

Welcome to the Wonderful World Of Spots.....Dalmatians!

Buyers Guide revised November 17, 2020

If I didn't have dogs.....

- 1) I could walk around safely barefoot in the dark;
- 2) My house could be carpeted instead of tiled and laminated;
- 3) All flat surfaces, clothing, furniture, and cars would be free of dog hair;
- 4) When the doorbell rang, it wouldn't sound like the SPCA kennels;
- 5) When the doorbell rang, I could get to the door without wading thru four or five dog bodies who beat me there;
- 6) I could sit how I wanted to on the couch without taking into consideration where several little fur-bodies would need to get;
- 7) I would not have strange presents under my tree....like dog bones, stuffed animals and have to answer to people why I wrap them up;
- 8) I would not be on a first name basis with a vet;
- 9) Most used words in my vocabulary would not be: potty, outside, sit, down, come, no and leave him/her ALONE;
- 10) My house would not be cordoned off into zones with baby gates;
- 11) My purse would not contain things like poop pick up bags and dog treats;
- 12) I would no longer have to spell the word B-A-L-L and F-R-I-S-B-E-E;
- 13) I would not buy weird things to stuff into "kongs", or have to explain why I'm buying them, or what a "kong" is;
- 14) I would not have as many leaves INSIDE my house as outside;
- 15) I would not look strangely at people who think having their ONE dog ties them down too much;
- 16) I would not have to answer the question why do I have so many dogs from people who will never have the joy in their life of knowing they are loved unconditionally by something as close to an angel as they will ever get. Who else has a friend who considers you the MOST important thing in the whole wide world all the time.



An Open Letter to a Puppy Buyer

I'm an average sort of dog breeder, I guess. I have too many dogs, love every one of them and wish I could have more. I spend more money on dog shows in a year than I do on five year's worth of cloths. My doctor had been retired for three years before I found out, but my veterinarian's phone number is more familiar to me than my own. In fact when he adds to his clinic, the new wing will be named in my honor. After all, without my business he couldn't afford to expand.

The popular term for a person like me is hobby breeder, but I kind of think that obsession describes it better. A hobby sounds like something you pick up in your spare time, like stamps or ceramics, but dogs aren't a sometime thing. About this hobby breeder business though. It's probably called that because hobbies are usually something on which you spend money rather than make it and boy does that describe dogs!

Oh, I know some people are bound to think, "Humph, with the price of purebred pups, some of those breeders are making a bundle!" But there's a saying in my hobby – that if you're making money, you're not doing it right. There are a lot of expenses like vet bills, dog food, stud fees, tattooing, microchipping, registrations, all the pre-breeding testing, post breeding visits to the vets and advertising. If you start to think of it as a business, you start trying to shave expenses and show a profit – and the dogs suffer for it. So you think of it as a labor of love and damn the expenses!

A TOP DOG FANTASY

Then why breed dogs at all? Maybe it's because puppies are such pure delights that to have a litter playing around the house is like living in a Disney movie. Maybe it's because I think my breed is so great that I like to see other nice people enjoy their company too. Maybe, it's because this could be the litter that contains that one perfect pup with all the special ingredients to become the best show dog ever. Other women fantasize about being shipwrecked on a deserted island with Burt Reynolds. In my own special fantasy, I'm being handed the Best in Show Ribbon at New York City's glamorous Westminster show while this magnificent dog that I've bred stands in the spotlight and charms the crowd with her poise and presence. Maybe that dog is in the next litter.

So I breed a litter every now and then. Not too often, because you can't run off to shows when you've got a litter of pups looking to be fed four times a day. They take a lot of time and work and don't leave you many spare moments. But I think they're worth it.

"How can you bear to part with them?" people ask. And truthfully, it isn't easy. The pups are born in a spare room and as they grow their territory expands until they're old enough to join the mainstream of the rest of the household.

I get to watch each developing personality and to know each one's nature. I watch them change from deaf, sightless, twitching blobs into positive characters that explore their territory with the tenacity of Cortez or Balboa. After eight weeks of constant companionship, I'm not anxious to hand them over to just anyone. I really try to find the best homes possible for my pups. That's why I screen buyers.

AN "INVENTORY" OF LOVE

It all starts when they first call. Nothing irritates me more than callers who begin as though they were connected to the order desk in an auto parts supply store.

The first words are. "Hello. Do you have any puppies and how much are they?"

Do you have any pups? Unless you still believe in the Stork Delivery Service, the question conjures up a picture of a stock department with shelves of merchandise. Cold. Please remember I'm not a dime store!

Or they ask, "I want a dog for my husband's birthday. I'd like a black and white female who'll be eight weeks old on April 23."

"Sure thing! I'll just run back to the stock room again where I'll check under B for Black and F for female."

I often sound like don't want to sell the pups. I tell the people how much exercise they require, how much they eat and remind them that they're not the quietest animals in the world. If they're still determined, I invite them out to my place to meet the spotted gang.

It's really a sort of trial by fire when they show up at my home. First they have to drive way out into the West Country.....into the bush and foothills to get to my place and look out for the steep hills and wildlife including cougars. The dogs greet them with all due enthusiasm leaping and licking faces and while I'm chatting away with the visitors, I'm watching for all sorts of little telltale things. Does one member of the family shrink back or push a puppy away? Is one person wildly enthusiastic while the other seems cold and disinterested? Does someone seem a little disturbed to find a dog hair decorating his or her clothing? It could be that a pup could be a bone of contention in the family.

Innocent words can be a warning. If someone remarks that they hate to see dogs 'cooped up' and think they should have their freedom, they're not likely to end up with one of my pups. I don't want to see one of my pups clobbered by a car while roaming the roadside, or choking on a chicken bone from raided garbage.

One couple happened to arrive while I was out in the back yard beating the bejabbers out of a living room scatter rug. Standing in the midst of a dense cloud of disrupted dust, I blithely remarked, "That's the sort of dirt four furry feet can bring in." I was exaggerating slightly, since sixteen feet had actually brought in the dirt, but the lady looked slightly aghast and murmured, "Well, we could always keep the dog in the basement." "No way!" I said, "I sell dogs for pets, not basements."

SUITABLE CANDIDATES WELCOME

You know the kind of people I like? I like the ones who ask lots of questions, the ones who want to see all my dogs and the ones who ask if there are any books they can read to learn more about the breed. I like the ones who ask me to suggest training classes or show them how to groom the dogs. I like the people who speak fondly of dogs they have had that have passed on, tell you of the clever things they did and show pictures slightly tattered from much handling and perhaps a tear or two. Most of all, I like the people who will love the pups as much as I do. And that's a very tall order.

SO YOU THINK YOU WANT A DALMATIAN

Let's cut to the chase...they don't come in a package like you see on TV anymore than the thigh master hidden under your bed is going to give you thighs like Suzanne Somers. They start out as cute little puppies that turn into something akin to a teenager on speed... If and it's a big "if" you are lucky to get one well bred that comes from stock with health clearances and has been socialized you're still not ahead of the game. It doesn't mean they will be easy to train or live with it, it just means you won't be adding a new wing to your vet's existing office building.

Dalmatians are bright creative clowns that are always one step ahead of you enticing you to catch them, "if you can". They can dismantle a room, rearrange your furniture and do some creative gardening in less than five seconds.

Anything that moves or flits about is fair game and the quickest way to reach it is a straight line regardless if it is across the furniture or through your favorite flower bed. Anything left on the floor becomes theirs to be appropriately investigated via a good chewing or tug of war with whoever decides to pick up the other end and one swift counter surf can take care of anything not previously found on the floor.

They will eat anything that doesn't bite them first and depending upon the circumstances will either barf, fart or both depending on who is there to witness.

If you have small children they will collude with them in ways that are beyond the imagination.

Add another dog or cat to the equation and you have organized chaos.

To add insult to injury they live longer than you have the energy to get the best of them and in their golden years have you waiting on them hand and foot catering to their every whim. Training them in any particular venue only adds to the excitement and increases the odds forward to experiencing.

So, if you still think you want a Dalmatian, prepare yourself! You are in for the ride of your life! That is guaranteed!

AS YOUR BREEDER.....I WILL ALWAYS BE HERE FOR YOU!

I will always offer advice etc. To people but I also won't be at their beck and call to bail them out when their backyard breeder fails them, and they don't know what to do with their pup because of illness or poor temperament.

To Puppy Buyers near and far,

Trust me, I get it. It sucks being told time and time again this year when reaching out to good breeders that they have nothing available, or they have 1–3-year waitlist. I understand that you do not want to wait that long for a well-bred puppy when you are ready for one now....heck even tomorrow!

But, While I hate to be brutally honest, those backyard breeders, those puppy mills and those greeders only exist because of people being eager (and often times impatient) for a puppy, line their pockets with money. The public who are buying these dogs are the reason why they exist.

At the end of the day as much as I would love to educate homes in the importance of shopping responsibly, we are in a world of getting what we want and fast. And hey, I have Amazon prime! I get the perks of being able to access something on demand but buying a dog should never be an impulsive decision nor should it be as easy as an Amazon purchase.

I cannot tell you the amount of people that have reached out to me for a puppy, I break the news of the wait period and the following week are messaging me about their sick Kijiji doberman they impulsively bought. Mind you, I will offer any guidance I can to these impulsive buyers, but my first question is always 'What did your breeder say?'

And do you know what their reply almost always is?

They 'don't know' because their breeder disappeared the second money was handed over.

A backyard breeder doesn't necessarily mean a large-scale puppy mill of 100's dogs in small crates. It also means a family that put their two-family pets together and had a litter. Both are irresponsibly bred, even if it means one lives outdoors and the other on the family couch.

Expect more from the breeder of the dog/breed you're looking for. Pet homes need to ask about health testing and be prepared to walk away when they find out that the puppies are not health tested.

The sire and dam being seen by a vet is NOT health testing. Health testing is being tested and cleared by the Orthopedic Foundation of Animals in areas that effect the breed in question. Whether it's an echo cardiogram done on Doberman's parentage, hips x rayed and scored with a passing grade or a Newfoundland or even extremely Important genetic DNA tests done in Doberman's - these tests vary per breed and it's important buyers are educating themselves on proper health testing.

Because while it's tempting to hand over 2k to a person off Kijiji for a cute puppy, that same person will not be there for that same puppy after you leave their property.

That same puppy could be affected with a life risking genetic disease that could've been prevented with a simple DNA test. That puppy could be infected with parvo due to lack of vaccinations due do 'breeder' neglect and will likely die. That same puppy could also have a severe heart condition and only live until it's 7 months because the parents' hearts were not tested. Basically, that puppy you fell in love with could possibly be a walking health issue time bomb or you could be one of the lucky ones.

So, I know you want a puppy.

I know the thought of having to wait 1-2 years for a puppy is depressing.

I know it feels like it will never happen but patience in this case may save you from HUGE heart break of buying a sick, poorly bred puppy.

We deserve better than a poorly bred dog from a person who will take your money, not put it towards bettering their breeding program and do it again and again. Backyard Breeders are the reason dogs are ending up in shelters, not the reputable breeders.

Reputable breeders' health test, we socialize our puppies, we temperament test our puppies, we screen the heck out of our homes. We take calls at 3am from homes who puppies are sick, we laugh with you, and we cry with you. We celebrate every update you provide us with and are thrilled you keep in contact as we loved our puppies as much as you have. When you are entrusted with one of our puppies you also get us - the GOOD breeders. The same people who would drive across the country to pick up a puppy who had to be surrendered vs allowing it to end up in a shelter.

I just want each and every one-off you wonderful homes who are waiting for a puppy to have a little bit of patience. Get to know your breeders. We may not have anything for you currently, but we are happy to talk about the breed or just even in general. Be patient with us as many of us are receiving upwards of 30 applications a week.

I know the wait seems unbearable but that's a good chunk of time to research the breed, get out to some dog shows (if we ever get back to the norm) and get to know the breeder as well as their dogs whom you hope to get a puppy from.

In the meantime, be careful of the scams out there, be wary of puppies that almost seem too good to be true and please do your homework on proper breeding practices no matter what breed you're looking at.

We need to do better for these amazing breeds we are preserving, and it starts with buying responsibly and ending the purchase of BYB dogs.

Trust me, it's worth the wait.

Why I Prefer The Dalmatian

by Paula Homiller

Tattoo K's, Newtown, Pennsylvania

A Good Dalmatian fills the eye first, the heart forever. His Beauty is clean, No frills, no concealment. One can truly SEE his strong, symmetrical body, sleek white coat, black or liver spotting that make his loveliness sparkle. He looks the same every day without cropping, docking, barbering, plucking and what-not. A natural dog always, he is naturally healthy, hardy, long-lived and tolerant of all climates. Easily whelped, easily cared for, what breed give more pleasure for less trouble?

His medium size recommends him, big enough to command respect, yet so neatly made and nimble he is no misfit anywhere. He's a game dog for any "Sport" a gentle fellow for leisurely persons, a gay companion and guard for children. Now no dog can be everything to everyone. But-----along with the accomplishments of any respectable dog (and others peculiarly his own) The Plum Pudding has one talent at which he is sheer perfecton..... the ability to fit his owner like a good shoe.

He will mold his life in the pattern you chose for him cleverly fulfilling your design. Dalmatians are as individual as their owners. Another's Dal may not appeal to you, nor would any other's boots. But of your own Spotted Dick you will say, "MY dog-----the best dog in the world!" He will give you his complete devotion, his loyalty, his heart. He will live for you alone and using keen intelligence and strangely acute sensibilities will become what YOU want him to be.

He is not a casual ornament. He has more to offer than the gift of his beauty, the greater gift of his beauty of character. To say I "Prefer" the breed is feeble. I love it and always will. The Dalmatian is one of the finest things in an unfine world.

----taken from 'Dog World' ---- July 1949

A CODE OF ETHICS IS ONLY AS GOOD AS THE PEOPLE WHO ABIDE BY ITS CONTENTS

Our Promise to You is.....

First & utmost, we at Echo View Dalmatians strives to breed sound, healthy Dalmatians with good, stable, and outgoing temperaments that will make an excellent member of anyone's family. After that is achieved, we hope for some really great specimens of the breed that conforms to the Dalmatian Standard which we hope will compete in conformation, obedience, and performance events.

Echo View's breeding stock are BAER (hearing) & OFA (hips) tested and vet checked prior to breeding. Detailed and accurate records of past breeding's as well as all current puppies are kept to ensure the health and longevity of the Echo View Dalmatian line. Each breeding is done with the goal of improving and continuing the standard of excellence that we require of Echo View Dalmatians as well as to be an asset to the Dalmatian breed as a whole.

Echo View Puppies Receive:

- BAER (hearing) Testing (depending on location/weather conditions)
- Puppy Aptitude or Temperament Testing - so we can match the best possible puppy to your family needs.
- We start handling the puppies as soon as they're born.
- Echo View Puppies are vet checked a minimum of 2 X's.
- Each and every puppy will be microchipped which the buyer must register upon arrival of your puppy.
- Socialization with other dogs, adults & children at the critical developmental phases.
- Exposure to many different environments, objects, textures, and smells.
- Puppy Shots & worming up to date at the time of departure to their new homes.
- Table training starts as soon as the puppy can stand. Puppies benefit from this training as they will need to stand still for nail trimming.
- Crate training begins at 4 weeks of age.

Please understand that a pup is a lifetime commitment-dogs are **NOT** a disposable commodity. In return for a healthy, well-bred, carefully raised pup we expect the following from the buyer:

- The pup will be a family member BUT will be treated like a dog, not a furry child.
- The buyer will read and understand all the information provided.
- The buyer will continue the socialization process and train this dog to be a good citizen.
- The buyer will provide a loving, safe environment.
- The buyer will feed a high quality food **low in purine protein** (for HUA Dalmatians) with access to fresh water.
- The buyer will attend at least one set of puppy socialization classes with the pup.
- The buyer will take the pup for regular vet visits for yearly check-ups.
- The buyer will contact us about small problems, so they can be resolved before they become big problems.
- The buyer will update us on how the new companion is doing at least 2 X's a year preferably with photos.

The Puppy Buyer Receives:

- A healthy well-socialized pup.
- Puppy Packet full of helpful information.
- Pictures and a 5 Generation Pedigree and extended pedigree on request.
- An extensive contract to prevent misunderstanding between buyer and seller to protect both parties.
- A new collar for the puppy.
- A sample of the food the puppy has started on.
- A Lifetime information resource to you and your new puppy from Echo View Dalmatians.
- We are always here to help you and to answer your questions.

And Lastly!

A faithful, loving new family member - YOUR ECHO VIEW PUPPY!

We encourage each and every prospective owner to come out for a visit if at all possible before and after the puppies are born.

We here at Echo View Abide by the following:
Code of Ethics of the Dalmatian Club of Canada

Breeding

Breeding presents a great responsibility to each individual, as he or she can either upgrade or nullify many years of conscientious effort. No one can be compelled to follow any ethical code, but the breeder must be aware of his awesome responsibility.

The problems of our breed can be resolved only by discriminating and intelligent breeding programs. Breeding is to enhance positive qualities and cannot be expected to cover up serious faults. Therefore, breeding partners should be carefully investigated as per background and serious faults before a commitment is made.

The conscientious breeder will be guided by the following:

1. The health and well being of our dogs & puppies are the first and foremost.

- a: Kennel conditions must be sanitary and a happy atmosphere provided.
- b: Breeding animals must be kept in top condition. High-grade prenatal and postnatal care is essential to the health of dam and her puppies.

2. Breeding restrictions:

- a: Dogs with disqualifying faults should not be used for breeding.
- b: Dogs with major faults may be bred only with utmost caution.

3. One of the aims of the club is to breed for normal hip joints and sound overall rear and forequarter assemblage. It is advised that all breeding stock be x-rayed for hip dysplasia.

4. The Dalmatian is an elegant and worthy dog. "Bargain" puppies are not a credit to the dignity of this breed.

5. Breeding should be done sparingly, as overpopulation has become a real problem, even in the purebred animal. When considering having a litter, one should be prepared to keep the entire litter or to put it down if necessary.

6. The prospective buyer should be screened before a sale is made. The breeder should be satisfied that:

- a. a safe and loving home will be provided
- b. The buyer appears responsible enough later to evaluate the breeding potential to produce quality offspring.

7. Breeders should continue to offer helpful assistance to the puppy buyer after the sale is made, for as long as aid is required.

8. Pet shops are dangerous interims for puppies and therefore we should NEVER sell puppies to them.

Exhibiting

Dog shows are meant to be an enjoyable experience.

The obedience and conformation rings offer us and professional handlers a great opportunity to be ambassadors of the Dalmatian

- 1. Courtesy in the ring is a must.
- 2. Good sportsmanship is a must.
- 3. One should willingly offer helpful assistance to other exhibitors and spectators whenever requested.

Education

Much can be done to improve the breed by offering helpful information to all Dalmatian fanciers.

1. Good intentions coupled with the lack of knowledge and mis-information are often responsible for the increase of inferior dogs. The DCC members can do a great service by dispersing honest information regarding breeding, training and caring.

2. When one is considering buying a Dalmatian, it should be understood that our dogs fit into many homes, but that there are exceptions. Also, there are some people who would do better with one sex than another.

3. All Dalmatian enthusiasts should feel welcome and encouraged by the D.C.C. members. They should be offered assistance in every way possible.



Echo View Dalmatians are 30
year Life members of the
DCC and CKC



How Echo View Dalmatians Came to Be

I have loved animals ever since I can remember. Homeless animals of all shapes and sizes, dogs, cats, raccoons, birds, horses etc. made their way to our doorstep to be cared for by myself when I was a child.

A dog or two was always by my side. Terriers, Boxers, Labs, Collies and of course mixed breeds trained me as I grew up. The care and training of dogs has always fascinated me and trial and error over the years has given me the understanding that kindness is always the winner.

After raising our children I decided to get serious about dogs again and after researching many different breeds, the Dalmatian, with their unique spotting, intelligent minds, their devotion to humans, guarding instincts, their clownish ways and their high level of energy seemed like a perfect match. After searching for two years to locate a reputable breeder we connected with Gina Stoski and after a 2 year wait, that is when we acquired Echo, our foundation bitch. Echo can now be found in almost every litter we have.

I thought when I brought this puppy into our lives that I knew everything there was to know about raising a puppy. I couldn't have been more wrong. To put it bluntly, Echo became the teacher and I became the student once again.

To love a breed, such as the Dalmatian, it doesn't take long to realize that one is not enough! Back to Gina, Echo's breeder and we purchased our second Dalmatian puppy, which we named Gina, after her breeder. Gina was a show dog who loved the show ring and proved it by placing number 14 in Canada in only 11 days of showing in one year. Gina was fire and ice! Quite a handful.

By this time thoughts of having a litter prompted us to purchase our acreage. Scrapping together every penny we could find, we purchased our acreage which was nestled in the rolling hills just one mile north of Sylvan Lake, Alberta. With no neighbours close by we were assured that the barking dogs would not become a neighbourhood nuisance. Echo Valley Acres became our home.

