



The Bull Terrier Club of America, Inc.

Questions to ask BEFORE purchasing a Bull Terrier

You've decided that a Bull Terrier is the dog for you. Choosing a reputable person from whom to purchase your puppy is your primary concern. After all, the little bundle of fun and energy will be with you and your family for a decade and hopefully more. Since it is virtually impossible for you, the buyer, to know what any of the puppies in a litter will grow into physically and emotionally; you must rely on the knowledge, integrity and honesty of the person from whom you purchase your pup. The following are questions you can ask that will help you assess the qualifications and dedication of the breeder. Each question has a "more information" button that will give you a more in-depth explanation of the potential responses to these questions. Don't be afraid to ask questions. A serious breeder will be willing to patiently answer your questions.

- How long have you owned and bred Bull Terriers? Experience is often an indicator of specialized knowledge of the breed. Conscientious new breeders should be mentored by more experienced breeders.
- Do you participate in conformation, obedience, agility or other events sponsored by the BTCA, AKC or regional clubs? Participation is good indicator of commitment to the Breed and the sport of dogs.
- Do you sell Bull Terriers to pet shops or dog brokers? A reputable breeder has promised to never sell to shops or brokers, but to place puppies personally. (more info)
- Do you health test your Bull Terriers and what conditions do you test for? At present there are four recommend test areas; hearing, hearts, kidneys and patellae (knee caps).
- Have the sire (father) and dam (mother) been tested and are the results available? Health testing is an indicator or serious commitment to breeding the healthiest puppies possible.
- To what age did the immediate ancestors live (i.e. parents, grandparents and great grandparents)? If they are not still alive, what happened to them? Long lived ancestors may indicate a better chance of long life for your puppy, though this is by no means a guarantee. Sometimes ancestors die from accidental injuries.
- What health problems have you had with your Bull Terriers? In general, Bull Terriers are quite healthy, but all breeders with significant experience have encountered some health issues with a few of the puppies they have bred.
- Would either or both parents be available for me to see? Usually it is possible to meet the dam, but often, in order to use the best dog available, the sire may be located in another state.
- Do you sell with a contract and what are the terms? A contract simply outlines what you might expect from the breeder in terms of health warrantees and support; and what your care obligations are. It also frequently outlines what you options are should you be unable to keep the dog for its entire life.



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— Do you sell with a health warranty and what is the length of the warranty and what conditions are covered in the warranty? Terms are specified under which you may return or get a refund of your purchase price in the event of a debilitating health issue.

— At what age do you place your puppies? 7 or 9 weeks is ideal for the human- animal bond. However, if a breeder is maximizing the socialization of the puppy there are advantages to keeping the puppy with its' litter mates to even 10 weeks

— What vaccinations would the puppy have prior to being available? The puppy should have had at least one vaccination prior to pickup. The vaccination schedule is age dependant. Different veterinarians make different recommendations.

— What health testing will be necessary in the future? The puppy should be BAER (hearing) tested before being entrusted to your care. It should have had a general examination by the breeders vet prior to your receiving it, but you should have it re-checked by the vet of your choice within a few days of bringing the pup home.

— Would I have to pick the puppy up or do you ship? It is always best to pickup your puppy as this allows you to meet the breeders personally and to view their dogs and facilities. If a breeder agrees to ship, they should ask you to allow a local fancier to view your home and should ask for references.

— If I purchase a Bull Terrier from you and events lead to my having to return the dog, what will happen with the dog? This eventuality should be spelled out in the Sales Contract at time of purchase. Usually breeders will evaluate health and temperament and if suitable for placement they will then find a new home for the dog.

— Do you have a website featuring your Bull Terriers? Many breeders have developed websites where you can see photos of there dogs and learn of their activities. Some breeders don't want the flood of enquiries to deal with and have avoided websites. A website is a useful tool for education, but is certainly no guarantee of quality or commitment to the Breed.

For information on Bull Terrier breeders in your area, local clubs and activities, or specific questions about the breed, please send an email with your city and state to:
BTCAinfo@aol.com