

Penalties

Penalties for breaking dog rules can be tough and in extreme cases may allow for the destruction of the dog. The courts and police have a range of powers to deal with offenders. For example, owners who allow their dogs to get dangerously out of control - can be imprisoned for up to two years and/or fined.

WHAT ALL DOG OWNERS SHOULD KNOW

Owning a dog brings great happiness but is also a lifelong responsibility to the dog. You will need to care for him properly and responsibly including staying within the law. This leaflet gives some essential tips to current and prospective dog owners.

Deciding to get a dog

Before getting a dog, consider the following:

Lifestyle

Do you have the time, suitable accommodation and willingness to care properly for a dog?

Environment

Are there suitable facilities near you to exercise a dog?

Budget

Dogs need a nutritionally balanced diet and will have to visit the vet for vaccinations and possible emergencies. Do you need additional insurance to cover vet bills or in case your pet causes an accident or damage to property? Can your budget cope with these costs?

Training

A well trained dog is a happy dog and, he will not be a nuisance to others if he's under control. You must never allow your dog to be dangerously out of control-he must not injure anyone or frighten anyone into thinking that they might.

12 BASIC TIPS FOR RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP

- Train your dog in elementary obedience
- Feed your dog at regular times and with a nutritionally balanced diet.
- Feed your dog from his own dish.
- Keep your dog on a lead anywhere near a road, or where there are other animals.
- Train your dog not to foul in public places - if it does, "Scoop the poop"!
- Remember your dog's bark can be a nuisance.
- Provide your dog with his own bed.
- Never take your dog into a food shop - always tie its lead to a post.
- Keep your dog clean and regularly groomed.
- If you do not want your dog to have puppies, obtain advice from your vet.
- Make sure someone is caring for your dog when you go on holiday and that he knows the local dog warden's telephone number.
- Register your pet with a vet of your choice.

This document can be made available on request in other languages and formats (large print, braille or audio) by contacting 0116 272 7515'

Working towards a better district

Responsible Pet Ownership



Register your dog with your local Vet

Don't wait for an emergency. Details will be in the Yellow Pages

For additional information or advice on the following, consult your vet or pharmacist.

Vaccinations and Worming

Every dog should be protected against **potentially fatal diseases**.

First vaccinations are given at about eight weeks. Puppies should not be allowed on the street or mix with other animals until your vet advises.

Always keep your dog's vaccination certificates. You may need them in the future.

Regular booster vaccinations are necessary, at least once a year.

Roundworm and tapeworm (intestinal parasites) can affect dogs at any age, so they should be treated regularly for worms. Worms can cause sickness and diarrhoea in young animals but adult dogs may show no signs. Worming is easy, effective and costs little using a worming preparation obtained from your pharmacist, vet or pet shop. Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully.

Adult dogs should be wormed at least every 6 months. Pregnant bitches and bitches with young puppies should be wormed more frequently. It is essential that puppies are wormed when they are about 2 weeks old and then treated at regular intervals until they are at least 6 months old. Always seek veterinary advice before worming your puppy.

Grooming

It is important to keep your dog clean by grooming at least once a week and bathing sporadically. Start at puppy stage so it becomes a pleasure not a chore.

Fleas

If your dog gets fleas treat him with a reliable spray, dusting powder, or wash. Also clean the areas your dog uses and sleeps in.

Neutering

Unless you are sure you want your bitch to have puppies and you can find good homes for them, you should have her spayed. This may also reduce the risk of certain cancers and prevent phantom pregnancies. Your vet will also be able to give you details on hormonal control of seasons.

Castration in dogs can also help with many behavioural issues and cleanliness. It can also reduce the chance of some cancers in male dogs. The risk of dogs straying and accidental mating can also be reduced.

Ask your vet whether your dog should be neutered.

Dogs and the Law

Dog owners and non-dog owners have the right to live side-by-side. There are, however, several rules which should be followed. Most are straightforward and many are concerned with safeguarding the environment - for the benefit of everybody.

All Dogs must wear a collar and clearly displayed tag.

The tag must bear the name and address of the dog's owner.

Stray Dogs

You must keep your dog under control at all times. Make sure you know the telephone number for your local authority so that you can contact the dog warden if your dog goes missing. The local authority has the responsibility to collect strays and will charge you for kennelling a dog, so act quickly to ensure you aren't put to unnecessary expense. If a dog is not claimed within seven days the authority has the right to find him a new home, or destroy him.

If going on holiday, when you give your dog to the person who will be caring for him while you are away, make sure you also give them the number of your local authority in case he strays.

Countryside Code

The main countryside rule is - DOGS MUST NEVER WORRY LIVESTOCK. Even letting your dog walk in the same field as farm animals may be

considered as "worrying". Remember the farmer is entitled to kill your dog if it is worrying livestock.

Local Dog Control Measures

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 has replaced the dog byelaw system and Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 with powers to make Dog Control Orders. Primary and secondary authorities (local authorities and, principally, parish councils) can make Dog Control Orders in relation to 5 dog control matters, including dog fouling, dog ban areas, dogs on leads, putting and keeping a dog on lead under supervision and multiple dog walking restrictions. Though Dog Control Orders do not need confirmation by the Secretary of State, they can only be introduced after completing the procedure prescribed in the Dog Control Order (Procedures) Regulations 2006, which includes a period of local consultation and notification in local press. The maximum fine upon conviction for a Dog Control Order offence is £1000, and Fixed Penalty Notices may also be issued.

Though section 65 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 repealed the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996, legislative savings were made to preserve the offence but only in respect of land designated under the 1996 Act prior to its repeal. So local authorities who designated land under the 1996 Act prior to 6 April 2006 can continue enforcing the offence. Authorised officers of local authorities can issue fixed penalty notices fixed at £50 and/or seek prosecution where a fine of up to £1000 may be given upon conviction. Similarly, no byelaws can be made by local authorities or parish councils for those matters capable of being prescribed in a dog control order (which are mentioned in the previous paragraph). But byelaws made before 6 April 2006 will continue to have effect until they are either revoked or replaced with a dog control order.

Dangerous Dogs

Dogs bred for fighting, such as pit bull terriers, must be kept on a lead by someone who is sixteen or over and muzzled in public. No-one may keep these breeds without registering them with the police.