

mental and nutritional needs peculiar to the breed.

No puppy should be released to its new home prior to 10-12 weeks of age.

Every puppy at the time of sale should be accompanied by the following:

1. Feeding instructions
2. Medical records that include number and type of vaccines, dates of vaccinations, date of dewormings
3. 4-generation pedigree
4. IWCA membership application
5. Copy of Standard of Ethical Conduct
6. Bill of Sale
7. Copy of the breed standard
8. AKC registration specifying Breeding or Non-Breeding.

Breeding arrangements should never be established which would encourage the average buyer to undertake a breeding program. If a breeder does not have the time, facility or desire to manage the mating, whelping and aftercare of a particular potential matron, that bitch should not be passed to another person, just to produce puppies.

THIS PRACTICE IS CONSIDERED TO BORDER ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "PUPPY MILL" AND IS HIGHLY DISCOURAGED.

All new owners should be told to have their puppies checked by a veterinarian within 48 hours of delivery.

All new owners should be advised to keep the breeder informed about the development of the puppy and should be told to contact the breeder immediately concerning any health problems, physical abnormalities and/or death of the dog.

The breeder should likewise keep in contact with the new owner for the life of the dog.

The contract of sale should include a stipulation whereby the breeder will be notified of any plan on the part of the owner to resell or otherwise dispose of the puppy. This stipulation would also require the buyer to either return the dog to the breeder or place it with new owners who have been approved by the breeder.

If a puppy is to be co-owned, a contract should be drawn up covering all details of the co-ownership and signed by both owners. Puppies under 11 weeks should not be exported or imported.

Each breeder should be willing to replace a puppy that has been sold or to refund all or a portion of the purchase price if the puppy proves to have a structural defect. Such a problem should be confirmed by the breeder and owner's veterinarian.



For more information, please visit the Irish Wolfhound Club of America's website at:
<http://www.iwclubofamerica.org>



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PUPPY BUYER'S GUIDE



BREEDERS:
Responsible - Irresponsible
Can YOU
Tell the Difference?

Purchasing An Irish Wolfhound Puppy

FIRST, FIND A RESPONSIBLE BREEDER

A distraught, heartbroken family recently called the IWCA for breed information...after the fact. Their Irish Wolfhound puppy is dead, possibly of a heart related problem. Unfortunately, these tragedies can happen to anyone - but as with many other similar cases, the odds of buying a puppy with problems are increased due to a lack of knowledge on the part of the buyer. The purchasers did not contact any IW clubs or meet or call other IW people. They answered a newspaper or internet ad or visited a webpage and bought a puppy.

This puppy may or may not have had preexisting problems - however, the puppy did not come with a health certificate and it appears that it was never seen by a veterinarian at any time before purchase. Nor did the purchasers inquire of the breeder about genetic testing done on the sire or dam, or about longevity of the relatives, or any other health problems or considerations in the background - nor did the breeder inform them of familial medical history, or about any other breed-related concerns, such as anesthesia sensitivity, bloat, heart disease, cancer and Von Willebrands Disease, among others. No one can guarantee that your IW will never have any health problems, BUT there is much you can do to stack the odds in his or her favor, and it begins with your choice of a breeder.

From the IWCA's Standard of Ethical Conduct in reference to the breeder, "The only justifiable reason to breed is to preserve the breed and improve one's dogs. One should never breed for personal profit or commercially exploit the breed."

In other words, the responsible breeder does not breed to supply the market. The potential puppy purchaser might think, "That's just snobbish! What about people who only want a pet?" In fact, the majority of even the most well-bred litters contain only a small percentage of show-potential puppies. But all of the puppies in litters bred by responsible breeders will have received the benefits of an informed, planned, well-thought-out breeding. Their mother will have received the same excellent care after their birth, including proper nutrition and socialization.

