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Working

Mastiff

When the Romans invaded Britain in 55BC they found the inhabitants already had a mastiff- type dog, huge and courageous and which defeated the Romans' own dogs in organised fights. The Romans took some of these mastiff types home with them and used them for fighting wild animals in the Coliseum.

The Mastiff, once known as the Old English Mastiff, was used as a guard dog, a gamekeepers' dog, a hunter of wolves, and for bear and bull baiting. He was also used in the fighting pits until this activity was outlawed in 1835. This threatened the breed's survival. A number of Mastiffs had been exported to the United States between the wars and by the end of World War II, just a single bitch, Nydia of Frithend remained in Britain. The dogs exported to the United States became the progenitors of fourteen Mastiffs who were in turn sent to Britain post-World War II to revive the breed.

Now, although they are still not numerous, they have their devotees who take on the challenge of achieving type and substance combined with soundness of movement.

Breed Group	Working
Vulnerable Breed	Yes
Size	Large
How much exercise?	Up to 1 hour per day
Length of coat	Short
How much grooming?	Once a week
Supposedly sheds?	Yes
Town or Country	Country
Type of home	Large House
Minimum garden size	Small/Medium
Lifespan	Under 10 Years

Health Information

You may be aware that some breeds of dog and their crosses can be susceptible to inherited disease. Of course you want to be sure that the dog you choose is as healthy as possible, and you would like to know that it has not inherited any undesirable disease-causing genes from its parents. There is some help in that DNA tests for diseases in purebred dogs are available for some conditions in some breeds, but there are not very many such tests just yet! There are also, however, a number of clinical veterinary screening schemes that dog breeders can use to increase the probability of producing healthy puppies.

Details of the various screening schemes, both veterinary and DNA, that are available to breeders in the UK can be found at www.thekennelclub.org.uk/doghealth

Potential dog owners should be aware that, at present, the application of various health screening results to breeding programmes is not always straightforward, and breeders may make choices for various reasons. A responsible breeder though, will always be willing to discuss relevant health issues with you. Breed clubs are often useful sources of breed-specific information.

What Screening is relevant for the Mastiff?

Kennel Club Assured Breeders must use the following screening schemes for sires and dams BVA/KC

- BVA/KC Hip Dysplasia Scheme

Kennel Club Assured Breeders are strongly recommended to use the following screening schemes and/or advice for sires and dams

- BVA/KC Elbow Dysplasia Scheme
- Bitches under twenty months not to produce a litter
- Bitches over 6 years not to produce a litter

The list above is not necessarily comprehensive. Breed clubs and experienced breeders are useful sources of information on health issues in the breed. All breeds have a Breed Health Coordinator.

Breeding Restrictions

The Kennel Club will not accept an application to register a litter when:

- 1) The dam has already whelped 4 litters (as of the 1st January 2012 the limit changed from 6 litters to 4 litters). As of this date the Kennel Club will no longer register any further litters from any bitch which our records show has already whelped 4 litters. Therefore for any litter born on or after the 1st January 2012, the system will automatically check to see how many previous litters the Kennel Club has an account of. Where the number previously recorded is 4 or more, the application will be rejected, or
- 2) The dam has already reached the age of 8 years at the date of whelping, (relief from this restriction may be considered normally provided an application is made prior to the mating, the proposed dam has previously whelped at least one other registered litter, and the application is supported by veterinary evidence as to the suitability of the bitch involved in the proposed whelping), or
- 3) The dam was under one year old at the time of mating, or
- 4) 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, or

5) (From 1st January 2012) The dam has already had two litters delivered by caesarean section, save for scientifically proven welfare reasons and this only normally provided the application is made prior to the mating, or

6) The dam was not resident at a UK address at the date of whelping.

There are further Kennel Club Rules and Regulations that may prevent a litter from being registered; the full Kennel Club Rules and Regulations are contained in the Kennel Club Year Book.

Breed Specific Breeding Restrictions

Mastiff Clubs

Name	Telephone
Mastiff Association	07929 988008
Old English Mastiff Club	01303 228680

Mastiff Rescue Organisations

Name	Telephone
Old English Mastiff Club Rehoming	01243 603899