DNA Profiling and Parentage Analysis Services

The Kennel Club offers DNA Profiling and DNA Parentage Analysis for all breeds of dog, including crossbreeds.

What is DNA Profiling?
Each dog has a distinctive DNA signature that is called its DNA profile or DNA fingerprint. This is unique to each dog and can be used as a form of individual identification. A dog's DNA profile can also be used to verify who its parents are. A dog inherits half of its DNA profile from its mother and the other half from its father; the parents and offspring's DNA profiles can therefore be compared (providing that the parents DNA profile are available) and the parentage checked.

What are the reasons for DNA profiling my dog?
A DNA profile is extremely unlikely to ever be altered, lost or malfunction during the course of a dog's life, unlike a microchip implant or tattoo.

As DNA profiles cannot currently be checked instantaneously, you may want to also consider complementing a DNA profile with another instant form of permanent identification, such as a microchip implant. DNA profiles can also be used to verify the parentage of a dog.

Does a DNA profile give information on disease status?
DNA profiles do not currently give any information on the disease status of a dog. DNA testing for specific diseases is done entirely separately to DNA profiling. If, in the future, disease markers were incorporated into profiles, then it is likely that the current profile format would change significantly to accommodate this.
Does a DNA profile give information on breed?
DNA profiles do not give any information on the breed of your dog.

How do I get my dog DNA profiled?
Complete and submit a DNA Profile Kit Request Form, which can be obtained from the Kennel Club website:  
www.thekennelclub.org.uk/kcforms or from the Health and Breeder Services Department: hbs@thekennelclub.org.uk

Once we receive your request, a sampling kit will be despatched from our laboratory and should take a couple of days to arrive. Instructions on how to use this kit will be provided and will guide you through how to take a simple mouth swab. The swab should then be returned to our laboratory in the pre-addressed envelope provided for processing. Once our laboratory has constructed your dog’s profile, a certificate of DNA profiling will be sent out to you.

What is involved?
A simple mouth swab is all that is required. Our laboratory will send you a sampling kit, which contains a swab that looks very similar to a long ear-bud. This swab should be rubbed against your dog’s gum or inner cheek to collect loose cheek cells from the inside of their mouth. The swab is then returned to our laboratory for analysis.

Do I need to get my vet to do anything?
Your vet does not need to be involved in this process; you can swab your dog yourself.
Is a blood sample required?
All that is usually required is a cheek swab. In less than 5% of cases, not enough DNA can be extracted from the provided cheeks cells and an owner may be asked to submit a blood sample from the dog instead. If a blood sample is required you will need to ask your vet to do this for you.

How much does it cost and how long does it take?
A DNA Profile and a Parentage Analysis each costs £25 per dog and takes on average four weeks to process.

How does the parentage analysis service work?
Complete and submit a Parentage Analysis Puppy Sheet for each dog, including adults, involved in a parentage analysis and one DNA Parentage Analysis Form, which can be obtained from the Kennel Club website: www.thekennelclub.org.uk/kcforms or from the Health and Breeder Services Department: hbs@thekennelclub.org.uk
The DNA Profile of your dog is the ultimate in individual identification and offers a ‘tamper-proof’ means of identity.
The Kennel Club works to protect and promote the health and welfare of all dogs in the UK. We want happy, healthy dogs living long lives with responsible owners. All profits from the organisation go straight into funding the many programmes run in the best interest of dogs and dog owners and to support the Kennel Club Charitable Trust to re-invest into a wide variety of welfare and health programmes.

Anyone can register their dog with the Kennel Club. By registering you will demonstrate your commitment to your dog’s well-being and to the health and welfare of all dogs. You can register online today at www.thekennelclub.org.uk/dogregistration.

Whatever your dog’s needs, the Kennel Club is here to help and support you. Find out more by contacting us on 01296 318540, or visit our website at www.thekennelclub.org.uk to find out more about the wonderful world of dogs.

Additional guides on a wide range of subjects are also available to download from our website at www.thekennelclub.org.uk:

- Asthma and your dog
- Breeding for health
- Breeding from your dogs
- Choosing and bringing home the right dog for you
- Common canine poisons in the house and garden
- Do you know dog law?
- Do you know how to look after your dog in its senior years?
- How to get involved in fun activities and competitions with your dog
- How to get started with dog training
- How to register your dog with the Kennel Club
- Introducing dogs to children or babies
- Kennel Club endorsements
- Managing your dog’s weight
- Moving house with your dog
- Pet Insurance Guide for dog owners
- Puppy Socialisation
- Road travel with your dog
- So you are thinking of working with dogs?
- Thinking of showing your dog in the UK?
- Travelling abroad with your dog
- Why should I Microchip my pet?