

Test Your Breed IQ

When it comes to “pit bulls,” looks can be deceiving

One of the more bizarre problems with policies that target “pit bulls” is that the breed doesn’t technically exist.

There’s no agreed-upon legal definition of a pit bull, nor is a dog called a pit bull recognized by any kennel club, says Stacey Coleman, executive director of Animal Farm Foundation.

People often casually apply the term to three breeds and their mixes: American pit bull terrier, American Staffordshire terrier, and Staffordshire bull terrier. Other dogs frequently lumped into the “pit bull” category include bulldogs, boxers, presa canarios,

cane corsos, mastiffs, and various mixes of all of these.

The advent of DNA testing to identify the various breeds that make up a particular dog’s genes has helped demonstrate the difficulty of accurate visual identification. Genes are mysterious in the way they combine to create an animal’s features; sometimes a dog who appears to be a pit bull may turn out to be a Labra-poodle-terri-hund. Check out some examples of what testing has revealed about the pooches shown here—it’s proof that when it comes to “pit bulls,” you can’t believe your eyes.



50% American bulldog
25% American Staffordshire terrier
9.28% Pembroke Welsh corgi
7.97% Irish wolfhound



25% German shepherd
25% Staffordshire bull terrier
13.36% Weimaraner
7.29% German wirehaired pointer



25% rottweiler
12.5% boxer
12.5% German shorthaired pointer
11.09% Manchester terrier



25% American Staffordshire terrier
25% collie
21.41% black Russian terrier
19.86% Norwegian buhund



25% American Staffordshire terrier
25% Dogue de Bordeaux
3.66% Irish terrier
2.17% Dandie Dinmont terrier



25% American Staffordshire terrier
25% boxer
25% soft-coated wheaten terrier
18.66% Great Dane



50% Catahoula leopard dog
25% Siberian husky
9.94% briard
5.07 Airedale terrier



25% basset hound
25% American Staffordshire terrier
25% chow chow
25% English cocker spaniel



25% American Staffordshire terrier
25% Staffordshire bull terrier
8.83% flat-coated retriever
3.14% Irish wolfhound



25% boxer
25% Alaskan malamute
21.95% Sealyham terrier
19.67% pointer

PHOTOS BY: MICHAEL GRANDALL. SOURCE: MADDIE'S SHELTER MEDICINE PROGRAM. SOME PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD UP TO 100 PERCENT DUE TO TRACE AMOUNTS OF DNA NOT SHOWN.