You are the owner of a very special dog.
You can’t mistake a Bulldog for any other breed. This good-natured little tank with the sourmug face is a universal symbol of courage and determination.

He will charm you with his antics, then curl up next to you for a nap. The wrinkled head, wide undershot jaw and loose skinned but heavily muscled body contribute to his strength and charm. The Bulldog combines a kind, equable disposition with a dignified demeanor and is known for being an excellent family companion. The Bulldog is one of a kind!

Training Your Bulldog
The Bulldog is a docile, even tempered animal, that should be taught proper behavior. Bonding with puppies and house training should begin immediately. A crate can be a source of protection and security for a puppy but should only be used for short periods. Taking your puppy outside after meals and upon waking from a nap or a night’s sleep is suggested. Leash training of puppies should also begin right away. Practice for short periods, always keeping it fun with patience and gentleness.

Bulldogs are known for independent thinking and a well-earned reputation for stubbornness. Attending puppy training classes after appropriate vaccinations will help your puppy to become better socialized and have good manners. Training is most successful when begun at an early age using elaborate praise and rewards given for good behavior. It also helps to have a sense of humor and appreciation for the many ways a Bulldog may respond during the learning phase. Once trained, there are many activities that BCA and the AKC offer you and your Bulldog, including conformation dog shows, companion events and performance competitions. Even a Bulldog originally purchased to be a family pet might end up being successful in rally, obedience, agility, nose work or tracking.

Caring For Your Bulldog
The Bulldog coat is short, smooth and glossy. Shedding occurs with changes in the seasons and is quite common during the spring and fall. A mild shampoo is suggested when you bathe your Bulldog. A Bulldog’s ears are never trimmed or surgically altered but should be kept clean. The tail may be either straight or screwed and is never docked. Tails that fit too tightly to the body of adults can become irritated when not cleaned regularly. Toenails should be trimmed at regular intervals. Bulldogs sometimes resist nail clipping or nail grinding unless exposed to it gently, carefully, and frequently at an early age. Dewclaws are not removed. Facial wrinkles need routine maintenance cleaning to keep them clean and dry.

Puppies under the age of six months are usually fed two or three times daily, and it is recommended that you not feed a high protein diet while they are in this rapid growth stage, after six months of age, feeding twice daily is usually sufficient.

Regular exercise on a leash is recommended to keep a Bulldog healthy, happy and in good condition. As a short-nosed breed, Bulldogs can overheat and are subject to heat exhaustion, so use good judgment and take extra precautions when conditions are warmer than those to which your Bulldog is accustomed. An air-conditioned environment is highly recommended.

Use extreme caution and exercise close supervision around any body of water, including swimming pools, lakes, ponds and rivers. Depending on how their weight is distributed, Bulldogs can have difficulty keeping their heads above water. Use good judgment when leaving your Bulldog alone in the house or a fenced yard. Bulldogs are very inquisitive, especially when food is involved, and may discover just about anything left lying around and mistake it for food or a chew toy. Bulldogs should not be left to roam off lead where there is no fence and exposure to oncoming vehicles. They are convinced they are indestructible so may not watch out for cars or other obstacles.

A Bulldog should never be picked up by its front legs and shoulders. Serious injuries can result. Pick the Bulldog up by placing one arm just behind the front legs or under the mid-section and the other arm under or between front or rear legs.

Activities With Your Bulldog
Many Bulldog owners enjoy activities and events offered by the AKC. Conformation dog shows are competitive events where the dogs are judged on how closely they adhere to the Breed Standard described below. Companion events include rally and obedience trials where dogs compete with their handlers in a series of drills that demonstrate their ability to follow beginning on-lead commands. More advanced classes progress to more challenging exercises both on- and off-lead. These events help owners to bond more closely with their dogs, channel the dogs’ energy constructively, and help dogs to become well-behaved at home, in public places, and in the presence of other dogs. Agility is an organized competition at which dogs negotiate a series of obstacles and jumps in classes of increasing difficulty. Bulldogs can even be part of AKC tracking trials or barn hunts.

