

Interviewing Breeders

Of course, you'll want to interview potential breeder(s) and request references from previous puppy buyers. Don't be surprised if the breeder interviews you as well – take this as an indication that the breeder really cares for their puppies and wants to find them good homes.

- Be honest with the breeder about how much time and energy you can devote to the dog. He/she is trying to ensure the puppy will be a suitable match for your lifestyle.
- Ask the breeder(s) if they are members in good standing with the American Beauceron Club (you can also contact us to verify their current membership status). If they are members in good standing with the ABC, they will likely also have signed the club's Code of Ethics, which requires them to apply ethical breeding practices and to follow a certain standard of care when raising their puppies and dealing with puppy buyers. (e.g. providing a written sales contract, health guarantees, etc.) Even so, don't assume this guarantees healthy, happy and stable puppies. You still need to do your research by checking references, talking with other buyers from that breeder and attending events where their dogs are being shown or in a trial.
- Ask the breeder why they chose these particular dogs to breed and what health testing has been done on the sire/dam. Ask if there is any history of allergies or other known health problems in either the dam or the sire or any of their offspring (if either has been bred before).
- Find out how many litters the female has had. Does the number indicate that she has had a litter each time she comes into season (usually twice a year) without any breaks between litters? A bitch should not be bred more

than twice out of every three seasons. Some breeders of working bitches limit breeding to age two, four and six.

- Ask the breeder the age of the sire and the dam. Each should be a minimum of two years of age. Because this breed is slow to mature, many breeders will wait until the dogs are at least three years of age before breeding.
- Ask for the parents and grandparents permanent OFA (Orthopedic Foundation for Animals) number. If you have the registered name, AKC registered number or the OFA number, then you can check the OFA website for the actual hip ratings. If the parents or grandparents are imported from another country, ask to see proof of hip clearance from that country's registry.
- If you want to participate in a sport, try to select a breeder whose dogs are successfully competing in the sport that interests you.
- Ask the breeder if you will be receiving full or limited AKC registration papers. If limited registration, ask what conditions must be fulfilled in order for the breeder to change this to full registration.
- Understand your sales contract and verify that the breeder will supply you with the puppy's health records from their veterinarian, the individual AKC registration papers for the puppy, and a three-generation pedigree.
- Ask for references and be sure to contact them.