

## Puppy Buyer: Beware!

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### What you need to know before you get a dog...

It is important to understand that all Border Collie Breeders/Breeders are not equal. A dog is a member of your family for up to 16 years. Getting a dog is like entering a marriage, it should be taken seriously...Many people take longer to decide on a TV than on a dog, and they are also willing to pay more for the TV too! You won't have a TV for 15 years in most cases, so choose your dog wisely...rather, choose your Breeder wisely. It's all fun and games till you are faced with a sick, flea covered puppy full of worms and with no registration papers, with no one to call but the Vet!

It does not matter how much you pay for a dog, EVERY SINGLE point below is valid. There is no excuse! If a person breeds a litter of pups, they are responsible to take every precaution to breed genetically healthy pups with registration and titles to prove their quality, and to charge an appropriate price to reflect that. A lower priced pup (under \$1500) WILL NOT be cheap in the long run, nor a higher price pup priced far too high for its lack of accolades, and you will pay for the Breeder's (Sellers) lack of care and effort later. Here are some things you need to know before you hand someone money for a puppy, which might result in you paying thousands of dollars more in vet and training bills later.



But, *"I just want a pet, not a show dog!"*...a line that reputable breeders hear over and over again... it's the excuse/reasoning pet puppy buyers use as to why they don't want to spend "too much money on a dog". This way of thinking often results in a pet with no support from the Breeder when you need it, a sick puppy, a bad tempered puppy, a buyer who supports very bad Breeders who only want to make money and then makes it possible for them to breed even more and send more dogs to shelters and pet stores...

My answer is this; You are better to save up the money to buy a well bred, and thus good tempered and healthy puppy with a health guarantee and a lifetime of Breeder support, than to buy a cheap one with thousands of vet and training bills to go with it, and no support system. It is not a discount. If you can not afford to purchase a well bred dog, and instead choose to support a BYB or Puppy Mill Breeder, then you are partially to blame for all the unwanted dogs in shelters...YES I just blamed you, you are after all supporting bad breeders and giving them a reason to breed even more poorly bred dogs that they do not take responsibility for! A good Breeder takes dogs back no matter what, and does not allow their pups to end up in shelters, EVER! If you can't buy a dog from a good breeder than you should not have a dog...anything can happen at anytime...you will be faced with a very high Vet bill. I have many times paid emergency vet bills in the range of \$5000-\$10000 for my dogs in the ICU, due to emergency issues not even caused by possible preventable genetic illnesses! Could you imagine how much higher that bill would be if my dogs were from bad breeders? GASP! Breeders who did not screen from genetic illness, who also did not worm the puppies correctly, who did not vaccinate or titer/nomograph the pups and Dam? The bills and heartache would be unmeasurable...

I say this with experience, my second Border Collie was purchased for \$500 off a sheep farm, the Breeder let me pick him out...I was only 6 years old...."awwwwww"...right!?... NO! This is NOT acceptable. My parents paid \$5000 USD (two 16 hr round trips to the USA, and months of therapy) by the time he was eleven months old, to replace both cruciate ligaments and one back hip from sever hip dysplasia... which is quite preventable had his parents been tested and had he had a better start in

life, and been fed something other than Ol'Roy, not been given feed store vaccinations with no actual Vet examination. Boy did we pay, and oh.... did we learn!

Please review the information I have attached. There are only two acceptable sources of dogs. REPUTABLE Breeders and REPUTABLE Rescues. Please... don't be fooled.

**This chart shows a comparison between several sources of which you might be able to obtain a dog:**

Obviously the columns in red indicate Breeders or sources you ideally should not get a dog from. Many Breeders can fall between two sides, make sure you ask lots of questions. A good Breeder or Rescue should always fall into the GREEN!

