

What type of Breeder Are You Looking For?

There are many types of breeders to choose from. I could probably never explain all the different kinds and many can be a cross between a few of the different types. My purpose in this article is to allow you to make an informed decision when choosing the right breeder for you. I relate breeders much like department stores ranging everywhere between The Dollar Store through Saks Fifth Avenue and many varieties in between. If you choose to buy from less than a reputable breeder understand that you are getting a breeder that will not stand behind their product. Remember you get what you pay for.

The Puppy Mill- These are breeding facilities that's sole purpose is to breed dogs for resale to Pet Stores, Many over the internet and in huge quantities. The dogs that they breed are nothing more than commodities to be used for financial gain and success and are usually bred until they can no longer be used or die. The dogs used in their breeding program are substantially inferior and lack the social requirements needed in a good dog. Although they may be AKC accredited dogs, the use of substandard stock and lack of socialization is a severe detriment in a dog you wish to purchase.

The Backyard Breeder- This type of breeder may own an AKC reg dog(s) and have a litter or occasional litter. Some of the reasons they breed are to witness nature or provide other homes with a dog that they believe is wonderful. The truth of the matter is that most often these types of breeders have no clue as to the genetic faults in the breed or even if their backyard owned dogs even meet the breed standard. They know nothing about the pedigree and if any health issues exist that they may be knowingly or unknowingly passing on to their progeny. This is usually a cash and carry situation where you bring the cash and they hand you over a puppy. There are no guarantees and they do not stand behind nor feel responsible for the dogs they have bred.

The Professional Reputable Breeder- These are breeders who KNOW the breed standard, KNOW the genetic problems, are members of their National Club and/or Local Breed Clubs and abide by their rules. They actively participate in dog venues ranging from showing in conformation, field and/or obedience events. The dogs chosen for their breeding program will be dogs that have been tested for health concerns IE: Eye, Heart, Hip & Elbow clearances as determined by appropriate specialists. Over and above these are the temperaments as well as any allergy issues. They do have written contracts that normally require spay/neuter agreements as well as First Right of Rescission agreements in the case that you ever need to place the dog. The Reputable Breeder will stand by the dog and be available to you for any questions you may have for its lifetime.

Understand that The Professional Reputable Breeder has a standard to uphold! We usually breed anticipating that from this litter will be our next "Show Dog", Field Dog, etc. to continue our breeding program.

Don't anticipate that there will always be a litter available to meet your specified time lines and more than likely to obtain a puppy from a reputable breeder you may have to wait or get on a waiting list for their next litter. We are not Target with unlimited stock. Females come into season only twice a year, normally they are not bred until AFTER they have received all their clearances at 2 years of age, they may not get pregnant, have a small litter or gender of puppy that you are not seeking.

This breeder will have many questions to ask you and/or a questionnaire for you to complete regarding whether you qualify for ownership.

Once you determined the type of breeder you are looking for here is a list of questions and observations you need to make to ascertain that you are getting a healthy well socialized puppy within your budget.

1. First, look at how the breeder advertises. Breeders who advertise in the paper or on the internet are not necessarily unethical. Be wary of advertisements that list many puppies or different breeds.
2. When contacted is the breeder aware of the genetic health screening required of the sire and dam. Are these certifications available to you for viewing? Are they knowledgeable about the "Breed Standard"? Can they give you information on the pedigree other than they have Champions in their background? How far back are the Champions of Record? If there are no titles or Champions on the sire and dam or on the Grandparents, you can be pretty sure this is a backyard breeder or perhaps a breeder "professing or wanting" to become recognized as a reputable breeder. Be cautious of this breeder. They know the talk to talk but don't walk the walk. These "wannabe's" may obtain International Championships and although this sounds important, is the easiest Championship title to earn often done in a short weekend. Many performance dogs holding American Championships, Field or Obedience Titles spend thousands of dollars, countless hours and years acquiring their Championship Titles.
3. Will the breeder allow you to come and see the facility in which the puppy will be raised? It should be clean and have sufficient area for puppy exercise. What socialization techniques are used to raise the Puppy?
4. Where were the puppies raised? In the house, garage and/or kennel? Many breeders will raise the puppies in the house for the first 4-5 weeks until they are weaned. At that time many but not all choose to move them to a safe Puppy Kennel with more area to run and play. I have an indoor heated Puppy area (the bedroom) and then an outdoor play area. I also have a large puppy yard filled with obstacle/agility & play equipment that allow the puppies more than adequate space for exercise and stimulation. See my website under litters for pictures of my puppy yard and play areas.
5. Does it appear as though the breeder is breeding only for monetary gain? Why are they breeding, why did they choose this particular male and female?
6. Ask for references of at least 2 prior puppy buyers if you were not referred to a breeder by someone you trust. Contact those references and ask how their experience was. Was the breeder available to them for questions? How did the dog they receive turn out, etc.

Don't get fooled into "Rare" breeds of Golden Retrievers. There is no such thing as a rare English Cream, it is just a light Golden. Because it may have ancestors that are from English lines it still in no way should cost any more than the going price of a golden.

Goldendoodles-Don't even go there with me. They are Mutts! No breeder can make a claim that any specific breeding can produce puppies that all have a particular trait as in no shedding!

The above is just a short biography of the different types of breeders available. I realize that not everyone can perhaps afford a dog from a top breeder but being knowledgeable about what to look for in a breeder will give you much insight in what to look for and

what you are paying for. There are many backyard breeders that although they normally do not complete any genetic testing and have no actual knowledge of the breed standard, can still produce a nice pet. Just know what you are paying for, these puppies should sell for almost 1/2½ the price of a pet purchased from a professional reputable breeder. On the other hand, not all professional breeders who provide health testing and actively participate in dog venues necessarily reputable. Be cautious of breeders who will ship you a puppy from somewhere else unless you have personal references that the breeder will fit your requirements.

SEE REPUTABLE BREEDER CHECKLIST