

You and your dog in the countryside



Great ways to explore, enjoy and help look after the countryside with your dog



“Even dogs like me can sometimes get lost”

A visit to the countryside should be enjoyable and trouble-free for you and your dog. Even so, every year many dogs go missing: they can become trapped, scared by loud noises, injured in road accidents, or even stolen.

To help get your pet back as soon as possible, photocopy this page, fill out the details for each of your pets and keep this information with you at all times.

Attach a photo of your dog here -
this will help people know what to look
for if it goes missing

Dog's name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Sex: male/female: _____

Breed: _____

Microchip number: _____

Tattoo number and location: _____

Distinguishing marks: _____

Any special medication or allergies: _____

Telephone numbers:

Vet: _____

Dog warden: _____

Police: _____

RSPCA: 0870 55 55 999

Petlog: 0870 606 6751

Pet insurance details: _____

Owner's name: _____

Owner's address: _____

Owner's tel. number: _____

Other person to contact in case of emergency:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

To help prevent your dog from becoming permanently lost:

- never let it go out of sight when on a walk
- train it to always come back immediately when called
- make sure it always wears a collar bearing your name, address and preferably a mobile telephone number
- have it microchipped and register the details on the Kennel Club's Petlog database
- change your contact details with Petlog and on your dog's collar, if you move or go away on holiday

If your dog gets lost, see page → P13

See page → P15 for details about Petlog and other useful services.

“Hello! I'm John the sheepdog from the Countryside Code, and I just love the countryside. I'll guide you through this leaflet to help you have an enjoyable time by being responsible with your dog in the countryside, and help protect the landscape, wildlife and people that make it so special.”



Whether ambling along leafy lanes, rambling through forests, or exploring new access land, the countryside is a great place for you and your dog to explore and enjoy.

Six steps to worry-free 'walkies' by following the Countryside Code*

- By law, you must control your dog so that it does not scare or disturb farm animals or wildlife. On most areas of open country and common land, known as 'access land', you must keep your dog on a short lead between 1 March and 31 July – and all year round near farm animals.
- Everyone knows how unpleasant dog mess is and it can cause infections, so always clean up after your dog and get rid of the mess responsibly. Also, make sure your dog is wormed regularly to protect it, other animals and people.
- You do not have to put your dog on a lead on public paths, as long as it is under close control. But as a general rule, keep your dog on a lead if you cannot rely on its obedience. By law, farmers are entitled to destroy a dog that injures or worries their animals.
- At certain times, dogs may not be allowed on some areas of access land or may need to be kept on a lead. Please follow any official signs.
- If a farm animal chases you and your dog, it is safer to let your dog off the lead – don't risk getting hurt by trying to protect it.
- Take particular care that your dog doesn't scare sheep and lambs, or wander where it might disturb birds that nest on the ground and other wildlife – eggs and young will soon die without protection from their parents.

You can also find out more about these rules from www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk, by emailing openaccess@countryside.gov.uk or calling 0845 100 3298.

Wherever you go, following these steps will help keep your pet safe, protect the environment, and show you are a responsible dog owner.

* The Countryside Code has been developed for England and Wales only. For the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, visit www.snh.org.uk/soac

Where you can go with your dog

“From walks along the beach to hikes across the hill-tops, there are thousands of miles of paths and acres of open country for you to enjoy with your dog, as long as you Keep it in sight and under close control or on a lead.”



Public paths

Public footpaths, bridleways and byways provide thousands of miles of paths and tracks for you to walk with your dog. These paths are often indicated by official signs at the roadside and coloured arrows like these along the way:



public footpath - for walkers



public bridleway - for walkers, horse riders and cyclists



public byway - for all the above, plus “off-road” vehicles

Local councils and landowners are working together to ensure you can use all these paths, as well as making sure they do not become difficult or dangerous to use.

The law protects your right to walk these paths at anytime and requires you to take simple steps to prevent harm to wildlife, farm animals and other people, so always follow the Countryside Code.

