

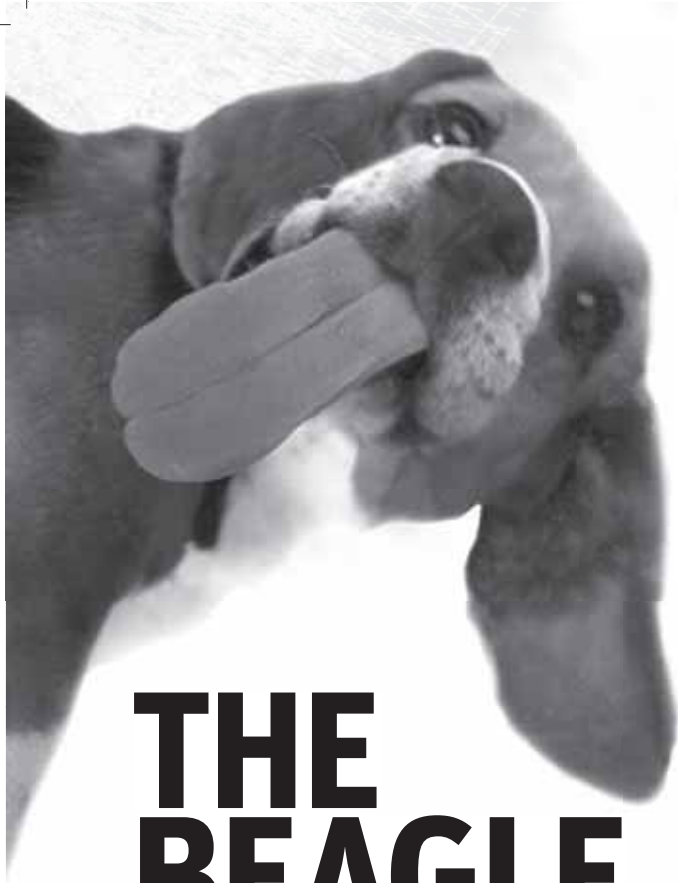


BeaGles as PeT's

**A GUIDE FOR BEAGLE OWNERS
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE**

Autumn 2010





THE BEAGLE

WHAT IS A BEAGLE?

BEAGLES ARE MEDIUM sized hounds, which stand between 13 and 16 inches high at the shoulder. They were originally bred for hunting hares in packs and today beagles are normally sociable, mischievous, healthy and delightful members of an active family.

Beagles enjoy company whether it is human, canine or feline and dislike being left on their own. A household where the whole family is out from morning to evening is quite unsuitable for

a beagle. He may be on the small side but he can do a prodigious amount of damage in a short space of time to furniture, floors and curtains.

He needs a home with a garden, which needs to be fenced with 'Colditz' in mind! Beagles can dig as well as jump, so five to six foot high fencing is recommended. He can squeeze through small spaces such as trellis work or wrought iron gates, so you'll need to make sure you have the right sort of fencing as well as making sure it is high and deep enough.

Remember that your hound will need to be exercised for at least an hour each day and part of that time should, if possible, be free running in a safe area away from traffic or livestock. Never forget that the beagle was bred to hunt, it is instinctive and will show up in his behaviour on walks. The Kennel Club says, "the man with the lead in his hand and no dog in sight owns a beagle", so be warned. Beagles are tough and love being with a family, but children must be taught to respect all dogs and not treat them like toys. Your hound should be provided with a spe-

BUYING A BEAGLE PUPPY

ALWAYS BUY A PUPPY from a specialist breeder where you will see the puppies with their mother and sometimes even the father.

Never obtain a puppy from a pet shop, puppy dealer, a market or from a puppy superstore.

The secretaries of Beagle Breed Clubs are probably the best place to start and many have Codes of Conduct, which cover the responsible way to breed and sell puppies. Contact details are available from us, SO please ask. The Kennel Club or your local veterinary surgeon may also be able to give you the

names and addresses of reputable breeders in your area.

You should be able to see a litter of puppies by appointment, but please don't turn up with the whole family on the first visit. Many prospective purchasers visit the litter several times before they take their puppy home,

THE EARLY WEEKS

The early weeks of a puppy's life are vital in its development, both physical and emotional. It's a good idea to read up about a dog's development before you take your puppy home, so that the whole family can be consistent in its approach to training. This is vital for a beagle who, if given conflicting rules, may become reluctant to obey the ones that he does not like!

So if you don't want your beagle on the furniture, make sure that everyone in the house sticks to the rules or you could find yourself in confrontation with your beagle and in a few cases, this could lead to obsessive and territorial behaviour.