	Reputable Breeder/Purpose Breeders	Back Yard Breeder (BYB)/ Home Breeders/ Doodle/Designer Breeders	Puppy Mill/Puppy Farm/Pet Store Supplier Breeder	Reputable Rescue	Non-Reputable Rescue/Retail Rescue
<b>Reason for Breeding:</b>	<p>To improve on the lines and preserve the particular breed and all its breed specific traits AND/OR to breed a dog that has the genetics to do a job that is needed that only that breed or mix can do.</p> <p>New Breeders should always have a mentor and you should also research their mentor Breeders to get an idea of what they are aiming for.</p>	<p>Because pups are cute, they want a pup from their dog, they want their kids to see pups being born, or they want to make money. All the above are NOT good reasons to breed and put your dogs health at risk.</p>	<p>Money.</p>	<p>Rescues DO NOT EVER BREED DOGS!</p>	<p>Rescues DO NOT EVER BREED DOGS!</p>
<b>Socialization:</b>	<p>Up-to-date education about stages of learning and development of dogs. Knowledge of the first 8 weeks of pups life including how to handle fear stages correctly, uses research bases rearing and socialization protocols, such as <u>Puppy Culture</u> or <u>Avidog!</u></p> <p>Educate new owners so they know how to continue.</p>	<p>Have no education about stages of dogs development. Put the dogs in a pen and leave them with their mom and often might allow visitors and think that is adequate socialization for a litter of puppies...</p>	<p>Pups and dogs rarely if ever meet new people nor receive any kind of socialization at all.</p>	<p>Attempts to understand, socialize and train the new dogs and people that come into their rescue. They take classes and train their staff to learn proper methods.</p>	<p>Don't receive proper training about anything to do with socialization protocols or stages of development of the dog. No attempt to educate themselves or staff properly.</p>

<b>Temperament:</b>	Only good tempered adult dogs are bred to make puppies, and research is done into many generations back within the lines. Pups are temperament tested and matched to new homes based on temperament. These breeders are aware that genetics have a huge impact on temperament, it is NOT simply just how they are raised.	Temperament does not matter. They breed two dogs because they make sellable puppies or are the same breed and want to breed a litter with no knowledge of temperament within the lineage.	Does not care about temperament at all or how that effects the family as long as the puppy looks cute enough to sell fast for lots of money!	Evaluated temperaments honestly and makes hard decisions about what dog should go to what home as well as what dogs are simply not adoptable ever and need to stay in rescue for life. They don't pass the problem on to unsuspecting new owners with no training.	Think every single dog is adoptable and worth saving. Don't evaluate temperaments and let anyone adopt a dog based on breed or photo etc. Do not work with trainers and behaviouralists.
<b>Lifetime Help:</b>	Help for the life of the dog and will take the dog back at anytime to prevent any dog they produce ending up in a shelter. Care about he dog for life.	Don't have the knowledge to truly help puppy owners with future issues so send them off to trainers even if issues are caused by bad genetics and breeding. Don't take responsibility for pups for life. Dont make sure the pups don't end up in rescue or puppy mills etc.	Won't even answer the phone. Don't care about the dog at all.	Help for the life of the dog and will take the dog back at anytime to prevent any dog they produce ending up in a shelter again. Care about he dog for life. Have trainers on hand and will contact them for help and pay for it.	Don't have the knowledge to truly help owners with future issues so send owners off to trainers etc. which is expensive, many are \$100-\$500 an hr!
<b>Knowledge:</b>	Breeder is constantly seeking up to date knowledge and education about all things dog. They do not take their responsibility as a breeder lightly.	Knows the very minimum to breed dogs together and sell the pups. Might try to learn from the internet but has no mentors, nor spends money on courses or formal education.	Knows the very minimum to breed dogs together and sell the pups.	Constantly seeking up to date knowledge and education about all things dog.	Does not seek up to date knowledge and education about all things dog, or thinks they already know it all because they watched TV or googled information.