Open Country

Since 2004, new laws have opened up new areas of land for walkers with dogs across areas of mountain, moor, heath and down, and registered common land, known as ‘access land’ in England and Wales. These areas are being shown on Ordnance Survey Explorer maps and on special maps at www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk

and may also be marked in the countryside by this symbol



Areas of open country are often some of the most peaceful parts of the countryside and their ‘wild’ beauty is maintained by those who manage the land for a living.



Countryside Agency / Jos Joslin

On access land, the law requires that:

- dogs are kept on a lead of no more than 2 metres long when birds are nesting, between 1 March and 31 July;
- dogs are also kept on a lead of no more than 2 metres near farm animals;
- to protect sensitive wildlife and farm animals, in some places official restrictions may ban walkers and their dogs for a few days, or even years on grouse moors. This doesn’t restrict your access along any nearby public paths.

To help manage the land in other areas, ensure your safety or prevent fires, there may be other temporary official restrictions. Again, these don’t restrict your access along public paths.

Plan ahead to avoid being disappointed. Any restrictions in place can be viewed on the maps at www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk and are indicated by official signage in the countryside.

For more information and the Moorland Visitors’ Code → **P14/15**

Other access

There are many other areas where you can walk with your dog, such as country parks, green spaces and cycleways. There are beaches, Forestry Commission woodlands, and local agreements where the Government and local councils help farmers provide extra paths.

For more about these different forms of access → **P14/15**



Countryside Agency / Jane Mitchell

What if I take my dog where it shouldn't go?

Depending on where you are, if you do this deliberately or ignore official signs, you could be made to leave the area or be fined. This could also lead to more restrictions for all dog owners.



Countryside Agency / Jane Mitchell



Countryside Agency / Sue Martin

"Whether it's setting-off on holiday, going to your favourite walking spot, or even moving home, we dogs love travelling to all those new sights and smells! Here's how to keep us safe and happy on the move."



What if my dog chases livestock?

It is sometimes a dog's natural instinct to chase things, but this can cause distress, injury and death for the animals concerned – including your dog. In some cases, farmers can legally shoot a dog that is worrying their livestock. Look ahead and keep your dog on a lead when you might encounter livestock.

What if my dog disturbs or chases wildlife?

Again, this may fatally harm the animals involved and jeopardise schemes that help protect vulnerable wildlife. It's an offence to disturb specially-protected birds, so please keep your dog on a lead or under close control in sensitive areas. Respect official signs restricting access with your dog.

What if a farm animal chases me and my dog?

This can happen if farm animals have young, or have been worried by dogs in the past. If chased, it's safer to let your dog off the lead to get away and distract the farm animal away from you. Don't risk getting seriously hurt by trying to protect your dog.



Kennel Club / Dogs for the Disabled

I've checked ahead and restrictions mean I'm not allowed to take my dog on my favourite moorland walk today. What can I do?

You could see if you can divert around the restricted area using public paths. However, if this is a sensitive time for breeding birds, you and your dog may have a better time somewhere else, such as a Forestry Commission woodland. → P14/15

How do I stop my dog from pulling on the lead?

Modern training methods mean dogs can be trained not to pull, without being cruel or restricting their freedom. The sooner you start, the easier it will be! → P10

I have an officially-registered assistance dog – do special rules apply?

Recent laws seek to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against. Any bans or restrictions affecting dogs should not unreasonably restrict access for assistance dog users. Contact your local authority or the Kennel Club if you have a problem. → P14

In the car

If using public transport isn't practical, here are some tips for travelling by car.