In some areas there are classes for puppies from 12 weeks old known as Puppy Socialisation Classes or Puppy

Parties where you can begin training your puppy when it is most receptive and where training is great fun. Your local vet should be able to put you in touch with your nearest class. Time spent with your puppy during these first few weeks will pay off handsomely as your hound grows into a well balanced and well behaved companion.





but you will need to check this out with the breeder first.

Talking to a breeder and with other owners will give you additional information about the needs of the beagle. A responsible breeder will take the time to talk to you about the breed. This is both for your benefit and the good of the puppy. Beware of the breeder who does not ask you questions, or is not prepared to answer your questions and who wants you to hand over the money and leave in as short a time as possible.

Never buy a puppy without a copy of the Pedigree or a Registration Certificate. It may be cheaper than those bred by a responsible breeder, but may not have been well reared. Time and time again, consumer watchdog programmes have re-

REGISTRATION

The progeny of a bitch who is more than eight years old or one who has already reared six litters of puppies cannot be registered at the Kennel Club. The breeder should hand over a signed Pedigree, the Kennel Club Registration Certificate and diet sheet.

Many will supply you with some of the food that your puppy has been used to. A responsible and caring breeder will be willing to answer any questions or concerns you may have in the early days and months after you have taken your puppy home. Many will want to know if, for any reason, you feel

you can no longer keep the hound you bought from them.

To transfer the puppy to your ownership at the Kennel Club, you will need to fill in the reverse side of the Registration Certificate and return it with the appropriate fee to the Kennel Club. If this is done within ten days, your puppy will receive Healthcare Insurance for six weeks. Many breeders insure their puppies for veterinary costs, loss and so on for the first few weeks with their new owners and you are advised to consider extending this cover with a special policy.

vealed the appalling conditions some of these cheap puppies are reared in. Buying from such an establishment will help perpetuate the problem, so try not to fall in the trap of feeling sorry for the puppies. Someone will - but then harden your heart and report your concerns to the Local Authority.

Beagle puppies are generally healthy and a beagle puppy is ready to go to a new home once it is at least eight weeks old. A responsible breeder will have begun the process of socialising the puppy with strange people and noises before it goes to its new home. 🐾



TAKING YOUR NEW BEAGLE HOME

ENSURE THAT YOUR garden is completely escape proof and be aware that a beagle can get caught in wrought iron gates and some types of paling fence. Take extra care if you have a puppy and a garden pond.

Make sure that there are **no electric cables** or trailing leads in the area in which your beagle will sometimes be left unattended, because they may be chewed – with fatal results.

Your beagle will also need its **own water and feeding bowls** – metal ones are safest for a puppy as they enjoy chewing the plastic variety! Hopefully the breeder will supply you with enough of the food your puppy is used to eating to last a few days - but if not, make sure you have a **supply of food** for him. A sudden change in diet for a young puppy will probably lead to a very upset stomach and your puppy will have enough to cope with already.

A small **soft collar** (as worn by cats) and a lightweight **nylon lead** are suitable for a puppy.

Allocate **an area and bed which are the beagle's own**. Most owners find an area in the kitchen or utility room which can be adapted. If you have a puppy, try

using a baby's playpen or mesh panels, available at DIY stores for making compost bins, for making a pen - both are ideal. As far as the bed itself is concerned, the **hard moulded plastic** variety is **easy to keep clean** and **more resistant to chewing** than the wicker type. For very small puppies, it's best to start off with a cardboard box with one side cut out as an entrance. This can be replaced frequently as the puppy grows and chews, but please avoid boxes with metal staples which can be dangerous.

You might also consider buying a **collapsible metal crate** as the beagle's own 'house'. Beagles love these crates and they have a wide variety of uses. They make ideal dog beds at home and on holiday and also provide a place to go that's away from visitors and their children - especially if they dislike dogs. They're a **secure place to keep a beagle** if doors are left open, as well as a safe haven when potentially dangerous activities are going on in the home.

They can also be an **aid to house training**, but the hound should never be locked in one for too long without an opportunity to relieve itself. The crates





are collapsible and fold flat in seconds, so they're also ideal for using in the car, with no fear of your beagle ever jumping out as soon as the car door is opened. They can also protect the interior from costly damage. A beagle will need one that measures at least 61 x 46 x 53 centimetres or 24 x 18 x 21 inches so the hound can sit, stand and stretch in comfort. For special requirements, shaped styles of these crates are available to fit specific cars.