Years of hard work have produced a friendly environment for our dogs boasting an eight run heated indoor/outdoor facility. There are huge paddocks for exercising with shade trees, decks for the dogs to lounge on and of course their dog homes. We began boarding puppies that we sold and word got around about our facility.

I decided to start up a dog boarding, grooming & training facility, called Hackle's Hut to help with the expenses and much to our surprise business had exploded.

In 2007 my husband, John retired after 38 years with Chrysler and the decision was made that I also retire, so we closed down Hackles Hut and sold the acreage and moved into the Rocky foothills. Thus, a new beginning....Spotted Gait Ranch.

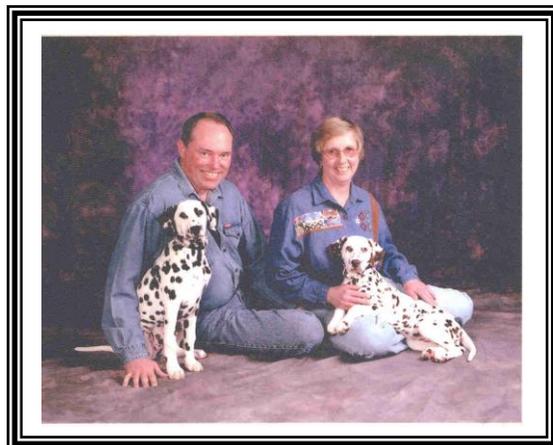
Over the years Dals have come and gone in our lives. We've survived the 101 Dalmatian craze, working on repairing the damage inflicted on this wonderful breed, having to rehabilitate and re-home Dals that were surrendered by uncaring buyers because that small and cute puppy grew up to be quite unmanageable.

Our selection of quality breeding stock remains top priority. Temperament & health are #1.

Echo View (perm. reg'd) Dalmatians was named Canadian Top Dalmatian Breeders several years running. This honour could have not been achieved without our puppy buyers, both Conformation & performance owners. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts and hope to continue our winning ways.

If you purchase a Dal pup or a retired adult from Echo View Dalmatians, be aware, you become part of our family. Our screening process is intense and yes, you may wonder if we really and truly want to place our puppies. Yes, we do want to share our beloved breed with people that truly love the breed as much as we do.

Yours in Spots,
John & Bonnie Hetherington



Did You Know?

Dalmatian puppies are born white and develop their spots as they mature

Unique spots are the Dalmatian's calling card, but his running ability is what made him famous. Bred to be a coaching dog, he ran alongside carriages or horseback riders for miles, discouraging stray dogs from interfering with the horses, alerting the coachman to the presence of approaching highwaymen and guarding the carriage at rest stops at night. No fashionable lord or lady went driving without a pair of the flashy dogs by their side and later, the Dalmatians talents were adapted by firemen, who kept the dogs to clear paths through town for their horse drawn fire engines.

The Dalmatian has a romantic and exciting history, not to mention those spots!
But he has health and temperament issues that must be taken into account.
The Dalmatian is a very smart dog with a sly sense of humor.

He is a clown and will do anything to make you laugh. And he has a tendency to greet people with a big, happy smile. Thanks to his coaching heritage, the Dalmatian has an endless capacity for exercise. He loves to go jogging; don't be surprised if he noses his way into your dresser drawer, pulls out your jogging shorts and brings them to you as a not-so-subtle hint. His high activity level makes him an excellent companion for people who spend their time training for marathons, going for long bike rides or skating along beach boardwalks. He can get enough exercise in his own yard if its big enough, has a picnic table or other obstacles for him to jump and contains plenty of toys. Of course, he'd really rather be out doing something with his people.

The Dal loves attention and has a strong desire to please, so it's not unusual for him to excel in canine sports such as agility and flyball. He's also great at performing tricks – not surprising considering he was once a favorite circus dog.
If you can teach it, your Dal can do it.

It's important to Dalmatians to be part of the family. They like to be with their peole and know everything that's going on. What's the downside? That depends. If you're active and athletic, there might not be one. If you acquire your Dalmatians from a good breeder who will be there to serve as a resource and if you SOCIALIZE your Dal and TRAIN him with fun positive methods, he can be the perfect companion....as long as you don't think a little dog hair is a big issue.
Dalmatians shed.

A common joke among Dalmatian owners is that the breed sheds only twice a year, 6 months in the spring and 6 months in the winter. Dalmatian hairs are stiff and weave themselves into fabric and they're not easy to remove from clothing or furniture. Weekly brushing of the smooth, dense coat helps to remove the dead hairs before they land in the house, but you'll never be entirely free. On the upside, the Dal's coat isn't oily, so it doesn't have an odor and it sheds dirt easily. It is also soft and velvety to the touch and that makes up for a lot.

Like most dogs, Dalmatians become bored when left to their own devices. The can easily become noisy or destructive if they don't have other dogs to keep them company and don't receive enough attention from their people.
Last but not least, it should go without saying that a people-loving dog like the Dalmatian needs to live in the house. It's an unhappy Dalmatian who is relegated to the backyard with little or no human companionship.

Other Quick Facts

1. Because of their heritage as coaching dogs, Dalmatians get along well with horses and make good companions for riders.
2. The Dalmatians spots may be the result of a mutation in a gene for a ticked coat, but no one is really sure where they come from. The spots today are now larger and less ragged around the edges than those seen in pictures of early Dals.
3. One of the British nicknames for the Dalmatian is Plum Pudding dog because his spots look like the plums in a Christmas pudding.
4. The Dalmatian is prone to inherited Deafness & Urinary stones. (See info on LUA Dalmatians)
5. The Dalmatian was once a popular circus dog.



101 DALMATIANS

Is a Dalmatian right for you?

1. Dalmatians are VERY active. Poorly bred Dalmatians may be hyperactive.
2. Dalmatians are territorial. Poorly bred Dalmatians may be aggressive or fear-aggressive (bite or snap because they are afraid).
3. Dalmatians shed twice a year, six months in the spring and six months in the fall.
4. Dalmatians are family oriented and do not do well as back-yard or kennel dogs.
5. A Dalmatian that spends too much time left to his own devices may become a barker or a digger.
6. Dalmatians have a uric acid anomaly that may lead to the formation of urate stones. They do best on a lower protein, non-beef based food. Visit <http://www.thedca.org/stones.html> And educate yourself of this genetic disorder in ALL Dalmatians (other than NUA Dalmatians).
7. Dalmatians can be deaf. Responsible breeders will have hearing tested the puppies as well as the parents.
8. A Dalmatian can be unilateral hearing, that is, normal hearing in one ear and deaf in the other.
A unilateral Dalmatian is perfectly acceptable as a pet.
9. Dalmatians require early, motivational, consistent training. Puppy kindergarten and basic obedience are highly recommended.
10. Dalmatians can be independent thinkers and even when well-trained may occasionally offer a behavioral challenge.
11. Dalmatians require regular exercise so a fenced back-yard is an absolute necessity.
12. The activity level and size of a Dalmatian dictates that the breed is supervised when with children.
13. In general, Dalmatians do well with older, well-behaved children.
14. Dalmatians are very intelligent and quick to figure out ways to get their own way.
15. Dalmatians require early socialization with a wide variety of people and dogs.
Homes without children should borrow some (children) for socialization purposes.

Buying a puppy

16. Read items 1-15 several times.
17. Buy a puppy only from a reputable, responsible breeder.
18. Reputable breeders never sell through pet shops or any third party.
19. Reputable breeders will have proof of hearing testing on both parents and on the puppies.
20. Hearing testing, also called BAER (Brainstem Auditory Evoked Response) testing requires highly specialized equipment and is usually done at a veterinary school or by a veterinary neurology specialist.
(May not be available in all areas.)
21. Reputable breeders will have had the parents hips x-rayed and certified free of hip dysplasia (an often crippling malformation of the hip joint) by the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals or Penn-Hip. Ask for copies of certification.
22. Some breeders also screen for eye problems, thyroid problems, etc. These conditions rarely affect the Dalmatian breed.
23. Responsible breeders require that pet puppies be spayed or neutered no sooner than 9 – 12 months of age.
24. Reputable breeders will supply the buyer with detailed information on caring for their new Dalmatian puppy.
25. Reputable breeders will interview the prospective buyer at length.
26. Reputable breeders are usually active in dog shows, obedience trials, therapy dog work, breed rescue, etc.
27. A reputable breeder will require you to notify her if you are unable to keep the puppy and will want to approve any new home.
28. Reputable breeders are always willing to take a puppy back if the owner cannot or will not care for it.
This does not imply any return of money. Expenses from rehoming your Dal may be deducted from the price you paid.
29. Reputable breeders will always be there to help you with a problem.
30. A puppy from a reputable breeder is usually not significantly more expensive than from a back-yard breeder.
31. Reputable breeders will have given the puppies all preliminary puppy vaccinations and will have had them checked by a vet.
32. Reputable breeders will be willing to answer your questions.
33. Reputable breeders will have demonstrated a long-term commitment to the breed.
34. Reputable breeders will be members of the Dalmatian Club of Canada, a regional Dalmatian club, and or a

local all breed or obedience club.

35. A reputable breeder will outline all details of the sale in a written contract.
36. If you really want a Dalmatian but do not have time to go through puppyhood, consider an adult or a rescue Dalmatian.

Caring for your Dalmatian

37. Take your puppy to the vet as soon as possible after purchase for a thorough exam.
38. Buy a crate for housebreaking and for confining the puppy when you are not able to supervise it.
39. Socialize your new puppy with 100 people of all ages, sizes, and ethnic backgrounds before the pup reaches its 4 month birthday. Ask for the scavenger hunt challenge.
40. Socialize your new puppy with a variety of other dogs.
41. Enroll your puppy in puppy kindergarten and then follow up with basic obedience. Statistics show that well-trained dogs are far less likely to be given up for adoption by their owners.
42. Check out the trainer carefully. A Dalmatian does best with motivational training that relies on praise, treats, and toys.
43. Dalmatians resent harsh training methods and may react negatively.
44. Take the time to housebreak your puppy correctly.
45. Carefully supervise young children when they are playing with the puppy.
46. Rough handling will damage a puppy physically and mentally.
47. When playing games like tug-of-war do not let the puppy win.
48. Feed your puppy a premium quality puppy food not a generic brand.
49. Follow your breeder's advice on an acceptable brand of food.
50. Follow your breeder's advice on when to switch to an adult food. For the Dalmatian breed switch to an adult food at about 4-6 months of age.
51. Always confine your puppy in a securely fenced yard.
52. Always walk your puppy on lead.
53. Never allow your dog to eliminate on someone else's property.
54. Carry plastic bags to pick up any bowel movements.
55. Carry a pocket of treats for rewards.
56. Read some books on puppy training.
57. Spay/ neuter your puppy at the age your breeder recommends. . No sooner than 10 months of age as the pup require many of the related hormones for proper development of bones etc.
58. In addition to being foolproof birth control, spaying and neutering have health benefits.
59. Never leave your dog out at night.
60. Never allow your dog's barking to annoy the neighbours.
61. Never allow your dog to run at large in the neighbourhood.
62. Pick up dog droppings in your yard frequently.
63. Make sure your Dalmatian's shots are always up to date and that he has a county or city license.
64. Know where your Dalmatians tattoo or microchip is for identification. Transfer the chip into your name soon after bringing the pup home.
65. Make your Dalmatian a part of the family. Echo View does not sell pups for basements.
66. If you have a problem, contact the breeder.
67. Learn to trim your dogs' nails and do so at least every other week.
68. Learn to brush your dog's teeth and do so several times a week.
69. Make sure your dog is on heartworm preventive if necessary in your area.

Breeding a Dalmatian

70. Unless you have a thorough knowledge of the Dalmatian or have a mentor, Don't Breed!!! Ask a reputable breeder for help & advice!
71. All Dals intended for breeding should be BAER hearing tested.
72. Breeding unilateral hearing dogs is not a good idea. Deafness is hereditary.
73. All dogs intended for breeding should be certified free of hip dysplasia by the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals.
74. All dogs intended for breeding should ideally be checked free of eye disorders, thyroid problems, etc.

75. All dogs intended for breeding should have a thorough vet exam including a full blood panel.
76. All dogs intended for breeding should be checked for brucellosis which can cause the bitch to abort and may render a male sterile.
77. Stone formers should not be bred.
78. Dogs intended for breeding should be shown to their championship.
79. Dogs that have a disqualifying fault under the CKC standard for the Dalmatian should not be bred.
80. Shy or aggressive dogs should not be bred.
81. Breeding will not calm down a hyperactive dog. It may make her/him worse.
82. Be prepared to keep perhaps 10 or 11 puppies until suitable homes can be found even if it takes a year.
83. A bitch is not always willing to be bred and may attack the stud dog or the people handling the breeding.
84. Be prepared to take at least a week off work to be with the bitch when she whelps and to supervise the puppies for at least the first five days.
85. Be prepared for the possibility of an emergency Caesarean section that will cost hundreds of dollars.
86. Puppies can be born dead or deformed.
87. A bitch can have difficulty whelping a puppy and may bite anyone who tries to help.
88. Be prepared for the possibility of a bitch who cannot or will not care for the puppies. You will have to be the substitute mother.
89. Be aware that a bitch can die in whelp.
90. If you want to breed so your children can see the "miracle of birth", you should also plan to take them to the pound to watch puppies being euthanized because they were the products of irresponsible breeding and no homes can be found.
91. Be prepared to spend hours socializing puppies, feeding puppies, cleaning puppies, and cleaning the puppies' living quarters.
92. Be prepared to euthanize deformed puppies.
93. You will not make money on a litter of puppies. If you do everything right you will be lucky to break even.
94. Novice breeders rarely have buyers waiting for their puppies and it may take a long time to sell all the puppies.
95. You are responsible for the puppies for the rest of their lives. If the owner cannot or will not keep a puppy, you must be willing to take it back.
96. Males that are used at stud may forget their housebreaking training and "mark" your furniture.
97. Males that are used at stud may become more aggressive.
98. Males that are not neutered are far more likely to become escape artists.
99. Males that are not neutered are more prone to prostate problems.
100. The owner of the stud dog is just as responsible for the welfare of the puppies as is the owner of the bitch.

Above all,

101. A Dalmatian deserves a responsible owner who realizes he/she is making a lifetime commitment to the welfare of the dog.

Why Dalmatian Puppies Cost So Much!

I am a breeder. I spend a lifetime learning pedigrees, going over dogs, talking, and learning from those in my breed and those outside it. I raise each litter as if I gave birth to them and spend an equal amount of time finding them loving forever homes. I only put puppies on this planet that I think will be the healthiest (mentally and physically) and nicest examples of their breed. I support each family that chooses one of my puppies and let them know they are now a part of our extended family. I am there if one needs to come back and will aggressively pursue the return of one of my dogs if it's in the wrong place. I share my knowledge and socialize my dogs so that they will be the advertisement for my dedication. I don't keep track of the money or the time I put into my love of dogs, it would not be a true measure of myself. The price I charge for my puppies is never profit, but investment for the next generation. I am not ashamed of who I am....I work hard at being a good dog person and encourage others to be the same. I am an ethical breeder and I'm proud of it.

Demanding a Dalmatian, Results in a Demanding Dalmatian

The Disney movies, 101 and 102 Dalmatians, have children asking for a Dalmatian as a pet. Before you make any promises, find out the facts about these animals. Dalmatians are beautiful animals but they are definitely **not for everyone**. In fact, after the 101 Dalmatians movie, humane societies and rescue groups experienced a 25 per cent increase in Dalmatian surrenders six months to a year after the movie's release. Why? Because Dalmatians are very demanding dogs!

Facts About Dalmatians

If you want a calm, quiet dog look elsewhere. Comparatively, Dalmatians are a demanding dog breed. If you get one, prepare for your life to revolve around your dog – even more than the average dog!

Dalmatians were bred to run with coaches to serve as watchdogs and protectors. As a result, they have a high energy level requiring lots of exercise. Daily long walks/runs (1-2 hours a day is recommended) along with playtime in a fenced yard are essential.

If You Are Not An Avid Exerciser, Be Prepared to Become One

Without plenty of running every day Dalmatians can easily get bored. When bored they can be destructive. This is not a good dog breed if you are two-person working family unless you structure lots of exercise and attention for the dog throughout the day.

Even Dog Trainers Admit Dalmatians Can be Challenging

Dalmatians are quite smart but they can also be stubborn, making them more challenging to train. They require patience and diligence to train but are very trainable with the proper techniques.

Training and obedience classes are a must for Dalmatian guardians. The training is as much for the guardians as it is for the dog.

Dalmatians love to play and excel at play sports such as dog agility, tracking and flyball.

Yes They Love People, But Be Warned...

Dalmatians are people dogs and love kids, however, because of their exuberant nature and strength, they can appear rough with small children. Families with young children might want to wait until their kids a bit older, or look to another breed.

What's That, Did You Say Your Dalmatian Doesn't Seem to Listen?

He might need training but he could also be deaf. There are significant health issues common with Dalmatians. Between 25 and 30 per cent of all Dalmatians have a hearing impairment ranging from slight deafness in a single ear to complete deafness. Having a deaf dog requires an even greater commitment but it can be very rewarding. Breeders routinely euthanize completely deaf dogs, but hearing-impaired dogs are still sold.



Feed Them Special Food

Unless your Dalmatian is a LUA Dal, Dalmatians are the only breed that process protein in a special way. Unless special low- to medium-protein commercial dog food is fed to them, Dalmatians are prone to developing bladder stones – a condition that can be fatal.

Healthy Dalmatians tend to live a good life span of about 14 years.

Dalmatians have smooth coat requiring little grooming. However, they do shed constantly. They tend to have little or no odour. Because of their short, fine fur Dalmatians cannot be kept outdoors. Dalmatians do not have an undercoat.

If You Are Sure, Here Are Some Final Thoughts

Before you get a Dalmatian read as much as possible and talk to other Dalmatian guardians, SPCA representatives, and Dalmatian Rescue groups before you adopt. Ask specifically about the negative qualities as well as the positive. Visit reputable breeders.

Stay away from pet store Dalmatians because workers often have little or no knowledge of the animal's parents and may not be knowledgeable about the breed's background. Also, the puppies may not be socialized as they are often separated from their parents at a young age in a rush to get them in the pet store while they are still cute puppies!

No doubt unscrupulous backyard dog breeders will be trying to cash in of the Disney movie's popularity.

So beware!

A good breeder will be questioning your knowledge and will not place the dog unless they are satisfied you will be a good guardian.

If they don't ask you questions then they must care little about their animals.

A good breeder will also guarantee the health and temperament of the dog.

Trust your instincts.

If there is something that bothers you, look elsewhere.

Supporting pet shops and back yard breeders leads to more animals born with health and behaviour problems, and often these animals end up unwanted and difficult to place in new homes.



Prince....a long haired Dalmatian.

SHORT HISTORY OF THE DALMATIAN

No breed has a more interesting background or a more disputed heritage than that dog from long ago, the Dalmatian. His beginning is buried so deep in the past that researchers cannot agree as to his origin. As to the great age of the breed, and the fact that it has come through many centuries unchanged, investigators are in complete agreement.

Models, engravings, paintings, and writings of antiquity have been used with fair excuse but no certainty to claim the spotted dog first appeared in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Perhaps some of the divergences in opinion as to the original home of the Dalmatian can be accounted for by the fact that the dog has frequently been found in bands of Romanies, and that like his gypsy masters, he has been well known but not located definitely in any one place. Authoritative writers place him first as a positive entity in Dalmatia, a province of Austria on the Eastern shore of the coast of Venice. Though he has been accredited with a dozen nationalities and has as many native names -- he is nick named by the English, the English Coach Dog, the Carriage Dog, the Plum Pudding Dog, the Fire House Dog and Spotted Dick -- it is from his first proved home that he takes his correct name, The Dalmatian. We find references to him as Dalmatian in the middle eighteenth century. There is no question whatsoever that his lineage is as ancient and his record as straight as that of other breeds.

His activities have been as varied as his reputed ancestors. He has been a dog of war, a sentinel on the borders of Dalmatia and Croatia. He has been employed as draft dog, as shepherd. He is excellent on rats and vermin. He is well known for his heroic performances as fire-apparatus follower and firehouse mascot. As a sporting dog he has been used as bird dog, as trail hound, as retriever, or in packs for boar or stag hunting. His retentive memory has made him one of the most dependable clowners in circuses and on the stage. Down through the years the intelligence and willingness of the Dalmatian have found him in practically every role to which useful dogs are assigned. Most important among his talents has been his status as the original, one-and-only coaching dog.

The imaginative might say that his coaching days go back to an engraving of a spotted dog following an Egyptian chariot! Even the practical minded will find no end of proof, centuries old, of the Dalmatian, with ears entirely cropped away and padlocked brass collar, plying his natural trade as follower and guardian of the horse-drawn vehicle.

