

# *Info shared by Pitbull SA.*

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## *The APBT and aggression.*

The main topic to bring to light with this thread is the misconception that the American Pit Bull Terrier is forced to fight and does not enjoy doing such.

**Know this!** It is not only how you raise them but how you manage them.

There is a lot of negativity surrounding the American Pit Bull Terrier - ranging from myths about locking jaws and brains that don't stop growing, to stories of random attacks and crazed antics – it is no wonder that the general public has come to see them as crazed, vicious monsters.

An effort to clear up the common misconception that the APBT is “vicious” and assist anyone who decides to read this in better understanding the difference between dog aggression and human aggression.

**Dog fighting is a felony and crime in South Africa.**

Punishable by up to 5 years in prison and a fine of R250000.00 due to the 2007 Animal Fighting Prohibition Enforcement Act.

In everyday conversation, there seems to be a great deal of misunderstanding and in turn frustration when it comes to this touchy subject.

Note when reading this post that all dogs are to be assumed APBT's or other fighting breeds/mixes, for logical reasons.

Matching dogs has taken place in the past and present by various cultures.

It is widely estimated that forms of this blood-sport have existed nearly as long as the canine species has been domesticated.

The sport of dog matching is popular and practiced by many people, legally and illegally relatively everywhere around the globe.

However, the actual practice of matching is not the focus of this thread. The main topic to bring to light with this thread is the misconception that the American Pit Bull Terrier is forced to fight and does not enjoy doing such.

On a general basis, this assumption has been consistently proven to be entirely false.

Fighting to the APBT is like herding to the Collie, hunting to the Pointer, racing to the Greyhound.

I am sure you get the point.

The same way that all of these breeds (and generally, every other breed of dog) loves to do the job that they were created to do.

### **Why?**

Because when a breed is being established or preserved, breeders are aiming toward not only health and temperament, but for the dog they are working with to have what it takes do its job well.

Regardless of the job the said breed is intended for, the most logical way to attain desired traits would be to only breed dogs that showed such traits.

**Think about it.** If you wanted to create a breed of dog that was good at a specific thing (in this case, combat) would you breed dogs that enjoyed doing the job and did it well, or would you breed the dogs you had to force to do said job?

It is said that Pitbull's assuming APBT's - don't like fighting and that they are forced to do it.

While understanding the compassion and empathy that would make one feel and think in such a way, this statement has been proven false. The APBT was bred for generation upon generation to be a fighter, they were molded through years of selective breeding to have the instincts that they have.

Retrievers for example, will chase ducks and other birds on instinct.

Dobermans will guard their property and pack.

Collies will try to herd groups of animals and even groups of people.

All of these breeds follow the instincts that have been installed in them by man, regardless of if they are trained or directed to do so, many times even when they're discouraged from it.

Watching a Collie try to herd other dogs or a Labrador chasing a group of pigeons can indeed be quite a comical situation.

However, the thought of an uneducated APBT owner experiencing a similar display of sudden instinct, on the other hand, isn't something that would be considered humorous at all.

The point is that after being bred specifically for so long to do a certain job, a dog will develop a tendency, an underlying instinct to do what it has been bred to do, without being asked to or forced to.

This is the same logic used in explaining the process of general domestication.

Of course, fighting is painful and of course Pit Bulls (and other fighting breeds) do indeed feel pain, as all other dogs do.

So why on earth would they enjoy fighting one another?

One word: Gameness that overwhelming urge to compete without never to give up.

The phrase "game" refers to *an unmistakable trait of eagerness, determination, and drive despite the highest forms of discomfort.*

Gameness is what makes the APBT and other game dogs what it is, a tried and true working machine, regardless of the job it is given to do.

Fighting just so happens to be the job that these dogs (along with many other breeds) were given to do.

At the same time the APBT was bred to show no traits of human aggression whatsoever through years of selective breeding.

Dog aggression in this breed was treated the exact opposite gameness. Rather than being extinguished, it was also pursued.

When the Pit Bull as breed was developed, dog to dog and dog to other animals aggression was sought for by selective breeding amplified. The chance of an APBT being dog aggressive (or at least selective) is practically certain in most cases.

This is the reason why owners and advocates of this great breed need to better understand the APBTs' most undeniable traits rather than shrugging them off as part of the common negative stereotypes surrounding the breed.

Many seasoned owners of APBT, have experienced this first hand, often on more than one occasion.

Even with the best of owners/trainers, natural dog aggression (all dogs) and more so with the APBT can add a fair deal of complication to everyday life.

Because dog aggression is so commonly a strong and definite trait of the standard APBT, such a quality should be considered even when not visible.

**Know this** - This particular breed can indeed be a danger to other dogs and animals when in the wrong hands.

Of course, that is not to say that your Pit Bull (or other fighting breed) is a "bad dog" or that you can't keep them.

With education, good handling skills and wise decision making dog aggression is totally manageable.

This is the reason why it is so strongly emphasized by the majority of APBT owners that Pitbull owners to be educated and be responsible when it comes to owning this breed of dog.

As said time and time again by countless frustrated dog owners as well as other experienced APBT owners and enthusiasts, ownership of the APBT is not a job for everyone.

"These dogs are not everyone's cup of tea".

This is also the reason why some (many) of us can end up getting angry or frustrated when one (especially an owner of the breed) refuses to take to heart the fact that dog aggression is a common trait of our breed of choice, and that even if your dog has not shown it yet, it can show up.

Discussing such a concerning topic can become extremely frustrating when someone foreign/new to or wrongly informed on the breed refuses to take advice from knowledgeable owners/fanciers.

Whether said person disagrees with this fact or simply misunderstands, it can often turn into a very heated and touchy subject.

You can imagine the way one might feel if they very well knew (firsthand or through others) what they were talking about and have had to continuously go over the same thing a thousand times. (Often getting less than mature reactions.)

A friendly reminder that when getting advice on such a subject from those who may be more knowledgeable and/or experienced in such fields than yourself, please try to keep your cool and take what they have to say as seasoned advice as opposed to them "coming off as a jerk" or whatever impression you may have gotten.

Best to agree to disagree peacefully.

And remember, you should always expect a Bulldog (The APBT) to fight and dog to dog aggregation will be a trait.