



## XL Bully guidance

As you will be aware, the government has added the XL Bully breed to the list of dogs banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

We have compiled information from the government website to help you navigate through these new rules. If you need any further information, then please go to their website, follow the links in the text below to take you to the relevant sections, or contact us.

### **Check if your dog is an XL Bully**

Use the [Official definition of an XL Bully dog](#) to check if your dog may be an XL Bully. This involves checking the dog's physical characteristics such as its size and height.

DEFRA recommends taking a precautionary approach. If you're not sure if you have an XL Bully dog, you should comply with all new requirements for this dog type. This includes puppies that may grow up to be an XL Bully dog.

The ban only applies to XL Bully dogs. There are other established breeds, such as those recognised by the UK Kennel Club, that may meet some of the characteristics of the XL Bully breed type. These are not within scope of the ban.

### **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.

To get a Certificate of Exemption you must:

1. Get [third party public liability insurance](#) cover for your dog.
2. Neuter your dog permanently if it is not already neutered. Read [Neutering an XL Bully](#) for when you must have your dog neutered. A vet must confirm if your dog is already neutered.
3. [Pay the £92.40 fee for each dog you want to keep](#). The fee is not refundable.
4. [Apply for a Certificate of Exemption to keep an XL Bully dog](#).

#### **You must also:**

- Have your dog microchipped.
- keep them a lead and muzzled at all times when in public.



- keep them in a secure place so they cannot escape.

## **As the owner, you must also:**

- be over 16 years old.
- 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.

## **To help current owners adapt to the new laws, these changes will come into force in 2 stages:**

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.

Read [Keeping an XL Bully dog](#) to find out how to get a Certificate of Exemption.

## Neutering

### **For a Certificate of Exemption, you must arrange for your dog to be neutered by a certain date:**

-by the 31 December 2024 for dogs less than one year old on 31 January 2024.

-by the 30 June 2024 for dogs older than one year old on 31 January 2024.

The Certificate of Exemption is contingent on confirmation from an RCVS registered veterinary surgeon that the dog has been neutered, through castration in the case of a male dog, and through spaying in the case of a female dog.

### **Confirmation of this must be submitted to DEFRA by the form VCN01:**

- For dogs aged one year or older on 31 January 2024, the VCN01 must be received by 30 June 2024.

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- For dogs aged less than one year on 31 January 2024, the VCN01 must be received by 31 December 2024.

The VCN01 form must be completed in part by yourselves and in part by the veterinary surgeon. The responsibility to declare that a dog is believed to be an XL Bully in accordance with DEFRA's conformation standard falls to the dog's owner.

The vet's role when completing form VCN01 is to verify and confirm that the dog presented to them by the owner matches the description and identification details (microchip) provided and has been neutered, the vet will then email this form direct to the Government.

## Completing form VCN01

- Please print this form and complete section 2.
- Bring the form to the surgery and inform reception which dog the form is for.
- The vet will need to complete sections 1 and 3.
- We will then send the completed form to the Government.

## Payment

The costs of neutering or any necessary veterinary procedures to determine whether the dog is neutered to be covered by the owner.

[Veterinary confirmation of neutering \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

## Muzzles and leads

From 31 December 2023 XL Bully dogs must wear a muzzle and be kept on a lead when in a public place.

You should start to train your dog to wear a muzzle when in public and to walk on a lead before 31 December 2023. Animal welfare organisations have developed helpful resources and free online learning to support owners to muzzle train their dogs. Read the training from:

- [Blue Cross](#)
- [Dogs Trust](#)

# Belle Vue Vets



- [PDSA](#)
- [Battersea Dogs & Cats Home](#)

## Microchips

You must make sure your dog is fitted with a microchip and registered on a database by the time it's 8 weeks old.

If you're not sure if your dog is microchipped, please make an appointment with a nurse to get your dog scanned.

## Third party public liability insurance

You must have third party public liability insurance for your XL Bully dog. The cover must start no later than 1 February 2024. This can be provided by [Dogs Trust Membership](#). The policy must renew annually for the life of the dog.

If you use a different insurance provider, you must check the policy:

- covers the policyholder for death or bodily injury to any person caused by the exempted dog.
- is suitable for a prohibited breed as defined under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.
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You must provide the start date of your insurance policy when you apply for a Certificate of Exemption. Your insurance provider can tell you the start date.

You do not need to provide the insurance policy number or any other documents from your insurance provider to apply.

**If you want any further information, then please go to the government website or contact the surgery on 016973 42174**