



Getting started with health testing



Are you thinking of breeding from your dog?

There's plenty to think about. What will the puppies look like? What personalities will they have? Which welcoming homes will they go to?

First things first – how can you be sure these puppies will have the best chance at a healthy, happy, active life, free from chronic pain and disease? That's where health testing comes in.

Health testing can seem intimidating at first as there are lots of health tests available. It can be hard to know which ones are recommended for your dog breed but this handy guide will give you an overview of why and how to health screen your dog to provide peace of mind both for you and for puppy buyers.

Through health testing, we can make a real difference to the health and welfare of dogs.



Which health tests do I need?

Every dog breed, including crossbreeds, is at risk of inherited disease. However there are some breeds that are more commonly affected by certain conditions than others.

For example, Labrador Retrievers have a higher rate of hip dysplasia, and English Springer Spaniels are more often affected by inherited eye disease than other dog breeds.

The Kennel Club Breeds A to Z, (access through the button below), offers helpful information and recommended health tests for every dog breed.



**Click here to learn more
about your breed**

[thekennelclub.org.uk/breeds-a-to-z/](https://the Kennel Club.org.uk/breeds-a-to-z/)



Hip and elbow screening

Hip and elbow dysplasia are two of the most common inherited health conditions that dogs can suffer from. These diseases can be very painful and have serious effects on the health, behaviour and welfare of the dog.

Getting your dog's hips and elbows checked enables you to make an informed decision about whether to breed from them or not. Your actions can help reduce the risk of puppies developing painful joint conditions.

To get your dog's hips or elbows checked, a vet will take an X-ray and send the images to a screening specialist. Dogs with lower scores/grades have healthier joints, and are better choices to breed from.

The Canine Health Schemes has a panel of expert veterinary specialists with decades of experience who check hip and elbow X-rays for signs of dysplasia.



**Learn more about
hip screening**

bva.co.uk/hips



**Learn more about
elbow screening**

bva.co.uk/elbows



Eye testing

There is a variety of eye diseases that affect dogs. Many of these conditions can have serious effects on health and welfare, causing pain, blindness, or the need for lifelong medication.

Testing your dog's eyes will allow you to take action to tackle disease progression and make informed decisions around breeding.

The Canine Health Schemes has a panel of expert veterinary ophthalmologists around the United Kingdom.



Learn more about
eye testing

bva.co.uk/eyes

For puppies

Litter screening is also recommended for puppies between 5 and 12 weeks of age to check for **congenital inherited conditions** (conditions that exist from birth or soon after birth).



Other health tests

There are several other less common health tests that are recommended for certain dog breeds. For a full list of tests and guidance on how you can get your dog checked, visit bva.co.uk/get-started or click the button below.



Get started with
health testing

bva.co.uk/get-started

About Canine Health Schemes

The schemes are run by the British Veterinary Association and the Kennel Club, helping dog breeders screen for a range of conditions to make informed breeding decisions, produce healthier puppies and work towards eliminating debilitating inherited diseases.

Find out more at
bva.co.uk/chs

