
About your American Bulldog Puppy

Villa Fournier American Bulldogs since 1997



Your American Bulldog puppy from Villa Fournier American Bulldogs is guaranteed to be of the finest breeding and environment possible. How your puppy grows up and what he will be like as an adult is primarily up to you. Since American Bulldogs are so sensitive to their environment, you have the responsibility of raising your Bulldog puppy to be an asset to his community. Improper training and environment can lead to problems in your puppy's temperament and his ability to be a trustworthy companion.

Your Bulldog puppy is intrinsically stubborn. He has to be in order to be a good Bulldog. If an eighty pound animal is going to change the direction of a charging bull or the intentions of a maniac with a pistol, he has to be stubborn and tenacious in order to get the job done. Harnessing the tenacity and stubbornness of the American Bulldog, and channeling that talent into worthwhile endeavors is your responsibility as the owner. Do not look upon stubbornness as a flaw or as undesirable. It is not. Remember, when you train a stubborn dog, he will stubbornly do as he has been trained. Stubbornness is an asset, not a hindrance.

Your American Bulldog puppy will arrive as a warm, wiggly empty slate. You are to fill this empty slate with the information, good habits, and manners that will last this puppy for the rest of his life. How he is treated and your expectations of him RIGHT NOW are what will mold him into the adult dog he is to become. NOTE: from 8-10 weeks is their **Fear**

imprint period - traumatic events will likely cause fear for life, so be careful to keep your puppies environment calm and stress free during this period.

There are many breeds that you can make mistakes with in upbringing and training. The American Bulldog is not one of these breeds. What you do to them as puppies and your methods of training impact them immensely. They are extremely sensitive. Rough hands make for rough dogs. They will not forgive inconsistent, wishy-washy, or abusive training practices. Being a consistent, wise, and competent authority figure is what the American Bulldog puppy needs in his new owner. Your best bet in raising a healthy-minded and trustworthy puppy is to simply make the right thing easy, and the wrong thing difficult and uncomfortable for him. Be firm and consistent, not harsh and punitive, and you will have the absolute best companion and working dog that is possible.



Your puppy from Villa Fournier American Bulldogs has been exposed to a variety of experiences from a very early age. Studies have shown that doing so increases the brain capacity and improves a puppy's ability to adapt to new and challenging experiences as an adult dog. Your puppy from Villa Fournier American Bulldogs is starting out in the best possible way. He or she has been fed the finest food and has been both wormed and vaccinated before his arrival to your home. They will be clean, certified healthy by a veterinarian, and ready to begin his new life with you.

We suggest that you enroll your puppy in a kindergarten puppy class, followed by a beginning obedience class. Expose him to new things, people, and other (friendly) dogs. Take him with you when you can, and when you can't, leave him at home in a dog crate. As your puppy grows, he will naturally go from one developmental stage into others. The first stage is the most fun, for you, as the new pup's owner. It is the, "Gee, I'm so cute and cuddly and perfect that you can't resist me. And, I sleep A LOT." Unfortunately, this stage does not last very long. At about fourteen weeks, your puppy enters the next stage, the "I think I want to be a little bit independent" stage. This is a normal part of your puppy's development. Your once perfect puppy, who used to always come when called, who used to sleep more than be awake, is now trying the waters a little bit. How you react to his efforts at independence will greatly impact

his actions as an adult dog. Being consistent, being firm without being harsh, and REWARDING compliance repeatedly is what will start the long process of turning your puppy into the well-behaved and respectable canine citizen you desire. At about five months of age, your puppy will begin to actively interact with his environment, especially if he is male. He may growl at strangers, and at the same time his tail is wagging or he's running away. The next day, he may act completely differently. He is also becoming rebellious, as in, "What happens if I do this?" This is a rotten stage that no one likes and luckily doesn't last long. Your puppy's bizarre reaction to strangers, or even to people he has already met but doesn't know well is his confusion as to how he should interact with people. Should he be a watch dog? A friend? What is his roll? He's trying to figure it out. He will, in time. Do not punish his reactions unless they include unwarranted, overt aggression.

This is a stage where unknowing dog trainers or your veterinarian might recommend that your male puppy be neutered. **This is exactly what you should not do!** Your puppy is reacting out of fear and confusion. Neutering him will only make things much worse and lesson his chances of ever being a mentally stable dog. Your male puppy needs the testosterone his body will produce in order to overcome his fears and become the type of dog that you want. Neutering him will also prevent the secondary sexual characteristics such as more muscle mass and a blockier head that you desire in a male dog. Do not neuter your American Bulldog puppy until he is at least 36 months old. Female bulldogs, on the other hand, can be spayed as early as eight weeks without any ill-effects, and it is recommended that you spay your bulldog if you do not wish to show her in conformation classes or breed her. Spayed bulldogs are not eliminated from obedience competition, weight pulls, tracking, herding, or canine good citizen tests. And, in fact, your life will be much easier if you do spay your female.

Once your puppy graduates from the "punk puppy" stage that occurs at about five or six months, he (or she) will enter the young adult stage of life. If you have not already completed a class or two in dog obedience, then by all means, now is the time! You will benefit greatly from the helpful instruction and the socialization of a dog training class. This young adult stage of your dog's life is very similar to the stage that human teenagers go through when they are about 17 years old. Yipes! Don't go through it alone .

At about 18 months, your American Bulldog enters adult dog status. At three years, he reaches mature adulthood, a stage you will appreciate and wish had occurred far earlier. The mature American Bulldog, when raised and trained properly, is the dog that everyone wishes they had, dignified, handsome, trustworthy, and (usually) obedient. He's great with kids, tolerant of other dogs, if not down right playful, and a true joy to be around. Yes, it takes some time and effort to get there. But, honestly, doesn't anything worthwhile?

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