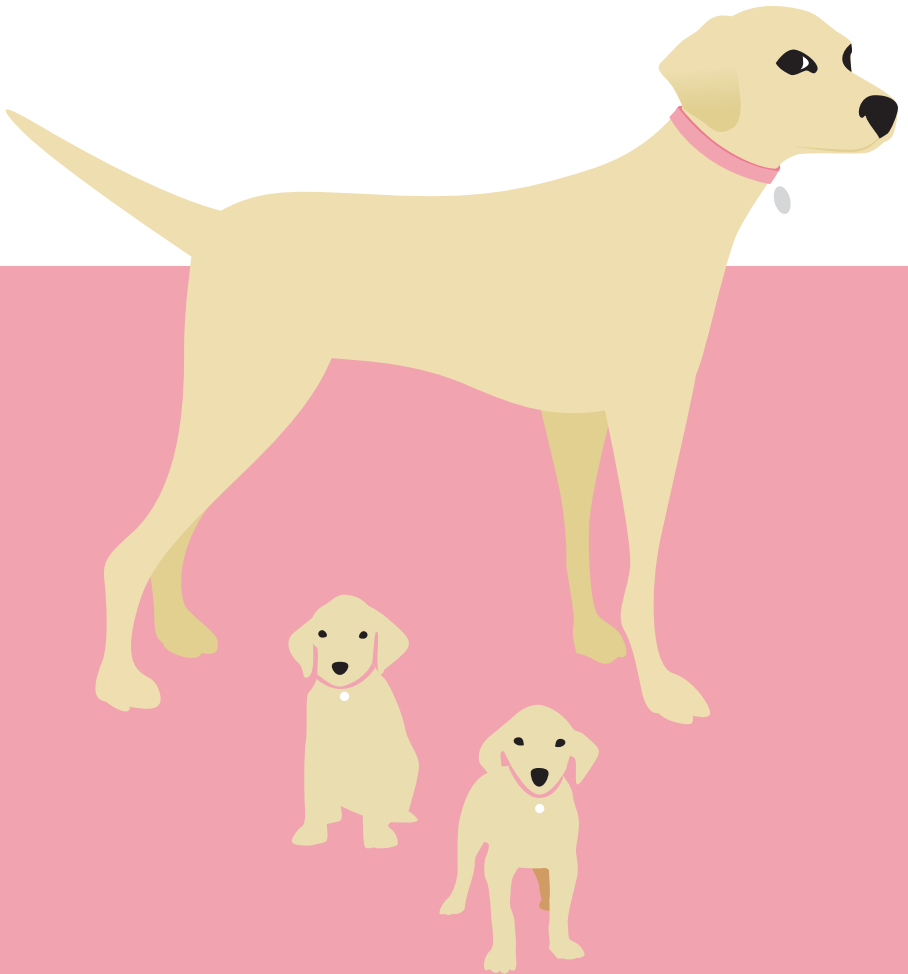




**THE KENNEL CLUB**  
*Making a difference for dogs*

## Information Guide

# Breeding from your bitch



[www.thekennelclub.org.uk](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk)

Breeding a litter of puppies can be very rewarding, but you need to remember that it can also be a costly and time consuming experience. The Kennel Club is committed to supporting responsible breeders to help ensure that all dogs – now and in the future are fit, healthy and cared for.



**THE KENNEL CLUB**

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**[www.thekennelclub.org.uk](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk)**

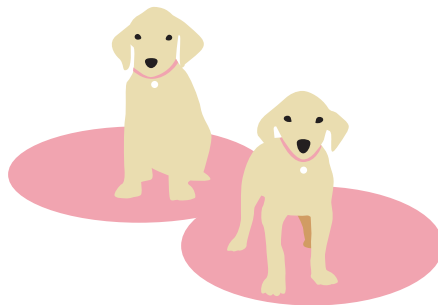
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# Breeding from your bitch

## **If you are contemplating breeding, there are certain questions that you will need to ask yourself before proceeding:**

- Have I the time to devote to a litter until the puppies are old enough to go to their new homes, which is usually around eight weeks?
- Am I knowledgeable enough to advise new owners about caring for their puppies, including rearing, diet, training and health problems?
- Can I afford to pay for the recommended health tests for the bitch prior to mating her and, where necessary, for her litter?
- Do I know enough to help the bitch during the whelping, if necessary?
- Can I afford to pay for a caesarean should the dam have difficulty whelping the litter?
- Could I cope with a very large litter of, say, 10 or 12 puppies?
- Do I have sufficient knowledge to rear the litter correctly, including worming, vaccinations and socialisation?
- Would I be able to find good homes for the puppies?
- Am I in a position to take back or re-home any puppies if it becomes necessary?



