



Alaskan Malamute Club

Victoria Inc.

Incorporations Registered No. A0016353X

ALASKAN MALAMUTE

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Information Pack

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About the Alaskan Malamute Club

Thank you for your enquiry regarding the Alaskan Malamute breed and the Alaskan Malamute Club.

The Alaskan Malamute Club was formed in July, 1986, originally as a social club, and was affiliated with the Victorian Canine Association (then the Kennel Control Council) in January, 1989, and is an incorporated body. By March, 1991, Club members currently number around 200 people from all over Australia and overseas.

Who can Join?

As an affiliated club we are able to provide benefits and services to those who own, or plan to own, Alaskan Malamutes and activities & events for all breeds of dog. All breeders and members are encouraged to abide by the rules, regulations and Code of Ethics of both the AMCV and Dogs Victoria (Victorian Canine Association).

We welcome any person who has an interest in Alaskan Malamutes or our club activities, whether the dogs are registered or not, or even a different breed. The Club aims to guide prospective owners to purchase their dogs from responsible breeders, to help them purchase a pup who will suit their needs, and to help new owners to understand this very special breed so that they may enjoy their dogs to the utmost.

Benefits of AMCV Membership

The Club keeps members informed of all activities via the newsletter, "The Malamute Mail", which comes out every second month. The topics covered in the newsletter include minutes of Club meetings, reports from conferences, seminars and club activities, notices and reports of sledding and weight-pull events, fun days, bush walks, etc., reports from sub-committees, and letters and photos from members. We also publish information from other sources around Australia and overseas, including articles relating to healthcare, grooming, Malamute achievements, and features show, weight-pull and sledding results. It also contains advertisements from suppliers and breeders which are often of interest to Malamute owners.

Activities for the Malamute

The Alaskan Malamute Club offers a range of activities that the Malamute loves to do, including obedience, showing, sledding, weight-pulling and backpacking. To introduce newcomers to these activities the club conducts a number of introduction & training days throughout the year. These days are an ideal way for new or prospective Malamute owners to find out more about the breed, and learn about the various activities in a friendly, non-competitive

environment. We encourage members, non-members and those just thinking of owning a Malamute to come along. The club also organises fun days and a snow weekend where members can get together with their Malamutes. During the year, the Club also holds two Dog Shows - one Championship and one Open Show, as well as Members' Competitions.

Club Services

The Club provides several important services, including a Malamute Referral Service, which attempts to find homes for unwanted Malamutes. The Malamute Health Sub-Committee addresses medical and hereditary diseases relevant to our breed and is formulating policies to control them. This includes a Hip Dysplasia Control Program which aims to eliminate this problem from the breed - the "A" suffix for good hips is available to VCA registered dogs who comply with this policy. The Club also provides a Breeders' Directory and Puppy Register, where members can register eligible litters of pups for sale, and interested buyers can be given information and referrals.

General Meetings are held several times a year.

Further Information

A great deal of information regarding Alaskan Malamutes as a breed is available from the Club, however, if you require additional information, the following books are recommended:

- "*Alaskan Malamutes - A Complete Pet Owner's Manual*" by Betsy Sikora Siino.
- "*The Alaskan Malamute Yesterday and Today*" by B Brooks & S Wallis
- "*This is the Alaskan Malamute*" by Joan McDonald Brearley
- "*The New Complete Alaskan Malamute*" by Maxwell Riddle & Beth J Harris
- "*Your Alaskan Malamute*" by Dianne Ross
- "*History and Management of the Alaskan Malamute*" by Janet Edmonds.
- "*Alaskan Malamute*" by Dianne McCarthy.

You can also find out more from our website at www.amcv.org.au

Finally, should you have any questions regarding any aspect of the breed, do not hesitate to contact any of the Committee Members listed on this page, all of whom can point you in the right direction.

Owning an Alaskan Malamute

The Alaskan Malamute is an arctic sledding and hunting dog. They are very attractive but can be a challenge to own and are not suitable for everyone. They require an owner who has a very good understanding and respect for the origins, traits and needs of the breed.

The Malamutes' strongly entrenched survival instincts include hunting, digging, being competitive with other dogs, eating just about anything and pulling very hard on lead.

Being a large, strong and sometimes exuberant breed, they are not suitable as a children's dog or for the elderly. The Malamute is by no means the ideal family pet, there are many other breeds of dog much more suited for that.

They are useless as a guard dog as they love all people, but their friendliness often does not extend to other animals.

Before you get an Alaskan Malamute

When choosing a dog you need to consider if the breed is going to suit your lifestyle, and if your family is going to be able to cope with the needs and traits typical of that breed.

Owning an Alaskan Malamute is a decision that must not be made without a great deal of consideration, research and objectivity. If you are a fit active person and love plenty of outdoor activities in which a dog can participate, you may find it very rewarding to own an Alaskan Malamute.

Be realistic: if you are not going to be able to provide a caring and suitable long-term home, please don't get a Malamute just because it "looks good".

What to expect from the Alaskan Malamute

Be aware that the Alaskan Malamute is quite likely to:

- dig up your lawn and garden
- not be friendly towards other pets
- require very good fencing and strong gates
- be very intelligent, but not necessarily obedient
- be difficult to train
- pull on lead
- run away if let off lead, not come when called
- be too strong for children or the elderly to walk
- hunt other animals
- not be friendly to other dogs, particularly those of the same sex
- require a lot of exercise, obedience training and mental stimulus
- do just about anything for food
- shed massive amounts of hair at certain times
- need a lot of brushing but not much washing
- be friendly and happy to greet all people
- not be a good guard dog
- not bark, but occasionally howl
- require an owner that understands the breed and is firm but fair.

Of course each dog is different - not all Malamutes will display all of the above behaviours and there can always be the odd exception to the rule. However, if you are not prepared to have a dog that does any of the above, then the Alaskan Malamute might not be the breed for you.

Be aware that young puppies may not display these behaviours or traits, however as the Malamute matures it is very likely that most of these behaviours will develop.

Things you need to consider:

- Are you going to be able to provide a permanent home for the Malamute?
- Are you financially able to support a large dog? Take into account feeding, worming, registering, vet bills etc.
- Do you have time to exercise a Malamute every day?
- Are you fit enough to cope with a large, strong dog and will you be able to walk it?
- Are you confident with large dogs? The Malamute needs a firm owner they can respect.
- If you have another dog, are the two going to get along?
- Do you own your own home, have a reasonably big yard with excellent fencing and good gates?
- Are you prepared to always walk your dog on lead?
- Are you prepared to put up with a dog that may do some extensive "garden remodelling"?

Purchasing a Puppy

It is important that any pet dog is healthy, has a good temperament and is at minimal risk of hereditary defects.

Any purebred puppy should only be purchased from a reputable and responsible breeder, even if it is just to be a family pet. These breeders will keep the mother and litter mates together until at least 8 weeks old, be very discerning about where their puppies go, will have done the necessary hereditary disease testing and will have pedigree papers and other documentation about the puppy and its background.

Paying a bit extra for a puppy from a reputable breeder is money well spent and could save you from costly health and temperament problems later on. Read the articles on health problems, selecting a breeder and puppy in the AMCV information pack for more details.

If you already have a dog or other animals

Dogs: Be aware that Malamutes are not always friendly towards other dogs. If you already have a dog, we strongly recommend you get a Malamute of the opposite sex. The Malamute may well need to be separated from your other dog(s) at feeding times to avoid fights.

Cats & Other Animals: Malamutes and cats can co-exist quite happily in many cases, and most often do when the Malamute is brought up with the cat from puppyhood. However be cautious if you are adopting an older Malamute it may well think the family puss is something to be hunted. Malamutes cannot be trusted around livestock or wildlife, and will not always come when called. If you have caged animals make sure the cages are strong and in a confined area away from the Malamute.

Activities for the Malamute

Being a working dog, owners must be prepared to spend plenty of time exercising their Malamute. Malamutes love to satisfy their natural heritage and working instincts with activities such as sledding, weight-pulling and backpacking. Malamutes are not suited to guard work or any activity that involves being off-lead. The Malamute enjoys and needs obedience training, however they may well not achieve high standards in this activity.

Further Information

If you would like more information about the Alaskan Malamute, purchasing a puppy or adopting a dog please phone Sandy or Ralph on (03) 9714 8540, or contact us by email to amcvinc@gmail.com.

Malamute FAQs

Is the Malamute the same as a Husky?

No, Huskies and Malamutes are two different breeds. They do look similar, but the Malamute is a larger, stockier looking breed and cannot have blue eyes. The Husky also tends to be more hyperactive than the Malamute and is the faster of the two arctic sledding breeds.

Do they eat a lot?

You would think so, but for a large dog they need surprisingly little food. Being an arctic breed they metabolise their food very efficiently, but because they will eat all they can lay their paws on they are very prone to becoming overweight. They need an owner who is prepared to be strict with their diet.

Do they need much exercise?

Malamutes were originally bred as working dogs, so they love as much exercise as you can give them. This is not a breed that will run around the yard exercising itself, so Malamute owners must be prepared to take their dogs out for some exercise. The adult Malamute should have at least 1/2 hour exercise a day and preferably be involved in some working activities to satisfy their natural instincts to pull.

Do they need alot of grooming?

Malamutes need surprisingly little grooming, except when they are dropping their coat (usually once a year for males and twice a year for females).

The Malamute is a breed that needs little or no washing if the coat is in healthy condition. A regular brushing should be sufficient to keep most Malamutes clean and free of odours, however during shedding of the undercoat they need daily brushing and grooming with an undercoat rake to remove the loose hair. Their coat drop acts as their "spring cleaning" and within a few weeks the new, clean undercoat grows back.

Do they need a big backyard?

The adult Malamute may not run around the yard on its own so they do not need a huge backyard, however they will need an owner with plenty of time to exercise them, always on lead. The Malamute has a natural instinct to roam over a huge distance if given the opportunity, so the security and strength of fencing and gates is very important.

What activities can you do with a Malamute?

Being an arctic working dog, the Malamute enjoys any activity that involves pulling in harness. These activities including sledding (mainly done in Australia with the dogs pulling scooters), weight pulling and backpacking. The Alaskan Malamute Club offers these and other activities that Malamutes love, and anyone is welcome to join in.

Are they easy to train?

No - Malamutes are very intelligent and learn quickly, but also can be extremely stubborn and independent-minded. They have many strongly entrenched survival instincts that won't be overcome completely with training. This makes obedience training a challenging task, but an extremely important one as they need to recognise that you are their pack leader.

How do they cope in summer?

Malamutes cope very well in all climates as in Alaska it also gets quite warm in summer as well as being extremely cold in winter. They won't be as active in the heat and will need a cool shady place to lie and plenty of cool water. The Malamute's double coat acts as it's insulation, just like the insulation in your roof, so the coat should never be shaved or clipped in summer.

Are they good with the garden?

The answer is definitely NO! Malamutes have a natural survival instinct to dig, which they do in the arctic to make a den or hollow to shelter from harsh weather. They also dig in summer to create a hollow to lie in and keep cool from the temperature of the soil, and some dig just for fun or may eat the dirt. Because they love to excavate, a Malamute can become a one-dog garden-remodelling unit, even moreso if bored! If you love a nice neat, manicured garden, this might not be the breed for you.

Can a Malamute be walked off lead?

NO! The Malamute has an inquisitive nature and strong hunting instinct and most often will not come back when called. This, coupled with the fact that they may not always be friendly to other dogs, means that Malamute owners need to be prepared always have their Malamute on lead in public places.

Are Malamutes good with children?

Malamutes love all people, including children, however their size and exuberance can make them unsuitable playmates for children. The Malamute is also very strong and should never be walked by a child – this breed is definitely an adult's dog.

Are Malamutes related to the Wolf?

No - Malamutes are no more closely related to the wolf than any other domestic dog. They have a wolf-like appearance as they have many of the same physical characteristics that are necessary for arctic survival.

Are they good guard dogs?

