

Dangerous Dogs Act 1991- a guide

Following an increase in the number of UK newspaper reports of dog attacks in 1990 and 1991, the Government introduced a piece of legislation, ***the Dangerous Dogs Act (DDA) 1991***.

‘Dangerous dogs’, regardless of breed

★ It makes it a criminal offence to allow a dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place. This includes any instance during which an injury of any sort occurs or there is a fear that an injury might occur. It is primarily aimed at dogs that have inflicted significant injury and applies only in a public place.

★ Under the DDA 1991, owners convicted of having either an ‘illegal dog’ or a dog which has injured a person for any reason, no matter how minor the injury, may receive a criminal record, up to £5000 fine and up to six months in prison. The dog may be destroyed.

‘Dangerous breeds’

Dogs known as a pit bull terriers and three other breed types (Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino and Fila Brasileiro) and any other type which *appears to have been bred for fighting*, have to fulfil certain strict requirements. These include:

- ★ The dog should be muzzled and on a lead at all times in a public place,
- ★ The dog should be insured and neutered, and must not be used for breeding.
- ★ Owners of these dogs cannot give away or sell their dogs.
- ★ The dog also has to have its details registered on an ‘Index’ maintained by government. Any person who owned a dog of one of the types is committing an offence if the dog is not on the Index.
- ★ Any dog of a prescribed type has to fulfil all of the requirements of the DDA 1991 or their dog will become illegal. *

Please ask if you require any further information. We have a full copy of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, available for reference.

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