

Dogs are a hugely popular companion animal species in the UK. Understanding the demography (i.e. the composition of populations by breed, sex, body shape etc) of the UK dog population can help owners when deciding which type of dog to get. This information can also help researchers and policy makers to make improved health and welfare decisions in response to changing conditions such as infectious diseases in the UK or increasing popularity of breeds with extreme body shapes. To date, there has been limited information on which dog breeds are most common in the UK.

This study aimed to explore the frequency of dog breeds and also to report on body shapes, bodyweight and sex in UK dogs during 2019 using information from anonymised veterinary clinical records from the VetCompass™ Programme.

Total number of dogs in VetCompass in 2019

Number of distinct breeds in the UK dog population

800

Average adult dog bodyweight

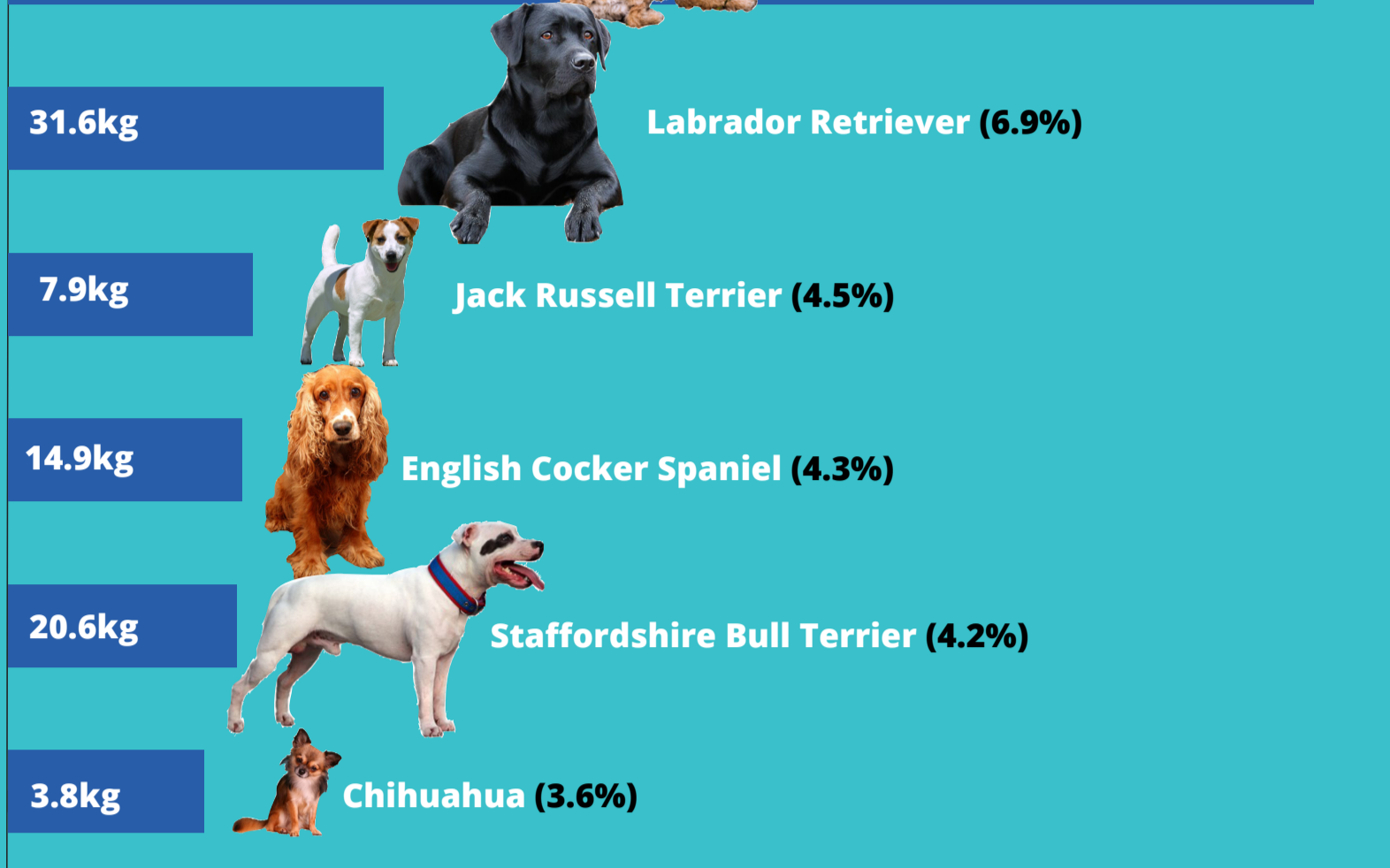
Males: 14.3kg
Females: 13.0kg

2,237,105

Most common dog breeds in the UK

The most common dog breeds at across all ages in 2019:

