

PETS WITH THE KILLER POTENTIAL

■ ALSATIAN

ALSO known as the German Shepherd Dog. Originally bred as a herding dog. Widely used by the police and armed forces because of its loyalty, intelligence and bravery. Can also be highly strung and nervous, with a reputation for unprovoked attacks on strangers. Should be handled with care.



■ DOBERMAN PINSCHER

Developed in the 1800s by Louis Doberman, a night watchman and keeper of the dog pound in Apolda, Germany. Fearless guard dog with undeservedly fearsome reputation as a family pet. Continental and American dogs said to have more aggressive temperaments.



■ STAFFORDSHIRE BULL TERRIER

Short, brown and stocky and pound for pound one of the most powerful breeds. Developed as a fighting dog. Crossed with a larger dog in the US to create the American Pit Bull Terrier. Nicknamed the Devil Dog and responsible for 24 deaths in the US, the pit bull is a favourite with drug dealers. The Kennel Club refuses to recognise the pit bull as a breed.



■ ROTTWEILER

The breed was originally developed by the Romans for driving and guarding cattle, but it had virtually died out by the start of the twentieth century. Rottweilers were used as attack dogs by the German Army during the First World War and were a rarity in Britain until around the mid-Sixties. Adults weigh around seven stone, but they can reach double that size.

