



Puppy Buyer's Checklist

Print this page and take it with you when looking at a litter of puppies.

You want to buy a puppy who will be a wonderful companion for the next 12 to 15 years. By asking the right questions, you'll be able to determine whether or not you are purchasing a dog who has the best chance of a long, healthy life and who has a good disposition. Here's a list of questions you should ask before buying a puppy.

ALL of the questions on this page should receive a "Yes" response, and a responsible breeder will be very happy to answer these questions for you. If you receive negative answers, or if a breeder is unwilling to answer, avoid that breeder and look for a puppy somewhere else.

TEMPERAMENT

- Has the puppy been well-socialized with people and exposed to a variety of new experiences?
- Is the puppy outgoing and friendly toward strangers?
- Do the sire and dam of the puppy have friendly, confident personalities?
- Does the breeder require the puppy to stay with his littermates until at least 7 weeks old?
- Has the breeder talked with you about how active the breed is and the amount of exercise your puppy will need so he doesn't have destructive behavior?
- Has the breeder discussed with you the breed's strong herding instincts that can cause a puppy to nip your heels, pull on your pants' legs, herd children, and chase cars and bicycles?

HEALTH

- Was the puppy raised in a clean, safe environment, preferably in a home?
- Has the puppy received at least one "puppy shot"?
- Has the puppy been de-wormed once or preferably twice?
- Is the mother of the puppy at least 2 years of age?
- Have both the sire and dam of the puppy had their hips x-rayed for hip dysplasia, and has documentation been given to you?
- Have both the sire and dam of the puppy had their eyes examined by a board-certified ophthalmologist to check for hereditary eye defects, and has documentation been given to you?
- Has the entire litter had its eyes examined for hereditary eye defects, and has documentation been given to you?
- Has the breeder talked with you potential health problems in the breed such as cataracts, epilepsy, cancer and allergies?

CONTRACT

- Have you been provided with a written contract which clearly states if the puppy is of show/breeding quality or if it is required to be spayed or neutered?
- Does the written contract guarantee the puppy or dog is free of debilitating hereditary defects including hip dysplasia and severe hereditary eye defects that can lead to blindness?
- Have you been provided with a written health record that describes which shots and worming have been given, and which shots, worming, and heartworm medicine will be needed after you take the puppy home?
- Have you been given a 3 or 4 generation pedigree of the puppy?
- Have you been given the registration certificate(s) or registration application(s) at the time you take possession of the puppy?

This puppy will be a major investment of time, money, and emotion. Be smart, ask questions, and make the best possible choice for a healthy, happy puppy.