↓ Average adult bodyweight

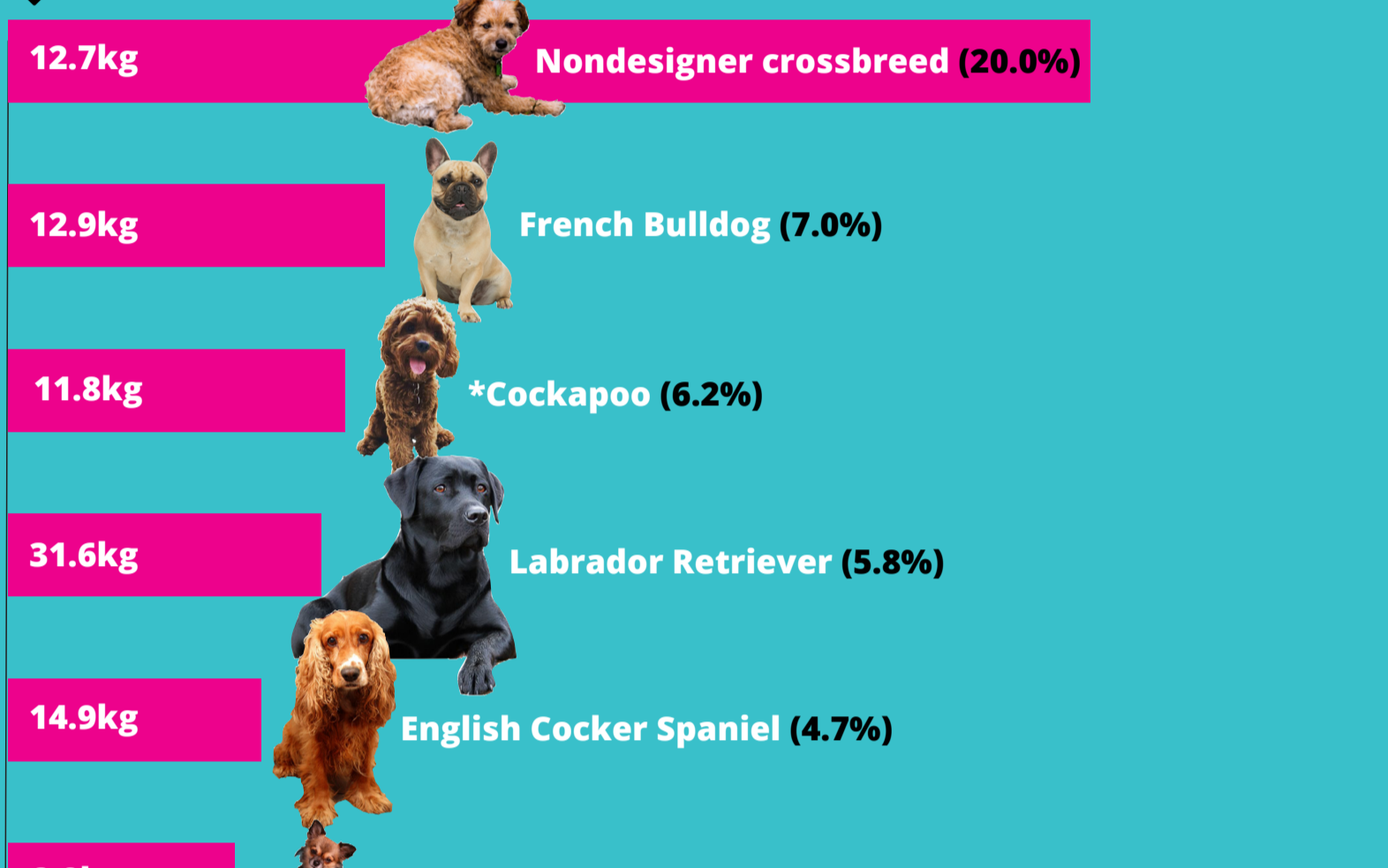


Breed frequency across all ages in 2019

* Nondesigner-crossbreeds include dogs described as a mix of breeds (e.g. lab x poodle, collie x) or unspecified (e.g. crossbreed, mongrel) mixes of breeds

