

# AMERICAN BULLY BREED STANDARD

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The American Bully is a companion breed that should give the impression of great strength for its size, with a compact, muscular body, heavy bone, and a broad, blocky head.

## **VARIETIES**

These types should all look like American Bullies – same overall breed type and temperament. Only differing primarily by size/style, not by correctness of structure.

Micro American Bully: Females & Males 13” and under at the withers

Pocket American Bully: Females 14” – 16”, Males 14” – 17” at the withers

Standard American Bully: Females 16” – 19”, Males 17” – 20” at the withers

XL American Bully: Females 19” – 23”, Males 20” – 23” at the withers

Classic American Bully: Females 16” – 19”, Males 17” – 20” at the withers. Lighter, more athletic frame, and less mass.

Extreme American Bully: No height requirements. Increased mass, muscle, and girth.

## **GENERAL STRUCTURE**

Head: Proportionate with distinct mass, short to medium muzzle, hard stop, strong jaw, symmetrical low set oval to almond shaped eyes, scissor bite preferred. Large nostrils. Semi-close lips with minimal looseness preferred.

Ears: May be natural or cropped

Neck: Muscular with slight arch, minimal loose skin.

Body: Compact to medium length, muscular, broad chest, balanced and symmetrical. Mass should not ruin movement.

Strong level topline. Should not be weak, roach, or sway-backed.

Forequarters: Muscular shoulders, straight legs, tight forward-facing feet.

Hindquarters: Strong hind legs, ~90-degree hock angle, tight forward-facing feet, strong rear.

Tail: Medium length to hocks, free of kinks or knots.

Coat: Short, smooth, and close.

Colors: All colors and patterns accepted, including merle.

The Certified Bully Registry American Bully Breed Standard  
Revised 5/19/2026

## **MOVEMENT**

Movement should reflect power, balance, and efficiency. Movement should be smooth, demonstrating strength without stiffness or restriction. Regardless of mass, dogs should still have fluid movement.

Front Movement: Forelegs should move straight forward, with good reach and without crossing or interfering. Elbows should remain close to the body, not turning in or out. Feet should remain firm, stable and maintain proper alignment.

Rear Movement: The hindquarters should provide drive, with full extension and flexion of the stifle and hock. Rear legs should move in line with the front legs, with no cow-hocking, bowing or crossing. Power should originate in the rear, pushing the dog forward with visible strength and propulsion.

Topline in Motion: Topline should remain level and stable while in motion. No excessive bouncing, rolling, or dipping of the back.

Side Gait: From the side, the dog should display a balance combination of reach and drive. The stride should appear fluid and rhythmic, not choppy or exaggerated. The head and neck should be carried naturally, inline with the body's forward motion.

Coming and Going: When viewed coming and going, the legs should move in straight lines, converging slightly toward the center line at increased speed. Movement should show proper alignment and structural integrity.

## **FAULTS**

Overshot/Undershot Bite	Bulging or Protruding Eyes
Too Long Muzzle	Lack of a Pronounced Stop
Short Tail (1" - 2" from hock)	Gay Tail
Severe Turned Front	Bowed Front Legs
Weak Pasterns	Splayed or Flat Feet
Hocks Turning In or Out	Curly or Wavy Coat

## **MOVEMENT FAULTS**

Rolling	Pacing
Crabbing/Sidewinding	Hackney Action
Paddling	Pounding

## **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

Aggressive Behavior Towards Humans	Cryptorchidism
Screwed Tail	Docked Tail
Wry Jaw	Deafness
Albinism	Blindness

**Rolling Movement** in the American Bully refers to a side-to-side, swaying motion of the body when the dog walks or moves. It typically happens because of a very wide chest, heavy muscle mass, and sometimes structural exaggeration, causing the dog's shoulders and hips to shift outward as it steps.

While a slight, natural sway can occur in very bulky dogs, excessive rolling is usually considered a fault in structure or movement, as proper movement should still be balanced, efficient, and free flowing rather than exaggerated or unstable.

**Pacing Movement** in the American Bully is a gait where the dog moves both legs on the same side of the body at the same time (right front with right rear, then left front with left rear), instead of the natural diagonal movement seen in a proper trot.

This type of movement is generally considered inefficient and a fault, as correct American Bully movement should be smooth, balanced, and coordinated with a diagonal gait (trotting). Pacing can sometimes indicate issues with structure, balance, or conditioning, though some dogs may pace when moving slowly or when they are tired.

**Sidewinding Movement** in the American Bully is when the dog's body does not track straight while moving—instead, it travels at an angle, with the front and rear not aligning properly. The dog may appear to move diagonally, almost “crabbing,” where the hind legs swing to one side instead of following directly behind the front.

This type of movement is considered a fault, as correct American Bully movement should be straight, balanced, and in line from front to rear. Sidewinding often indicates structural issues such as poor rear angulation, weak topline, or lack of coordination.

**Hackney Action Movement** in the American Bully refers to an exaggerated, high-stepping gait where the dog lifts its front legs unusually high, with excessive flex at the wrist, resembling the motion of a Hackney horse.

This movement is considered a fault, as proper American Bully movement should be smooth, efficient, and ground-covering—not overly flashy or lifted—since hackney action wastes energy and often indicates improper front structure or restricted shoulder movement.

**Paddling Movement** in the American Bully refers to a gait fault where the dog's front legs swing outward in a circular or winging motion during movement, rather than moving straight forward and back in a clean line. It is most noticeable when viewed from the front, as the feet appear to “flip” or “roll” outward with each step.

This type of movement is considered a fault, as correct American Bully movement should be straight, efficient, and true, with the legs tracking forward without wasted motion. Paddling often indicates issues in the front assembly, such as loose elbows, incorrect shoulder structure, or weak ligament support.

**Pounding Movement** in the American Bully refers to a harsh, heavy gait where each step hits the ground with excessive force rather than flowing smoothly. The dog appears to drive its legs straight down into the ground, often lacking flex, shock absorption, and fluid motion.

This is considered a fault, as proper movement should be smooth, efficient, and effortless. Pounding movement usually indicates issues such as poor shoulder or pastern structure, insufficient angulation, or lack of flexibility, all of which reduce endurance and overall movement quality.