He is physically fit for roadwork. In his makeup, speed and endurance are blended to a nicety. His gait has beauty of motion and swiftness, and he has the strength, vitality, and fortitude to keep going gaily till the journey's end. The instinct for coaching is bred in him, born in him, and trained in him through the years. The Dalmatian takes to a horse as a horse takes to him, and that is to say, like a duck to water. He may work in the old way, clearing the path before the Tally Ho with dignity and determination, or following on with his ermine spottings in full view to add distinction to an equipage. He may coach under the rear axle, the front axle, or most difficult of all, under the pole between the leaders and the wheelers. Wherever he works, it is with the lover of the game in his heart and with the skill that has won him the title of the only recognized carriage dog in the world. His penchant for working is his most renowned characteristic, but it in no way approaches his capacity for friendship.

There is no dog more picturesque than this spotted fellow with his slick white coat gaily decorated with clearly defined round spots of jet black, or in the liver variety, deep brown. He does not look like any other breed, for his markings are peculiarly his own. He is strong-bodied, clean-cut, colourful and distinctive. His flashy spottings are the culmination of ages of careful breeding.

His aristocratic bearing does not belie him, for the Dalmatian is first of all a gentleman. He is quiet chap, and the ideal guard dog, distinguishing nicely between barking for fun or with a purpose. His courtesy never fails with approved visitors, but his protective instinct is highly developed and he has the courage to defend. As a watchdog he is sensible and dependable. He is not everyone's dog -- no casual admirer will break his polite reserve, for he has a fine sense of distinction as to whom he belongs. Fashion has not distorted the Dalmatian. He is born pure white, develops quickly and requires no cropping, docking, stripping or artifices of any sort. He is extremely hardy, and easy keeper, suited to any climate. He requires only the minimum of care, for he is sturdy and neat and clean.



LIVING WITH A DAL

Anyone contemplating buying a Dalmatian puppy should be aware of a number of things concerning these dogs. It is always a good idea to learn as much as possible about any breed before acquiring a puppy.

A good Dal puppy will grow to a sturdy, well-muscled dog, one that is able to keep going on the road or in the field for hours on end. The dog will have a trusting attitude toward you, its master, and will present a reserved manner toward strangers. After it has been introduced to the stranger it will be friendly and loving. Some Dalmatians smile. It is necessary to determine that the dog is smiling and not snarling. The entire attitude of the smiling Dalmatian is quite different from that of a dog that is daring you to approach one-step nearer. The uninitiated person may be unable to tell the difference and thus will fear your dog. The Dalmatian has great ability to guard and protect its own property. The breed was developed to guard. It is willing to learn if you don't push it. Pushed, it can seem quite stupid. It will become a member of your family, so it behooves anyone acquiring a puppy to train it properly. It cannot know what you want it to do unless you teach it.

Training a Dalmatian for Obedience work is a little more strenuous than training it to be a good housedog. Many organizations offer puppy kindergarten classes that will introduce your dog to other dogs and to simple behavior patterns----all of which are useful in the home.

When you acquire your puppy you will want to establish certain patterns in its life. Start as soon as possible to make a habit of these things so that as your dog grows it will expect them.

Grooming a Dalmatian is the simplest thing in the world. If you have a pet Dalmatian the important thing is to keep it brushed. Dalmatians shed. Some people believe that only the white hairs are shed, never the black or liver. Actually, this is simply myth. Try wearing a pair of white pants! A jokester once quipped that "Dalmatians" shed only twice a year, every morning and every night. Brushing will keep the shedding down.

Running a dog on concrete at all times will spoil the development of the foot. If you jog with your Dal, make sure to jog on a grassy area. Concrete is also hard on the joints and can cause stiffness and soreness. Do not run a young pup for long periods of time.

Toenails should be cut or ground down with a dremel (my preference) on a regular basis whether the dog is a pet or a show prospect. If the nails are allowed to grow long, the feet will splay and the toes will become very sore.

In cutting toenails, if you start the process at an early age and do it regularly you will not have problems. Putting the dog up on a grooming table or something higher than it is used to will help in making it behave for the cutting process.

The quick is retractable and keeps moving back when the nails are properly cared for. Have a container of "Quick Stop" (available at most pet supply shops) to stop the bleeding if you cut too deep. With a dremel the nail will not bleed as it will cauterize the quick. To smooth the nails some people use a sandpaper disk on the end of a power hair clipper.

Other than giving your dog a bath from time to time with a quality dog shampoo, brushing it well and keeping it in good health so that it is not plagued by skin problems, there is little more to do than to train it to be a good companion.

Exercise is important. If at all possible, move your dog for a mile or so each day at a given easy pace. Too fast for you to keep up? Try using a bicycle.

Swimming is good for a Dal, but you have to be careful not to overdo this form of exercise. Loaded shoulders can be the result.

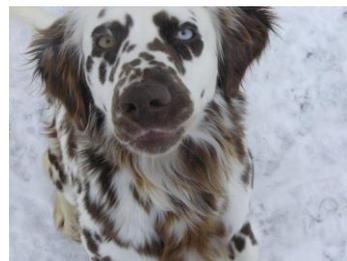
There are a few ailments that can befall all dogs, including the Dalmatian. The Dal is subject to skin troubles that crop up from time to time. Much of the pinking that occurs on Dals is diagnosed as skin allergy. Many people refer to this as "grass allergy." Whatever causes the rash or pinking probably has more to do with the general metabolism of the dog than with grass.

The Dalmatian has a urinary system that is rare in canines. The Dal is the only breed of dog whose urine stops short of forming urea or allantoin and produces, instead, uric acid. This peculiarity causes bladder and kidney stones in Dalmatians. Too many dogs are lost to this condition. Sometimes a stone will be lodged in the urethra and cause great pain. Other times "gravel" will be passed in the urine. Sometimes, in acute cases, the stones will pile up and completely block the passage from the bladder; this situation will require surgical removal of the stones.

A diet, which contains no purine protein, is necessary for the breed. Talk to your veterinary and breeder on different types of dog foods. Much research is being done in these areas and it is hoped that a cure will be found in the near future.



A Lemon spotted Dal.



A Long Haired Liver Spotted Dal.

DALMATIAN DISCRPTION

Dalmatians are medium-sized, short-coated dogs. The preferred size is between 19 and 24 inches at the shoulder. Weight ranges from 40 to 70 pounds. Females are generally smaller than males. Today, many Dalmatians are much larger than the accepted breed standard. Males can be seen as large as 27 inches and weigh 90 pounds. In Great Britain, Dalmatians are usually larger than in the States & Canada.

The Dalmatian is built for long distance endurance. It is well muscled, without being coarse, with a capacious, deep chest. The coat is quite short and predominantly white with distinctive round spots in either black or liver (brown). The spots range in diameter from the size of a dime to the size of a half-dollar. Some Dalmatians have one or more 'patches'. These are large unbroken areas of black or liver, which are silkier in texture. Although the spots are already present as skin spots at birth, Dalmatians are born with pure white fur, unless patched. These patches are silky large areas of black or liver. Patches disqualify a Dal from the conformation show ring, but have no impact on the dog's quality as a pet. Many pet owners find patches to be very attractive. Other disqualifying faults are tri colours and lemons. Tri colouration is where both black and liver spots exist on the same dog. Lemon spotting is a faded beige or orange beige colouration.

CHARACTERISTICS AND TEMPERAMENT

The Dalmatian is an **active, energetic** dog that enjoys **lots** of exercise. Dalmatians are people-like and people oriented. They do best when given the opportunity to spend lots of time with and around their families. Dalmatians are rather sensitive, too - they can sulk when scolded, and "talk" up a storm when they're happy or want your attention. If a Dal is what you crave; be prepared to make him a part of your life, both outdoors and indoors. Dals love to play... and play... especially as youngsters. Bred to run for hours under, or alongside the axle of a horse drawn coach, most Dals do not tire easily. However, they do poorly as full time outdoor dogs. Their sensitive skin and short hair does not allow them to handle weather extremes well, and they will pick up fungi from moist soil and grass; not to mention fleas and ticks. Carefully bred, Dalmatians are 'up' dogs, as bold as their unique spotting exemplifies! They are the clowns of Dogdom. But parents with small children (under 6 years) should be aware that Dals are very exuberant and will want to consider their potential reaction when the dog accidentally knocks a child down. Mind you, small children must be taught not to poke at eyes or pull tails; both Dal and child need to learn proper behavior! Because of their intelligent and exuberant nature, early obedience training is essential for Dalmatians. Dals usually get on well with other dogs and are great in multi pet households. It is desirable to socialize puppies with children, adults, and other dogs

from an early age. Dals can also get along splendidly with cats if introduced appropriately. A well-bred Dalmatian may be aloof with strangers, but never shy or aggressive. Once they get to know a stranger, that person may be treated to the full-toothed smile or 'smarl' - a combination of a smile and a snarl that can be disarming to one unfamiliar with the ways of a Dal! Dals can also be very vocal. They coo and grunt and will give you a whistling yawn when attempting to avoid a scolding! As former guard dogs, Dalmatians make good watchdogs. Sensible and alert, they are usually not hysterical 'yappers' but will bark only when necessary.

Are Dalmatians stupid! Definitely not. On the contrary, they are extremely intelligent and creative! They are often smart enough to recognize a situation where the owner is unable or unwilling to enforce a command. They are often headstrong. If you do not give them consistent, firm training and boundaries as puppies, you will wind up with an unmanageable adult. Dalmatians may also be easily bored. Makes, in particular, may have an independent streak. For these reasons, Dalmatians often respond best to more positive training methods, as opposed to methods, which rely primarily on scolding and telling the dog what not to do.

DALMATIAN ACTIVITIES

The CKC has placed Dalmatians into the "Non-Sporting" group. Breeds with assorted 'talents' are placed in this selective group. Dalmatians have been used as hunting dogs, as soft mouthed retrievers, as pointers, herding and even as watch dogs. During both World Wars and during Vietnam, Dals were used to guard the camps of US soldiers. Dalmatians are also excellent tracking and Search and Rescue dogs. Their strong 'scenting' tendencies can be traced back to the introduction of the white Pointer, far back in the Dalmatian's lineage. In keeping with their early utilization as carriage dogs, Dalmatians have earned the titles of Road Dog (RD) and Road Dog Excellent (RDX) from the Dalmatian Club of America. Road trials are held in conjunction with the National Specialty and with some other regional Dalmatian Club Specialties. The Road Dog titles are earned by dogs that accompany horses or carriages for distances of 12.5 miles (RD) and 25 miles (RDX) and perform some off leash obedience work. Competitors need not be members of these clubs. In fact most are pet owners who enjoy working with horses and their dogs. Dalmatians also can do well in obedience competition, when given positive training. Some folds say that to own a Dal requires a sense of humor; which certainly helps in obedience competition! Many Dals successfully complete their Companion Dog (CD) and Companion Dog Excellent (CDX) Obedience degrees; some also have completed Utility Dog (UD) and Utility Dog Excellent (UDX) degrees and a few have completed Obedience Trial Champion (OTCH) degrees as well. Obedience training methods that work best with the Dalmatian minimize repetition and maximize variety. Dals get bored easily and will then begin to *modify* the exercise to introduce some excitement! Dals do not generally respond well to harsh, inflexible training methods. Praise, play and food reinforcement ensure better results. Dalmatians also enjoy agility as it suits their athletic natures. They make excellent hiking and backpacking dogs. Many Dals

are talented fly ball and Frisbee retrievers since these skill add a bit of whimsy and 'theatre' to their repertoire.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is it spelled Dalmatian or Dalmation! I've seen it both ways.

It is spelled DalmatiAn, with no O - named after the province of Dalmatia.

Do Dalmatians shed?

Yes. Dalmatians shed lots of hair year round. Their stiff short hairs cling to most surfaces and weave their way into fabrics making them difficult to remove. Giving the dog a brisk five-minute daily brushing can reduce shedding. Giving the Dal fish oil sometimes helps also.

How much grooming is required for a Dalmatian?

Dalmatians are natural dogs, cat like in cleanliness and free of doggy odor. Their toenails should be kept trimmed, as they grown rapidly. Long nails are understandably uncomfortable for any dog. Dals may object to having their nails trimmed, unless they are trained early. But it must be done. Frequent brushing helps to keep them clean without disturbing their protective skin oils. During their daily brushing, check eyes and ears for irritation. Also, during warm weather check for fleas and ticks while outdoors. Frequent bathing, especially with harsh soaps can lead to dry skin and skin problems. Most Dals clean up well with a damp towel or the use of a plain gentle soap. Be sure to rinse well, as soapy residue will irritate the skin. Ask your vet to show you how to empty the anal sacks. This procedure should be done whenever you bathe you Dal in order to avoid infection.

How much exercise is required?

Here is a report from one Dalmatian owner: "In addition to plenty of play time in the yard, we walk our Dalmatian, Chili, three times daily - in the morning, at dinnertime and before bed. It adds up to about two miles." Another owner says: "In the summer they get about three miles a day, come winter I will have to increase this to about five miles." Dal owners must take an active part in exercising their dogs; having a fenced yard is not enough - they will not usually get enough exercise themselves. Long walks are not the only way to provide the exercise required; another canine playmate can help, or playing fetch in the yard can also serve as the major portion of their exercise. But do keep in mind, that as important as exercise is the quality time a Dal spends with his human family. As much as a Dalmatian needs exercise, dogs under a year should self-exercise with a doggy or human playmate. When doing so, the youngster will stop to rest when tired. Allow your Dal to exercise on soft ground (grass or dirt) rather than asphalt or concrete, when young. Exercising on soft ground is a good idea even as an adult.

What kind of food should I feed my Dalmatian?

There are as many brand preferences as there are Dalmatian breeders, but there are some generalizations that can be made. We and other breeders have had good success with premium dry type foods (Pro Plan, Nutro, Eagle, Nature's Recipe etc.) because they contain high quality ingredients like real meats instead of meat meal and because they minimize the amount of purines, corn meal, soy meal, meat by-products and preservatives. The dogs seems to make better use of the premium brand foods, therefore generating less fecal waste. Dalmatians do not generally require canned dog food, however, it is sometimes useful in encouraging the finicky eater, and those Dals are few and far between. Do not feed your Dal foods with 'cute' colours and shapes as these require additives and may cause or aggravate skin allergy conditions and can turn your dog the color of the food.

Should I give my Dalmatian 'People food?'

Dals love most foods. In fact it is a very effective training method to reward good behavior with food. Human food may be OK, in VERY small amounts. Always avoid foods high in purines, such as liver or other organ meats. Avoid chocolate, which can be toxic to dogs. Remember that people food has calories too!

How often should my Dalmatian be fed?

Dalmatians usually eat very quickly and most seem to be always hungry, and as a result do not do well with self-feeding. This can lead to overweight dogs with higher incidence of medical problems later in life. Adult Dals should be fed twice a day, from three to six cups total, depending on their weight and activity level. Some adult females do well on as little as two cups of food per day. Most puppies do best with three to four smaller daily servings.

Your breeder should tell you how often and how much they were feeding when you pick up your puppy.

Do Dalmatians make good apartment dogs?

Don't be put off, apartment dwellers - you can still have a Dal in your life if you're willing (and able) to walk your Dal during the week and have access to an open area where he can be set loose (provided he is off-lead trained) to let out steam and blow out the cob-webs on weekends. Make friends with dog owners who have fenced yards! A Dalmatian looks great trotting alongside a bicycle - think of the attention you'll attract while you both stay fit. Your Dal will enjoy and benefit from long daily walks.

Are Dalmatians hyper?

Most Dals are very active and if they are ignored or not exercised enough they can become high strung. Obedience training is extremely important in order that the Dal learn boundaries and do that what is expected of him. Poorly bred Dalmatians may be genetically predisposed to having excessive hyperactive or even neurotic behavior.

What should I look for when selecting a puppy?

The increased popularity of the breed following Disney's "101 Dalmatians" has had a largely negative effect. Too many people saw money in Dals and began breeding with no

thought about stable temperaments, or of improving the breed. Let the breeder know your lifestyle, for most times they are better able to select the right puppy for you. If possible, spend time with the puppies and watch their activities. In an hour of watching the puppies you should be able to tell which puppy is dominant, aggressive or shy. This is something that the breeder can tell you if you are unable to visit.

Should I adopt an adult dog?

Because Dalmatians can take three to four years to mentally mature, uneducated or “untrained” owners may put adolescent or adult Dals up for adoption whom were too much form them to handle. In addition, retired show dogs, and adolescents who do not ‘pan out’ for the show ring sometimes become available from very good breeders. These dogs make excellent pets as they’ve been trained from an early age on basic obedience. Contact your local humane society, Dalmatian Rescue and your local kennel club about Dals in need of a home or breeders. Adopting an adult dog can be very rewarding. Be sure to ask the owners for a medical history. Do inquire about the reason why the dog is being placed. Remember that it is harder to retrain than it is to train especially a dog with bad habits. Be prepared to spend the extra time required to gain the trust and positive behavior you desire.

Although Dalmatians tend to be very loyal to their owners, it does not take them long to realize whom their adopted owners are. Dalmatians are very good ‘people psychologists.’ Be consistent and firm, yet gentle, and the rewards will far exceed your efforts!

Do Dals like to swim?

Dals are usually good swimmers who love the water if introduced gently at an early age. If your Dal swims a lot, pay attention to his ears. Wet ears can trigger a painful ear infection. We give our Dals a heaping tablespoon of Yogurt everyday!

Do Dalmatians do well in colder climates?

Dalmatians should get lots of outdoor time for both physical and emotional reasons. They should **not** be left out in the cold for long periods. A Dalmatian will enjoy short periods out in the snow and ice, but should be brought in when it gets cold.

Is obedience training recommended for Dals?

Dalmatian breeders either require or highly recommend that each owner bring their dog through basic obedience classes. Dalmatians have minds of their own, and like children, they tend to see how much they can get away with, while testing the boundaries of behavior. Basic obedience training will allow you and your dog to bond together and will assist you in setting house rules. It will also make your walks with you dog much more enjoyable. Most breeders and dog clubs will be able to recommend a

good trainer. You can expect most classes to cost less than \$60.00 for a session.

Should I crate train my Dalmatian?

Many people think it is cruel to keep a dog in a crate even for reasonable amounts of time. However, when properly trained, a Dal sees his crate as his space, his own room. Due to the highly active and easily bored nature of the typical Dal, it is not a good idea to give your Dal free run of the house in your absence. Most breeders recommend that your Dal be crate trained in order to protect your valuables and to protect the dog. Crate training is also an excellent beginning to house training. Fresh water should be supplied to Dals at all times, even when they are crated. They should not be crated over long periods of time, since concentration of urine could lead to stone formation. For adult Dalmatians 8 to 10 hours is the longest amount of time that they should be crated on a regular basis. Puppies should be given the opportunity to relieve themselves every 2 to 3 hours, gradually increasing until they are 6 months old to 6 to 8 hours.

Should I consider breeding my Dalmatian?

There is the unique Dalmatian problem of deafness, and breeding Dalmatians brings the added responsibility of dealing with deaf puppies. The Canadian Kennel Club and the Dalmatian Club of America’s position, supported by reputable breeders is that all deaf pups be humanely euthanized, not placed in homes. If you decide to breed your Dal, you must be prepared and able to deal with the consequences of whelping a deaf puppy and having it euthanized. In addition, should you decide to breed, make sure that you know the hearing status of both the sire and dam. Plan also to do a complete thyroid workup. Since genetic defects are passed on to the offspring, both parents should be excellent breed specimens, reasonably free of genetic defects.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE DECIDING ON A DALMATIAN PUP (Is the Dalmatian the breed for me?)

1. Am I able to keep the dog indoors?
2. Am I willing to spend at least one hour a day exercising the dog?
3. Do I want a dog that is very dependent on me?
4. Am I willing to spend the time necessary to train the dog?
5. Am I willing to spend time playing with the dog?
6. Am I willing to put up with the shedding?
7. Am I physically strong and active enough to control and train a lively dog of considerable strength and energy?
8. Have all my household members recently spent time indoors with a Dalmatian to be certain no one has an allergic reaction to them?

DEAFNESS IN DALMATIANS



Next to smell, hearing is the dog's most acute sense. The dog hears sounds two octaves higher (60 kHz) and five times as far away as man can. The earflaps raise and open and swivel homing in on the source. Following this the head turns until the intensity of sound reaching each ear is equalized and the dog is facing the point of origin. If he then cannot locate the focus of his attention visually, he will cock his head to one side causing the ears to be closer together and unobstructed by the muzzle. By this means, it is said that the dog can discriminate between sound sources and little as one degree apart.

