



# Rhodesian Ridgeback Club of Great Britain

## Guidelines for Breeding

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### Preparation

It is recommended that breeders shall only breed from KC registered stock, which conforms closely to the Breed Standard, & are expected to produce healthy & well-adjusted puppies. All breeding stock must be mentally & physically sound, believed to be free from hereditary defects & not suffer from acute nervousness or any kind of aggressive tendencies.

Bitches shall not be used for breeding prior to their 2nd birthday or after their 7th birthday & shall not be bred from on more than one occasion in any period of 12 calendar months. No bitch shall be expected to produce more than 3 litters in her lifetime. It is not recommended that any bitch should be bred from for the first time over the age of 4 years.

It is recommended that all breeding stock is x-rayed under the BVA / KC Hip Dysphasia Scheme & that their score is within or better than the current breed average. Additionally it is recommended that all breeding stock should be identified by microchip and/or DNA and / or tattoo.

A stud dog should be chosen well ahead of time paying close attention to pedigree compatibility, the likelihood of hereditary

defects & the suitability of conformation & behaviour so as to compliment the bitch. It is also important to agree prior to mating the terms & the cost of using the stud dog & it is therefore recommended that a contract is drawn up & signed by both parties agreeing to these terms. It is also suggested that a replacement stud dog is put on stand-by in case of need.

Stud dog owners must satisfy themselves as to the suitability, breeding & condition of any bitch presented to them & also as to the conditions under which any resultant litter would be reared.

It is suggested that both dog & bitch obtain a health check from a qualified Veterinary Surgeon prior to any mating so as to ensure that both dogs are free from any infection or other condition which may prevent a successful mating taking place. Many people recommend giving both dog & bitch a broad-spectrum antibiotic such as Synulox for a few days before & after the mating to counteract any minor bacterial infections that maybe contracted either prior to or at the time of mating. Such an infection may be contracted by the bitch visiting a new place, such as the stud dog's home.

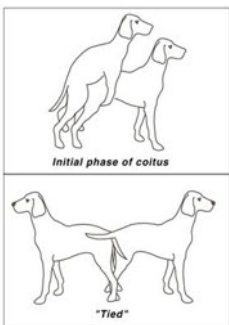


Do ensure that you keep in regular contact with the stud dog owner so that when the time is right, they are prepared for your visit. The normal practice is for the bitch to go to the stud dog. It is also recommended that you are familiar with the route & have made the necessary accommodation arrangements in cases where the stud dog lives a considerable distance away.

Finally, you must ensure that your bitch is kept away from other male dogs during her season (it is recommended that she is kept on a lead whilst being exercised) and prior to & after mating to prevent a mistake occurring. Should a mistake occur, consult your Veterinary Surgeon immediately who will be able to suggest a course of treatment to abort any potentially unwanted puppies.

### Mating

A bitch's season will generally last for 3 - 4 weeks & is readily identified by the discharge of variable quantities of blood for approx the first 10 - 14 days from her vulva. It is usually in the middle of the season that she will ovulate (release eggs ready for fertilization by the male) however, there is not always a positive indication of this stage which may occur as early as Day 5 or as late as Day 21 or 23. One possible sign is that the colour of the blood-stained



discharge will change from pink to colourless however not all bitches display this. Your Veterinary Surgeon can carry out a Pre-mate Test which involves a blood sample being taken every 2 days which will help identify when the bitch begins to ovulate. If you are not familiar with this, ask your Veterinary Surgeon for more details.

Once it has been agreed that your bitch is ready, take her to the stud dog's home. Try to allow your bitch to urinate before reaching the property. Have your bitch on a lead & under control when entering the premises as there may be other dogs about.

The dog & bitch should be allowed some time to

play together before mating. This may involve growling & snapping on the bitch's part until she accepts the dog. The dog then mounts the bitch from behind grabbing her around her waist level. A few minutes after a successful penetration follows the 'tie'. This can last anywhere from 5 minutes to almost an hour. Stud dog owners will turn the dog so that he no longer rests on the bitch's back & both owners will steady the dogs so that neither is pulled around during this time. The tie will break of it's own accord.

Most breeders prefer to do a second mating either the following day or 48 hours later to ensure a successful outcome.

## Whelping

The length of pregnancy is taken from the day of mating & is usually considered to be 63 days however, a successful pregnancy can be as short as 54 days or as long as 72 days. Many bitches whelp at around 60 days.

Ultra-sound tests (to confirm pregnancy & give an indication of the number of puppies) can be undertaken between 3 - 4 weeks. Palpitating the uterus to confirm the presence of foetuses should only be carried out by a qualified Veterinary Surgeon.

During pregnancy your bitch should continue to be exercised regularly but avoid excessively long walks or climbs & hot weather. Towards the end of pregnancy the exercise will be shorter & slower as dictated by the bitch.

