



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

## Information Guide

# Find a rescue dog



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

Giving a home to a rescue dog can be an immensely rewarding experience as long as you are prepared to put in extra work if it is needed. The Kennel Club is committed to ensuring that all dogs have the benefit of living in happy homes with responsible owners and the Find A Rescue Dog service will help point you in the right direction of the many rescue organisations that give dogs the potential to find a better life.



## THE KENNEL CLUB

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

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## Find a rescue dog

Do not consider adopting a rehomed dog if you have a busy life, or very young children, as it may need special care unless you know it is 'bomb proof' and the people rehoming it can give you a full history.

Find out as much as you can about the dog, as this may help you to settle it in. If you are getting a dog without a confirmed case history, make sure you can take it back if it does not fit into your household. Ex-racing Greyhounds usually make excellent pets but may not if you have cats or other pets – but of course there are exceptions.

Rescue societies come in all shapes and sizes and with a variety of policies. Some rescue groups have no facilities to keep dogs; they make referrals from the current owners to potential adopters. Others have kennelling or use foster homes - particularly with people who know the breed well.

All try to help owners find new homes for their dogs, give advice for solving problems, maintain a list of available dogs, and screen potential owners. Most rescue societies are anxious to place dogs in good homes.

Rescue dogs may be neutered, and should be vaccinated and relatively healthy before rehoming. A dog on medication for an ear infection or arthritis can easily go to a new home; a dog with heartworm or an active respiratory or intestinal infection should stay put until the disease is cured to avoid the stress of relocation while under treatment.



For more information call **0844 4633 980** or to search online for rescue societies by breed and region visit **[www.findarescuedog.org.uk](http://www.findarescuedog.org.uk)**

Good rescue organisations try to match each applicant with an appropriate dog. They know if a particular dog likes children, can get along with other pets, needs lots of exercise, plays rough, is easy to train, is afraid of adults, jumps fences and so on. They cannot make a good match if they don't ask questions about the type of home the adopter will provide. So be prepared for the following types of questions:

- Why do you want this breed?
- Do you have enough time and energy for a Border Collie (or a Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Labrador Retriever)?
- Do you have a fenced garden?
- Do you plan to walk the dog a mile or more every day?
- Will the dog live indoors or outside?
- Do you have children? How old?
- Do you have other pets?
- Do you plan to visit your vet at least once a year?



Most rescue dogs have had at least one home and sometimes many homes. They may come with behavioural 'baggage' and some problems due to the fact that they may have been rejected at least once and, in some cases, a number of times.

Some will have been in kennels or the rescue centre for some considerable time. This will have an effect on dogs, especially those that are normally used to family life and constant attention. The dog may have been put in a rescue centre because of behavioural problems, which could include toileting indoors, excessive barking, destructive tendencies, etc.

Rescued dogs are usually more than six months old, are house-trained, and mainly past the 'chewing-everything' stage, they are normally happy to be placed in a loving home. Many have been precipitously uprooted from a loving family by some misfortune, and some have been abused or neglected and need lots of patience and care, to get past the trauma in their short lives.

The initial adjustment can be difficult as the dog may need to learn to trust again or even for the first time. Separation anxiety, fear of noises, and attempts to run away are common. But once past the first few months, when the dog learns to depend on the kindness of his new owners, then the bond is forged.

Here are some points to keep in mind when choosing a dog:

1. If your time is limited, choose a breed that needs little grooming, minimal training, and only moderate exercise.
2. If your budget is tight, choose a small-to-medium breed that needs less grooming and less food.
3. If you are an inexperienced dog owner, do not choose a large, dominant breed or a breed with a high energy level unless you are committed to six months of patient, consistent training and a dozen years of daily walks of a mile or more.
4. If you have children or elderly people in your home, do not choose a large, dominant breed that needs lots of training and exercise, or a highly-strung dog that is fearful of high-pitched voices and childish behaviour.

Be prepared to walk the dog at least twice a day and to clean up his/her waste.



Finding your perfect companion isn't always easy.  
So we've developed a Find a Breed service to help you.  
[www.thekennelclub.org.uk/findabreed](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/findabreed)

There may not be any background or information on the dog. Some will have been found wandering the streets cold and hungry. Whatever the case, there are a few principles and rules you should adhere to:

1. Do your homework: decide on a breed or breeds before you even start looking. Look at your working and time commitments. Can you really afford the time and expense of dog ownership?
2. Never buy on impulse or because you feel sorry for a frightened and timid dog, especially if you are not an experienced and confident dog owner.
3. Discuss what you want in a dog (e.g. an active dog that will play willingly, happily go on long walks, or a homely, laid back dog that will be happy to sit for hours by the fire, and only requires gentle exercise).





4. Check the breed requirements and possible problems, then discuss the positives and negatives of that breed with breeders and the rescue staff.
5. Don't expect to contact a rescue organisation and get a dog immediately. They will need to check your suitability to own a dog including your home, garden, and work commitments. In many cases they will pay a home visit and will require you to complete a long questionnaire.
6. Once you have decided that you are going to rehome a dog then prepare your home and garden well before the arrival.

Remember, your new dog may be 'stressed', worried and uncertain of you, your family and the new surroundings/environment. He/she must have time to adjust. By taking on a rescued dog, you will be taking on his/her past too, and this could be an unhappy past.

If you are considering taking a dog into your life, think long, hard and seriously about the commitment that dog ownership entails.

# Settling In

- Make sure you contact the Kennel Club to update your dog's Petlog registration details. This relates to the microchip owner details, to ensure that if your dog is lost we have access to your details 24 hours a day, so that you can be contacted with minimum delay and reunited with your pet should it be found and scanned.



Contact Petlog on **0844 4633 999**  
or visit **[www.petlog.org.uk](http://www.petlog.org.uk)**  
to find out more.

- Remember to act on specific advice given by the rescue organisation about your dog.
- Make sure you get a new collar tag for your dog with your new details.
- Introduce your new dog gradually to your neighbours, postman and any other regular callers.
- Do not forget to find out more about dog training with the Kennel Club's Good Citizen Dog Training Scheme.
- Find local Good Citizen training classes, find out more about your breed, or get involved in great canine hobbies like Agility, Heelwork to Music or Obedience – join a club and there's a whole world of exciting doggy fun to be had.



For more information on the Scheme call  
**0844 4633 980** visit **[www.gcds.org.uk](http://www.gcds.org.uk)**  
or email **[gcds@thekennelclub.org.uk](mailto:gcds@thekennelclub.org.uk)**



To find your local dog training club visit  
**[www.findadogclub.org.uk](http://www.findadogclub.org.uk)**

Visit **[www.thekennelclub.org.uk](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk)**  
to find out more.



**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 and enjoy the service benefits including access to information about how to be a responsible dog owner and care for their dog throughout its life.

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](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk) and sign up to regular news, features, and updates 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
- 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?
- 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