To discuss deafness in the Dalmatian, it is helpful to describe the anatomy of the dog's ear. The hearing apparatus is subdivided into three parts: the outer, middle and inner ear. In the outer ear the sound is concentrated by a cone of the raised earflap and passes down the ear canal to the eardrum. The middle ear is an air space that contains three small bones and the two muscles, which modify and amplify the vibrations picked up by the drum and pass them on to the 'window' of the inner ear. This final part comprises three liquid-filled tubes wound around themselves for $2\frac{3}{4}$ turns (the COCHLEA,) looking very much like the shell of a snail. The waves of sound go through the first tube right to the tip of the spiral and then through the third tube and retrace this course until they return, almost extinguished, to the middle ear. The sound-detecting second tube lies between the first and third and contains within its cavity a delicate membrane, which when moved by passing sound waves, rubs against minute nerve ending called hair cells. The pattern of movement along the coiled tubes enables the auditory nerve and the brain to distinguish between different pitches and intensities of incoming sound.

The inner ear is so designed that the highest pitched sound is both detected and suppressed first. Thus when the general function of the organ fails, "high frequency deafness: appears first. So it is with old age, deafness in man and the hereditary deafness in Dalmatians. Reviewing the above, it is obvious that deafness can occur in dozens of different ways. Early studies of deafness in the Dalmatian did not point to any one of the many possible causes. A study by Dr. Lars Johnson in 1967 however, used new and special techniques and was able to demonstrate that the minute blood vessels (striae vascularis) supplying the hair cell were the cause of the trouble. As a result of this work, we know that the Dalmatian is not born deaf. In fact, the inner ear in most cases is fully developed. This implies that if the cause of the failure of the striave vascularis can be isolated, there may in the future be a preventative treatment that could be applied around the time of birth.

Puppy's ears will usually 'open' about the same time as the eyes (10 to 14 days.) However, cases have been reported of puppies not hearing until the sixth week. Despite external appearances, puppies do not begin to hear until 21 days old when the first startle responses can be elicited. As mentioned previously, the genetics of hereditary deafness are uncertain, but it is most likely to be hereditary and should be eradicated from breeding stock.

A puppy, which is deaf in both ears, exhibits the following symptoms:

1. He is last to leave the litter box.
2. He barks at a different pitch or barks incessantly.
3. He shows failure to blink, alert or raise his ears when a sudden sound out of his field of vision occurs for the first time.
4. He cannot be wakened unless he is touched.
5. He does not respond to your voice if you are in a different room.
6. He may appear stupid, vicious, shy, naughty or spooky because he cannot respond appropriately to sounds.

Of course you will be concerned if your pup shows these signs after the 4th week and will want to test him.

Remember:

1. All test sounds should be given outside the pup's field of vision and when he is alone and thus not set off by his hearing littermates.
2. Repeated sounds are not a good Test because pups will pay no attention to them once they find out they are not associated with pain or pleasure.
3. Even if deaf, he can detect the vibrations or stamping or door slamming without the use of his ears.

Studies show that as many as 1 in 4 pups may have a hearing defect of a varying degree. If your dog is deaf mainly in one ear, then he will merely have directional deafness and will show this by failure to accurately pinpoint the source of sounds.

Partially deaf Dalmatians have proved themselves in obedience and other canine sports.

Breeders are wise the test their litters for deaf puppies.

It is very heartbreaking for a buyer to lose their puppy to an accident, all because the dog couldn't hear his master's voice.



Deafness (partial or total hearing loss) can have a number of causes. It can be acquired - caused by trauma, high fever, drug reactions, etc, or deafness can be congenital (present at birth). Congenital deafness can be acquired; due to intrauterine infections, liver disorders, or toxic exposure before or shortly after birth, or congenital deafness can be inherited.

Hereditary congenital deafness is a rare condition in the general purebred dog population. There are however approximately 40 breeds (with more being reported) that have reported incidences of this condition.

This is a short list of Dog breeds with reported incidence of congenital deafness there are many more with this problem.

Akita	Great Dane	Cocker Spaniel	Pointer
American Staffordshire Terrier	Great Pyrenees	Collie	Rhodesian Ridgeback
Australian Cattle Dog	Ibizan Hound	Dalmatian	Rottweiler
Australian Heeler	Kuvasz	Dappled Dachshund	Scottish Terrier
Beagle	Maltese	Doberman Pinscher	Sealyham Terrier
Border Collie	Miniature Poodle	Dogo Argentino	Shetland Sheepdog
Boston Terrier	mixed breeds	English Bulldog	Shropshire Terrier
Bulldog	Norwegian Dunkerhound	English Setter	Walker American Foxhound
Bull Terrier	Old English Sheepdog	Foxhound	West Highland White Terrier
Catahoula Leopard Dog	Papillon	Fox Terrier	

Congenital deafness is not exclusive to these breeds. It has the potential to appear in any dog breed. At the present time, congenital deafness appears to have a higher incidence of occurrence in association with the presence of the merle and piebald coat genes, within certain breeds.

Deafness can occur unilaterally (one ear normal, one ear deaf), or deaf in both ears. Detecting deafness in a unilateral dog can be difficult, however, there is a test called the BAER (Brainstem Auditory Evoked Response) test, which will measure and record hearing loss.

If you are considering purchasing a puppy from one of the affect dog breeds, deal only with a reputable dog breeder who has the BAER testing performed on the puppies.



THYROID DEFICIENCY (HYPOTHYROIDISM)

Hypothyroidism is the condition resulting from an inadequate (low) production of usable hormones by the thyroid gland. Mild hypothyroidism is a common cause of skin and hair abnormalities. Thyroid issues are not common in Dalmatian.

The following is a list of symptoms that may present. Some dogs will show only one symptom, some will show numerous symptoms, and others will show no symptoms at all.

1. Hair condition changes - hair can get dry and brittle, falls out to the touch.
2. Hair loss - usually starting at the back of the ears, can also appear under the throat and down the thighs.
3. Mottled coat - hair thin over ribs, normal down backbone and shoulders, thin under the neck and belly.
4. Dry flaky cool skin - no matter how often you bathe or comb your dog it has scaly skin with large flakes all the time. The belly skin feels slippery and cool to the touch.
5. Skin infection - secondary staphylococcus infection, skin infection characterized by small pustules most often on head and torso. Sometimes called "puppy acne."
6. Gains weight - in comparison with littermates puppy is eating much less than the others - yet maintains good weight. Dog is eating much less than would be considered "normal" for his age and either maintains weight or becomes overweight.
7. Lethargy - you will either notice that your dog is sleeping more and more or that a dog is sleeping much more than would be expected for a dog his age.
8. Heat cycle irregularity - in mature dogs the heat cycle can be too short, or too long, very irregular, or cease entirely to come. In young bitches hypothyroidism can cause an adolescent not to achieve first heat at a standard age.
9. Fatigues easily - will run and play hard for a short period of time and then is either asleep or resting when his littermates or other dogs are still playing.
10. Infertility - in bitches can cause only a few eggs to be released resulting in small litters; in dogs can cause low sperm count again resulting in small litters, or can cause total sterility in either sex.
11. Reduced sex drive - males can show little to no interest in receptive bitches.
12. Inconsistent Bowel Movements - dog can exhibit prolonged diarrhea, or prolonged constipation, or erratically bouncing between constipated or diarrhetic; never achieving "normal."
13. Climatic sensitivity - dog exhibits discomfort from temperature extremes. Suffering on hot days, snuggling the heater on cold days.
14. Excessive skin pigmentation - spots on the groin or belly, spots can be light or dark.

A complete blood serum thyroid panel (T3,T4,freeT3,freeT4) is the only way to be assured that the dog does not have a thyroid deficiency problem. This is particularly important in breeds with a higher incidence of thyroid deficiency.

Treatment is available for thyroid deficiency, consisting of a thyroid replacement therapy (pills). Generally within 3 day of the beginning of treatment the dog's appetite will begin to return to normal. Within 2 weeks the skin scaling will decrease and the coat will be less dry. Hair growth can take 90-120 days to return to normal.

Warning : Once thyroid replacement therapy has begun, the dog is on treatment for life. Do not put a dog on thyroid replacement medication without a thyroid screening indicating that replacement is necessary - symptoms may clear, but you could be masking over a far more serious medical problems.

Diet can also impact your dog's thyroid. A diet high in usable protein and fairly low in fat is recommended. At present thyroid deficiency is suspected of being inherited. Recent studies have shown that mother's on thyroid replacement therapy and stabilized at normal levels prior to conception can and do produce normal offspring. Thyroid deficiency may not be eliminated - but with proper treatment many types of thyroid related disorders can be drastically reduced.



A long haired, Black spotted Dal
doing Agility.

URINARY STONE FORMING IN DALMATIAN

Reading this is VERY important!

LUA Dalmatians do not suffer from Urate crystals and/or stones.

see following article

Dalmatians, Bulldogs and many other breeds can form urinary stones. Innumerable stone-forming dogs, Dalmatians included, live out their lives happily and uneventfully without any sign that they are stone-formers according to US veterinary centers specializing in urinary stone problems. Other Dalmatians also never show any symptoms, may not be stone-formers at all.

Most dogs that exhibit symptoms of stone forming can be easily and successfully treated. Veterinary knowledge of canine urinary stones and their non-surgical treatment has expanded rapidly within recent years. Today, there are even two national veterinary centers specializing in urinary stones.

The best *preventatives* for stone forming in Dalmatians are those of diet and probably of water intake. Paralleling the splendid advances of many special dog foods for this problem has also evolved. Most of these are readily available at local pet stores, others by prescription. After being weaned from the mandatory puppy diet, maturing and adult Dalmatians (stone formers or not) can be fed now from a choice of non beef, non meat dog foods (such as vegetable and rice or turkey and barley) and go their entire lives without the onset of urinary stones. In others, stones already formed can be non-surgically and successfully dissolved with certain medications and prescription anti stone forming dog food from the veterinarian. For the few for whom bladder surgery is unavoidable, modern anesthetics such as Isoflurane for dogs provide neither more threatening nor complex a procedure than appendix removals in humans.

WHY DO SOME DALMATIANS FORM URATE STONES?

Dalmatians, humans and apes are unique for the way in they metabolizes "purine yielding foods." Not every human will form urinary stones and neither will every Dalmatian.

In the 'normal course' of digestion a dog's liver converts uric acid to allantoin. The Dalmatian is the exception to this 'normal course.' Their system does not fully convert uric acid, thus all Dalmatians are susceptible to urinary (urate) stones.

The level of dietary purine protein in the dog's food greatly affects the concentration of uric acid. Therefore, meats such as liver and beef should be avoided by Dal owners. Dals should also have water provided at ALL TIMES! Frequent drinking and opportunities to urinate will help flush the urinary tract of the crystals. Periodic veterinary screening of urine samples can also aide in preventing this condition from becoming fatal.

It is not the amount of dietary protein contributing to the problem so much as the type of protein and for many Dalmatians, those diets containing high amounts of purine yielding foods. Certain foods such as liver and other organ meats are very high as purine yielders. When some humans ingest foods high in purines, they develop gout or kidney stones. When some Dalmatians ingest those foods, they develop urinary stones and in particular those known as "urine" or "urate" stones. Dog foods containing high amounts of meat, beef and meat or beef by products should be carefully evaluated for Dalmatians as well as other formulations creating abnormally high acidic urine. Of all stone forming Dalmatians, the vast majority form urate stones but a few may form other types. Treatment can be the exact opposite for each type of stone so your veterinarian will want to first obtain an accurate assay in order to prescribe the most effective treatment.

FEEDING MOST TYPES OF HUMAN TABLE SCRAPS TO DOGS IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE WORST DISSERVICES TO THEIR NORMAL GOOD HEALTH...ESPECIALLY TO DALMATIANS!

Urate stones are composed of one or several of three types of purines: 1) ammonium acid urate, 2) uric acid or 3)-sodium urate. Over 90 percent of stone forming Dalmatians produce ammonium acid urate, a purine stone very responsive to simple non-surgical treatment with a conscientious program of anti urate medication and anti urate diet.

Urinary stones in dogs are found in the upper system (such as in the kidneys.) or in the lower system (such as in the bladder.) Data collected over 10 years of stone forming Dalmatians showed 97 percent of their stones were found in the bladders where treatment and maintenance is much more simple and successful than for those in the kidneys and upper system.

The most common type of stone in all breeds of dogs is "struvite," so identified with urinary infections they are called "infection stones." The treatment of infections stones vs. urate stones is totally different and underscores the importance, for first, accurate assay of the type of urinary stone being formed by the Dalmatian before treatment is started.

HOW IS A STONE FORMER DETECTED?

A standard urinalysis will immediately show if abnormal crystals are forming in the urine long before the crystals "grow up" to become stones, which then may reach a size large enough to create the dreaded urinary obstruction.

If no diagnostic tests have ever been done to reveal its presence, stone forming in male dogs will produce emergency symptoms more obviously than in females perhaps because of the marked difference in their normal urinary anatomy. As a large enough stone travels down the urinary pathway, it can lodge within the male dog's penis at a dam like narrowing of a cartilage, the "os penis." The same size stone will usually pass uneventfully through the female dog's urinary anatomy.

When a stone obstructs normal urine flow, the male dog will visibly strain to urinate. No urine will pass or only a few drops. The dog will attempt to urinate repetitively with little or no result. Urinary obstruction in male dogs is thus very visible to the observer familiar with these signs and watching for them daily.

Females with stones will demonstrate symptoms similar to those of urinary infections; namely more frequent urinating, "accidents" by housebroken bitches and very frequent licking of their genital area. (Because these are similar symptoms to simple urinary infections, do not become concerned unless results of a urinalysis confirm abnormal crystals are being formed.)

Some stone forming dogs will succeed after several attempts with a sudden outpouring of urine. In such an instance, it is probable that the stone creating the obstruction was passed, restoring the normal flow of urine. Any obstructed dog, even those who quickly pass stones naturally, should be seen by their veterinarian for workup and to embark on a preventative program of anti stone medication with the proper anti stone diet.

Low Uric Acid Dalmatians

The Dalmatian/Pointer Backcross Project:

Overcoming 20th Century Attitude About Crossbreeding

In July 2011, the AKC announced that descendants of a 1973 Dalmatian/Pointer crossbred litter would be registered as Dalmatians. The initial request for registration of descendants of that crossbreeding was made in 1980. The fact that it took 30 years for this issue to be resolved had to do with changes in attitude about crossbreeding.

Up until the middle of the 20th century dog breeders did not hesitate to crossbreed as a way to introduce desirable traits into established breeds where those traits were lacking. Offspring from such crosses could generally be registered as purebred after the third generation of backcrossing. However, in a span of 50- 60 years the time honored practice of crossbreeding fell out of favor. Attitudes about crossbreeding changed to the extent that the very idea of crossbreeding became thought of as heresy by most pure-bred dog breeders. Therefore, it is not surprising that many in the Dalmatian fancy were opposed to registration of descendants of the Dalmatian/Pointer Backcross Project that began in 1973.

When geneticist and Dalmatian breeder, Robert Schaible, PhD's started his project it had already been established that:

- The Dalmatian breed had a metabolic defect that causes them to have abnormally high levels of uric acid in their urine a condition know as hyperuricosuria (HU).
 - HU was a serious problem because dogs with this condition are prone to urinary obstruction.
 - All Dalmatians, worldwide, that had ever been tested had HU.
 - HU was rare in other breeds of dogs HU was inherited as a simple autosomal recessive.
 - Dogs with HU could be identified through urinalysis.
 - Crossbreeding could be used to transfer a desirable trait from one breed to another.
 - The only way to produce Dalmatians that did not have HU was to do an outcross to a dog from a breed that did not have HU.

The Dalmatian/Pointer Backcross Project began with a single crossbred litter. It took Dr. Schaible seven years and 5 generations of backcrossing to Dalmatians to reestablish proper breed type. When he reached that point, in 1980, he applied to the AKC for registration. The AKC spent several months reviewing the project and consulting with the Board of the Dalmatian Club of America before registering Dr. Schaible's dogs as Dalmatians.

News of registration of Dr Schaible's dogs was considered noteworthy enough to merit a multipage article in the April 1981 issue of the AKC Gazette. In a preface to the article, AKC President, William F. Stifel, wrote "If there is a logical, scientific way to correct genetic health problems associated with certain breed traits and still preserve the integrity of the breed standard, it is incumbent upon the American Kennel Club to lead the way."

The article sparked a controversy that took 30 years to be resolved. Shortly after the article appeared, Dalmatian breeders pressured the AKC into putting a hold on any further registration of descendants of Dr. Schaible's Backcross Project. The hold resulted in no Dalmatians with low uric acid (LUA) being registered with the AKC between 1981-2011 (LUA Dalmatians were bred and registered with the United Kennel Club (UKC) registry during that time pe- riod).

The hold might still be in place and LUA Dalmatians might have become nothing more than a footnote in Dalmatian breed history if researchers at UC Davis led by Danika Bannasch, PhD, DVM had not identified the genetic mutation that causes HU. Dr. Bannasch's research prompted the Dalmatian Club of America to take a new look at Dr. Schaible's project.

Having a DNA test to distinguish which LUA Dalmatians were homozygous for the normal gene and which were heterozygous carriers of the defect eliminated the need to do test breedings to determine if an LUA Dalmatian was Clear for HU. In the past, the need to grow out multiple pups from a litter and test breed from them to identify which were Carriers and which were Clear was unappealing to most Dalmatian breeders. News of Dr. Bannasch's research was the catalyst for the Dalmatian Club of America to reconsider Dr. Schaible's project.

- In 2006, Dr. Schaible was invited to speak to the Dalmatian Club of America's Board.
- In 2007, Dr. Bannash was the featured speaker at DCA's annual educational seminar in conjunction with the National Specialty.
- In 2008, owners of LUA Dalmatians were invited to bring their Dals to the DCA National. Ten LUA Dalmatians were presented all together in the ring after the day's judging was completed. For 3 days LUA Dalmatian owners took turns in a Meet the LUA Dalmatian booth to answer questions, give out informational material and giving club members the opportunity for hands-on examination of the dogs. In 2009, proponents of LUA Dalmatians made a formal request to the AKC to lift the hold that prevented registration. The AKC referred the issue to their Health and Welfare Advisory Committee.
- In 2010, after receiving the Health and Welfare Advisory Committee's report, the AKC Board consulted with the Dalmatian Club of America and asked the club to poll the membership on the question of registration.
- In June 2011, a strong majority of Dalmatian Club of America members voted that they were in favor of AKC registration for descendants of the Dalmatian-Pointer Backcross Project.

- In July 2011, the AKC Board of Directors voted unanimously to accept descendants of the Dalmatian-Pointer Backcross Project into the AKC Stud Book.

In the end, a combination of a 19th century practice of crossbreeding to bring in a trait that was missing in the breed and a 21st century DNA test has the Dalmatian breeders on the road to eliminating a serious health problem in the breed. The Dalmatian-Pointer Backcrosses Project can now serve as a model for other breeds that are faced with issues that cannot effectively be dealt with through selective breeding from within the existing gene pool for that breed.

The Dalmatian/Pointer Backcross Project began with a single crossbred litter.

written by; Denise Powell - E Dalmatians | www.edalmatians.com

“But Al-liver, You’re the Dog Trainer’s Dog!”

I went with a friend to help her pick out a Dalmatian puppy. The pups were adorable, but we were continually interrupted by relentless, frantic barking coming from the other end of the barn. Occasionally, the owner would march over and spray the dog crate with a garden hose, an unkind and completely ineffective correction. I learned that this barking machine was Al-liver, a seven month old Dal who was looking for a home. He had already driven several previous owners to distraction. My friend insisted that we take a look at this poor homeless fellow and finally I agreed. The crate opened and out popped Al-liver. He was liver & white. He was cute. He was out of his mind!!!!

We tried to ignore this leaping, licking, barking bundle of misdirected energy, but it was impossible. Suddenly, his temporary owner produced a riding crop and I knew I had to help this confused creature. My intention was only to evaluate his personality to better help him place him. This is the first thing I do with every dog I meet. I believe that no matter how badly behaved a dog may be, there is a spirit beneath the confusion that can emerge with proper understanding and training. I saw the spirit in this dog immediately and found myself uttering the fateful words, “I’ll take the dog.”

I’d like to say that the rest of the story was just a perfect canine fairy tale, but it wasn’t. Our first night, he grabbed a sandwich right out of my hand and swallowed it whole. The next morning, he tore the molding off of my car door and urinated all over the house. For several months, I thought I had lost my mind. He was a case study in behavior problems; housebreaking, chewing, jumping, nipping, barking and leash pulling. He ran in the opposite direction when I called him. I enrolled him in a dog class and had to quit because he whined and agitated the other dogs.

I cried at night. I wrote poetry to keep my spirits up. Petting his head, I kept pleading with him, “But Al-liver, you’re the dog trainer’s dog!” Twice, I nearly gave up. Although I felt that my life had become a dog training nightmare, I realize now that Al-liver taught me more than any book or lecture could. He frustrated and aggravated me and made me feel like a fool. But he also taught me patience, understanding and commitment. And his most valuable lesson? I learned what it feels like to be one of my clients.

