



PROMOTING THE HEALTH, QUALITY & WELFARE  
OF THE HUNGARIAN VIZSLA  
[vizsla.org.uk](http://vizsla.org.uk)

### HVS BREEDERS CODE OF BEST PRACTICE

- The **central aim** is to **safeguard the future of the Hungarian Vizsla**.
- Every decision or interpretation of this Code must **prioritise Vizsla health, welfare, and quality**, above any personal or commercial interest.
- The **principle of enforcement** is **education and influence first**, but disciplinary action (suspension/expulsion) will be taken if there is reckless or intentional harm to a Vizsla.

1. All members of the Hungarian Vizsla Society undertake to abide by the Royal Kennel Club General Code of Ethics (Appendix A) and this Code of Best Practice.

2. Members will consider the welfare of their dogs and the benefit to the Breed above any personal gain or profit.

Members will not allow their Vizsla to be intentionally bred with any other breed, only with dogs and bitches which are Kennel Club registered as smooth Hungarian Vizsla. The aim of all breeding should be to improve the breed or at least provide a quality litter, from carefully selected and planned mating. Mis-matings or couplings where the true donor cannot be verified should not be registered

3. Members are encouraged to report any occurrence of illness or disease which may have significant consequences for the breed's health. Reports should go to the Breed Health Co-Ordinator appointed by the KC ( [bhc@vizsla.org.uk](mailto:bhc@vizsla.org.uk)); all information received will be treated in the strictest confidence unless otherwise advised and will be used to gather data on any possible heritable health issues.

4. Members are encouraged to actively support any bona fide research programmes specific to the Hungarian Vizsla and any relevant official scheme devised to test the dog's

health and soundness, and to participate in any breed specific DNA collection programmes for dogs owned or co-owned by them that are part of bona fide veterinary research programmes

5. Members should only breed from Vizslas of sound temperament, which show natural ability (Hunt, Point, Retrieve), and conform to the Hungarian Vizsla Breed Standard as published by the Royal Kennel Club. Dogs showing temperament problems, including but not limited to aggression and nervousness or construction faults, must be excluded from breeding.

6. To help reduce the incidence of heritable breed-related health issues, a low Coefficient of Inbreeding (COI) should be aimed for; current KC recommendation is 3.1% or below.

### HEALTH SCREENING BEFORE MATING

Health screening of your Vizsla before mating is mandatory for all dogs and bitches born on or after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018. It is strongly recommended for all Vizslas born before this date that are currently being used at stud have been hip and elbow scored.

Other health schemes are available to Vizsla owners, however for many conditions little is known of underlying causes, and health screening tests are not yet available. DNA testing is also available.

7. Members will not breed from dogs or bitches in poor health or with any serious hereditary health issue such as, but not limited to:

- Epilepsy
- Autoimmune (immune mediated) illnesses, including:
  - Vizsla Inflammatory Polymyopathy (VIP)
  - Masticatory Muscle Myositis (MMM)
  - Myasthenia Gravis (MG)
  - Immune Mediated Polyarthrits (IMPA)
  - Sebaceous Adenitis (SA)
  - Pemphigus
  - Lupus – (SLE, DLE, ECLE, SLO)
  - Addison’s Disease
  - Immune Mediated Haemolytic Anaemia (IMHA)
  - Immune Mediated Thrombocytopenia (IMTP)
  - Hereditary Hypothyroidism
  - Steroid Responsive Meningitis-Arteritis (SRMA)

- Any other veterinary-diagnosed condition with a significant genetic predisposition such as Canine Atopic Dermatitis, Cerebellar Ataxia, certain Cancers. (Health Overview – Hungarian Vizsla Society) - [Health Overview](#)

8. For VIP it is also recommended to avoid breeding from first degree relatives (parent, sibling or offspring) of affected dogs or the affected dogs themselves. The current list of VIP-affected dogs can be found here - VIP: [First Degree Relatives](#).

9. For other complex inheritable diseases (especially epilepsy) - for which there is currently no test - members should follow Kennel Club advice. Caution is advocated in the matter of breeding from unaffected dogs that have produced disease or have affected siblings or parents - [read more](#)

10. Breeders should make it their priority to actively investigate any health issues that their stock is producing and mitigate where possible. They are encouraged to be vigilant as to whether to proceed with a second mating where the first has produced affected offspring. They should be able to validate decisions based on how any ongoing risk has been mitigated

11. Members are advised that if breed specific advice is not followed, they should expect recourse; breach of these rules may result in expulsion from the HVS and exclusion from its activities.

