



Breeding dogs in  
**SWEDEN**

within Svenska Kennelklubben

**SVENSKA KENNELKLUBBEN**

# BREEDING DOGS



Illustration: Hamiltonstövare.  
Cover image, beagle puppies. Photographer Åsa Lindholm.

# Svenska Kennelklubben – the dog owners' national organisation

*This pamphlet is published by Svenska Kennelklubben, SKK, i.e. the Swedish kennel club, which is an organisation for everyone with an interest in dogs and we represent all dogs, dog owners and dog breeders in Sweden.*

The goal of our work is to promote the positive sides of dogs, to point out how useful dogs are, the benefits humans can get and how much good dogs can do in our community. We support research in dogs and we run campaigns. Above all we protect the dog by making sure the existing traits in the dog breeds of today are preserved.

Svenska Kennelklubben is an organisation with many branches. We are a union of non-profit clubs all over Sweden, consisting of regional/provincial clubs, breed clubs, activity clubs and our youth organisation Sveriges Hundungdom. By being a member of one of these clubs you automatically are part of Svenska Kennelklubben.

- The affiliated clubs strive towards having all puppies born healthy and continuing to lead fulfilled and happy lives, but also for enabling the dog owner to take part in fun and exciting activities together with their dog.
- By being a member you too can have an influence on the situation for dogs and dog owners in Sweden. You are part of a large fellowship of almost 300 000 members!
- Your membership entitles you to participate at dog shows, working tests, trials, competitions, training classes, courses, take part of certain benefits and much more.

## The dog scene in Sweden

At present there are nearly 900 000 dogs in Sweden. About 15% of all Swedish households have at least one dog! Most dogs in the country, almost 70%, are registered with Svenska Kennelklubben which is quite a unique figure in an international perspective.

The dog is a natural part of Swedish society and is a much appreciated resource in many different fields. Service dogs, guide dogs, hunting partners/gundogs, police dogs, rescue dogs etc play a big part in the community and the dog is also of great importance as a beloved family member. Most dogs, about 90%, are insured and there are no stray dogs in Sweden.



# Laws and regulations

*There are a number of laws, regulations and guidelines which are particularly important to have knowledge of for everyone who is breeding dogs in Sweden.*

The Swedish animal welfare act and the regulations and general guidelines from the Swedish Board of Agriculture regarding keeping dogs and cats are amongst the most important ones, together with the regulations for registering dogs and the code of ethics stated by Svenska Kennelklubben.

In this pamphlet we want to help you get the all important overview of what you as a breeder need to know, although it is your own responsibility to get appropriate knowledge of the laws, regulations and general guidelines which apply to your field of work. Unfortunately not all information is translated into other languages but you can find more information at the websites [skk.se](http://skk.se) and [jordbruksverket.se](http://jordbruksverket.se)

## **The Swedish animal welfare act – Djurskyddslagen**

In the Swedish animal welfare act you will find legislation regarding how to keep and take care of dogs as well as other animals. Basically it states that animals should be well cared for and be protected against diseases and unnecessary suffering. They should also be able to have as natural life as possible. The Swedish Board of Agriculture, Jordbruksverket, has the overall responsibility to make sure regulations regarding animal welfare are being followed and at regional level the operational supervision is carried out by the County Administrative Board, Länsstyrelsen, who carry out animal welfare inspections to ensure the well-being of animals.



You will find more information on the role of the County Administrative Board, and which permissions you might need from them, further on in this pamphlet. All breeders and all dog owners are obliged to comply with the animal welfare act as well as supplementary animal welfare regulations and various other regulations and general advise.

### **The regulations from the Swedish Board of Agriculture, Jordbruksverket**

As a breeder of dogs you more or less have to know by heart the regulations and general advice regarding keeping dogs and cats, published by the Swedish Board of Agriculture. The regulations are meant to clarify the animal welfare act and they describe in detail how you need to keep and take care of dogs. You will for example find regulations regarding kennels, the size of dog runs, at which age a bitch can first be mated and much more.

