



The Irish Wolfhound Club of Canada

Guidelines to Choosing a Breeder

We would like to thank you for your interest in the acquisition of an Irish Wolfhound. To support you in your quest of finding a breeder that will meet your expectations here is a list of questions that you should ask the breeders you are considering and also a list of questions that the breeders may want to ask you.

Ask the Breeder:

1. Are you a member of the Irish Wolfhound Club of Canada (IWCC) and the Canadian Kennel Club (CKC)?

Good breeders belong to local, provincial and national organisations. These clubs have a code of ethics that breeders must respect.

2. How long have you been breeding Wolfhounds? If you are a new breeder do you have an IWCC mentor?

Look for someone who has experience with the breed and avoid breeders who breed more than two different breeds.

3. Do you participate in breed events such as; dog shows (conformation) straight racing, obedience and rally performance events?

This shows the breeder has a commitment to the breed.

4. How many litters do you have a year and how many times has this bitch been bred?

It is recommended that wolfhound bitches not to be bred before the age of 2 and have only two litters in their lifetime.

5. Are both parents registered with an agency such as the CKC? Can I have a copy of these documents?

To be CKC registered certain Codes of Ethics have been met. The term "purebred" is applied only to dogs registered with the CKC. Make sure that the parents are not bound by a "non-breeding" contract registered with the CKC.

6. Are both parents owned by the breeder; if not who owns the sire (father) and can we meet him?

Breeders with nothing to hide are very welcoming and will gladly arrange for you to visit their kennel and meet their hounds.

7. Will a copy of the puppy's 4 generation pedigree be provided?

This is the hounds family tree for 4 generations. Sometimes breeders can produce an annotated pedigree of age and cause of death of past generations.

8. Do you test the parents for the following before breeding?

Hips / Elbows Heart Eyes

Are the results available?

9. Do you test the puppies for liver shunt and will you give me a copy of the results?

Puppies must be at least 8 weeks for the test to be valid.

10. What is included in the puppy's vet check? Will you provide me with a copy?

11. When and how often has the puppy been de-wormed and with what medication?

12. At what age is the puppy ready to go home?

The puppy must be a minimum of 8 weeks, to separate it sooner from his mother and his litter mates is detrimental to its development.

13. Has the puppy had it's first set of vaccinations and will you provide me with a recommended schedule?

The first set of vaccinations is usually given at 8 - 9 weeks of age. Dr. Jean Dodd's vaccination protocol & schedule are often followed.

14. What type of food and how much is the puppy eating? Is the puppy being fed kibble (what brand), raw or a combination of both?

The breeder should help you with the quality and quantity of food your puppy will need, and he can provide you with a growth chart that is specific to the breed.

15. Do you provide a written Health Warranty, what does it cover and what is the time line?

Good breeders will give a full refund if your vet finds a problem, but you must have the puppy examined within 72 hours of delivery. Some breeders will give longer warranty periods with possible refunding of the puppy fee or replacing the puppy when a serious medical condition develops.

16. Are you available for post purchase support?

Support can comprise of advice regarding food, specific veterinary care, training, grooming, apprenticeship in show competitions.

17. Can I visit you to see the puppy interacting with the rest of the litter and its mother?

Puppies should be happy, playful with clear eyes and ears. You should be asked to remove your shoes and to wash your hands.

18. Is the area allocated to the puppies large enough, clean and has fresh water available?

19. What is the difference between purchasing a companion dog (pet) or show quality puppy?

There may be a difference in price and the breeder may want to co-own a "show quality" puppy and also have breeding rights.

20. Does the Sales Contract include the following and will I receive a copy?

a) CKC non-breeding registration, **b)** Warranty, **c)** Full Cost, **d)** Specific details of co-ownership, **e)** breeding rights and stud fees, **f)** a spay neuter clause

(A companion/pet will not be allowed to be used for breeding and the breeder may require proof of neutering. However, giant breeds such as Wolfhounds are at a higher risk of long bone cancer if they are neutered before 18 months of age. Your vet may not know this and recommend neutering at 6 months. You may need to educate your vet on this subject.

