



GUIDELINES FOR BUYING A VIZSLA

Vizsla Canada does not rate, recommend or endorse breeders, their kennels, or their breeding stock. It does, however, encourage breeders to test all breeding stock against known breed-specific genetic diseases, and to adopt good breeding management principles.

It is the buyer's responsibility to research the breed and breeders as fully as possible. The following guidelines are intended to assist in your choice of a Vizsla breeder.

EVALUATING AND CHOOSING A VIZSLA BREEDER

Example questions to ask the breeder **BEFORE** you buy a puppy:

- Why does the breeder breed? Most ethical breeders practice with motivation stemming from their love for the breed. They generally want to better the breed through proper breeding and breed towards breed standards. When done correctly, very rarely is breeding notably profitable as there are so many factors when it comes to working with live animals.
- Is the breeder a member of the Canadian Kennel Club (CKC), or another country's registered body for purebred dogs? All responsible breeders should be members of a purebred dog registry and have their purebred breeding stock registered with it.
- Are the puppies registered? For example, in Canada, the law states that any dog represented as a purebred must be registered with the CKC. Beware- if a breeder offers you a puppy at one price but quotes another price (higher) "if you want papers"; then you are clearly not dealing with a responsible or registered breeder.
- At what age does the breeder let a puppy go to a home and why? Puppies have definite needs that are met at different stages. Have they thought it through or are they just sending the puppies home as soon as they can? Do they understand the developmental stages of puppies?
- Does the breeder offer a health guarantee? Any responsible breeder will ask you to sign a contract that spells out the arrangements. A contract should protect the buyer as well as the seller and always puts the puppy first and foremost. The

breeder should be willing to offer a written health guarantee. Health guarantees can vary with regards to time frames/age.

- Does the breeder do the required health testing for their breed? (Hips, Eyes and Thyroid for Smooth or Hips and Eyes for Wire-Haired?)
 - Hip X-rays are evaluated and given a rating by the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA). This cannot be evaluated by a regular vet. In North America, results should be visible on the OFA website. Hips evaluated via PennHip, by - International Canine Genetics or the British or European equivalent, may not be available on the OFA website, but the breeder should have a copy to verify.
 - Eye testing is done only by a certified ACVO Veterinary Ophthalmologist. In North America, results should be visible on the OFA website.
 - Thyroid testing is done only by approved laboratories. In North America, results should be visible on the OFA website.
- Does the breeder do any optional health testing for Elbow Dysplasia, Cardiac Disease or Sebaceous Adenitis? In North America, results should be visible on the OFA website.
- Will the breeder be willing to help you, if you have problems with the puppy? The answer to this should be a resounding 'YES!' with some implication that they'll be quite upset if you don't! The breeder should also be willing to help if the dog needs a new home, should something happen to you. Many breeders will insist that you return the dog to them, at any age in these instances.
- Ask for references. The breeder may also ask YOU for references.

Good or reputable Vizsla breeders will:

- Be aware of and knowledgeable about the Vizsla's faults and possible health problems. Every breed has some. Avoid the Vizsla breeder/seller who says there are none; or doesn't know what they are.
- Test and ensure that their Vizsla breeding stock is cleared of Hip Dysplasia, Autoimmune Thyroiditis, eye diseases, and should be able to provide proof of testing for both the dam (mother) and the sire (father) from an approved testing organization (OFA or PennHip) If the breeder also has copies of test results for the puppy's grandparents and great-grandparents, so much the better.
- Ensure that their breeding stock is tested and cleared for other genetic diseases known to affect the Vizsla breed. Testing for Elbow Dysplasia, Cardiac Disease and Sebaceous Adenitis is recommended.
- Know very well the pedigrees of their own dogs; and be willing to provide these.