Do you know that  
a bitch may be mated at  
18 months the earliest?

### **Regulations of the Swedish kennel club, Svenska Kennelklubben**

To buy a dog from a breeder within SKK should feel safe – and far far away from the scene of smuggled dogs, puppy farms and breaking the rules and regulations. As a breeder within SKK you must follow the SKK Code of Ethics and the regulations for registering dogs. You must also have knowledge of the breed standard and the breed-specific breeding strategies for your breed.

Among other things, these documents have been produced with the purpose of making

sure breeders are keeping their dogs in a decent way, that puppies get as good a start as possible in life and that the dam and sire used for breeding are being well treated and well looked after.

### **SKK Code of Ethics – SKKs grundregler**

The Svenska Kennelklubben Code of Ethics is one of the most important regulations within the organisation and all members are

#### **The Svenska Kennelklubben Committee for Breeders and Kennel Consultants interpretation 1:1, regarding keeping dogs in cages or tied up**

It is of importance to make sure the SKK members keep a high standard in keeping their dogs, which means the SKK code of ethics can be on a higher level and with more precise requirements than the regulations from the Swedish Board of Agriculture (SJFVS 2020:8, L 102). Their regulations are customized for several fields of businesses whereas the SKK code of ethics and the interpretations hereof are standpoints phrased specifically with dog breeders and SKK members in mind.

To keep a dog in a smaller space when at a trial or a competition and when travelling may be necessary, not least for the well-being of the dog. However, the everyday life of a dog must not contain being kept in a cage or in any other way being kept in too small a space. For example, keeping the dog in a closed cage for the night is not acceptable. Everyday situations as feeding, bitches in season, keeping dogs apart because they are not getting on or house-training a puppy must be solved in another way than locking the dog up in a too small a space. Keeping a dog in a cage, or otherwise limit the space available for a dog in everyday situations, therefore goes against the SKK Code of Ethics.

Further, a dog must not be kept tied up indoors other than temporarily, for example for any kind of care (grooming, bathing etc). If so, the dog must be under constant supervision and there can not be any risk it might get injured.

obligated to obey to them. They state overall rules for how breeding should be carried out within SKK. For example, according to the code of ethics, you must not mate a bitch who is too young or too old, and a bitch must have enough time between litters. Also, you must always make a written agreement when transferring the ownership of a puppy or a dog to someone – and you must use the SKK agreement forms. The agreement forms which are mandatory for you as a breeder to use when transferring ownership is 'Köpeavtal' (transfer of ownership), 'Köpeavtal med bibehållen avelsrätt' (transfer of ownership with retained breeding rights) or 'Fodervärdavtal' (transfer of dog on breeding terms).

### Breeding policy

The central message in the SKK breeding policy is that dogs suffering from serious disease or malfunction must not be bred from. I.e; you should only breed from dogs

that are mentally and physically sound in all aspects. You should also avoid in-breeding and never overuse individuals or groups of closely related individuals in your breeding.

### Regulations for registration

In the Svenska Kennelklubben regulations for registration there are several parts concerning you as a breeder. There are general rules applying to all breeds as well as specific regulations for a number of breeds. Make sure you know what is required in your breed in order for you to register your puppies. For example, will you have to X-ray the parents, or take an eye test? The health tests must have been taken and the official test result must be in place before the mating, otherwise you are breaking the rules. The sire and the dam may be healthy as a horse but you have to find out in advance!



# Keeping dogs in practice

*To keep your dogs in a decent way means we look after our dogs accordingly, considering all of their needs.*

## Health and care

It is of importance that the environment our dogs are inhabiting is safe and spacious enough, and not too noisy, too muddy, too wet, too cold or too hot. And of course it should also be clean and fresh-looking. It is just as important that the dogs are taken well care of. They should be clean and get the appropriate coat care needed, the claws need inspection and cutting if necessary. Teeth should be taken care of. The dogs must have free access to fresh water and they should be fed a well balanced nutritious diet enough to keep them in good condition, neither too fat nor too skinny. They should also get the possibility to feed in peace and quiet. It goes without saying that a sick or injured dog must be given the necessary care and treatment.

