



THE KENNEL CLUB
Making a difference for dogs

Information Guide

How to breed dogs using Artificial Insemination



Checklist

- Ensure that the stud dog has produced natural litters before - this is a KC requirement of acceptance.
- Speak to the Kennel Club to ensure that your application would meet the criteria for registration.
- Obtain a certified three generation pedigree from the overseas KC for the sire.
- Contact Defra for an import licence for the semen.
- Make arrangements to import the semen.
- Ensure you keep copies of all paperwork.
- Make contact with a vet experienced in AI procedures.
- Consider the welfare aspect of breeding via AI.



For further information please visit www.thekennelclub.org.uk or call **0844 4633 980**



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How to use Artificial Insemination

Who is this guide for?

This guide is intended to provide an information resource and to give assistance to those enquirers who are contemplating using Artificial Insemination (AI) within the United Kingdom, and should be read in conjunction with the Kennel Club's form 2 (Application For the Registration of Puppies Produced by Artificial Insemination). The whole procedure can prove to be quite complex and expensive, and may therefore not be appropriate for most breeders.

The Kennel Club has put this Information Guide together following a survey which was conducted of breeders who had gone through the process of applying to register a litter via AI. This is not a definitive guide and the enquirer is advised also to contact Defra, which governs the import of canine semen, for up to date information on the procedures and policies for importation.



For further information please visit www.defra.gov.uk or call **020 7904 6222**

Will the Kennel Club register puppies produced by AI?

The Kennel Club will always consider a request for the registration of puppies produced by AI, provided the stud dog has produced natural litters before.

However, applications will not normally be accepted if the donor dog is alive and domiciled in the UK, with one exception, namely that Irish Wolfhounds of 8.5 years or older and domiciled in the UK may be used as donors.

Litters produced by AI using bitches that have not produced a registered litter naturally may be registered, but the Kennel Club will not register a litter produced by AI from one of her progeny unless said progeny has already produced at least one registered litter naturally.

All applications must be made on a Kennel Club form 2 (Application for the Registration of Puppies Produced by Artificial Insemination). Full information relating to applying to register puppies by AI can be found on this form. Special attention should be taken when reading the section on insemination.

Why use AI?

There are many reasons for breeders requesting to use AI, some of which may be:

- The applicant feels that the breed in the UK is in decline.
- Wanting to re-introduce old or to introduce new lines.
- The chosen stud dog has been exported.
- To widen the gene pool in the UK.
- Lack of bloodlines in the UK.
- No suitable stud dog in UK.
- To improve the health/conformation/type/temperament of a breed.
- Breeder had lost their line – semen stored from UK based male.
- Chosen stud dog is deceased.

How can I import semen for AI?

Before importing semen, you will need to obtain a licence from Defra. This should take approximately 7-14 days to obtain, but you should apply for this in plenty of time. Licences are usually only valid for 6 months. Reports from our survey indicated that when contacting Defra, it is advisable to ask to speak directly with the person who deals with the import of canine semen, as locating the right person to speak to for information is fundamental and will save you time.

It is understood that semen may be imported into the UK either frozen or chilled. If you decide to import semen from a non-rabies free country, it may not be despatched until 6 months after the completion of collection from the donor sire. However, if importing from a rabies-free country, this does not apply although there are other conditions which are applicable to the donor dog.



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Ensure that you keep copies of ALL paperwork in case any part of it goes astray during the importation of the semen – if the worst happens and you have not kept copies, you will need to contact Defra for help. Reports have been received that in some cases the semen took several days to clear Customs and therefore you should make sure that Customs in both countries know exactly what is being shipped, and how.

Shipping semen is expensive, and therefore you may wish to consider sharing a canister with other breeders to reduce the costs. Ensure that the shipper or courier is reliable and obtain a shipping number from the courier firm so that you can “track” the package.

Which vet should I use?

It is imperative that you locate a vet well in advance who is experienced in AI procedures as this may prove key to your success in obtaining a litter. Ensure that you create a good relationship with the vet, find out their success/failure rates with this procedure, and how accessible they are at inconvenient times i.e. weekends, bank holidays. If you decide to proceed, it would certainly seem a good idea to have an ovulation test done to determine the correct date of insemination for your bitch.



What types of AI can be performed?

Three types of insemination can be performed: surgical, transcervical/endoscopy or vaginal. The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons advise that surgical insemination has many disadvantages for the bitch, and can only be justified for exceptional reasons. In the UK, evidence has shown that trans-cervical inseminations are just as successful as surgical inseminations if performed correctly.

You therefore need to think carefully about the welfare of your bitch before proceeding and whether putting her through surgery is the right decision, particularly as the Kennel Club may not accept registrations from litters produced using this technique. Bear in mind the Kennel Club's requirements for insemination when planning an AI litter (see the KC form 2) and consider all options, as AI matings are expensive and not guaranteed to work. Reports have been received that AI litters can commonly be born early, although there are no hard facts to support this observation. Kennel Club records show that the largest litter so far registered having been produced by AI is 16, although we would add that this is extremely rare!

The results of the Kennel Club's AI survey indicated that the vast majority of breeders would not be put off using AI again, even though nearly half of the respondents were unsuccessful in obtaining a litter. However some commented that it would have been cheaper and easier to have imported the stud dog, and that they would have preferred a natural mating.

Words of Wisdom

The following Words of Wisdom have been provided by breeders who have been through the experience of importing semen and may prove beneficial to others who are new to this venture:

- Plan well ahead – you will need to allow at least 6 months.
- Obtain everything in writing and keep it.
- Research your chosen stud dog thoroughly and request copies of health tests for the sire.
- Try and visit the chosen dog and see its relatives, especially its progeny.
- Use AI from the right stock and for the right reasons – not for the ‘glamour’.
- Speak to as many people as possible that have used AI and use their experience to aid you.
- Consider using alternatives - it can be cheaper to import a dog than to use AI.
- Ensure semen is DNA profiled so that you know that it comes from the correct dog.





THE KENNEL CLUB

Making a difference for dogs

The Kennel Club works to protect and promote the health and welfare of all dogs in the UK. We want happy, healthy dogs living long lives with responsible owners. All profits from the organisation go straight into funding the many programmes run in the best interest of dogs and dog owners.

Anyone can register their dog with the Kennel Club. By registering you will demonstrate your commitment to your dog's well-being and to the health and welfare of all dogs. You can register online today at www.thekennelclub.org.uk/dogregistration.

Whatever your dog's needs, the Kennel Club is here to help and support you. Find out more by contacting us on 0844 4633 980, or visit our website at www.thekennelclub.org.uk and sign up to regular news and features about the wonderful world of dogs.

Additional guides on a wide range of subjects are also available to download from our website at www.doginformation.org.uk:

- Asthma and your dog
- Breeding from your bitch
- Choosing and bringing home the right dog for you
- DNA profiling and parentage analysis services
- Do you know dog law?
- Do you know how to look after your dog in its senior years?
- Do you know what to do if you lose your dog or find a stray?
- Find a rescue dog
- Health screening and the Kennel Club
- How to get involved in fun activities and competitions with your dog
- How to get started with dog training
- How to register your dog with the Kennel Club
- Kennel Club endorsements
- Moving house with your dog
- Road travel with your dog
- So you are thinking of working with dogs?
- Thinking of showing your dog in the UK?
- Thinking of using your dog as a stud?
- Travelling abroad with your dog