Whichever type of bed you decide to use, your beagle will need **clean bedding at least once a week**. Something old and warm can be used for a puppy to

snuggle up in, but do check that there are no buttons or fasteners left on that can be chewed and swallowed. You can also buy a special type of warm, non-allergenic bedding called **Vet-Bed**. It's available from good pet stores and many breeders use it for rearing puppies. It's really **tough and hard-wearing** and can be put in the washing machine.

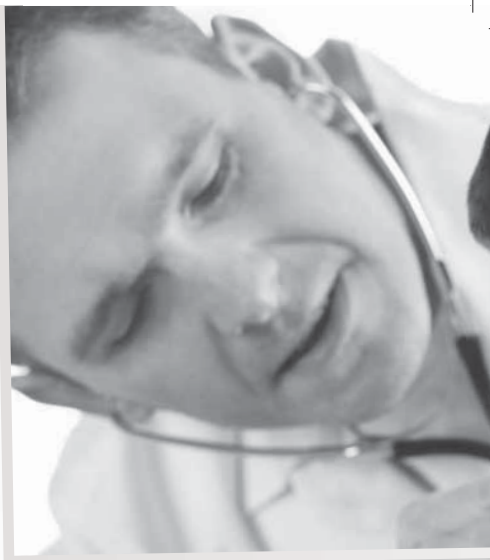
One other piece of equipment that many beagle owners find useful is a baby gate. It can be used to bar hounds from a specific room, or prevent them from going upstairs. However, your hound will still be able to see you and will therefore not feel left out of the family's activities. 🐾



A HEALTHY AND HAPPY BEAGLE

AS SOON AS YOU obtain your beagle puppy, contact your local veterinary surgeon to find out the programme of vaccinations. This does vary with the type of vaccines used, but until your puppy has received its first full course it must not be taken out where other dogs may have been. You can still take your puppy out to get used to new noises and sights. Wrap him or her in a blanket or towel (in case of leaks!) and carry your precious bundle safely in your arms, or go for a short journey in the car. Most vaccines need a **yearly booster** and licensed boarding kennels will need proof that this has been kept up-to-date. If you take a rescued beagle, vaccination details will be passed on where available, but if there is any doubt about the vaccinations being up-to-date then you should seek veterinary advice. Remember also that puppies and adult hounds must be regularly wormed.

Beagles' coats are easily kept clean with a **quick brush** through **every day** and when they moult a fine comb will help get rid of any unwanted hair quickly. Feel free to bath your beagle whenever



needed, but don't let your hound get cold when drying and remember that clean bedding helps keep your hound healthy. **Watch out for fleas**, especially in hot weather or if there are hedgehogs about and, if necessary, treat adult hounds with a spray or shampoo. Never treat a young puppy for fleas without first obtaining veterinary advice. **Check your beagle's ears** weekly; they should be clean and there are many products you can buy that will help. A hound's lovely **long ears can get damaged** easily by running through brambles or scrambling through barbed wire, so check regularly that they are not injured.

Some hounds, especially those who don't get much exercise on hard surfaces, grow rather **long toe nails**. Pay attention by clipping the tip off or by filing; otherwise you'll need to get your vet's help. **Check teeth** regularly and if you start soon enough, most hounds will tolerate having their teeth brushed or cleaned using one of





the several products now easily obtainable from pet suppliers.

Beagles are not normally difficult dogs to feed, as they will eat just about anything. However, do keep to the breeder's recommended diet, because any sudden changes may well upset a puppy's digestive system. A full-grown beagle at approximately one year will need **one meal a day** of 170 to 227 grams (6 to 8 ounces) of meat with one or two handfuls of soaked biscuit meal. Leftover vegetables or raw carrot may be given with the meal, but never feed titbits or scraps from the table, as **beagles very soon become over-weight**. There are also many good quality complete diets, which come in a dry pellet form and these are both economical and convenient to use. As your hound gets older and less active, you may need to **adjust the diet** and feed less protein. Remember that **clean water** must always be available, especially for a puppy. 🐾

VETERINARY CARE

Veterinary surgeon Sam Goldberg confirms that, "on the whole beagles are a healthy breed; they are descended from hardy working stock and today are still mainly free from most specific diseases. Many beagles will only visit their vet for their annual check and vaccinations and only occasionally need other medical attention. There are a small number who unfortunately are not so lucky and there are a few reports each year of certain conditions turning up. In young dogs, a few beagles exhibit signs of a condition known as **Beagle Pain Syndrome** or **Sti Beagle Disease**. It's a form of non-infectious meningitis and requires steroids for treatment. Fortunately most beagles grow out of it but it is very painful while it lasts. In the older beagle the

reports which come in mention epilepsy, hip problems and under activity of the thyroid gland leading to skin problems. These are all low numbers (a handful in the 1,000 or so beagles registered each year) but if they do develop, it's helpful to mention them to the breeder (if known) as this helps their breeding programmes".

