

Info shared by Pitbull SA.

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Brindle Pit Bull facts.

Brindle American Pit Bull terriers, a definite acceptable colour and member of the APBT are definitely handsome, but not all that rare. The only thing differentiating a brindle colour APBT from other **Pit Bulls** is their coat color.

However, these beautiful brindles have some interesting genetics leading to their colorful coats.

No matter what kind of coat he has, the APBT bull is usually an affectionate dog.

The beautiful brindle.

[You'll know a brindle coat when you see it](#) -- a mixture of colors resulting in a mottled appearance or streaks in the fur.

Brindle patterns vary widely, with black, brown, fawn, white and red common among the coat colors.

A dog may be a "heavy" brindle, meaning his appearance is darker in color, or he may be "light" brindle, with a lighter color.



*Photo of "Manjaro's El Lycan" of Markus Geyzer
Dead Serious Pitbull KENNEL South Africa.*

Brindle genetics.

To understand how a dog's coat gets a brindle pattern, think biology. Each dog has 78 chromosomes, receiving some genetic makeup from his mother and some from his father.

Genetic traits are located on specific parts of the chromosomes, known as the loci.

The range of possible combinations on a locus is called an allele.

When it comes to making a brindle coat, a recessive gene on the K locus needs to be expressed.

The A locus is also involved, determining how much branding appears on the dog's coat.

Usually, brindle appears as black stripes on a red coat, and the stripes are actually pigment: eumelanin for black and phaeomelanin for red. The base pigment –phaeomelanin -- is affected by the intensity locus, which can range from deep red to light cream.

The eumelanin, or striping pigment, is determined by dilution, liver, merle, greying and recessive red.

Recessive but not rare.

Though the brindle coat is caused by a recessive gene (and some complicated genetic science,) it's not rare.

The United Kennel Club recognizes a brindle coat in an APBT, but it does not recognize a merle, or splotchy coat, which is not natural to the real APBT.

It takes a dominant allele to produce a merle coat, and APBT only have recessive alleles for merle.

A "pit bull" with a merle coat would be **the result of crossbreeding** with a breed that carries the rare merle gene - thus a mixed breed.

Though a red or blue nose on a brindle APBT may make him all the more handsome, it doesn't make him rare.

Sometimes, when the genetics are just right and the genes come together on the E locus, he'll sport a black mask with his brindle.

What is the brindle APBT's bloodline?

The American Pit Bull Terrier (note that "Pit Bull" is two words, both capitalized when used as a proper breed name) derived from Bull-and-Terrier dogs (also the source of the American Staffordshire Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Boston Terrier, Bull Terrier, Miniature Bull Terrier, and American Bulldog).

The brindle color was a common color in Bulldogs of the era when the breed was developed, and also can occur in several of the terrier breeds that may have been used in development of the Bull-and-Terrier type dogs (and then their later formalization into breeds).

*Brindle coloring is controlled by the K locus and has middle dominance between dominant solid color and normal expression of the agouti gene (which controls where the two pigment types found in dogs occur in dogs that display both).

Dogs with a brindle and a not-solid-colored parent are often brindle and a breed derived from an often-brindle breed is likely to have a lot of brindle individuals unless they are being actively selected against.

*This is, of course, a simplification of canine color genetics.

There are other modifiers like the masking gene, and brindle still doesn't "dominate" the agouti pattern so much as modify it by causing the tan/yellow/red portions to be striped with black / blue / chocolate / liver, so a sable + brindle dog is brindle everywhere, but a -and-tan pattern + brindle dog would show bridling only on the tan points.