No! Malamutes should love all people and will greet any stranger with delight. Their size and appearance may, however, act as a visual deterrent. They are not a loyal, one-man dog and most would happily go off with anyone.

Why do I need Pedigree Papers for a pet?

Even if you want the Malamute just as a pet, good health and temperament are still extremely important.

The pedigree papers are the only proof you can get that the puppy or dog you are getting is in fact a purebred Malamute. The pedigree papers are similar to your car registration papers and you wouldn't buy a car without those!

Any breeder who does not offer papers for the puppy is not being responsible, is in breach of the rules of the State and National Canine Controlling bodies (VCA/ANKC) and should be avoided.

How much can I expect to pay?

The price of a purebred pedigreed Malamute puppy will vary considerably from breeder to breeder, however you can expect to pay around the \$1000 mark. Some breeders will charge less, some quite a bit more, but purchase price is not the time to try and save money. Spending a few hundred dollars extra to purchase a pedigree puppy from a reputable breeder could save you money and disappointment in the long term.

What is a "Giant" Malamute?

The term "Giant Malamute" does not refer to a recognised breed, but may be used by some breeders to make an oversized Malamute sound more acceptable to the unsuspecting puppy buyer. The recommended size for the Alaskan Malamute is between 23-25 inches and 34-39 kg as a mature adult so this is a large, but not giant, breed. A reputable breeder would never deliberately breed or promote oversized Malamutes as they cannot effectively do the work the Malamute breed is designed for and can be more prone to health and structural problems. Bigger is definitely NOT better for this breed.

Prepared by the AMCV, January 2008

Personality of the Alaskan Malamute

By nature, the Malamute is a placid, easy going, fun loving dog, but many people find themselves unwilling or incapable of coping with the highly intelligent, sometimes devious, Malamute mind. The Malamute is not the fabled one-man dog; following loved ones with blind faith and obedience. First, those loved ones must prove themselves worthy of faithfulness and obedience. The Malamute can be stubborn and independent, ignoring his family with disdain and happily following a stranger.

Respect is the key word. Using somewhat rough affection, make your Malamute feel your attention is not given lightly and that is something to be valued and earned.

Force or unbending severity will make a Malamute sullen and uncooperative, and he may turn to aggression as a protection to his pride. Be firm when training your Malamute. Be sure he understands what you expect of him. If you are unable to follow through and enforce a command, don't issue it.

There is no need to fear your Malamute. Despite stories of vicious arctic dogs, the Malamute is basically a friendly gentle dog. Malamutes are not overly successful as guard dogs because of their trusting, friendly nature. However they have no fear and have been known to be worthy opponents if their family is threatened. Their main value as watch dogs lies in their size and formidable appearance. They are not often challenged.

While they may react aggressively out of loyalty and love, Malamutes are difficult - if not impossible - to train for formal guard duties. During World War II, Malamutes were inducted into the army for the purpose of guarding installations in their native Alaska. It was discovered that the basic nature of the breed was simply too friendly and gentle. Only when cruel and extreme training methods were used would they attack a human and then they were dangerous to all and impossible to control.

The working dogs of the North were often mistreated and neglected, left to survive by their own wiles. Native mushers did not encourage a great deal of affection or trust. The dogs grew up half wild, with codes of their own, competing as equals with humans for food and developing their independent nature to compensate for the lack of personal attention. Even today, there are many instances of cruelty, neglect, and tormenting which can turn any dog. Children are usually the worst offenders. A penned or chained dog is easy prey to bored youngsters, but let the animal retaliate and the world hears about the unstable temperament of the breed in general.

I answer the commonly asked question "How are your dogs with children?" with "How are your children with dogs." People turn small puppies over to their children with no instructions or supervision on care. The child may not even realise he is tormenting a pet into defending itself, and when it does it is disposed of as being "vicious". The parents' attitude regarding the child-dog relationship is very important in determining whether a home is suitable for a puppy.

Like a child, the Malamute goes through a "teenage stage", testing his family to see just how far he can go. A Malamute that does not learn respect during this

teenage rebellion is almost impossible to change as an adult.

The Malamute's friendly, gentle attitude toward humans does not extend to other dogs - especially those of the same sex. Malamutes constantly strive to prove their superiority to strange dogs. This aggressiveness is perhaps the biggest disadvantage the breed has and the main reason Malamutes are often dropped from teams. Except in unusual cases, Malamutes can be raised to respect the rights of other dogs - if properly brought up from puppyhood.

Malamutes do not always fight to prove superiority. They also do battle for the sheer joy of it, tails wagging happily the entire time. This does not make the fight any less violent, for Malamutes attack any project with enthusiasm! Most owners take the necessary precautions to protect the innocent canine public rather than battle their dogs to change this natural compulsion to fight.

Breaking up a fight can be simplified by having a spray can of "Dristan" or similar product close at hand in the kennel or on the sled. A good spray in the face will take the breath - and the fight - out of the dogs and will not damage the eyes. This is an inexpensive precaution which can save costly vet bills, and as one musher put it, "clear up their sinuses!"

The Alaskan Malamute, a natural hunting dog, is not usually successful as a farm dog. Cats, ducks, chickens, rabbits, goats, sheep and occasionally larger animals are fair game to the Malamute. Constant contact with these animals from puppyhood may bury this instinct, but a Malamute owner must be prepared to cope with this aspect of the arctic heritage.

A Malamute will adjust comfortably to confinement quite happily if raised with a comfortable kennel as "home" where he is fed, loved, and played with. There is no cruelty involved in confining a Malamute for his own safety.

Try to understand the natural instincts you are dealing with when coping with the Malamute personality. Their pride, independence, aggressiveness, and high spirits were all necessary to survive the life for which nature created them. Realise that they dig huge holes in the yard not to annoy but to provide a cool den in the summer and a warm home in the winter. Allot them a portion of the property where they are free to bury treasures and create their wolf-like dens. Weather and living conditions may not necessitate these activities, but the instincts of the Malamute are strong enough to override the changes civilisation may have produced.

The more an animal is trained, the more his intelligence is developed. This can work to both good and bad results with the Malamute. His reasoning power and versatility can enable him to excel in many fields. His independence and stubbornness can cause disagreements. And his amazing memory can cause embarrassment.

Since temperament is so much a part of compatible living with a Malamute, please, for the sake of all involved, be sure that this is the type of dog you want before buying your Malamute. This is not the breed everyone can or should own, and there is enough variety in the dog world to offer happy, comfortable relationships for everyone.

Written by Dianne Ross (USA)



Is this the Breed for You?



When someone buys a dog, they can reasonably expect to live with it for anything up to fourteen or fifteen years. That being so, it makes sense to ensure that the particular breed of dog is suited to the household where it will live, and there are few breeds that need more careful thought than the Malamute. This is partly because it is not an easy breed in the first place and partly because Malamutes rarely settle well into second homes, or worse, third ones. Conscientious breeders therefore go to enormous trouble to make sure the intending buyer is really suitable and will, as far as possible, insist on meeting anyone who wants a puppy.

Books always give the advantages of the various breeds, when what really matters are the snags. Let me give you a simple example : it is a fact of life that, with the exception of the hairless breeds, every dog either moults or needs clipping, stripping or trimming, and some do both. Only you can decide what will bother you the most. For the record, Malamutes moult. I have heard it variously described as being like a mattress coming unstuffed or like an exploding thistle. The carpets turn grey and soup gets a garnish of hairs - unusual and not always appreciated by visitors. Will that bother you?

Many people are attracted to Malamutes because they want a guard dog. Malamutes look ferocious because, to the uninitiated, they look like cross-bred German Shepherds. Furthermore, several non-specialist dog books say that they make good guards. They do not. The average Malamute will not only not warn of an intruder, it will welcome one with open arms, a cup of coffee, and the safe combination. Having said that, I have yet to hear of a burglar prepared to risk it, and I have myself twice had break-in attempts at different houses foiled by the sudden appearance of a couple of friendly, tail-waving Malamutes. Even my neighbours, who know my dogs well, say they would not be prepared to enter the house in my absence. I have only ever come across one Malamute who gave warning of strangers about, which she did only at night. If you want a

dog which is a visual deterrent, then a Malamute is fine, but if you want one which will attack, look elsewhere.

Allied to this is the fact that Malamutes don't usually bark - quite an asset in built-up areas. This does not mean that they are silent, however they howl. The single dog will only do this in rare circumstances: to join in with a police siren, an ambulance or a fire-engine.

If you live in the country, you would have to face the fact that Malamutes are not safe with stock, especially sheep, poultry and game. Nor are you likely to be able to train them to be. There are occasional exceptions to this general rule, and those dogs need no training, but they are few and far between. This means that if you are going to let the dog off lead, not only must there be no stock in the field in which you are, but also none in any of the neighbouring fields: the dog has only to set up a rabbit and chase it, to end up in a flock of sheep.

If you live in a town you will have different problems. Malamutes have a regrettable tendency to aggression with other dogs. Unfortunately it is likely to be something small - like a Yorkshire Terrier, or a Jack Russell - that hurls abuse at the Malamute. Most Malamutes will immediately retaliate and, unless you are very careful its a case of "Look no Yorkie." Needless to say, it will be the bigger dog that will get the blame. So you will have to exercise you dog on a lead except when you go out at the crack of dawn (few people are exercising their dogs at 6 am and the casual open-the-door-and-turn-them-out brigade aren't awake at that time) or when the rain is lashing down.

This tendency makes the breed a difficult one to keep if you have other dogs, unless they are kept as kennelled dogs. A Malamute will almost always get on with a dog of the opposite sex, especially if the other one was there first. Quite often - but by no means always - a bitch will get on with her daughters provided they have never been separated. This togetherness may not last beyond the daughter's adolescence and probably won't survive the separation necessitated by either of them having a litter.

The whole question of trainability is vexed one. It is not always realised that intelligence and trainability are not always synonymous. Malamutes are highly intelligent but not particularly trainable in general, although most litters contain a "biddable" puppy which, in the right hands, will achieve a moderate level of success. However, the precision work need in competitive obedience work is unlikely to be achieved with a Malamute. I gather that one sticking-point tends to be the retrieve: puppies love retrieving, but there comes a point in most right thinking Malamutes' lives when they take the entirely rational view that, since you threw it, you can fetch it back.

I am not suggesting for one moment that it is not a good idea to take a puppy to training classes - in fact I encourage it. But do not expect to reach too dizzy a height. I have heard of some Malamutes being used for agility and I have a feeling this might be an area of activity that they might well enjoy - provided the dog could be prevented from rushing off after a dog in the crowd.

The question I am most often asked is whether the breed is good with cats and/or children. Lets take cats first. I have never had any problems with my own cats. My puppies are always brought up in the kitchen where the cats - we have several - soon teach them due deference. No dog I have had from puppyhood does more than bounce at our cats but they have killed litters of newly-born kittens when by accident, they get into the same room. They are not safe with other cats which they may meet either in my garden or in the street.



There is only one possible answer to the question “Are Malamutes good with children?” and that is “Are your children good with dogs?” Children, especially young children, think that puppies play all day. They do not. They sleep. If a child keeps waking a puppy up to play, sooner or later the puppy - and this applies not only to Malamutes, but any puppy will snap. The child must be taught - and be made to learn - that dogs, like people, have the right to be left alone sometimes. If you bring up your children to understand and obey the word “no”, and if your children are obedient and well-behaved, you will have no problems. If you believe that it is wrong to stop a child expressing itself; wrong to thwart it; wrong to “repress” it, in other words, wrong to bring it up to be a civilised human being, then you should not have any kind of dog.



Assuming your child is a paragon of Victorian virtue, there is just one more thing; a Malamute is not a dog you can give to a child as its own, to look after and exercise. Malamutes are far too strong to be handled by children except under strict supervision, until the child is in it's mid teens and is demonstrably responsible.

Malamutes are strong willed, cussed animals. To keep one successfully, you have to be stronger minded and more cussed.

