

The Following Article was found at the following address:

<http://www.cnasa.ca/find%20breeder.htm>

What is a Reputable Breeder?

Reputable breeders will have the best interests of the breed and of your dog foremost in mind. These breeders will do their very best to make sure that you go home with a healthy, temperamentally sound dog that is well matched to your expectations and requirements. Years of effort go into developing sound and healthy Aussies.

Look for the following indicators:

- **Registration certificate:** By law, a breeder who sells you a dog as "purebred" is obliged to provide you with registration papers for the dog within 6 months of the date of purchase.
- **Permanent identification:** The Canadian Kennel Club requires that a purebred dog be permanently identified before leaving the breeder's premises. Permanent identification is a microchip or a tattoo.
- **Kennel name:** An established breeder has his or her kennel name registered with the Canadian Kennel Club.
- **Health clearances:** Ask for proof that the puppy's parents have been cleared for hip dysplasia (look for OFA clearances) and have had a recent eye exam by a certified canine ophthalmologist (these may be called "CERF" exams; a CERF report can be sent to and registered with the Canine Eye Registry Foundation). The puppy's eyes should also have been cleared by an ophthalmologist, and the breeder should provide you with a copy of the signed eye exam report. In addition, your puppy should have received its first set of immunizations.
- **Contract:** Reputable breeders sell their puppies under a written contract. This contract specifies their expectations from the puppy buyer and their commitments to the puppy buyer. A contract is meant to protect the interests of all involved, including the puppy. For example, there may be a Spay/Neuter clause that requires the buyer to have the puppy spayed or neutered. Reputable breeders will also guarantee their puppies against any debilitating hereditary defect and, should one occur, offer a replacement or a refund.
- **Reference checking:** A reputable breeder will want to find about you, what kind of person you are, what kind of home a dog will have with you. This breeder will refuse to sell a puppy if she or he doesn't feel that a home is right for his or her puppy. And in return, don't be afraid to ask for references from a breeder. Reputable breeders will gladly provide you with references from people who have bought dogs from them.

Other things to look for:

- Dogs are raised in a clean, healthy environment.

- The breeder is knowledgeable about his or her breed, is aware of any specific breed problems, is open about such problems, and does his or her best to prevent them.
- The breeder provides you with "after sales" advice, such as recommending a veterinarian and advising you on how to take care of your new family member. Does he or she encourage puppy buyers to stay in touch on a regular basis?
- The breeder titles his or her dogs in conformation, herding, and performance venues:  
Showing and trialing his or her dogs is a sign that a breeder cares about the Australian Shepherd breed standard and strives to adhere to it in his or her breeding program. Look for the initials Ch (Champion) before a dog's registered name or initials like HS, HI, HA (Herding Started, Herding Intermediate, & Herding Advanced) after its registered name.  
Performance titles on a dog indicate that the breeder is interested in showcasing and encouraging the breed's versatility. Performance venues include Agility, Obedience, Rally, Flyball, and Tracking, for example. Look for initials such as AGI (Agility Intermediate) & CDX (Companion Dog Excellent) after a dog's registered name.