



# Introducing THE BULLMASTIFF

By the Bullmastiff Club of NSW

## Breed Origins:

Their history dates back to the 1860's when the breed was developed in England to serve as a companion and estate guard dog. Their purpose was to discourage the common practice of poaching on the numerous large English Estates. Their strength and apparent ferocity proved very successful in combating the poacher problem. Referred to as "the gamekeeper's night dog", the Bullmastiff would intercept poachers and their very strength and weight would hold the intruder down on the ground until their master arrived on the scene. This is an important point for fanciers to remember. Do remember that the breed standard calls for "a symmetrical animal, showing great strength, powerfully built, but active. The dog is fearless yet docile, has endurance and alertness".

Bullmastiffs are a man-made breed comprising of 60% Mastiff and 40% Bulldog (old style). The original colour of the Bullmastiff was brindle so as to blend with its background therefore making it undetectable to the poachers. The fawn colour appeared as more fawn mastiffs were introduced, and it is believed that the red came from the 'secret' interbreeding of the Dogue de Bordeaux (*extracts from The Bullmastiff Fancier's Manual by Bill Walkey*).

## Recommended Literature:

**The Bullmastiff Fancier's Book (Hard Cover) – Bill Walkey**  
**The Bullmastiff Today – Lyn Pratt**  
**The Mastiff Bullmastiff Handbook – Douglas Oliff**  
**Bullmastiff – Clifford Hubbard**  
**The Bullmastiff Fancier's Manual – Bill Walkey**  
**Peerless Protector – Jack Shastid, Geraldine Roach**  
**Bullmastiffs – Alan & Mave Rostron**

# The Bullmastiff....

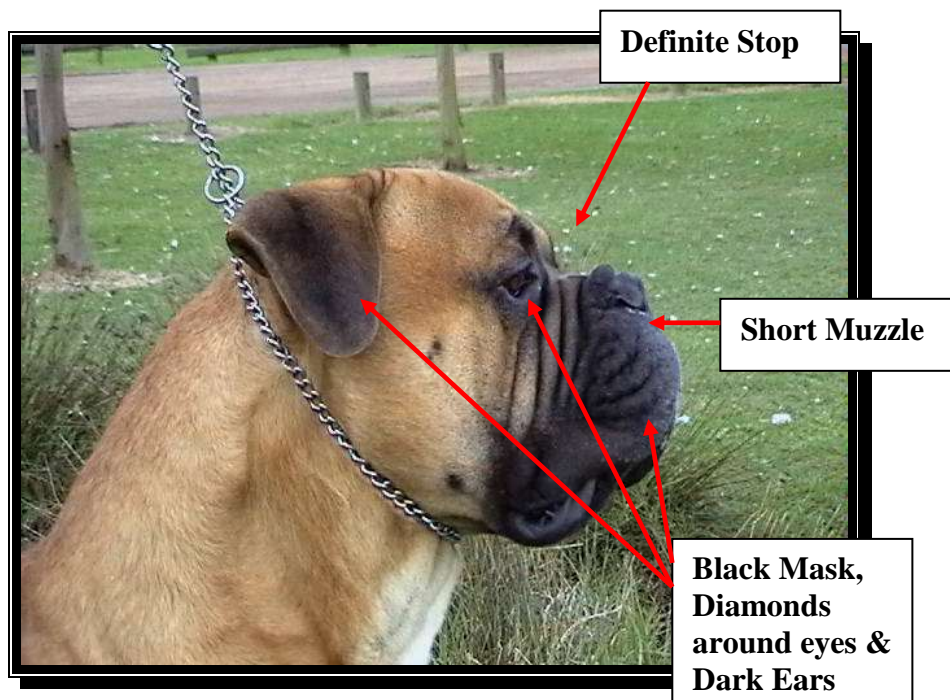
## What They Should Look Like

### General Appearance:

The Bullmastiff typically has a powerful build, symmetrical, showing great strength, sound and active. A well socialised animal will be high spirited, alert and faithful. They will however, be wary and cautious of strangers or strange situations.

A Hall Mark of the Breed is its head. The skull is large and square. It should have a definite stop between its eyes its muzzle should be short and broad (see photo below). They should always have what is known as 'A Mask'. This is a black muzzle, black triangles around the eyes and black to darker than coat colour ears.

The breed comes in 'Three Colours Only', which comprise of any shade of Brindle, Fawn and Red. A small white mark on the chest may be evident but no other white should appear on them. The coat should be short not wavy, curly or long.





Red male (left) Bullmastiff Bitch (Right) brindle in colour, allowed a small white mark on chest



Bullmastiff Bitch fawn in colour

**The Bullmastiff bitch is much smaller than its male counterpart. The Bullmastiff can measure between 63 - 68cm (25 – 27 inches) to the shoulder and weigh in between 50 - 70kgs (110 – 150lbs). All Bullmastiffs have long tails, however there are some that may have been born with a genetic defect and possess what is known as a ‘Crank’ tail, which can appear to be a bend or twist in the tail, not unlike a British Bulldog tail. It may also be significantly shorter in appearance as well.**

### **Variations in Type**

**As the Bullmastiff was only developed in the 1860’s it is still regarded as a relatively young breed, therefore variations in type do occur.**

**The main variation occurs with the head structure. There can be some longer muzzles and the overall shape can appear more wedge shaped rather than a square on a square.**

**Below are a few photos of Bullmastiffs with the longer muzzles and some with a less pronounced stop, however, they should still possess the black around the muzzle and eyes to varying degrees.**

**One other point to remember is that pure bred Bullmastiffs might have small to large splashes of white on their chests or a white toe but they do not have white anywhere else on their bodies.**



**The above photos are of puppies displaying a longer muzzle.**





Height of the dog is measured to the withers, which is the top of the shoulders.

The height of the Bullmastiff varies between dog and bitch. Here is a large male Bullmastiff next to his female owner. The owner is 157.5cm (5'2") tall whilst the dog measured 67.31cm (26 1/2") to the top of the shoulder and he weighed in at 70kgs (150lb).



# **BULLMASTIFF CHECK LIST AND SUMMARY**

- **Bullmastiffs are classed as a Giant Breed**
- **Average heights of the Bullmastiff**
  - Males – 63.5cm to 68.58cm (25 to 27 inches) to the withers / top of shoulder.**
  - Females – 60.9cm to 66.4cm (24 to 26 inches) to the withers / top of shoulder.**
- **Average weights of the Bullmastiff**
  - Males – 50kgs to 60kgs (110 to 132lbs)**
  - Females – 40kgs to 50kgs (88 to 110lbs)**
- **White markings – minimal, on chest or toes no where else**
- **Distinguishing Features –**
  - Black muzzle, black diamonds around eyes (intensity of colour and coverage can vary);**
  - Ear colour can be one or two shades darker than coat colour right up to being black;**
  - Three coat colours varying intensities of red, fawn and brindle ONLY**
  - Predominately short muzzle (however as listed before some muzzle lengths can vary and be longer giving a wedge shape appearance rather than a square appearance)**
- **Appearance of tail – tail is long to the hock (ankle on back leg) slight variation can occur with the tail slightly shorter. The tail should not be docked (unless there was a birth defect or injury which may result in surgical amputation of a portion of the tail).**

**[www.bullmastiffclubofnsw.com.au](http://www.bullmastiffclubofnsw.com.au)**