It is very important that you go to see Malamutes in the flesh before making up your mind. For one thing, they tend to be both taller and heavier than you think, a situation not helped by the fact that books do not always give the correct size. It is not important at this stage to look at puppies, which are always irresistible, anyway. You need to see what they will grow into, to have a long chat with the breeder and then go away and think about it.

After I have detailed all the snags to potential owners, there is often a long pause before they say “If they're as bad as that, why do you keep them?”

It is not an easy question to answer but I suppose it is because, for me and a lot of other, people, the good points outweigh the bad and the bad simply make the breed more interesting. Malamutes are friendly, extrovert companions, their intelligence coupled with their independence of spirit - no lick-spittle lackeys in this breed - makes them a constant source of interest, All in all, it is a breed for people who like a real challenge. But deciding whether the Malamute is the breed for you does not end with knowing the snags. When you have satisfied yourself that you can accept the snags, you must give thought to the suitability of your circumstances.

If you work, you must be prepared to accept three problems: first it will take much, much longer to house train your puppy, secondly, while the puppy will sleep for most of the day, when it does wake up it will be bored to tears, and amuse itself by testing its teeth on anything lying around, from skirting boards to chair legs to upholstery; and

thirdly, you must make arrangements to get home at mid-day to feed the puppy for a least the first two or three months. Do not consider relying on neighbours, friends or family to do this: it is not their dog and they will have no compunction about leaving it unfed when it happens to be inconvenient to do otherwise. If you cannot cope with these three problems, then do not consider having a Malamute.

A flat, however large, is quite unsuitable unless it is on the ground floor and has a large garden attached. I should have thought the reasons were obvious, but I once had a long argument with a would be owner who thought she could train a Malamute to use a litter tray. Maybe she could, but to think she had any idea of how much of the kitchen floor would have been taken up with litter tray, even if she could have bought one big enough.

A well fenced garden is a must. The size of the garden is not important - in fact, I would rather sell a Malamute to someone with a small well fenced garden, who is prepared to exercise the dog properly, than to a person with four acres which are unlikely, due to cost, to be dog-proof - and who thinks it is perfectly adequate to turn the dog out there for exercise.

What constitutes good fencing? Chainlink, overlap or solid boarding. Hedges are no good unless the bottom is well reinforced with close-mesh chicken wire because any self respecting dog will push through the bottom, the weakest part of any hedge/strands of wire will keep cows out but they will not keep dogs in and Malamutes just walk through large mesh chicken wire; dogs can rip their bellies open jumping chestnut pailings. In general, Malamutes do not jump, so, while I recommend five or six feet for a good fence height, in practice four feet will be adequate in most cases. (There are the occasional Houdini-like exceptions - of course). Gates must be as high as the fence, of course, and as escape proof. It pays to put springs on them so that they close automatically. Gardens with shared access are never suitable for dogs.



You must be prepared to exercise you dog properly. An adult Malamute can take as much exercise as you can dish out. If you are not prepared to take your dog out on a lead for a brisk two mile walk (ie. half an hour) morning and evening no matter what the weather, then forget it.

If all the problems outlined are superable, I am delighted for you, and I hope you have as much pleasure from your Malamute as I have had from mine.

Extract from “THE HISTORY AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ALASKAN MALAMUTE” by Janet Edmonds

Activities you can do with your Malamute

BACKPACKING

Backpacking is an enjoyable, albeit sometimes strenuous, activity for you and your Malamute. Anyone can join in as long as they and their dog are in good health, are reasonably fit and have the right equipment. Dogs must be at least 12 months old to participate in a full day hike (approx. 16 km).

The only specialised equipment you'll need is a canine backpack for your dog - these can be obtained through the club and are made from heavy-duty water-proof materials with adjustable straps so that the pack can be fitted to your dog. Apart from that you'll require a sturdy lead (6 - 8 feet long is ideal) & collar, weight for the backpack (if you are seeking the Working Pack Dog title), water & water bowl for your dog, rubbish bags, sensible footwear, warm & waterproof clothing, human backpack, food & drink, sunscreen, hat, insect repellent, etc. Walkers must also carry their own basic first aid items. Be aware that dogs are to be kept on lead at all times and always remain the responsibility of their owner.

If you are just interested in hiking with your dog for fun, then you can put items such as food, drink and clothing in his pack. Anyone is welcome to join in on our walks - your dog doesn't have to carry a pack or much weight and you don't have to complete the full distance.

Training should begin with walking your dog with a lightly loaded pack to get your dog used to the feel of it, and to ensure that the pack is fitted correctly and is comfortable. Once the dog is used to wearing the pack, gradually increase the weight in the pack and the distance of your walks. By building up the weight in this way, any problems with your dog or the backpack should become apparent before you find yourself miles from anywhere participating in a backpacking event. A badly fitted pack will not only be uncomfortable, but may rub the skin raw or cause injury, so please find someone to assist you if you are unsure that the pack is adjusted correctly.

Working Pack Dog Title: The AMCV offers a Working Pack Dog title which is available to registered Alaskan Malamutes who have met the requirements set out under the AMCV's Working Dog Title Program. The rules and application forms for the Working Pack Dog (WPD) can be obtained from the Backpacking co-ordinator or the Secretary. To qualify for the WPD title your dog must carry 30% of its body weight for a minimum of 16 km on four occasions - a dog weighing 40 kg would therefore have to carry 12 kg of weight, which is the equivalent of 12 litres of water. We do not recommend that you and/or your dog attempt this unless you are both fit, healthy and have done some training. You will require a sturdy backpack which is sufficiently large to hold the required weights. The weight is usually made up of something that is dense yet can mould to the shape of your dog: bags of rice, bags of damp sand and/or a soft pack of water (similar to the bladder of a wine cask) are suitable. It is also important that you know how to adjust the pack so that it is fitted correctly and is most comfortable for the dog.

The AMCV holds several backpacking events each year at various venues around Victoria (usually within 2 hours drive of Melbourne), and anyone with a healthy and fairly fit dog (at least 1

year old) is welcome to come along. Further information about backpacking with your dog and AMCV backpacking events can be obtained from the club newsletter or by phoning the AMCV Backpacking Co-ordinator.



SLEDDING

Sledding is one of the many activities that Malamutes enjoy and is a fun and rewarding experience for both you and your dog, as well as an excellent way to keep your dog fit.

The Alaskan Malamute is a freighting breed and they are not necessarily very fast, however they all enjoy the opportunity to satisfy their natural instincts and heritage to pull in harness and it provides a great way to exercise your Malamute. Whether you want to participate in sledding events, have a bit of fun on a sled at the snow or simply want to exercise your dogs around your local area, it is well worth while giving any Malamute the opportunity to do some sledding.

You will need the following to get started: a sledding harness, which ideally should be custom made for your dog, a scooter (usually a modified BMX bike), a bungee line (a 2 metre length of poly-rope incorporating a short section of elastic shock cord) and for your safety a bike helmet. To participate in sledding events your dog must be over 12 months of age, can be either entire or desexed and does not need to have pedigree papers, in fact any breed is welcome to join in. Your dog doesn't need to be particularly fast, in fact most Malamutes will just plod along at their own pace, but your dog does need to be in good health. To help steer your Malamute you will need to teach commands such as left turn (or "haw"), right turn (or "gee"), go ("hike up", "let's go", etc.) and, most importantly, stop ("whoa up"). Much of this basic training can be done with your dog on lead.

The number one priority with any of our events is the welfare of the dogs, and the rules reflect this. Anyone who jeopardises their dog's wellbeing may risk disqualification. We are not out there to win races, but primarily to have a good time working as a team with our dogs. To prevent the dogs suffering from heat stress there is a maximum temperature restriction of 15°C, so sled dog events are only scheduled from late autumn to very early spring and commence early in the morning or in the evening.

Venues for the sport are limited as dogs are not permitted in National Parks. The only snow area that allows dogs

(with the relevant permit) is Dinner Plain, near Mt Hotham. This is the venue of our club's annual Snow Trip which is a fun weekend that provides a good opportunity to try your hand at sledding on snow. Currently a

majority of our club races are held on dirt tracks at various locations, usually within 1-2 hours drive from Melbourne. Trail distances start at about 3 km for the 1-dog class in sprint races, and can be quite a lot more for larger teams, and for freight and endurance runs.

If you think that you and your dog would like to try sledding, we encourage you to come along to a race event or training day.

Training days are held at the beginning of the season (late April/early May) and a calendar of events can be obtained from the Secretary or the Race Co-ordinator, on the website at www.users.bigpond.com and is also published in the AMCV's bimonthly newsletter, "The Malamute Mail".

The club produces an "Introduction to Sledding" booklet that is designed for newcomers to the sport. This includes articles on training, equipment, dog care, race rules and procedures and can be obtained at AMCV sledding events.

Everyone is welcome, including non-members and other breeds of dog.



SHOWING

Your Alaskan Malamute needs to have ANKC registration papers (main register) and must be an entire dog or bitch (ie. not desexed) a minimum of 3 months old. Your Malamute should conform relatively closely to the Breed Standard, which is the written description of the ideal Alaskan Malamute (see elsewhere in this info pack), but keep in mind that no dog is perfect and that every dog will have its good and bad points. Your dog will need to be clean and nicely presented.

Equipment: You will need a suitable show lead and collar. Choose something unobtrusive but strong such as a reasonably fine correction chain or nylon collar and a thin nylon lead in a colour that blends in with your dog or outfit. Clothing and footwear should be sensible, clean and neat, and should complement (not hide or distract from) your dog. Always take water and a bowl, some form of shade and some means of confining your dog – a dog crate is ideal for this.

Show details: Show schedules are published in the monthly Dogs Victoria magazine. You will need to be a member of Dogs Victoria to receive this publication. The schedule will include the time, date and venue for the show, entry fees, where to send your entry, who the judges are, closing date for entries and other details. Entries for a show usually close about one month before the show is to be held, so you have to plan one month ahead.

Entry forms: Booklets of show entry forms can be obtained from Dogs Victoria. They can also be purchased from other outlets that sell dog related goods, such as the vendor caravans which come along to most dog shows. All dog show entries must be filled out on these forms and most of the information you need to complete the form will be found on your dog's registration papers. You will also need to know which age class to enter your dog in – keep in mind that this is based on the dog's age at the commencement of the show.

What you need to teach your dog: Your dog needs to be tolerant of being handled and having his teeth and testicles (for male dogs only of course!) checked by the judge. Your dog must also have a good temperament towards other dogs as they are often placed in very close proximity to each other in the show ring, and may be confined at a dog show for long hours close to many other dogs of all breeds. Your dog will need to be trained to stand still in a show "stack" and gait at a "show trot". It is almost impossible for a judge to assess a dog that won't stand still and otherwise misbehaves in the ring.

Other requirements: A good sense of humour and sportsmanship is a must. If you are going to get upset if you don't win, then dog showing is probably not the hobby for you. Remember that when you enter a dog show, you are paying for the judges opinion of your dog relative to the others in the competition on the day. What one judge chooses one day could well be the opposite of what a different judge chooses the next day, so it pays to persevere. Whether you win or lose, you will still have enjoyed a day's outing with your dog.

You will also need to be prepared to get up early on the weekend. Most dog shows commence at 9 am. As Malamutes are the 2nd breed in Group 6 after Akitas, you will usually need to be at the venue well before the show starts so that you and your dog are ready on time. ALWAYS CHECK THE SHOW SCHEDULE: occasionally shows have reverse order judging, sometimes Group 6 is divided between two or more judges, and sometimes the Alaskan Malamute Judge may also be judging other breeds or groups prior to judging Group 6.



More information: For advice about any aspect of showing and hands on practical training, bring your Malamute along to the Mally Activities Days and you are also welcome to contact the AMCV Show Secretary if you have any queries. More information about dog showing can be found on the Dogs Victoria website: www.dogsvictoria.org.au

WEIGHT-PULLING

Weight pulling is another activity that many Malamutes love to do and, as with sledding, satisfies the Malamute's natural instinct to pull in harness.

