



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

## Information Guide

# Do you know dog law?



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

## Do you know dog law?

### Why do I need to know about dog law?

As a responsible dog owner, you need to know about dog laws - your rights and responsibilities, in order to protect yourself, your dog and other dogs. At the Kennel Club, we are constantly lobbying the government to ensure that the law benefits responsible owners.



For further advice please contact  
**0844 4633 980** or email  
[kcdog@thekennelclub.org.uk](mailto:kcdog@thekennelclub.org.uk)

The Kennel Club also provides many services which will help you to be a law abiding, responsible owner - from microchipping your dog to training him or her to be a good citizen.

On the following pages, you can read about the laws which affect you and your dog the most.

### Animal Welfare Act 2006

The Animal Welfare Act was introduced on April 6th 2007. From this date, the Act repealed the Protection of Animals Act 1911 and the Abandonment of Animals Act 1960. The new Act increases and introduces new penalties to tackle acts of cruelty, neglect, mutilation, tail docking, animal fighting and the giving of pets as prizes. In addition to this it introduces a duty of care for all pet owners to provide for their animals a suitable environment, a suitable diet, the ability to exhibit normal behaviour patterns, protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease and consideration of the animal's needs to be housed with, or apart from, other animals.



## The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005

Under this Act, you could be fined up to £1,000 for breaching dog control orders. Local authorities can make orders for standard offences including: failing to remove dog faeces, not keeping a dog on a lead, not putting and keeping a dog on a lead when directed to do so, permitting a dog to enter land from which dogs are excluded and taking more than a specified number of dogs on to land.



To find out whether your local authority has introduced these orders sign up to the Kennel Club's dog owners group KC Dog, by contacting [kcdog@thekennelclub.org.uk](mailto:kcdog@thekennelclub.org.uk), visiting [www.kcdog.org.uk](http://www.kcdog.org.uk) or calling **0844 4633 980**.

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act also updates the law on stray dogs by transferring the responsibility for strays from the police to the local authorities. It is highly recommended that your dog is microchipped and registered with Petlog, the largest pet reunification scheme in the UK, as this can prove extremely effective in locating a lost pet. The Petlog Premium service can even alert local vets and dog wardens when an owner reports where their pet was lost. This can be done by telephone, SMS text message or via the Petlog website.



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

If you lose your dog, you should stay in regular contact with the local council, Petlog, vets, dog shelters, and put up posters in the area where you lost it. (For outdoor flyers you may need to get permission from your council)

Dog wardens are obliged to seize stray dogs. The finder of a stray dog must return it to its owner (if known), or take it to the local authority. It is illegal to take a found dog into your home without reporting it to the police first. If you want to retain the dog, this might be allowed, provided you are capable of looking after the

dog and agree to keep it for at least 28 days. However, the original owner could still have a claim for the dog's return.

### **Byelaws on noisy animals**

If your dog's barking causes a serious nuisance to neighbours, the local authority can serve a noise abatement notice, which if unheeded can result in you paying fines and legal expenses.

### **Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999**

Breeders who breed five or more litters per year must be licensed by their local authority. Breeders with fewer litters must also be licensed if they are carrying out a business of breeding dogs for sale.

Licensed breeders must:

- a)** Not mate a bitch less than 12 months old.
- b)** Not whelp more than six litters from a bitch.
- c)** Not whelp two litters within a 12 month period from the same bitch.
- d)** Keep accurate records.
- e)** Not sell a puppy until it is at least eight weeks of age, other than to a keeper of a licensed pet shop or Scottish rearing establishment.

### **The Control of Dogs Order 1992**

This mandates that any dog in a public place must wear a collar with the name and address of the owner engraved or written on it, or engraved on a tag. Your telephone number is optional (but advisable). The Kennel Club can provide these tags.



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for further information.

### **Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (section 3)**

It is a criminal offence (for the owner and/or the person in charge of the dog) to allow a dog to be 'dangerously out of control' in a public place, a place where it is not permitted to be, and some other areas. A 'dangerously out of control' dog can be defined as a dog that has injured someone or a dog that a person has grounds for reasonable apprehension that it may do so. Something as simple as your dog chasing, barking at or jumping up at a person or child could lead to a complaint, so ensure that your dog is under control at all times.

If your dog injures a person, it may be seized by the police and your penalty may include a prison sentence and/or a ban on keeping dogs.

There is also an automatic presumption that your dog will be destroyed (unless you can persuade the court that it is not a danger to the public, in which case it may be subject to a control order). You may also have to pay a fine, compensation and costs.

### **Dangerous Dogs (Amendment) Act 1997**

The 1991 Act was amended by the Dangerous Dogs (Amendment) Act 1997. The 1997 Act removed the mandatory destruction order provisions on banned breeds and re-opened the Index of Exempted Dogs for dogs which the courts consider would not pose a risk to the public. The courts were given discretion on sentencing, with only courts able to direct that a dog be placed on the list of exempted dogs.

### **Dogs of the following type are banned under the Dangerous Dog Act:**

- The Pit Bull Terrier
- Fila Brasileiro
- Dogo Argentino
- Japanese Tosa

### **The Control of Dogs Act 2010 (Scotland only)**

The Act is enforced alongside the Dangerous Dogs Act in Scotland and removes any reference to a dog's 'size and power' when determining whether or not it is out of control. The legislation also covers attacks on private property and introduces dog control notices. A notice may be served by an authorised officer appointed by a local authority where a dog has been out of control. The notice sets out the reasons why an authorised officer considers the dog was out of control and specifies what steps the recipient of the notice must take to bring and keep the dog under control.

## **The Road Traffic Act 1988**

It is an offence to have a dog on a designated road without it being held on a lead. Local authorities may have similar bye-laws covering public areas. Dogs travelling in vehicles should not be a nuisance or in any way distract the driver during a journey.

If a dog is injured in a car accident, the driver must stop and give their details to the person in charge of the dog. If there is no person in charge of the dog, the incident must be reported to the police within 24 hours.



## **Animals Act 1971**

You could be liable for damage caused by your dog under this Act or under some degree of negligence. It is highly advisable to have third party liability insurance to cover this, something that is included in most pet and some household insurance policies.

## **Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963**

Anyone boarding animals as a business (even at home) needs to be licensed by the local authority.

## **Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953**

Your dog must not worry (chase or attack) livestock (cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, horses and poultry) on agricultural land, so keep your dog on a lead around livestock. If your dog worries livestock, the farmer has the right to stop your dog (even by shooting your dog in certain circumstances).

## **Dogs Act 1871**

It is a civil offence if a dog is dangerous (to people or animals) and not kept under proper control (generally regarded as not on a lead nor muzzled). This law can apply wherever the incident happened. The dog can be subject to a control or a destruction order and you may have to pay costs.

As a dog owner, you should be aware of laws which affect you and your dog. Enclosed are some useful guidelines to help you keep within the dog law! The Kennel Club is the best place for advice on these issues and provides many services to help you to be a law abiding, responsible dog owner.



## THE KENNEL CLUB

1-5 Clarges Street, Piccadilly, London W1J 8AB  
Telephone 0844 4633 980 Email [info@thekennelclub.org.uk](mailto:info@thekennelclub.org.uk)

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

Join the conversation:

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**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 and to support the Kennel Club Charitable Trust to re-invest into a wide variety of welfare and health programmes.

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) to find out more about the wonderful world of dogs.

**Additional guides on a wide range of subjects are also available to download from our website at [www.thekennelclub.org.uk](http://www.thekennelclub.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 how to look after your dog in its senior years?

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

Pet Insurance Guide for dog owners

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

Why I should Microchip my pet?