

What to Look for in a Reputable Breeder

Reputable Breeders are not a burden on rescue! A Reputable Breeder ALWAYS takes back the dogs they are responsible for producing no matter what the age. Many Reputable Breeders are very supportive of rescue and help out with fostering, transporting, mentoring/education and information.

Reputable Breeders do not have puppies available all the time, and therefore usually have waiting lists. A reputable breeder rarely has more than 1 - 3 litters a year, and many times may only have a litter once every few years. At times, a reputable breeder may have an older puppy or adult available as well.

A Reputable Breeder puts much thought and planning into each breeding. They care about where each and every puppy goes, and keep in touch with the new family for the life time of the dog. Should anything happen that the family is no longer able to care for the dog, it is required by contract that the dog be returned to the breeder.

Reputable Breeders are very careful with the placement of their dogs, and are able to knowledgeably answer questions about their dogs. Be prepared to answer a lot of questions about yourselves and your life style, and be prepared to have a home check performed.

Reputable Breeders do extensive pedigree research and health checks on their dogs before breeding them. This may include but is not limited to:

- Hips and OFA Certification
- Eye Certification
- Heart/Thoracic exams
- Thyroid Exams

Reputable Breeders breed for the All Around Dog. This includes conformation - not just looks - an unsound dog is unable to perform the functions it was bred for. Health and temperament should also be kept in mind. Any time only one aspect of a dog is concentrated on in a breeding, such as size or color, or breeding just for the show ring, the All Around Dog is not being taken into consideration.

Reputable Breeders don't send their pups to their new homes before 8 - 10 weeks of age - sometimes later. They rarely breed their girls before 2 years of age, and rarely more than 2 - 4 times in their life time.

Not all reputable breeders show all their dogs, but usually show some or have in the past shown some, and the pedigrees of their dogs usually have several AKC champions behind them in the first two or three generations.

Reputable Breeders register their dogs with the [AKC](#), or in the case of Canada, the [CKC](#). They sometimes are dually registered with [UKC](#), but any other registration is marginal at best

How to find a Reputable Breeder

One of the best resources to finding a reputable breeder is through the national breed club - you can find a list of breed clubs for your chosen breed at www.akc.org. You can also check with local clubs - for example the [Alaskan Malamute Club of WI](#). A reputable breeder isn't always going to have puppies available, but they may refer you to someone they trust who does have a litter planned.

Once you have found the names of four or five breeders you think may work out for you, it's best to prepare a list of questions to ask to get to know more about them and their dogs. Be prepared to be asked just as many questions about yourself - a reputable breeder understands this is not the breed for everyone and wants to ensure their pups are placed in suitable homes.

Some good questions to ask your potential breeder:

Do the parents have their health clearances, and if so can you provide the certifications as well as their registered names so they can be looked up in the [OFA database](#)?

What is the health clearance history of the dogs in the pedigree behind this planned litter? Something that can also be looked up in the OFA database.

How many litters do you have a year?

Are your puppies sold with a contract?

What would you do if I can no longer take care of this dog? Do you take your dogs back?

What sort of support do you give your puppy owners?

Why did you plan this breeding - why did you choose these two dogs to breed?

Do you do performance work with your own dogs and do your current dogs have any titles - conformation/showing, harness work, agility or obedience?

Can you describe the health, longevity and temperament of the sire and dam's pedigree for three generations back?

What are the incidences of epilepsy, cancer, bloat, skin/allergy/food sensitivity issues, cataracts, hypothyroidism, heart conditions, orthopedic disorders in your dogs and the dogs behind your dogs? (Beware the breeder that says "none". They are either lying or have not been breeding long.)