Weight pulling is a timed event in which each dog is allowed 60 seconds to pull the weight-pull trolley a distance of 16 feet. The dog must qualify for the event by first pulling the empty trolley, which weighs 160 kg. After each dog has attempted the pull, the trolley is loaded with more weight and each dog who successfully pulled the previous weight is again given 60 seconds to pull the higher weight. A dog is out of the competition if it fails to pull the loaded trolley, and that dog's result gets recorded at the highest weight that it successfully pulled. In the event that two or more dogs finish up the competition having pulled the same weight, then the dog that pulled that weight in the quickest time is placed the highest.



To be successful in weight-pulling, your dog needs to pull on voice command, as the handler is not permitted to use any form of bait or enticement to get the dog to pull in competition. The dogs that generally perform the best are not necessarily the largest dogs, so don't think your Malamute won't do well just because it is not a particularly large or strong-looking specimen of the breed. The dogs that perform well are more often those with good pulling technique and the right attitude – these dogs really want to pull and have learnt to lean into their harnesses to get the weight-pull trolley moving. The AMCV offers 5 weight-classes for the dogs competing in its events so that smaller dogs are not competing against significantly larger dogs. The results of the competition are based on the overall weight that the dog pulled within the class, as well as weight to weight ratio, that is, how much the dog pulled relative to its body weight.

All that you need to compete in AMCV Weight-Pull events is a dog over eighteen months of age and a weight-pull harness (the club has some you can borrow). Your dog does not need to be registered and does not even need to be a Malamute in order to participate in events, but keep in mind that as a breed club, the AMCV is only able to offer major prizes for the purebred, registered participants. Minor prizes are however awarded to dogs that do not fit this criteria. It is also advisable that you have your dog's hips x-rayed and assessed for soundness before participating in weight-pulling or any other strenuous activity.

The AMCV has several harnesses that members are able to borrow, but you must make sure before borrowing any harness that it fits your dog reasonably well. An ill-fitting harness can make weight-pulling uncomfortable for your dog, and may even cause injury. For this reason it is best to have your dog measured and fitted for a weight-pull harness by someone who has experience in this field, and Mally workshops or training days are an ideal place to have this done.

For more information on weight-pulling contact the AMCV Weight-Pull Co-ordinator, or come along to a Mally Activities Day or harness work training day – details of these are published in the AMCV newsletter.



Obedience and your Malamute

The Alaskan Malamute can be a very independent and stubborn dog which often won't do anything without good reason. It is important that all Malamute owners obedience train and socialise their dogs from an early age for this reason, preferably with a reputable obedience club or organisation.

An untrained Malamute may be cute as a pup, but will soon turn into a large, energetic, uncontrollable, destructive dog if left undisciplined - hence the numerous phone calls the club receives from people wanting to "get rid" of their adult Malamutes. Often these people have not done their research into the breed or have not disciplined, socialised or obedience trained their dogs.

It is very important early in your dogs life to establish yourself, your family and any other human being as being higher in the pecking order than your dog. You must show your dog that you are the "pack-leader". This does not mean using physical punishment, but it does mean that you have to earn your Malamute's respect by being extremely firm and letting him know that you mean what you say. Once you have issued a command, don't let him get away with not doing what you have asked. Every time you let your Mal get his way you are undermining your authority and you will end up with a dog that thinks he's the boss, which can be unpleasant to live with when its a large, strong dog such as the Alaskan Malamute.

Obedience training, as well as teaching good manners and house rules, should start as soon as you get your puppy. If you would like help or advice about obedience training your Mal, please feel free to contact the AMCV Obedience Co-ordinator, or join in our obedience practice sessions at the Mally Workshops.

Some Basic Obedience Training Tips

- A dog is at its learning peak at 8 to 16 weeks of age, so start your obedience training as soon as you get your pup.
- If your puppy is too young to attend obedience class, buy an obedience training book and start your training at home.
- Keep your training lessons at home short, 5 - 10 minutes a session for a puppy and 15 - 20 minutes a session for an adult. You will achieve much more in several short sessions than you will in one long session.
- Give basic lessons in a quiet place with no distractions. After your dog has learnt the basic obedience commands you can introduce more distractions during your training sessions.
- Keep your training sessions regular when you are beginning with your pup - train at the same time and in the same place. Training before feeding time is a good idea.
- Wait until one command is learnt before trying to teach another. Once your dog has learnt a command, revise it at the beginning and end of each successive lesson.
- Keep training interesting and fun - always do your lessons in a different sequence. Dogs (especially Malamutes) easily get bored going over and over the same thing in the same order.
- Any sort of lessons or training sessions should be a happy time for you and your dog - if you are losing patience, stop the lesson. Make sure you finish up with an easy exercise so that you can end with praise for your dog. This will keep the dog enthusiastic and happy to work for you.
- Don't blame the dog for not doing what you are expecting it to, the handler is nearly always the one to blame.

- Get your dog's attention before giving a command and praise your dog when he looks at you for instructions - this shows your dog is listening and considers you the "pack-leader".
- When your dog reacts correctly always respond with positive feedback in the form of praise, a piece of food or a pat. Remember to show your dog that you are pleased when it has acted correctly - never take correct behaviour for granted, especially when training a young pup.
- Use a tone of voice suited to the message you are trying to get across to your dog - the dog interprets much of what you are saying by the tone of voice used. Saying "Good dog" in an angry voice (it sounds silly but you do hear it done) gives the wrong message to the dog.
- Do not allow or encourage behaviours in your pup that you won't want him doing when he is an adult. Behaviours such as mouthing, jumping up and pawing may be cute and tolerable when your Mal is a young pup, but can be dangerous, painful and frightening to other people when your dog is fully grown.
- Make sure that your actions are always telling the dog that you are the one in charge. You can remind your dog that you are the pack leader in many simple ways, for instance: the dog should be the last one through the door/gate, he should never be allowed to barge in first; you and your family must always eat first, then feed your Malamute - never feed him at the dinner table while you are eating; don't let the dog sit at your level on the couch or bed - the dog's place is on the floor. If your dog is misbehaving stand over him - don't crouch down to his level.
- When playing games don't let your Mal "call the shots". If you play tug of war games (which we advise you not to) always make sure you win, and never go and fetch the ball yourself. Keeping control over the games will reinforce your dominance in a way that your dog will recognise.
- Never handle your dog roughly or angrily, always be firm but gentle - remember, you must earn your dog's respect.
- If you have to guide your dog into the sit position, do so by pushing down on the dog's rump at the base of the tail, or guide the dog to drop by pushing downwards on the shoulders.
- A command is issued once only - if your dog hesitates to carry out your command, make your dog do as you have asked. By doing this you are actively showing the dog what it is to do when you issue that command.

Remember that when you go to obedience school with your dog, YOU are the one who will be receiving instruction on how to train your dog - the dog is not there to learn from the instructor. For this reason obedience classes usually last for about an hour - your dog may not have such a long concentration span (especially a puppy) but the handler should!

So, if you aren't having much success with your obedience training, don't blame the obedience club or the dog - you will almost certainly be the one making training mistakes. Ask your instructor for positive feedback on your training technique if you can't work out where you are going wrong.

You are always welcome to bring your dog along to the Malamute Club events and activities, or ask us about a particular problem you are having with your Malamute. We also recommend any of the Victorian Canine Association (VCA) affiliated Obedience Clubs - details are available from the Obedience Co-ordinator or from the VCA website at www.vca.org.au. These clubs are inexpensive, are well equipped and have a number of instructors to help you with any problems you may have.

Health Problems in the Alaskan Malamute

Hip Dysplasia

Affects bone in the hip ball and socket. The mode of inheritance is polygenic (controlled by a number of genes) and can skip several generations without showing up. Environmental factors also influence the soundness of the hip joint. Controlled breeding programs offer the only means by which the incidence can be reduced. Only dogs with good hips as determined by hip x-ray should be bred from, however, pups from x-ray cleared parents can still be affected, although the likelihood is reduced. Relief can be provided to affected dogs by medication or surgery. Prospective buyers should make certain both parents of the pup have been x-rayed and passed for hip dysplasia before choosing a pup.

Chondrodysplasia (Dwarfism)

Affects bone development and growth. The mode of inheritance is thought to be simple autosomal recessive, meaning that both parents of an affected animal must carry the gene, but may not be affected. The symptoms are shortened, deformed front legs with a downhill posture. Diagnosis by radiographic examination is fairly reliable before the age of three months.

Day Blindness

Also known as Cone Degeneration. Vision in bright light is affected. Mode of inheritance is simple autosomal recessive, meaning that both parents of an affected animal must carry the gene, but may not be affected. Affected pups may appear clumsy in bright light, stumbling over obstacles, feeling their way with their nose and paws and are unable to catch an object thrown to them. These symptoms disappear in dim light. Suspected cases should be checked by a veterinarian and can be confirmed by Electroretinograph (ERG). Affected dogs that have learnt their way around their home can lead a restricted but happy life - they must be kept on lead in strange environments.

Hypothyroidism

A hormonal disorder arising from deficient production of metabolic hormones by the Thyroid Gland. The most common sign is lethargy, but symptoms may also include dry, coarse and sparse coat and obesity. Diagnosis is made by a blood test. Successful treatment of this condition requires an adequate level of hormone to be given each day to compensate for the deficiency in secretion.

Epilepsy

A functional disorder of the brain characterised by symptoms related to the nervous system including convulsions, hysteria and unusual behaviour patterns. Epilepsy can be due to parasites, exposure to toxic chemicals or hereditary factors. The clinical signs may include the dog convulsing, with or without loss of consciousness, and may be followed by drowsiness and disorientation for several minutes after the attack. Dogs that have suffered an attack will appear very tired afterward and will need to be rested. Medication can be dispensed during stressful times to help prevent an attack. Dogs with a history of epilepsy should not be bred, and owners of related animals should be notified.

Gastric Torsion & Dilatation (Bloat)

This condition can occur in any breed of dog at any age, but is more prevalent amongst large, deep-chested breeds such as the Alaskan Malamute. Bloat results from the dog's inability to pass food through the stomach into the lower intestines and, in cases of torsion (twisting) of the stomach, inability to vomit. The symptoms appear shortly after the dog has eaten and may include distension of the abdomen, restlessness, excessive salivation, unproductive attempts to vomit and reluctance to move or lie down. The situation worsens rapidly with the dog going into shock, indicated by pale mucous membranes, rapid heartbeat and weak pulse. Death is rapid and painful. Suspected cases must be taken immediately to a veterinarian for urgent treatment. Studies have indicated that overeating, swallowing large amounts of air whilst eating (gulping) and exercising shortly before or after eating may predispose a dog to this condition.

Cataracts

Cataracts are defined as an opacity or loss of transparency of the lens of the eye. They are not uncommon in Alaskan Malamutes, though their true prevalence is unknown. Small, non-progressive cataracts will not interfere with vision, but complete cataracts (covering the entire lens) may result in blindness. Many cataracts are genetically inherited, although the specific inheritance pattern for cataracts in the malamute has not been established. Non-hereditary cataracts also occur, resulting from other diseases, trauma, toxicity, metabolic disturbances, or aging. With their acute sense of smell and hearing, most dogs quickly learn to compensate for vision loss.

Some cataracts can be seen with the naked eye, but most require special equipment for detection. Your veterinarian will use an ophthalmoscope to determine the presence and severity of cataracts. Treatment is nearly always conservative, particularly given that most cataracts do not affect the dog's quality of life and are not painful. Cataracts can be removed surgically, but surgery is not advised if the degree of visual impairment is minimal.

Breeders must assume cataracts are inherited unless another cause can be identified - dogs with inherited cataracts should not be used for breeding. Responsible breeders will screen their dog's eyes for cataracts and other ocular disorders. When inquiring about purchasing a puppy, ask the breeder for evidence of screening of both parents within one year of the date of the breeding.

References: "The New Complete Alaskan Malamute", M Riddle & B J Harris
"Veterinary Notes for Dog Owners", Ed. T Turner DVM
"Successful Dog Breeding", C Walkowicz & B Wilcox DVM
"Everydog: A Complete Book of Dog Care", R Blogg and E Allan, Methuen Australia, 1983.
Alaskan Malamute Health website: www.malamutehealth.org "Cataracts", Karyn Colman, B.Vet.Med., MRCVS

Produced by the Alaskan Malamute Club, Victoria Inc.