<b>Dogs Physical Health:</b>	Breeder is constantly seeking up to date knowledge and education in regards to nutrition, care, vaccinations, reproduction, neonatal care etc. from top global experts in the fields. Pups go home with at least one clear bill of health from a certified Veterinarian. They are properly dewormed at least four times or have a clear fecal test 72 hrs prior to going to new homes.	Some do health testing but normally not all that should be done, it is very minimal if they do any. They think a vet inspection is "health testing" and that is SO VERY FAR from the only thing that should be done prior to breeding. If your lucky they will have at least one treatment of dewormer and one vet examination.	As long as they can breed and make cute puppies that is all that matters...	Has all dogs examined by a vet as healthy as well as neutered/spayed, heart worm and fecal tested, prior to placing, at their expense.	Does not properly vet dogs, adopt them out and pass the problems on the the new owners.
<b>Dogs Genetic Health:</b>	Breeders does all possible breed specific genetic and health testing no matter what the cost to ensure that the resulting pups are as healthy as possible.	Minimal health testing or non!	No heath testing.	Rescues have no heath testing.	Rescues have no heath testing.
<b>Genetic Health Guarantee:</b>	Place all dogs with a written health guarantee till at least two years of age.	No heath guarantee or if they do it is not in writing or is too short of a time period to be usable.	No heath guarantee.	No heath guarantee.	No heath guarantee.
<b>Short Term Health Guarantee:</b>	Place all dogs with at least a 72 hr communicable health guarantee.	No heath guarantee or if they do it is not in writing or is too short of a time period to be usable.	No heath guarantee.	No heath guarantee.	No heath guarantee.
<b>Predictability of Temperament and Health:</b>	Able to predict temperament and genetic health of the pup because records of genetics of the line have been kept for many decades.	Rarely predictable because Breeder does not have real knowledge of the line for many generations.	Don't care enough to pay attention to the line nor how the dogs are after they leave their care.	Unknown thus unpredictable.	Unknown thus unpredictable.

<b>First 8 weeks of life:</b>	Does not breed unless they have the time and money and knowledge to raise, socialize and care for the pups to the highest standards as well as be present throughout the day and night. Know how to do SQ fluids, tube feeding, oxygen protocols, top vets on call etc.	Many don't have the knowledge to breed and raise litters properly. Still work full time and leave dogs at home all day unattended.	Locked with mom in cage and given the bare minimum to survive and be sellable.	Unknown start in life.	Unknown start in life.
<b>Placing Pups:</b>	Properly evaluate both pups and potential new owners and match them accordingly. Ask new owners a ton of questions and only sell dogs on contracts that protect the dog for life. Requires all dogs sold to be spayed or neutered in writing by new owners. Cares about matching dogs to new owners for their whole lives.  Require Pets to be spayed or Neutered.	Some filter new homes and others don't care.  These Breeders usually do not have the knowledge to properly place pups with owners and let people choose their pup based on one sole visit, looks alone, or who pays them first. This is BAD waiting to happen!  They might breed one litter or several litters and from the same parents more than once.	Highest bidder gets the dog. They send their pups to pet stores where they don't care where they end up.	Properly evaluate both dogs and potential new owners and match them accordingly. Ask new owners a ton of questions and only places dogs on contracts that protect the dog for life. Requires all dogs sold to be spayed or neutered in writing by new owners. Cares about matching dogs to new owners for their whole lives and making profit is not a goal at all.	Adopts dog to anyone who wants that particular dog.

<b>Proof of Quality:</b>	Most of their adult “parent dogs” have been proven to be top quality through competition. They don’t breed dogs unless they meet high Breed Standards and pass intensive testing. There are enough dogs on the planet so they only breed if they breed the best possible of that breed to preserve that particular breed. Purpose bred dogs are bred for a purpose and the parents are proven successful in it prior to breeding.	No proof of quality. It takes money to prove the dogs is good enough to win, normally tens of thousands of dollars in dog show expenses per year. They don’t do this as will take too much away from profit!! They don’t care about the quality of the animals they breed, or if they have unsound structural or genetic faults that they often are not educated enough to recognize.	Will not spend money to prove the dogs is breeding quality.	No papers/family tree.	No papers/family tree.
<b>Reputable Registration Papers:</b>	Do comes with reputable registration papers. The main ones in North America are the Canadian Kennel Club (CKC) and the American Kennel Club (AKC)	Some might have reputable registration papers or non at all. Many have FAKE registration such as Continental Kennel Club and World Kennel Club...these are NOT authentic papers, do not support breeders who forge or use fake papers to sell dogs at higher prices.	Some might have reputable registration papers or non at all. Many have FAKE registration such as Continental Kennel Club and World Kennel Club...these are NOT authentic papers, do not support breeders who forge or use fake papers to sell dogs at higher prices.	No papers/family tree.	No papers/family tree.

