



## THE RIGHT WAY

No doubt about it, the BEST way to find a well-bred Irish Wolfhound is through a responsible breeder. A good breeder takes his dogs very seriously, and will only place or sell puppies to homes that he feels will be good ones.

Working with a responsible breeder means that you will be able to consult with him about grooming, veterinary care, health issues, diet, etc. And, if there are any problems, the breeder will want to work with you to help resolve them.

You should speak with and visit the breeder or better yet, several breeders before making any kind of final decision to purchase a puppy. In fact, a good breeder will want to interview YOU! You will be able to see how his puppies interact with littermates and their mother, to see the conditions under which the puppy has been raised, and to see health certifications for the parents. Breeders will often provide a contract that will state your responsibilities as well as their own, and it may outline any guarantees or spay/neuter requirements, if any.

If the breeder does not have any puppies ready for placement, he may be able to refer you to a fellow breeder, who does. And, contrary to public opinion, puppies purchased from breeders are often less expensive than those from pet shops.

The Irish Wolfhound Club of America, the national club for Irish Wolfhounds, offers good advice on its website. The club cannot officially endorse any particular breeder, as individual talent, skill and experience vary greatly. Still, at least two active club members are required to sign any new application for membership, which is then published in the club's magazine, Harp & Hound, prior to acceptance of a member. Even with that precaution, members sometimes skate close to the edge of acceptable conduct in their breeding programs. This is another reason to visit more than one breeder and to take your time in deciding if and where to obtain a puppy. "Let the buyer beware," is a valuable axiom when buying a dog.



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Presented by the Irish Wolfhound Club of America  
[www.iwclubofamerica.org](http://www.iwclubofamerica.org)  
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## So, you want to own an Irish Wolfhound?



## THE JOY OF OWNERSHIP

A well-bred, typical Irish Wolfhound is a joy to own. Gentle and loving, this magnificent creature wants nothing more than to be your friend. Wolfhounds are large dogs, but are satisfied with a comfortable spot in which to lie and need not live on a large estate. They are by nature companionable and affectionate, but are often trained for the show ring or coursing and sometimes trained for obedience or as therapy dogs.

Even if you are looking for a dog to curl up nearby and go for walks with you, the Irish Wolfhound can fill the bill perfectly.

Irish Wolfhounds come in several colors, none being more preferable than another. You will most often see varying shades of coat with brindling. The minimum height at the shoulder of Irish Wolfhound males is 32" tall and 30" for females. They are strong and athletic in build.

Some health problems, such as heart disease and cancer, can be anticipated in most giant breeds, and the Irish Wolfhound is no exception. That is why it is especially important that you buy from a responsible breeder. These breeders take their dogs very seriously and try their best to breed happy and healthy Irish Wolfhounds.

We encourage you to visit the Irish Wolfhound Club of America website - the national breed club for Wolfhounds - for detailed information about owning an Irish Wolfhound:  
[www.iwclubofamerica.org](http://www.iwclubofamerica.org)



## A PERFECT MATCH?

Would you love to have an Irish Wolfhound, but worry that you don't have the time, patience, or knowledge to raise a puppy? Or, would you be able to find room in your heart to provide a loving home for an older Wolfhound in its later years? Maybe you are one of those special people who has a burning desire to save an abandoned Wolfhound.

Perhaps the "right" rescue Wolfhound would be the perfect match for you.

Wolfhounds are given up by owners to shelters or rescue groups for many reasons. Sometimes there are major changes in the lives of their owners - illness, death, divorce, a new baby, a new home. Sadly, some are rescued from deplorable situations.

The breed is fortunate to have volunteers across the country to assist in hound rescue. A list of these individuals is available on the club's website. In spite of their best efforts, it is not always possible to fully screen each dog, so you will need to take care in selecting a dog that is right for your family and your environment. Dogs placed through rescue are spayed or neutered.

If you can find room in your heart and home for a rescued Wolfhound, chances are good that you will be rewarded by the gentle wave of a very long tail on a dog who will love you forever for giving him a second chance at happiness.

To find out more about rescuing an Irish Wolfhound, please visit [www.iwclubofamerica.org](http://www.iwclubofamerica.org)



## NOW WHAT?

Owning an Irish Wolfhound can be very exciting and rewarding, but making the decision to do so is also life-changing.

