

HOW TO FIND A REPUTABLE BREEDER

What IS a “Reputable Breeder”?

A Reputable Breeder ...

... screens their dogs for genetic problems. They should be able to tell you about the genetic problems in the breed and show proof that the parents of the litter are free of those problems.

... does not breed dogs “to make money” or so “our children can experience the miracle of birth.” A reputable breeder breeds to advance their breeding program and for their love and devotion to purebred dogs.

... will tell you the good points as well as the bad points of the breed. They want to make sure you are fully aware of what to expect before you buy the puppy. Cute little puppies grow into big dogs. Will you be happy when that cute little ball of fuzz turns into an 80 pound, shedding fur factory?

... usually only breeds a litter if they intend on keeping something out of the litter. They are breeding to further improve their breeding program, not just to produce puppies for pet buyers.

... should be able to explain the reasoning behind breeding a particular dog to a particular bitch. They should be attempting to reach perfection as defined by the breed’s standard. In the attempt to reach this goal with the resulting puppies, they should be able to explain the good points of each dog and what things they are trying to improve. If when asked about the breed standard, the breeder looks at you with a blank look on their face – RUN! If they don’t know what a standard is, they shouldn’t be breeding dogs.

... should be able to provide you with a pedigree of the puppies, not just a copy of the parents registration papers. A pedigree usually has at least three generations of the puppies’ ancestors listed.

... does not breed a volume of puppies. A breeder with seven adult bitches is not going to breed all seven in a single year. Bitches are only in very rare cases bred on consecutive heat cycles.

... usually participates in some sort of dog-related events such as dog shows, obedience, agility, schutzhund, sled dog racing, herding, field trials, lure coursing, earth dog trials, etc. They do something with their dogs.

... usually belongs to some sort of dog club (*i.e.*, all-breed club, obedience club, breed club, etc.).

... is willing to give you references from previous puppy buyers. Those new to breeding should be able to give you references from other breeders of their breed or dog club members. They

aren't offended if you ask them for references. Talking to references will help you to judge the character of the breeder.

... may ask you for references or ask to visit you at your home. The breeder wants to be sure that the housing or yard is suitable for the dog. A large dog wouldn't necessarily do well in a small apartment. Some breeds need to have a fenced yard with secure fencing for their own protection. The breeder is looking for the ideal situation for the puppy. They want the owner to be happy and not return the puppy because it was ill suited for the environment of life-style of the buyer.

... believes in service after the sale. If a puppy buyer has grooming questions, feeding questions, or training questions, the breeder will be there for you long after the puppy is no longer a puppy.

... will usually insist that puppies sold as pets be spayed/neutered or placed on an AKC limited registration. The limited registration makes the dog exempt from having any of its offspring registered by the AKC.

... will usually take back any dog of their breeding at any age. Reputable breeders do not want to find out a dog they bred has been left in a pound or dumped by the roadside. They assume a lifetime responsibility for the canine lives they have put on this earth.

... Would never sell puppies through a retail outlet, animal broker, or laboratory.

How do you FIND a Reputable Breeder?

- Check the HKC Breed Resources directory for member breeders.
- Contact the American Kennel Club to refer you to breeders in your area, or visit their website at <http://www.akc.org>.
- Ask a veterinarian. Local breed clubs usually send them a breeder referral list.
- Check the classified section of your newspaper for an ad placed by your local all breed dog club.
- Attend a dog show or other dog-related event.
- Ask anyone you know who may show dogs or work their dogs in obedience. Even if they don't have the breed you're interested in, they probably know someone who does.
- Ask a dog groomer.

- Ask around your office. Somebody, knows somebody, who usually knows somebody! Even if it's not the breed you're looking for, they can usually steer you in the right direction.

And, after you bring your dog home, you're encouraged to protect it by having it microchipped and registered with the AKC Companion Animal Recovery enrollment program.