<b>Price:</b>	Typically between \$1500-\$3000 for a puppy depending on breed, testing, parents wins, pedigree.	Typically between \$500-\$5000+	Typically between \$500-\$5000+	Free (Donation) - \$400	Free-\$1000
	Champion and/or proven, or big winning adults are easily \$5000-\$10,000+	\$2000-\$10,000 for poodle cross bred mutts.  <b>Please don't support these bad Breeders, they breed solely for money!</b>	\$2000-\$10,000 for poodle cross bred mutts.  <b>Please don't support these bad Breeders, they breed solely for money!</b>		<b>BEWARE</b> "Retail Rescue" has become a real issue. Rescues are importing dogs with communicable diseases into our countries and then doing minimal care and selling them to the public as "rescues", for profit. They often "accidentally" breed puppies to sell as "rescues". If they claim a dog is from a "meat farm" that is a very big red flag!

**DO NOT PURCHASE A DOG FROM A BREEDER WHO:**

- 1. LETS YOU CHOOSE A DOG FROM A PICTURE/VIDEO AT A FEW DAYS OR WEEKS OLD, OR A FIRST COME FIRST SERVE BASIS.** It is IMPOSSIBLE to know the pups temperament. One litter yields temperaments from one side of the spectrum to the other...shier pup who will never like crowds, to pups who guard objects, to pups that love everyone but are distracted easily etc. A good Breeder cares to match the right pup to you and not just give you the colour you want because that is the fastest way to get MONEY from you and make the sale, a good breeder would NEVER let you choose this young. They should care enough to match pups to new owners with a forever match in mind.
- 2. IS BREEDING A LITTER "JUST THIS ONE TIME" OR FOR "FUN".** These people do not have the knowledge to raise a litter properly. They have no knowledge to help you later when your dog is sick, or you are faced with severe training challenges. These Breeders HAVE NO IDEA about the breeds health, the health of their lines, the temperaments in the lines, how to properly socialize and raise a litter, how to read a pedigree, how to asses structure nor know what should be bred to what to produce pups who are physically and mentally sound. They also probably have done NO genetic health testing. (Not to be confused with a breeder breeding their first litter under the guidance of another long time breeder mentor which is good!). Purchasing a dog from this situation will ensure that you and your dog will pay for their mistakes while incorrectly raising your dog.
- 3. SELLS YOU A DOG WITH NO AKC/CBCA/ABCA REGISTRATION PAPERS, ISSUED WITHIN 6 MONTHS OF SALE!** NO good Breeder on the planet would ever dream of not putting registration on their puppies! At a bare minimum, even the "bottom of the barrel" breeders have papers on their dogs! There is a FEDERAL LAW IN CANADA called the Animal Pedigree Act of Canada, it is illegal to not serve new owners papers within 6 months of date of sale on any dog that is sold as "Purebred", without registration the dog is worth virtually nothing, they can not prove they are not cross bred, can not show you the health behind the dog, have no way to prove that the dog is from a high quality line without papers. Non papered dogs can not compete in any events with a reputable canine registry to prove their value. Be careful of fake papers and fake registries! (ie CONTINENTAL KENNEL CLUB and WORLD KENNEL CLUB) Many claimed "purebred" non-registered dogs are actually Border Collies crossed with Aussies or Scotch Collies and you will not tell easily by looking at them as pups, but "Breeders" will ask for the same price for these cross as papered dogs. If they are indeed Border Collie to Border Collie and there are no papers to prove pedigree (family tree) the Breeder might be breeding half siblings, siblings, mother daughter and not even know it as they obtained the parents from random people they found in the newspaper or on Kijiji, from another BYB, and they could be deeply inbred with no way to know or trace it. Do not be tricked into someone telling you

that they don't need papers because the Breeder "DNA tested them to prove they were Border Collies", that is NOT an excuse. These dogs should NEVER be bred from. They are low quality and you should never give these Back Yard Breeders a cent!