Hip Dysplasia

What is Hip Dysplasia?

Hip Dysplasia is basically a deformity of the hip joint in which the head of the femur (ball section of the joint) fits poorly into the acetabulum (the socket).

Due to the poor fit of the joint, the ball moves in the socket in an abnormal manner leading to wear and tear on the surfaces of the joint and the development of arthritis. The ligament and capsule around the joint become slack and the muscles of the hindquarters waste away.

Hip dysplasia is a largely inherited condition seen mostly in the bigger breeds of dogs, such as the Alaskan Malamute, although environmental factors also play a large part in the soundness of the hip joint. The mode of inheritance is polygenic, meaning that a number of genes interact to determine the final physical characteristics of the hip joint.



Ventro-dorsal x-ray of a dog with good hips

Signs of Hip Dysplasia

The signs of hip dysplasia may develop in a pup as young as 3 - 4 months in age, but may not become apparent until the dog is older. A dog with hip dysplasia may not show any obvious signs initially, however the hips can degenerate with age and the dog may eventually suffer severe pain and difficulty in moving the back legs. Hip dysplasia may be indicated when a dog shows discomfort after exercise, a tendency to "bunny hop" when running, an awkward, rolling movement rather than a smooth gait, difficulty in jumping or getting up from lying down and a reduced level of activity. Hip dysplasia can only be confirmed by hip x-ray when the dog is over 12 months of age.

Prevention

Hip Dysplasia has been diagnosed in more than 100 breeds of dog. Fortunately, studies have shown that the chances of progeny being hip dysplastic are significantly decreased when both parents have normal hips.

The degree of Hip Dysplasia is indicated by a scoring system for each hip, the lower the score, the better the hips. Dogs with hip scores 0 - 7 on either hip are considered to have normal hips and are suitable for breeding, while those with hip scores of greater than 7 on either hip are considered hip dysplastic and are therefore not suitable for breeding. Hip dysplasia can be progressively eliminated by only using dogs with normal hips (as determined by x-ray) for breeding programs. Dogs with hip scores closer to 7 should only be bred with dogs with lower hip scores, e.g. 0 - 4.

It should be remembered that, although both parents may be free of hip dysplasia, there is no guarantee that the progeny will not be hip dysplastic, however the chances of having pups with hip dysplasia will be greatly reduced.

When looking at a litter ask the breeder to see the hip evaluation reports for the sire and dam. The report must include:

- the kennel name of the dog which has been x-rayed
- the kennel names of the dog's parents and grandparents
- a break down of how different aspects of the hip joint were scored
- scores for each hip (0 = excellent, 53 = worst possible score).
- the suitability of the dog for breeding based on the hip scores obtained.
- the signature of the veterinarian who read the hip x-ray.

Puppy buyers can help reduce the incidence of hip dysplasia in the Alaskan Malamute by refusing to buy pups from breeders who have not had both parents hip x-rayed, or where one or both parents have not passed for hip dysplasia. If the breeder cannot show puppy buyers the hip x-ray reports, buyers should go elsewhere for their pups.

Normal hip



A mildly dysplastic hip



Hip dysplasia can range from mild to severe (top right to bottom right)

What Makes a Breeder Professional?

- A professional breeder is one who has made a lifetime commitment to the well-being and IMPROVEMENT of one or possibly two breeds.
 - A professional has studied and researched his breed and knows, intimately, its history and standard, its strong points and drawbacks.
 - A professional has spent time, effort and MONEY researching and proving the qualities and health of his or her breeding stock. Those that do not prove out are NOT bred. He/she plans a litter only with the goal of puppies better than the parents, not for profit or vanity.
 - A professional considers his/her dogs' health and well-being far more important than their ability to reproduce.
 - A professional builds a good reputation slowly, based on dedication and consistent quality, not on volume, advertising or from a casual or self-glorifying attitude.
 - A professional has both the time and mental fortitude to BE THERE for his/her bitches and puppies. They evaluate their litters and make every effort to match the puppy to buyer in temperament, attitude and energy level as well as physical qualities.
 - A professional does NOT have so many dogs that there is no time for individual attention, play and grooming, or so that he/she has to skimp on food quality, space, preventive medicine and health care.
 - A professional can look at a bigger picture than dog show wins or puppy sales and contributes in some way to the betterment of dogs as a whole.
 - A professional is, first and foremost, selling, to responsible, loving homes. While some exceptional pups may be saved for special show homes, the professional does not force entangling contract or arrangements for "puppies back" on people who are only interested in a pet.
 - A professional assumes responsibility for the life he/she creates - carefully screening buyers, helping find new homes, making a comfortable life for the retirees, and yes, being able to make the decision to euthanize when a puppy born with a mental or physical problem has no chance for a quality life.
 - A professional goes further and assumes some responsibility for the problems of his/her breed as a whole - they belong to an organisation for the breed, they continue to read about new developments, and they work to reduce the number of their breed that are carelessly bred, ill care for and discarded.
- Given a choice, educated owners much prefer to buy from these professionals. If you want to join the professional ranks, we'll enjoy working with you as you learn. If you feel this is more obligation than you care to take on, choose the responsible alternative of having your pet neutered.

Facts about Breeding

It is extremely important to know the facts and consequences in advance if you are contemplating breeding your dog.

In today's overcrowded world, we, the wardens of our domestic pets, must make responsible decisions for them and for ourselves. The following points should be reviewed carefully:

Quality - ANKC registration is NOT an indication of quality. Most dogs, even purebred, should not be bred. Many dogs, though wonderful pets, have defects of structure, personality or health that should not be perpetuated. Breeding Animals should be proven free of these defects BEFORE starting on a reproductive career. Breeding only should be done with the goal of IMPROVEMENT - an honest attempt to create puppies better than their parents. Ignorance is no excuse - once you have created a life, you can't take it back, even if blind, crippled or a canine psychopath!

Cost - Dog breeding is NOT a money-making proposition, if done correctly. Health care and shots, diagnosis of problems and proof of quality, extra food, facilities, stud fees, advertising, etc. are all costly and must be paid BEFORE the pups can be sold. An unexpected Caesarean or emergency intensive care for a sick pup will make a break-even litter become a big liability. And this is IF you can sell the pups.

Sales - first-time breeders have no reputation and no referrals to help them find buyers. Previous promises of "I want a dog just like yours" evaporate. Consider the time and expense of caring for pups that may not sell until four months, eight months or more! What WOULD you do if your pups did not sell? Send them to the pound? Dump them in the country? Sell them cheaply to a dog broker who may resell them to labs or other unsavoury buyers? Veteran breeders WITH a good reputation often don't consider a breeding unless they have cash deposits in advance of an average-sized litter.

Joy of Birth - If you're doing it for the children's education, remember the whelping may be at 3:00 A.M. or at the vet's on the surgery table. Even if the kiddies are present, they may get a chance to see the birth of a monster or a mummy, or watch the bitch scream and bite you as you attempt to deliver a pup that is half out and too large. Some bitches are not natural mothers and either ignore or savage their whelps.

Bitches can have severe delivery problems or even die in whelp - pups can be born dead or with gross deformities that require euthanasia. Of course, there can be joy, but if you can't deal with the possibility of tragedy, don't start.

Time - Veteran breeders of quality dogs state they spend well over 130 hours of labour in raising an average litter. That is over two hours per day, every day! The bitch CANNOT be left alone while whelping and only for short periods for the first few days after. Be prepared for days off work and sleepless nights. Even after delivery, mom needs care and feeding, puppies need daily checking, weighing, socialization, and later grooming and training, and the whelping box needs lots and lots of cleaning. More hours are spent doing paperwork, pedigrees and interviewing buyers. If you have any abnormal conditions, such as sick puppies or a bitch who can't or won't care for her babes, count on double the time. If you can't provide the time, you will either have dead pups or poor ones that are had tempered, antisocial, dirty and/or sickly - hardly a buyer's delight.

Humane Responsibilities - It's midnight - do you know where your puppies are? There are THREE AND A HALF MILLION unwanted dogs put to death in pounds in this country each year, with millions more dying homeless and unwanted through starvation, disease, automobiles, abuse, etc. Nearly a quarter of the victims of this unspeakable tragedy are purebred dogs "with papers." The breeder who creates a life is responsible for that life. Will you carefully screen potential buyers? Or will you just take the money and not worry if the puppy is chained in a junkyard all its life or runs in the street to be killed? Will you turn down a sale to irresponsible owners? Or will you say "yes" and not think about that puppy you held and loved now having a litter of mongrels every time she comes in heat which fills the pounds with more statistics - your grandpups? Would you be prepared to take back a grown puppy if the owners can no longer care for it? Or can you live with the thought that the baby you helped bring into the world will be destroyed at the pound?

Conclusions - Because of these facts, we believe that dog breeding is best left to the "professional" breeder.

Reprinted from The ECSCA News-Review, July/August 1991

Selecting your Alaskan Malamute Puppy

In the location and purchase of a purebred Alaskan Malamute, the best source is the breeder who has had years of experience and cares about the dogs that represent his kennel. They will honour their guarantees and can save newcomers from making many mistakes. They can advise about future purchases or breedings and will promote membership in the Alaskan Malamute Club, Victoria (AMCV) or breed club in your State. The breeder's success is constantly being tested in the show ring and working activities as they strive to improve their stock and conform to the breed Standard. They will offer information on the breed and documentation for their puppies, and will question prospective owners in detail to determine if they will be able to provide the Malamute with a suitable and caring home.

A list of breeders who are members of the AMCV is published in the Information Pack and on the club website at www.amcv.org.au.

You may be able to locate a Malamute puppy through local newspaper ads. Occasionally a reputable breeder will advertise there or in the Trading Post, however more often you will come in contact with a "back-yard" breeder. This is not always disastrous, but often such a breeder does not put proper planning, care and attention into the breeding or the litter. They may not offer pedigree papers or long term guarantees, they may not have done the necessary testing and may be unaware of hereditary defects bred into the litter.

One outlet for puppies can be more damaging than any other. This is the "not-so-reputable" breeder who goes on year after year taking advantage of eager newcomers. He may tell stories of "half wolf", "vicious and protective guard dogs" - anything the buyer may want to hear. He breeds litters with no thought to the Standard, soundness or temperament. This breeder is aware of hereditary problems but ignores them in breeding. If questioned, he makes light of the problem or trifles with the truth. Guarantees are non-existent or purposely vague.

Another puppy outlet is the commercial pet shop. Pet shop personnel often know little about the pups they handle. Their main consideration may be a quick turnover while the puppies are still in their "cute" stage. After purchase, the buyer too often is on his own and pet shop personnel are not interested in further contact with buyer or pup. The "not so reputable" breeder often uses the pet shop to distance themselves from any responsibility for their puppies.

There are certificates, reports and written guarantees to back up claims, and reputable breeders are happy to supply copies. Requesting these papers for your own files shows your interest and impresses the fact that you want to do right by the breed.

Even a top breeder cannot always pick the puppy that will become the best Malamute of a litter, but he can give honest professional advice on the basis of his experience.

We look for a short, broad head and muzzle, and a "cobby" look. The term cobby signifies a very compact, short body. A puppy lengthens in head and body, and we prefer the sturdy look to the rangy. Keep in mind the over-all proportion, for this is the single most important factor in the Malamute. Without it - regardless of size - stamina, balance, and working ability are affected. Heavy leg bone is an indication of a sturdy adult Malamute. The small boned puppy becomes a lightly built, small, or sometimes rangy adult. One successful eastern breeder once told me, "look for the puppies that are built like young bulls".

Puppy colour and markings are a good indication of the adult. Coats may go through several shadings of the basic colour and the adult guard coat is usually darker than the puppy undercoats.

