



DOG BREED TRENDS OVER THE YEARS

The landscape of Britain's favourite dogs has been shifting in recent years, as dog breeds of foreign origin have shot up in popularity whilst native British breeds are declining, with some now so unpopular that they could be at risk of disappearing from our street and parks.

The most recent example, which made headlines recently, is the British public's obsession with the French Bulldog. This foreign-originating breed has shot up in popularity in recent years, with a 47 per cent increase from 2015 to 2016 alone, a 368 per cent increase in the past five years (2012 to 2016) and a staggering 3,104 per cent increase over the last ten years (2007 to 2016). If this trend continues, the Kennel Club forecasts that the breed could be the most popular dog breed in the UK, overtaking the Labrador, by the end of 2018.

This presents a number of problems, notably the fact that people seem to be choosing breeds based on how fashionable they are or because of the fact that celebrities own them, rather than because they might be the right breed to match their lifestyle. Furthermore, native British and Irish breeds tend to get overlooked when more 'exotic' breeds become fashionable.

Certain native British and Irish breeds have seen their numbers drop so low that they are at risk of disappearing from our streets and parks altogether. To tackle this the Kennel Club put together a list of native British and Irish breeds that have 300 or fewer registrations each year – the Kennel Club vulnerable British and Irish breeds list – and another list of those breeds with numbers between 301 and 450, that are considered to be at risk of becoming vulnerable – the 'At Watch' list.

One of the Kennel Club's concerns is that whenever there is a big shift in breed popularity and certain breeds become 'flavour of the month', this is often at the expense of other breeds, which tend to get overlooked. Some example of this below:

Examples - Rises

The number of Miniature Smooth Haired Dachshund (Germany) has more than doubled in past ten years – 2,112 in 2007 – 4,576 in 2016

The number of Smooth Coat Chihuahuas (Mexico) has nearly trebled in the past ten years – 1,143 in 2007 – 3,394 in 2016

Examples - Declines

West Highland White Terrier – less than a third of what it was ten years ago - 8,309 in 2007 – 2,414 in 2016. West Highland White Terrier dropped out of the top ten breeds list in 2012. It is now the 18th most popular breed.

Cavalier King Charles Spaniel – more than halved over ten years – 11,422 in 2007 – 4,114 in 2016. Dropped out of the top ten breeds list in 2012. It is now 13th most popular.

Welsh Springer Spaniel

The Welsh Springer Spaniel has been added to the vulnerable native British and Irish breeds list (as of 1st Jan 2017) for the first time after it had only 299 registrations in 2016.

Full list of vulnerable native British and Irish breeds for 2017 (based on registration figures for 2016):

Breed	2016 Kennel Club registrations
Bloodhound	53
Bull Terrier (Miniature)	172

Collie (Smooth)	89
Dandie Dinmont Terrier	91
Deerhound	209
English Setter	285
English Toy Terrier (Black and Tan)	102
Fox Terrier (Smooth)	118
Glen of Imaal Terrier	76
Irish Red and White Setter	63
Irish Wolfhound	256
King Charles Spaniel	84
Kerry Blue Terrier	168
Lakeland Terrier	220
Lancashire Heeler	90
Manchester Terrier	191
Mastiff	102
Norwich Terrier	145
Otterhound	40
Retriever (Curly Coated)	83
Sealyham Terrier	113
Skye Terrier	28
Spaniel (Clumber)	171
Spaniel (Field)	80
Spaniel (Irish Water)	116
Spaniel (Sussex)	49
Spaniel (Welsh Springer)	299
Welsh Corgi (Cardigan)	218

At Watch list:

Breed	2016 Kennel Club registrations
Irish Terrier	326
Old English Sheepdog	424
Welsh Corgi (Pembroke)	393

Choose a dog because it fits your lifestyle, not because it's fashionable

There are 217 breeds of dog in the UK and each one is different. When choosing a dog, it is important to do the proper research and find out which breed might be the best fit for your lifestyle. The great thing about pedigree dogs is their predictability – you know what you're getting – and you can use this to work out which breed might fit well into your family and home life. While breeds such as the French Bulldog, Chihuahua and Dachshund are lovely, they are not suited to everyone, so it is well worth finding out more about some of the lesser known breeds, such as some of our native British and Irish breeds, such as the Dandie Dinmont Terrier, Otterhound or Field Spaniel, to name a few.

Each breed can be split into one of seven groups – working, pastoral, gundog, toy, utility, hound and terrier – each of which were developed for different functions and which share similar characteristics. Within these seven groups each pedigree breed has its own breed standard, which outlines the breed's individual characteristics. These can be found on the Kennel Club website (www.thekennelclub.org.uk). Researching the different pedigree dog groups can be a good starting point when choosing the breed that is right for you.

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