

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

By Kris Munday

The Dogue de Bordeaux is an amazing breed, but it's not a breed for everyone, especially not for a first time dog owner.

Below are the good, the bad and the ugly, but, in reverse order.

The Ugly

- Dog Aggression- Once they reach maturity, they may become dog aggressive. Same sex aggression is somewhat common in the breed, occasionally some may have general dog aggression. Often, this may be with dogs in their own household. This does NOT mean that they are not controllable, does NOT mean that they are bad dogs, does NOT mean that they will harm/hurt humans. The breed was once a fighting breed, and those instincts may still be there.
- High Prey Drive- Some dogues have a very high prey drive. They may not be ok with cats or other small animals such as squirrels, gophers, other rodents, small dogs, birds. If the dog has a high prey drive, animals that run from it could set that drive off.

The Bad

- Health- There are numerous health issues in the breed. From life threatening issues such as heart disease and cancer, to expensive issues like torn cruciate ligaments (a typical TPLO surgery to fix is \$3000-\$3500 per knee), to allergy issues. We highly recommend getting insurance on all dogues.
- Short Life Span- The most recent DDBSA Cause of Death Survey indicates that the life expectancy is around 6 years. This is not really accurate as the people who are completing the survey are often losing their dogs young, so they find the survey when they go out searching for why they lost their dog young. Example. Ten people who lost dogs at 3 years old, Five people who lost their dogs at 7 years old and five who lost their dogs at 10, is going to give an average live span of 5.75 years. We always tell people 6 to 10 is pretty average for the breed, though there are exceptions at both ends.
- Expensive- The ddb, as other large/giant breeds can be expensive to own. Vetting for large/giant breed dogs is often much more than a small breed
- Dominant and Stubborn- You must be the pack leader and they need to know it. They may challenge you, but usually once they know their place and what is expected of them, they thrive.
- Drool- Some drool more than others, some only after eating, drinking or while begging, when hot or excited. Extremely heavy drool all the time may indicate a health issue and should be checked by a vet.
- Shedding- DDB's shed year round and blow coat very heavy usually twice a year (spring/winter).

The Good

- Loving they will look into your soul and if they love you, be totally devoted
- Protective without being aggressive (should NEVER be human aggressive)
- Smart and easily trainable (though some are extremely dense)
- Gentle and typically very good with kids
- Sweet and comical, they WILL entertain you with their goofy antics
- Loyal and constantly near, they are never out of earshot, underfoot majority of the time (be prepared to never be alone)
- Expressive they use their wrinkles to communicate with you
- Low maintenance grooming, though they do blow coat twice a year very heavily (it may look like you can build another dog out of their sheddings)
- Willing to Work, most love having a job to do and crave structure