

# Australian National Kennel Council

## Media Release

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## Dog breed shows are not “all show”

Dog shows are held regularly throughout Australia, and have been a popular pastime for decades. Most shows involve judging a purebred dog against a breed standard by taking all externally observable factors, including temperament, gait, and conformation into account. Dog shows are an excellent way for owners to meet people and for dogs to become better-socialised companions.

Dog shows can be a fun and sociable for both the owner and dog. The owner will have the opportunity to meet and mix with other dog lovers, while the dog will be better adjusted to being around unfamiliar dogs and people. Dogs that are properly socialised are well-adjusted companions, behave better around humans and other dogs, and make less noise at home.

“Going to a dog show means having a good day for both people and dogs. The dogs themselves socialise, making them better-adjusted animals at home and when around strangers and unfamiliar dogs.”, believes veterinarian and spokesman for the **Australian National Kennel Council, Dr Peter Higgins.**

Dog shows are organised by District Clubs, Breed Clubs and state canine councils, sometimes as fundraisers for charity. Anyone with a registered purebred dog can take part in a show. The largest dog shows in Australia are held annually at the Sydney Royal Easter Show, Melbourne Royal, and Brisbane Royal. Sometimes there can be as many as 5000 dogs shown, all in view of show crowds and enthusiasts.

It is important for first-time dog showing that owners take proper care of their dog throughout the day. Owners should take a beach umbrella for shade, water, snacks, and a dog bowl so as to avoid exhaustion or dehydration. Owners of dominant dogs should also seek additional advice on how to handle their dog in order to avoid possible conflict with other dogs.

Large-scale dog shows are held regularly, and often take place in the form of a conformation show, where the dog is judged against a breed standard. The judges take all externally observable factors into account, including temperament and gait, in addition to physical appearance. Other types of dog show include obedience, and agility shows and sheepdog trials.

“It’s a common misconception that dog shows are simply beauty contests that encourage breeders to adhere to unrealistic breed standards. I’ve worked as a vet at the Sydney Royal for the last 18 years. I have been to Brisbane Royal many times and have also been to the other Royal shows. I very rarely see unhealthy animals competing. The dog exhibitors would never want to see their animals in distress. It is a sociable pastime and an enjoyable event for the dog and the owner.”, says **Dr Higgins.**

“A dog show is not a beauty contest. A dog needs to be able to move well and have the right sort of temperament. Most importantly, the structure, or conformation, of the dog must be sound and show no signs of ill health or other problems. I am glad to see strict rules are in place to ensure responsible breeding and showing is practised by breeders throughout Australia.”, states **Dr Higgins.**

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