- Make sure your dog has a safe, secure place to sit to prevent it distracting the driver or being injured in an accident. Solutions include mesh wire cages, dog guards, harnesses and pet carriers;
- Ensure your dog wears its collar and tag in case it runs away from the car;
- Stop every few hours to give your dog a drink and exercise on a lead;
- Moto service areas have dog feeding stations at their entrance doors, with water and disposable bowls, plus special grassy areas to walk your pet, complete with poop scoop bins;
- Dogs left in cars on even moderately sunny days can quickly die from heatstroke. If you must leave it, park in the shade, provide plenty of ventilation and water, and check on it regularly;
- Dogs are increasingly being stolen from cars and unpredictable events outside could frighten it. If in doubt, don't leave your dog;
- The Kennel Club's Good Citizen Dog Training Schemes cover safe and enjoyable travel for your pet. Starting with short trips can help avoid travel sickness. → P14

Staying away

Taking your pet on holiday can be as much fun for you as it is for your dog. Here are some tips.

- Many places welcome well-behaved dogs, but always check beforehand to avoid disappointment. The Dogs Trust charity has a database on its website where you can find dog-friendly places to stay. → P15
- Update the information on your dog's collar and advise the Petlog register if your pet is microchipped, so it can be returned to your temporary address if it gets lost. Giving a mobile telephone number is a good idea.
- Find out details of the local vet and dog warden in case the unexpected happens. Local tourist information centres will have details, as do some websites. → P14/15
- Take your dog's usual food with you, as it may not be available where you are staying.



Countryside Agency / Paul Glendell

“There’s lots you can do to help protect the environment and keep it safe and enjoyable for everyone. You and your dog can make a real difference... here’s how.”



Countryside Agency / Tina Stallard



Kennel Club / C Seddon



Countryside Agency / Sue Martin

Keep our wildlife safe and special

Even well-behaved, friendly dogs can scare birds and other animals away from their young. Their eggs or chicks could then become cold and may die, or get eaten by other animals and birds.

- Make sure your dog doesn’t chase any wildlife. This can cause injury and distress to both wildlife and your dog - especially if your pet gets lost, or runs across a road;
- Keep your dog close to you so it does not sniff out and flush nesting birds during the spring and early summer. Keep your dog on a short lead in areas of access land between 1 March and 31 July;
- Other rare birds are most sensitive in winter when they roost on the ground, as they can become exhausted and die if frequently disturbed;
- Follow official signs and advice in areas containing sensitive wildlife;
- Clear up dog mess – it can cause infections in people and other animals and affect the special soils that rare plants need to survive;



English Nature / Mark Hamblin

Supporting the people that manage the countryside

You and your dog can help farmers keep their animal’s happy, safe and healthy if you:

- make sure your dog is wormed at least once a year, preferably every 3 months. Your vet can suggest suitable products;
- keep your dog on a lead near farm animals, to prevent injury to them and your dog;
- be particularly careful when there are lambs and other young farm animals about, being chased by a dog can kill young and unborn animals, so give them plenty of space. Your dog is also more likely to be attacked by parent animals at this time;



Countryside Agency / Joe Low

Let people see the best in your dog

Some people can feel uncomfortable if even the most friendly, tail-wagging, pet approaches them. Even just one bad experience can make people - especially children - frightened of dogs for life. You can help people see the best in your dog by:

- looking out for horse riders, cyclists and joggers. They can startle your dog - or your dog can startle them - and cause an injury or accident. It’s best to put your dog on the lead as they come past;

- not letting it approach other people or their dogs, unless you are sure they are happy about this;
- ensuring you have third-party insurance in case your dog injures someone or is dangerously out of control. If found guilty, courts can ban you from keeping dogs and, in some cases, order that your pet be destroyed.



Countryside Agency / Mike Kipling

"C'mon, c'mon let's go!" Yep, there's nothing quite like our wagging tails and pleading eyes to make you pick up the lead and go for a walk, even on the dullest of days."



Countryside Agency / Rob Pilgrim



Countryside Agency / Paul Glendell



Countryside Agency / Julia Bayne

Have a happy, well-trained dog

There are few things more rewarding than when someone says "What a lovely, well-trained dog you have!"