A survey, carried out in 1993 by Beagle Welfare, showed that 79% of beagles lived to be at least ten years of age. Once your beagle has settled in, do attend a good training class if your hound is a suitable age. Vets normally know of local classes or you may have a neighbour or friend who can recommend a club. Also please consider having your beagle neutered – it's a very good idea for any pet hound.





YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

BY LAW YOUR BEAGLE must wear a **collar when in a public place**, bearing your name and address. Remember to check regularly that the tag is still in place and clearly readable. Change the address if you are away on holiday. The Animal Act places **responsibility** for any accident or damage caused by your hound **firmly on you**. Check your household insurance policy or think about taking out a **special dog insurance** with one of the specialised companies and there's a wide choice currently available.

Don't play into the hands of the anti-dog lobby, so train your beagle **not to foul in public places** and always carry a plastic bag or 'poop-scoop' to clean up any mistakes. Please be a **responsible beagle owner** and never allow your hound to be noisy or annoy others.

Please think carefully before you invite a beagle to join your household, but remember that in return for your time and care, a beagle will reward you with love and friendship for an average of 12 to 14 years. 🐾

A RESCUED BEAGLE

IF YOU'VE DECIDED that a beagle is the dog for you, but for various reasons you would prefer to have one that isn't a puppy, then you might like to consider giving a home to a rescued hound. If this is the case then Beagle Welfare, a charity set up in 1979 to give help and advice on beagles, may be able to assist you.

There are many reasons for re-homing beagles, sometimes the hound has not been given the necessary love and care and has developed some bad habits through lack of attention and training. Often the owner's situation changes and the beagle will find, through no fault of its own, that it can no longer live with them. Divorce, illness and bereavement, can all be reasons why a beagle needs a new home.

Beagle Welfare has also helped find special homes for hounds which have been 'institutionalised' for several years and used as breeding stock for beagles sent to laboratories or in 'puppy farms' supplying pet shops and dealers.

An older person, who may not wish to take on a lively young hound, can often provide a wonderful home for a Beagle Welfare **Golden Oldies** hound older than 7 or 8 years. These hounds are much less demanding than a youngster and can offer much needed companionship to an 'older' owner. Beagles enjoy a long life



expectancy; the majority living for 12 to 14 years, so a middle-aged or older hound can give many years of pleasure to a new owner.

A rescued beagle will have been uprooted from the home it has known or may have spent a long period in kennels, so it may take some length of time before it feels that your home is also its home. During the settling-in period you must be prepared for your beagle to howl or scratch doors, or even be destructive when left alone. However, beagles usually adapt to new circumstances quickly. You just have to have patience and understanding to help it adjust to a new life. So if you think you want a rescued hound from Beagle Welfare, the next step is to read the following article on page 12 very carefully. 🐾

WELFARE BI

SO YOU THINK IT would be nice to give a home to an unwanted beagle? You don't want all the mess, the noise, the training that goes with a puppy? Read on, think carefully and take your time before deciding that this is what you really want.

A lot of people need to re-home their beagles because they have not appreciated just how **challenging** they can be. Although Beagle Welfare actively encourages former owners to tell us as much as possible about the hound they are handing over, not everyone is totally honest and it may take us a while to find out about those bad habits that could make a hound more difficult to re-home. Conversely, others arrive with an array of toys, food and detailed instructions!

Some hounds come to us as strays and we will need to keep these for a while before we can judge the sort of home that will be best suited for them. Fortunately we have a small number of dedicated, experienced people who have the facilities and time to make a proper assessment before the hound is re-homed. Beagle Welfare prides itself on giving each hound as

much time as necessary before re-homing, having learned from experience that to re-home too quickly will lead to failure and the hound having to come back to us for another chance. That's not good for the hound and distressing for the owners who feel they have failed.

Experience has shown us that it can take **up to six months** for the hound to feel **happy and secure** in its new home. You might feel that you're taking two steps forward and one step back during this period but stick with it; **perseverance usually pays off!**

Do think about a **collapsible crate**; it will help him feel secure and can be his own space when he needs to retreat from the family. It can be used in the car and can be a real boon if a hound is destructive. Beagles are notoriously **difficult to train**. Their concentration is easily distracted so other than basic commands and food reward pledges, **don't have high hopes** of your beagle becoming a highly trained canine.