Somehow, we got through it. And we did it without electronic collars, riding crops and garden hoses. Negative corrections like that create fear and confusion, not love and trust. Dogs seek out attention of any kind. In his previous homes, Al-liver got negative attention for acting up. In his mind, negative attention was better than no attention at all. I was determined to show him a new way of doing things. I taught him that good behavior gets attention, but bad behavior does not. He learnt to bring things rather than steal, to fetch a toy for guests rather than knocking them over and to lick my hand instead of nipping it. I didn’t break his spirit; I just helped him focus all that energy.

In the end, Al-liver taught me a lot.



Al-Liver Eating bees

Hip Dysplasia

(note: Hip Dysplasia is not a major issue in the Dalmatian breed)

Hip dysplasia almost exclusively occurs in the larger breeds of dogs weighing over 35 pounds, and is the most common cause of rear-end lameness.

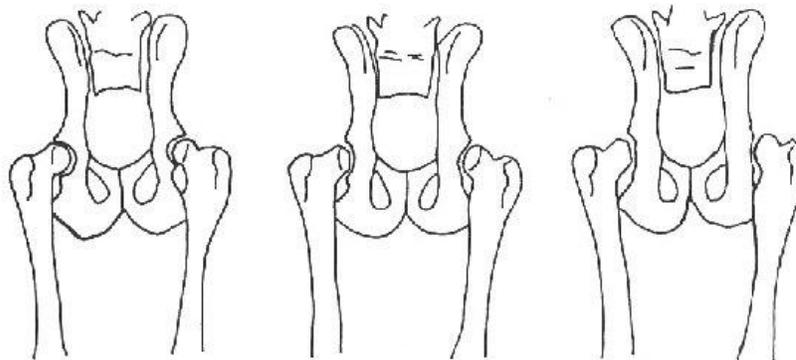
What the cause of Hip dysplasia, is the structure of the hip joint. Normally, there is, in the healthy dog, a broad pelvis with a rounded cup into which the ball of the femur fits solidly. The ligaments and good musculature hold the ball in place while allowing free motion of the femur. Genetics play the largest role in whether or not a dog will develop hip dysplasia. Other factors include environmental (including weight and nutrition) and under what conditions the puppy is raised, also training methods and rearing practices.

Even dogs with normal hips can produce dysplastic puppies.

The first signs often appear at four to nine months of age. Some of the signs of hip dysplasia at this age are: walking with a limp or swaying gait, bunny hopping when at a run and exhibiting difficulty in getting up. If the dog is rolled onto its back, the rear legs resist being spread into a "frog-leg" position.

The Orthopedic Foundation for Animals provides a consulting service for purebred dog owners. For a fee, the OFA's radiologists review a properly-taken X-ray of a dog's hips, and if they conform to the norm for that breed, they certify the dog by assigning an OFA number. Currently, the OFA certifies dogs who are twenty four month of age or older.

It is important that a veterinarian is consulted to alleviate pain and improve function. Treatment can be most effective for dogs with mild to moderate symptoms that exercise and remain active. There are several surgical treatments available to dogs with more severe symptoms. Again, consultation with your veterinarian is imperative.

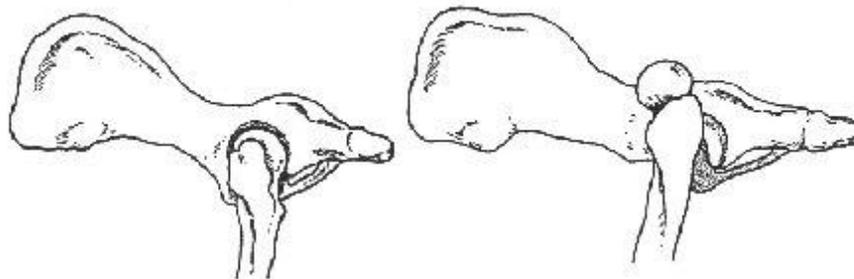


Normal Hips

Moderate Dysplasia

Severe Dysplasia

Hip dysplasia is a moderately heritable condition.



Normal Hip

Severe Dysplasia with
Upward (Dorsal) Dislocation

Upward (dorsal) displacement is the most common type of dislocation in hip dysplasia.

Powerful Prevention

There are some common canine diseases out there to which all dogs are susceptible. But vaccines will protect your dog from quite a few of these illnesses, from parvovirus, rabies and distemper to Lyme disease. As well as oral medications to prevent heartworm, dogs get a series of initial vaccines as pups and are then revaccinated annually. You'd think your dog would be feeling like a four-legged pin cushion but many of the vaccines are combined in one shot.



Basic Vaccinations

Even though vaccines can protect your dog from many common conditions – as well as some that aren't so common – some vets believe that giving more vaccines than are absolutely necessary can stress a dog's immune system and make him more rather than less likely to get sick. While some vaccines, like the one for rabies, are absolutely essential, others are optional, depending on where you live and whether or not your dog is often in contact with other dogs. Your vet will help you plan a vaccination schedule that is tailored to your dog's individual lifestyle. Here are some vaccines that are usually offered.

Rabies

Your dog must be vaccinated against rabies. Rabies is a viral disease that's deadly for people and pets.

Parvovirus

This viral disease is very common among dogs and can be extremely serious. It damages a dog's intestinal lining and treatment is intensive and expensive. Your dog should be vaccinated against this disease. In fact, if you want to board your dog at a kennel, the kennel will insist that she has been vaccinated.

Distemper

This is a viral disease that affects the respiratory, gastrointestinal and nervous systems. It's also contagious and easily passed from dog to dog and can be deadly.

Canine Hepatitis

This viral disease of the liver rarely occurs these days because the vaccination program against it has been so successful. However, while that means your dog doesn't necessarily need it, the vaccine is often difficult to avoid because it is included in most commercial multi-vaccine preparations.

Corona virus

Like parvovirus, coronavirus causes diarrhea. Even though it's not as dangerous, the virus infection is mighty hard on young puppy. It's spread by social contact, so if your dog spends time with other dogs or if she's boarded or shown, she should have the vaccine.

Parainfluenza

This viral infection is the most common cause of canine coughing. Kennels and veterinary hospitals usually require a vaccination before your animal can be boarded. It is given annually as a standard inclusion in your dog's vaccine schedule.

Leptospirosis

This bacterial disease affects the liver and the kidneys. It is only prevalent in some parts of North America, notably where there are deer and rodent populations that spread the bacteria. If you live in one of the affected areas, then your dog needs to be vaccinated.

Canine Cough

This is the dog world's equivalent of our common cold. Affected dogs develop a hacking cough that lasts for weeks and leaves the dogs lungs permanently damaged. The coughing can spread the infection to other dogs. Although the name 'kennel cough' has been around for decades, there's a move to lose that moniker because it suggests that kennels are at the heart of the problem. Dogs do get canine cough at kennels, but they also can get it at dog shows, groomers' facilities, pet shops and even at veterinary offices. It's not caused by just one germ. Dogs become susceptible when they develop any of a number of viral infections (including parainfluenza,), which are then followed by a

bacterial infection called Bordetella bronchiseptica. The bordetellosis vaccine is squirted into your dog's nose to protect against the bacterial infection. Kennels usually require this vaccination.

Lyme Disease

Transmitted by deer ticks, Lyme disease can cause intense joint pain and other symptoms. Your dog needs a Lyme disease vaccination only if you live in areas where the deer ticks are present, or when you are visiting such areas.

Preventing Heartworm.

No one had heard of heartworm about a decade or so ago, but now it's everywhere and every dog is at risk. And that's unfortunate, because this fatal infection, caused by a parasite spread by mosquitoes, is so easy to prevent. Before starting your dog on a heartworm protection plan, your vet must run a blood test to make sure she is not already infected. Assuming that she's in good health, she's ready to start taking her pills. There are two types of heartworm medication. The first is diethylcarbamazine citrate (Filaribits,) a tasty treat given on a daily basis. More convenient are the medications given once a month, such as ivermectin (Heartgard) or milbemycin oxime (Sentinel.) These have the added benefit of giving you a little leeway. Even if you're a day or two late with the pill, your dog will still be protected. Some dogs are sensitive to ivermectin. If your dog isn't able to take it, your vet will find a substitute that works. And regardless of whether she's taking a daily or monthly pill, she'll need to be tested from time to time.

Internal & External Parasites

Nobody likes to hear that their dog has worms, but they are a common canine problem. The good news is that there are now more ways than ever before to eliminate internal parasites from your pet. No worm is a good worm, because they all put stresses on your dog as her immune system tries to cope with their presence and they can all be spread to people with the same unpleasant and sometimes dangerous consequences. Talk to your vet in regards to what type of preventative medication is best for your pet.

No matter what breed or size of dog you own, talk to your vet on her specific needs in preventative care. Your dog will be healthier and happier.



A GUIDE TO WHAT THE BREEDER MEANS WHEN OFFERING YOU A 'PET' OR 'SHOW' PUP

To true dog lovers the word 'pet' is synonymous with 'dog.' They cannot imagine being without one.

Most people don't realize that breeders classify dogs into groups – pet (companion) and show. But, when they hear about the two classifications, they fear that perhaps they are getting an inferior dog if they ask for a pet. To the professional breeder, the terms mean something different. A show puppy is the one that has the best chance of finishing its championship in conformation competition, and a pet is one that probably won't. A breeder's desire is that each of the pups will be somebody's beloved companion. Pet or show, they want the best for each pup. They hope the buyer will love the pup the way they have.

It would be to a breeder's advantage if every pup was a show prospect, but that doesn't work out in the percentages. It is much more likely that the litter will turn out all pets than all show dogs. So exactly what classifies a dog as a pet?

A pet has the same number of legs as the show dog. It's put together with the same number of bones, has a noisemaker located just under its nose, a fast-licking tongue, and sheds hair just like the show dog. So what's the big deal?

There are several imperfections that can turn a prospective show puppy into a good pet. Among these are coat texture and length, poor markings or mismarkings, orchidism (undesended testicles,) bite (dentition) and attitude. What may be confusing to the buyer is that what is a no-no in one breed is a 'must have' in another. An all white dog in German Shepherds or Bearded Collies is undesirable. Yet that's just what a Samoyed or West Highland White Terrier breeder wants. Long coated Corgis are not shown, but a long, flowing coat is an Irish Setter breeder's dream. These little differences are exactly what make a pet.

A pup's coat may be silky rather than harsh, long rather than short, smooth rather than fluffy, curly rather than straight – or vice versa. Obviously, dogs with these flaws can still be outstanding companions, as a coat has nothing to do with good health and temperament.

If a bite is overshot or undershot, even or wry, it doesn't make much difference to the pet owner. The owner of a companion dog is much more concerned about the "will he or won't he" bit, than an Andy Gump bite. Missing teeth may also mark a dog as a pet, although these usually do not show up until late puppyhood. Unless it's all the teeth that are missing, that dog will happily chomp his food on your hearth.

Orchidism is said to be the ideal pet fault. Only you and your vet know for sure.

The common term "monorchidism" is used for one undesended testicle, and 'cryptorchidism' identifies both as undesended. Again, this has nothing to do with whether or not the dog is a good pet. In fact, since dogs that are not close to the breed standard should be neutered, a dog with orchidism will be no different than any other pet after the surgery.

Attitude simply means the dog does not have enough sparkle to win in the ring. Actually, those dogs that do not have the extra zip and animation for life on the dog show circuit are sometimes easier for the average person to live with.

Some breeds specify no preference in markings, Old English Sheepdogs and St. Bernards, for instance. Others, such as Shetland Sheepdogs and Welsh Corgis have minimal requirements. Still others, like Dalmatians and Harlequin Great Danes must meet definite specifics. Colour or pigmentation is highly important in some breeds. Pale eyes or washed out colour will not offend a doting owner, but are a distraction to a judge.

Ears that are too high set or don't stand or don't tip or fold may zap a show career, but that dog can still hear a chew bone drop a mile away, and he can hear his master's voice. At the other end, tails may be low set or carried to gaily over the back, but they still wag the same when you walk in the door.

A dog, which is undersized or oversized for the show ring may actually be ideal for the pet owner who really wants a Belgian Tervuren, but prefers one that could sit in his or her lap. Another owner may want a Tibetan Spaniel who strikes fear into the heart of an intruder and looks like he'd do something more than nibble an ankle.

The difference between a show dog and a pet may not be obvious to the untrained eye. Examples are infinitesimal flaws in movement, angulation or extension of gait. Without a period of intense study, most observers will never know. Although these and other points may matter a great deal to the professional breeder and/or exhibitor, they won't mean a whit to the person just looking for a good friend. After all, we don't judge our human friends by the length of their hair, their colour, their overbite or how fast they can run a mile. So a pet's not perfect, just like us. But most importantly, a pet is a dog made for love.



What a Puppy Is Not . . .



A puppy is one of the most appealing creatures on earth. He's the embodiment of exuberance, humour, and affection. But there are a great many things that a puppy is **not**, and these negative aspects deserve some thought before you bring a puppy home.

A puppy is not a toy to be enjoyed while he is a novelty, then set aside in favour of a new diversion. He is a living thing whose physical demands must be met constantly for as long as he lives.

A young puppy needs more sleep than a human infant, even though your children may be in the mood to play with him. He needs to be fed regularly and often, even though his meals may conflict with family plans.

A young puppy is breakable. Very young children can inflict unintended tortures on a puppy, especially one of the small or fine-boned breeds. And his broken leg is much harder to fix than the broken wheel of a toy truck.

A puppy is not a teaching aid guaranteed to instil a sense of responsibility in children. If a child loves his dog, he will probably enjoy brushing him, taking him for walks, filling his water dish, and other tasks. A sense of responsibility may well grow out of the relationship, but it is unfair to the animal to put his entire well being into the hands of young children.

Even the most dog-loving youngsters tire of daily chores, and parents who try to force the regime will be asking for friction. Unfortunately, it is the puppy that is the loser in this battle. Responsibility lessons are better left to household tasks that don't involve a pet. The essentials of feeding, housebreaking and discipline training will fall to an adult member of the household. Youngsters can help with the less essential jobs of grooming and walking.

Dogs and children do give each other something very valuable -- time and attention that adults are often too busy to offer in sufficient quantities. This is the main function of a child-dog partnership.

A puppy is not cheap. Whether you pay a nominal fee at the city humane shelter or what seems to be a king's ransom for a really special pup, the money paid to make the pet yours is a mere drop in the bucket compared to what it will cost to keep him.

There will be veterinary bills to pay for both emergencies and regular vaccinations and checkups. There will be city and county licenses to buy. And there are legal aspects of dog ownership you may never have considered -- not just personal injury claims, but replacement of shrubbery or grass or neighbourhood children's clothing torn in play. And there's the wear and tear on your furniture and carpet.

A puppy is not a spur-of-the-moment purchase, or at least he shouldn't be. The wrong dog can be an unending nuisance to a household - and it's much easier to acquire a pup than it is to get rid of a grown dog that didn't work out. Animal shelters are bulging with dogs that were acquired for the wrong reasons, or without sufficient investigation.

If your family has decided to buy a dog, by all means take the time to learn about the breed you have in mind. Every breed has

characteristics of temperament, and some of these traits may not fit in with your lifestyle. Some breeds are prone to physical problems such as hip dysplasia, ear cankers, and eye abnormalities. If you are aware of these problems, you can do a more intelligent job of selecting your puppy.

Many towns have kennel clubs whose members are reputable, knowledgeable, and generally helpful. Most breeders will be glad to answer your questions and to help you locate the pup you want. A veterinarian can put you in touch with the nearest kennel club.

If you take the time to do some investigating before you buy, you will know what the going prices are for your breed. Pet shops are *never* a bargain, no matter what the price because they often sell pups of very low quality for show-dog prices simply because few buyers bother to check. Always buy a pup from a reputable breeder - one who has been recommended by your local kennel club.

Many puppies are bought impetuously because they looked cute in the pet shop window; because it was a nice day for a drive in the country and there was a kennel with a "Visitors Welcome" sign; or because another family pet had died. Pups bought without being genuinely wanted -- and planned for -- too often end up at the animal shelter.

A puppy is not a gift unless the giver is certain that this particular pup will be wanted. Not only now, but a year from now, ten years from now. And even then the puppy should be selected by his new owner rather than by someone else. The pup that appeals to one might very well not appeal to the other. It's a matter of chemistry, like love at first sight.

A puppy is not self-cleaning. There will be puddles on rugs, vomiting occasionally, dog hair on clothing and furniture. There may be worms to be dealt with. If these prospects are intolerable to the housekeeper of the family, then perhaps the pleasures of owning a puppy will be overshadowed by the tensions it will cause.

Longhaired breeds need to be groomed -- not only while the pup is small and new, but also week in and week out, for years. The heavy, silky coats of breeds such as cocker spaniels, Yorkshire terriers, and Lhasa Apsos become matted in a very short time, especially in the areas of friction, such as legs and flanks. If the dog's coat isn't combed thoroughly and frequently, it becomes unsightly and uncomfortable. The mats pull and irritate, and they make excellent hiding places for fleas and skin disorders.

A puppy is not an adult dog. He has neither the physical nor the mental ability to perform as an adult dog would. He cannot go for long periods of time without relieving himself. He cannot tolerate harsh training methods, nor can he differentiate between what is chewable and what isn't. Nor will he make any distinction between food and objects that hurt him if he swallows them. He will try the patience of the most devout dog lover in the household, and at times he may drive everyone mad. If he is very young, he will cry during his first night or two in his new home. He will require patience and understanding from everyone in the family.

A puppy is not a puppy for long. Before you succumb to the charms of a clumsy St. Bernard pup, or a sad-happy hound, or a limpid-eyed cocker, be very sure that you want not only the puppy he is now, but also the gangly, unattractive adolescent he is about to become, and the adult dog who may fall short of what you hoped he would be.

If you've faced all the negative aspects of puppy ownership and still want him, chances are good that your new dog will be one of the lucky ones who finds a permanent happy home. And you will enjoy the rewards of planned-parenthood dog ownership -- rewards which far overshadow the drawbacks.

CHECKLIST FOR CHOOSING A PUPPY

1. **Are the pups clean and healthy?**
2. **Are they friendly and attracted to people?** Do they beg to be picked up and do they enjoy being held?
3. **Is the mother friendly and attractive?** Caring for her pups is the dam's strongest instinct. Do not panic if she is standoffish. If the father is present, is he willing to make friends with visitors? **DO NOT** buy a pup whose parents do not have good temperaments. **TEMPERAMENT IS HEREDITARY!**
4. **Have the pups been checked for worms and will they receive at least one shot before you take yours home?**
5. **Are the pups old enough to leave the litter?** Pups should NEVER EVER be taken from the litter before 6 weeks of age. They need to interact with their littermates for at least that long. Seven weeks would be even better. On the other hand, a pup that is kept with its littermates past the age of 10 weeks may have become "dog dependent". Be sure the breeder has given the pups individual attention and training.
6. **Is the paperwork in order?** You should receive a contract (signed by both buyer and seller), and a pedigree. Responsible breeders sell their pet pups on spay/neuter contracts, which means you will receive the registration application AFTER your dog has been spayed or neutered. That should be explained in the contract. It is against Canadian Laws to have to pay extra for the registration papers or pedigree.
7. **Will you receive a supply of food, instructions about the care and feeding, a list of necessary supplies and health record?** Does the breeder suggest dog care books, as well as information about vets and training schools?
8. **Is the breeder experienced with Dalmatians?** Will he be able to answer your questions or help with any problems that arise? That's one of the biggest disadvantages in buying a pet shop or commercially raised pup - no one cares whether or not you're having trouble. **They only want your \$\$\$.**
9. **Did the breeder insist that you take the dog through at least one set of puppy/socializing classes?** Responsible breeders make that a requirement for sale. All Dals should have at least one basic obedience class.
10. **Were you told the good and bad features of Dalmatians?** All breeds have their drawbacks, and they should have been explained to you. Beware the hard sell!
11. **Did the breeder talk to you about dog crates, explain how to use them and stress how helpful they are?**
12. **DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE ADOPTING A CHILD??** YOU SHOULD! BUYING A PUP IS A SERIOUS RESPONSIBILITY.
13. **ARE YOU WILLING TO MAKE A COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING CARE AND LOVE FOR THE LIFE OF THIS DOG?** If the answer is no - then you should reconsider your desire to purchase a puppy.

A DOG IS NOT AN OBJECT TO BE DISCARDED

WHEN IT NO LONGER IS OF USE OR FITS INTO YOUR LIFESTYLE!

If you can't answer "Yes" to the above questions, perhaps you should look elsewhere for your puppy. Take your time and find the right breeder and the right pup



Coach Exiting a tunnel at full speed!

What is a Puppy Mill?

A puppy mill is any type of a set up where the multiple dogs and sometimes multiple dog breeds are kept in small crates. The Dam and Sire may spend their lives doing nothing but being breed and having puppies. Many times the dogs are not well cared for, receive no love and affection and never have the proper medical attention. In some cases, when the dogs are no longer useful to the owners of these puppy mills, they may be taken out back and shot or worse yet, left to starve.



Is this where you want your next puppy to come from?