## Exercise and stimulation

All dogs need to get out and exercise every day and they need mental stimulation. The dogs must be in contact with you or another person at least a few hours a day through activity, exercise, air or similar. Make sure you have the energy and the time to spare! Do not let your dogs lie on their own the entire day only to get exercise/air when you finally get home from work – in which case you have to sort out someone else taking care of your dog during the day.

## Life in a flock

Dogs are social animals who need contact with both humans and their own species in order to lead a good life. But they are also in need of peace and calm, the possibility of retiring on their own. Crowded living space can cause irritation and stress. Regardless of the number of dogs in a flock it is important that they all go well together. No dog should be bullied, they should all enjoy themselves and be happy. If you have both dogs and bitches, in order to avoid unwanted matings you need to be able to part the group when the bitches are in season. You must have the time and opportunity to notice if a dog is not its "usual self". If you do not have that time you are simply keeping too many dogs.

Not all dogs go well together.  
Sometimes it becomes necessary to  
re-home a dog.

You have to put your own feelings  
aside and decide what is best for  
your dog – who might just be better  
off somewhere else?



# The space for keeping dogs – 'förvaringsutrymmen'

*The limited boxes/kennels/dog runs etc, indoors or outdoors, where we keep our dogs are called 'förvaringsutrymmen' – the space for keeping dogs.*

## **The Swedish Board of Agriculture, Jordbruksverket**

The Swedish Board of Agriculture's, Jordbruksverket, regulations (SJFVS 2020:8, L 102) states the minimum space needed for indoor as well as outdoor space. If dogs have access to a combined indoor and outdoor space at least one of these facilities must

meet the requirements of the regulations. A space for keeping dogs must be customized in such a way that taking care of the dogs and the space can be executed without difficulty. The ventilation must work properly.







### Limited areas

Dogs must not be kept in cages or in a limited area smaller than the minimum space stated. There are a few exceptions, for example during shorter trips such as travelling when on holiday, journeys to and from, as well as the stay during, a dog show, a competition, a test or when hunting and training dogs, including the time these activities take place.

A sick, ill or injured dog who needs to rest or stay still may be kept in a cage if it has been prescribed by a veterinarian for medical reasons.

Space used for keeping dogs must be well ventilated.

Too high ammonia level causes a pungent smell and is both unpleasant and unhealthy for dogs as well as humans.

### Box

HEIGHT AT THE WITHERS OF THE DOG	SINGLE DOG	DOGS KEPT IN PAIRS OR IN GROUPS	
		THE LARGEST DOG	FOR EACH ADDITIONAL DOG THE FLOOR AREA MUST INCREASE WITH
<25 cm	2 m <sup>2</sup>	2 m <sup>2</sup>	1 m <sup>2</sup>
25 – 35 cm	2 m <sup>2</sup>	2 m <sup>2</sup>	1,5 m <sup>2</sup>
36 – 45 cm	2,5 m <sup>2</sup>	2,5 m <sup>2</sup>	1,5 m <sup>2</sup>
46 – 55 cm	3,5 m <sup>2</sup>	3,5 m <sup>2</sup>	2 m <sup>2</sup>
56 – 65 cm	4,5 m <sup>2</sup>	4,5 m <sup>2</sup>	2,5 m <sup>2</sup>
>65 cm	5,5 m <sup>2</sup>	5,5 m <sup>2</sup>	3 m <sup>2</sup>

*For each additional dog added, the area stated on the line which corresponds to the height at the withers for that particular dog should be added.*

## Boxes for bitches with puppies

Bitches must have the opportunity to whelp in privacy. A lactating bitch must also have access to a calm and undisturbed place for her and her puppies. Boxes and kennels must be furnished so that the animals are specially protected against the cold. You may have to provide heating of some sort. Bare in mind that the young puppies must not be left without supervision for any longer periods. Before the puppies are 8 weeks old and until they no longer need the milk and care from their mother you must not separate them from the bitch other than

temporarily. According to the SKK Code of Ethics the puppies must not leave their breeder until 8 weeks of age the earliest. The regulations of the Swedish Board of Agriculture, Jordbruksverket, state the minimum size of a box for a bitch with puppies older than three weeks.

