



The law has changed about XL BULLY DOGS

If you have, or know someone who has a XL Bully dog, this is important information for you.

The UK government has added XL Bully dog to the list of dogs banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

From 31 December 2023 it will be against the law to:

- **Sell an XL Bully dog**
- **Abandon an XL Bully dog or let it stray**
- **Give away an XL Bully dog**
- **Breed from an XL Bully dog**
- **Have an XL Bully in public without a lead and muzzle**

From 1 February 2024, it will be a criminal offence to own an XL Bully dog in England and Wales unless your dog has a Certificate of Exemption.

Legal Consequences After Deadline

From 1st February 2024 owning an unregistered XL Bully dog will be illegal.

The penalties for these offences are substantial, reflecting the serious nature of the law:

- **Criminal Record and Unlimited Fine:** Owners found in possession of an unregistered XL Bully face the risk of a criminal record and an unlimited fine
- **Seizure of the Dog:** In addition to legal penalties, the unregistered XL Bully could be seized by the authorities.
- **Dangerous Dogs Act Penalties:** For owners whose dogs are dangerously out of control, the penalties under the Dangerous Dogs Act apply. This can include up to 14 years in prison, disqualification from owning any dogs, or the dog being euthanised.

To get a Certificate of Exemption you must have:

- Third-party public liability insurance cover for your dog
- Your dog is neutered by castration or spaying. A vet will need to confirm that a dog has been, or already is, neutered
- Pay a registration fee of £92.40 for each dog you want to keep
- Apply for a Certificate of Exemption to keep an XL Bully dog

Check if your dog is an XL Bully dog

This involves checking the dog's physical characteristics such as its size and height.

There is more information here [Check if a dog is an XL Bully – GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-a-dog-is-an-xl-bully) (www.gov.uk).

Crossbreeds

The ban may apply to crossbreeds that look more like XL Bully dogs than any other type of dog. This applies even if you thought your dog was not an XL Bully when you got it.

Keeping an XL Bully dog

If you want to keep your XL Bully dog after the ban, you must apply for a Certificate of Exemption by 31 January 2024.

Once you have the certificate of Exemption, a Bully XL dog must still be:

- Microchipped, if older than 8 weeks old
- Kept on a lead and always muzzled when in public
- Kept in a secure place so it cannot escape
- Neutered



Animal welfare organisations have developed some information on helping owners muzzle and lead train animals:

[Blue Cross](#)

[Dogs Trust](#)

[PDSA Battersea Dogs & Cats Home](#)

As the owner, you must also:

- Be over 16 years old
- Take out third-party public liability insurance against your dog injuring other people
- Be able to show the Certificate of Exemption when asked by a police officer or a council dog warden, either at the time or within 5 days.

Giving up an XL Bully dog to be euthanised

If you choose not to keep your XL Bully dog, you should take it to be euthanised at a registered vet practice by 31 January 2024.

You can claim £200 compensation towards the costs. You and your vet will fill in a [compensation form to make a claim](#). You must apply by 15 March 2024.





Buying, selling, or transferring XL Bully dogs

From 31 December 2023, it will be illegal to rehome, sell, buy, or transfer ownership of an XL Bully dog to another person.

Breeding XL Bully dogs

It will be a criminal offence to breed XL Bully dogs from 31 December 2023.

This includes:

- Breeding from an XL Bully dog
- Allowing for an XL Bully dog to be bred from any combination of other dogs

Stray and abandoned dogs

From 31 December 2023, it will be illegal to abandon an XL Bully dog or allow it to stray.

Rescue and rehoming organisations

From 31 December 2023, it will be illegal to rehome, sell or transfer ownership of XL Bully dogs. From this date, rescue and rehoming organisations should not rehome XL Bully dogs.

Support following the loss of a pet or possible support with vet costs

End of life decisions

At times, very sadly the only way to end a pet's suffering is for you to make the final decision about their life. If you would like to talk to someone about this, free help is available through:

[Cats Protection Paws to Listen](#)

[Blue Cross Pet Bereavement Support Service](#)

Charities that can help

Some animal charities help owners struggling with vet bills, either by providing some of the payment or by offering reduced costs through their clinics. In most cases, you'll need to fit specific criteria to use them so check first. It is not known, yet, if they will help and support people to meet the requirements to license an XL Bully dog. To check if there are services available in your area, visit the charity websites below. There may be other charities available for your specific area.

People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) provides low-cost and free vet care to the sick and injured pets of people in need. Depending on your location and benefit status you may be eligible for support from PDSA.

Dogs Trust offers free and reduced-cost vet assistance for people who are in housing crises or are homeless. Visit Dogs Trust to find out more.

Veterinary Financial Assistance In Your Local Area | RSPCA through local branches and hospitals can sometimes help with vet bills.



Examples of XL Bully breed types

Check if a dog is an XL Bully – [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

These pictures show what an XL Bully dog looks like.

A dog does not have to look exactly like this to conform to the standard.

Note: some of these dogs have cropped ears. The cropping of a dog's ears is an offence under the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

Dog 1



Dog 2



Dog 3