Any colour is acceptable but the distinctive facial markings must be symmetrical. In other words, one side of the face should be identical to the other, whether markings consist of cap, cap and goggles, or full mask. Symmetrical markings on chest, legs and underbody are also preferred, but uneven markings are not faulted as is facial imbalance. A white blaze, star on forehead, full or partial collar of white around the neck are all acceptable, but white splotches on shoulders or upper body are a disqualification for showing.

Eyes should be brown, the darker the better, and nose and lip line should be black except in red or whites, where they are a tan colour. The eye should be almond shaped and slanted up slightly toward the ear. Ears are folded over for the first four weeks of life. They begin to stand after four weeks but will often tip over during teething or early developmental stages. A puppy with tipped ears at weaning stage is no worry, but avoid the puppy whose ears lie flat against his head. A puppy whose ears have not stood erect by six months should have some help with taping. A veterinarian can recommend the procedure.

Beware of the long, soft, fluffy coats which often makes a puppy stand out as the cutest of the litter. Also avoid a soft, short coat that does not stand off from the body. Neither would protect a Malamute from the elements it would face in its native habitat. A puppy coat will be softer than the adult coat, for it consists mostly of the thick, warm undercoat with some evidence of stiff guard hairs. Keep in mind that a medium length, somewhat "bushy" double coat is called for in the Standard.

A healthy Malamute puppy is active, roly-poly, awkward, and may not be as cuddly as hoped. He simply does not have time to be a lap dog. Some Malamute puppies are aggressive, outgoing types that demand attention; others may sit back and study a situation before responding. Several may fall in between these categories. Choose the one which appeals to you most. Occasionally there may be a very shy puppy in the litter. It is best to pass him by unless you are prepared to give the extra attention required.

Check the teeth to see that they are reasonably close to the proper "scissors" bite. The outer side of the lower incisors should touch the inner side of the upper incisors. Minor imperfections will usually straighten out with development, but don't expect miracles from badly matched teeth.

The top line will be erratic, for a puppy grows spasmodically, and we can only hope he will eventually attain the slightly sloping top line we are looking for. Gait is hard to evaluate in a excited puppy, but he should have a sturdy look with the four legs descending, straight of bone, beneath the corners of the body. The feet should point straight ahead; some slight toeing out of the front feet will usually correct itself as the chest develops and widens the elbows. Toeing in is more serious, for it will be increased as the chest develops. Extreme toeing out of the rear feet may indicate a "cowhocked" dog, and toeing in will result in a tiring, improper gait. Unproportionally large feet and knees are necessary in a puppy which develops quickly into a large, heavily built Malamute.

When buying a male puppy, make sure both testicles are present. The lack of either or both eliminates a dog from show and breeding and may cause serious medical problems in the adult. Check for them when the pup is totally relaxed, such as when eating or sleeping. A veterinarian can be consulted for examination, but be sure this factor is included in your guarantee.

Puppies are usually weaned and ready to go to new homes at eight weeks of age, ten weeks if being shipped by commercial

carrier. They should have been treated for roundworm and should have received their first vaccination. If it is not possible to pick up your puppy personally, the breeder should have a veterinarian certify to the puppy's good health and should make all arrangements to ship the puppy to the airport nearest you. You should be alerted to exact time of arrival, instructed on feeding and care, supplied with complete medical records for your veterinarian's information.

The puppy may be frightened upon arrival, but a considerate, loving new family will provide a sense of security and companionship through the early adjustment. Malamute puppies are stable and hardy and need no special care. They thrive on outdoor living in all climates and need only a warm, dry place to sleep, shade in summer, and plenty of fresh water, good food and happy times with their family.

ANKC¹ papers are available on all purebred, registered litters, whether they be for the Limited or Main register. Each pup has an individual registration certificate which the new owner sends to the ANKC for transfer of ownership to his name. This form should be supplied by the breeder as soon as he has received full payment. In some cases the ANKC papers may not have been processed in time for the sale, but the sales agreement should guarantee they will be forthcoming.

It is sometimes possible to purchase a pet quality, purebred puppy at a lower price, with "limited register" papers. The limited register provides pedigree papers for those puppies the breeder wishes not to be bred or exhibited in the show ring. It is advisable to neuter unregistered pets so they can be enjoyed by their families without worry that they will contribute to the canine population explosion. There is absolutely no truth to the old wives' tale that a female needs to have one litter for proper development.

The general health of a puppy is usually guaranteed for a short period of time, such as two weeks. This covers any disease that may have been carried from the breeding kennel. The Malamute is one of the hardiest and most easily raised of all breeds, but illnesses and expenses can arise, and they are not the responsibility of the breeder. Hereditary defects are another matter.

The AMCV has programs in place for combating two serious problems of our breed. The first is a condition common to all large breeds of dog, as well as to humans and other animals. It is "hip dysplasia", a condition defined as "an example of biomechanical disease representing a disparity between primary muscle mass and too rapid growth of the skeleton. There is a lag or failure of the muscles to develop and reach maturity at the same rate as the skeleton. This allows a major joint such as the hip, that depends on muscle power for stability, to pull apart and thus trigger a series of events that end in hip dysplasia and degenerative joint disease."

1 Australian National Kennel Council

For Victorian residents, contact Dogs Victoria, Locked Bag K9, Cranbourne VIC 3977 ☎ 03 9788 2500 Website: www.dogsvictoria.org.au



There are variant degrees of the condition. Arthritis may occur and the animal may suffer extremely. Some cases are hopeless and the only humane thing to do is put the affected animal to sleep. Others can be treated so the animal can live a comfortable but somewhat inactive life. Many cases are discernible only through the use of x-ray, and the afflicted animal can continue an active normal life. Regardless of the degree, affected animals must be removed from breeding programs in order to control the disease in future generations. I say control because there is little hope of defeating this complex genetic condition which can skip generations of sound animals only to reappear in extreme degrees. Breeding sound dogs to other sound dogs is no guarantee the resulting puppies will be clear of the disease, but it does keep the percentages of sound dogs high. The Malamute, however, does not carry as high a hip dysplasia rate as many other large breeds.

The AMCV has a Hip Dysplasia Control program which documents the guidelines under which Alaskan Malamutes can be certified to be cleared of Hip dysplasia. Ask for proof of this certification when buying or breeding adult dogs. A puppy should have cleared parentage on both sides and should be guaranteed by replacement. Regrettably, this condition cannot be officially certified for the dog himself until at least one year of age.

Chondrodysplasia, more commonly called dwarfism, was diagnosed originally as a form of rickets, but closer examination determined that this was incorrect. While it is not known exactly what the problem is, it has been proven to be genetic. Sire and dam both must carry the gene in order to produce an affected (chondrodysplastic) puppy.

In puppies under six weeks of age, the deformity is difficult if not impossible to detect. As puppies grow older, the problem becomes evident in the shape and length of the forelegs. Although the breeding of two carriers can produce a chondrodysplastic, a litter from a breeding between a carrier and a clear will show no physical signs of the deformity.

However, some of the puppies will be carriers.

Efforts are being made to develop a better method to test a suspected Malamute. For the present, certification can only be offered based on a statistical probability rating calculated from data available back through the dog's bloodlines, however this is not a definitive guarantee that the certified dog is not a carrier of the Chondrodysplasia

gene.

Other hereditary diseases include Day blindness (Cone Degeneration), epilepsy and Hypothyroidism, and any reputable breeder will be knowledgeable about these conditions and if they have occurred in their Malamutes' bloodlines. These conditions are often not detectable in young puppies and may only develop later in life.

When selecting a breeder & puppy, please note the following AMCV health testing recommendations for the sire & dam of the litter:

- x-rayed & passed for hip & elbow* dysplasia
- hold a current (issued no later than 12 months prior to mating) ACES eye certificate or equivalent, and
- have within 12 months prior to mating been tested for thyroid including for TGAA, with such test results to indicate the dog is clear of thyroid problems.

*elbow x-ray results will not be required from dogs that have already been hip x-rayed before 1 January 2012.

NB: does not apply to frozen semen from dogs not available for testing.

Points To Consider Before You Breed

Financial considerations

- Can you afford to breed? Have you realistically worked out your expenses (and then add more for unforeseen expenses, e.g. emergency Caesarian, illnesses). You will need to outlay a huge amount of money for hip x-rays, stud fee, care for the pregnant bitch, vaccinating, worming and feeding puppies, hire of a whelping box, advertising, vet bills, etc.
- Breeding is not a profitable venture - a great deal of expense is incurred weeks before any money comes in from sale of puppies. If you are lucky you might make a small profit, more often responsible breeders break even or make a loss from breeding.
- Will you be able to sell your pups? Are Malamute pups currently in demand, or has the market already been flooded with pups?
- Are you aware what prices Malamute pups are being sold for? It is a good idea to look in newspapers (the Trading Post has the most dog advertisements) to get a feel for the market.
- Are you willing to refund a certain amount of money on proof of desexing by a certain age?
- Do you have sufficient room to raise a litter until at least 8 weeks of age? Litters can be as large as 12 pups, or sometimes even larger.

Time considerations

- Can someone be with the bitch before and during whelping? It is irresponsible to leave the bitch to whelp on her own as problems could arise and you may risk losing both the bitch and all the pups.
- Are you able to be with the bitch and pups after the pups are born? Can you be there to feed the pups every few hours after they are weaned?
- If problems arise and the bitch cannot feed the pups herself, will you be able to hand-rear the pups (this requires feeding every few hours for the first couple of weeks)?
- Screening prospective owners and having them come over look at the pups is a very time consuming exercise. You may spend hours talking to people, only to find that they buy their pup from someone else. Have you the time and patience for this?
- Are you prepared to provide new puppy owners with information about the breed and the pups' requirements? Are you prepared to talk at length to your puppy owners after they have purchased the pup and answer any queries they may have? If this is their first puppy there will be plenty!
- Are you prepared to keep in touch with the owners of your pups on an ongoing basis?
- If the owners can no longer keep the pup for some reason at a later date, are you prepared to take the dog back?

Reasons for breeding

- Why do you want to breed? You will probably not make money, so this is not a good reason.
- If you are breeding because you would like another pup to keep, have you considered that it is easier (and may be cheaper) to purchase a pup from a reputable breeder.
- Do you know and understand the Alaskan Malamute Breed Standard? Breeders should always be aiming to improve the breed - without knowing the breed standard you won't know what points are desirable in your dog/bitch, and

which points are not (e.g. many new Malamute owners think "bigger is better" - it isn't)

- It is not true that every bitch should have a litter before being spayed. It is also not true that having a litter will settle a bitch down. These are not reasons for breeding.
- Remember that a vast majority of Malamutes:
 - are beautiful to look at
 - have excellent markings
 - have friendly temperaments
 - are seen by their owners as being the perfect dog.These in themselves are not reasons to breed.
- Do not breed just because your friends say you should, or that they would like a puppy. When the time comes, often promises made in the past are forgotten, and the people you were assured would take a pup have changed their minds.

Suitability for breeding

- Are both sire and dam purebred, registered Alaskan Malamutes? If you do not have pedigree papers, you could be breeding very close relatives, or to dogs with hereditary problems in their background. Without papers you cannot be 100% sure that the dog is a purebred Malamute. It is harder to sell dogs without papers, and people will not be prepared to pay nearly as much for unregistered pups.
- Do the sire and dam conform closely with the Breed Standard? Never breed with a dog that has a major fault, hoping to breed that fault out - you are only perpetuating the problem.
- Are the dog and bitch of suitable age to breed and are they in excellent health? The AMCV Code of Ethics states that the minimum age for breeding is 18 months.
- Do you know what hereditary problems Malamutes are prone to, and are you prepared to screen your breeding stock for hereditary problems?
- Have both sire and dam been hip x-rayed (cost \$150 - \$200)? Good hips cannot be determined by looking at the dog, a hip x-ray is the only way of telling if hips are dysplastic. Breeding from dogs of unknown hip status is irresponsible and may result in a litter of pups with bad hips.
- Do you know if there are any hereditary problems in the lines of your dog or the stud dog? Breeding without knowing the medical background of both dogs is irresponsible and could result in puppies with costly medical problems.

