

Be an Informed Buyer

Some questions to ask when talking to breeders.

(Make copies of this as you contact breeders so that you can keep your records straight)

Breeder's name / Kennel name _____

Phone number _____ Pups available _____ Next litter due _____

Basic health clearances for breeding animals. OFA ratings come on a Certificate and the breeder should have it at hand

<p>DAM Name _____ AKC # _____ Hip OFA # _____ Rated _____ Elbow OFA# _____ Rated _____ Thyroid # _____ Cardiac # _____ Von Willebrand # _____ Eyes (CERF #) _____</p> <p>DAM'S DAM _____ AKC # _____ Hip OFA# _____ Rated _____ Elbow OFA# _____ Rated _____ Thyroid # _____ Cardiac # _____ Von Willebrand # _____ Eyes (CERF #) _____</p> <p>DAM'S SIRE _____ AKC # _____ Hip OFA# _____ Rated _____ Elbow OFA# _____ Rated _____ Thyroid # _____ Cardiac # _____ Von Willebrand # _____ Eyes (CERF #) _____</p>	<p>SIRE Name _____ AKC # _____ Hip OFA# _____ Rated _____ Elbow OFA# _____ Rated _____ Thyroid # _____ Cardiac # _____ Von Willebrand # _____ Eyes (CERF #) _____</p> <p>SIRE'S DAM _____ AKC # _____ Hip OFA # _____ Rated _____ Elbow OFA # _____ Rated _____ Thyroid # _____ Cardiac # _____ Von Willebrand # _____ Eyes (CERF #) _____</p> <p>SIRE'S SIRE _____ AKC # _____ Hip OFA# _____ Rated _____ Elbow OFA# _____ Rated _____ Thyroid # _____ Cardiac # _____ Von Willebrand # _____ Eyes (CERF #) _____</p>
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If you are confused by any of the questions; please consult the accompanying Bernese Mountain Dog Puppy Buyer Guide.

Important questions to ask

- What genetic screening/testing do you routinely perform on ALL of your breeding stock?
- How long have you been a breeder?
- Do you breed other breeds? Which ones?
- Are you a member of any dog clubs?
- How many litters do you have a year?
- Do you show your dogs and what other titles do they have?
- Do you temperament test your puppies before placing?
- Will you take the dog back/help find another home for it if for some reason in the future I can no longer look after it?
- Do you require spaying/neutering?
- What health clearances/procedures do you require from puppy buyers?
- What guarantees are given under the contract?
- May I have a copy of your contract to review?
- Do you have any puppies or will you have any in the future?
- Do you have the parents on site? Can I see them?
- How old are the Mother and Father of this litter?
- Is there any special health problems I might need to watch for in this particular breeding?
- How much does a non-show or show quality puppy cost?
- What are the parent's temperaments and personalities like?
- Where were the puppies raised? How have you socialized them?
- What is the likelihood that I might be able to get a puppy from this litter?
- After receiving my contract, how and when do you notify me if I am on your approved list?
- What do I have to do to reserve a puppy and do you need a deposit?
- If I place a deposit with you, under what conditions will/can my deposit be returned?

REPUTABLE BREEDER CHECKLIST

- Puppies for sale are born on the premises - not shipped in.
- Breeder does not sell puppies to wholesalers, brokers, dealers or retail shops.
- Dog set up is clean and well kept.
- Breeder insists that the puppies for sale will be at least seven weeks old before being placed.
- Sire and dam of the litter were tested for genetic health before the breeding.
- Puppies for sale and dogs for sale have been introduced to children and other animals as part of their socialization.
- Breeder reviewed some of the problems some people have with the breed.
- Breeder asked if you plan to breed the dog. Your contract should spell out spay and neuter or what is required if you are going to show your dog?
- Breeder is available as a resource for advice and support for the life of the dog.
- Breeder promises to take the dog in (Not return your money) if you can't keep it, for the life of the dog.
- Breeder provides a contract for your review and goes over it with you.
- Breeder raises no more than 2 different breeds of puppies for sale and dogs for sale. It is very difficult for a breeder to be competent in more breeds.
- Breeder is a member of a breed club.
- Breeder's primary concern is finding a good home for the puppy, rather than getting paid.
- Breeder asked you lots of questions about your lifestyle, family, experience with dogs and other pets, why you are looking for a dog for sale. Breeder was happy to answer all your questions and made you feel comfortable asking for advice.
- Breeder shows their dogs in conformation.
- Breeder breeds puppies to support their own line. Breeder does not breed for profit.
- Breeder selects the puppies out of the litter best suited for you and your family.
- Breeder's priority is the placement of the puppy in the best home and circumstances for all.

"RED FLAGS"

- Sells males for less money than females.
- Sells "show quality" while they never show themselves.
- Sells any puppy with full registration for more money, regardless of the quality or health of the pup.
- Breeding stock that has come from the Eastern European countries, like Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Czech Republic, Russia, etc.
- Brokers pups from other breeders (Especially those outside the USA). No reputable breeder sells to a broker.
- Does not have verifiable health clearances on hips AND elbows of at least MOST of the dogs on the pups pedigree. If you are told "our vet said they are healthy" this is a BIG red flag.
- Breeder discourages you from visiting their facilities, or "suggests" you meet somewhere to get your pup.
- Requires money up front before any paperwork (such as pedigree info, contract info etc.) is provided. Requires deposits (usually non-refundable) before their bitch is bred or the litter is whelped.
- Sells without a contract.
- Puppies registered with other than AKC registry. (If you are getting a dog from Canada, then the CKC, Canadian Kennel Club is fine).
- Has a PayPal or credit card system set up for payment.
- Says "I just breed nice puppies for nice people." What this REALLY means is I am selling them to anyone who comes up with the cash."
- Breeds multiple breeds.
- Sells unregistered puppies or charges additional money for registering puppies.
- Advertises in the newspaper.
- Does not provide pedigree information or provide the family health history of the parents.
- Does not allow you to see the mother of the puppies.