

TRAINING

Once you have found your working Bulldog, you must make use of his willingness and energy. Work to channel those traits in the right direction without discouraging your dog by negative responses.

While you cannot make a great performance dog out of a poor prospect; you can ruin a potentially great dog by improper training methods.

Bulldogs like to make us happy but if they are not successful, they seldom worry about it! The bulldog does not find repetition exciting; nor is it productive.

Repeating a portion of training 2-3 times then moving on, is usually better than drilling over and over. Bulldogs are very intelligent. They are also stubborn. When they don't do what we ask it is usually because they don't want to, not because they don't understand it! Our job is to encourage them to perform the activities we want because by making them fun.

Only then will our Bulldogs earn those performance titles. A working Bulldog cannot be made to do anything! Rewards are the most important part of training a Bulldog. Petting, praise, food and fun are the type of rewards that appeal to most Bulldogs



MORE RESOURCES:

Getting started: Contact a local dog training club...a list of clubs is available at: www.akc.org or by calling AKC Customer Service at (919) 233-9767.

Visit www.BulldogPerformance.org For comprehensive coverage of the sport, its competitors and an updated list of E-mentors willing to help you get

For a list of Bulldog Club of America Member Clubs in your area Contact:
www.thebca.org



**THE BULLDOG CLUB
OF
AMERICA EDUCATION
COMMITTEE 2008**
www.thebca.org

Selecting and Training your Performance Bulldog

Key traits to look for in a bulldog, to be competitive in performance sports



Choosing a sound, healthy Bulldog to compete for entry-level performance titles in rally, obedience, agility and tracking may have serious side effects. The competitive bug to take a dog to the upper levels of performance competition may bite you. The thrill of being part of team working to achieve goals together, will knit a relationship between you and your dog that is hard to beat!

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A new pup, a rescue, a retired conformation dog, an existing pet... all can successfully compete in Performance Sports!

ATTITUDE

The single most important trait that all performance dogs share is attitude. It is the willingness to work hard, to succeed. It is evident in the dog that enjoys performing. He finds learning new skills exciting and fun. The dog with attitude has the desire to do the job and will earn titles at the higher levels.

Look for a dog that is inquisitive, bright and alert. Your working Bulldog should be curious about everything around him. He will also have a higher than average energy level. Look for a dog that follows and wants to be with you; he has higher pack drives and will attempt to please you as a pack member. A more independent dog will be harder to train, though not impossible

Retrieval instinct is not strong in Bulldogs so it needs to be nurtured in order to advance in competition. Try throwing a small toy just a few feet to see if he will go out to it and pick it up. Retrieve instinct is not essential but it does make it easier to teach advanced retrieving skills.

Puppies with attitude and drive will require more effort on your part to devise ways to channel their energy and curiosity but not stifle it.



CONFORMATION

Conformation and soundness are necessary components of a working Bulldog. The working parts of his anatomy are very important. He need not be a show prospect but must have correct length of back, adequate shoulder and rear leg angulations. He should be balanced.

Most importantly, he must be a good breather. A properly arched neck will aid his breathing. Try to avoid pinched nostrils. The Bulldog should be a very athletic, strong dog and therefore is very capable of working

CONDITIONING

Conditioning is critical to a performance Bulldog. He cannot sit around all week and be expected to go out and perform a strenuous routine on the weekend. A regular exercise program with opportunity to run and play each day will teach him to use his body efficiently and will build strong muscles and ligaments. If possible provide an area with varied levels. Let him play on hills or banks to improve strength and agility.

Watch his weight. Excess weight stresses the soft tissues and the respiratory system. Exercise is a must, but be cautious about training or performing in warm weather and always carry water, towels, spray bottles and cool pads.



ATTENTION

Attention is the key to successful training. Until your Bulldog will pay attention your training will have minimal success. Attention training will strengthen the bond between you and your Bulldog resulting in the focus needed to perform well, in spite of distractions. Dogs that do not pay attention to their owners are easily distracted in a performance venue.



For more information on Bulldogs in performance sports go to:
www.bulldogperformance.org