**If you have not been able to say yes to all of the above questions, then breeding may not be for you. You may therefore wish to consider having your bitch spayed to prevent unwanted or unplanned pregnancies; your breed club or the breeder of your bitch may be able to provide you with further expert advice.**

If you have been able to say yes to all of the above questions, do not forget that you will also need to keep the following in mind:

- Responsible breeders believe that each new litter that they breed should be an improvement on the parents.
- Responsible breeders give careful consideration to health issues, temperament and soundness.
- Responsible breeders plan ahead of each mating so as to ensure that each puppy produced will be bred in the best possible environment.
- Responsible breeders accept responsibility for a puppy which they have bred, and make themselves available to give advice, help and information to new owners.

Still interested in breeding? Then read on!

The Kennel Club does not keep general information relating to breeding from bitches as this can vary tremendously from breed to breed. However, the following information may be of some help to you when planning to breed from your bitch.

### **Breed specifics:**

There are a number of general books on breeding currently available. Additionally, you will find that there are many breed specific books that contain chapters, that relate to breeding.

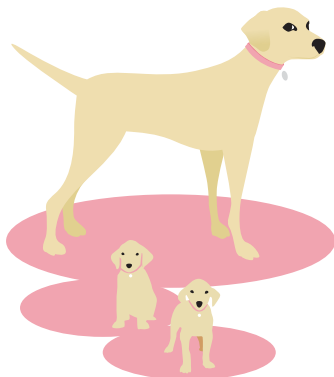
Before breeding from your bitch, the Kennel Club advises that you check with your veterinary surgeon, your breed club and/or your dog's breeder to find out whether there are any possible inherited conditions that may affect your breed, for which there is an available test (e.g. hip dysplasia and eye conditions). There are several health schemes currently in operation to assist in the prevention or control of some diseases (including DNA tests), and where they exist, the Kennel Club strongly recommends that both sire and dam are tested.

Details of approximate stud fees, puppy prices and more detailed information on your chosen breed may be obtained from the breeder of your dog or from the breed clubs.

Becoming a member of a breed club will enable you to learn more about your breed and allow you to contact other owners and breeders. Telephone numbers for these clubs can be obtained via the Kennel Club's call centre.



Call **0844 4633 980** or visit  
**[www.thekennelclub.org.uk](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk)**



### The Kennel Club:

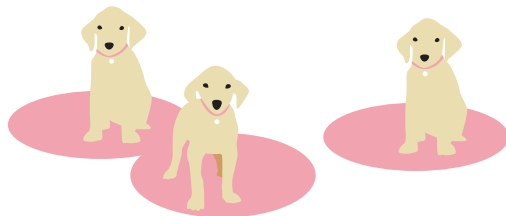
Before thinking about breeding from your bitch, you should acquaint yourself with the Kennel Club Rules and Regulations on registering litters and the registration system in general. You will need to remember that the Kennel Club will not accept an application to register a litter when:

- a) The bitch has already whelped six litters (will reduce to four in 2012), or
- b) The bitch was under a year old at the date of mating, or
- c) The bitch has already reached the age of eight years at the date of whelping.
- d) The offspring are the result of any mating between father and daughter, mother and son or brother and sister, save in exceptional circumstances or for scientifically proven welfare reasons.

N.B. Relief from the restriction C may be considered if an application is received by the Kennel Club prior to mating and provided the dam has previously whelped at least one other registered litter, and the application is supported by veterinary evidence confirming the suitability of the bitch involved in the proposed whelping.

Ensure that your bitch is registered in your own name and that the stud dog is also Kennel Club registered and that the owners details are correct.

You will also need to ensure that your bitch's Kennel Club registration does not carry any breeding restrictions.



If there are any, you will need to discuss this further with the person from whom you obtained the bitch, as any breeding restrictions will need to be removed before registration of a litter can take place. In most cases it will be the breeder who has placed the restriction, and they will therefore be the person empowered to remove it.