Walks are much more fun if your dog always comes back when called and doesn't pull on the lead. The Kennel Club's Good Citizen Dog Schemes are a fun way to train your dog and learn how to keep it happy and healthy. → P14

Here are some top tips to be thinking about.

- Praising your dog every time it comes back will encourage it to return immediately when called. Never reprimand a dog that has eventually come back, as that will only make things worse.
- Dogs can become unwilling to come back when called if they are then just taken home. So call your dog back regularly for more exciting things too, like being given a treat.
- Extending dog leads can help your dog have more freedom, until it always comes back immediately when called. Keep it short near roads, farm animals, horse riders, cyclists, in sensitive wildlife areas and on access land from 1st March to 31st July.
- A dog whistle is a great way to get your dog's attention and return to your side. It also draws less attention to yourself and gives you more chance of seeing wildlife. → P15

- make sure your pet is kept up to date with its vaccinations and is wormed regularly.

Healthy walkies

Walking your dog every day keeps it happy and healthy – it can do wonders for you too! Walking for 30 minutes, five or more times per week, helps you live longer and reduces the risk of heart disease, diabetes, strokes, arthritis and some cancers.

Here's how to get even more health benefits from your walkies.

- Whilst walking at any speed is good for you, some brisk walking enhances the health benefits.
- Think about walking a bit further or faster each day, or taking in a few more hills. Make sure your dog has time to stop, sniff, train and play.
- Walking with others who like dogs can be a great way to make friends.
- If you drive a short distance to where you exercise your dog, consider walking that part of the journey, especially if there's a traffic-free path or track that you can follow from home.

- If you are walking near traffic or at night, reflective or flashing dog coats, collars and leads can help drivers see your pet.
- The Countryside Agency's 'Walking the Way to Health Initiative' can help you get more from your walking. → P14
- For more ideas about fun activities with your dog, try Dog Days Out from the Kennel Club.

And whatever you do...

- Have your fun and games in a safe place, away from cars, farm animals, sensitive areas for wildlife – and other people who may not share your enthusiasm!

- Throwing sticks can cause horrific injuries to dogs. Instead, play with a tough plastic toy from a pet store, making sure it's big enough not to be swallowed.
- Avoid exercising your dog for at least an hour before or after meals.
- Avoid heatstroke by making sure your dog gets plenty of shade and clean, cool water.
- Don't let your pet drink any water that doesn't look clean – it may be poisonous.
- Please respect official signs asking you to keep your dog away from certain areas of water and beaches.



Countryside Agency / Jane Mitchell

“These tips will help you stay safe and do the best for your dog in an emergency.”



Be prepared

This information will help with some emergency situations that can arise when out for a walk, during those initial moments before you get advice from a vet.

You can best prepare for medical emergencies in advance by: attending an animal first aid course run at local colleges and vets' surgeries; carrying a simple dog first aid kit - this can be used to help humans too; learning life-saving skills at a Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog training scheme; having pet health insurance.

Road accidents, fractures and falls

- Keep calm so as not to cause panic.
- Make sure you and your dog aren't in further danger; keep the dog warm.
- If you need to move the dog out of danger, do so slowly and gently. If it can't walk, use a coat, board or blanket as a stretcher.
- Try to stem blood flow from cuts with a pad and firm pressure; press around any foreign objects - such as broken glass or metal - to avoid pushing them further in.
- Dogs can appear paralysed after a severe accident, but this can be temporary. Never assume an animal is beyond help - follow veterinary advice.
- Internal injuries are not always obvious; contact your vet immediately if your pet is off-colour within 24 hours of an accident.

