

Dogs

There are about 35 species in the dog family, one of which is the group of domestic dogs. Other dogs in this family include the African wild dog, many kinds of foxes, and four different species of jackals.

Dogs and humans have lived in harmony for more than 10,000 years. Dogs can be trained to help with hunting, herding, and guarding. Other jobs that dogs can do include guiding the blind, pulling sleds, and racing. Police train dogs to help them find people who are maybe trapped or in hiding. Dogs also make great pets!

More than 140 breeds are recognized in Britain. Height ranges from 150 mm in the Chihuahua to about 0.76 m in the Irish Wolfhound. There are also a variety of colours from black to white and browns from light to dark. Most breeds of dog shed their coats. Coats can be straight, curly or smooth.

Dogs have a good sense of hearing and can turn their ears to locate a sound. They also have a very sensitive nose that they use for tracking animals and people. Their long skulls help them to seize prey when they are on the run. They have four claws on each paw and tough pads to help them grip when they run. Dogs cool themselves down by panting because they cannot sweat because their fur is so thick. Their tail is used to give social signals. Dogs will wag their tails when they are happy.

Wolves and dingos are wild dogs and live in family groups called packs. Each pack has a leader who the other dogs must obey. Domestic dogs see their owner as a pack leader and will obey that person's commands e.g. sit, roll over, lie down, come here, and stay.

Puppies spend most of their time playing. They tumble, jump, chew and shake things. This helps them develop hunting skills for adult life.

Dogs communicate by barking, growling and whining.



Quick facts

Type: Mammal

Life span: 10 - 13 years

Diet: Omnivore

Group name: Pack

Name: _____
Date: _____

Subject: Themes
Sheet: Dogs



Read the information sheet about dogs on the previous page and then answer the questions.

a) Write down four jobs that a dog can be trained to do?

b) What is the group name for dogs? _____

c) How many breeds of dog are recognized in Britain? _____

d) Underline the correct answer. Dogs wag their tails when they are:

1. sad

2. happy

3. angry

4. tired

e) How many claws does a dog have on each paw? _____

f) Why do dogs pant? _____

g) Name two wild dogs? _____

h) What is an omnivore? _____

i) Write down three different ways that dogs communicate?

j) Can you think of two different breeds of domestic dog?
