



SO YOU WANT TO OWN A PIT BULL?

PITBULL ADVOCATES FOR COMPASSION & KINDNESS

Here are some tips for being a responsible Pit Bull owner:

One of the best things you can do for your Pit Bull is to socialize him. Especially at an early age, get your Pit Bull out into the world and expose him to as many things as possible: children, adults, sights, sounds, places and other dogs (see: Your Pit Bull: A Social Butterfly for how to introduce and socialize your Pit Bull with other dogs safely). The important thing to remember when socializing your Pit Bull is not just that he sees and experiences things but that he has positive experiences with these exposures. Also, don't forget to spend lots of quality time with your Pit Bull.

Train your Pit Bull to perform obedience skills. Do not just do this in a class setting for 6-8 weeks but throughout his life. Two- to five-minute sessions, 2-3 times a day, is all it takes to keep your dog in good training shape once he's got the skills down. He can use his obedience skills to earn what he wants in life. For instance, have him sit and give you eye contact first, and then give him his dinner. This is a positive way to establish leadership with your Pit Bull as well.

Be sure to spay/neuter your Pit Bull. Spaying or neutering your Pit Bull will curb certain types of behavioral problems, and let's face it – dogs are not like the dinosaur, they're not going extinct – we don't need more puppies!

Always supervise play sessions and watch for signs of intolerance with other dogs. If you have a Pit Bull puppy, be aware that your pup's behavior can change as he matures. He may be the life of the party as a pup, but when he gets older, he may become more selective about what dogs he plays with and may become less tolerant of other dogs in general. Watch for this as it is normal in all dogs as they mature. It is best to adopt an older Pit Bull, 2-3 years old because once a Pit Bull has matured, what you see is what you get. NOTE: Human aggression is not normal in a pit bull. If you see human aggression in your Pit Bull, please seek the help of a breed-experienced professional immediately.

You don't have to be a bully to own one. As a Pit Bull owner you will possibly encounter negative reactions to you and your dog. Try to be patient and understand the viewpoints of others due to bad experiences or media hype. The best way to handle this is to be pleasant and have a well-behaved Pit Bull. Show him in a positive, calm light. This will help dispel fears and counter the media hype surrounding Pit Bulls at this time. Learn everything you can about your breed so you can educate people about the Pit Bull. This will also help you to be a better owner for your Pit Bull.

Make your Pit Bull a breed ambassador. Clean up after your Pit Bull wherever you go. Keep your Pit Bull on leash in public, as it's the law. Be sure to set a good example. Help your bully friend become a breed ambassador by getting him involved with therapy work, agility or just plain ole' fashioned obedience training to really show him off. PACK can even help you get your Canine Good Citizen Certification. Your best "paycheck" ever will be when he looks up at you with that lover boy face and gives you that big bully snuggle.