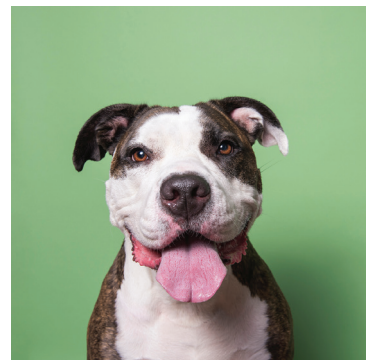
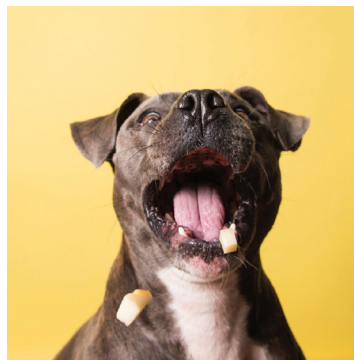
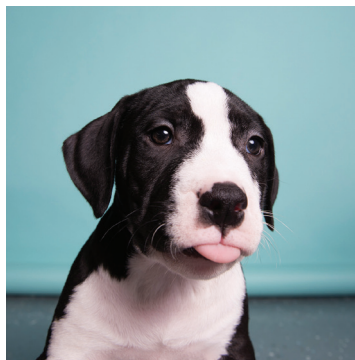
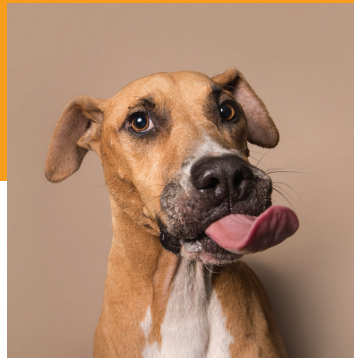


Pit Bulls:



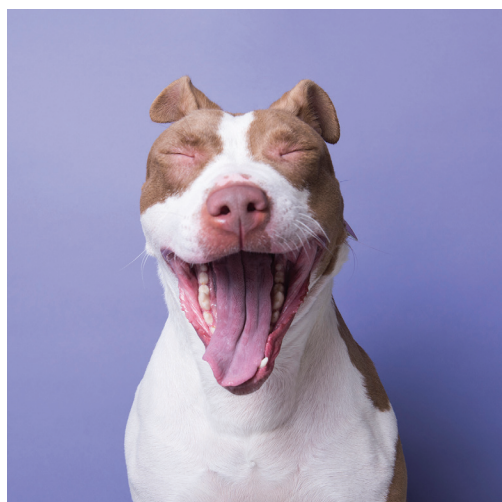
All of us for all of them.™

One of the Most Popular and Misunderstood Pets in America



What is a Pit Bull?

Pit bull terrier dogs are among the most popular and intelligent dogs in the nation, and yet they are also the most **misunderstood and misidentified**. To begin with, the term "pit bull" or "pitbull" refers to an ill-defined type of dog, rather than a breed. There are at least five breeds of dogs that are commonly misidentified and lumped into the category of the pit bull-type dog: the English bull terrier, the American bulldog, the boxer, the American pit bull terrier and the American Staffordshire terrier. "Pit bulls" are not recognized by the American Kennel Club (AKC). The United Kennel Club does recognize a breed known as the American pit bull terrier, however, **the term "pit bull" is commonly used to refer to mixed breed dogs** with certain physical traits, such as a muscular body and broad head.



A Case of Mistaken Identity

Animal shelters across America today are moving away from trying to identify dogs by breed because **sight identification has proven to be extremely unreliable**. Many different combinations of breeds can look like a "pit bull" terrier. Here at The Animal Foundation, we have DNA tested many of our dogs that are lumped into the "pit bull" terrier category and have found cocker spaniel, boxer, golden retriever, bulldog, German shepherd, Boston terrier, and many other breeds in their heritage. For some dogs, assigning even one main breed is a challenge. Based on the research that exists (It's been shown that almost 90 percent of shelter dogs visually identified as a breed are not identified accurately) and our own experiences, we no longer try to assign a breed to any dog, unless they come with breed registration papers.



All Dogs are Individuals

There is no breed or type of domesticated dog that is inherently dangerous or aggressive. The American Temperament Test Society, which provides a uniform national program of temperament testing for dogs, has found that pit bull terrier-like dogs passed the test at a higher rate than many other popular dog breeds, such as golden retrievers and border collies. Myths and misconceptions that pit bull terrier-type dogs are somehow physiologically and genetically different from other dogs simply aren't true.