Check out <http://www.nowisconsinpupmills.com/gs6.html>



If the breeders you visit do not allow you to see the facilities where they keep their dogs....turn and run!

Where Do Pet Shop Dogs Come From?

Many puppies from pet stores are the result of puppy millers. Sometimes they are kept in better conditions but the life is much the same. Pet shops have grown wise to the public outcry against puppy mills. So they tell customers that their puppies come from local or good breeders. No responsible breeder would allow their puppies they raised to be dumped off at a pet store.



Pet Shop Puppies

I don't remember much from the place I was born. It was cramped and dark, and we were never played with by the humans. I remember Mom and her soft fur, but she was often sick, and very thin. She had hardly any milk for me and my brothers and sisters. I remember many of them dying, and I missed them so.

I do remember the day I was taken from Mom. I was so sad and scared, my milk teeth had only just come in, and I really should have been with Mom still, but she was so sick, and the Humans kept saying that they wanted money and were sick of the "mess" that my sister and I made. So we were crated up and taken to a strange place. Just the two of us. We huddled together and were scared, still no human hands came to pet or love us.

So many sights and sounds, and smells! We are in a store where there are many different animals! Some that squawk! Some that meow! Some that Peep! My sister and I are jammed into a small cage, I hear other puppies here. I see humans look at me; I like the 'little humans', the kids. They look so sweet, and fun, like they would play with me!

All day we stay in the small cage, sometimes mean people will hit the glass and frighten us, every once in a while we are taken out to be held or shown to humans. Some are gentle, some hurt us, and we always hear "Aw they are so cute! I want one!" but we never get to go with any.

My sister died last night, when the store was dark. I lay my head on her soft fur and felt the life leave her small thin body. I had heard them say she was sick, and that I should be sold at a "discount price" so that I would quickly leave the store. I think my soft whine was the only one that mourned for her as her body was taken out of the cage in the morning and dumped.

Today, a family came and bought me! Oh happy day! They are a nice family; they really, really wanted me! They had bought a dish and food and the little girl held me so tenderly in her arms. I love her so much! The mom and dad say what a sweet and good puppy I am! I am named Angel. I love to lick my new humans!

The family takes such good care of me, they are loving and tender and sweet. They gently teach me right and wrong, give me good food, and lots of love! I want only to please these wonderful people! I love the little girl and I enjoy running and playing with her.

Today I went to the veterinarian. It was a strange place and I was frightened. I got some shots, but my best friend the little girl held me softly and said it would be OK. So I relaxed. The Vet must have said sad words to my beloved family, because they looked awfully sad. I heard severe hip dysplasia and something about my heart... I heard the vet say something about, back yard breeders and my parents not being tested. I know not what any of that means, just that it hurts me to see my family so sad. But they still love me, and I still love them very much!

I am 6 months old now. Where most other puppies are robust and rowdy, it hurts me terribly just to move. The pain never lets up. It hurts to run and play with my beloved little girl, and I find it hard to breath. I keep trying my best to be the strong pup I know I am supposed to be, but it is so hard. It breaks my heart to see the little girl so sad, and to hear the Mom and Dad talk about "it might now be the time". Several times I have gone to that veterinarians place, and the news is never good. Always talk about Congenital Problems. I just want to feel the warm sunshine and run, and play and nuzzle with my family.

Last night was the worst, Pain has been my constant companion now, it hurts even to get up and get a drink. I try to get up but can only whine in pain. I am taken in the car one last time. Everyone is so sad, and I don't know why. Have I been bad? I try to be good and loving, what have I done wrong? Oh if only this pain would be gone! If only I could soothe the tears of the little girl. I reach out my muzzle to lick her hand, but can only whine in pain.

The veterinarian's table is so cold. I am so frightened. The humans all hug and love me, they cry into my soft fur. I can feel their love and sadness. I manage to lick softly their hands. Even the vet doesn't seem so scary today. He is gentle and I sense some kind of relief for my pain. The little girl holds me softly and I thank her, for giving me all her love. I feel a soft pinch in my foreleg. The pain is beginning to lift; I am beginning to feel a peace descend upon me. I can now softly lick her hand. My vision is becoming dreamlike now, and I see my Mother and my brothers and sisters, in a far off green place. They tell me there is no pain there, only peace and happiness. I tell the family good-bye in the only way I know how, a soft wag of my tail and a nuzzle of my nose. I had hoped to spend many, many moons with them, but it was not meant to be. "You see," said the veterinarian, "Pet shop puppies do not come from ethical breeders."

The pain ends now, and I know it will be many years until I see my beloved family again. If only things could have been different.

The Patched Puppy

Patches have always been a part of the breed. The s(w) gene (extreme white piebald) that gives Dalmatians their white background colour, sometimes comes with small areas of colour as well. Although Dal pups are normally born pure white (the spots start to show up at about 10 days), patches are present at birth. They are most commonly found on the ear and around the eye, may be seen at the base of the tail (generally extending part way down the tail), and appear less commonly on the body, generally on the shoulder. Various studies indicate that the percentage of patches is about 12% for the breed as a whole. Although that amounts to about one patch per litter, some litters have multiple patches, while others have no patches at all. Although patches are a disqualification and are not shown in the breed ring and are generally not bred from, they are popular as pets, and are often the first pups selected from a litter. Some of the top obedience competition Dalmatians have been patched.

There was a time when most responsible breeders euthanized patched pups because it was thought that patching was associated with serious health problems. That theory was disproved, patching is now considered strictly a cosmetic issue, and most breeders place their patched pups in homes as pet companions.



These pups on the left are multi-patched! The lovely puppy on the left has two patched ears and the tail patch, while the liver puppy on the right has a shoulder patch and a tail patch.



Patches are generally found on the head. These are typical Dalmatian patches. The pup on the left has an ear patch, probably the most common patch. Some of them are only on the ear, while others extend onto the head, like Theo's does. The pup in the center has an extremely attractive eye patch. Eye patches are often much larger. The liver pup on the right has a double patch - both his ear and eye are included. Note the white edge on the otherwise patched ear.



The pup on the left has a rather unusual patch. I call it a beanie patch! Patches spread a bit as the pup grows. The pup in the center still shows a white area between the two ear patches. A few weeks later the patches are connected.



The pup on the left has a shoulder patch. Note how short the hair on the patch appears, compared to the fluffy puppy coat. On the right, the shoulder seems to be the most common location for body patches, other than those at the base of the tail.



Tail patches attract much attention. This mother & son pictured on the right would probably attract twice as much attention!



Patches come in all colours! In addition to the typical black or liver patches, there are lemon, brindle and blue patches.

Training A Dalmatian

Years ago, training was really in the dark ages. Choke collars and harsh correction were the only tools used to coerce dogs into obedience. This was especially difficult for sensitive, intelligent breeds like the Dalmatian. I believe that Dals enjoy working and that they have a great desire to please but it has to be done as a partnership with the owner. I truly feel that one of the reasons Dalmatians have a reputation for being hard to train is that many owners rely on pain avoidance methods. Dalmatians do not like to be jerked, pulled, and given sharp corrections with a choke collar. I have always felt that dogs operate on the "What's in it for me?" principle. Certainly a dog would be more motivated to work for treats, praise, and playtime than to work just to avoid being jerked on the neck. Positive reinforcement training methods, particularly operant conditioning, help strengthen the bond between the dog and owner and encourage the dog to be a willing partner in the learning process.

What is positive reinforcement training? It is rewarding a dog for doing the right thing and ignoring or reshaping undesirable behaviours. For example, if I am trying to teach a dog to sit I can stand there all day and yell "Sit" but if I haven't taught him what the word means it will do me no good. With positive reinforcement I will use a toy or treat, called a lure or motivator, and use it to shape the behaviour. I can move the treat towards the dog's nose and he will sit in order to get it. If he bounces up to get it I say nothing to correct him but I also do not give him the treat. When he does sit, he gets praise and the treat. After a few such episodes the dog will sit every time I bring the treat towards his nose. Now I can add a word to tell him what he is doing. I will say, "Sit" just as he sits. Soon he will have the connection between the word and the action. Now he will get a treat after he complies with the verbal command. As the behaviour becomes more and more established I start to vary the reward system. Sometimes he gets a treat, sometimes-just praise. Sometimes I surprise him with a jackpot, an extra good treat or several treats. The dog will stay enthusiastic about working because he never knows when he might get that jackpot.

Clicker training, or operant conditioning, is based on the training used to train performing dolphins and whales. It is impractical to put a choke collar on a killer whale and haul off and give him a sharp correction. Trainers found they could use a device, usually a whistle, to let the animal know when they performed correctly. The sound of the whistle means "You did it right. Come get a treat." For use with dogs, a clicker (just like the little cricket toys we had as kids...oh come on, you remember!) is used as the signalling device. The dog is first conditioned to the clicker. The handler clicks and then rewards the dog with a food tidbit. This might be done 20 or 30 times so the dog learns the click means a treat is coming. Then a motivator or lure is used to shape a behaviour. When the dog does it right he gets a click and then a reward. If he gets it wrong there is no correction but there is also no click and no reward. The clicker can be used to "capture" a behaviour. For example, if you don't mind taking a lot of time to train a dog to sit, you could just stand around with the clicker. When the dog sits on his own you click and give him a reward. Every time he sits you click and reward. He will soon get the idea. Then you can add the verbal command. Of course, you could stand around waiting for a very long time if you were trying to teach something like the teeter-totter in agility. It might be days or weeks before the dog goes over to the teeter on his own and walks across it. You get much faster results by using a lure, as in the example above, to shape the behaviour and then using the clicker to let the dog know when he gets it right.

Owners who want to use these methods to train a dog should seek out instructors who are well versed in the techniques. Visit the class and see what is going on. If everyone is using a choke collar and jerking the dog around this is not a good class for your Dalmatian. Look for a place where the handlers use treats, toys, buckle collars, and, perhaps, clickers to train. The dogs will be wagging their tails and working eagerly. Positive reinforcement training allows the dog to learn to think on his own. The dog will not be afraid to learn new things. He will experiment to see what behaviours bring rewards.

The ideal time to start training is when you first get your puppy. Sign up for a puppy kindergarten class as soon as possible. The puppy class should be taught with buckle collars not choke collars. It should provide ample opportunity for the puppy to socialize with the other dogs and handlers. However, it should also provide instruction on how to teach the puppy to sit, down, come when called, walk on a leash, etc. The puppy will learn attention, that is to look up at the owner and to try to maintain eye contact with the owner. It is a lot easier to train a dog when he is looking at you. The basics of housebreaking and problem prevention should be covered. Many puppy kindergartens use agility equipment such as ramps and tunnels to teach confidence and coordination.

After puppy kindergarten take a basic obedience class. Again the class should be taught using positive reinforcement. The dogs should be worked on loose leads and the instructor should stress praising and rewarding good behaviour rather than correcting undesirable behaviour. Attention work will be emphasized. There will be more going on than heeling in a circle. The dog will learn to pay attention to the owner and work in spite of distractions.

If your Dalmatian is already an adult and in need of training, take heart. These methods can work very well for you too. If your dog is badly out of control I suggest a few private lessons with the instructor to work on attention and some basic control. Then you can go on to a group class. Some people may advise you to try a prong or pinch collar. DON'T DO IT!!! If you really have a wild, lunging dog, try a Halti, Gentle Leader, or other type of head collar (similar to halters used on horses) instead. Be sure to get instruction on the use of the head collar as improper use can cause damage to the dog's neck.

There are a number of benefits to positive reinforcement training. A 15-minute obedience session is excellent exercise, helps burn off some excess energy, increases the bond between dog and owner, and results in a well-trained dog. What a deal! The better trained your dog is, the more time you will want to spend with him. This will make both of you a lot happier.

Once your dog has some of the basics down pat, you might like to try earning a Canine Good Citizen certificate. This 10-part test is offered by many dog clubs and training organizations and is open to any dog over six months of age. When your dog passes you will get a neat certificate that you can frame and hang on the wall above Spot's bed. The Canine Good Citizen Test should be a goal for every dog owner.

Keep up with the obedience training even after you have completed the classes. The old adage that you lose what you don't use is true for dogs too.



A double-patched puppy

TEN PEEVES THAT DOGS HAVE ABOUT HUMANS

'1'

Blaming your farts on me.....
not funny... not funny at all !!!



'2'

Yelling at me for barking.
I'M A FRIGGIN' DOG



'3'

Taking me for a walk, then
not letting me check stuff out.
Exactly whose walk is this anyway?



'4'

Any trick that involves balancing
food on my nose. Stop it!



'5'

Any haircut that involves bows or ribbons.
Now you know why we chew your stuff
up when you're not home.



'6'

The sleight of hand, fake fetch throw.
You fooled a dog! Whoooo Hooooooooo what
a proud moment for the top of the food chain.



'7'

Taking me to the vet for 'the big snip', then acting
surprised when I freak out every time we go back!



'8'

Getting upset when I sniff the crotches of your guests .
Sorry, but I haven't quite mastered that handshake thing yet.



'9'

Dog sweaters. Hello ???
Haven't you noticed the fur?

'10'

How you act disgusted when I lick myself.
Look, we both know the truth. You're just jealous.



Now lay off me on some of these things.
We both know who's boss here!
You don't see me picking up your poop do you?

Breed Characteristics

<p>Adaptability *****</p> <p>How easily a dog deals with change.</p>	<p>Dog Friendly *****</p> <p>Tendency to enjoy or tolerate other dogs.</p>	<p>Shedding Level *****</p> <p>Amount and frequency of dog hair shedding.</p>
<p>Affection Level *****</p> <p>Amount of warmth or friendliness displayed.</p>	<p>Exercise Needs *****</p> <p>Level of daily activity needed.</p>	<p>Social Needs *****</p> <p>Preferred amount of interaction with other pets and humans.</p>
<p>Apartment Friendly **</p> <p>Factors such as dog size and his tendency to make noise.</p>	<p>Grooming *</p> <p>Amount of bathing, brushing, even professional grooming needed.</p>	<p>Stranger Friendly ****</p> <p>Tendency to be welcoming to new people.</p>
<p>Barking Tendencies ***</p> <p>Breed's level of vocalization.</p>	<p>Health Issues **</p> <p>Level of health issues a breed tends to have.</p>	<p>Territorial ****</p> <p>A dog's inclination to be protective of his home, yard or even car.</p>
<p>Cat Friendly ***</p> <p>Tendency toward a tolerance for cats and a lower prey drive.</p>	<p>Intelligence *****</p> <p>A dog's thinking and problem-solving ability (not trainability).</p>	<p>Trainability *****</p> <p>Level of ease in learning something new and a willingness to try new things.</p>
<p>Child Friendly ****</p> <p>Dogs that tend to be more sturdy, playful and easygoing around children and more tolerant of children's behavior.</p>	<p>Playfulness *****</p> <p>How lighthearted and spirited a dog tends to be.</p>	<p>Watchdog Ability *****</p> <p>A breed that is likely to alert you to the presence of strangers.</p>

Check out this spot on the web for the following Books

<http://www.alibris.com/>

THE DALMATIAN BY ANNA KATHERINE NICHOLAS

THE NEW DALMATIAN BY ALFRED & ESMERALDA TREEN

THE OFFICIAL BOOK OF THE DALMATIAN which can be purchased through this site

<http://www.thedca.org/>



Starting the Search:

- Call the CKC, or check out their website at <http://www.ckc.ca> to obtain the names of the breeder referral contacts for the breed(s) you are interested in.
- Attend a local **dog show** or breed match. Show catalogs list the names and addresses of the owners of entered dogs. You can also talk to the owners and handlers of the dogs (though not when they're about to go into the ring!) and get some leads that way.
- Learn about your breed before you look to buy one. There is no such thing as the "perfect breed for everyone," as there are as many different lifestyles and personal preferences as there are breeds of dog. Read the **breed standard**, find out about **grooming** requirements, typical **temperaments**, health problems that are common in the breed, etc. Irresponsible breeders hate educated buyers!
- Price alone should not be a factor in deciding what breeder to buy from. While a high price doesn't necessarily guarantee high quality, a very low price often does not turn out to be a bargain in the long run. Find out what typical prices are for show and pet quality puppies of your breed in your area.
- Be patient. You may have to wait a few months (or longer) to find the right dog from a good breeder. This is a very short time compared with the ten to fifteen years that a dog will live with you.



Responsible Breeders DO:

- Breed in order to improve the breed and produce the best puppies they possibly can, and usually plan to keep at least one of them
- Ask as many questions of you as you do of them
- Allow potential owners to visit, meet the dam and other dogs owned by the breeder, see the conditions that the pups are raised under, and ask questions.
- Show evidence of at least two or three years of serious interest in their breed, i.e. dog club memberships (the CKC doesn't count!), show and match ribbons and win photos, and championship and/or performance (obedience, agility, tracking, field, etc.) titles
- Breed only dogs that closely match the breed standard and are free of serious health and temperament problems. Championship titles and health clearances such as OFA and CERF are good indicators of this
- Register their dogs with the accepted registry for their breed and the country they're in.
- Tell you if they think you would be better off with another breed of dog, or no dog at all
- Provide referrals to other breeders if they don't have anything available
- Use a written contract and guarantee ("guarantee" meaning that they will either replace the dog or refund part or all of your money if health or temperament problems should arise), or at least an oral agreement when selling a dog, with clear and reasonable terms that you can live with
- Use spay/neuter agreements, co-ownership registrations to ensure that dogs going to pet homes are not bred
- Provide a registration slip from a legitimate breed registry, a pedigree, and up-to-date shots/health records with every puppy they sell
- Honestly discuss any special problems/requirements associated with the breed
- Offer assistance and advice on grooming, training, etc., for the life of the dog
- If, for any reason and at any time, you cannot keep the dog, will take it back
- Have dogs that are clean, healthy, happy, and humanely cared for



Responsible Breeders DO NOT:

- Accept credit cards, or offer financing or easy payment plans
- Appear overly eager to sell/"get rid of" a puppy
- Breed simply to produce puppies to sell
- Breed a bitch on every season, or more than once a year
- Have breeding stock that consists of a "mated pair"
- Claim that all of their puppies are "show/breeding quality" or makes unsubstantiated claims of their dogs' superiority to those of other breeders
- Claim that their breed has no problems (some have fewer than others, but every breed has at least a couple)
- Sell puppies through pet stores, brokers, auctions, or to anyone that they have not met/screened personally
- Sell puppies that are less than 7 weeks of age
- Sell puppies without papers (registration slip and 3-5 generation pedigree), provide only a photocopy (a clue that the registration may be forged, especially if it is a foreign registry), or charge extra for papers
- Have more than one or two litters at any given time, or litters of multiple breeds
- Refuse to guarantee their dogs, or if they do, attach such unreasonable conditions to the guarantee, i.e., "dog must not be spayed or neutered, must never have been bred, and the ears must stand correctly," that it is unlikely that they would ever have to honor it



Phrases to be aware of in breeder's ads:

- "Rare"--This is often because either the breeder is using the wrong term for a common trait (i.e., "teacup" for toy size) or the dogs in question have a trait that no responsible breeder would deliberately produce, either because it is not allowed or is considered a serious fault in the breed standard, and/or is associated with health problems in the breed (e.g. white Boxers and Dobermans, parti-colored Poodles, "king" Labs, lemon spotted Dalmatians, and blue-eyed Malamutes). Although it can also mean that the breed is not well known or widely recognized, it does almost always mean that the breeder expects you to pay top dollar for the privilege and snob appeal of owning one.
- "Aggressive"--Most dogs are naturally protective, the extent depending on their breed and individual personalities. Why would anyone in their right mind deliberately breed dogs with unstable temperaments?
- "Champion"--A dog becomes a breed champion by earning points defeating a specified number of other dogs of its breed in competition. A dog can have a whole wall full of blue ribbons, yet still not have earned a single point, let alone a championship title.
- "Grand Champion"--the CKC does award a Grand Champion title. Some other registries do, such as the UKC, but make sure the breeder explains how and where that title was earned.
- "Champion lines"--Almost all dogs have some champions in their pedigrees if you go a few generations back. Ideally, at least one parent and the majority of the dogs listed in the pedigree should have a championship or other title.
- "Champion puppies"--Dogs cannot be shown towards a championship before they are six months old. Maybe the breeder means that the parents are champions. Maybe it means that you'd be better off buying from somebody that's honest.
- "OFA puppies"--OFA stands for Orthopedic Foundation for Animals, a registry that screens dogs for hip dysplasia. Dogs must be two years of age to be screened. If a breeder claims that any dog younger than that has OFA numbers, run!
- "Show quality"--What does the breeder mean by this? Expected to finish a championship fairly easily? No disqualifying faults? Has "perfect markings and is really cute?" Make sure you understand exactly what this means before you buy. By the way, unless you are serious about breeding and showing, there is nothing wrong with a dog that is "pet quality."
- "CKC registered (or just "CKC")"--the CKC (Canadian Kennel Club) is a registry that issues registration papers to dogs of the more than 140 breeds that are currently recognized, whose parents were also registered. While great to have (essential if you plan to show and breed), CKC registration is no guarantee of a dog's quality, or of a breeder's integrity. Other popular registries include the American Kennel Club, (AKC), United Kennel Club (UKC) and the American Rare Breeds Association (ARBA), as well as breed-specific registries such as the Australian Shepherd Club of America (ASCA) and the Dalmatian Club of Canada (DCC). However, there are some registries, such as the World Wide Kennel Club (WWKC), the Continental Kennel Club (CKC), the American Kennel Association (AKA), and the Federation of International Canines (FIC), whose sole purpose seems to be to provide papers to otherwise unregistrable dogs/"breeds such as Pugapoos, Labradoodles & Goldendoodles." Many of these so-called "effigy" or "puppymill" registries are purposely named to sound like their legitimate cousins. If in doubt, ask around.
- "Foreign bloodlines" (or "foreign-bred")--Although this can be a legitimate claim (especially with breeds used for protection work, such as German Shepherds), there are an increasing number of brokers who are importing litters of puppies from other countries (or at least claiming they are) in order to cash in on the implied superiority of these Irish/German/Russian/etc. dogs. These pups often are sold only with a photocopy of their foreign registration papers, which strongly implies that those papers are forged. In any case, the fact that these dogs originate from outside the country make any claims the seller makes virtually impossible to verify. This list is intended to provide general guidelines, so there may be some valid exceptions to what is listed. For example, some breeders may withhold papers until a pet quality puppy is spayed or neutered or until full payment is received, though this should be specified in writing. If a breeder can give a satisfactory reason for a single discrepancy, and otherwise checks out as responsible, they may still be okay. Again, if in doubt, ask around.