*7 § Minimum space of a box for a bitch who is kept with her puppies, older than three weeks but not older than 12 weeks, is stated below. The measurements refer to the smallest available floor area in square metres.*

### Box for bitch with puppies older than three weeks

HEIGHT AT THE WITHERS OF THE BITCH	BITCH WITH 1-3 PUPPIES	FROM THE FOURTH PUPPY AND FOR EACH ADDITIONAL PUPPY THE FLOOR AREA SHOULD INCREASE WITH
<25 cm	2 m <sup>2</sup>	0,5 m <sup>2</sup>
25 – 35 cm	3 m <sup>2</sup>	0,7 m <sup>2</sup>
36 – 45 cm	4 m <sup>2</sup>	1 m <sup>2</sup>
46 – 55 cm	5 m <sup>2</sup>	1,2 m <sup>2</sup>
56 – 65 cm	7 m <sup>2</sup>	1,5 m <sup>2</sup>
>65 cm	8 m <sup>2</sup>	1,7 m <sup>2</sup>



Lactating bitches must have access to a separate spot for resting which the puppies can not reach.

But she must always be able to get in to her puppies, as well as get out, whenever she wants to.

In other words a lactating bitch should be able to choose when and if she wishes to spend time with her litter.

## Outdoor space

### Dog runs

Dog runs must contain spots both for sun and for shade, and there must also be protection against rain and wind.

The ground must be well drained and suitable for dog feet. There must be a spot for resting which is situated above ground. The resting spot must be spacious enough for each and every dog to lie down in its natural position without difficulty. If the dog is to spend time in the dog run regularly and/or for longer periods of time there must be a kennel or another indoor space where the dog can take shelter. Different breeds have different needs and requirements. Some can take heat better and other worse. Some can resist stormy weathers, snow and wind better and other worse. Make sure your dogs can seek shelter from the sun, the wind, the cold or the rain if needed! Please note that not all dogs

are suited for being kept in dog runs at all. It is of importance that the dogs may come out of the dog run from time to time. They must be exercised and aired outside of the dog run at least once a day. If dogs are kept in dog runs for a lengthy time the environment must be stimulating enough. A dog run must be environmentally enriched. For example this could be poles for males to mark on, tunnels, platforms to stand and gaze the surroundings from, the possibility to do dig-outs and a choice of durable dog toys.

### To tie up dogs

You may tie up your dog temporarily if for example you need to do some grooming or any other care, but if you do you are not allowed to let the dog wear a pinch collar. A dog which is tied up must be under constant supervision.

#### Dog run or any other outdoor space

HEIGHT AT THE WITHERS OF THE DOG	SINGLE DOG	DOGS KEPT IN PAIRS OR IN GROUPS	
		THE LARGEST DOG	FOR EACH ADDITIONAL DOG THE FLOOR AREA MUST INCREASE WITH
<25 cm	7 m <sup>2</sup>	7 m <sup>2</sup>	4 m <sup>2</sup>
25 – 35 cm	10 m <sup>2</sup>	10 m <sup>2</sup>	6 m <sup>2</sup>
36 – 45 cm	15 m <sup>2</sup>	15 m <sup>2</sup>	8 m <sup>2</sup>
46 – 55 cm	16 m <sup>2</sup>	16 m <sup>2</sup>	10 m <sup>2</sup>
56 – 65 cm	18 m <sup>2</sup>	18 m <sup>2</sup>	12 m <sup>2</sup>
>65 cm	20 m <sup>2</sup>	20 m <sup>2</sup>	14 m <sup>2</sup>