21. What happens if I find myself in a situation where I am unable to take care of the dog?

The breeder should be prepared to take the hound back whatever the reason.

22. Will the puppy be micro-chipped or tattooed?

CKC states that no puppy will be sold without the breeder's tattoo or microchip. If micro-chipped you will be provided with bar codes which you will need when you register your puppy with your local animal control.

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Questions Breeders May Ask You:

- 1. Why do you want an Irish Wolfhound?**
Breeders want to know you and determine if an Irish Wolfhound is the best breed for you.
- 2. Have you ever owned a large breed dog ?**
This indicates that you have experience in feeding, handling and cost of caring for a big dog.
- 3. Do you live in a house and do you have a fenced yard?**
Wolfhounds take up a lot of room standing and lying down. The breeder wants to know if you have a sufficiently large space to accommodate them. Sighthounds are quick and very fast hence the need for a good fence.
- 4. Are there any other pets in the home?**
If you have other dogs are they dog friendly. Breeders will most likely want to discuss with you the hounds high chase drive if you have cats or other small animals.
- 5. Do you have children and if so of what ages?**
As gentle as hounds are they are very big and can accidentally knock over a small child with their tail or body. Who will be responsible for the puppy's care? Children while well intentioned can not be relied upon to care routinely for a pet.
- 6. Do you have a vet? Do they have experience with giant breeds, if not, are they willing to learn?**
It's very important that your vet have experience with giant breeds or is open minded to becoming familiar with issues specific to the IW; for example: anaesthesia protocol, sterilization after 18 months, difficulties of detecting pneumonia etc.
- 7. May we have your vet's contact information as reference?**
- 8. Are you aware of the wolfhound's short life expectancy?**
The breeder wants you to be fully aware of the wolfhound's short life span.
- 9. Are you familiar with the wolfhound's related health issues?**
The breeder wants to know if you have researched the breed and know the particularities.
- 10. Are you prepared for the higher cost of feeding a giant breed and what food do you plan to feed?**
The breeder will advise you on the quality and quantity of food to feed your puppy in order to provide a slow and optimal growth.
- 11. Are you prepared for the higher veterinarian costs to medically maintain and treat a giant breed?**
All medical treatments are more expensive due to the quantities required to treat a giant breed. A pet insurance may be an interesting option.
- 12. Where and how will you provide exercise for your hound?**
The breeder will explain the importance of controlling your puppy's running and jumping while their bones are growing and developing.
- 13. How long will the puppy be alone while you work?**
- 14. Will the puppy be crated or have the run of the house?**
- 15. What are your sources of research on the breed: books, internet, dog shows?**
This tells the breeder you are serious about providing the best life for your wolfhound.
- 16. Do you prefer a male or a female?**
The breeder can help you with information about the behavioral and personality differences of the genders.
- 17. Are you interested in a companion (pet) or a show potential hound?**
There will be a different contract for each.
- 18. If choosing a companion are you prepared to sign a non-breeding contract with the possibility of sterilizing or neutering the puppy at the appropriate time.**
- 19. If you purchase a "show quality" puppy that you plan to enter in dog shows you may be required to enter into a co-ownership agreement with the breeder.**
Be sure to ask about the conditions of co-ownership and that all terms of the contract are clear and in writing. Joint ownership is designed to enable the breeder to participate in decisions concerning the possible reproduction of the dog.
- 20. Does anyone in your household have allergies to dogs?**
Wolfhounds are not hypo-allergenic.
- 21. Are you prepared, if your puppy is to be spayed or neutered, that it not be done before a minimum of 18 months?**
It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the latest scientific studies regarding sterilization because it is not always in the best interest of the dog.
- 22. Do you plan to enroll your puppy in a basic obedience training course?**
The breeder wants to ensure you will have a well socialized and well behaved hound that is a joy to take into a variety of environments.