### **Stud dogs:**

The Kennel Club does not currently keep a register of stud dogs and therefore you should contact either your dog's breeder or a breed club to ensure that you find a suitable mate for your bitch. As a responsible breeder, you will need to ensure that any stud dog that you decide to use not only has a compatible pedigree, but has also been examined for any inherited disease to which the breed is subject. Remember that male dogs may also carry breeding restrictions, and therefore you will need to bear in mind that any breeding endorsements will have to be removed from his registration records before the litter can be registered. You are strongly advised to confirm, prior to the mating, that any such endorsement has been removed.

### **General Advice:**

The Kennel Club would advise that if you are using another owner's stud dog, or when it comes to selling your puppies, you ensure that anything agreed between the parties is recorded in a written contract. This way, there can be no misunderstandings between either party should the worst occur. This is especially important if you are selling any puppies that you have endorsed with the Kennel Club, and in fact forms part of the KC Regulation when applying to place endorsements.

The average day on which to mate a bitch is between the 11-14 day of her season. However, judging the correct day to mate your bitch can sometimes be difficult as some can be ready to be mated on day seven and some bitches will not accept a dog until day 21. It may therefore be prudent to have an ovulation test carried out by your veterinary surgeon to determine the correct date on which to mate your bitch, especially if the stud dog lives a fair distance away.

Bitches are in whelp for approximately 63 days, although it is not uncommon for them to whelp up to 3 or 4 days early (especially if the bitch is expecting a large litter) or several days late, if perhaps a smaller litter is expected.

### Accredited Breeder Scheme:



ACCREDITED BREEDER SCHEME

The Kennel Club Accredited Breeder Scheme promotes good breeding practice and, as a breeder, you should consider joining. There are set requirements that Accredited Breeders must agree to follow, which encourage the breeding of healthy, well-adjusted puppies. In return, Accredited Breeders may use the scheme literature and logo to promote their breeding. Details of the current scheme requirements can be obtained from the Kennel Club's Health and Information Department or from the Kennel Club website.



For more information and to join online visit  
[www.accreditedbreeders.org.uk](http://www.accreditedbreeders.org.uk)  
or call **0844 4633 980**.

- Before breeding from a dog or bitch, the Kennel Club advises breeders to investigate whether there are any possible inherited conditions that may affect the breed. Breeders can do this by discussing the matter with the breeder of their dog, the relevant breed club or clubs, the Kennel Club Health & Breeders Services Department or, possibly, their veterinary surgeon. There are several health schemes currently in operation to assist in the prevention or control of some diseases (including DNA tests), and where they exist, the Kennel Club strongly recommends that both sire and dam are tested.
- The Kennel Club's Dog Health Test Search Tool allows you to search for any health results for a dog which is registered on the Kennel Club's Breed Register either by its registered name or registration number (or stud book number). It will display any health screening results received and recorded by the Kennel Club from a British Veterinary Association /Kennel Club (BVA/KC) health scheme or an official Kennel Club DNA testing scheme.



For further advise on health schemes and  
the Dog Health Test Search Tool visit  
[www.thekennelclub.org.uk/doghealth](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/doghealth)



## The law:

Under the Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999, those breeders breeding five or more litters per year may need to be licensed. However, a local authority may still classify a breeder as being commercial - and therefore requiring a licence - even if the person breeds fewer than five litters per year, if in the local authority's opinion that person is deemed as breeding for commercial gain.

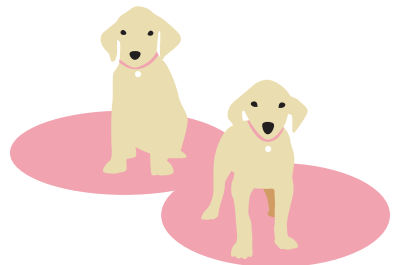
If breeders are in any doubt as to their eligibility under the Act, the Kennel Club advises that they contact their local Environmental Health Office for further clarification. If you need to be licensed, the Kennel Club advises that you obtain a copy of the Act so that you are fully aware of its contents and your responsibilities.

## Finding good homes for your puppies:

It is vitally important that you find the right home for your puppies. Hopefully this will determine where they will spend the rest of their life, and you will want to ensure that the puppy will be happy in that environment.