*For each additional dog added, the area stated on the line which corresponds to the height at the withers for that particular dog should be added.*

#### Resting spots for dogs in kennels/dog houses

LENGTH	WIDTH	HEIGHT
The dog's length measured from the tip of the nose to the tip of the nose to the set-on of tail multiplied by 1.1	The dog's height at the withers multiplied by 1.1	The dog's height at the withers multiplied by 1.2



# The County Administrative Board – Länsstyrelsen

*The task of the County Administrative Board is to see to that animals in Sweden are being treated well and we should be very grateful for their efforts.*

The County Administrative Board may perform animal welfare inspections without notice but they may also perform a planned inspection. Should you get such a visit they will inspect the dogs and the space in which they are kept. After the inspection they go through their findings with you. If they have found any shortcomings they must be corrected in compliance with the regulations.

So as stated above; please keep track of the animal welfare act and the Swedish Board of Agriculture regulations and general guidelines regarding keeping dogs!

## Permit

**In case your activity increases you may need a permit from the County Administrative Board. For example you will need a permit if you:**

- Keep more than nine dogs of 12 months or older or
- Breed more than two litters a year or
- Sell dogs from three or more litters of your own breeding a year

When you apply for a permit the County Administrative Board will make a house call to go through your business. They will also estimate your suitability so it is of benefit for you if you can show them any grade, certificate or diploma from relevant education or courses. Anyone who is planning to seek permit as from January 1, 2022, needs to have a certain competence requirement fulfilled (this does not apply to anyone who



already holds a previously approved permit before this date).

When your permit has been approved it is important that you meet the conditions, for example that you do not keep more dogs than the permit allows.

# Agreement forms – 'avtal'

*As a breeder within SKK you must always use the SKK agreement forms when transferring a dog.*

## Three important agreement forms

The forms which are mandatory to use when transferring a dog is one of the following:

- Transfer of ownership – 'Köpeavtal'
- Transfer of ownership with retained breeding rights – 'Köpeavtal med bibehållen avelsrätt'
- Transfer of dog on breeding terms – 'Fodervärdsavtal'

You may order the agreement forms in paper from the SKK office, but please make the order in plenty of time before you plan on delivering your puppies!

SKK also has a mating agreement form and a loan agreement form which we recommend you to use. If you for some reason further on should find yourself in a dispute it is an

element of security to have a written agreement to refer to and it reduces the chance of misunderstandings.

SKK also have other agreement forms which may be of use for you as a breeder.

## Veterinary examination– no older than a week

The SKK Code of Ethics states that a dog must not be delivered unless a veterinary examination certificate no older than seven days prior to delivery is enclosed. The date of the examination is to be counted as day one.

This rule is a valuable help for you as a breeder, for example it is the best way of proving a puppy was healthy at delivery. You should always save a copy of the certificate for yourself.

If the certificate is older than seven days at delivery it can mean a hidden-fault insurance will not be valid and that the dog's individual insurance might not cover any veterinary costs.

## Legal Q&A

You will find answers to frequently asked legal questions at [www.skk.se](http://www.skk.se), for example regarding purchase and agreement forms, insurances, owner's right and damage demands.





# Responsible dog breeding

*An important part of your work as a breeder is to make wise and well thought-out breeding decisions.*

## Health screening programmes

In certain breeds there are hereditary diseases and defects which causes the animals to suffer. The aim of the SKK genetic health screening programmes is to enhance health within these breeds. There are screening programmes regarding both physical and mental health, and programmes which limit the use of a specific sire or dam (the dog is only allowed a restricted number of litters). There may be requirements of having a screening test regarding a specific disease/defect in place for the parents in order to be allowed to register the puppies. These tests must be performed before the mating. You will find information on the genetic health programmes that may be in use for your breed in the SKK regulations for registration.