Your bitch should be fed a good quality balanced food. Vitamin & mineral supplements are unnecessary. Food quantities

should not be increased until around the 6th week & then only gradually increasing from approx. 10% in week 6 to 50% in the last week. It is quite common for bitches who are close to whelping to refuse meat-based foods & therefore an alternative should be sought.

Shortly before whelping commences the bitch will become restless, usually refusing food for as long as 24 hours & may vomit. She will drift into a very deep panting which can last for as long as 24 hours during which she will sleep intermittently. She will also spend a lot of time shredding her bedding or digging, possibly in the garden.

When she is ready to whelp she will become quieter & you will be able to see visible contractions. The first sign of birth is a black fluid-filled sack or possibly a quantity of fluid if the sack has burst. The puppy will not be far behind. Some bitches whelp quickly giving only

a few minutes between pups, others may take their time & a gap of 1 - 1½ hours between puppies is not uncommon.

It is always advisable to have someone with you during whelping & your Veterinary Surgeon's number to hand in case of complications. Should the bitch have difficulty in whelping naturally, seek Veterinary advice immediately, if left untreated, complications could cause the puppies to be stillborn & put the bitch's life in danger.

Once a puppy has been born, the bitch should chew off the umbilical cord & lick the puppy clean. The puppy should be encouraged to suckle from the bitch as soon as it is able.

Puppies should be whelped in a clean, dry & warm environment. A hot water bottle wrapped in a towel may be used for extra warmth if required.

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## Rearing

All puppies shall be carefully examined for Dermoid Sinus a few days after birth & at least twice thereafter before leaving for new homes. Checks for Dermoid Sinus to be undertaken by at least 2 competent persons i.e. experienced breeders or Veterinary Surgeons with some knowledge of sinus & its detection. Any puppy discovered to have sinus before leaving the nest may be assessed & operated on, if appropriate, by a Veterinary Surgeon with knowledge & experience of the condition or, if surgery is deemed unviable, the puppy may be humanely euthanized. The puppy should be sold as "not to be shown or bred from". This shall be reflected in the price & registration documents shall be endorsed "Progeny not eligible for registration" with a written undertaking that it will be neutered.

In the very rare case of a sinus being detected after the puppy has left the nest, the breeder should agree a financial contribution towards

the operation to remove the sinus & neuter the puppy or, take the puppy back & either reimburse the owner or undertake in writing to supply another puppy. The sinus puppy should be operated on (as before) or if not viable, humanely euthanized. Thereafter the puppy may be re-homed with the relevant endorsements (as before) in place & at a commensurate price.

Any mis-marked puppy either in colour, excess white, ridge faults, ridgeless or any puppy with unsuitable conformation faults in kinky tail, entropion, incorrect bite etc., are Companion puppies & are not suitable for breeding or showing. Their registration documents should be endorsed before leaving the litter & sold at a commensurate price.

Particular care should be taken to ensure that puppies are raised in an environment that is clean, warm, dry & has space for the puppies to

develop. They should be weaned onto a suitable puppy food from approximately 2 weeks old. Caution should be exercised over visitors during the early weeks of life to minimize the likelihood of infections being transmitted. It is suggested that antibacterial handwashes & disinfectants are used by all visitors prior to them meeting the puppies. It is also recommended that visitors who have other animals at home, should only visit wearing clean clothes that have not been in contact with their animals.

Puppies are like children & therefore care must be taken to ensure that they do not have access to anything that can harm them. They should also be introduced to different everyday objects to aid their development. Ridgeback puppies play very rough & it may seem like they are killing each other. This is perfectly normal & part of growing up!

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## New Homes

Puppies shall not be sold through dealers, pet shops, trading posts or any third party. They should be sold direct to their new home with every effort being made to ascertain that the new owners have the facilities, time & commitment to correctly raise, train, exercise & appreciate a large, active but sensitive hound.

It is recommended that a Contract of Sale is drawn up encompassing all points to do with the care & welfare of the puppy & explaining carefully any endorsements on the registration documents. This contract should be explained to the new owner prior to signing & both parties should retain a copy. All new owners should be made aware of the facts about dermoid sinus, its implications & what to look

out for should it occur.

Any puppy sold over the age of 12 weeks shall be inoculated & no puppy shall leave the breeder under the age of 7 weeks. All puppies shall be accompanied by a contract of sale, pedigree certificate, KC registration certificate, diet sheet, inoculations certificate (if appropriate), worming certificate, 6 weeks insurance & an advice sheet on initial care & training. It is also advisable to give the new owner a small piece of bedding that the puppy is familiar with & a reasonable quantity of the food that the puppy has been brought up on.

Breeders should remember that their responsibility does not stop when the puppy



leaves the nest & they should be available by telephone or in person should advice be sought. The breeder should also undertake to re-home their puppy at any age should the owners circumstances change necessitating the removal of the puppy.