Finding a suitable match

- Are you able to locate a suitable stud dog at a price you can afford?
- Do you understand pedigrees and the difference between line-breeding, inbreeding and an outcross? You should be seeking a stud dog which would make a good match according to the pedigree as well as conformation (physical attributes) of both dogs. If you are not sure, ask a reputable and experienced breeder for advice.
- Do both sire and dam have excellent temperament? Never breed from dogs with bad temperament, regardless of how wonderful you think other attributes of your dog are. A fantastic specimen of the breed is useless if no one can go near the dog. Breeding with a Malamute of bad temperament is perpetuating a serious problem.

Finding suitable homes for your pups

- How and where are you going to advertise your pups?
- Are you a member of the breed club? Many responsible prospective owners will approach the breed club for advice and recommendations. If you are a member of the AMCV and both parents of the litter are passed for Hip Dysplasia, you may be able to advertise and receive referrals through the club.
- Are you prepared to cull any puppy born with a congenital defect, e.g. cleft palate, serious heart defect, missing digits, etc?
- Can you find good homes for your pups? Are you prepared to screen prospective owners to determine their suitability as Malamute owners? Are you prepared to turn away people who you don't think are suitable?
- Are you prepared to keep puppies until suitable homes are found, even though good homes sometimes cannot be found until the pups are 6 months of age or even older?

- Are you prepared to keep any puppies that you cannot find good homes for?
- A breeder is responsible for dogs that they breed for the life of the dog. Would you be prepared to take back the pups that you bred at a later date should a problem arise? The club will refer unwanted Malamutes back to their breeders.
- Are you prepared to take back any pup that you breed if it develops a serious health problem or inherited disease, and refund monies or replace the pup?

If you have answered NO to any of these questions DO NOT BREED, desex your Malamute and have a nice pet.

If you have answered YES to all these questions and have taken into account all the above considerations, be prepared to continually outlay money. A word of advice - YOU DO NOT MAKE MONEY OUT OF BREEDING DOGS.

Produced by the Alaskan Malamute Club, Victoria Inc., July, 1998

Alaskan Malamute Puppy Register

If you are considering purchasing a Malamute puppy, we encourage you to contact our club's Puppy Registrar for details of breeders who have pups available (contact details are elsewhere in this information pack).

Guidelines for the Puppy Register are that:

1. The owners of the mother of the litter (dam) must have been members of the club for at least the last 6 months.
2. Both parents of the litter must be purebred, registered Alaskan Malamutes.
3. Both parents (sire and dam) of the litter must be x-rayed and passed for hip dysplasia in accordance with the AMCV Hip Dysplasia Control Program.
4. Puppies must be sold with their registration papers (either limited or main register) and be at least 8 weeks old.

Selecting a Breeder

To help determine if a breeder is reputable and responsible, consider the following:

1. How long has the breeder been involved in this breed?
2. Does the breeder belong to the breed club and the State canine controlling body?
3. Does the breeder encourage prospective puppy buyers to visit and see their stock? Do the dogs appear to be healthy and well cared for?
4. Will the whole litter, dam and sire be available for viewing?
5. Has the breeder a good relationship with the dogs he/she owns?
6. What is the temperament of the dam and sire?
7. Do both parents and the puppies have registration (pedigree) papers?
8. Is the breeder aware of health and hereditary problems that the Malamute is prone to?
9. Is the breeder aware that Hip Dysplasia is only detectable for evaluation by X-ray? Are both the sire and dam hip X-rayed and passed for Hip Dysplasia? If the hip scores are available be sure to see a copy.
10. Is the breeder aware that Dayblindness is a hereditary problem that can occur in Alaskan Malamutes?
11. How old is the dam? How old is the sire? Are they both of suitable age for breeding? The AMCV Code of Ethics states that bitches should be at least 18 months of age before breeding.
12. Does the breeder offer a guarantee? If so, can you read it before buying the puppy? What does the guarantee cover?
13. Does the puppy come with information on worming, feeding and vaccinations? Does the breeder provide information and seem knowledgeable about the breed?
14. Will the breeder be available and willing to help you as the puppy grows?
15. At what age can you pick up the puppy? The Victorian Canine Association Code of Ethics states that 8 weeks is the minimum age for pups to leave their litter mates and dam.
16. Does the breeder have some hold on the puppy after you buy it?
17. Agreements on breeding and stud arrangements should be discussed and understood by both parties.
18. Will the breeder pick the puppy or will you select it?
19. How much will the puppy cost? Is a deposit required? Does the breeder issue a signed receipt?



Written contracts often protect both parties

Alaskan Malamute Breed Standard

American Kennel Club - Effective 31st May 1994 (Amended January 1996)

Country of Development: United States of America

GENERAL APPEARANCE: The Alaskan Malamute, one of the oldest Arctic sled dogs, is a powerful and substantially built dog with a deep chest and strong, well-muscled body.

The Malamute stands well over the pads, and this stance gives the appearance of much activity and proud carriage, with head erect when alerted. The muzzle is bulky, only slight diminishing in width from root to nose. The muzzle is not pointed or long, yet not stubby.

The coat is thick with a coarse guard coat of sufficient length to protect a woolly undercoat. Malamutes are of various colours. Face markings are a distinguishing feature. These consist of a cap over the head, the face either all white or marked with a bar and/or mask. The tail is well furred, carried over the back and has the appearance of a waving plume. The Malamute must be a heavy boned dog with sound legs, good feet, deep chest and powerful shoulders, and have all of the other physical attributes necessary for the efficient performance of his job.

The gait must be steady, balanced, tireless and totally efficient. He is not intended as a racing sled dog designed to compete in speed trials.

The Malamute is structured for strength and endurance, and any characteristic of the individual specimen, including temperament, which interferes with the accomplishment of this purpose, is to be considered the most serious of faults.

CHARACTERISTICS - Important: In judging Malamutes, their function as a sledge dog for heavy freighting in the Arctic must be given consideration above all else. The legs of the Malamute must indicate unusual strength and tremendous propelling power. Face markings are a distinguishing feature.

TEMPERAMENT: The Alaskan Malamute is an affectionate, friendly dog, not a "one man" dog. He is a loyal, devoted companion, playful on invitation, but generally impressive by his dignity after maturity.

HEAD AND SKULL: The head is broad and deep, not coarse or clumsy, but in proportion to the size of the dog. The expression is soft and indicates an affectionate disposition.

Skull: Is broad and moderately rounded between the ears, gradually narrowing and flattening on top as it approaches the eyes, rounding off to cheeks that are moderately flat. There is a slight furrow between the eyes. The topline of the skull and the topline of the muzzle show a slight break downward from a straight line as they join.

Muzzle: Is large and bulky in proportion to the size of the skull, diminishing slightly in width and depth from junction with the skull to the nose. The lips are close fitting.

Nose, lips and eye rims' pigmentation: is black in all coat colours except red dogs. The lighter streaked "snow nose" is acceptable.

EYES: The eyes are obliquely placed in the skull. Eyes are brown, almond shaped and of medium size. Dark eyes are preferred. *Blue eyes are a disqualifying fault.*

EARS: The ears are of medium size, but small in proportion to the head. The ears are triangular in shape and slightly rounded at the tips. They are set wide apart on the outside back edges of the skull on line with the upper corner of the eye, giving ears the appearance, when erect, of standing off from the skull. Erect ears point slightly forward, but when the dogs is at work, the ears are sometimes folded against the skull. High set ears are a fault.

MOUTH: The upper and lower jaws are broad with large teeth. The incisors meet with a scissors grip. Overshot or undershot is a fault.

NECK: The neck is strong and moderately arched.

FOREQUARTERS: The shoulders are moderately sloping; forelegs heavily boned and muscled, straight to the pasterns when viewed from the front. Pasterns are short and strong and slightly sloping when viewed from the side.

BODY: The chest is well developed. The body is compactly built but not short coupled. The back is straight and gently sloping to the hips. The loins are hard and well muscled. A long loin that may weaken the back is a fault.

HINDQUARTERS: The rear legs are broad and heavily muscled through the thighs; stifles moderately bent, hock joints are moderately bent and well let down. When viewed from the rear, legs stand and move true in line with the movement of the front legs, not too close nor

too wide. Dewclaws on the rear legs are undesirable and should be removed shortly after puppies are whelped.

FEET: Are of the snowshoe type, tight and deep, with well-cushioned pads, giving a firm, compact appearance. The feet are large, toes tight fitting and well arched. There is a protective growth of hair between the toes. The pads are thick and tough; toenails short and strong.

TAIL: Is moderately set and follows the line of the spine at the base. The tail is carried over the back when not working. It is not a snap tail or curled tight against the back, nor is it short furred like a fox brush. The Malamute tail is well furred and has the appearance of a waving plume.

GAIT AND MOVEMENT: The gait of the Malamute is steady, balanced and powerful. He is agile for his size and build. When viewed from the side, the hindquarters exhibit strong rear drive that is transmitted through a well-muscled loin to the forequarters. The forequarters receive the drive from the rear with a smooth reaching stride. When viewed from the front or from the rear, the legs move true in line, not too close nor too wide. At a fast trot, the front will converge toward the centreline of the body. A stilted gait, or any gait that is not completely efficient and tireless, is to be penalised.

COAT: The Malamute has a thick, coarse guard coat, never long and soft. The undercoat is dense, from 2.5-5 cm (1-2 ins) in depth, oily and woolly. The coarse guard coat varies in length as does the undercoat. The coat is relatively short to medium along the sides of he body, with the length of the coat increasing around the shoulders and neck, and down the back, over the rump, and in the breeching and plume. Malamutes usually have a shorter and less dense coat during the summer months. The Malamute is shown naturally. Trimming is not acceptable except to provide a clean cut appearance of feet.

COLOUR: The usual colours range from light grey through intermediate shadings to black, sable and shadings of sable to red. Colour combinations are acceptable in undercoats, points, and trimmings. The only solid colour allowable is all white. White is always the predominant colour on underbody, parts of legs and feet, and part of face markings. A white blaze on the forehead and/or collar, or a spot on the nape is attractive and acceptable. The Malamute is mantled, and broken colours, extending over the body or uneven splashing are undesirable.

SIZE - Size, Proportion and Substance: There is a natural range of size in the breed. The desirable freighting sizes are:

Dogs 63.5 cm (25 ins) at the shoulders - 38.5 kg (85 lbs)

Bitches 58.5 cm (23 ins) at the shoulders - 34 kg (75 lbs)

However, size consideration should not outweigh that of type, proportion, movement and other functional attributes. When dogs are judged equal in type, proportion and movement, the dog nearest the desirable freighting size is to be preferred. The depth of chest is approximately one half the height of the dog at the shoulders, the deepest point being just behind the forelegs. The length of the body from point of shoulder to the rear point of pelvis is longer than the height of the body from ground to top of the withers. The body carries no excess weight, and bone is in proportion to size.

FAULTS: The degree to which a dog is penalised should depend upon the extent to which the dog deviates from the description of the ideal Malamute, and the extent to which the particular fault would actually affect the working ability of the dog.

Serious faults: Any characteristic of the individual specimen, including temperament, which interferes with his strength and endurance is to be considered the most serious of faults.

Any indication of unsoundness in legs and feet, front or rear, standing or moving. Faults under this provision would be :

Ranginess, shallowness, ponderousness

Lightness of bone Poor overall proportion Straight shoulders

Lack of angulation Bad pasterns Cow hocks Splay footedness

Stilted gait, or any gait that is not balanced, strong and steady.

Faults: High set ears Over or undershot
Broken colours extending over the body or uneven splashing.

Disqualification: Blue eyes.

NOTE: Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

Code of Ethics

of responsible dog ownership including keeping welfare, breeding, selling and disposing of dogs by Members of the Alaskan Malamute Club, Victoria, Inc.

