



Dangerous Dogs Act 1991

1991 CHAPTER 65

1 Dogs bred for fighting.

- (1) This section applies to—
- (a) any dog of the type known as the pit bull terrier;
 - (b) any dog of the type known as the Japanese tosa; and
 - (c) any dog of any type designated for the purposes of this section by an order of the Secretary of State, being a type appearing to him to be bred for fighting or to have the characteristics of a type bred for that purpose.
- (2) No person shall—
- (a) breed, or breed from, a dog to which this section applies;
 - (b) sell or exchange such a dog or offer, advertise or expose such a dog for sale or exchange;
 - (c) make or offer to make a gift of such a dog or advertise or expose such a dog as a gift;
 - (d) allow such a dog of which he is the owner or of which he is for the time being in charge to be in a public place without being muzzled and kept on a lead; or
 - (e) abandon such a dog of which he is the owner or, being the owner or for the time being in charge of such a dog, allow it to stray.
- (3) After such day as the Secretary of State may by order appoint for the purposes of this subsection no person shall have any dog to which this section applies in his possession or custody except—
- (a) in pursuance of the power of seizure conferred by the subsequent provisions of this Act; or
 - (b) in accordance with an order for its destruction made under those provisions;
- but the Secretary of State shall by order make a scheme for the payment to the owners of such dogs who arrange for them to be destroyed before that day of sums specified in or determined under the scheme in respect of those dogs and the cost of their destruction.

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- (4) Subsection (2)(b) and (c) above shall not make unlawful anything done with a view to the dog in question being removed from the United Kingdom before the day appointed under subsection (3) above.
- (5) The Secretary of State may by order provide that the prohibition in subsection (3) above shall not apply in such cases and subject to compliance with such conditions as are specified in the order and any such provision may take the form of a scheme of exemption containing such arrangements (including provision for the payment of charges or fees) as he thinks appropriate.
- (6) A scheme under subsection (3) or (5) above may provide for specified functions under the scheme to be discharged by such persons or bodies as the Secretary of State thinks appropriate.
- [^{F1}(6A) A scheme under subsection (3) or (5) may in particular include provision requiring a court to consider whether a person is a fit and proper person to be in charge of a dog.]
- (7) Any person who contravenes this section is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale or both except that a person who publishes an advertisement in contravention of subsection (2)(b) or (c)—
- (a) shall not on being convicted be liable to imprisonment if he shows that he published the advertisement to the order of someone else and did not himself devise it; and
 - (b) shall not be convicted if, in addition, he shows that he did not know and had no reasonable cause to suspect that it related to a dog to which this section applies.
- (8) An order under subsection (1)(c) above adding dogs of any type to those to which this section applies may provide that subsections (3) and (4) above shall apply in relation to those dogs with the substitution for the day appointed under subsection (3) of a later day specified in the order.
- (9) The power to make orders under this section shall be exercisable by statutory instrument which, in the case of an order under subsection (1) or (5) or an order containing a scheme under subsection (3), shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.

Subordinate Legislation Made

- P1** S. 1(1)(c) power exercised: dogs of the types known as Dogo Argentino and Fila Brasileiro designated (12.8.1991) by [The Dangerous Dogs \(Designated Types\) Order 1991 \(S.I. 1991/1743\)](#), arts. 1, 2
- P2** S. 1(1)(c) power exercised: type of dog known as XL Bully designated (E.W.) (31.12.2023) by [The Dangerous Dogs \(Designated Types\) \(England and Wales\) Order 2023 \(S.I. 2023/1164\)](#), arts. 1(2), 2
- P3** S. 1(1)(c) power exercised: type of dog known as XL Bully designated (S.) (23.2.2024) by the [Dangerous Dogs \(Designated Types\) \(Scotland\) Order 2024 \(S.S.I. 2024/31\)](#), arts. 1(1), 2
- P4** S. 1(3) power exercised: 30.11.1991 appointed by [The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 \(Commencement and Appointed Day\) Order 1991 \(S.I. 1991/1742\)](#), art. 2
- P5** S. 1(8) power exercised: 31.1.2024 appointed for the purposes of s. 1(3)(4) in respect of dogs of the XL Bully breed type (E.W.) (31.12.2023) by [The Dangerous Dogs \(Designated Types\) \(England and Wales\) Order 2023 \(S.I. 2023/1164\)](#), arts. 1(2), 3 (as substituted by [S.I. 2023/1407](#), arts. 1(2)(a), 12(2))
- P6** S. 1(8) power exercised: 31.7.2024 appointed for the purposes of s. 1(3)(4) in respect of dogs of the XL Bully breed type (S.) (23.2.2024) by the [Dangerous Dogs \(Designated Types\) \(Scotland\) Order 2024 \(S.S.I. 2024/31\)](#), arts. 1(1), 3

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Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 1(6A) inserted (13.5.2014) by [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 \(c. 12\)](#), **ss. 107(2), 185(1)** (with [ss. 21, 33, 42, 58, 75, 93](#)); [S.I. 2014/949](#), [art. 3](#), [Sch. para. 7](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 1(3) excluded (12.8.1991) by [The Dangerous Dogs Compensation and Exemption Schemes Order 1991 \(S.I. 1991/1744\)](#), [arts. 1\(1\), 3](#)
- C2** S. 1(3) excluded (E.W.) (3.3.2015) by [The Dangerous Dogs Exemption Schemes \(England and Wales\) Order 2015 \(S.I. 2015/138\)](#), [arts. 1\(1\), 4](#)
- C3** S. 1(3) excluded (E.W.) (14.11.2023) by [The Dangerous Dogs \(Compensation and Exemption Schemes\) \(England and Wales\) Order 2023 \(S.I. 2023/1204\)](#), [arts. 1\(2\), 5](#)
- C4** S. 1(3) excluded (E.W.) (31.12.2023) by [The Dangerous Dogs \(Exemption Schemes and Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(England and Wales\) Order 2023 \(S.I. 2023/1407\)](#), [arts. 1\(2\)\(b\), 3](#)
- C5** S. 1(3) excluded (S.) (1.4.2024) by [The Dangerous Dogs \(Compensation and Exemption Schemes\) \(Scotland\) Order 2024 \(S.S.I. 2024/70\)](#), [arts. 1\(1\), 5](#)

Commencement Information

- I1** S. 1 wholly in force at 12.8.1991, see [s. 10\(4\)](#) and [S.I. 1991/1742](#), **art. 3**.

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