



QUESTIONS TO ASK THE BREEDER ON THE PHONE



Before you arrange to visit a puppy, it's a good idea to phone and ask some questions first. Here's a guide to get you started.



Part 1: General questions

1. Did they breed the puppy?

It's not a good idea to buy a puppy from anyone other than the breeder, otherwise you will not be able to see the puppy with its mother in the place where it was bred or find out about the puppy's history.

2. Are the puppies kept where they were bred?

Always see the puppies in the place where they were bred.

3. Find out how many puppies there are/were in the litter?

It's best to arrange a viewing when there's more than one puppy to see. Also ask this question again when you visit the puppy to make sure that you get the same answer about the size of the litter.

4. Have any of the puppies had any health problems? Has the mother had any health problems?

5. Have the puppies been treated for worms or any other parasites?

Generally puppies should have been wormed at approximately two, five and again at eight weeks of age.

6. Have, or will, the puppies be given their first vaccinations before they go to their new homes?

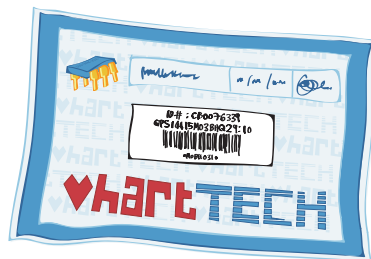
If not you will need to arrange for them to be carried out soon after the puppy arrives, should you choose to buy one.

7. Have the parents been screened for any inherited diseases known to be a problem in that breed?

Read our factsheet on inherited disease for more information. Many inherited diseases including cancers, blindness, diabetes, heart disease, cataracts, epilepsy, hip dysplasia and congenital deafness, are very common in particular breeds. They can be extremely painful or even life threatening. Veterinary treatment can be very costly and some insurance companies may charge more or not cover certain breeds so it's worth checking with the insurance company of your choice.

8. Do the puppies have any form of identification, such as microchips?

It is advisable to microchip puppies to help them be traced if they are ever lost or stolen, but you can arrange this after you have got the puppy.



Part 2: Matching the right puppy to your home and lifestyle



A puppy who hasn't met many people or dogs, or has lived in a very quiet home may need to be very carefully introduced to new experiences to ensure he/she doesn't grow up afraid. This may be OK if you're an experienced dog owner who has got plenty of time to help build the puppy's confidence, but if this is your first puppy or you are inexperienced then this puppy is probably not for you.

9. Ask where the puppies are kept?

For example, is this inside the house in a busy kitchen where lots of people come and go and interact with the puppies?

Think about whether this set-up matches your own home environment.

10. Find out about where the breeder lives.

Is it in a quiet or busy area? Has the puppy been exposed to noises such as traffic, the television, gunfire?

Think about whether this matches your own home environment.



11. Have the puppies met and been gently handled by children of different ages?

This is particularly important if you have children or grandchildren yourself.

12. Have the puppies met adult dogs as well as their mother?

13. How many people regularly interact with the puppies and are they used to having contact with people during the day or only at certain times (e.g. for short periods of play and feeding)?

Part 3: Arranging to see the puppy

If you're happy with the answers the next step is to arrange to see the puppy. But before you do, just check the following.

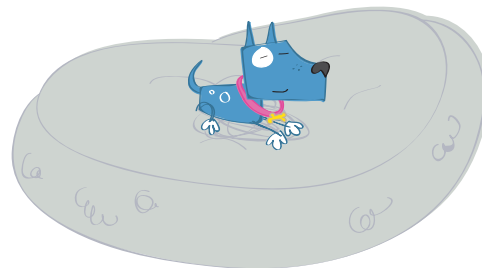
14. Will you be able to meet all the puppies and their mother?

Don't agree to meeting just one puppy without his/her mother. Looking at the health and behaviour of the mother and the puppies interacting together will help you make a good choice of puppy.

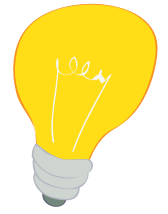
15. Will the puppies' father (sire) also be present?

If not find out if you can contact his owner.

Ask plenty of questions about his health, temperament and that of other litters he has fathered.



your answers



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