

PASSION *for* PETS

American Staffordshire terrier - Information Sheet



BACKGROUND - The American Staffordshire Terrier is not a new breed. Although it gained American Kennel Club registration and recognition in 1936, it has been developed since the early 1800s as a result of crosses between the bulldogs of that time and game terriers.

Although the early ancestors of this breed came from England, the development of the American Staffordshire Terrier is the story of a truly American breed. This dog was instrumental in the success of farmers and settlers who developed that country. They were used for general farm work, hunting wild pigs, bears, and other large game, guarding the homestead and for general companionship.

A number of the early ancestors were also developed for the "sport" of dog fighting. The extraordinary vitality of this breed is a direct result of breeding for successful fighting dogs. This now illegal activity is, unfortunately, more often cited as the early purpose of the dogs rather than the general farm work, and although ancestors of the American Staffordshire were fighting dogs, the selective breeding since the 1930s has been away from the fighting heritage. The American Staffordshire Terrier today is a companion and show dog.

AVERAGE LIFESPAN - The American Staffordshire Terrier usually lives up to nine years of age but can easily last 11 years if given plenty of loving attention and a good diet.

AVERAGE SIZE & WEIGHT - The bitch is usually 40cm to 44cm in height and typically weighs from 16kg to 19kg, and the male should weigh from 19kg to 23kg and is 45cm to 49cm tall.

BREED PERSONALITY, CHARACTERISTICS & TEMPERAMENT - The American Staffordshire Terrier is a stoic and powerful breed. It's nature tends to be courageous and training is recommended.

COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER PETS - The American Staffordshire Terrier can, under some circumstances, show aggressive tendencies towards cats, rabbits and other household pets. With other dogs, it needs to be socialised correctly over a period of time to establish a lasting relationship.

The owner of an American Staffordshire Terrier should be ever aware that it will respond to a challenge offered by another dog, and for this reason great care should be taken in the surrounds of an unfamiliar dog, especially if both are male.

CARE REQUIREMENTS - The American Staffordshire Terrier is a relatively low maintenance dog, requiring minimal grooming of its coat, dry shampooing or bathing only when necessary and rubbing its coat will bring out a good shine. It requires daily exercise.

It will also seek and demand attention from its human family, but it will require training to become a good member of the family. A home with a fenced yard or kennel is essential.

IDEAL OWNER/S - As the American Staffordshire Terrier is a strong, muscular and active dog its ideal owner is someone who has an active life and will spend time with it in forming a mutually satisfying relationship.