As a guideline, you may wish to think about some of the following when making your decision:

- Find out if the people who want to buy the puppy have done their "homework" on their chosen breed.
- Try to meet the whole family, including any children if possible.
- Ask potential owners if they have any other dogs / pets.
- Find out whether the dog is wanted purely as a pet, or whether they may be interested in breeding at a later stage. You may have placed endorsements on the puppy's registration certificate and these will need to be explained to the new owner before or at the date of sale.



- Advertise on the Kennel Club's Find A Puppy Service. When you register your litter you have the option to advertise your litter on the Kennel Club website. The online Find A Puppy Service has on average over 300k searches every month. However if you are an Accredited Breeder your litter will be advertised for free.



  for more information on the Find A Puppy Service visit [www.findapuppy.org.uk](http://www.findapuppy.org.uk) or call **0844 4633 980**

- Do not mislead people regarding the dog's characteristics and the care it requires (particularly of the coat). Incomplete information for the new owner may result in the puppy being returned to you, or being sold on.
- Find out if the potential owner has the time and inclination to groom an adult dog (particularly long coated breeds).
- Find out how much time they spend at home. It is not necessarily a bad thing if they are out all day, provided they can take the dog to work with them.
- Find out more about where they live, for example do they have a fenced garden? Some breeders like to conduct a home check before selling a puppy (you could always ask for photographs if it is not possible for you to visit the house in person). Do not automatically rule out flat dwellers - as long as they are willing and able to walk the dog regularly they may be able to offer a suitable home. It can even be the case that the dog is better off as it cannot just be put out in the garden for exercise!

Finally, if you are not sure that the home is right for the puppy, then do not sell it.

It is also important to ensure you have adequate insurance. The Kennel Club Healthcare Plan allows you to tailor your policy to include breeding cover as an optional benefit to provide up to £1,000 for a fertility examination.



  For more information call **0800 369 90 90** or visit [www.kcinsurance.co.uk](http://www.kcinsurance.co.uk)

# The Kennel Club General Code of Ethics

All breeders who register their puppies, and new owners who register ownership of their dogs with the Kennel Club, accept the jurisdiction of the Kennel Club and undertake to abide by its general Code of Ethics.

## **Breeders/Owners:**

1. Will properly house, feed, water and exercise all dogs under their care and arrange for appropriate veterinary attention if and when required.
2. Will agree without reservation that any veterinary surgeon who performs an operation on any of their dogs which alters the natural conformation of the animal, or who carries out a caesarean section on a bitch, may report such operations to the Kennel Club.
3. Will agree that no healthy puppy will be culled. Puppies which may not conform to the Breed Standard should be placed in suitable homes.
4. Will abide by all aspects of the Animal Welfare Act.
5. Will not create demand for, nor supply, puppies that have been docked illegally.
6. Will agree not to breed from a dog or bitch which could be in any way harmful to the dog or to the breed.
7. Will not allow any of their dogs to roam at large or to cause a nuisance to neighbours or those carrying out official duties.
8. Will ensure that their dogs wear properly tagged collars and will be kept leashed or under effective control when away from home.
9. Will clean up after their dogs in public places or anywhere their dogs are being exhibited.
10. Will only sell dogs where there is a reasonable expectation of a happy and healthy life and will help with the rehoming of a dog if the initial circumstances change.
11. Will supply written details of all dietary requirements and give guidance concerning responsible ownership when placing dogs in a new home.
12. Will ensure that all relevant Kennel Club documents are provided to the new owner when selling or transferring a dog, and will agree, in writing, to forward any relevant documents at the earliest opportunity, if not immediately available.
13. Will not sell any dog to commercial dog wholesalers, retail pet dealers or directly or indirectly allow dogs to be given as a prize or donation in a competition of any kind. Will not sell by sale or auction Kennel Club registration certificates as stand alone items (not accompanying a dog).
14. Will not knowingly misrepresent the characteristics of the breed nor falsely advertise dogs nor mislead any person regarding the health or quality of a dog.

Breach of these provisions may result in expulsion from club membership, and/or disciplinary action by the Kennel Club and/or reporting to the relevant authorities for legal action, as appropriate.



**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](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/dogregistration).

What ever 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](http://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](http://www.doginformation.org.uk):**

- Asthma and your dog
- 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 breed dogs using artificial insemination
- 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