

Beginner's guide to... dog showing



Could your dog be a contender for Crufts? Then dog showing is for you!

What is dog showing?

Dog showing, or exhibiting as it is known, is the most popular canine activity in this country. At shows, the judge compares each dog against the official Kennel Club Breed Standard which is a blueprint for the perfect characteristics for that breed – covering every aspect of the dog, from head to tail. The dogs which conform most closely to the Breed Standard will be the ones that receive the top places. The health of the dog is of paramount importance when making this decision – a dog must always be Fit for Function: Fit for Life! All pedigree dogs can take part in this unique hobby and you never know, you and your dog could even end up at the world's greatest dog show – Crufts!

Why should you begin dog showing?

- You think your dog is the best in the world – will others agree?
- To enjoy a unique hobby and make lots of new friends
- Your dog will love being the centre of attention
- Learn new things about your breed
- Develop that special bond with your dog
- Your beloved dog could be Crufts Best in Show one day!



All you need to know

- Your dog must be registered with The Kennel Club on the Breed Register or if your dog is from abroad it must have an Authority To Compete number before competing at any show
- Only pedigree dogs can enter shows
- Exhibitors taking part in any Kennel Club licensed event must familiarise themselves with The Kennel Club rules and regulations beforehand. The show regulations can be found in the show regulations booklet which is available from our publications department
- We recommend that you attend some local dog shows before you start showing your dog, so you can get a feel for it and know what to expect
- It would also be helpful if you can attend ringcraft classes for specific training before entering a show
- There are thousands of different types of Kennel Club licensed shows throughout the UK. They vary from companion dog shows, single breed shows, open shows and championship shows
- Dogs can start competing at 6 months of age
- No previous experience is necessary so request a list of **ringcraft clubs** today

Possibility of qualifying for Crufts!

Handling your dog

Attending your first dog show may cause your dog to behave differently than it does in training. Young dogs in particular can be bothered by crowds and if this is the case you can move a little way from other competitors and officials. Just remember it is a new experience for you and your dog and should you have any concerns there are always stewards/officials available to speak to.

Try a ringcraft class or companion dog show and see if showing is for your dog!

You can find out how to take part in a companion dog show by visiting thekennelclub.org.uk/companion-dog-shows

Get started today!

To find a list of clubs, training classes or competitions near you, use the 'Find a Club' and 'Find a Show' services available on thekennelclub.org.uk

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Starting out in dog showing

Types of shows

Companion dog shows

Companion dog shows are fundraising events held throughout the year. The shows are mostly organised in conjunction with fetes, charity open days or similar events to raise money for charitable causes. The shows are very relaxed so they are ideal for people who are new to the show scene and offer the opportunity to practice with your dog in the show ring. Your dog does not have to be Kennel Club registered to enter a companion dog show.



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Single breed shows

As the name suggests, single breed shows have classes for just one breed of dog and are organised by a specific Breed Club. Such shows are likely to attract breed specialists who may have been involved in the breeding and showing of that particular breed for a number of years. These shows will provide you with a great opportunity to really learn about your breed from the experts.



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Open shows

Some people prefer to start out on their show career by entering general open shows that schedule classes for many different breeds of dog. Such shows are run by general canine societies and are a good testing ground for new exhibitors. The shows are very popular and can attract many hundreds of competitors. At premier open shows you may even be able to qualify for Crufts.



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Championship shows

These are the most prestigious shows where you may be able to qualify your dog to be shown at Crufts, and where Kennel Club Challenge Certificates (commonly known as CCs or tickets) are on offer. Challenge Certificates are the very highest award a dog can gain and they are awarded only to the very best dogs.

What is benching?

Benching is a raised pen allocated for each dog to stay in for the duration of the show. It is comfortable for the dogs and offers security to the owner, which is convenient should you be exhibiting other dogs on the same day.

Are you ready for your first show?

Visit the Kennel Club.org.uk/dogshowing or email breedshows@the Kennel Club.org.uk to find all you need to know about entering shows and the next steps to becoming a Crufts champion!

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