

ANIMALOLOGY: DOGS & OTHER CANIDS

BY

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DOG BREEDS BASICS

The Affenpinschers (Affen), sometimes referred to as 'monkey terriers' or 'ratters' date back to early 17th century Germany. This dog was an excellent ratter (rat killer).

The Affen comes in black, fawn, gray, black and tan, gray and tan, and seldom reddish. Its feet and chest may be white. Its fur feels wiry.

Originally, Affens were larger. Later, they were bred to be mousers (house mouse killers). Long-skirted women had every reason to fear mice. But during their heyday Affens were placed in farms or any place where rats could live in.

Affens are tough and strong for their size. They're energetic, playful, alert, inquisitive, and protective of those whom they love. This is an energetic dog needing daily activity.

According to an April 1950 AKC Gazette publication the Affen was brought to America in the mid-1930s. Note, standards and critiques of breeds were vague compared to today. Thanks to

the tenacious efforts of Bessie Mallie the Affen received official recognition.

The Affen is 10 to 15 inches tall and weighs 7 to 9 lbs.

Afghan hounds are an ancient breed. These sight hounds are graceful, fast (not as fast as the greyhound, but they have better endurance), and convey a stately appearance.

Afghan hounds have long bodies, noticeably thick and long coats, and proudly carry their heads up.

Afghans date back to Ancient Egypt, 4000 years. They were 'employed' as sight hound hunters. They were bred to be fast, agile, and merciless in their hunting pursuits in ground terrain and mountains.

The Afghan hounds' ancestors were brought to Afghanistan by tribal peoples. In Afghanistan they chased down gazelles, hares, and snow leopards. Countless generations of chasing fast prey and living in rugged and rough mountainous terrain in Afghanistan have made this breed of dog a tough and fast hunter.

Afghan hounds were 'brought' to England during the 19th century by returning military personnel.

Afghan hounds tend to 'attach' themselves to one or two persons and may be cat like to others.

The Afghan hound is 27 to 29 inches tall and weighs 58 to 65 lbs.

Africanis (African Dog) is the 'generic name' used for the native dogs of Southern Africa. This dog is medium-sized, muscular, runs fast, and has a smooth gait. This dog forms close attachments to its human family. It's a good guard dog, herder of animals and livestock. Africanis is territorial but friendly.

The Africanis was bred and raised to be in open land. It needs roaming space and freedom. This is a healthy dog that can walk behind you for long distances without having to feel a need to lead.

The Africanis traces its ancestry to 5000 BC, Ancient Egypt. Although the Africanis is not a recognized breed Southern Africa is an incredibly large area with rich history and the Africanis has been used extensively as a special purpose dog. There are no precise height or weight measurements.

The Aidi or Atlas Mountain Dog is a North African (Moroccan) dog that is 5000 years old.

The Aidi was employed to guard and protect people, flocks, and property from mountain predators. Aidis were prized for their readiness and preparedness to work and do what they had to. It is an independent thinker, has good vision, olfactory sense, and is powerful.

Trained Aidis can run on uneven, irregular terrain, skip from one rock to another, and have a keen sense for spotting snakes.

Owners must show that they are 'the boss' (alpha male), otherwise the Aidi will likely take over.

The Aidi is an outdoor dog. Apartment dwellers are not recommended to own this breed of dog. Aidis need to work and move about.

The Aidi is 24 inches tall and weighs 55 lbs.

The Ainu dog is slim, muscular, and compact dog. This dog is brave, fast, easily trained, energetic, faithful, and is a good hunter and guard.

The Ainu dog can challenge a large bear several times its size and weight. This is an outdoors dog that will not be suitable for apartment life. Long walks and a large yard or a place to run in are necessary.

The Ainu dog is a Spitz breed native to Japan and is sometimes referred to as a Hokkaido dog. They trace their history back to 1000 B.C.

Ainu dogs weigh 45-65 lbs. and are 18-22 inches tall.

Airedale terriers (king of terriers) are the largest of the terrier dogs. The Airedale has a dense, wiry coat that is water resistant. Their heads are long and may appear rectangular at a glance. The head is held high.

Airedales originated in Yorkshire, England, in the mid-19th century. They were used in rat killing competitions by the Yorkshire working class. Airedales were placed near the banks of the Aire River and surrounding area. Rats that entered the water were duly chased by the Airedale Terrier then killed, if possible. They have a very strong bite.

Airedale males are 23 to 25 inches tall and weigh 55 to 65 lbs.