12. Members will not allow their dog to be used at stud until it is at least 18 months of age, and the dog must not be used more than three times in its first year of use, until the health and quality of its progeny is proven. Members will not allow their dog to serve bitches of less than 2 years of age, or bitches that will whelp after their 8th birthday.

13. Members will not allow their bitches to be mated before their 2nd birthday or to whelp after their 8th birthday. Members will not allow any individual bitch to whelp more than once in any 12 months or to have more than three litters in her lifetime. The Society recommends that the optimum age to whelp bitches is between their 3rd and 7th birthdays.

Where a bitch gives birth by Caesarean delivery – after the second caesarean it will be removed from further breeding programs.

Where the bitch's pedigree is endorsed “R-Progeny not for registration” You must have written confirmation from the breeder that the endorsement has been lifted prior to mating to allow registration of the puppies at the Royal Kennel Club.

14. Where artificial insemination is used, the Code will be applied in line with the Royal Kennel Club's guidance: <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/dog-breeding/first-time-breeders/artificial-insemination-in-dogs/>

All members are encouraged to contribute to the [Breed Health Conservation Plan](#) by health testing their dogs in accordance with the schemes required by the Royal Kennel Club as detailed below. Members will only breed from Vizslas that have been fully tested, obtaining and assessing the results PRIOR to breeding. Members should consult the current BVA recommendations when assessing health test results: BVA - [Canine Health Schemes](#). Please see Appendix B for additional information.

#### Hip dysplasia screening scheme (BVA/KC/ANKC/Etc)

Members are encouraged to hip score their dogs/bitches. For breeding stock, scores that are high by breed standards or disproportionate in score from hip to hip should be discounted from breeding.

Elbow dysplasia screening scheme (BVA/KC/ANKC/Etc) Members are encouraged to elbow score their dog/bitches. For breeding stock, any dog with a score higher than 0 please see the BVA recommendations (see Appendix B).

Eye screening scheme (BVA/KC/ISDS) Adult dogs should have the general health of their eyes assessed before they are used for breeding, using the BVA/KC/ISDS eye screening scheme or the ECVO scheme. Regular eye examinations are recommended due to the varying age of onset of different conditions and should be carried out within 12 months before mating in dogs and bitches. A final examination to ensure that there is no indication of late onset inherited disease and provide evidence of clear breeding lines should take place in all dogs that have been used for breeding when they have reached 8 years of age.

Eye testing - PLA (Gonioscopy) (BVA/KC/ISDS) Primary glaucoma is a painful and blinding inherited condition caused by a build-up of pressure in the eye and requires a separate eye test. Members should submit dogs/bitches for a PLA/PCAG (gonioscopy) test to assess the predisposition for glaucoma every three years. (i.e., 1, 4 and 7-8 years of age). This is a requirement for any breeding stock. Dogs who scored grade 2 (moderately affected) have a greater risk of developing and passing on the condition to their offspring and scores of 2 and above should be discounted from breeding.

14. Members will register all stock with the Royal Kennel Club. Royal Kennel Club registration documents will be available to the purchaser at point of sale, together with a 5-generation pedigree.

15. Members will not allow puppies to be removed from their mother before 8 weeks of age – it is illegal to sell a puppy under 8 weeks of age. All puppies should be microchipped, and the chip is registered by the breeder with an appropriate registry such as Petlog. The breeder should ensure that both the RKC and microchip registrations are transferred to the new owner on the day of collection.

16. Members will be fair, open and honest with buyers and prospective purchasers, and will NOT misrepresent themselves, or their dogs.

17. Members are encouraged to have puppies examined by their vet prior to sale. Puppy purchasers are encouraged to register their puppy with a veterinary surgeon within 3 working days of purchase. Should a veterinarian advise that the puppy/dog is not in good health, the purchaser should authorise their veterinarian to confirm the diagnosis with the breeder. Members will verify this opinion and, if asked, take back the dog and refund the purchase price, or agree to a mutually acceptable compromise.

18. Members are encouraged to take responsibility for any progeny bred by them, or dog supplied by them, which finds itself in need of re-homing. If this is not possible for any reason, then assistance with re-homing can be sought from The Hungarian Vizsla Rescue Charity: <https://www.vizslaescue.org.uk> and Hungarian Vizsla Welfare Charity: (<https://hungarianvizslawelfare.org.uk>).

## APPENDIX A

All members undertake to abide by the following :

1. Will properly house, feed, water and exercise all dogs under their care and arrange for appropriate veterinary attention if and when required.
2. Will agree without reservation, that any veterinary surgeon performing an operation on any of their dogs which alters the natural conformation of the animal, may report such operation to the Royal Kennel Club.
3. Will agree that no healthy puppy will be culled. Puppies which may not conform to the Breed Standard should be placed in suitable homes.
4. Will abide by all aspects of the Animal Welfare Act.
5. Will not create demand for, nor supply, puppies that have been docked illegally.

