

Prescribed Breeds

The Dog and Cat Management Act, 1995 prescribes certain dog breeds.



Dogo Argentino



Presa Canario



Fila Brasileiro



Japanese Tosa



American Pit Bull Terrier

Five breeds of dog are prescribed in the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995. They are:

- American Pit Bull Terrier
- Fila Brasileiro
- Japanese Tosa
- Dogo Argentina
- Presa Canario

No breed of dog is banned in South Australia. The prescribed breeds are all Mastiff type dogs that, at some time in their history were specifically bred for fighting. Being Mastiff types, they are large powerful animals and, because they were bred for fighting, they have extraordinary courage or "gameness". Individuals of these breeds are not inherently dangerous or "bad" dogs but because of selective breeding over centuries, they are powerful, game and very effective fighters. As a result, they require particularly responsible ownership and the people who choose to own them must recognise the potential of these dogs

and take additional safeguards to ensure the safety of the public, other animals and their own families. These breeds are not recognised by the Australian National Kennel Council so there is no Australian breed standard and the size and colour of individuals may vary considerably.

Legal Requirements for the owners of prescribed breeds

There are particular legal provisions in relation to the prescribed breeds to ensure they are managed appropriately. Young male drivers are statistically more likely to be involved in car accidents than the general population but many young males are responsible and good drivers. However, all pay higher insurance premiums because of the risk. In the same way, the owners of prescribed breeds must abide by particular laws relating to their dogs. If the owners of these dogs do not contravene any of the requirements, there is no penalty for keeping a prescribed breed.

The owner of a prescribed breed must:

- Effectively confine the dog to their property;
- Muzzle the dog when in public;
- Restrain the dog, in public, with a lead not exceeding two metres (even if that dog is in an area where other dogs are allowed off-lead);
- produce evidence that the dog is desexed, if requested by a council officer to do so; and
- must not sell or give the dog away, or advertise it for purposes of sale or give away

In addition, all the penalties relating to dogs wandering at large, attacking and other offenses under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 are considerably higher if the dog involved is of a prescribed breed.

Dog owners are responsible for their dogs' actions and behavior. This expectation is even more important for the owners of prescribed breeds. Prescribed breed dogs are not suitable for the general population. Although they can be good pets, they are only suitable for people who have the experience, resources and time to ensure that they are managed appropriately.