

So You Want to Breed Your Mastiff

Mastiffs are one of the hardest and most expensive breeds of dog to raise and breed. It is common to experience fertility problems in both males and females. It is also common for the female to experience problems during whelping as well as post-delivery problems. You should not breed a Mastiff until they are at least 22 months of age and if you try breeding after 6 years of age you



will be courting disaster. So you would be very lucky to see 3 litters out of a Mastiff female, I personally believe a female should never be bred more than twice. This is one of the reasons the cost of buying a Mastiff puppy is higher than other breeds. Reputable Mastiff breeders seldom it ever make money breeding Mastiffs.

Before deciding to breed your Mastiff, whether it is a stud dog or a bitch, the breeder should be confident that their Mastiff is a good example of the breed. This includes temperament, size and conformation. It is also necessary to determine that the prospective breeding pair does not have health problems that can be passed on to their puppies.

Health problems that should be tested for in the Mastiff are Hip and Elbow Dysplasia, Heart problems, genetic eye problems (PRA and CMR), Cystinuria, Patella's, and Thyroid. Many reputable breeders go even farther and do testing for many more genetic health problems.

So now you are thinking... why bother testing? From a monetary standpoint you do not want to be refunding money to unhappy puppy buyers because their pup has Hip dysplasia or a bad heart. You may even find yourself in court over an unhealthy puppy. Your goal as a breeder should always be to produce a healthy, sound, friendly, Mastiff, of outstanding breed type.

If you are thinking of breeding your Mastiff you should probably think a little harder about that.

To start with you need to consider the cost of buying a breeding quality Mastiff, you are looking at paying \$2500 to \$3000 dollars for a Mastiff puppy with complete genetic health testing on their sire and dam. Then there is the cost of caring for that Mastiff for at least 2 years prior to the first breeding. Before you are ready to breed you need to spend \$1000-\$1200 to complete the dogs health testing.

Okay... so now you are ready to breed. But wait, what about the 'other' party. It takes two to tango. You can expect to pay around \$2500 for a stud fee, plus it is generally the bitch owner's responsibility to pay to collect and ship the semen, another couple hundred dollars.

So you've done all the prep work, you have the semen, so now what? Now you have to do progesterone testing on the female to make sure you have bred her at the right time, so factor in another \$400 dollars on progesterone tests. Once she is ready to inseminate consider the cost of the surgical insemination, several hundred more dollars. Then there is the cost of ultrasound should you chose to do one to see if the pregnancy took... then the x-ray before birth to see how many pups are in there (to make sure she gets them all out).

Many Mastiffs need some sort of veterinarian help when whelping and most end up in C-sections at a cost of \$1200 or higher if it's an emergency C-section. Mastiffs are also known to have large litters, and you very well may end up bottle feeding pups. Then you must supplement the pups, pay for worming and vaccination and health checks before you can sell the pups, as well as the cost of registering the pups with the AKC and microchipping them. Add at least another \$600-\$800 for these expenses.

So consider that you only have a litter of 3 or 4 puppies. Even if you sell each puppy for \$2500 you are still in the red.

Now consider what if someone a year from now can't keep their Mastiff. Guess where it's going? Right back to you, that's where. That is, if you are a reputable breeder that takes your puppies back. Now you have an additional dog to care for until you can properly place it. There's more! What if one of the puppies has a genetic health problem covered under your health guarantee? Now you either have to refund the puppy buyers money or replace the puppy.

None of this even takes into consideration the costs of travel, handlers, hotels, entry fees, etc. spent on showing your dog to find out if it is conformationally correct. You're talking several thousand dollars just in showing costs. There is only one reason reputable breeders sacrifice all of this; for the love of the breed.