- Encourage you to meet the dam and the sire (if he is on the premises) and provide copies of their registration certificates.
- Be willing to show you where the puppies are whelped and raised. This should be a clean, heated, indoor facility.
- Register the litter with the CKC, or their country's registering body for purebred dogs.
- Put your purchase agreement/contract in writing. You should enter into a contract with the breeder that guarantees the dog is a purebred Vizsla, and eligible for individual registration. That the dog is from sound, healthy stock and, if given proper affection, care and nutrition, should develop into a sound representation of the breed.
- May ask you to sign a Non-Breeding Contract as part of the dog's registration. If you are buying a pup with breeding rights, you should expect the breeder to ask you a lot more questions about your future plans for this dog, and the breed.
- Outline in writing what s/he is prepared to do if you encounter problems or have to give up the dog. Most breeders give you 48 to 72 hours to have your own veterinarian check your puppy and, if necessary, return or exchange the dog. Note that some breeders will offer to take a dog back, for the lifetime of the dog.
- All Canadian Registered Purebred Vizslas have a microchip and/or tattoo . This permanent identification is helpful to identify your dog if it is lost or stolen - it can be traced back to the breeder.
- Know the breed standard and have a copy available. Purebred dog registries, in most countries, have official descriptions of the Vizsla's appearance, temperament, movement, etc.
- Interview you! They should ask questions about your lifestyle and interests. They should want to know why you want a Vizsla; and try as much as possible to ensure a good match between you and the breed, and you and the individual puppy.
- Provide you with written instructions on the care and feeding of your new Vizsla puppy; and ideally will send your puppy home with a small supply of food.
- Achieve titles on their own dogs in conformation, field, obedience, tracking, or other performance events. While a Championship-titled dog doesn't necessarily mean it's worthy of breeding, Vizsla breeders who are active with their dogs in one or more areas indicates a measure of desire to maintain or improve the breed's conformation, health, temperament, and versatility.
- Be active members of the National Vizsla Club as well as regional clubs or associations in their own country or beyond. This indicates their willingness to keep up to date on the breeds.

- Happily provide references from other puppy buyers, other dog owners, or breed club members. Talking to the breeder's previous buyers will tell you a lot about the individual with whom you'll be dealing with, if you purchase his/her dog.
- Provide follow-up support and assistance after you bring your dog home and will encourage you to call or write if you have questions or problems.
- Will want to hear from you!! From the puppy's first few days of adjustment in its new home, to stories and pictures, achievements, etc. for the life of the dog.

Reputable breeders will be connected to their puppy families for life! Be prepared to communicate with your breeder over the life of your Vizsla.

AVOID VIZSLA BREEDERS:

- Whose major income is derived from the sale of puppies.
- Who do not register their adult dogs, and litters, with a registered purebred dog registry. Dogs, including puppies, not registered with a registered purebred dog registry are not to be considered purebred.
- Who routinely practice in-breeding: i.e., mating sister to brother, mother to son, father to daughter.
- Who breed females younger than 24 months and older than 10 years.
- Who breed the same bitch year after year.
- Whose dogs appear nervous, fearful, aggressive, or in poor health.
- Who keep dogs chained outside or locked up in outdoor kennels all the time or in poor housing conditions. Vizslas need a lot of attention and love from humans; they don't get it in these sorts of situations.
- Who don't appear interested in you or what happens to the puppy after it leaves the breeder. They should be interested in your plans for this dog!

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A DOG OWNER

Buying a dog is a lifetime commitment and a major responsibility in time, energy and sometimes money. Vizslas often live until the age of 12 to 14 years. Before buying a Vizsla, or any dog, please consider:

- Domesticated dogs cannot fend for themselves. Who will feed, walk, groom and pick up after your dog, when it's a puppy and when it grows older?
- Can your home and lifestyle accommodate a dog? If you work long hours, travel a lot or have a very active social life and are out much of the time, then don't buy

a dog; certainly not a Vizsla. Dogs are social creatures and need human attention, affection and quality time with family members.

- Have you considered the energy requirements of a Vizsla and its effect on your personal lifestyle? While they require a bit less than some of the other sporting breeds, adult Vizslas still need a minimum of 45 to 60 minutes of vigorous daily exercise. Puppies will require 2 hours of play and exercise a day. Since dogs generally don't run around a yard on their own, YOU will need to walk, run, hike or play each day with your Vizsla. If you're not an active person, then you should consider a dog with much lower energy and exercise requirements (or a cat!).
- Vizslas do have a protective instinct but should not be aggressive. If you are looking for a guard dog, the Vizsla is not for you.
- Obedience training/lessons are essential for all dogs. Will you take the time to socialize and train your new Vizsla? And the younger the better, for socializing and raising a well-behaved dog.
- Have you budgeted for the cost of good quality, nutritious food, veterinary fees, and obedience lessons?
- Have you found a veterinarian and discussed your new dog's medical care requirements?

Vizsla Canada is a non-profit, national breed organization formed in late 1992 and incorporated on March 12, 1999, to promote and protect the purebred Vizsla and to educate the public in the joys and responsibilities of owning these breeds of dog. Vizsla owners are encouraged to become members of Vizsla Canada.