6. Will agree not to breed from a dog or bitch which could be in any way harmful to the dog or to the breed.
7. Will not allow any of their dogs to roam at large or to cause a nuisance to neighbours, those carrying out official duties or any member of the public
8. Will ensure that their dogs wear properly tagged collars and will be kept leashed or under effective control when away from home.
9. Will clean up after their dogs in public places or anywhere their dogs are being exhibited.
- 10. Will only sell dogs where there is a reasonable expectation of a happy and healthy life and will help with the re-homing of a dog if the initial circumstances change.
11. Will supply written details of all dietary requirements and give guidance concerning responsible ownership when placing dogs in a new home.
12. Will ensure that all relevant Royal Kennel Club documents are provided to the new owner when selling or transferring a dog, and will agree, in writing, to forward any relevant documents at the earliest opportunity, if not immediately available.
13. Will not sell any dog to commercial dog wholesalers, retail pet dealers or directly or indirectly allow dogs to be given as a prize or donation in a competition of any kind. Will not sell, by sale or auction, Royal Kennel Club registration certificates as standalone items (not accompanying a dog)
14. Will not knowingly misrepresent the characteristics of the breed nor falsely advertise dogs nor mislead any person regarding the health or quality of a dog.
15. Breach of these provisions may result in expulsion from Society membership, and/or disciplinary action by the Royal Kennel Club and/or reporting to the relevant authorities for legal action, as appropriate.

#### APPENDIX B -

Canine Health Schemes Sources of useful information:

BVA - [Canine Health Schemes](#)

[Royal Kennel Club \(thekennelclub.org.uk\)](http://thekennelclub.org.uk)

#### Hip Scoring

It must be appreciated that selection of dogs for breeding based on hip scores is not an exact science, since environmental as well as genetic factors are involved in determining the nature of the hip joints. However, the best chance of producing offspring with good

hips is to use only parents with low scores. An average (or median) score is calculated for all breeds scored under the scheme, and advice for breeders is to choose breeding stock with hip scores around and ideally below the breed median score, depending on the level of hip dysplasia in the breed. To make selection of breeding stock easier, 5- and 15-year medians are published on the BVA website, along with the rolling 5-year medians.

Data from the BVA/KC Hip Dysplasia Scheme is also used to estimate genetic 'risk' for each dog and to produce Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs). EBVs provide a more accurate measurement of genetic risk than using a dog's hip score alone. It is therefore recommended that EBV breeding advice is used where possible. Ideally breeders should use dogs that have an EBV which is lower than average (i.e., a minus number), and preferably with a confidence rating of at least 60%. Dogs with an EBV with a confidence less than 60% can still be used, but the higher the confidence, the more accurate the EBV will be. The lower the EBV, the better, but breeders do not need to search out the dogs with the lowest risk EBV. Selecting animals with a lower risk EBV than average will still lower the risk of hip dysplasia in the breed as a whole. Due to the use of other eligible health screening schemes such as the ANKC, the COI's and EBV available from the Royal Kennel Club aren't a true reflection of the breed averages as they aren't currently included in the BVA's data

#### Elbow scoring

It is strongly recommended that breeders wishing to reduce the risk of elbow dysplasia should select their breeding stock (both dogs and bitches) only from animals with an overall grade of 0. Dogs with elbow grades of 2 or 3 have marked osteoarthritis likely to be due to Elbow Dysplasia, with or without a visible primary lesion. There is a significant chance of ED being passed on to the offspring.

Dogs with elbow grades of 1 show mild or early osteoarthritis which is also likely to be due to ED. They should only be used for breeding with caution, taking into consideration the ED grades of as many relatives as possible, as well as the results of other health tests and characteristics. If EBVs (estimated breeding values) are available for your breed, you should use these to guide your breeding decisions. Ideally breeders should use dogs that have an EBV which is lower than average (i.e., a minus number), and preferably with a confidence rating of at least 60%. Dogs with an EBV with a confidence of less than 60% can still be used, but the higher the confidence, the more accurate the EBV will be.

#### Eye Screening.

If a dog is found to be affected, it is recommended that you seek breed-specific and condition-specific breeding advice from the eye panelist at the time of examination or the Breed Health Co-Ordinator.

Gonioscopy:

It is preferable to only breed dogs with grade 0 or grade 1 in most breeds. Dogs who scored grade 2 (moderately affected) have a greater risk of developing and passing the condition to offspring, in comparison to breeding dogs with grades 0 and 1.

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