Adopted 28/1/1999

SECTION 1 - COMPLIANCE WITH CODE OF ETHICS

Each member, upon signing an application for membership or renewal of membership of the Alaskan Malamute Club, Victoria Inc. (AMCV), and being duly elected to general membership of the AMCV, shall, in addition to agreeing to be bound by the Rules and Regulations of the AMCV, be also bound by the AMCV's Code of Ethics relating to responsible dog ownership, including the keeping, welfare, breeding selling and disposing of dogs by members to the effect of the terms and conditions set out under Section 2 hereof.

SECTION 2 - CODE OF ETHICS AND UNDERTAKING

In consideration of the Alaskan Malamute Club, Victoria, Inc. electing me to its general membership and approval of that renewal from time to time, I pledge to the AMCV that:

1. I shall ensure that at all times all dogs under my control are properly housed, fed, watered, exercised and receive proper Veterinary attention, if and when required.
2. I shall not allow any dogs under my care to roam at large and when away from home ensure they are kept fully leashed, or under effective control, at all times.
3. I shall breed only for the purpose of improving the standard of the breed, and not for the pet market or any other commercial purpose.
4. That excepting in extenuating circumstances, I shall not breed from any bitch kept by me causing it to be mated before it is eighteen months of age. Thereafter I shall not breed from any bitch kept by me causing it to whelp more than twice in 18 months. I will not breed any bitch kept by me causing it to whelp more than six times without prior veterinary certification of fitness for further breeding.
5. I shall not permit any of my pure bred dogs to be mated to a dog of a different breed, to a cross-bred dog, or to an unregistered dog of the same breed.
6. I shall not sell or otherwise transfer from my care any puppy under eight weeks of age, thus allowing for vaccination to be given at six weeks of age, and the necessary ten to fourteen days

for the vaccine to take effect.

7. I shall ensure that all persons acquiring dogs from me clearly understand their responsibility for the care and welfare of the animal, and that they have the time and facilities (i.e. adequate fences, sufficient room and proper shelter, etc.) to perform their obligations.
8. I shall provide to all purchasers of dogs or placed by me, written details of all dietary and immunization requirements and/or an appropriate publication relating to such requirements and responsible dog ownership.
9. I shall not sell any dog to commercial dog wholesalers, retail pet dealers, or directly or indirectly to allow a dog to be given as a prize or donation in a contest of any kind.
10. I shall not knowingly misrepresent the characteristics of the breed, nor falsely advertise, or mislead any person regarding the performance of any dog.
11. I shall ensure when selling or transferring a dog to another person that documents as required by V. C. A. Inc. Rules or Regulations, will be provided to the purchaser or transferee.
12. I shall act in a responsible manner to rehouse those animals that are the result of my breeding.
13. I shall not offer for use at stud any dog that has not been certified clear of Hip Dysplasia in accordance with the AMCV Hip Dysplasia Control Program.
14. I shall not sell any puppy whose sire and dam have not been certified clear of Hip Dysplasia in accordance with the AMCV Hip Dysplasia Control Program.
15. AMCV members will exhibit good sportsmanship at all times.

It is recommended that any puppy sold with the designation pet/companion be sold on a spay/neuter contract with the Limited Registration now offered by the ANKC. It is recommended that adults sold as companions be sold on a spay/neuter contract.

SECTION 3 Any member failing to observe any provisions of the Code of Ethics may be dealt with under the Rules of the Alaskan Malamute Club, Victoria, Inc.

Statement of Purposes

The objects of the Alaskan Malamute Club, Victoria, Inc. are:

- (a) to affiliate with the Victorian Canine Association Inc.;
- (b) to promote and encourage the breeding of pure bred dogs and in particular the Alaskan Malamute.
- (c) to promote and raise the standards and exhibition of registered pure bred dogs, particularly the Alaskan Malamute.
- (d) to promote the holding of Exhibitions under the VCA Inc. Rules and Regulations and to conduct Exhibitions and/or to promote Obedience training and to conduct Obedience training and to conduct Obedience Trials, Tracking Tests, and Field Trials;
- (e) to foster, promote and protect the interest of exhibitors of dogs at exhibitions and particularly the exhibitors of Alaskan Malamutes
- (f) to collect, verify and publish information relating to dogs and the breeding and exhibition of dogs;
- (g) to educate and encourage members, breeders and judges to abide by the requirements and standards approved by the VCA Inc. for the conduct of Exhibitions and Shows;
- (h) to promote good fellowship and sportsmanship amongst members and those participating in or attending at Exhibitions and Shows;

- (i) to inform members of and make known to them the Laws and Regulations of the State relating to the ownership and care of dogs, and the responsibility of owners for the conduct and actions of their dogs;
- (j) to hold functions and lectures relating to dogs and to the purposes of the Club generally;
- (k) to provide awards and donate prizes for competition at Exhibitions and for the competition by breeders and exhibitors of dogs;
- (l) to foster relations with other Clubs and bodies having similar aims;
- (m) to promote and assist worthy causes, as agreed at a General Meeting of the members of the Club;
- (n) to invest the funds of the Club not immediately required in such manner as the members or the Committee in lieu thereof shall determine;
- (o) to purchase, hire, lease, etc. and do such things as are conducive or incidental to promoting and achieving the purposes of the Club;
- (p) to carry on such other activities or promote or encourage interest in the breeding, upkeep and training of and the general well-being and improvement of Alaskan Malamutes and to do all such other things as may be necessary or conducive to carrying out the objects of the Club.

BREEDERS' DIRECTORY

Breeders who are listed on the AMCV Breeders' Directory are required to comply with the following requirements for any litters whelped under their kennel prefix. Both sire and dam must:

- have been x-rayed for hip dysplasia and passed
- have been x-rayed for elbow dysplasia and passed*
- hold a current (issued no later than 12 months prior to mating) ACES eye certificate or equivalent, and
- have within 12 months prior to mating been tested for thyroid including for TGAA, with such test results to indicate the dog is clear of thyroid problems.

*elbow x-ray results will not be required from dogs that have already been hip x-rayed before 1 January 2012.

NB: Frozen semen from dogs not available for testing is exempt from the above requirements.

Kennel Name	Location	Contact Name	Contact Phone No.	Other Contact Information
BELLTREES	Campbelltown, NSW	Cheryl Harrison	(02) 4631 1920 0457 311 920	Email: belltreeskennels@bigpond.com Website: belltreeskennels.com.au
KATAKU	Pearcedale, VIC	Merv & Shelley Turner	(03) 5978 6001	Email: kataku@bigpond.net.au Website: www.dishlickers.com.au
SNOWSTEEDS	Durham Ox, VIC	E'vette Levett	0427 301 043	Email: snowsteeds@hotmail.com Website: www.angelfire.com/ma4/snowsteeds/

* Correct at the time of publication. Whilst the above paid advertisements have been accepted by the AMCV Inc. all care should be taken and inquiries made by purchasers to ensure the litter being inspected has been bred in accordance with the AMCV Code of Ethics.

PUPPY REGISTER

Litters registered on the AMCV Puppy Register comply with the following guidelines:

- The owner of the dam (mother of the litter) must have been an AMCV member for at least the last 6 months;
- Both parents (sire & dam) of the litter must be purebred, registered Alaskan Malamutes.
- Both sire and dam must:
 - have been x-rayed for hip dysplasia and passed
 - have been x-rayed for elbow dysplasia and passed*
 - hold a current (issued no later than 12 months prior to mating) ACES eye certificate or equivalent, and
 - have within 12 months prior to mating been tested for thyroid including for TGAA, with such test results to indicate the dog is clear of thyroid problems.

*elbow x-ray results will not be required from dogs that have already been hip x-rayed before 1 January 2012.

NB: Frozen semen from dogs not available for testing is exempt from the above requirements.

- All puppies on the register are to be sold with registration papers (either main or limited register).



**Please check the website www.amcv.org.au
or contact the breeders listed above for current puppy availability.**

MALAMUTE ADOPTION

If you are considering adopting an older Malamute please contact the AMCV Referral Officer or log onto our website at www.amcv.org.au for information about adopting a Malamute and for details of Malamutes needing new homes. Animal shelters often have Malamutes for adoption and in urgent need of a new home - a list of some Victorian animal shelters is provided below.

Please keep in mind that Malamutes may have trouble settling into new homes where there are other dogs, and most often will not get along with dogs of the same sex. If you already have a dog and are considering adopting a Malamute it is advisable to introduce the two dogs on a neutral territory to make sure they get along before taking the adopted dog home.

Dogs referred via the AMCV Referral Service are in no way assessed by the AMCV, we are simply assisting in getting those wanting to adopt a Malamute in touch with those who have Malamutes needing new homes.

PLEASE NOTE:

Malamutes most often DO NOT get along with dogs of the same sex - if you already have a dog you should only consider adopting a Malamute of the opposite sex.

Please look at adopting from your local area or same State if possible for the following reasons:

1. This allows you (and your dogs) to meet the new dog to make sure everyone will get along before you make your decision.
2. You can then take a dog for a trial period (which we strongly recommend) and easily return the dog if it does not work out.
3. This will avoid the need for long distance travel which may be difficult to organise and may be traumatic for some dogs.

Please check the website www.amcv.org.au for a current list of dogs for adoption.



ALASKAN MALAMUTE CLUB, VICTORIA, INC.

Reg No. A0016353X

Website: www.amcv.org.au

General Enquiries: Ph: (03) 9714 8540

Postal Address: PO Box 41 Hurstbridge VIC 3099

Email: amcvinc@gmail.com

Application for Membership

YOUR DETAILS: *(Please print clearly)*

I / We Member 1: _____

Member 2: _____

of _____

Address of Applicant(s)

Postcode: _____ Email Address: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____ VCA/ANKC Number: _____
(must be provided to receive discounted membership fees)

Your ANKC Kennel Prefix (if applicable - not your dog's): _____ Companion Dog Club Member: **YES / NO**

hereby apply for membership of the ALASKAN MALAMUTE CLUB, VICTORIA (Inc.).

In the event of my/our admission as a member/members, I/we agree to be bound by the Rules, By-Laws and Code of Ethics of the Club, and the Rules, Regulations and Code of Ethics of the Victorian Canine Association for the time being in force.

Signature(s): _____

Date signed: _____ Payment enclosed: \$ _____

MEMBERSHIP FEES

*Please note that new members joining after 1 January will receive membership up until 30 June the following year

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:	STANDARD MEMBERSHIP	DOGS VICTORIA & COMPANION DOG CLUB MEMBERS ONLY*
	for new members who are <u>not</u> members of Dogs Victoria or the Companion Dog Club.	to qualify for VCA Members discounted fees you must provide your VCA/ANKC Registration Number
	ANNUAL FEE – 1 July to 30 June* (includes \$10.00 joining fee & insurance levy)	ANNUAL FEE – 1 July to 30 June* (includes \$10.00 joining fee)
SINGLE	\$46.00	\$40.00
DUAL	\$58.00	\$45.00
FAMILY*	\$58.00	\$45.00
SPECIAL INTERSTATE (No voting rights)	\$35.00	\$35.00

*FAMILY MEMBERSHIP – Includes two parents and any number of children under 18 years of age residing at the one address

PAYMENT METHOD: Cheque / Money order enclosed Direct Deposit *(account details below)*
(do not send cash)

Cheque Payments: Please make cheques payable to "The Alaskan Malamute Club, Victoria Inc"

Direct Deposits: Account Name: Alaskan Malamute Club, Victoria, BSB: 633 000 Account no.: 1149 97406
Please include your surname & "MEMB" in the transaction details, and submit your membership form by email or mail.

SUBMIT TO:

Please mail this form and payment to: **AMCV SECRETARY, PO BOX 41 HURSTBRIDGE VIC 3099**
or submit form with payment details by email to: **amcvinc@gmail.com**

PLEASE NOTE THAT MEMBERSHIPS ARE RENEWABLE ON 1ST JULY EACH YEAR

New members joining after 1 January will receive membership up until 30 June the following year

PLEASE NOTE:

Applications for membership will not be accepted without full payment and a completed and signed membership application form.
Due to postage and administration costs, only financial members will be sent newsletters or notices of meetings unless other arrangements have been made.