Many metropolitan areas have local Bulldog specialty clubs which put on activities for Bulldogs and their owners, including training classes and grooming demonstrations. These clubs also hold conformation dogs shows and other AKC events. Joining one of these local clubs is an easy way to quickly increase your knowledge about the special characteristics and abilities of a Bulldog.
History of the Breed
The Bulldog is one of the few dog breeds that are emblematic of a nation. There is little doubt that a species resembling the Bulldog has existed for many centuries in England. Early Bulldogs were easily recognizable and often referred to as the “Broad Mouthed Dogs of Britain,” the Bandogge, or Bandog. The early Bulldog was legendary as a fierce sporting competitor and was primarily bred for that purpose. However, in the early 19th century, authorities banned the sports in which the Bulldog had competed and so the Bulldog’s purpose became outdated. The Bulldog could have disappeared had it not been for a small group of English enthusiasts who preserved the breed by purposefully breeding out any tendency toward viciousness or aggression. As a result of these efforts, the Bulldog thrived and by the end of the 19th century had been transformed from a competitive sporting dog into the wonderful gentle companion that we know today.

The turn of the 20th century brought new recognition to the Bulldog. In 1892 the Bulldog became the athletics mascot at Yale University, a recognition that continues to this day. Many other academic institutions followed suit, making the Bulldog a favorite sports mascot. The Bulldog has also received many starring roles in Hollywood movies, on television series and in commercials.

The 21st century has once again redefined the Bulldog as an active and fit companion animal. Today’s Bulldog is a fine example of health and fitness, capable of riding a skateboard or surfboard or participating in many other physical activities.

The Bulldog Club of America, Inc. (“BCA”) and the Bulldog Breed Standard
The Bulldog Club of America is the official AKC National Breed Club for Bulldogs. It was first organized in 1890 and is one of the oldest dog clubs in the United States. The purposes of BCA are to maintain the Breed Standard as a guide to breeders, owners and judges and to encourage breeding to that Standard, to stimulate interest in showing Bulldogs and otherwise to further the interests of the breed.

BCA has more than a thousand members and publishes an acclaimed periodical called The Bulldogger, which includes stories of interest to BCA members and other Bulldog owners, as well as calendars of upcoming AKC Bulldog events. In various locations around the country, BCA hosts a week-long BCA National Specialty event each year, at which many of the finest examples of the breed are exhibited.

Preserving and upholding the Bulldog Breed Standard is a central mission of BCA. This Standard is a guide for preservation breeders and describes the ideal Bulldog in temperament, health and conformation. The Standard describes a Bulldog that is healthy and strong and able to move in an unrestrained, free and vigorous manner. The nose should be large with wide nostrils to accommodate its breathing. The Standard was changed in 2016 to add a breed disqualification for any coat color other than red, white, fawn, fallow or any combination of these, thereby helping to preserve the integrity of the breed. Patterns and markings may include brindle and piebald but most others, such as merle, are also a disqualification. Bulldogs with a disqualifying coat color, marking or pattern or with a disqualifying eye color are excluded from competing in AKC conformation events. If interested in more information about the Standard, a complete copy can be found on the BCA website referenced below. As with all breeds, there is a possibility of underlying health conditions that could appear in a dog of that breed. BCA encourages all breeders to exercise great care when selecting dogs for breeding and recommends the use of health testing. As stewards of the Bulldog breed, responsible breeders are encouraged to produce the soundest dogs possible while also striving to continuously improve the health and welfare of the breed as a whole.

Additionally, BCA maintains a close relationship with the BCA Charitable Fund (BCACF), which supports and funds research on health conditions that Bulldog breeders or owners may encounter. The BCA Charitable Fund has supported many studies that have included Bulldogs. This research has also led to the development of additional genetic testing opportunities. The BCA also maintains a close relationship with the BCA Rescue Network (BCARN) which is an organization dedicated to finding new loving homes for Bulldogs whose owners are no longer able to care for them.

Additional Resources and Contact Information
Additional information about the BCA, its organization, programs, publications and activities is available on BCA’s website: bulldogclubofamerica.org.

BCA encourages all Bulldog owners to visit its website in order to take advantage of the valuable resources and educational information about the Bulldog and BCA found there, or you may contact the BCA Education Committee Chair at bca.ed.chair@gmail.com.

For those who may be interested, The Bulldogger is available by subscription at a reasonable annual subscription price. Contact the subscription manager whose contact information can be found on the BCA website.