



## HOW TO EVALUATE A BREEDER

Finding a reputable breeder is the first, and possibly most important, step toward acquiring a healthy puppy with an excellent temperament. A reputable breeder feels a responsibility to the breed itself and to the people who have dogs of her breeding. She spends enormous amounts of time studying pedigrees for what she feels are the best possible matches for her line and will result in puppies that are most likely to be healthy and temperamentally sound. She spends untold dollars testing her breeding stock for known hereditary diseases and breeds with the aim of trying to reduce the incidence of these diseases.

It is this burden of responsibility that separates the reputable, ethical breeder from “puppy raisers.” The breeder is motivated by a desire to create the best possible puppy she can, while puppy raisers and puppy millers are only concerned with making money or lack the knowledge and desire to breed the best possible puppies.

Whereas a puppy miller sells entire litters to brokers who supply pet stores, a reputable breeder insists on direct contact with her puppy buyers, carefully screening them to determine mutual suitability of both puppy and buyer. This screening is the greatest protection a puppy buyer can have; it builds a relationship between puppy buyer and breeder that ideally lasts the lifetime of the dog. A breeder’s help and advice are an invaluable resource for any puppy owner.

When picking out your puppy after passing the breeder’s screening, the reputable breeder will allow you to see the puppies and their mother and assist you in choosing the puppy that will best meet your needs. It is also a common, accepted practice that reputable breeders will select a puppy for the potential new owner rather than allowing them to pick a puppy. The breeder has lived with the puppies and carefully evaluated their potential on a daily basis during their first several weeks of life. She has an intimate knowledge of each puppy’s general disposition that will help her match you with the perfect puppy. The puppy that is a good fit for a retired couple may not do as well in a home with three children. The breeder will understand which puppy fits best in which situation.

### **The Ethical Breeder:**

Carefully interviews prospective buyers and has specific requirements owners must meet such as spaying/neutering pets, having a fenced yard, etc.

Sells with a contract.

Sells puppies with a health guarantee.

Has a provision in her contract for taking back the dog if the buyer is no longer able to keep it.

Does not have more litters than she can keep well groomed and well socialized.

Does not have more litters than she can keep long term if necessary.

Tests breeding stock for known hereditary diseases and provides prospective buyers with copies of test results.

Is just as concerned with excellent temperament as with health.

Can identify each puppy and chart its growth and development from birth.

Is willing to take the time to educate the novice buyer about the breed and answer any questions the buyer may have about the breed and her individual dogs.

Socializes her puppies and continues to socialize them until they go to their permanent homes, no matter how long that is.

Wants to be informed of any health or temperament issues that her puppies may develop over their lifetime.

Is available to provide help, advice or education to buyers for the lifetime of each puppy.

This information is provided to assist the prospective puppy buyer in finding a quality breeder. If you wish to obtain further information regarding health testing, finding and interviewing a breeder or further educational material, please see the following pages on the VIP website:

[http://www.vipoodle.org/docs/VIP\\_health.html](http://www.vipoodle.org/docs/VIP_health.html).

[http://www.vipoodle.org/docs/VIP\\_education.html](http://www.vipoodle.org/docs/VIP_education.html).

These pages include the following articles that will help you in your search for an ethical breeder:

- *Buying a Poodle*
- *Questions to Ask a Breeder: Guidelines for Buying a Miniature, Standard, or Toy Poodle*
- *VIP Recommended Genetic and Health Tests for Miniature, Standard, or Toy Poodles*

*The information contained in this document is current at the time of this writing and is accurate to the best of VIP's knowledge.*

This information has been provided to you at no charge. You are free to use it provided it is used in its entirety with no changes or alterations and that the copyright remains intact. If you have found this information to be helpful **please consider making a tax-deductible donation to:**

Versatility in Poodles  
1929 Van Buren Ave., SE  
Bemidji MN 56601

**Send PayPal donations to [vip\\_tsr@earthlink.net](mailto:vip_tsr@earthlink.net).**

For more information about VIP, you may contact VIP officers at <http://www.vipoodle.org/docs/aboutvip.html>.

This document provided by Versatility in Poodles at <http://www.vipoodle.org/>.

**© Copyright 2011 by Versatility in Poodles, Inc.**