

Great Dane

Buyer Beware

More and more frequently we are receiving photographs and questions from people who have purchased a puppy or adolescent Great Dane but they are concerned that something about the dog is not quite right.

This has prompted us to compile the following check list for anyone considering purchasing a Great Dane of any age so you can be aware of the pitfalls to avoid:

1. Firstly, please do your RESEARCH. Look at websites, word of mouth, visit kennels of top winning dogs or buy or borrow a good book on Great Danes from your library. This will give you a picture in your mind of what a good, sound Great Dane should look like. While a baby puppy will not fit this picture, the parents of the puppy should.
2. There are many 'dodgy' breeders around, both backyard and registered. Ask questions. A serious registered breeder will show their dogs – their aim is to better the breed and they want their breeding stock assessed. If they are just producing litter after litter without showing their dogs or show average quality dogs, look elsewhere!!! Backyarders may be cheaper initially, but chances are they did not undertake proper health testing before breeding their dogs or do not know how to rear giant breed puppies correctly, so you could be paying out \$1000's in the not too distant future. A puppy that is not raised the right way or who is from a questionable breeding can suffer problems throughout its life.
3. When you are looking for a puppy – seeing them in person is best and it is important not to be distracted by how cute they are! Things to look for are: clear eyes with no discharge or 'gunk' in the corners; no loose red, sore looking haws; a shiny coat and nice wet nose; any rashes, hives or bald patches; a big round worm burdened stomach; a solid, big boned puppy with a strong rear and topline; a nice croup, not too steep and whilst puppies sleep a lot, when he/she's awake, should be playful, interacting with other puppies and full of energy, not listless and hunched up.
4. If the breeder is only interested in how much money you have and doesn't ask about your experience with puppies; where the pup will be accommodated; your daily routines; any other animals or children you might have and provide you with a maintenance, exercise and feeding sheet, worming and vaccination records and any other information you might need to raise a happy, healthy puppy, plus the promise of their support and back up if needed, RUN!! This is not the sort of breeder you want to enter into a relationship with, and that's what it should be – an ongoing relationship where the breeder looks forward to hearing from you and the progress your puppy is making and where you know you can go, at any time, for help and advice should something seem not quite right.

We have to stress that this checklist is just to give you an idea of some things to look out for but is not a guarantee that it will identify everything. It all comes back to the first point – it is really important to do your research and make a careful planned decision and not a spontaneous and ill considered decision based on the cute factor.