Whilst being an ideal sized family pet, beagles are **extremely agile**. A hound determined to escape will **scale a five foot high fence** or dig underneath. Are you



BEAGLES



prepared to alter your fencing to prevent this? Beagles can **jump on work surfaces** whilst searching for food. They can **open cupboards** and fridges and get into waste bins. Are you prepared to purchase locks for your cupboards and fridge? Can you tolerate leaving food unattended on a table and finding it gone the moment your back is turned? Beagles have **no conscience where food is concerned**. Will you be able to cope with food being taken from your child's hand? Beagles can be possessive about food and reluctant to give up their stolen goodies. Their possessiveness can be extended to unlikely objects such as a sock, a pair of pants or a child's toy. Think carefully - **are you prepared to accept advice** on how to deal with these possibilities?

Like any dog, beagles do not like to be left alone for long periods of time. If left, they may howl or become destructive and a lot of serious damage can be done to your home in an astonishingly short space of time. If you do go out to work then it may be better to consider taking on two dogs, but don't lose sight of the fact that it could mean double trouble.

Beagles can take as **much exercise** as you are prepared to give them and it is likely you will have had enough long before they do! Be prepared for some pulling on the lead for although they are short, they are extremely sturdy and will need some training to get them to walk nicely on the lead. As is common with most hounds **noses come first** and this is definitely the case when taking a beagle for a walk. When off the lead they have a tendency to put their noses to the ground and **follow any scent**. Rabbit, hare, fox and even deer - it really doesn't matter to the determined beagle.

Hearing becomes selective and he will certainly be deaf to your pleas to come back. This can be a major problem when you are on a time limit and your beagle is just a speck on the horizon. Would you be happy with a dog you have to keep on a lead? Some, if not most beagles love to eat or roll in all manner of disgusting organic matter. Are you ready for the bathing this could involve and can you overcome your natural revulsion at such behaviour? Altogether, there's a lot to be thought about when considering taking on a beagle. 🐾





LET'S BE POSITIVE

BEAGLES USUALLY HAVE a nice nature, their temperament is good and many enjoy the company of children. They will usually be quite happy to curl up with you at the end of the day. They have short coats, which makes grooming easy and any shed hairs on the furniture can be easily vacuumed up. They are very unfussy eaters and will do well on most dog foods; there is no need to feed most beagles on any expensive food. They are fun and their sense of mischief is either endearing or frustrating! Beagles are big dogs in a small dog package, so men aren't embarrassed to take them out for a walk!

Beagle Welfare's intention is to match the right dog to the right home, to inform you of all the known facts and to offer

help if things start to go wrong. Our team of Area Officers and home checkers will offer advice and suggest ways to make the transition into becoming a beagle owner as smooth as possible. Area Officers have years of experience and the success rate of 'getting it right first time' is high.

We're determined to give all hounds in our care a new home so, if you've read this and have not been put off, have thought about it carefully and would still like to offer one of our beagles a home, then fill in the enclosed questionnaire and return it to your nearest Area Officer. A full list of Area Officers and contact details for more information is enclosed. We wish you well in your search for the right dog for you and your family. 🐾

FRIENDS OF BEAGLE WELFARE

COME AND JOIN US

NOT EVERYONE CAN give time, expertise or kennel space to help a beagle in need - however much they wish they could. Yet everyone can help Beagle Welfare carry on this important work by making a regular donation through the **Friends Of Beagle Welfare (FOBW)**. For just a minimum donation of £10 a year, you can show how much you care about the less fortunate members of this lovely breed. For that small donation, you will be sent a twice-yearly newsletter called **In Full Cry**, which will keep you in touch with the work of **Beagle Welfare**. It includes news of events for beagles and their owners. It's packed with information, reports from Area Officers, your letters and photographs of hounds plus items of special interest to beagle owners.

Beagle Welfare depends on the support of caring beagle lovers and friends for donations, fund raising and practical help. The **Friends Of Beagle Welfare** donation scheme provides a useful regular income to keep the scheme going. Owners giving up a hound and new owners taking one home are also asked

to make a donation towards expenses.

If you could donate a little more than the £10 we'd be very grateful. Perhaps you might also like to think about making your donation via the Gift Aid Scheme, which will increase the value of your donation without costing you any more. If you are interested then please complete the enclosed form and return it to the address given. If you'd like more information then do get in touch with us and we'll be happy to help. 🐾





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