Airedales are multi-purpose dogs. They've been used for hunting (rats, coyotes, foxes, otters, fitches), guarding, doing police and military work, herding, sporting, search and rescue, aiding the physically challenged, and are good companion animals. They have an appearance of elegance and class. Teddy Roosevelt admired the Airedale terrier.

Two recognized breeds of Akitas are the original Japanese Akitas and the American standard Akitas. The exceptions to the 2 breed rule are in the U.S. and Canada. They're considered one breed. I take the latter's opinion.

The American version has a black mask while the Japanese doesn't.

The Akitas trace their origins to the northern mountainous district of Japan. They were used to hold big game at bay until the hunter came. They were also used to bring back water fowl.

Akitas have the physical appearance of a cold climate dog. They're the largest of the spitz-type dogs. These dogs are beautiful, courageous, tough, dignified, detached to strangers,

can be house broken, highly intelligent, good with children and other animals within the home. As with any other breed of dog correct socialization is essential. Akitas are prone to hypothyroidism.

Unfortunately, Akitas have been used in the dog fighting world. Cold-blooded criminals have used the strength, bravery, and size of this breed for evil purposes. Thankfully, the vast majority of Akitas are not bred for dog fighting.

Akitas are 26 to 29 inches tall and weigh 75 to 125 lbs.

The Alapaha Blue Blood Bulldog is massively built, powerful, hardworking, trainable, a good companion, and will fight to the death to protect its family, especially children. This is a very good guard dog.

The Alapaha looks like an enhanced/exaggerated bulldog. It looks menacing and is as tough as it looks. Originally a 'Southern plantation dog' and today is rare in number. A sustained rescue attempt was begun in 1979 by a dedicated group of southerners belonging to the Alapaha Blue-Blood Bulldog Association.

The Alapaha is 22 to 25 inches tall and weighs 75 to 100 lbs.

Alaskan huskies were bred to pull skis and to run long distances in the far north. This dog is not an official breed, but a category.

Alaskan huskies are the epitome of the 'sled dog' racers. These dogs are larger but slimmer than Siberian huskies. Their endurance is unmatched, even by the Siberian husky.

Alaskan huskies have an overall friendly demeanour, are good with children, intelligent, highly energetic, and easy to train.

Alaskan huskies fair better with access to the outdoors so they can move about. If kept indoors in an urban environment the owner/s must walk their dog regularly and allow it to use up much energy on activities.

Alaskan huskies are not big eaters. Surprisingly, they can get by with less food than expected. They need to be shown who is boss otherwise the owner will see rebellion and mischievous behaviour.

Furthermore, dog owners living in warmer climates should be warned that Alaskan huskies are genetically and physically equipped for the northern colder climates. They should not be worked hard in warm weather.

Alaskan huskies should be well cared for by their mushers. Unfortunately, some owners overwork, underfeed, and chain their working dogs for extended periods of time. Sled or working dogs are helping their owners get their 'bread and butter'. This is not the way to thank them.

Alaskan huskies are beautiful dogs. They have a 'happy face expression' and beautiful coats.

The Alaskan husky is 21 to 24 inches tall and weighs 75 to 85 lbs.

Alaskan malamutes (Malamutes) are the largest of the northern (Arctic) dogs. They are affectionate, kind, caring, good with children, and loyal to their masters. Like the Alaskan huskies, they're beautiful dogs, and should not be considered good guard dogs. A friendly disposition and beauty will not scare away a criminal intruder. Alaskan malamutes need much activity; they were bred to be hard working dogs in the far north.

Apartment life may be difficult. Alaskan malamutes that are placed inside apartments or homes can be quite destructive if their 'inherent drive' is not satisfied. Do not overwork your dog in warm weather.

Alaskan malamutes have an inherent pack hierarchy sense. The human must be the leader. Otherwise, there'll be rebellion.

Unfortunately, some scrupulous breeders look only for the quick buck; breeding money making sled dogs, and disposing of the puppies that can't make the grade.

The Alaskan malamute is 22 to 27 inches tall and weighs 70 to 100 lbs.

The American Alsatian was selectively bred from the Alaskan malamute, Anatolian Shepherd, German shepherd dog, Great Pyrenees, and English Mastiff.

The American Alsatian is a large dog, a good family dog, loyal to its master, also good with children and pets.

Although the Alsatian is oblivious to strangers it's not aggressive or antagonistic. If taken for regular walks or is allowed to perform activities this dog will be quiet and calm; individuals may appear relaxed and laid back.

The American Alsatian is tolerant of loud noises and is comfortable in a home environment. In addition, they have a weak prey drive and are not big barkers, whiners, or make other sounds that can be quite bothersome when performed at inopportune times.

