



# *Welcome to the Keeshond Family!*

Dear New Keeshond Owner,

Congratulations on your new puppy! We are thrilled to welcome you to the Keeshond family on behalf of the Keeshond Club of America (KCA). Keeshonden are not only beautiful and affectionate companions, but they are also incredibly intelligent, loyal, and eager to please. With proper training, love, and care, your Keeshond will bring happiness, laughter, and companionship to your life for years to come.

This welcome packet is designed to provide you with information and resources to ensure you and your puppy enjoy a successful start together. Below are some key areas to help guide you in caring for your new furry friend.

## **Training**

Keeshonden are intelligent and eager to learn, but like all breeds, they benefit from early socialization and training. Positive reinforcement techniques work especially well with Keeshonden. They respond best to gentle, consistent training that rewards their efforts with treats, toys, or affection.

Here are a few tips for training your Keeshond puppy:

**Start Early:** Begin socialization and basic obedience training as soon as possible to establish good habits.

**Be Patient and Consistent:** Keeshonden are sensitive dogs who respond well to encouragement. Patience and consistent routines will help reinforce good behavior.

**Positive Training:** Positive dog training techniques focus on rewarding desired behaviors with treats, praise, or toys rather than using punishment. This approach helps dogs develop confidence and promotes long-term behavior changes.

**Mental Stimulation:** Keeshonden are intelligent and curious, so provide plenty of mental challenges, such as puzzle toys and learning new tricks, to keep their minds engaged.

It is recommended to find a Trainer accredited with one of the following programs;

- Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT)
- International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC)
- Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT)
- Pet Professional Guild
- Professional Animal Care Certification Council (PACCC)

## Grooming

Keeshonden have a beautiful double coat, which, with proper care, remains a source of pride and joy for both the dog and the owner. Regular grooming is essential to keep your Keeshond's skin and coat healthy and reduce shedding. Your breeder will help guide you in what tools to use for grooming, and may offer a demonstration if you need.

Here are a few grooming basics:

**Brushing:** Brush your Keeshond at least once a week to prevent matting, remove loose hair, and maintain the coat's natural beauty. During shedding seasons (spring and fall), more frequent brushing may be necessary.

**Bathing:** Bathe your Keeshond only as needed, as too-frequent baths can strip their coat of natural oils.

**Nail Trimming:** Regular nail trimming is important for your dog's comfort and health. Aim to trim nails every 2-3 weeks. "Lick mats" are a good way to make nail trims less stressful for your pup!

**Dental Care:** Start a dental care routine early with regular brushing or dental chews to promote good oral health.

There is a useful step-by-step guide on grooming a Keeshond on the KCA website, here:  
<https://www.keeshond.org/grooming-a-keeshond>

## Things You Can Do with Your Puppy

Keeshonden are versatile dogs who thrive in various activities. As you get to know your puppy, consider exploring some fun options for mental and physical engagement. We recommend enrolling in local puppy classes which are a great way to bond with your puppy and start their socializing, and from there, there are many available activities for you to pursue. There are some examples below, your breeder will be able to help connect you to resources and training clubs in your area if you would like to know more!

**Obedience** is a training discipline focused on teaching dogs to perform specific commands and behaviors, such as sit, stay, heel, and recall, with precision and reliability. This training builds a strong foundation for good behavior, enhances communication between dog and handler, and is often showcased in formal competitions.

**Fast CAT** (Coursing Ability Test) is a timed 100-yard dash where dogs chase a lure, with their speed calculated in miles per hour to assess their natural drive and athleticism. It's a high-energy event that allows dogs to showcase their running abilities in a safe and fun environment.

**Rally** is a sport that combines elements of traditional obedience with a fun, interactive course. Handlers guide their dogs through a series of stations, each with a sign instructing a specific obedience task (like sit, stay, or heel), emphasizing teamwork and communication.

**Agility** is a popular and fun activity for many Kees and their owners! With their natural aptitude and energy, many Keeshonden excel in agility courses. Agility training builds confidence and provides an outlet for their playful spirit.

**Barn hunt** is a scent-based dog sport that taps into a dog's natural hunting instincts, challenging them to locate and indicate the presence of a hidden rat (safely contained in a ventilated tube) within a maze of

straw bales. It's a fun and mentally stimulating activity that allows dogs of all breeds to use their noses and problem-solving skills.

**Therapy Work;** Keeshonden's natural gentleness and friendliness make them wonderful candidates for therapy work, brightening lives in hospitals, schools, and nursing homes.

**Conformation Showing;** For those interested in the show ring, Keeshonden are a pleasure to show and have a long history of success in dog shows.

There are many other activities and sports you can pursue such as scentwork, herding, flyball and dock diving.

### **Regional Keeshond Clubs**

The Keeshond Club of America has regional clubs across the country, each dedicated to the breed's preservation, welfare, and education.

The regional clubs offer a wonderful opportunity to enrich both your life and your puppy's through learning new skills and exploring various dog sports, and can be a fantastic way to connect with other local Keeshond owners, find local events, and get support and advice.

You'll gain insights from experienced members and breeders on how to get started in these sports, discover local events, and receive advice on training and classes. Regional clubs also host events like conformation dog shows and agility.

To find a club near you, your breeder can help, otherwise please visit the KCA website or contact us, and we'd be happy to help you find your closest club. Additionally, regional clubs value volunteers, so joining and offering your time can be a rewarding way to get involved, meet other members, and support the breed!

### **Join KCA**

New Keeshond puppy owners can consider joining the Keeshond Club of America (KCA) to connect with a community dedicated to the health, preservation, and well-being of this beloved breed.

Although two sponsors are required for membership (your breeder is often one of them), the KCA community is welcoming and can help new members find sponsors through participation in club activities or through regional clubs.

As a member of the Keeshond family, we are here to support you on this wonderful journey. The KCA and our regional clubs offer a wealth of resources, activities, and a network of passionate Keeshond lovers. We're delighted to have you with us and look forward to being a part of your journey with your new Keeshond.

Warm regards,

The Keeshond Club of America  
<http://www.keeshond.org>