Before "taking the plunge," speak with as many Wolfhound owners and breeders as possible - at dog shows or through contacts available on the IWCA website at:

[www.iwclubofamerica.org](http://www.iwclubofamerica.org)

People "in the breed" are usually happy to share their experience and knowledge and like to talk about their breed.

You may believe that an Irish Wolfhound would be the "perfect" addition to your life - or, you may realize that it would not. Sharing your life with an Irish Wolfhound - or any dog, for that matter - means a total commitment to loving, caring for, training, disciplining, and protecting a living creature who depends on YOU! It's not a decision to be taken lightly.

Please visit our website, which will give you a real sense of what the breed is about. For additional information, feel free to contact our Club Secretary or other contacts posted there. They will be happy to help you with your questions."

[IWCLUBOFAMERICA.ORG](http://www.iwclubofamerica.org)

## TEN REASONS NOT TO OWN AN IRISH WOLFHOUND

- 1. You just saw "the most breathtaking Irish Wolfhound" in a large cage at "Puppy Kingdom."** A pet store or puppy mill or farm are probably the WORST places to buy an Irish Wolfhound (or any breed). There are many reasons:
  - Selling puppies is strictly a money-making proposition for these businesses.
  - The puppies have been taken from their mothers too soon, and haven't been socialized and evaluated properly.
  - These sellers have NO IDEA about the health of the pup and, just as importantly, that of its family.
  - The price is often higher than what you would pay a reputable breeder.
  - These sellers will rarely take responsibility for any problems that crop up - health, behavioral or otherwise.
- 2. You can't - or don't want to - add another category to your budget.** Owning a dog is not inexpensive - especially a giant breed such as an Irish Wolfhound. All of his expenses will considerably exceed those of most breeds whether it be his veterinary care, food or housing when you are away.
- 3. Your idea of grooming consists of hosing your dog off in an outside tub every once in a while.** Brushing an Irish Wolfhound, trimming its nails and keeping it flea, tick and heartworm free is not easy or inexpensive. Although a crisp, harsh coat is not difficult to manage if brushed weekly, there is a lot MORE dog to groom! Having an Irish Wolfhound groomed by a professional groomer would prove to be very expensive and your dog probably would not like it, anyway.
- 4. You are not willing to make a commitment for the lifetime of the dog.** Finding another home for a huge Irish Wolfhound can be difficult - especially if you have failed to train him. If he is inexperienced about the outside world, the change could be very hard for him. Older dogs develop illnesses, just as older people do. Finding a new owner who wants to take on such burdens can be very difficult.
- 5. You have valuable furniture, rugs, antiques or flower beds. Irish Wolfhound puppies can be particularly destructive.** They dig huge holes, can chew up an entire sofa in an afternoon or eat your car seats beyond recognition if left unsupervised.



- 6. You are a clean freak and don't like dog hair.** Irish Wolfhounds are big dogs, which means they have more hair than a small dog with a smooth coat. They have great big feet that can track in lots of mud and strong toenails that can scratch your favorite hardwood floors. Relegating a Wolfhound to a solitary life outside will cause him to very unhappy - he needs a companion to play with and to be part of your life.
- 7. You want a guard dog.** An Irish Wolfhound's stature and deep bark are usually enough to thwart an intruder, but other than that, he is likely to gently wag his tail while the family silver is being stuffed in a sack and carried out the door. We quite intentionally do not breed guard dog temperament in the Irish Wolfhound as it would be extremely dangerous in a dog of this size and would be out of character for the breed, in any event.
- 8. You think having an Irish Wolfhound will teach your children responsibility.** An Irish Wolfhound is far too great a responsibility for a child, for all kinds of reasons. It is not a dog that can run loose in the neighborhood at your child's side or that has much savvy when it comes to traffic. This means that you will need tall, strong fencing - you may feel that will ruin your home's "curb appeal."
- 9. You like to leave snacks on low tables for guests or may want to leave the kitchen during meal preparation.** Irish Wolfhounds have been known to steal entire roasts or turkeys from the table in a matter of seconds. They can reach any counter you may have and even the top of the refrigerator!
- 10. You have a sedentary lifestyle.** Unless you can provide a secure area in which your dog can run and exercise, you will need to plan on lots of walking, jogging, or biking in a safe area with your dog at your side. Irish Wolfhounds are sighthounds, which means if they see something that interests them they are likely to chase it. They can run *much* faster than you.



Photo Credit: Kevin Peuhkurinen