

~ Questions to Ask When Selecting a Breeder ~

Determining whether a breeder is prioritising temperament over coat colour requires some careful observation and questioning. Here are several key indicators to consider:

1. ***Breeding Goals and Philosophy***: A reputable breeder who focuses on temperament will clearly articulate their breeding goals. They should emphasise the importance of producing dogs with stable, predictable temperaments that align with the breed standard.
2. ***Health and Temperament Testing***: Ethical breeders prioritise health and temperament testing over cosmetic traits like coat colour. Ask the breeder about the specific tests they conduct on their breeding dogs to screen for genetic conditions affecting temperament. They should be able to provide documentation of health clearances.
3. ***Observation of Breeding Stock***: When you visit the breeder, observe the temperament of the breeding dogs. They should be friendly, well-socialised, and exhibit the desirable temperament traits for their breed (e.g., calmness, friendliness, confidence).
4. ***Socialization Practices***: Ethical breeders invest time and effort into socialising their puppies from an early age. Puppies should be exposed to various environments, noises, people, and experiences to promote good temperament development.
5. ***Prioritisation in Breeding Decisions***: Ask the breeder how they prioritize temperament in their breeding decisions. They should be able to explain how they select breeding pairs based on temperament traits and not solely on coat colour or other superficial features.
6. ***References and Reviews***: Check references and reviews from previous buyers. Positive testimonials regarding the temperament of the puppies they've purchased can indicate that the breeder places a strong emphasis on producing dogs with good temperaments.
7. ***Involvement in Breed Clubs***: Ethical breeders often participate in breed clubs or organisations that promote responsible breeding practices. Membership in these clubs suggests a commitment to upholding breed standards, including temperament.
8. ***Questions Asked by the Breeder***: A breeder who prioritises temperament will ask you questions about your lifestyle, experience with dogs, and expectations for a pet. They should be concerned about placing their puppies in homes that can meet their behavioural needs.
9. ***Contracts and Guarantees***: A reputable breeder typically provides a contract that outlines expectations for care and may include guarantees related to health and temperament. They may offer support and guidance throughout the dog's life, reflecting their commitment to responsible breeding.
10. ***Avoidance of Red Flags***: Be cautious of breeders who seem more interested in selling based on coat colour preferences or who have multiple litters available at once. These can be signs that they prioritise appearance over temperament.

Ultimately, determining if a breeder prioritises temperament involves a combination of observation, asking the right questions, and trusting your instincts. A responsible breeder's primary concern should always be producing healthy, well-tempered dogs that make excellent companions.