A peer-reviewed study found that nearly 85 percent of dog bite fatalities were from unneutered dogs, and the co-occurring factors that led to bites were things like lack of socialization and positive interactions with people and animals, abuse or neglect, and tethering for long periods of time. Breed had nothing to do with it.



The Victory Dogs

Many today can still remember the 2007 case where a then famous football quarterback, Michael Vick, was found guilty and sentenced to federal prison for promoting dog fighting and engaging in the torture and killing of dogs. Of the 49 dogs seized from him, only one was euthanized for aggression. The others were sent to animal rescue groups, with Best Friends Animal Sanctuary taking the 22 most traumatized dogs. There they received the training, veterinary care, compassion and in-depth emotional support they needed. Now referred to as the "Victory dogs," most went on to find homes, many in families with children and other dogs. Only two were ordered by the court to remain at Best Friends for life.

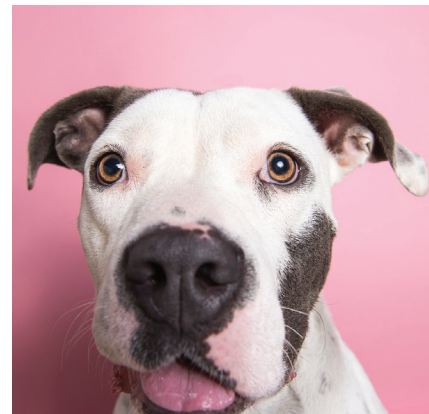
Some even went on to become service dogs or therapy dogs. Johnny Justice serves as a therapy dog in San Francisco and was named ASPCA Dog of the year in 2014 for his work with terminally ill children. Sox and Hector both received therapy dog certification as well, and spend their days at hospitals, nursing homes, and schools.

The Popularity of “Pit Bull” Terriers

Pit bull terriers have been in this country since before the Civil War and by the early 1900s they were extremely popular in America and a prominent part of the culture.

- One of the most famous pit bull terrier-like dogs was Stubby, a dog who served in World War I and earned the rank of sergeant for his acts of bravery. He captured a German spy and saved his regiment from mustard gas while serving in the trenches in France for 18 months. He received a hero's welcome when he returned to America, was known and greeted by three presidents, and when he died in 1926, his obituary in *The New York Times* was a half-page long.
- Our Gang (also known as the Little Rascals), a popular series of movie shorts in the early 1920s until the late 1930s, featured a pit bull terrier-like dog, Petey, who was the children's faithful canine friend. Petey ultimately appeared in more than 224 films.
- Buster Brown, a comic strip character created in 1902, had a pit bull terrier-type dog named Tige. Brown and his dog went on to become mascots of the highly popular Buster Brown Shoe Company from 1904 through the 1950s. The company sent actors, each accompanied by a dog, to perform in department stores, theaters and shoe stores from 1904 until 1930, and both characters were prominently featured in the company's advertising.

There are many other examples that illustrate the widespread popularity of these affable dogs. Pit bulls even have the distinction of being the only dog featured on the cover of *Life* magazine three times – more than any other dog.



Pit Bull Terriers Make Great Family Pets

One of the reasons there are so many pit bull terriers in shelters today is because pit bulls terriers are extremely popular pets!

Dogs, like people, are individuals. Treating them as such, and providing them with the care, training, and supervision they require is the best way to ensure a happy and safe environment for both people and their pets.

Over the years, pit bull terrier-like dogs have been loving pets to everyone from presidents and authors to singers and film stars. Famous people who have loved and had pit bull terriers include: Thomas Edison, John Steinbeck, Billie Holiday, President Teddy Roosevelt, Helen Keller, President Woodrow Wilson, General George Patton, Humphrey Bogart, Dr. Seuss, Fred Astaire and many more. In recent years, famous pit bull terrier devotees include Jon Stewart, Ira Glass, Brad Pitt, Orlando Bloom, Cesar Milan, Rachael Ray, Serena Williams, Jennifer Aniston, Miranda Lambert, Betty White, and many more.

The Animal Foundation's goal is to maintain a safe and humane community where all dogs are treated as individuals. Thankfully, Nevada is among the states that prohibits breed discrimination with a provision that states, "A dog may not be found dangerous or vicious based solely on the breed of the dog."



About the Photographer

Photos used in this brochure were generously donated by Sophie Gamand, an award-winning photographer and animal advocate.

Since 2010, Sophie has been photographing shelter dogs for free to help bring awareness to their fate and help them get adopted. Her most well-known series is *Flower Power*, featuring shelter pit bull terriers wearing flower crowns.

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Adoptions Open Daily: 11am-7pm

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