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Top 10 Signs of A Reputable Breeder

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Anybody can breed dogs. However, here is a Top 10 list that sets Reputable Breeders apart from “Backyard Breeders.”

1. Time in the Breed

A reputable breeder should have lots of experience (and years) in their breed. They should be able to discuss the breed’s strengths and weaknesses and the diseases the breed is pre-disposed to. Most reputable breeders are members of breed clubs (locally and/or nationally), other dog-related organizations and/or involved in canine sports.

2. Onsite Visit

A reputable breeder will want to meet you. They should be open for you to meet them and show you where their dogs (and puppies) live. Dogs should be clean and in good condition (not fat, not too thin.) The dogs should be alert and lively. The whelping area should be clean and should not smell. They should interview you just as you are interviewing them.

3. Health Testing of Parents

Reputable breeders have tested (and can provide paperwork) the parents of your puppy and are free from inheritable issues. If your breeder has not done testing (or cannot provide the documentation), the breeder may not be reputable!

4. Why Are You Breeding?

A reputable breeder should be able to answer the question on why they are breeding (both in general and why they are breeding these two particular dogs together.) They should be able to tell you what they expect to get from this litter of puppies.

5. Breeder References

A breeder should be able to give you a list of past puppy owners’ contact information and encourage you talk to them about their experiences with the

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breeder. If this is their first breeding, make sure they have lots of experience. Ask if they have a mentor during the breeding process.

6. Puppy Application

Many reputable breeders have a multi-page puppy questionnaire. Questions will include why you want this breed, what you want to do with your dog and where the dog will be (during the day, at night, when you travel). A reputable breeder will want to know how their puppy will be cared for.

7. Puppy Contract

Reputable breeders want only the best home for their puppy. Many breeders will require you sign a contract. They may include the “right of first refusal” clause stating that if, for whatever reason, you cannot take care of your puppy at any time during his/her life, you must contact the breeder first before placing the dog with another person. This is because they are concerned about their puppy during their whole lifetime. A reputable breeder will allow you to see the contract BEFORE you sign and the puppy goes home with you.

8. Early Socialization

Reputable breeders want to set their puppies up for a successful life! Ask what the breeder does BEFORE the puppy goes home to socialize the litter. There should also be some early housetraining. Ask what the breeder has introduced the puppies to and what has been done to jumpstart your puppy’s housetraining!

9. Puppy Selection

Most breeders will want to choose your puppy for you. You may have spent several hours with the litter of puppies but the breeder has spent weeks observing the puppies as they grow. With their knowledge of their puppies, knowledge of what you are looking for in a dog, they have a better understanding of which puppy will do best in your household. They should be able to explain their decision.

10. Contact After Puppy Goes Home

A reputable breeder cares for their puppies for their entire life. They will want to keep updated on how your puppy is doing (both the good and the bad.) They will want to be able to contact you as well as allowing you to contact them. Ask how they follow up with their puppy owners. If they are not interested in their puppies after they leave, do not purchase a puppy from them.

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