

## BULLMASTIFF

*A breed standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance including the correct colour of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function. Absolute soundness is essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure. However, if a dog possesses a feature, characteristic or colour described as unacceptable, it must not be rewarded in the show ring.*

Most recent changes to this Standard have an effective date of 01/01/2026

### ORIGIN

Great Britain.

### UTILISATION

Watchdog.

### BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

[ed. from FCI Breed Standard No. 157]

The Bullmastiff evolved from the Old English Mastiff and the Bulldog, primarily used as a guard dog and, in olden times, to help the gamekeeper in the apprehension of poachers. The Bullmastiff is intelligent and observant; he is totally reliable, both physically and mentally, and can quickly assess a situation. His bravery, courage, and defence against intruders is legendary.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

Powerful build, symmetrical, showing great strength, but not cumbersome; sound, and active.

### CHARACTERISTICS

Powerful, enduring, active, and reliable.

### TEMPERAMENT

High-spirited, alert, and faithful.

### HEAD

Skull large and square, viewed from every angle, fair wrinkle when interested, but not when in repose. Skull broad and deep with well-filled cheeks. Pronounced stop. Muzzle short; distance from tip of nose to stop approximately one-third of length from tip of nose to centre of occiput; broad under eyes and sustaining nearly the same width to end of nose; blunt and cut-off square, forming right angle with upper line of face, and at same time, proportionate with skull. Underjaw broad to end. Nose broad with widely spreading nostrils; flat, neither pointed nor turned up in profile. Flews not pendulous, never hanging below level of lower jaw.

#### Eyes:

Dark or hazel, of medium size, set apart the width of muzzle, with furrow between. Light or yellow eyes undesirable.

#### Ears:

V-shaped, folded forward, set on wide and high, level of occiput giving square appearance to skull, which is most important. Small and deeper in colour than body. Point of ear level with eye when alert. Rose ears undesirable.

#### Mouth:

Level desired but slightly undershot tolerated. Canine teeth large and set wide apart, other teeth strong, even and well-placed.

### NECK

Well-arched, moderate length, very muscular, and almost equal to skull in circumference.

## FOREQUARTERS

Chest wide and deep, well let down between forelegs, with deep brisket. Shoulders muscular, sloping, and powerful, not overloaded. Forelegs powerful and straight, well-boned, set wide apart, presenting a straight front. Pasterns straight and strong.

## BODY

Back short and straight, giving compact carriage, but not so short as to interfere with activity. Roach- and sway-backs highly undesirable.

## HINDQUARTERS

Loins wide and muscular with fair depth of flank. Hind legs strong and muscular, with well-developed second thighs, denoting power and activity, not cumbersome. Hocks moderately bent. Cow-hocks highly undesirable.

## FEET

Well-arched, cat-like, with rounded toes, pads hard. Dark toenails desirable. Splayed feet undesirable.

## TAIL

Set high, strong at root and tapering, reaching to hocks, carried straight or curved, but not Hound-fashion. Crank tails highly undesirable.

## GAIT / MOVEMENT

Movement indicates power and a sense of purpose. When moving straight, neither front nor hind legs should cross or plait, right front and left rear leg rising and falling at same time. A firm backline unimpaired by powerful thrust from hind legs denoting a balanced and harmonious movement.

## COAT

Short and hard, weather-resistant, lying flat to body. Long, silky, or woolly coats highly undesirable.

## COLOUR

- Any shade of brindle, fawn, or red; colour to be pure and clear.
- \* A slight white marking on chest permissible. Other white markings undesirable.
- \* Black muzzle essential, toning off towards eyes, with dark markings around eyes contributing to expression.
- \* Any other colour or combination of colours unacceptable.

## SIZE

### Height at withers:

**Males:** 64cm – 69cm (approx. 25" – 27").

**Females:** 61cm – 66cm (approx. 24" – 26").

### Weight:

**Males:** 50kg – 59kg

**Females:** 41kg – 50kg

## FAULTS

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog, and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

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**When judging this breed at FCI International Shows, use:**

**FCI Standard No. 157: BULLMASTIFF**

**FCI Classification: Group 2: Pinscher and Schanuzer, Molossoid, and Swiss Mountain and Cattle dogs.**

Section 2.1. Molossian breeds: Mastiff type  
Without working trial.