

ADOPTING A DOG

Your decision is made...you want to adopt a new companion!

If you don't have a specific breed in mind and your heart is big enough to adopt a stray, why not go to your local animal shelter. You will probably find an ideal companion that can follow you when you go for a walk or just as a foot warmer when you watch TV. Some dogs available at the animal shelter are there only because they shed, bark or ask too much attention. Make sure that the dog you choose will fit your lifestyle, needs and space availability.

If this is not your cup of tea and you have specific requirements, then you should turn to pure breeds. Here is what you should know before you start looking.

How to choose your future companion

Short or long hair? Giant or tiny? Guard dog or lap dog? These are questions you should ask yourself before deciding on a breed. Most abandoned dogs in animal shelters were all cute as puppies but adopted for the wrong reasons. And because of those wrong reasons, they end up behind bars or are put to sleep without any other reason than being true to their breed.

Do not make the same error! If you live in a 1 bedroom apartment and work 10 hours a day...a lively German long hair pointer is not for you. But if you are athletic and have a big fenced yard so he can run and play then you have made the right choice.

Make a list of qualities you are looking for and another list of things that you don't want in a dog, then start looking. Visit dog shows, consult dog books. Read as much as you can about the breed. The internet is also a very good resource. After your research, you will have 2 to 3 breeds that might fit the bill. You are now ready to make those phone calls.

First contact the Canadian Kennel Club in order to get the National Club list of the breeds chosen. Each breed is represented by a National Club. These Clubs will be able to give you reputable breeders in your area.

Why buy from a breeder?

A puppy is a puppy. This is probably what you are telling yourself. Well yes...and no! The puppies sold in pet stores or puppy mills have started their lives not in the best of care. Their parents are treated very cruelly. TV reports are not fiction. These have a very bad life. If we consider that a puppy from a pet store or puppy mill will cost you between 500\$ and 1000\$ not counting the veterinary bills encountered in the first few weeks in your home (these puppies are rarely healthy), you are better off knocking on a reputable breeders door and start your adventure with a win/win situation. This goes without saying that you are not encouraging a business without scruples that exploits defenceless animals.

A reputable breeder will offer you a healthy puppy, registered, identified with a tattoo or microchip, guaranteed and with an after sale professional follow up. And how much do you think you will pay for that puppy? No much more than the puppy sold in a puppy mill and in which the parents live in very poor condition, locked up in a tiny and filthy cage. The Chihuahua so longed for will soon transform into a 10 pound dog. With a reputable breeder your questions will always be answered truthfully. A reputable breeder always cares for his puppies. One they are gone, they are not forgotten to make room for another litter.

Is this breeder a reputable one?

Armed with a ton of questions, contact the first breeder on your list. How to know if you are dealing with a conscientious breeder? A passionate breeder will truthfully describe his breed, its qualities and defects without trying to sell under pressure. He raises only one or two breeds, rarely more than that. He is a specialist, a do it all. He can talk for hours about the genealogy of his breeding stock, on the genetic defects specific to the breed, on veterinary care he give his dogs in order to insure their health. Also he can entertain you on their winnings in the show ring. He will ask you questions on your lifestyle, your occupation, the type of home, etc. He can also discourage in buying a puppy if he thinks that your requirements do not meet the particularities of his breed.

Do not hesitate to contact as many breeders as you can. Finally, when you have made a choice on the breed suited to your needs, go visit the breeders that you think are the most professional. When you are there, you should find a clean environment, happy and healthy dogs. The breeder should be able to show you the registration papers for each of his reproducers and also registrations for the puppies. Since it takes some time to get the registration for the puppies he should at least show you the litter registration. On request, he should also be able to show you their veterinary health certificates. He should also be a member of a recognized breed club like the Canadian Kennel Club.

A conscientious breeder is a breeder that seeks knowledge. In addition to books on his breed, he should also have genetic literature, dog training, nutrition and other related subjects.

Sur demande, il devrait pouvoir vous montrer les certificats de santé de ses chiens. Il devrait appartenir à un club de race reconnu par le CCC.

It could be impossible for you to visit all the breeders you have chosen because of their location. Certain breeds are very rare and you may not have a breeder in your area. In this case, make sure to get references on that particular breeder. Mention this breeder's name in your conversation with other breeders and study their reaction. Contact the CKC and National Clubs and ask them questions. Put all the chances on your side. If you are not totally convinced of the honesty of the breeder, cross him from your list.

Registered? Of course!

Some breeders and pet store employees are trying to make you believe that a registered dog is much more expensive. NOT TRUE!!!! First, know that the term pure breed can only be used to designate a dog that is registered with the CKC. It is a Federal Law (Animal genealogy Law) and whoever sells a dog under these pretences must supply you with a registration certificate. Secondly, it is the breeder that pays for the registration fees. A registration certificate is a document on which the names and registration numbers of the litter's parents is stated, their birth date, their sex and color and the number of puppies in that litter. It is clearly identified by the CKC logo. Some registered dogs are sold on a non-breeding agreement, this means that the puppy can never be reproduced. This certificate is clearly identified in that matter. If you see a non-breeding agreement registration certificate and that the dog is bred without the agreement of the breeder, the puppies can never be registered and some breeders will take legal actions towards you. Be careful, if you buy a puppy from a dog with a non-breeding agreement, you are dealing with a non conscientious and dishonest breeder!!!!!!

My neighbour has puppies for sale

Your neighbour is selling puppies to buy a new plasma TV set. Hurray! Ask him when will he be renting out rooms in his house or transform his car into a taxi in order to replace his old furniture. Why does the family dog have to become a revenue resource? His puppies are sold to the first buyer without questions asked. Most of those puppies won't see their second birthday. Statistics show this. In Quebec only, 500 000 dogs and cats die each year. What a sad thing for men's best friend.

A puppy well chosen, bought from a conscientious breeder has all the chances to grow healthy of mind and body. Tell yourself that in the end both will be winners!!!

Good luck in your research.

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