

Selecting a Breeder & a Puppy



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 to prove that the puppies are purebred Alaskan Malamutes? Without these, there is no proof that a puppy is purebred.
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? The hip dysplasia reports for both parents should be available so make sure you see a copy.
10. Is the breeder aware that Dayblindness, Hereditary Cataracts, Chondrodysplasia and Hypothyroidism are hereditary problems 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 have responsible breeding practices? The VCA Code of Ethics states that a bitch should not be bred more than six times and no more frequently than twice in any 18 month period.
13. Does the breeder offer a guarantee? If so, can you read it before buying the puppy? What does the guarantee cover?
14. Does the puppy come with information on worming, feeding and vaccinations?
15. Does the breeder provide information and seem knowledgeable about the breed?
16. Will the breeder be available and willing to help you as the puppy grows?
17. 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.
18. Does the breeder screening of puppy buyers carefully for suitability? The VCA Code of Ethics states that breeders will not sell for the commercial market or pet retail outlet.
19. Does the breeder have some hold on the puppy after you buy it? Some breeders may request co-ownership or have requirements regarding desexing.
20. Agreements on breeding and stud arrangements should be discussed and understood by both parties.
21. Will the breeder pick the puppy or will you select it?
22. How much will the puppy cost? Is a deposit required? Does the breeder issue a signed receipt?

Written contracts often protect both parties.