

# **Applying the XL Bully breed type conformation standard in Scotland**

**Last updated: 15 March 2024**

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## Introduction

From 23 February 2024, it is a criminal offence under The Dangerous Dogs (Designated Types) (Scotland) Order 2024 to:

- have an XL Bully in public without a lead and muzzle
- breed or breed from an XL Bully dog
- sell an XL Bully dog
- abandon an XL Bully dog or let it stray
- give away an XL Bully dog

This document sets out the physical conformation standard for the XL Bully breed type in Scotland. The conformation standard is the same as operates in England and Wales (as is contained in the UK Government Defra guide). The DEFRA guide was developed in consultation with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) dangerous dogs working group, English and Welsh local authorities and vets.

It is intended to be used to assist all those involved in the operation of the safeguards relating to XL Bully dogs in Scotland. This includes law enforcement, local authorities, animal welfare organisations and owners of dogs that may be XL Bully dogs.

In particular, this document can be used as a guide for dog owners and keepers to help them to consider whether a dog may be within scope of the new XL Bully dog safeguarding rules in Scotland. It can also be used by agencies and animal organisations to support the identification of the XL Bully breed type.

## Conformation standard: XL Bully type

The XL Bully breed type is a variant of the wider American Bully breed type. The XL Bully breed type is typically larger (both in terms of height and body shape) and more muscular than other American Bully breed types such as the 'Micro', 'Pocket', 'Standard' and 'Classic'.

### General impression

- Large dog with a muscular body and blocky head, suggesting great strength and power for its size. Powerfully built individual.

### Height

- Adult male from 20 inches (51cm) at the withers.
- Adult female from 19 inches (48cm) at the withers.

## **Head**

- Heavy, large and broad.
- The length from the tip of the nose to a well-defined stop (indentation between muzzle and the head) is equal to around one-third of the length from the tip of the nose to the back of the head.
- Muzzle blocky or slightly squared to fall away below the eyes. Topline of muzzle straight.
- Prominent cheek muscles with strong, well-defined jaws and lips semi-close. Often having prominent wrinkles on face.
- Nose is large with well opened nostrils.

## **Teeth**

- Level or scissor bite.

## **Neck**

- Heavy, muscular, slightly arched, tapering from the shoulders to the base of the skull
- Medium in length.

## **Forequarters**

- Shoulder blades are long, well-muscled and well laid back.
- Upper arm length is about equal to the length of the shoulder blades and joined at a 35-45 angle to the ground.
- Front legs straight, strong and very muscular with dog standing high on the pasterns. (area between feet and ankles).
- Elbows set close to the body.
- Distance from the withers to elbows about the same as the distance from the elbow to the bottom of the feet.

## **Body**

- Heavily-muscled.
- Large, blocky body giving impression of great power for size. Broad, deep chest with well sprung ribs.
- Chest may be wider than deep. Topline level and straight.
- Loin short and firm.
- Generally appears square shaped from point of the shoulder to the point of the buttocks compared with the withers (tallest point on the dog's body excluding head and shoulders) to the ground.

## **Hindquarters**

- Strong, muscular and broad.
- Thighs well developed with thick musculature.
- From behind, both pasterns are typically straight and parallel to each other. Muscular development, angulation and width in balance with forequarters.

## **Feet**

- Rounded, medium in size and in proportion to body.
- Compact and well arched.

## **Tail**

- Medium length and low set.
- Tapers to a point to end at about the level of the hocks.
- Generally assumes a straight or pump handle shape when dog relaxed.

**Coat**

- Glossy, smooth, close, single.

# Glossary

## **Bite**

- The relative position of the upper and lower teeth when the mouth is closed.

## **Coat**

- The hairy outer covering of the skin.

## **Croup**

- Part of the back from the front of the pelvis to root of the tail.

## **Forequarters**

- The front part of dog excluding head and neck.

## **Hindquarters**

- Rear part of dog from behind the loin.

## **Loin**

- The region between the last rib and the beginning of the pelvis.

## **Musculature**

- The muscles on an animal's body.

## **Muzzle**

- The length from the tip of the nose to the stop.

## **Pasterns**

- The pastern is the lower part of the foreleg, just above the foot and below the wrist. Similarly, in the hind leg, the pastern is the portion located above the foot and below the heel (also known as the hock). Every canine possesses a pair of front and rear pasterns.

## **Scissor bite**

- The upper front teeth closely overlapping the lower teeth and set square to the jaws.

## **Spring of rib**

- Degree of curvature of rib cage.

## **Tail set**

- The position of the tail on the croup.

## **Tapering**

- Becomes progressively smaller towards one end.

## **Top line**

- An outline after the withers to the tail set. Viewed from the side of the dog or from above.