Also, be realistic in your expectations and your situation. The Irish Wolfhound is not a breed for everyone. Neither is a Great Dane, a Collie, a Schnauzer, an Old English Sheepdog, a Chihuahua, a Poodle...you get the

idea. Even if you love a particular breed dearly, it may not fit into your life-style - maybe just not at present, maybe not ever. A responsible breeder will ask you many questions about your situation and life-style - and you should have many questions of your own to ask in return, after doing your research on the breed.

Be aware that someone may call themselves a breeder, may have a number of years "in the breed", may expound on how much they "love the breed", may even produce championship certificates, show photos, and a lot of brightly-colored ribbons but none of that necessarily means they are a responsible breeder. Some may have picked up a lot of buzz words - "eyes checked", "hips checked", etc., while it turns out what was actually done was that a vet gave a brief physical. Ask to SEE copies of the test results.

Be an educated buyer - not only for your sake, but for the sake of the puppy AND the breed as a whole. An educated buyer will not buy an Irish Wolfhound puppy from a pet shop or from an irresponsible breeder. If irresponsible breeders cannot find a market, they will cease producing Irish Wolfhounds; many pups of such breeding at present end up in other irresponsible hands producing more puppies.

Please read the following excerpts from the IWCA's Standard of Ethical Conduct, and ask yourself if the breeder you are contemplating buying from measures up (and then ask THEM).

DOES ANY IRISH WOLFHOUND DESERVE LESS? IN FACT, DOES any DOG deserve less?

The breeder is expected to:

1. Have a clear understanding and a comprehension of the Standard of Excellence.
2. Have a basic knowledge of genetics.
3. Be informed about the pedigrees of both dog and bitch - understanding faults and strengths on both sides. There exists a constant danger that reputable or ignorant breeders may, by improper practices, produce physically and mentally unsound specimens of the breed. In addition, a member who undertakes to breed a bitch or use their stud dog must:
 - a. Never breed for the pet market but only to preserve the breed and improve on one's breeding program.
 - b. Breed only those animals free from hereditary defects.
 - c. Breed only those animals, which have attained the minimum height as specified in the standard.

- d. Be prepared to provide the proper care for both the bitch and the litter and retain the puppies for as long as necessary to find the proper homes.

In General:

- a. The only justifiable reason to breed is to preserve the breed and improve one's dogs. One should never breed for personal profit or commercially exploit the breed.
- b. While it is expected that breeders will sell their most promising puppies to other serious students or guardians of the breed, breeders should sell on a non-breeding contract and encourage spaying and neutering of all others.
- c. Breed only those bitches between the ages of 24 months and 6 years, which are in excellent health.
- d. Breed an individual bitch no more than two out of three consecutive seasons, and this only under exceptional circumstances, and not produce more than three litters in her lifetime.
- e. Breeders will act responsibly towards all puppies produced by their bitch for the lifetime of the puppies.

Care and Sale of a Litter

Be prepared to give up 3 months of your life to care for the bitch and puppies. This bitch needs supervision and care while in the whelping and nursing phase and the puppies need constant care and socialization from birth until they leave at 10-12 weeks. All puppies shall be provided with proper veterinary care and a clean and safe home environment. They should be parasite free, and have a good diet and the necessary immunizations.

Any puppy, which is deformed or irreversibly ill, should be humanly euthanized. Bearing in mind that all puppies and dogs should only be sold to loving homes, the litter may be graded as to quality but not necessarily called "show quality" as it is difficult to ascertain this prior to 10-12 weeks. Grading them as "promising", "better than average", or "pet quality" is preferable. Any pet puppies should be sold on a non-breeding contract.

Only the most promising puppies should be sold without non-breeding contract, and then only to homes after the breeder has carefully investigated the new owners' qualifications for becoming future breeders. Prospective buyers should be screened on their desired and ultimate intent for each Wolfhound. Their interest and ability to provide a safe, adequate and loving home should be determined. Fenced yards and crates should be strongly recommended. Give the prospective buyer an honest appraisal of cost management, as well as the physical,