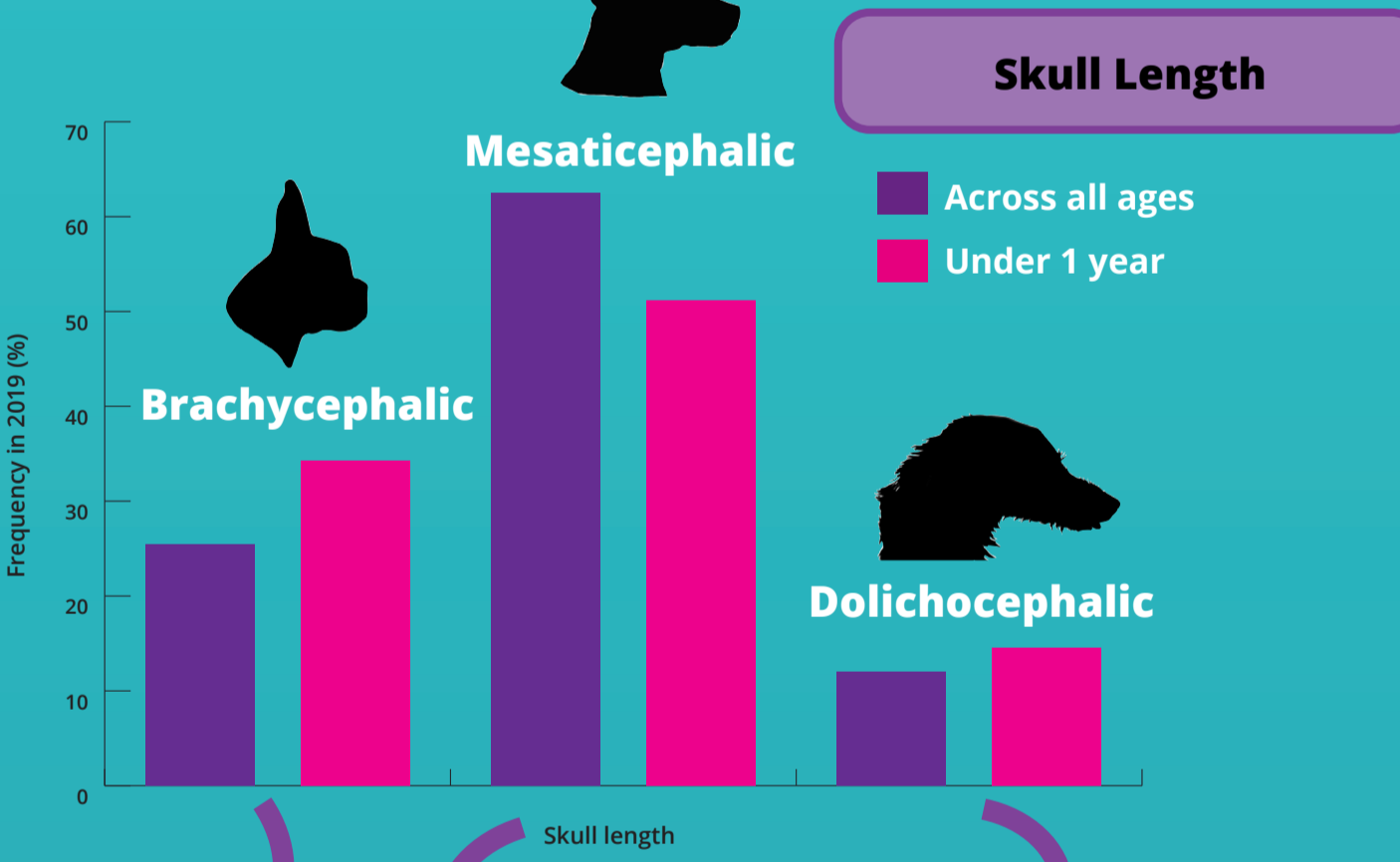
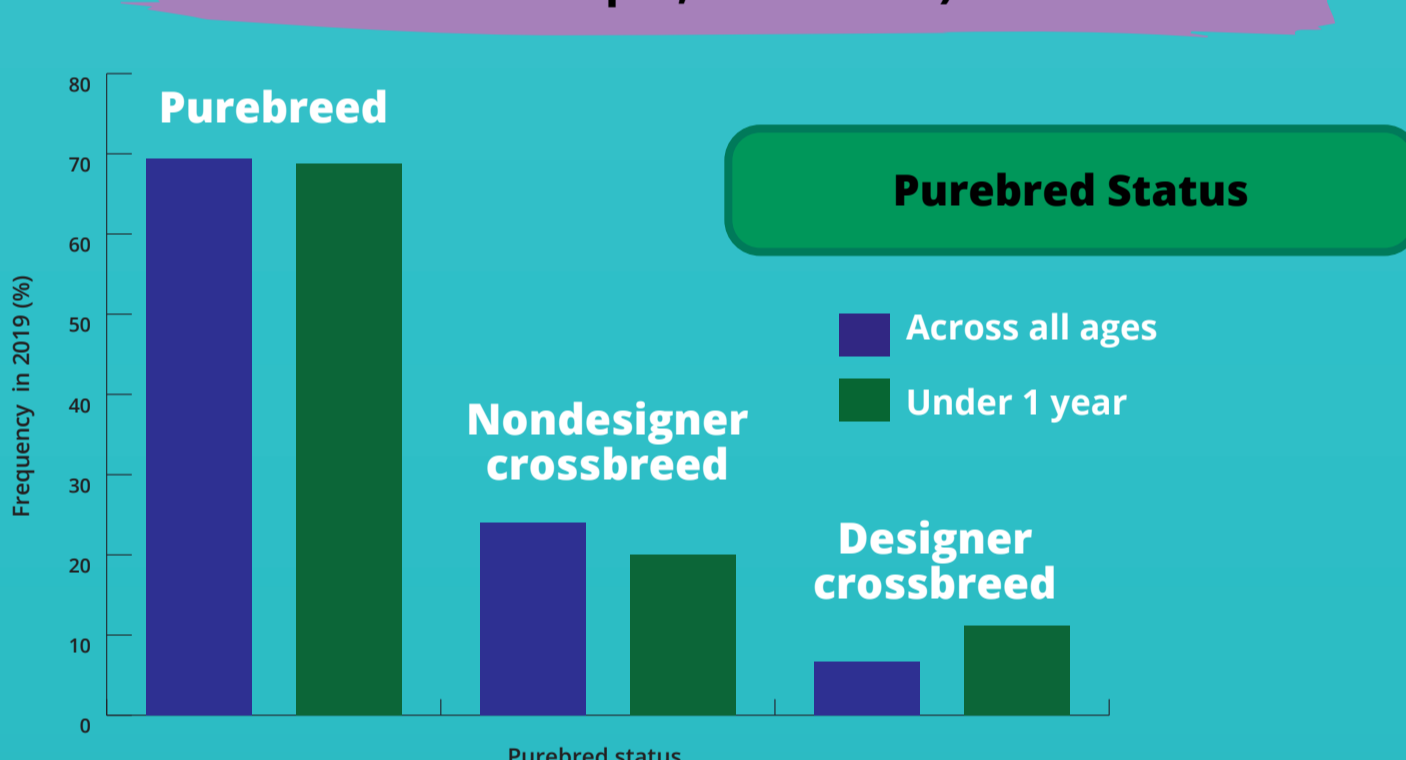
The most common dog breeds aged under one year in 2019:

↓ Average adult bodyweight

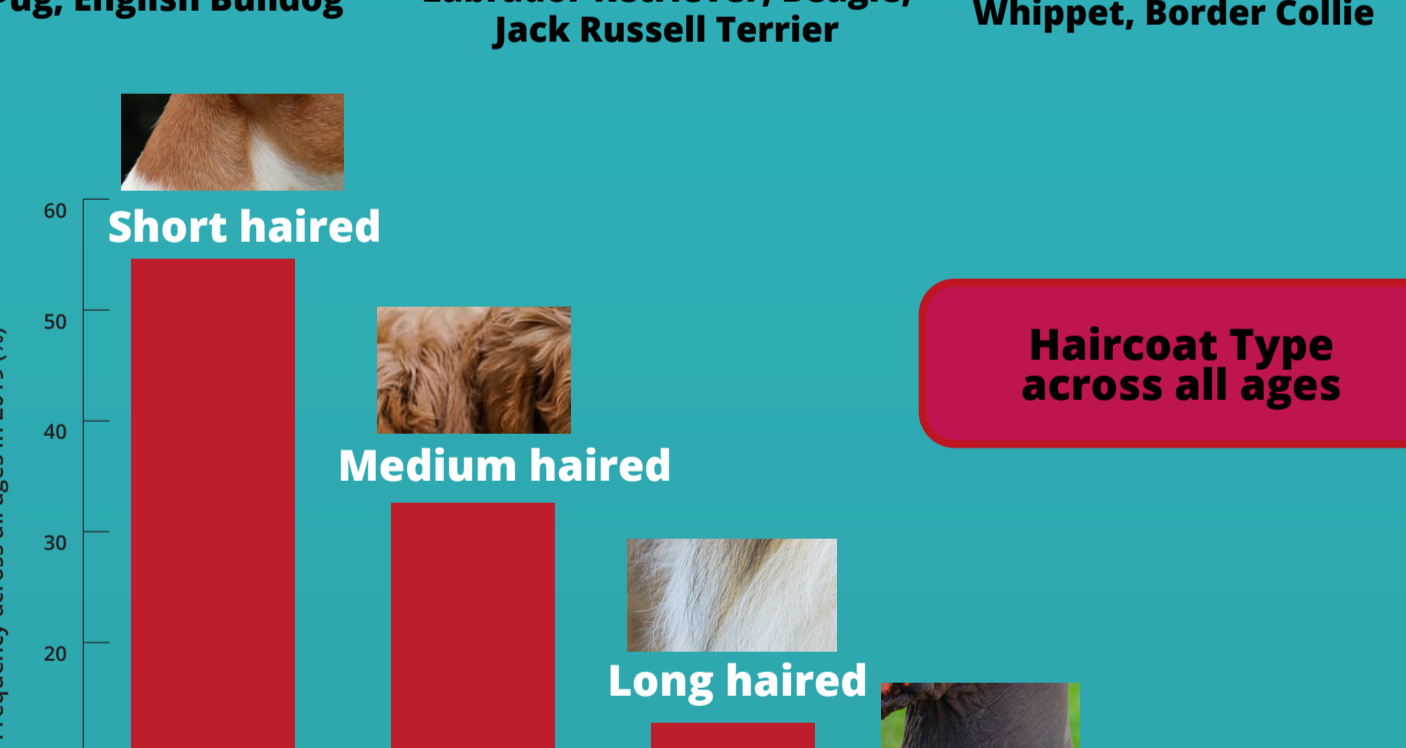


Breed frequency under one year in 2019

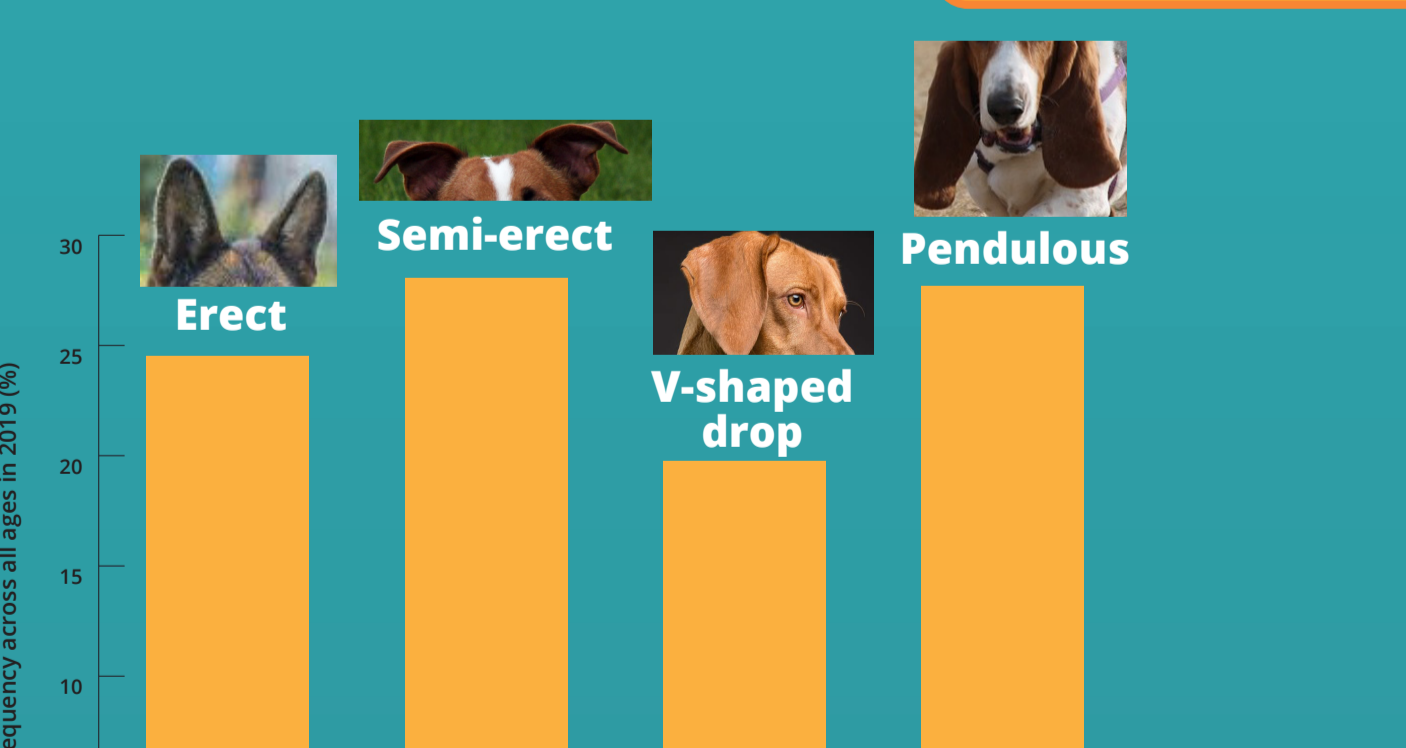
* Designer-crossbreeds include types of dogs with blended names generated from two or more purebred breed terms (e.g. Cockapoo, Labradoodle)



Flat-faced dogs e.g. French Bulldog, Pug, English Bulldog
Medium-length skulls e.g. Labrador Retriever, Beagle, Jack Russell Terrier
Long-faced dogs e.g. Greyhound, Whippet, Border Collie



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There were 52.15% male dogs compared to 47.85% female dogs. Female dogs were statistically older and lighter than male dogs.

43.74% of dogs overall were neutered. Females were more likely to be neutered than males. Neutered dogs were older and heavier than entire dogs.

Conclusions

The most common breeds overall in the UK were the nondesigner-crossbreed, Labrador Retriever and Jack Russell Terrier.

Changing preferences for extreme breeds and emergence of new designer-crossbreeds are reflected by breed popularity under one year where the most common breeds were nondesigner-crossbreed, French Bulldog and Cockapoo.

Brachycephaly is a highly popular bodyshape in dogs among UK dog owners, raising important questions about the canine welfare impact from our collective breed selection choices.

[CLICK TO READ THE FULL STUDY](#)

O'Neill et al. (2023) "Dog breeds and conformations in the UK in 2019: VetCompass canine demography and some consequent welfare implications"

RVC VetCompass <https://www.rvc.ac.uk/vetcompass> carries out welfare research based on anonymised clinical information shared from over 30% of UK veterinary practices. We are very grateful to the owners and veterinary professionals who contribute to VetCompass research.