## **Withers**

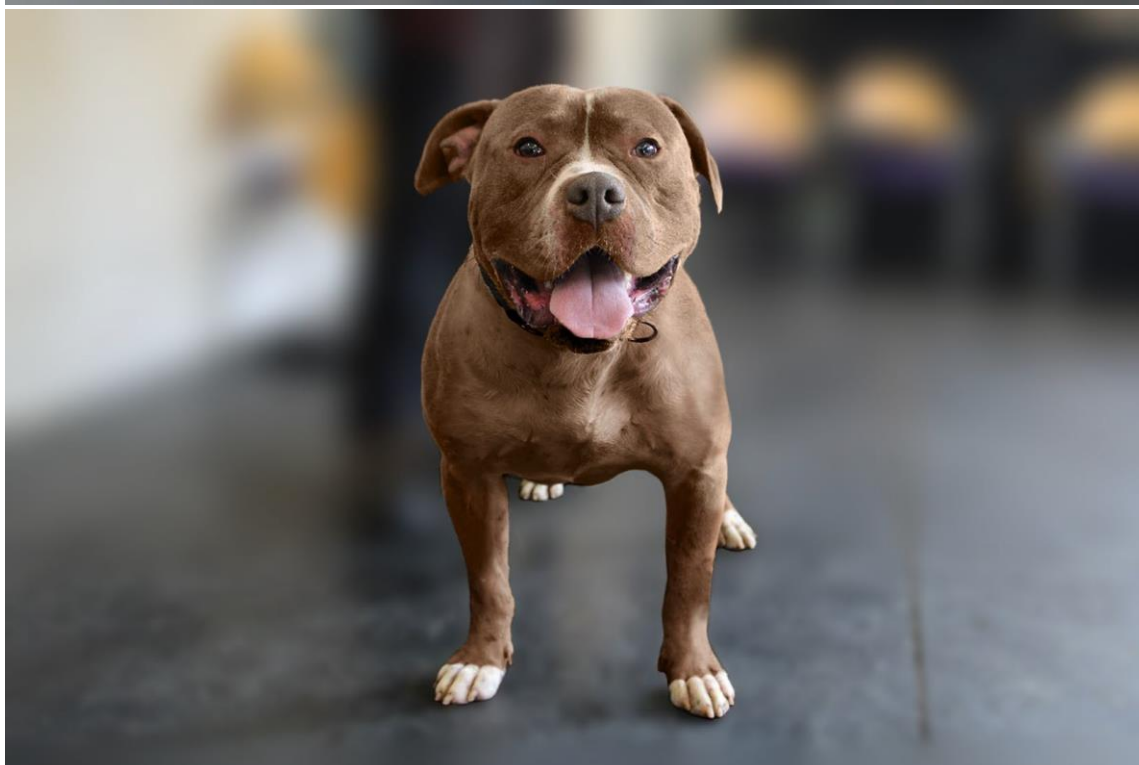
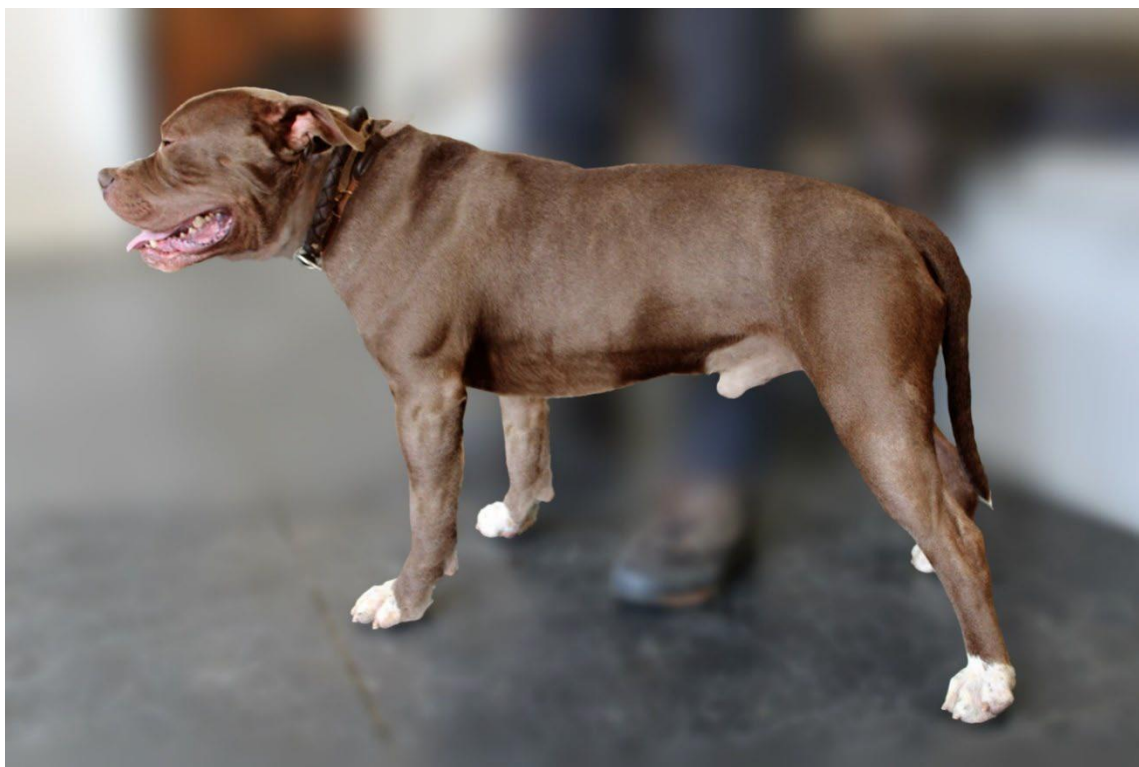
- The highest point of body immediately behind the neck where height is measured.