4. **SELLS YOU A DOG WITH NO MICROCHIP.** Dog should be microchipped at the expense of the Breeder, BEFORE the puppy leaves their residence, this is illegal in Canada! There is no way to know that the puppy you are getting is the puppy they are claiming it is, or is even the puppy they claim it is on the papers. You cannot DNA a dog without a microchip. You should be able to verify pups parentage through DNA testing through the AKC registration papers and its microchip.
5. **CHARGES YOU FOR A PUPPY BASED ON COLOUR.** Any Breeder who tries to charge you more money for a particular colour or gender, or breeds for certain colour or a "rainbow" of colour is not reputable! It costs the same to raise a pup no matter what the gender or colour. Price should reflect the parents quality, show wins, titles, genetic health testing and the money the breeder puts into raising and socializing the litter/days off work etc. NOT because the pup was born a certain colour. That is a money grab! If a breeders breeding goals are to produce as much colour as possible, they are NOT a good breeder. Breeding and producing dogs because of their colour and not because of their actual quality is not reputable and is a sign of a Back Yard Breeder or a Puppy Mill.
6. **OFFERS A GENETIC GUARANTEE SHORTER THAN 2 YEARS, OR, NOT AT ALL.** The guarantee for genetic disease should last at least 3 years as a dog can not be officially tested for Hips and Elbows with then OFA till at least two years of age. This health guarantee against genetic illness should be in writing and signed. Do NOT buy from a breeder who does not have a sales contract outlining the sale of the dog, it should specify purchase price, worth of the dog, what genetic health tests are guaranteed and that the parents have been genetically health tested for at least hips, elbows, eye certified, hearing tested and DNA tested for CEA, CL, TNS and Glaucoma. Some breeders only guarantee against the one's you can, DNA test for...that they know the dog can never get such as CEA, CL and TNS...this means NOTHING! What you should see is a guarantee against genetic defects that don't allow the dog to function as a pet such as Hip and Elbow issues and blindness and other eyes issues.
7. **BREEDS DOGS YOUNGER THAN TWO YEARS OF AGE.** Unless there is extenuating circumstances (stud dog on death bed or stud leaving the country etc) no dog should be bred younger than two years of age. This is because a dog can not have it's hips and elbows certified free of hip and elbow problems by the OFA until that age and no Border Collie should be bred until it passes both hip and elbow testing.
8. **CANNOT PROVIDE YOU WITH PROOF OF BORDER COLLIE SPECIFIC GENETIC HEALTH TESTING. A normal vet examination is NOT proof enough that a dog is healthy enough to breed.** You need actual proof from specialists who have tested that dog for breed specific illnesses. For the Border Collie they need HIP AND ELBOW passing certification from the OFA (Orthopaedic Foundation for Animals), an eye exam by a Canine Opthamologist resulting in a clear eye result from CAER, a hearing exam done by a canine hearing specialist from BAER, and a DNA test done for CEA, CL, TNS at minimum through one of the high quality DNA labs.
9. **ALLOWS PUPS TO LEAVE PRIOR TO 8 WEEKS OF AGE.** In many places (US States) this is straight up ILLEGAL. Pups will miss out on socialization with mother and littermate that will shape that dogs temperament for the rest of it's life. Further their immune systems are weaker and worming protocols are not complete. The longer the pup is left with the dam and littermate the better and will shape the pup for its entire lifetime.
10. **IS SELLING YOU A PUPPY WITH NO VET INSPECTION NOR VACCINATIONS/NOMOGRAPHS/TITERS.** The dog should have at least one vet inspection before the dog is handed to you, at their expense. A breeder cannot hear HEART DEFECTS nor lung issues, only a vet can!!! Just because the pup is playing when it arrives does not mean it is healthy at all. They should give you proof, signed by a vet, with a vaccination and worming record with exact dates, medication and amounts. If they do not believe in vaccinations then they still should have proof of a vet examination and a clear bill of health.

