

## Top 14 Tips for Being a Responsible Pit Bull Terrier Owner

*Pit Bull owners lead by example. Some important tips for you and your pet:*

- 1. Train your dog** so he's a star in all situations, including: around other dogs, in crowds, around skateboards, kids, etc. Because of the current breed prejudice, our dogs have to display better manners than the average dog. Consider obtaining a Canine Good Citizen award, and remember, reinforcing a dog's training requires a committed owner who's willing to work their dog daily.
- 2. Neuter/Spay your dog** and encourage others to do the same. We appreciate your decision to adopt a dog that goes home altered, but there is still more work to do in our community to prevent unwanted litters.
- 3. Keep your dog a Social Butterfly.** Socialize him with as many different people as possible, with kids, seniors, disabled folks, and people of all different ethnicities. This is especially true for puppy owners!
- 4. Socialize your dog with other dogs** at a level that is GOOD for your dog. You should introduce your dog carefully and slowly, supervise them to make sure all play behavior is friendly and appropriate and (Important!) the dogs are separated from each other when they can't be watched. All dogs benefit from well-structured socialization. Because excitement levels run high at dog parks and not all the participants are fair players; we believe that smart dog owners avoid them in place of smaller, supervised play group sessions with dogs that know and like each other. If your dog has matured beyond his dog friendly youngster days, being off leash around strange dogs could be asking too much of him. Training classes are a great place to give your mature dog important socialization experience.
- 5. Become a dedicated student of "Dog Body Language"** and get to know your dog like the back of your hand in order to be able to anticipate and prevent potential dog-dog conflicts. Pit Bull play can often be very exciting, so know when to interrupt, and give the dogs a chance to settle down to keep the play appropriate. As your young Pit Bull moves into his golden years, that maturity may lower his tolerance for other dog's exuberance, so monitor the interactions closely.
- 6. Respect the Leash Laws!** Leash laws are a dog owner's best friend. Make sure you know the rights and laws surrounding dogs on and off leash.
- 7. Understand that any sign of aggression towards humans is a major red flag and should be dealt with immediately.** Seek the help of a certified trainer or behaviorist, such as a CPDT or DACVB. Pit Bulls were bred to be exceedingly friendly with people. A Pit Bull that shows aggression towards a human is NOT typical of the breed and help should be sought out immediately.



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**8. Exercise your dogs regularly so s/he can burn off that famous bulldog energy.** Pit Bulls are intelligent athletes, and young dogs need at least two hours of your time each day - Minimum! A well exercised Pit Bull is a happy Pit Bull, and his owner is a happier owner. You two going for a run together, encouraging your dog to eat his meals out of food dispensing toys, and playing with toys are great ways to ensure your dog is getting enough exercise. Need more tips? Just ask us!

**10. Understand that many people have had negative experiences with dogs** and are sincerely afraid of them. A calm, friendly, well-trained Pit Bull can be an ambassador for the breed, but still, keep your dog on leash and under control at all times. Remember, what we Pit Bull lovers see as ADORABLE, others may see as scary.

**11. Try to develop a thick skin** to help you endure rude and hurtful comments about your pet. Don't be offended if people cross the street to avoid you and your dog. Instead, pet your dog, talk in a happy voice to him and keep walking. A picture can speak 1,000 words!

**12. When out with your dog, pay attention to your surroundings** and balance the needs of the public with your dog's needs. This means picking up dog mess, not letting her jump on or annoy others, and avoiding off leash dogs that may run up.

**13. Research your dog's breed, including the history and original purpose of terriers** so you can understand his behavior. Knowing the ins and outs of canine behavior will be your biggest help in enjoying great success with your pet. Spread the word to other Pit Bull owners and be a responsible example others can learn from.

**14. Despite all the work, enjoy your dog!** Whether your buddy loves a long hike, a fast swim or just a rip snorin' power nap, you and your special friend deserve to keep soakin' up all the Good Bully Love!



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