqualifications: unilateral or bilateral cryptorchidism

Disposition: The American Staffordshire Terrier exhibits courage, determination and intelligence. They are confident, gentle, and loving toward people. They are loyal affectionate family dog with a strong desire to please their master. Disqualifications: viciousness or extreme shyness

Size: Height and weight should be in proportion.

Male: An ideal male should be 18-19 inches at the withers.

Female: An ideal female should be 17-18 inches tall at the withers.

Head: Medium length, deep through, broad skull, very pronounced cheek muscles, distinct stop.

Eyes: Dark and round, low down in skull and set far apart. Lighter colored eyes acceptable but not preferred.

Cosmetic faults: pink eye rims
Disqualifications: crossed eyes, divergent strabismus (wall-eyed)

Muzzle/Bite: Medium length, rounded on upper side to fall away abruptly below eyes. Jaws well defined. Underjaw to be strong and have biting power. Lips close and even, no looseness. Upper teeth to meet tightly outside lower teeth in front. They have full dentition with 42-44 teeth.

Serious faults: overshot, undershot, less than 42 teeth
Disqualifications: wry mouth

Nose: The nares are open and the preferred color is black. Gray nose color is acceptable but not preferred.

Cosmetic faults: dudley nose
Serious fault: pinched nares
Disqualifications: liver colored nose

Ears: Ears are set high, cropped or natural are accepted without preference. Uncropped ears should be short and held rose or half prick. Cosmetic fault: full drop ear

Disqualifications: unilateral or bilateral deafness

Neck: Heavy, medium length, slightly arched, tapering from shoulders to back of skull. No looseness of skin.

Shoulders: Strong and muscular with blades wide and sloping.

Chest, Back, Loin and Body: Well-sprung ribs, deep in rear. All ribs close together. Forelegs set rather wide apart to permit chest development. Chest deep and broad. The back is fairly short. Slight sloping from withers to rump with gentle short slope at rump to base of tail. Loins slightly tucked.

Hindquarters: The hindquarters are well-muscled.

Legs: The front legs should be straight, large or round bones, pastern upright. No semblance of bend in front. The hindquarters are let down at hocks, turning neither in nor out.

Feet: Feet of moderate size, well-arched and compact.

Tail: Short, low set, tapering to a fine point; not curled or held over back. The tail should reach the hock.

Serious faults: tail too long or badly carried
Disqualifications: docked tail

Coat: Short, close, stiff to the touch, and glossy.

Color: Any color except merle. Solid, parti, or patched is permissible. All white, more than 80 percent white, black and tan, and liver not to be encouraged.

Disqualifications: merle, albinism

Movement: Gait must be springy but without roll or pacing.

Disqualifications:

- Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchidism
- Viciousness or extreme shyness
- Crossed Eyes
- Divergent Strabismus (Wall-Eyed)
- Wry mouth

-Liver pigmentation

-Unilateral or bilateral deafness

-Docked tail

-Merle

-Albinism

Fault Degrees:

A cosmetic fault is one of a minor nature. A fault not specified as cosmetic has to do with structure as it relates to a dog that is able to compete in performance/working venues. In a show or other evaluation, the dog is to be penalized in direct proportion to the degree of the fault. Any fault, which is extreme, should be considered a serious fault and should be penalized appropriately.