

# The American Staffordshire Terrier

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### Background:

The American Staffordshire Terrier finds his ancestors in the brutal days of dog-bull and dog-bear fighting. Europeans of the time found dog fighting to be an entertaining sport, and were always on the lookout for new breeds to enter into the ring. In 1835 a cross between the Old English Terrier and the Bulldog produced a dog breed called "Bull and Terrier." This new breed ruled the ring and gained a sizable fan base.

After dog fighting was banned the Bull and Terrier mix found its place among farmers and proved useful as a ratter. Soon after making their way to America differences in Bull and Terrier breeding led to subdivisions within the group. The American Kennel club recognized the Staffordshire Terrier as an individual breed in 1936.

During the 1900s the Staffordshire slowly transitioned from a fighting dog into a family dog. During World War I he was also used on the battlefield. The greatest war-dog of that era was named Sergeant Stubby.

### Sizing up:

- Weight: 50-60 lbs.
- Height: 17-19 inches
- Coat: Short, smooth, and close
- Color: Red, blue, black, fawn, white, or any shade of brindle
- Life expectancy: 12-15 years

### What's the American Staffordshire Terrier like?

The American Staffordshire Terrier should be taken on by pet veterans. He is sweet natured and playful, but his instincts can make him difficult to handle. The American Staffordshire terrier has a strong prey drive and will chase anything. He's also tough, intelligent,

willful, and prideful. He won't take direction easily so early training is essential. Perhaps even more important is early socialization. The American Staffordshire Terrier is unlikely to get along with other dogs, especially dogs of the same sex. Try to teach him to have polite interactions early in life, and always keep him on a leash at the dog park.

American Staffordshire Terriers shouldn't be left outside alone, but they also won't be happy inside doing nothing. They're high maintenance canines and could walk for many miles per day. They have farm life in their blood and love to be given jobs to do. Indoors, American Staffordshire Terriers should be supervised around children, but will generally be very playful and friendly with them.

The American Staffordshire Terrier makes a poor guard dog. Despite his intimidating appearance he loves all people and will welcome intruders.

His grooming needs are minimal but he will need plenty of exercise every day.

### Health

The following conditions might affect the American Staffordshire Terrier:

- [Cataracts](#)
- Distichiasis
- Mast cell tumors

### Takeaway points:

- American Staffordshire Terriers love people but will often be aggressive towards animals.
- Adopted American Staffordshire Terriers are sometimes rescue dogs from abusive homes. They'll need extra care and attention throughout their lives.
- American Staffordshire Terriers are versatile dogs with many talents.

*If you have any questions or concerns, you should always visit or call your veterinarian - they are your best resource to ensure the health and well-being of your pets.*