A Note About Pet Stores

Many people believe that a local pet store is a great way to obtain a puppy. This couldn't be further from the truth.

For a number of reasons a pet store is probably the worst possible place to purchase a family pet. Many of these puppies are bred in "puppy mills," large-scale commercial breeding operations whose sole objective is to turn out as many puppies as possible, as cheaply as possible. The rest are obtained from "backyard breeders," people who know and care little about the breed standard or health and genetics. Whether these pups were bred solely for money, or so the kids could see the miracle of birth, the end result is the same--many of the puppies suffer from health, temperament, and behavioural problems that are the direct result of poor breeding and poor upbringing.

Another problem with pet store purchases is that they are very often done on impulse, without the buyer really knowing or thinking about the requirements of a particular breed.

Finally, if the new owner has questions or problems, there will be no caring, knowledgeable breeder around to provide help and support.

The real irony is that the pet stores typically charge just as much, if not more than a reputable breeder would!

Some people buy pet store puppies in spite of knowing all this, believing that they are "rescuing" them. All this does is encourage the practice.

Please, if you care about dogs, do not purchase one from a pet store! The same goes for backyard breeders, Internet brokers, and other disreputable sources.

Testimonial Letter #1

February 19, 1997

Doreen and Heinz Willner
49 Strathearn Gardens, SW
Calgary Alberta, Canada
T3H 2R1
rentals@westcampers.com

Dear Future Dalmatian Puppy buyer:

We are writing to relate our experience with Echo View Kennels and Bonnie Hetherington, and the acquisition of Wrangler, our beautiful Dalmatian, who came into our lives last month. A chance search on the Internet led us to Echo View Kennels; we were looking for a replacement for our Rocko, a Dalmatian that passed away at the end of November. We were looking for a grown dog rather than a puppy and Wrangler fulfilled all of our wishes, and then some! He is very loving, funny and energetic, a wonderful addition to our home.

From the first telephone conversation we knew that the Hetherington's were more than just breeders, they truly loved and knew all of their dogs, and would only place one of their gang with the right home. When we visited Echo View, situated in beautiful rolling country north of Sylvan Lake, we could see at once that this was a dog haven. All the Dals were full of love and energy, in beautiful condition, and ready to steal our hearts.

Bonnie has been very understanding and helpful, and made sure that Wrangler was right for us--we passed the Wrangler interview and brought our spotted friend home right away! We certainly have no regrets with our choice of breeder and dog. It is reassuring to know that the Hetherington's are there to help us with any questions or problems that we may have. Wrangler has stolen our hearts and has adjusted well to our home, although we think he sometimes remembers the frolicking in the snow with his Dalmatian family and perhaps has some doggie dreams about his first love, Bonnie! Don't worry, Wrangler! We will try to live up to her example!

If anyone were looking for a well tempered, beautiful Dalmatian, we would not hesitate to recommend Echo View Kennels.

Sincerely
Heinz and Doreen Willner

Testimonial Letter #2

Piper Creek Veterinary Clinic
1 166 37428 RR 273
Red Deer, Alberta
T4E 0A1
Phone: 403 346-8288
Fax: 403 346-8286

March 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

I have known Bonnie and John Hetherington since 1998 and during this time I have got to know them and their dogs very well. Bonnie is very knowledgeable and caring when it comes to her dogs. Her dogs are very clean and healthy and if a problem does arise, she deals with it promptly. I know of no health problems that would be of concern to anyone receiving a dog from the Hetherington's. These dogs are also very well behaved and I can honestly tell you that the temperaments of her dogs as a whole are better than any other dogs that I deal with at the clinic.

I have many clients that also deal with her personally and all have only positive comments when speaking of her and her dogs. I would recommend any Dalmatian from Bonnie and John Hetherington. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call.

Thank you,

Greg Linnell D.V.M.

.....
August 2, 2013

To Whom It May Concern

After much research, I had the pleasure of purchasing a puppy from Echoview Dalmatians. I completed all the paperwork giving Bonnie a very clear description of my requirements. I required a very athletic dog, one who could and would enjoy biking, walking, running, blading and especially horseback riding. On June 24, 2011 she picked a puppy from a litter that she felt was up to the task. I have not been disappointed. Everything I asked for plus more, he has been super easy to train. He is gorgeous in looks as well and I am often told that he could have been a champion in the show ring. Wherever I go he gets compliments, and we travel often. He attracts a lot of attention and people praise his calmness. I always tell them, the place to get your perfect canine companion is at Echoview Dalmatians, Rocky Mountain House, Alberta. I am proud to be an owner of one of their dogs.

Please don't hesitate to contact me via email for pictures or a chat.

Charlene Rhode
char.jag@hotmail.com

Testimonial Letter #3

Hi, this is Drager, Echo View's Five Alarm Fire, and the light of our lives. I could think of no better way to tell you about what we think of Echo View Dalmatians and Bonnie and John and the Spotted Gang, than to introduce you to her.

Drager is our first Dalmatian family member. She lives in semi-peaceful co-existence with our 2 cats. I don't think that there is anything or, for that matter, anyone that she doesn't love. That is one thing that you will notice about the Echo View Dals, their great temperaments. They are brought up in a loving, home environment. Their love for each and every puppy and adult shows.

Bonnie and John have always been there to answer any and all questions we had - from should she eat every dandelion in sight (which she does from time to time) to is it normal for her to want to sleep all the time (when she first came home). No matter what the question was, they had the answer and they are still answering questions to this day. Their follow-ups with us have proved time and again their concern and love for all the pups.

As you can see, Drager fits right in with the profession commonly associated with Dals (guess she takes after Gramma Echo!), and now has about 30 god-parents! She has taken well to the noise and bustle around the fire hall and seems right at home in and out of the trucks. Special thanks are due to Bonnie & John's effort in getting our of her formal name accepted. To tell the honest truth, Drager gets along with everyone like a house on fire.

We would not hesitate for an instant to recommend Bonne, John and Echo View Dalmatians to anyone considering adding a Dal to the family. Their love for the breed, their caring and on-going concern are evident from the initial meeting towell, forever! We have absolutely no regrets in our choice of breeder and we recommend them to you as reputable and responsive to both the needs of the owner and the dogs. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us by mail, phone or e-mail.

Sincerely.

Susan & Graham Smyth (and DrAger)

Testimonial Letter #4



Brad & Nancy Dahl
Box 2677
Claresholm, AB
TOL 0T0

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Echo View Dalmatians

We purchased Ch Echoviews Range Rider from Echoview Dalmatians in 2002. We were thoroughly impressed with all aspects of them. Upon initial inquiry into their dogs they sent out a most impressive package on who they were, about their dogs and things to consider about owning a Dalmatian.

As breeders they care about their dogs. We sent in a deposit for our pup, and once they had enough deposits from their clients only then would they breed the dog. In case we were no longer able to care for the dog, we signed an agreement they could buy it back for \$1.00 to ensure the dogs welfare would be looked after. Once the puppies arrived, we got regular updates and photos that we greatly appreciated.

They invited us up to see their facility, meet all the dogs and the puppies. The housing facility is first class. Everywhere you look both inside and outside it is immaculate and the dogs have lots of room to run. For us not being first time Dalmatian owners, we got to once again witness first hand how sweet and social the Dalmatians are. Upon picking up our puppy he had his dewclaws removed, 1st shots and been hearing tested and health inspected.

The Echoview Dalmatians are exceptional dogs. They are smart, sweet natured, beautiful looking, well mannered and a wonderful companion. We would strongly recommend Echoview Dalmatians as people to do business with. You can be confident that they stand behind their dogs. They will answer all questions both before and after taking the dog home.

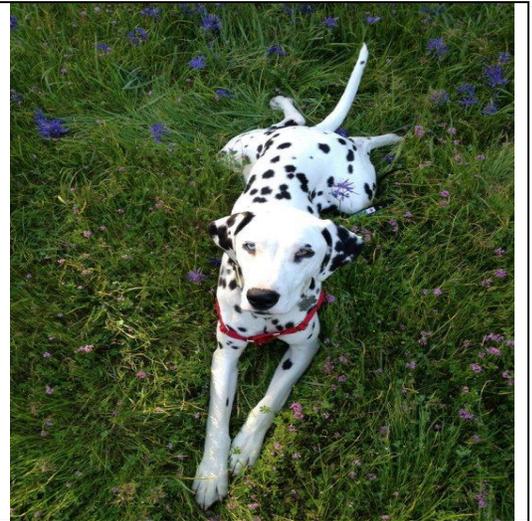
Yours truly,
Brad & Nancy Dahl
Brad & Nancy Dahl

(C)Disney

Testimonial Letter #5

Laura and Levi Kandall
Nanaimo, BC
250-619-9983
laurakandall@hotmail.com

To potential Dalmatian owners,
July 3, 2012



My husband and I researched Dalmatians and Dalmatian breeders for over a year before putting a deposit down on one of Echo View's future litters. Although we had to wait awhile for a puppy to arrive, he was worth it! He is a lovely dog with a great disposition and no vices. So far he has been very easy to train and is constantly proving to people that Dalmatians are neither stupid nor difficult. I believe in nature and nurture and with both great breeding and socializing/training, this dog has become very well known for his obedience and behaviour in the area we live.

Bonnie Hetherington was wonderful to deal with and even after a year I am still in contact with her – discussing Radar and asking any questions that may arise. Bonnie is always willing to answer my questions and is always able to lend tidbits of advice or suggestions for my training.

Radar has been a very healthy pup. We have had no health problems or concerns and since he is so great at the vets, he even volunteers as a blood donor! He is an active dog, but not overly; he enjoys running around and having fun but he will also sleep for days if I let him! He is a great mix of exercise and snuggles. If somebody I knew was considering a Dalmatian, I would send them to Bonnie in a heartbeat! I believe her to be a very responsible breeder who breeds some fantastic pups! If any further recommendation is needed, don't hesitate to contact me so I can chat your ear off about my wonderful Echo View bred dog, Radar.

Sincerely,
Laura Kandall
(and Radar!)



I WANNA CHOSE MY PUPPY.....CRIES THE PUPPY BUYER!

There is an excitement when you are getting a puppy that is hard to explain. You want to meet the litter, snuggle them and then pick your favorite. In the short time you are with the litter you are only getting a snap shot of temperament, attitude, and drive. It is not a complete picture, and that sassy little puppy you like may very well be a heathen in 4 weeks time, a puppy that will require far more work that you are equipped to handle. Conversely, that cute snuggly little puppy that you sat with for 20 minutes may never have the drive you are looking for in an obedience dog... Picking a puppy is an art. A good breeder is your best friend and ally in this.

I have been very lucky with both my Dalmatians I have gotten from Bonnie. My first Dal I had a choice between 2 pups. I picked the sleepy quite snuggly little boy. And he is a wonderful companion. He tries his heart out for me and always gives it 100%. We have successfully gotten our Canadian Championship in Conformation, our Pre Companion Dog in Obedience and almost a dozen titles in NADAC agility.

However, the more I got into performance and conformation showing the more I found his soft nature holding us back. Do not get me wrong, I adore Bryn and would not trade him for the world, but his soft temperament is one of our biggest challenges in training and competition. I must be very careful in how I train so that he does not get discouraged and shut down.

I discussed these challenges with Bonnie at length. Bryn is my heart dog, I would not trade him for anything, but I did want to be more competitive in the ring. I will say it has made me a better more patient handler working with Bryn. He has forced me to learn a lot more than a "ring ready" puppy would have. But we were not competitive with the other Dals in the conformation ring.

Bonnie had a litter of puppies about a year after I got Bryn and I got this wonderful email at 5 weeks. It reads something like this: "Emily, I have your puppy here. She is a beautiful little Liver girl with personality to spare. She is pick bitch and she belongs with you"

I am paraphrasing as I am certain the email was much longer. I thought about it, for a day or so (Bonnie claims it was less haha). I had Bryn who was 1; did I want to add another Dalmatian so close in age?

It came down to Bonnie's and my conversations. I trusted her judgment and went and got Fynlee a couple weeks later. She has been a great match. She is challenging and sassy. She has the drive I wanted and needed to be competitive in the ring. Bonnie knows my training style and personality and picked a puppy that is so well matched. She is tough and hardy, tries her heart out but still has a mind of her own. She handles correction well, which makes her a joy to work with. I am still careful in how I train, but I worry less about her shutting down. She is almost 2 and we have yet to have her shut down, even on day 4 of 30+ degree heat at the dog show she still goes out and tries her very hardest. She loves everyone and everything. Fynlee is brave and outgoing (a lot of this is socialization I did when she was very young, but her Alpha personality does play a role). There are times when she drives me crazy, but it is those things that make her a good match for me and my goal. We finished our Championship before a year and completed her Grand Championship 4 months later with limited showing. I am excited to take her into the obedience ring, and debuted her in agility.

The biggest mistake that many puppy buyers make is they chose the puppy they like the spots of best, or the one that snuggled the most. This is not a good basis for a show or performance dog. If you are looking for a show Dalmatian, or an agility partner, or a performance dog- talk to your breeder. Bonnie knows these puppies. She spends every day with them. She can tell you which ones will be sassy and spunky and which ones will be quiet and reserved. She will be able to help match a puppy to your needs. Do you work a lot and just want a relaxed pet? Or do want a dog that will run 10km with you every morning and still have gas to go to obedience classes 3 times a week? Or run in a full Agility trial weekend?

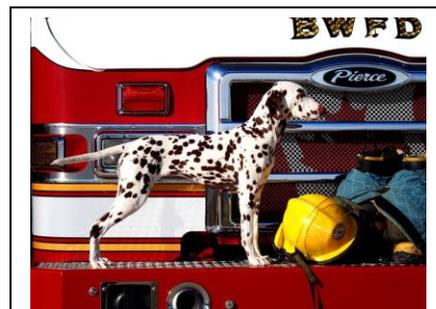
It is not something that anyone wants to hear- everyone wants to pick their own dog. But the risk is picking a dog that is not well matched to your life and goals. I know you filled out the application... It is incredibly thorough. It is important to be honest on this; Bonnie is basing her pups' future on your questionnaire. And you want a dog you can love forever, one that will match your lifestyle and competition goals.

Picking a puppy is an art, the best Breeders will have one or two pups for you to chose from, and ones that they feel are best matched to you and your lifestyle. Trust Bonnie. She has spent many years breeding Dalmatians and the last 8 weeks she has cared for these puppies and watched them grow and interact. She is your best resource in making sure you get the perfect Dalmatian.

Because they all snuggle well on the ride home

Sincerely,

Puppy Buyer: Emily Polack & the Dots



My Fynlee at a photo shoot.

A Day in the Life of Animal Rescue

Hello. You have reached 123-4567, Tender Hearts Rescue. Due to the high volume of calls we have been receiving, please listen closely to the following options and choose the one that best describes you or your situation:

Press 1 if you think we are veterinarians and want free medical advice.

Press 2 if you know we are a rescue organization but want to save money and have us give you free, untrained medical advice anyway.

Press 3 if you make \$200,000 a year but still want us to pay to spay the "stray" in your yard (house).

Press 4 if you have a 10-year-old dog and your 15-year-old son has suddenly become allergic and you need to find the dog a new home right away.

Press 5 if you have three dogs, had a baby and want to get rid of your dogs because you are the only person in the world to have a baby and dogs at the same time.

Press 6 if your dog is sick and needs a vet but you need the money for your vacation.

Press 7 if you just got a brand new puppy and your old dog is having problems adjusting so you want to get rid of the old one right away.

Press 8 if your little puppy has grown up and is no longer small and cute and you want to trade it in for a new model.

Press 9 if you are elderly and want to adopt a cute puppy who is not active and is going to outlive you.

Press 10 if your relative has died and you don't want to care for their elderly dog because it doesn't fit your lifestyle.

Press 11 if you are moving TODAY and need to immediately place your 150 pound, 8-year-old dog.

Press 12 if you want an unpaid volunteer to come to your home TODAY and pick up the dog you no longer want.

Press 13 if you have been feeding and caring for a "stray" for the last three years, are moving and suddenly determine it's not your dog.

Press 14 if you are calling at 6 a.m. to make sure you wake me up before I have to go to work so you can drop a dog off on your way to work.

Press 15 to leave us an anonymous garbled message, letting us know you have left a dog in our yard in the middle of January, which is in fact, better than just leaving the dog with no message.

Press 16 if you are going to get angry because we are not going to take your dog that you have had for 15 years, because it is not our responsibility.

Press 17 if you are going to threaten to take your ten-year-old dog to be euthanized because I won't take it.

Press 18 if you're going to get angry because the volunteers had the audacity to go on vacation and leave the dogs in care of a trusted volunteer who is not authorized to take your personal pet.

Press 19 if you want one of our perfectly trained, housebroken, kid and cat friendly purebred tiny dogs that we have an abundance of.

Press 20 if you want us to take your dog that has a slight aggression problem, i.e. has only bitten a few people and killed your neighbors' cats.

Press 21 if you have already called once and been told we don't take personal surrenders but thought you would get a different person this time with a different answer.

Press 22 if you want us to use space that would go to a stray to board your personal dog while you are on vacation, free of charge, of course.

Press 23 if it is Christmas Eve or Easter morning and you want me to deliver an eight-week-old puppy to your house by 6:30 am before your kids wake up.

Press 24 if you have bought your children a duckling, chick or baby bunny for Easter and it is now Christmas and no longer cute.

Press 25 if you want us to take your female dog who has already had ten litters, but we can't spay her because she is pregnant again and it is against your religion.

Press 26 if you're lying to make one of our younger volunteers feel bad and take your personal pet off your hands.

Press 27 if your cat is biting and not using the litter box because it is declawed, but you are not willing to accept the responsibility that the cat's behavior is altered because of your nice furniture.

Press 28 if your two-year-old male dog is marking all over your house but you just haven't gotten around to having him neutered.

Press 29 if you previously had an outdoor only dog and are calling because she is suddenly pregnant.

Press 30 if you have done "everything" to housebreak your dog and have had no success but you don't want to crate the dog because it is cruel.

Press 31 if you didn't listen to the message asking for an evening phone number and you left your work number when all volunteers are also working and you are angry because no one called you back.

Press 32 if you need a puppy immediately and cannot wait because today is your daughter's birthday and you forgot when she was born.

Press 33 if your dog's coat doesn't match your new furniture and you need a different color or breed.

Press 34 if your new love doesn't like your dog and you are too stupid to get rid of the new friend (who will dump you in the next month anyway) instead of the dog.

Press 35 if you went through all these presses and didn't hear enough. This press will connect you to the sounds of tears being shed by one of our volunteers who is holding a discarded old dog while the vet mercifully frees him from the grief of missing his family.

WE SALUTE YOU, RESCUERS AND VOLUNTEERS!!!



NO CHRISTMAS PUPPIES, PLEASE!

...in loving honor of my own dogs...

The following applies to both puppies and kittens:

To many people, a puppy is the perfect symbol of the true spirit of Christmas. A puppy represents wonderment, innocence, exuberant energy, unconditional love, hope for the future. These are the sorts of gifts that many of us wish we were able to give one another. And that is a good thing. In an increasingly violent, horrifying, mind-numbing and impersonal world, Christmas time reminds many that there are more important values, that there is hope and love, that joy comes from giving of oneself more than it does from taking. To many people, these values bring to mind the loyal, loving, uncorrupted, hauntingly simple innocence of a puppy.