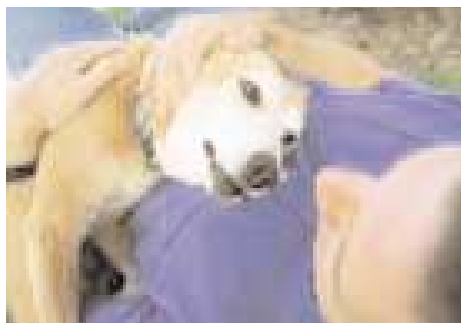
Poisoning

Many garden and agricultural chemicals can be attractive to dogs but fatal, so never let it out of your sight or let it eat what it finds when out for a walk. If you think your dog has ingested something poisonous, phone the vet immediately and keep any labels, containers or samples with you to help the vet decide the best treatment. DO NOT make your dog sick without first consulting your vet.

Heat stroke

This occurs to dogs when exercised in hot weather, or left in cars on even moderately warm days. They will pant excessively and may vomit, collapse, have fits or difficulty breathing. If heat stroke occurs:

- keep the dog calm. Move it into the shade, a cool room or building, or near a fan or breeze;
- cool all of your dog with water, paying particular attention to the head;
- let your dog drink small amounts of cool water frequently. Call the vet.



Countryside Agency / Joe Low

Insect stings

If a sting is left in your dog, scrape it away with a fingernail or credit card; do not squeeze or grasp it. Cool the area with a wet cloth to help reduce pain and swelling. If in doubt, contact your vet.

Adder bites

If your dog is bitten by an adder, keep it still and calm. If possible, don't allow it to walk; carry it instead. Leave the bite wound alone; contact a vet immediately.

Ticks

These potentially harmful parasites are particularly likely to be encountered in spring and autumn, especially where sheep and deer live. Check your dog for ticks every day; they resemble a dark, smooth pea. Have them removed immediately, as they can spread harmful diseases. They must not be squeezed or pulled off. Ask your vet how to do this safely.

If your dog goes missing

If lost, your dog is likely to be picked up by the Police, local authority Dog Warden, or an animal welfare or rescue organisation. These people can read a dog's microchip number, and so contact the owner using the Kennel Club's Petlog database, 365 days of the year.

Other ways to help find your pet are:

- phoning Petlog immediately if your dog is microchipped on 0870 606 6751;
- searching the area where you last saw your dog;
- leaving your details and a picture/description of your pet with as many people as possible, especially those delivering letters, newspapers and milk;
- advertising in the 'Lost' section of local newspapers – read the 'Found' adverts too;
- calling the local vet, police station and dog warden;
- visiting nearby animal welfare and rescue centres. Ensure you look into each enclosure;
- calling radio stations that announce lost and found pets;
- visiting the website: www.doglost.co.uk
- putting up posters in pet shops, vets, supermarkets, restaurants, local stores and post offices;
- keeping an up to date photograph of your pet in this booklet;
- not restricting your search to just one small area. Dogs can stray for long distances.



More help and information

“You’ve had lots of tips about enjoying the countryside and Keeping it special for others. But if, like me, you like dogs and love the countryside, you might want to know more...”



People and places

The Kennel Club

Your first port of call on all canine matters, including Good Citizen training clubs, rescue societies, publications, access advice, gifts and factsheets. Tel: 0870 606 6750 www.the-kennel-club.org.uk

Countryside Agency

Helping everyone to respect, protect and enjoy the countryside. Tel: 01242 521381 www.countryside.gov.uk

English Nature

The Government agency that champions the conservation of wildlife and geology throughout England, with information on volunteering and special places in your area. Tel: 01733 455101 www.english-nature.org.uk

The Countryside Agency, English Nature and the Rural Development Service are working together to create Natural England - for people, places and nature.

