

Based on the **Breeding for Health Framework** outlined in the Royal Kennel Club's 2026 Impact Review, breeders are encouraged to move beyond "breeding by numbers" to a structured approach that prioritises canine welfare.

The following are practical questions for Dachshund breeders for each of the nine framework elements:

Domain 1: Genetic Diversity

1. Population Size

- How numerically small is my specific Dachshund variety, and does this limit my access to unrelated mates?
- Have I considered the value of interbreeding between related subpopulations (such as show and working lines) to improve diversity?
- Are there overseas lines I could use to introduce "new blood" and avoid genetic bottlenecks?

2. Harmful Breeding Practices / Popular Sires

- How many litters has this stud dog already sired this year, and am I contributing to "popular sire syndrome"?
- Am I selecting a sire because he is truly the best health match, or simply because he is currently "fashionable" or a recent show winner?

3. Limited Pedigree Data

- If using an imported dog, am I aware that the standard three-generation pedigree may hide remote common ancestors?
- Have I used RKC online tools to check if the calculated **Coefficient of Inbreeding (Col)** might be "falsely low" due to missing data?
- Can I research the ancestors of an imported dog through international databases to verify its actual genetic diversity?

Domain 2: Conformation

4. Visible Conformation

- Does the dog I am breeding from have sufficient ground clearance, as described by the Breed Standard, to move freely and perform its original working purpose?
- Has the dog undergone a professional "Nose-to-Tail" visual assessment by a vet to check its innate health and suitability for breeding?

5. Distinctive Breed Features

- Am I aware of the health risks associated with certain "distinctive" features, such as the dapple (merle) pattern or dilute coat colours?
- Do the dog's height:length and ground clearance proportions match the Breed Standard?

6. Shifting Conformation over Time ("Creep")

- When comparing my dogs to historical breed examples, can I see a gradual shift toward more extreme lengths or shorter legs?
- Am I selecting for moderate traits rather than rewarding the "conformational creep" that critics identify as a threat to the breed?
- Am I following the **Breed Watch** system to identify if the traits I find desirable are becoming problematic for the breed's overall health?

Domain 3: Breed-Related Disease and Wellbeing

7. Testable Conditions

- Have I completed all the "**Good Practice**" (critical) tests listed in the RKC Health Standard for my specific variety?
- Am I utilising clinical screening schemes, such as the **IVDD x-ray scheme**, to address the breed's most pressing conformation-related diseases?
- Am I adopting any of the "Best Practice" tests that could help me reach the highest standard of health for my puppies?

8. Untestable Conditions

- Have I reviewed the family history for serious conditions that do not yet have a DNA test, such as heart disease?
- What is the typical longevity of the ancestors in this dog's pedigree, and were there any recurring health themes?
- Am I monitoring emerging conditions in the breed community to ensure I am not accidentally propagating a new health burden?

9. Temperament / Mental Wellbeing

- Does the dog have a stable, predictable breed-specific temperament that makes it suitable for life as a modern companion animal?
- Have I assessed if the breeding pair shows excessive fear or aggression, which could lead to behavioural issues in their offspring?
- Am I breeding puppies that will realistically meet the lifestyle and behavioural expectations of today's buyers?