## Examples of XL Bully breed types

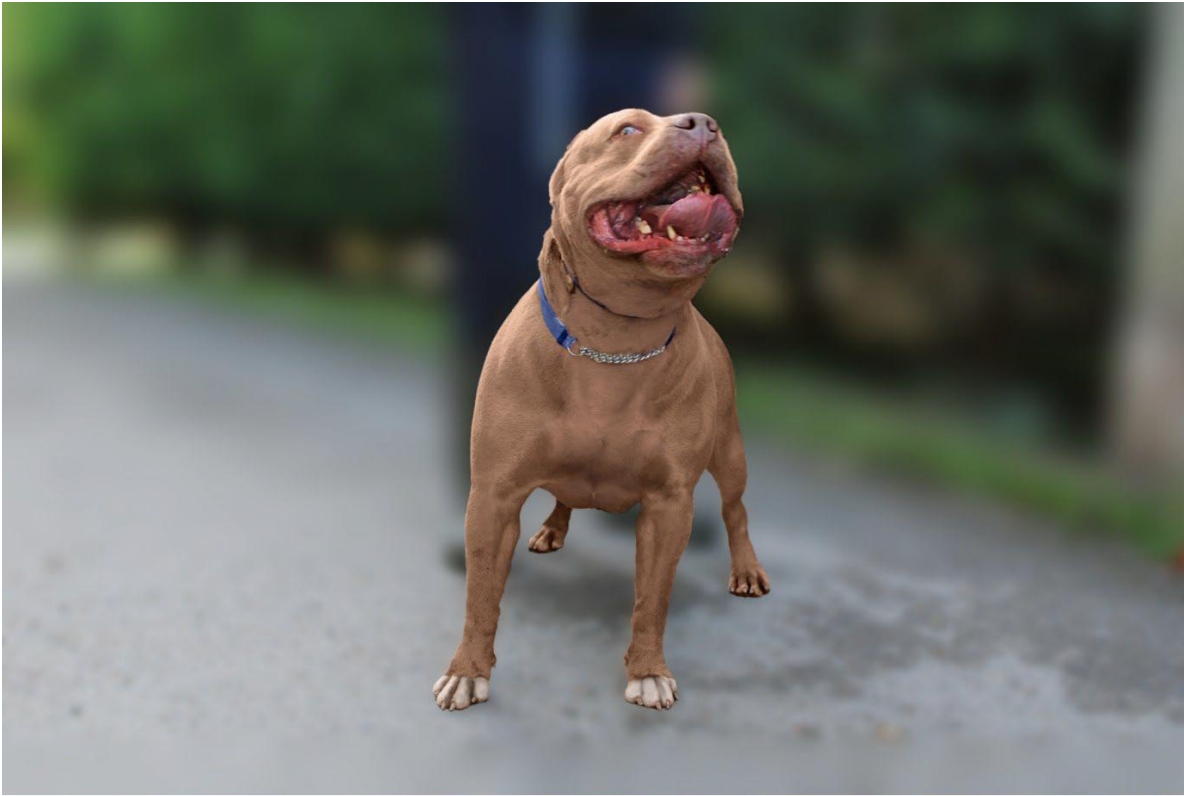
These pictures are indicative of what an XL Bully looks like. A dog does not have to look exactly like this to conform with the standard above.

Reader note: Some of the dogs below have cropped ears. The cropping of a dog's ears is an offence under the Animal Welfare Act (Scotland) 2006.

**Dog 1**



## Dog 2





Dog 3







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