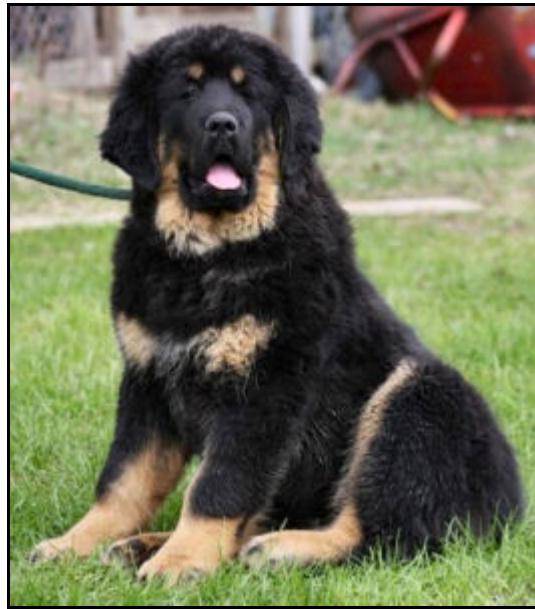


# EVALUATING BREEDERS

## A CHECKLIST

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*"Making a list, Checking it Twice. Gonna find out who's naughty or nice..."*  
Author: J. Fred Coots & Haven Gillespie



The TMBRN continually strives to maintain its reputation as the premier informational website about the Tibetan Mastiff breed. In our efforts to educate the public we have provided numerous articles addressing the various aspects of the TM character and TM ownership. Please read these **articles** thoroughly and take you time to ensure that you are the right fit for the Tibetan Mastiff. Along with evaluating whether or not you are compatible with the TM, your ability to recognize and your decision to choose an ethical breeder positively impacts the breed.

*For a more comprehensive article about the importance of choosing the correct breeder and the red flags you should watch for, see **Choosing a Breeder**.*

### **Basic Essential Requirements**

- Because of the territorial and guardian nature of the Tibetan Mastiff, it is essential that you have a fenced-in yard. Responsible breeders will insist that you have a secure containment area that is of good size. This is an imperative element to TM management and there can be no short-cuts in keeping this large breed and others safe from harm.
- Crate training must be a priority with the Tibetan Mastiff breed. It is an important tool in helping to establish good manners.

## **Beginning the Process**

- For more information and answers to any of your questions, contact long-time breeders to ask about the Tibetan Mastiff experience.
- Look to a breeder that is a member of a breed club or is involved with an organization that is dedicated to protecting and preserving the Tibetan Mastiff breed.
- A breeder should speak openly about the challenges of the Tibetan Mastiff and will not hesitate to refer you to other owners of their puppies who may be willing to share their own experiences.
- Don't be afraid to ask for referrals to other breeders should a puppy not be available from your breeder of choice.
- Should you consider buying a puppy from a novice breeder, question him/her as to whether s/he is being mentored by a more experienced breeder.
- Statistics show us that those who venture into the world of dog breeding rarely continue on with it past the 5-year mark. When dealing with a novice breeder, ask how s/he will continue on with advice and lifetime support for your prospective puppy should that individual get out of the breed.
- If the breeder you are interviewing is not particularly active in the show ring ask him/her how breeding stock is evaluated. Expect to hear about a long term breeding program for that kennel and its goals. This individual should be familiar with the Breed Standard, be educated about health issues, structure, movement, temperament and type. Continue your search if this person cannot convey these important fundamentals.
- Having breeding stock evaluated, either by judges or an experienced third party is important, but don't be fooled into thinking that yards of show ribbons guarantees you an ethical breeder. Quality dogs come from responsible and knowledgeable breeders. Ask the breeder about his/her practices, ethics, philosophies and views about continued advice and support for the life of the dog.

## **Following Through**

- Arrange to make a kennel visit when you can. Note the set-up of the kennel and if the dogs are well-loved, socialized and cared for.
- Ensure that your breeder of choice raises no more than 2-3 breeds. Breeding dogs is not a business nor is it a money-making venture. Puppy millers/backyard breeders show their true colors and motivation when money is at the root of their breeding efforts.
- Avoid breeders who make a constant point of criticizing and bashing other breeders' dogs and programs. You do not need to listen to any breeder bad-mouthing others. Truly reputable and enthusiastic breeders understand the considerable effort it takes to rear puppies and should be completely involved with the welfare of their own dogs.
- Make sure that you have a list of questions to ask the breeder prior to visiting a kennel or visiting with a litter of puppies. Evaluate whether the breeder volunteers information, is at ease with your questions and answers you thoroughly about health and other important issues.
- Ask questions about the sire and dam of the litter. The parents of your puppy should be approximately 2 years of age or older, so get proof of their ages and ask for copies of

their medical checks, (i.e. hips/elbows certification) prior to agreeing to a puppy purchase.

- Be prepared for the questions of responsible breeders. Questionnaires, numerous email and long telephone chats mean that a conscientious breeder is sizing you up as a potential puppy owner.
- Do not expect that you will just be handed a puppy because you want one or because you have the cash. If getting a puppy is this easy, walk away. Quality breeders love their puppies/dogs and want only the best for them. Dedicated breeders have learned to say "NO" when they do not feel that a Tibetan Mastiff is a suitable dog for you, your family, your lifestyle or your present situation. This does not mean that you aren't a WONDERFUL dog owner. This is a challenging breed and it is much easier to say "NO" at this stage, than face re-homing/rescue situations later.
- Make sure to find out if puppies are born on the premises. A breeder should not have puppies born elsewhere and then shipped into his/her facilities. Neither should a breeder claim puppies as his/her own if they are born elsewhere and "drop shipped" from other locations.
- Every breeder should understand the importance of early socialization and takes the time to introduce puppies to other people, animals and different situations.
- Your breeder of choice should provide a contract and take the time to review what is expected of breeder and owner.
- Breeding is a huge responsibility. It is an involved, time-consuming and expensive venture. Do not enter into a contract in which you are required to breed a litter of puppies as a condition of the purchase of your puppy.
- Breeder will require that all puppies sold as pets be spayed/neutered at the appropriate time.
- A responsible breeder does not sell puppies to wholesalers, dealers, brokers or retail shops. Also ensure that the breeder prohibits the same by the new owner in a written contract.
- Breeder promises to work with the owner to re-home or take back the dog over the dog's lifetime should it be necessary.
- No responsible breeder will release any puppy to his/her new home prior to eight weeks of age. In fact, many places have laws that prohibit the sale of a puppy before the age of eight weeks.
- A responsible breeder will provide a summary and/or puppy packet outlining the pedigree, medical history of the puppy and future diet, training, grooming and general care recommendations.
- Choosing to open your home to a Tibetan Mastiff is a 10-14 year commitment. It is in your best interest to take your time and choose wisely. Should you feel any doubts at all, it is best to wait. Realize that your perfect puppy may not necessarily be the one that is most readily available.
- Please remember that while it may be in *your* best interest to purchase your puppy from an ethical breeder, it is also your *obligation* to do so. Rewarding bad breeders with puppy sales ultimately damages the entire Tibetan Mastiff breed.