

SHCGB

Siberian Husky Club of Great Britain

The SHCGB is a club for all those interested in the Siberian Husky, whether they are owners or not. The club holds Open and Championship shows each year as well as a schedule of Competitive Working Events for KC registered Siberians throughout the race season which is October through March. There are a number of other clubs that will allow non registered dogs to compete, please see useful links for more information.

The SHCGB also operates a **Welfare Scheme** for Kennel Club registered Siberian Huskies requiring a new home. The Welfare Scheme is run by a team of volunteers who offer advice about the breed and attempt to support owners who are finding owning a Siberian Husky difficult.

If a person/family is interested in adopting a Siberian Husky through SHCGB Welfare, then several questions will be asked about their home, lifestyle, family, other pets and children. This is so that the most suitable dog is matched to a person or family. A home visit is arranged to make sure that the garden is secure and to double check that a potential new owner is happy with their decision to take on a husky.

All of SHCGB Welfare dogs are assessed by experienced Husky people for a minimum of two weeks before being offered for adoption. All dogs come with 6 weeks free insurance, are vaccinated, health checked, spayed or neutered and new owners receive one years free membership to the club. A £200 donation is requested for most of our dogs to cover some of their expenses whilst in our care.

If you would like to find out more about Siberian Huskies, or learn more about the welfare scheme, you can contact the Siberian Husky Club of Great Britain at www.siberianhuskyclub.com or telephone **0871 277 6783** option 3.

Useful links

www.steeldog.co.uk (three wheeled rigs)
www.pawtrekker.com (scooters)

Other clubs

www.huskyracing.org.uk (BSHRA)
www.absasleddogracing.org.uk (ABSA)



Learn about
Welfare...

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Welfare history

The Siberian Husky as a breed is likely to be around 3,000 years old and has been recognised as a breed by the UK Kennel Club since the 1970s. Siberian Huskies came

from a small area of Siberia on the tip of the Bearing Sea, where the Chukchi people developed the breed as a winter sled dog. The dogs were used when travelling to hunt. They were expected to travel quickly for long distances, around 80 miles a day, pulling a moderate load in low temperatures.

The Chukchi people developed the breed to eat very little whilst working. They were welcome in the houses as playmates for the children and as hot water bottles at night. During the summer months they allowed the dogs to run loose, hunting and fending for themselves. This lifestyle, which continued unchanged for centuries, produced a breed of dog which retained the pack instinct and hunting attributes of the wolf, while being unaggressive and affectionate towards people.

Sled Dogs enabled explorers such as Byrd, Peary and Amundsen to explore the frozen wastelands of the North and South Poles, playing a vital role in bringing civilisation to the snowbound areas of the world. They have helped men in two World Wars pulling weaponry up into the mountains. During the gold rush years, Sled Dogs were used to deliver the mail - it was not uncommon for a driver to have up to 25 huskies pulling a sled with a 1,500lb load.

The Siberian remains pretty much the same today. They are still very much capable of fulfilling their original function, working over many miles pulling sleds and could if necessary, survive alone without the need for humans.

This is no problem to owners willing to adapt to and tolerate the natural instincts of the breed, but would be a liability to those who really want a more 'civilised' type of dog.



Working Huskies/Exercise

Exercise

The Siberian Husky is a working breed like no other! A Siberian Husky is easily adaptable and could be happy with a few miles walks a day. However in all fairness, the Siberian Husky only truly wants to work. **The Siberian Husky** has a very strong instinct and literally has '**run**', '**pull**' and '**work**' engrained on its brain!!

To keep a Siberian Husky happy, fit and healthy is to allow it to run. This can only be done by working it in harness. It is irresponsible and unfair on the breed to allow it to run free and off the lead as their instinct will tell it to run, hunt and inevitably not come back.

The easiest way (and a lot of fun too) to exercise a pet Husky is to use a scooter. This is a safer way than attaching it to a bike as a scooter is fitted with a 'Brushbow' which stops the lines getting tangled in the wheels and stops the dog being run over.

Working

Due to the British weather and limited space to train and race, opportunities to work sled dogs are more limited here than in the US, Canada or Europe. However, Sled Dog racing continues to grow in popularity, using three-wheeled rigs or two-wheeled scooters instead of sleds. In winter the SHCGB holds 3 to 7 mile working rallies, and in January you can see the dogs in their national snowy environment at the annual Sled Dog Rally in Aviemore, Scotland.

Sled dog owners, like their dogs, are on the whole a friendly bunch and will talk for hours about the sport of sled dog racing and, more particularly, their dogs! Anyone coming to a race should make themselves known, ask for the Rally Organiser (usually wearing a hi viz vest) to check on where to go and what to do out on the trail.

In all honesty, though, unless you have the time to devote to such a wonderful breed and allow it to do exactly what it wants, which is work, then there are few advantages!

The Siberian Husky are an extremely beautiful breed, it is unfortunate that some people cannot see past this and do not understand exactly what they are taking on. This means that welfare associations and rescues are becoming overwhelmed by the ever increasing number of Siberian Huskies that need rehoming across the UK.



Good & bad



- Huskies love people, they're not a one-man dog - any human will do - which can be seen as a lack of loyalty.
- Huskies are not guard dogs, they love people and therefore will not guard your home or property.
- Strong desire to run. If he gets free he will run so far he will be lost, if not hit by a car or train, or shot by a farmer. **Never let a husky off lead.**
- Poor recall. He will decide whether or not to return for himself, knowing you cannot catch him.
- Very independent and strong willed, generally not good for obedience training.
- Keen and efficient hunter/killer. Cannot be trusted with non-canine pets or livestock of any sort. On occasion have been known to accept, into the pack a cat (also known to kill them even after years of happy co-habiting, but should not be trusted alone and all others will be regarded as fair game.
- Requires a substantial amount of exercise to keep him fit and happy, but this must be done ON a lead.
- Very destructive, especially when young and/or if left alone for a long time.
- Huskies are pack animals and need company, human but preferably canine, and are miserable without it.
- Huskies are great escape artists, a safely enclosed garden with 6ft high fencing is USUALLY enough (can climb 7ft) and will dig their way to freedom if there is no way over. Do not leave dustbins etc near the fence or they may use them to get over the top. Keep the garden gate locked, so there's no risk that visitors, window cleaners etc may leave them open.
- If you like a nice garden huskies are not for you!! Huskies love to dig for no reason and destroy plants, trees and shrubs.
- Huskies moult excessive amounts twice a year.
- Huskies are a natural breed with strong pack instincts and body language, this needs to be understood.
- A husky needs to know who is boss otherwise he will make himself the boss!!

