

My legal responsibilities as a dog owner

The Animal Health and Welfare Act (2013)

- 🐾 You must provide **appropriate care** for your dog.

The Microchipping of Dogs Regulations (2015)

- 🐾 Ensure your dog is **microchipped** and **registered** on an approved database.
- 🐾 Have a valid **Certificate of Registration** from the database operator.
- 🐾 Ensure you keep owner and dog **details up to date** on the database.

The Control of Dogs Act (1986)

- 🐾 Annual or lifetime **dog licence**.
- 🐾 **Collar or harness** on your dog with your **contact details** attached.
- 🐾 Keep your dog under **effectual control** when you are in public places.

The Control of Dogs Regulations (1998)

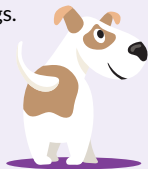
- 🐾 **Additional controls** apply to the following breeds and type of dog (or strains or crosses of these breeds or type of dogs), so-called 'listed' or 'restricted breeds'

American Pit Bull Terrier	Japanese Tosa
Bull Mastiff	Rhodesian Ridgeback
Doberman Pinscher	Rottweiler
English Bull Terrier	Staffordshire Bull Terrier
German Shepherd (Alsatian)	Ban Dog (or Bandog)
Japanese Akita	

- 🐾 In a public place, these dogs must be **securely muzzled** and **kept on a strong chain or leash (maximum 2 metres in length)** by a person **over 16 years of age** who is **capable of controlling the dog**.

The Litter Pollution Act (1997)

- 🐾 Pick up and bin dog poo when in public places.
- 🐾 This requirement does not apply to guide dogs.
- 🐾 Remember: **Bag it and bin it!**



If you keep a dog, you MUST follow these requirements.

Checklist for responsible pet ownership

My dog MUST

- Be microchipped and registration kept up to date on an approved database.
- Have a certificate of registration from the microchip database.
- Have a valid dog licence issued by An Post.
- Wear a collar or harness with my contact details attached.
- Be under my effectual control both in urban and rural public places.
- Have access to clean water and appropriate food suitable to my dog's needs.
- Be kept in a manner that safeguards my dog's health and welfare.
- Be kept in a manner that does not threaten the health or welfare of another animal.
- Be kept in a manner that safeguards the health and welfare of people.



Who do I contact if I suspect animal cruelty?

Suspected cases of dog cruelty or animal welfare concerns should be reported to:

- DSPCA: cruelty@dspca.ie Contact number: **01 4994700**
- ISPCA: helpline@ispca.ie Contact number: **0818 515515**
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine National Helpline: animalwelfare@agriculture.gov.ie Contact number: **01 607 2379**



Rialtas na hÉireann
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Responsible Dog Ownership



[gov.ie/ResponsibleDogOwnership](https://www.gov.ie/ResponsibleDogOwnership)

In addition to pet dogs enhancing the lives of their owners, dog ownership involves owner commitment and owner responsibilities.

The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM), The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and Local Authorities have compiled this guide to responsible dog ownership in Ireland.

Is a dog right for me?

Owning a dog is a lifelong commitment, with some dogs living up to 20 years of age.

If you are thinking of getting a dog as a pet, firstly consider if your home and family lifestyle are suited to keeping a dog for its lifetime. There are three key questions to ask yourself:

Is my home right for a dog?

- First determine if your living conditions are suitable for a dog.
- If living in rental accommodation, landlord permission must be sought.
- Some local authorities do not permit tenants to keep dogs of certain breeds as listed under the Control of Dogs Regulations.

Is my, and my family's, lifestyle suited to caring for a dog?

- Are all family members in agreement with having a dog?
- What type of dog will suit your lifestyle?
- Have you time each day to care for, interact with, and exercise your dog?
- Will commitments, such as a baby or new job, impact your caring for a dog?
- Who will look after your dog when you are away from home?

Do I have the financial resources to cover expenses?

- In addition to household expenses such as dog food, bedding and accessories, you may need to budget for a dog licence, microchipping, veterinary care, vaccination, neutering, grooming, dog training classes and boarding kennel fees.

How to be a responsible dog owner

Responsible Sourcing

- Consider adopting from a local authority dog shelter or animal welfare charity.
- If you decide to buy a dog, consult your vet for advice.
- Never agree to collect a dog without seeing the dog in its home environment.
- Reputable breeders have waiting lists so, please be prepared to wait.
- If sourcing your dog from a Dog Breeding Establishment (DBE) check the premises is registered with the local City/County Council.
- A registered DBE will have a registration certificate on display in the premises.

Microchipping

- In Ireland, if you keep, sell, purchase or rehome a dog, your dog must be microchipped and registered on a database approved by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.
- If your dog goes missing, there is a greater chance of being reunited if your dog is microchipped.
- Please contact your vet for information on microchipping.

Dog Licence and Identification

- If you own a dog, you must have a dog licence.
- Dog licences may be purchased online at www.licences.ie or in your local Post Office.
- Current fee for an individual dog licence, valid for one year, is €20; the fee for a lifetime licence is €140.
- Your dog must wear a collar or harness with your contact details attached.
- Consider adding your phone number to your dog's identification tag.

You can purchase a dog licence at your local Post Office <https://www.anpost.com/Store-Locator>

Basic Care

- Provide **clean water, appropriate food** and **shelter** suited to your dog's needs.
- Exercise** your dog daily (exercise needs depend on dog breed).
- Groom** your dog regularly to keep coat and skin healthy.
- Play** with your dog to keep them stimulated.
- Socialise** your dog regularly with other dogs.
- Train** your dog to understand basic commands.

Veterinary Care

- Please consult your vet for professional advice on **veterinary care** including vaccinations, neutering, flea and worm treatment and health checks.

Dog Control

- As it is a legal requirement that dogs are kept under 'effectual control'. It is recommended to keep your dog on a lead when you are in public spaces.
- Make sure your dog does not cause a nuisance to others, and respect rules in relation to where dogs are welcome.
- Additional rules may apply in certain locations. For example, farmers often request that dogs are not brought onto their lands, particularly when sheep or other livestock are present. Local bye-laws may also apply in beaches or public parks.

