

Pitbulls Aren't That Bad

By Olivia Coston and Julie Ornelas

The amount of Pit Bulls that are in the United States is roughly 3-5 million. The term 'pitbull' categorizes three main breeds of canine: the American Pit Bull Terrier, the American Staffordshire Terrier, and the Staffordshire Bull Terrier. Their names were changed to pit bulls as a nickname in the 1000s when they were used to help round up bulls by latching onto the nose until the bull got tired. Now, pitbull is the dog's most common name and it is used more frequently than anything else. Later, dog fights became popular and even after it became illegal, it continued to be a common past time.

This breed of dog has fallen victim to Breed Specific legislation, or BSL. This has resulted in them being the most euthanized breed by far. It is known that pit bulls and pit bull mixes take up about 33% of shelter intakes nationally. In larger cities, it can peak to approximately 65%. The worst part is that about 75% of municipal shelters euthanize pit bulls immediately upon intake, without them ever having a chance for adoption. Not to mention that those that are offered up for adoption end up as the first chosen for euthanasia when overcrowding forces the shelter's hand and decisions have to be made. Some studies show that up to 1 million pits are put down per year. That's about 2,800 per day. Some estimates are up to double that number. In the Los Angeles area alone, 200 pits per day are put to sleep. A study by the organization Animal People reports that there is a 93% euthanasia rate for pit bulls. Currently, only one in about 600 pits end up finding a forever home. The problem is easy to find: there are too many pits and not enough people willing to adopt them. Shelters become overwhelmed with dogs who demand space and funds for their care and medical treatment. Someone needs to give back. It's the animals, most often pit bulls, that give their very lives.

There are some states that have BSL laws. This means that pitbulls are banned in places such as Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri. These are just a few of the states in the US that enforce these laws. Hundreds of towns and cities in these three states have enacted breed legislation for many so called "bully breeds". Other states have had laws where they allow the government to pass their own laws banning these breeds or even banning the owners if their pitbull "appears" to be dangerous. If you are a pitbull owner, you and your pitbull will get snubbed in some of the worst states ever where pitbulls are banned such as Iowa and Kentucky. In some states there are over 90 municipalities that have BSL laws. These states are Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Ohio, Mississippi, Wisconsin, Michigan, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Kentucky.

There are many accounts of pitbulls saving people. One of these accounts was of a dog named Ember which the Daniels family had adopted from a rescue organization. The dog soon grew extremely attached to the family's son, a 10 year old boy named Tre. Every night, she

would sit at the end of his bed. One day, Tre's mother found Ember pacing far from her usual spot. Knowing something was wrong, she followed Ember to the bathroom where Tre's feet were hanging outside the tub. The boy had a seizure and thanks to this loving pit bull's quick reaction, Tre was rushed to the hospital where he got the attention he needed. Another account of this is an incident involving Rhonda and Evelyn Westenberger who had woken from their slumber to, Baby, the pitbull jumping on them and barking. They knew something was horribly wrong when smoke filled the room. They hurried to get outside but by the time they made it out, the fire was already out of control. If their loving dog hadn't woken them up, they probably wouldn't have been able to get out in time. But their loving pet wasn't done with her rescue efforts yet. She dashed back into the burning building to save the other five dogs who were trapped inside. She had led them out of the flames and even grabbed one scared pup who had been hiding under the bed and dragged them by the neck to safety. Baby managed to save her whole family, humans and pups alike.

These dogs have had a rough patch. Even their name has been concealed from many people's minds. The true name of this magnificent breed is the English Staffordshire Terrier which sounds a lot less violent than their current title of pitbull. Many people believe that this breed is dangerous when the problem isn't the dog at all. What people fail to realize is that it is the people who make a dog this way. "I'm suspicious of people who aren't interested in dogs, but I trust a dog when it doesn't like a person," says Bill Murray.

Pitbulls are a relatively healthy breed. It is true that any breed (including mixed breeds) can inherit genetic issues. Thousands of Pit Bulls have genetic issues but rarely are fatal. These genetic problems are not found in all — or even many — Pit Bulls. On the matter of grooming them, their short coats take very little time to wash and need very little care. They also don't need to be bathed much. Pitbulls don't need to be brushed a lot either, even though they like it. This breed is super devoted, because once you adopt one, you have an awesome friend for life. Some pitbulls are not the best guard dogs because they just love people and kids too much. Although, if you threaten to hurt their owner they might step in and protect them. They love to cuddle anywhere you are, like on the couch, your bed, your chair, and your lap, even though they know they are too big. Lastly, the #1 reason why pitbulls are awesome: their smile. :) Really, it's their smile because if you're in a bad mood, you can just look at your pitbull's smile.

<http://saveabullmn.org/pit-bulls-and-euthanasia-rates/>

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<https://dogtime.com/trending/30095-5-pit-bulls-saved-owners-lives>

<https://www.petfinder.com/pet-adoption/dog-adoption/reasons-why-pit-bulls-rule/>