The American Alsatian is one of the best American dog breeds.

Adult males are 25 to 29 inches tall and weigh 80 to 120 lbs.

The American bulldog is a muscular, agile, powerful (body and jaw), tough-looking dog. This dog has a broad face, and looks like a fighting dog, but in actuality it isn't.

Although the American bulldog (ABD) appears menacing it has a friendly temperament. Its jawbone is not as massive as that of the American Staffordshire terrier.

The ABD is faithful, trustworthy, courageous, tenacious, protective, and good with children. The breed was originally bred for bull baiting, guarding, and hunting. Out-breeding of the fighting instinct has resulted in a friendlier dog. Mind you, these are generalities. Any dog (male or female) from any breed can have a friendly hostile temperament; individuals and circumstance should be taken into consideration.

In addition, the general mood and health of the particular dog should not be ignored. For instance, a stranger who crosses a dog's territory or path may be bitten, or worse yet viciously attacked. Ask yourself, what is the dog doing? Does it perceive me as a threat to it or its master? Am I getting too close to its territory? Always be careful when meeting a new dog. Never pet a dog without the owner's permission, and slowly place your hand below the dog's muzzle first. Hands coming down in a jackhammer method appear as an attack to some dogs. The dog cannot fend off the attack by lifting up its forelegs. It can bite your hand, however.

Sexual dimorphism is more apparent in the ABD than in most other breeds. The ABC is 22 to 28 inches tall and weighs 60 to 120 lbs.

The American Bully is massive and athletic-looking. Although it looks extremely menacing it has a happy and friendly temperament. This is an obedient dog that enjoys pleasing its owner. Good with children and will fight to the death to protect its family or if forced to defend itself. This dog is confident, strong, and hard-working.

The American Bully needs to be active; long daily walks or exercise area will do. If these conditions are satisfied this dog can live indoors.

American Bullies are 17 to 21 inches tall. Weight distribution is broad and there is no maximum. Healthy adults are massive.

The American cocker spaniel (Cocker) is medium-sized, sturdy, and the smallest member of the sporting dogs. This dog is fast and has good endurance. As such, it needs to use up much of its pent up energy. It is gentle and if properly trained is good with its owner and children.

Cockers are good-natured, joyous, energetic, athletic, and willing to please. They were bred as gundogs; retrieving woodcocks. The American cocker spaniel is smaller than the English cocker spaniel; this became apparent in the 1930s.

Cockers are very popular in the United States. Although popularity has dipped a bit, it's still widely loved.

Cockers can live indoors if they receive adequate exercise. Cockers are 13.5 to 15.5 inches tall and weigh 24 to 29 lbs.

The American Pitt Bull Terrier (APBT) is a strong, muscular, alert, tenacious, energetic, loving, protective, athletic, playful dog that has gotten a bad reputation by the press.

The APBT loves to please its master. In addition, it will fight to the death to protect its family and property. This is an incredibly strong and awesome breed. The APBT was originally bred to be a 'sustained fighter', to endure pain, to have a relentless drive, and to have a 'sustained bite'.

Although the APBT looks 'very menacing' and 'intimidating' this dog will more likely show aggression towards another dog or another animal, if at all.

Proper socialization, the correct temperament, and firm leadership should remove these aggressive traits. As will all other breeds of dogs and individuals, there is NEVER A GUARANTEE. Remember, this applies to all breeds of dogs not just the APBT. We have to be fair about that. Bites and attacks, although horrible and sad, are more publicized if they're committed by bull terrier type dogs, Rottweiler, Dobermans, or other large, tough dogs. Virtually any powerful dog can hurt any unarmed and unprepared human. APBT has a 'sustained bite'; this means that unlike other dog breeds in general who bite and then snap back, this dog breed has the inherent ability to bite and not let go, unless made to do so.

A properly socialized APBT should be playful, loving, affectionate, and enjoy playing games like fetch. In addition, its athletic abilities can be used for agility trials, guarding, search and rescue, and obedience trials. The APBT has also been used for the sick and elderly.

APBT can live indoors but must be exercised daily. This is an athletic dog that loves activities.

The APBT's forefathers were bred as fighters and bull baiters. It was humans who bred the forefathers of the APBT for fighting; they can also breed for a kind, loving dog. The biggest problems with dog fighting are the human participants. They're the ones who breed, organize, sustain, wager, furnish, advertise, enjoy, punish and kill (has-been fighters), train, and provide the facilities.