Forestry Commission

Where to go, what to do and where to stay in the nation's one million hectares of public forest. Tel: 0845 3673787 www.forestry.gov.uk

National Parks

For details of the National Parks of England, Scotland and Wales visit www.nationalparks.gov.uk

Moorland Association

Information about how landowners and moorland keepers manage heather moorland to keep it special for wildlife and people. www.moorlandassociation.org

Visit Britain

Attractions, accommodation and transport details throughout the UK, with contact details of local tourist information centres. Tel: 020 8846 9000 www.visitbritain.com

Walking the Way to Health

Encouragement, advice and local contacts to keep you stepping-out for health. Tel: 01242 533258 www.whi.org.uk

Countryside Access Information

Find out where you can go and what you can do, from beaches to hilltops, plus restrictions information for access land. For advice about specific paths and problems on public access in your area, contact your local council helpline or information centre will have contact details. The Countryside Code and the Moorland Visitor's Code leaflets are available free by calling 0845 100 3298. www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk

Panacur™

Panacur is a tried and tested wormer for dogs and is available in liquid, paste, granules and Favourites. For further information about worming your pet, contact your veterinary surgeon or local trade outlet.

Support organisations and charities

Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors

Tel: 01386 751151 www.apbc.org.uk

Association of Pet Dog Trainers

Tel: 01285 810811 www.apdt.co.uk

Assistance Dogs UK

Tel: 01844 348 100 www.hearing-dogs.co.uk/assistance-dogs.html

Blue Cross

Tel: 01993 822651 www.bluecross.org.uk

Dogs Trust

Tel: 020 7837 0006 www.dogstrust.org.uk

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Tel: 0870 33 35 999 www.rspca.org.uk

People's Dispensary for Sick Animals

Tel: 0800 917 2509 www.pdsa.org.uk

Suppliers and services

Dog whistles

Tel: 01902 746329 www.reflog.co.uk

Dog-friendly service areas

Tel: 0870 1911900 www.moto-way.com

MyPetstop

Tel: 0800 738800 www.mypetstop.co.uk

Ordnance Survey

Tel: 0845 200 2712 www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk

Our Dogs bookshop

Tel: 0870 731 6502 www.ourdogs.co.uk

Pets at home

Tel: 0161 486 6688 www.petsathome.co.uk

Vet finder

www.rcvs.org.uk www.any-uk-vet.co.uk

Emergency contacts

Petlog

Tel: 0870 606 6751 www.petlog.org.uk

Missing dogs

Tel: 01909 733366 www.doglost.co.uk

Pet bereavement support

Tel: 0800 096 6606 www.bluecross.org.uk

Pollution and fly-tipping hotline

Tel: 0800 80 70 60

Wildlife poisoning hotline

Tel: 0800 321600

These contacts are given in good faith, although their listing does not imply endorsement of their content, advice or services. Other suppliers are available; please contact the Kennel Club for details.

"It's all in here..."

- Where can I go with my dog in the countryside? → P4
- How can I help look after the countryside? → P8
- Why should I keep my dog on a lead at certain times? → P8
- What can I do to make walks more exciting for my dog? → P10
- How can I get my dog to come back when called? → P10
- What should I do if my dog gets injured? → P12
- Who should I call if my dog gets lost? → P13

The Countryside Code

Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs

Even when going out locally, it's best to get the latest information about where and when you can go. For example, your rights to go onto some areas of open land may be restricted while work is carried out for safety reasons, or during breeding seasons. Follow advice and local signs, and be prepared for the unexpected.

Leave gates and property as you find them

Please respect the working life of the countryside, as our actions can affect people's livelihoods, our heritage, and the safety and welfare of animals and ourselves.

Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home

We have a responsibility to protect our countryside now and for future generations, so make sure you don't harm animals, birds, plants or trees.

Keep dogs under close control

The countryside is a great place to exercise dogs, but it's every owner's duty to make sure their dog is not a danger or nuisance to farm animals, wildlife or other people.

Consider other people

Showing consideration and respect for other people makes the countryside a pleasant environment for everyone – at home, at work and at leisure.



www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk

www.the-kennel-club.org.uk • www.english-nature.org.uk

CA 205

For multiple copies of this leaflet, contact Countryside Agency publications: PO Box 125, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS23 7EP Tel: 0870 120 6466. Single copies can be ordered via our website www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk

This publication has been produced through a partnership between the Countryside Agency, the Kennel Club, and English Nature with support from 