Indeed, many advertisers and artists have noticed this connection. Images of cozy family Christmas mornings often include scenes of floppy-eared puppies peering innocently out of a colorful gift box, their eyes wide with wonderment and awe. As the scene continues, the puppy stumbles preciously over mounds of gift-wrappings, to the great amusement of delighted children who rush to hug the youngster and receive big wet puppy-slurps in return. Mom and Dad smile knowingly in the background as the true meaning of life is celebrated before their eyes. What could possibly be wrong with this picture?

Nothing. As art, as fiction, or as advertisement, it captures a lot of the symbolic spirit of the Christmas celebration perfectly. The appeal of this scene is like that of Norman Rockwell's paintings. As advertisement, it works. It sells products, even those totally unrelated to dogs or to Christmas. As fiction it warms people's hearts. What's wrong, though, is what happens when real people try to re-enact this warm loving scene in their own homes with a real, living puppy playing the role of a prop in this mythic family life-drama.

I am not against dog ownership. I have two dogs myself, and I think the world would be a lot better place if more people had meaningful relationships with dogs. My concern here is with the future of those living beings, those adorable puppies with child-like eyes that show up as gifts on Christmas morning. While images like the one I described may look irresistibly appealing in pictures, art, advertising or fiction, the future for those real-life puppies that start out under the Christmas tree, in all probability, will turn out to be fairly grim. Groups as diverse as, and often at odds with one another as, the Humane Society, canine behavior experts, the Canadian Kennel Club, breed rescue groups, veterinarians, obedience training instructors, and most reputable breeders of sound, healthy dogs, are in strong agreement that live puppies should not be given as Christmas gifts. Here are some of the reasons:

THE ATMOSPHERE OF CHRISTMAS MORNING FRIGHTENS THE PUPPY.

People who study canine development and behavior have found that puppies, like children, go through developmental stages. The first fear/avoidance period in a puppy's development occurs roughly between 7-12 weeks of age. However this is also when the puppy is developmentally best capable of leaving its litter and beginning to form bonds of attachment with its new family. Most breeders agree that this is the right time to send a young puppy home with its adoptive family. However, it is also extremely important not to over-stress or unduly frighten the puppy during this vulnerable time. Fears learned during this first fear/avoidance period can be very, very difficult to overcome later, even with the very best training or behavior modification techniques. In other words, traumatic experiences at this point can have a permanent impact on your puppy's personality as an adult dog.

Your puppy's experiences of leaving its mother and littermates, and its arrival in its new home and introduction to its new family, can permanently affect its ability to bond with and trust humans. The puppy needs to be introduced to its new home and family during a relaxed and quiet, gentle time, with a minimum of loud noises, flashing lights, and screeching children, ringing phones, visiting company, and other types of general hub-bub. Christmas morning is absolutely the worst time, in terms of the puppy's developmental needs, for introducing this newly weaned youngster to its new family.

THE TIMING TEACHES CHILDREN THE WRONG VALUES.

Many families who value pet ownership do so at least partly because of what children can learn from the family pets in terms of care and responsibility, love and loyalty, and respect for other living beings. But think of what happens to the rest of the toys and gifts that start out under the Christmas tree. By Valentine's Day, most of them have been shelved or broken or traded or forgotten. The excitement inevitably wears off, and the once compelling toy becomes something to use, use up, and then discard in favor of something newer.

A living puppy should not be thought of in the same category as a Christmas toy. Children need to learn that a living puppy is being adopted into the family - as a living family member who will contribute much, but who will also have needs of its own, which the rest of the family is making a commitment to try to meet. A puppy that makes its first appearance as a gift item under the Christmas tree is more likely to be thought of by children as an object, as a thing-like toy rather than as a family member. This will not teach one of the most valuable lessons there is to learn from a puppy, which is respect for living beings and concern for others in the form of attention to their needs.

A GOOD BREEDER WILL NOT SEND A PUPPY HOME ON CHRISTMAS MORNING.

Responsible breeders - those who guarantee the health and temperament of their puppies, and who are abreast of current knowledge about canine health, genetics, socialization and development - already know these things and will not send a puppy home with its new owner on Christmas morning. If you were to be able to obtain a puppy from someone who actually let you have it on Christmas Eve so that it could appear under the tree on Christmas morning, that should tell you something. It should warn you that you would be getting your puppy from someone who does not know enough about canine behavior and development to be in the business of breeding or selling puppies.

You would be much better off acquiring your newest family addition from a breeder who knows enough about dogs, and who cares enough about the particular puppies that he breeds and places, to insist that you take the puppy home under conditions which would be best for the puppy. If your breeder does not insist on this, you are purchasing a puppy from a breeder who does not know or care enough about his "product," to be in that business, and you should acquire your pup from someone else instead.

THE PUPPY GROWS UP AND HAS NEEDS.

Many people have a somewhat romantic view of what dog- ownership is like. This romanticism can become exaggerated by the warmth and loving kindness associated with the Christmas season. People who have not had dogs before, or who have not had dogs since they were themselves children, or who have recently had a dog but one who was a canine senior citizen trained and socialized to the family's ways long ago, often are completely unaware of how much work it is to raise a puppy from infancy into a good adult canine companion. They may have mental images of happy times romping with the dog on the beach, or curling up in front of the fireplace, of playing Frisbee in the park or of hunting with a loyal companion. All these are things they might well eventually enjoy with their canine companions. But they may have temporarily forgotten, or perhaps not ever really have known, how incredibly much work it takes to raise and socialize a dog from puppy hood to that point of mature canine companionship.

Unlike cats, who generally do not need extensive training and socialization, dogs require a huge commitment from at least one person who is prepared to teach the dog what behaviors are expected of him, under a wide variety of circumstances. Adults may believe that they remember a Faithful Fido from their youth who seemed never to need training; Faithful Fido always seemed to "just know" what was expected of him. But those adults were children at the time, and they did not necessarily see all the work that their parents and others put into training and socializing Fido. Professionals, who deal with dogs regularly, call this common fantasy the "Lassie Syndrome." That is, everyone hopes for that imaginary dog who has E.S.P. and who automatically knows how to behave in human company without needing any training. In other words, they want a dog like "Lassie." But "Lassie" was a fictional character. "Lassie" actually was owned and trained by Rudd Weatherwax, one of the most hardworking and successful professional trainers of dogs in the history of US television and film. Rudd Weatherwax spent his entire lifetime training "Lassie" to do those things which looked spontaneous in the fictional story lines. No real, non-fictional dog is actually like that.

Real dogs not only must be housetrained - most owners are aware of that need; they also must be taught not to chew the furniture, taught not to jump on their owners, taught not to play-bite, taught not to bowl over the toddler, taught not to dig holes in the yard, taught to come when they are called, taught not to eat the homework or the woodwork, taught not to swipe food off the table, taught not to growl at strangers or bark at the mail carrier, taught to walk on a leash without dragging their owner down the block, taught to allow their toenails to be cut and their coats to be groomed without biting the groomer, taught not to shred feather pillows and down comforters, taught not to steal the baby's toys, taught not to growl at their owner's mother-in-law, taught to sit, stay, and to lay down when and where the owner tells them to, and to wait there until the owner says they may get up (absolutely essential commands for the dog's own safety), taught not to escape out the front door or out of the yard or out of the car when the owner looks away for just a second ... all of these things and many more are not "natural" canine behaviors; they must be taught by owners who are willing to spend the time and the effort doing so.

The reason I mention this is because lack of owner knowledge about the amount of work required to socialize, raise, and train a puppy, is one of the main factors contributing to a huge national problem: the problem of adolescent and young adult dogs being "given up" by owners within the first year or so of having acquired the animal. Untrained, unsocialized puppies might be "cute" and "natural" but they are tolerable only for a few weeks, if even that. Then they start to be nuisances. Then they start to be major problems. Sooner or later they become downright dangerous to themselves or to their families and neighbors.

It is often between the ages of 7-14 months that the dog (sadly, reluctantly) is brought to the pound or to the vet for euthanasia by a frustrated owner as an "uncontrollable" dog, or as a dog with "behavior problems." Or perhaps it is taken to a shelter in the faint hope that someone else will adopt it. (Chances are almost certain that it won't; nobody else wants an untrained, unsocialized dog's behavior problems either.) By that age the untrained dog is a full-grown and unruly adolescent. It might have bitten a family member, or threatened a neighbor's child, necessitating the involvement of a town animal control officer. Or the dog may have run away and been hit by a car. Or it may be adopted into a series of homes, one after another, none of which can adequately control it, until it finally winds up on death row at the pound.

These tragic dogs, those wonderful canines known to generations as "Man's Best Friend," never had a chance. According to statistics kept by the Humane Society of the United States, the majority of puppies and kittens born in the United States never reach their second birthdays, even though their natural lifespan should be many times that length. They die from being hit by cars, euthanized by owners, starving or being fatally injured in fights with other animals - including wild animals, some rabid in many areas - after having run away from their owners, or being taken to shelters, pounds or vets, where they are "put to sleep," usually before the age of two. In other words, many, many canine deaths are squarely the responsibility of owners who did not understand what it would involve properly to train and socialize their puppy, or who did understand, but did not do the necessary work.

IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

"Christmas puppies" often are impulse purchases, in a spirit of love and giving and generosity that goes with the season, but without the hard self-assessment that goes into asking oneself if one has the time and the energy and the inclination to give the necessary commitment to raising and socializing and educating that puppy. Better to get that new puppy at a less emotionally charged time of the year, when the decision to add a dog to the family is a less impulsive and more carefully considered one, uninfluenced by seasonal generosity of spirit, which might just fade a bit after the tree comes down and the lights are put away.

If you are absolutely set upon getting your family a puppy for Christmas, consider this alternative instead: Purchase a leash, a collar, a good book on raising a puppy, a gift certificate for a veterinary checkup, a gift certificate for puppy socialization classes from one of the local obedience instructors, a book or video tape on the topic of how to select the right dog for your family (there are several, including even a computer program that purports to help you do this), or a gift subscription to one of the dog-oriented magazines.

Wrap these up and put them under the tree. As family members unwrap the various pieces of the "puzzle", their delight and anticipation will grow. They will gradually understand what this present is! Then, after the Christmas tree is taken down and the frenzy of the holiday season is behind, the family can once again enjoy together the anticipation and excitement of discussing and selecting a breed, selecting a breeder, selecting an individual pup, and so on. This will increase the family's mutual commitment to, and investment in, the well being of the newest family member. It will be a project the family has done together, which is a wonderful way for any adoption to commence. This will not decrease the enjoyment of your new puppy; I guarantee it. It will increase it by many fold. And it will be a better start both for the puppy, and for the long-term relationship between dog and owner(s). A dog with a good introduction to its adoptive family is much more likely to become a long-term companion rather than just another tragic statistic.



I AM YOUR PUPPY

I am your Puppy and I will love you until the end of the Earth, but please know a few things about me.

I am a Puppy and this means that my intelligence and capacity for learning are the same as an 8-month-old child.

I am a Puppy and I will chew EVERYTHING I can get my teeth on. This is how I explore and learn about the world. Even HUMAN children put things in their mouths. It's up to you to guide me to what is mine to chew and what is not.

I am a Puppy and I cannot hold my bladder for longer than 1 - 2 hours. I cannot "feel" that I need to poop until it is actually beginning to come out. I cannot vocalize nor tell you that I need to go, and I cannot have "bladder and bowel control" until 6 - 9 months. Do not punish me if you have not let me out for 3 hours and I tinkle. It is your fault. As a Puppy, it is wise to remember that I NEED to go potty after: Eating, Sleeping, Playing, And Drinking and around every 2 - 3 hours in addition. If you want me to sleep through the night, then do not give me water after 7 or 8 p.m. A crate will help me learn to housebreak easier, and will avoid you being mad at me.

I am a Puppy and accidents WILL happen, please be patient with me! In time I will learn.

I am a Puppy and I like to play. I will run around, and chase imaginary monsters, chase your feet and your toes and 'attack' you, chase fuzzleballs, other pets, and small kids. It is play; it's what I do. Do not be mad at me or expect me to be sedate, mellow and sleep all day. If my energy level is too much for you, maybe you could consider an older rescue from a shelter or Rescue group. My play is beneficial, use your wisdom to guide me in my play with appropriate toys, and activities like chasing a rolling ball, or gentle tug games, or plenty of chew toys for me. If I nip you too hard, talk to me in "dog talk", by giving a loud YELP, I will usually get the message, as this is how dogs communicate with one another. If I get too rough, simply ignore me for a few moments, or put me in my crate with an appropriate chew toy.

I am a Puppy and hopefully you would not yell, hit, strike, kick or beat a 6-month-old human infant, so please do not do the same to me. I am delicate and also very impressionable. If you treat me harshly now, I will grow up learning to fear being hit, spanked, and kicked or beat. Instead, please guide me with encouragement and wisdom. For instance, if I am chewing something wrong, say, "No chew!" and hand me a toy I CAN chew. Better yet, pick up ANYTHING that you do not want me to get into. I can't tell the difference between your old sock and your new sock, or an old sneaker and your \$200 Nikes.

I am a Puppy and I am a creature with feelings and drive much like your own, but yet also very different. Although I am NOT a human in a dog suit, neither am I an unfeeling robot who can instantly obey your every whim. I truly DO want to please you, and be a part of your family, and your life. You got me (I hope) because you want a loving partner and companion, so do not relegate me to the backyard when I get bigger, do not judge me harshly but instead mold me with gentleness, guidelines and training into the kind of family member you want me to be.

I am a Puppy and I am not perfect, and I know you are not perfect either. I love you anyway. So please, learn all you can about training, puppy behaviors and caring for me from your breeder, veterinarian, books on dog care and even researching on the computer! Learn about my particular breed and it's "characteristics", as it will give you understanding and insight into WHY I do all the things I do. Please teach me with love, patience, the right way to behave and socialize me with training in a puppy class or obedience class, we will BOTH have a lot of fun together.

I am a Puppy and I want more than anything to love you, to be with you, and to please you. Won't you please take time to understand how I work? We are the same you and I, in that we both feel hunger, pain, thirst, discomfort, fear, but yet we are also very different and must work to understand one another's language, body signals, wants and needs. Someday I will be a handsome dog, hopefully one you can be proud of and one that you will love as much as I love you.

Love,
Your Puppy



MUST READ.....

Rambling thoughts of a good friend...

I sometimes wonder how we can clarify what having a Dal puppy is like. We try, I know. But, so many don't comprehend the full impact.

A Dal puppy is.....just like a people baby. It cries, it pees, it eats constantly, and it wants to be held and cuddled.

Instead of spitting up. it usually chews. Well, it spits up too! (That's why I just bought a new mattress!)

A Dal puppy will demand your most far reaching patience....So do your people kids.

A Dal puppy will look at you with adoring eyes....so do your people kids when they want something.

While I too am not a breeder, I do have several different breeds as well as friends who are breeders and am not aware of ANY that return funds to buyers (they do all have 'must return to breeder clauses) and having dealt with the public for over 30 years, I think this is smart.

I would venture to think that breeders offer a full refund policy thinking it will ensure the pup's safety, when in fact it actually rewards and encourages people from taking responsibility and thinking their decision through. There's a proven psychology that something that is free (a full-refund makes something potentially free in the mind of the buyer) will be worth exactly that - NOTHING. Free generally encourages a lack of long-term commitment and that's why free things are usually cheap items like plastic pens.

As breeders, potential buyers are paying for your expertise, knowledge, as well as the dog that comes with it. A full refund may inadvertently cheapen the very profession you strive for and as I said prior, rewards the wrong behaviors. With all of that said, each breeder has to do what they think is right and every circumstance always comes with unique situations. However, refunds probably shouldn't even be mentioned if the goal is to encourage a buyer to REALLY think about what they're about to purchase (now if you chose to later, that's a different story).

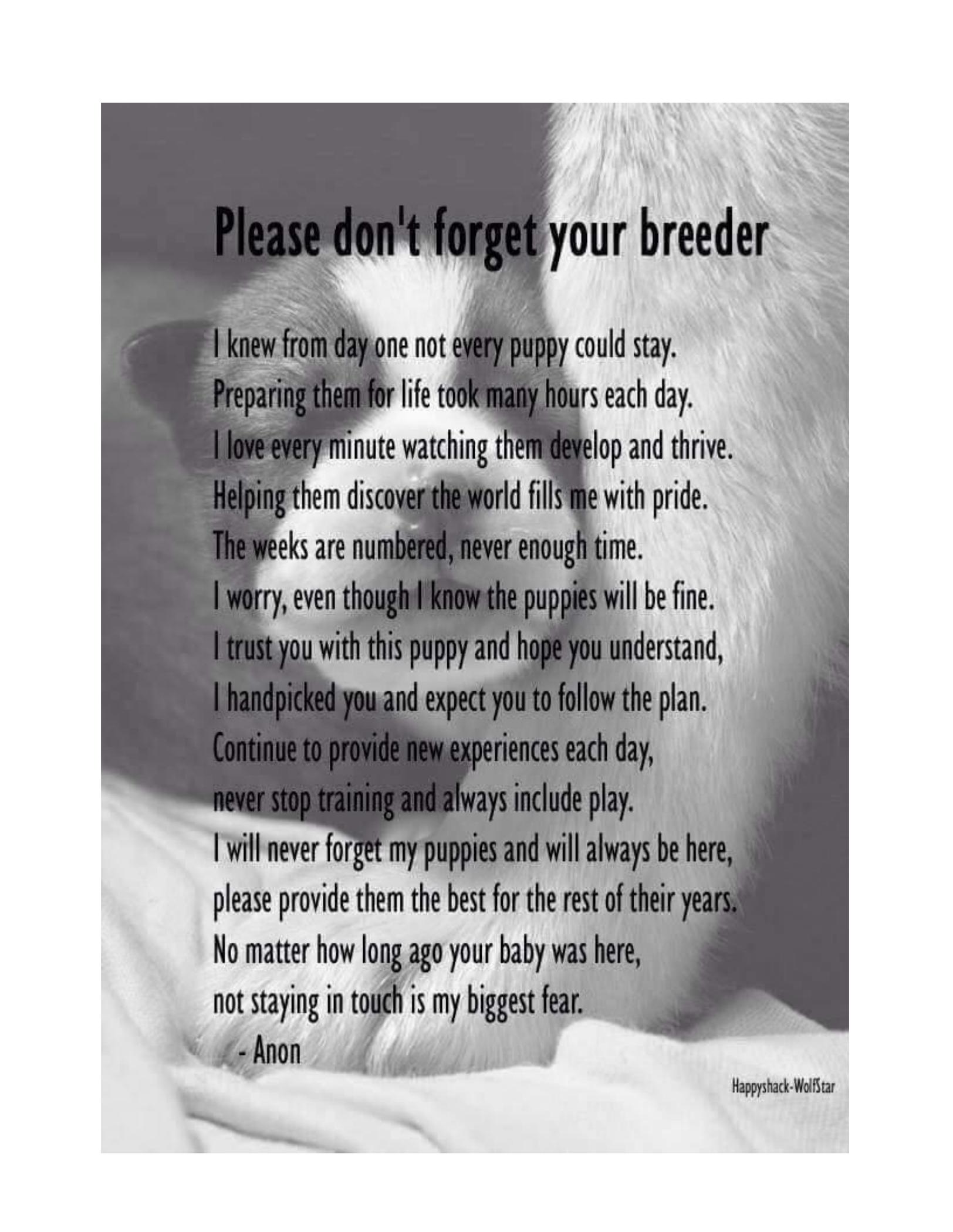
While everyone has contracts, to adapt to today's 'take no responsibility public' I highly suggest that each breeder create several info sheets and as you present them, have the potential client sign each one as you go, as well as the contract that is an over view of exactly what is on each sheet.

This shows you mean business and it gives you the opportunity to say important things several times. Here are a couple that come to mind:

- A list of what is included in the sale price (health certificates, your knowledge, etc.) and add to the bottom that their fees are non-refundable (after all, you still incur costs regardless if they keep the dog or not).
- A sheet that outlines what is to happen if the dog doesn't work out. Sure it's in the contract, but it's also in another place. Add in penalties if they don't follow the return policy (they are responsible for XYZ costs).
- Have each of these sheets 'linked' so they refer to one another.

Just a few thoughts. My overall point is that you guys are experts in what you do and should be treated as such. And this applies to deposits too! Non-refundable...period!

Shelley A Glendel
A good friend of this breeder....



Please don't forget your breeder

I knew from day one not every puppy could stay.
Preparing them for life took many hours each day.
I love every minute watching them develop and thrive.
Helping them discover the world fills me with pride.
The weeks are numbered, never enough time.
I worry, even though I know the puppies will be fine.
I trust you with this puppy and hope you understand,
I handpicked you and expect you to follow the plan.
Continue to provide new experiences each day,
never stop training and always include play.
I will never forget my puppies and will always be here,
please provide them the best for the rest of their years.
No matter how long ago your baby was here,
not staying in touch is my biggest fear.

- Anon