If your breed is included in the SKK genetic health screening programme any mandatory screening of the sire and dam must have been performed, and an official test result must be in place, before the mating.

## Breed specific breeding strategies

'RAS, Rasspecifika avelsstrategier', i.e. breed specific breeding strategies, are action plans regarding breeding within a certain breed. They contain information on both troubles and strengths that may occur in the breed as well as breeding recommendations. You will



find the strategy for your breed at the breed club website and also at 'Hundrasguiden', the breed guide at the SKK website.

In the breed specific breeding strategies the breed club presents the present situation in the breed and you can find the breeding goals and which strategy the breed club hopes will get you there.

# Support and guidance

*As a breeder within SKK you have access to support, advice, guidance, information and education.*

## Kennel consultants

As a breeder within Svenska Kennelklubben you can count on getting a visit from a kennel consultant at one point. The kennel consultant mainly inspects the environment of the dogs' living space and they assess the condition and well-being of the dogs. Further, the role of the kennel consultant is to be a support for you and they can help you interpret the laws and regulations which dog breeding has to abide by.

When a kennel consultant visits he or she will have a look at the space for keeping dogs, the whelping boxes, the dog kennels etc. You will also have a conversation regarding other aspects of your business, for example if a permit is needed from the County Administrative Board or how to use agreement forms. The consultant will sign a protocol for the visit which will be sent to the SKK office. Most times the visits are not announced in advance.

The SKK kennel consultants have lengthy experience in dogs and more often than not they are dog breeders themselves. In order to become a kennel consultant they need to go through a thorough education held by SKK.

The kennel consultants should be considered valuable resources!

Should the kennel consultant find shortcomings during the visit this will be pointed out and you agree on when they should be resolved. For you as a breeder within SKK it is mandatory to accept visits from our kennel consultants.

Close to a hundred kennel consultants perform around 2 500 visits at kennels around Sweden each year. Most visits are positive experiences on both parts. You will find more information regarding the work of the kennel consultants at [www.skk.se](http://www.skk.se) where you will also find contact information for a kennel consultant near you.

## SKK Legal Department

As a breeder and a member of Svenska Kennelklubben you are entitled to get advice from the legal department at the SKK central office regarding agreements and complaints, keeping dogs and the work of the kennel consultants. The department also handles matters of offences against the SKK Code of Ethics, matters of statutes and any other legal matter, as well as applications for and changes in kennel prefixes.

## SKK Department for Breeding and Health

The department handles matters regarding the dog's physical and mental health and well-being. Among other things they handle Breed Specific Breeding Strategies, 'rasspecifika avelsstrategier, RAS', Breed Specific Instructions for show judges, BSI,

Behaviour and Personality Assessment in Dogs, 'BPH', research funds and projects, DNA-tests, the on-line service 'Avelsdata', hip and elbow index and education and seminars on breeding. The department also keep records of health tests which are registered by SKK.

### **SKK.se – a mine of information for breeders**

You will find a multitude of information regarding breeding, laws and regulations, health programmes, BSI and RAS, mental tests, DNA-tests, education for breeders and much more on [www.skk.se](http://www.skk.se).

You will also find several pamphlets with all sorts of information available for downloading.

### **Education**

Should you wish to learn more about all parts of dog breeding, the SKK education for breeders certainly is something to consider! The course is available as distance learning which means you can study at times most convenient for you. All you need is a computer and access to the internet. The course is also available as a physical study group with a tutor, these courses are organised by the SKK member clubs around the country. Further, SKK offers several other interesting distance learning courses, for example an in depth course on breeding and a course covering the behaviour of dogs.





The Swedish Kennel Club is the dog owners' national organisation and represents all dogs and dog owners in Sweden. With close to 300,000 members, we are one of the country's largest interest organisations. We disseminate information, educate and provoke debate - and show the great joy and benefit of a dog!



## SVENSKA KENNELKLUBBEN

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