Any person/s found guilty of organizing dog fighting events should face stiff criminal penalties. Furthermore, the organizer/s must also be liable for any suffering and deaths caused by their blood-sport.

Unfortunately, in big cities across North America and even out in the country, where fights can be hidden from the general public, there's an increase in dog-fighting. Has-been Pitt bull type fighting dogs are sometimes found in garbage dumps. An occasional 'sensational arrest' as in the case of Michael Vick

is few and far between. The guilty parties should be forbidden to own any animal for life, especially dogs.

'Former owners' are the most likely persons to 'dump' their ABPT or 'mix breed' into shelters. These persons were not qualified to own an APBT, and most likely any sort of dog. First time potential buyers of any pet (any breed of canine or non-canine) should understand what it takes to properly care for their potential new family member.

Basically, dog fighting includes the following elements:

A. Stealing companion animals for bait or for training as upcoming fighters.

B. Horrible training regimens, causing severe mental agony and/or physical pain.

C. Deprivation of food and water to toughen up the fighter. Afterwards, 'the bait' will be 'granted' in the form of a practice opponent in a pit or dangled on a tree branch; sometimes pasted with blood. The killing instinct has to be 'all encompassing' during every single fight.

D. Lack of respect for the dog fighter. Masters often bitch out or get physical with their dog fighter.

E. No mercy or compassion is shown if the dog fighter is maimed and is no longer able to fight or is killed. Sometimes losing fighters are killed outright after the match, done through beatings, shootings, kicking, or in rare instances being burned alive. The dog fighter can be tossed out into the street or into an already overcrowded shelter.

F. Spectators are from the rabble of society; illegal wagering, drugs, weapons, convicts, alcohol, and an atmosphere of enjoying blood, pain, and when applicable death. The feelings of the combatants are irrelevant. Winning is the only thing!

G. Dog fighters who do survive and are lucky enough to be tossed away must live with horrible mutilating, and mental trauma injuries. Pitt bull terriers are present in shelters at disproportionately high levels.

H. Children are sometimes taken to these blood-sports. Without delving deeply into the psychological aspects, it is sad, and may be dangerous. Unless he/she dies, every single child will grow up to be an adult.

I. Some of the dogfighters that are tossed out or escape become a danger to the public at large.

J. Little or no veterinary medical care is available to the dog fighter, as that would entail the loss of 'profits' and 'earnings'.

K. Food may consist of slop or if the fighting dog is lucky something approaching normal.

Most of the aforementioned points apply to any fighting dog regardless of breed, except the final statement in letter 'G'.

Politicians simply aren't doing enough. The biggest victims, the dog fighters can't vote, they're animals, and certainly their 'trainers' don't care about them. Usually, only big cases make big stories in the media.

The predecessor to the modern APBT was transported to America during the mid-19th century by Irish immigrants living in Boston. The American version of this bull terrier (APBT) was bred to be larger than its British counterpart.

The APBT is 15 to 22 inches tall most weigh 30 to 65 lbs.

The American Staffordshire Terrier (AST) is 17 to 20 inches tall and weighs 55 to 70 lbs.

The UKC (United Kennel Club) uses the name American Pitt Bull Terrier while the AKC (American Kennel Club) uses the name American Pitt Bull Terrier.

ASTs are bred primarily for show. For in-depth information on this dog breed go to the go to the INFORMATION BOOTH section.

ASTs are massive, powerful, and large-framed.

Although the American Foxhound (AFH) is similar in appearance to its close relative the English foxhound it has been bred to be lighter in weight and taller.

The AFH was bred to move about and run; hence it is a very active and energetic dog. Furthermore, this dog is friendly, easy-going, kind, and loving. However, during a hunt it is courageous and very tenacious. The dog must be on a leash if taken for a walk as its nose may pick up an interesting scent. If the dog isn't 'secured' it may go off to in search of the target animal. In addition, this dog is not good in extended kennel living and may not be suitable for indoor living. Daily activity is a must; as this dog is highly energetic and active.

The AFH has an inherent pack mentality, therefore it is generally dog-to-dog friendly. However, this may not be so with other species of animals.

Be advised that this dog loves to bay and bark. Neighbours may not like this.

The AFH are derived from the English hounds that were transported to America in the mid-17th century. George Washington is the father of the AFH; even mentioning them in many of his journals.

AFH may be 21-25 inches tall and weigh between 65-75 lbs.

American pit bull terriers (APBT) who are properly socialized are not 'automatic attackers' or 'automatic fighters'. However, most dog breeds bite then pull or snap back. APBTs have an inherent ability to be 'sustained biters'; not letting go, sometimes having to be killed to do so.

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