

# Choosing A Breeder:

## Who Really Cares About Preserving the Breed?

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**Newbies' News:** This section of TTRM is dedicated to the continuing elementary education of those who are new to the Rottweiler breed.

You have studied the specifics of various breeds and you have determined that the Rottweiler is right for you and you are right for a Rottweiler. Congratulations! Now what do you do? Do you rush out and get a puppy? That is not what you do if you want a pup that is ideal for you. Your "puppy to be" is probably not even born yet. In fact, it is possible that the breeding that will produce your puppy has not even taken place yet. Nevertheless, it has been planned for months and maybe even years in advance in the mind of a dedicated breeder. Long before you will love your pup, someone else envisioned its litter. Potentially great pups are not usually produced randomly. They are produced by knowledgeable, caring, and conscientious breeders. Just because someone breeds dogs doesn't mean that they should breed dogs, or that they genuinely care about the good of the breed. That is why the next vitally important step in getting your future puppy is choosing the right breeder. You need to choose a breeder who really cares about preserving the breed and not just about making a buck!

Breeders are the ones who ensure the continuation of the breed. All breeders propagate the breed, but only good breeders really care about preserving the breed according to the accepted written standard. Thankfully, it is not necessary to go to Rottweil, Germany to get a great Rottweiler. But you do have to do your homework thoroughly. Assuming you have already read several breed specific books before deciding on the Rottweiler, it is now time to begin researching breeders in order to determine where you will get your puppy. Start by contacting local Rottweiler clubs in your state. Active members of these clubs will be able to answer many of your questions and provide you with invaluable information as you investigate potential breeders from which you will purchase your puppy. It is also advisable to visit a number of conformation shows and/or working events. Again these competitors will prove to be tremendous assets in your search for the right breeder. Compile your list of recommended breeders and then begin contacting them for initial interviews and to schedule an appointment for you to visit them, their dogs, and their facilities.

There are two types of breeders:

- Bad breeders, often referred to as "backyard breeders," who are motivated by financial gain
- Good breeders, reputable and responsible breeders who follow a generally accepted "code of ethics."

Good breeders are motivated by a love for the breed and a passion to preserve the complete Rottweiler. That does not mean that their puppies will be cheap. Good breeders put a lot of time, energy, and money into their facilities, their breed stock, and the care of their litters. You can reasonably expect to pay \$750-\$1,000 for a pet quality puppy and \$1,500-\$3,000 for a show and/or working prospect. A healthy, well-



bred puppy is an investment. You may pay more up front, but you will probably save yourself a lot of money down the road if you are fortunate enough to avoid the health issues that accompany many poorly bred purebreds.

Here are a few of the generally accepted code of ethics points that should be adhered to by any breeder that you are considering:

- Breed only nationally registered dogs and bitches with certified hips.
- Breed only dogs and bitches of sound temperament and proven to be free of any disqualifying faults.
- All puppies or dogs are sold with a signed written contract which guarantees the health of the dog at the time of sell. Many reputable breeders will also guarantee the dog against inheritable diseases by providing a fair replacement policy.
- Will only release puppies to go to their new homes after they have reached the age of seven weeks old. Additionally, they will provide the new owner with a schedule of recommended puppy vaccinations yet to be administered.
- Will not sell any of their puppies to a pet store or any entity who engages in any activity which might exploit the breed.
- Breeder agrees to take any of their puppies back and relocate them in a new home if a situation arises where the original buyer cannot keep the puppy. Conscientious breeders recognize and acknowledge that they have a lifelong responsibility to any and every dog that they produce in their breeding program.

Besides following a code of ethics, there are many other distinguishing characteristics of a good breeder of which you should make inquiry. Ask them how long they have owned the breed. You want a breeder with both integrity and longevity in the breed. Less reputable breeders do not stay with one breed for very long, often switching breeds according to popularity, because that is what sells. Ask them about their breed club affiliations. The best breeders will typically be active members of a national and local level breed club. Ask them if their breed stock has the recommended health certifications for our breed.