## **11. TELLS YOU THAT YOU CAN BREED YOUR DOG THAT YOU PURCHASE FROM THEM NO QUESTIONS**

**ASKED.** Any Breeder with good lines will never allow just anyone to breed the dogs that they sell without first ensuring that they mentor you for a few years, teach you about the breed standards, how to assess breeding stock, what health screenings need to be completed, teach you how to read pedigrees, complete registration, show and groom the dog, how to whelp a litter, tube feed, bottle feed, make formula and much much more. Learning this takes many years and a good breeder will not sell you a dog for breeding purposes simply because you were willing to pay them more money. They are very picky about who gets to use their lines and whomever does needs to breed them with the utmost respect and with guidance from the breeder so that you do not cause irreplaceable damage to the lines.

### **SIGNS THAT A BREEDER IS A GOOD BREEDER:**

- 1. GOOD BORDER COLLIE BREEDERS ASK A LOT OF QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU, YOUR LIFESTYLE, AND HOME.** Good breeders want to know that their pups are going to very good homes. They won't just sell to you simply because you have the money. Good Breeders want to make sure their pups have permanent homes and that they are given the attention, care and training they need. Good Breeders also offer help to their puppy owners for the life of the dog and want updates.
- 2. THEY SPEND MORE ON DOG SHOWS TO PROVE THEIR DOGS QUALITY THEN THEY WILL EVER MAKE FROM PUPPY SALES.** Good breeders breed to preserve the line and improve on the breed, not to make money. It is VERY expensive to show, health test and care for dogs and that is what the money from puppy sales goes towards. Show campaign bills can run from \$10,000 to \$100,000 per year for ONE DOG! That is why good breeders can charge what they do for their pups. Bad breeders don't show and attempt to charge the same, undeservingly. Papers do not mean you can charge more. The dogs accolades in the show ring and genetic health are what determines the quality and price of the progeny.
- 3. GOOD BREEDERS KNOW THE PEDIGREES BEHIND THEIR DOGS VERY WELL.** Not only do they know all the dogs in the pedigrees, what these dogs have won, their temperaments and also the results of their hereditary examinations but they know the breed type of each pedigree and the faults of each dog. Good Border Collie Breeders strive to maintain breed type within their lines and the breed. They take breeding decisions very seriously and will go to all ends of the earth too ensure the dogs are matched to the very best possible stud/dam to create the best pups they possibly can.
- 4. THEY RAISE THEIR PUPS THE BEST.** Good Border Collie Breeders research non stop how to raise their pups. They are always expanding their knowledge about behaviour and development of pups to ensure that the pups are trained according to their age and socialized in a manner that allows them to be the best dogs they can be both as future show dogs and as family pets. Their development is recorded and Breeders are looking for new ways to be the best. Food and vaccination protocols are researched to ensure that the highest standards are met. It is common for reputable breeders to NOT ALLOW VISITORS to prevent their dogs and pups and home from lethal canine illness which can be nearly impossible to eradicate from the soil (I.e. Parvovirus). New born pups do not have strong immune systems.
- 5. THEY HAVE SPAY/NEUTER AGREEMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS.** A good Breeder always sells their dogs as PETS on a non-breeding agreement. The public who buys a dog as a pet must never breed that dog and most of the time must fix that dog by a certain age. This is because good Breeders do not want pet owners to just randomly and loosely start to breed dogs from their lines any which way without having the knowledge to breed dogs properly. It takes years of learning and research and mentorship before one is at a level where they should breed their first litter!

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