

PUPPY SHOPPING - THE INTERNET, NEWSPAPERS AND DOG MAGAZINES

Can you get a Bernese Mountain Dog?

Answer - YES!

We want you to have the best possible chance for a positive experience with your Bernese, an experience that will make you happy to have the dog as a part of your life.

It's easy to find Bernese breeder websites, ads in the newspaper, breed information websites and pictures of beautiful Bernese.

The search for a pup and a breeder can be as simple as clicking on a website, picking up the classified section of the newspaper, leafing through a dog magazine with breeder ads, looking at a few dogs pictured on a site or listed in an ad and picking up the phone or emailing a breeder.

If the dogs' pictures look good, what could possibly be more important than that? If the breeder has a pup available, what more do you need to know? It seems pretty simple and straight forward. You just want a puppy, not for showing, not for breeding – a dog to be your friend, a loving puppy to become your child's pet.

You want one; the breeder you found has one. Buy the puppy.

But wait! Just what are you buying? You think you are buying a puppy that will become a wonderful pet. Will you be that lucky? Did the breeder seem to care about you? Did they ask you any questions about the things you wanted in a dog? Or did they quickly rush you into completing the transaction? Did the breeder ask you for your credit card number and tell you no problem; the Berner pup will be on your doorstep as soon as possible?

Better breeders take a PERSONAL interest in knowing what the dog's life will be like and, in YOU as a person, as well as a future owner of one of their dogs. We encourage you to purchase your pup from a breeder who keeps their dogs well and raises litters in a clean, nurturing environment. Make sure your puppy's breeder is committed to offering pups lots of human contact and the pups are socialized.

✓ SMART SHOPPER TIP

You should never buy a Berner puppy if you will have no direct and ongoing contact with the breeder. Never buy a pup if you have no idea of the conditions under which the pup was raised.

**Smart puppy shoppers buy their pup directly from a breeder...
never from a broker, pet store, or middleman.**

✗ DON'T FALL FOR SLICK SALES PITCHES or GET RIPPED OFF BY PROFITEERS or PET STORES that charge puppy buyers the same price for Berner pups as conscientious breeders charge! Pet stores cater to impulsive puppy buyers.



For more information on the pitfalls of purchasing a puppy from a Pet Store or profiteers please see http://www.stoppupmills.org/puppy_buying_tips.html. Price is not necessarily a reflection of quality nor does it reflect the upfront and ongoing services offered by a breeder you might think are essential at the time of purchase or those you could potentially desire later.

BEWARE

Do not send any money to any breeder/seller as a deposit before developing a clear understanding of the breeder/seller's priorities and focus. Do not send money to anyone before learning about the health, orthopedic and temperament status of the puppy's parents. It is best to work with a breeder who has and can provide extensive health and temperament information on dogs in the puppy's family tree (pedigree).

Breeders you contact should provide you with:

- ✓ a 3 or 4 generation pedigree;
- ✓ documentation that the sire and dam of your puppy are AKC registered or registered through a legitimate foreign registry.
- ✓ copies of certifications issued by OFA, CERF, OVC... for genetic testing (hips, elbows, eyes, etc...)

✗ AVOID DOING BUSINESS WITH ANY BREEDER WHO TELLS YOU: "ORTHOPEDIC CLEARANCES AND GENETIC TESTING IS ONLY FOR SHOW DOGS"

Keep in mind the heartache and cost of owning a Berner that is affected by orthopedic conditions or inherited diseases – these problems affect pets as well as show dogs. Better breeders make every effort to produce litters of puppies that have the greatest potential to grow into healthy, happy companion dogs. **In order to breed the best dogs possible ...**

✓ All Bernese Mountain Dogs used for breeding should undergo genetic screening for hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia, inherited eye disorders and other hereditary health conditions that have occurred in families of Bernese. Better breeders take into consideration genetic test results when determining the breeding suitability of individual dogs as well as mating pairs.

✓ **When possible purchase your pup locally.**

Make arrangements to meet the breeder and their dogs at the breeder's home – before you make the decision to work with that breeder. Observe the conditions under which a breeder's dogs are kept and ask the breeder about where litters are raised. If you are buying your pup long distance and can not visit the breeder's home, it is extremely important for you to learn everything you can about how the breeder keeps their dogs.

✗ AVOID INVOLVEMENT WITH ANY BREEDER WHO WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO ARRANGE A VISIT TO MEET THEIR DOGS/SEE LITTERS AT THEIR HOME – it is probable the conditions under which dogs live and pup's are raised are less than optimal when breeders don't want puppy buyer's to visit.

BEWARE

High demand for Bernese puppies coupled with the short supply of well bred pups has given rise to exploitation of dogs. In today's market dog brokers obtain dogs from commercial breeders in the US or import dogs for resale. **Better breeders would never sell a puppy to a broker or reseller.** There has also been an increase in 'back yard breeders' selling unregistered pups produced by females which were sold as pet quality dogs on AKC Limited Registrations. AKC Limited Registration is used by breeders to designate a dog as not suitable for breeding. These pups are sold for the same price as pups from a responsible breeder, but often "as is" without the clearly defined health guarantees or the post sale service responsible breeders provide. Make sure you're getting more for your money than just a dog. Make sure the breeder you choose is charging top prices for pups produced from well thought out breeding program in which health, soundness and temperament are of paramount importance.

BEWARE

Fully investigate any imported Berner pup that may be offered to you. There are reputable breeders who export pups to other countries. They work directly with puppy buyers – not with resellers. Dog brokers/importers are purchasing dogs from breeders located in economically depressed countries. Some breeders overseas sell pups to brokers for as little as \$100.00 per pup. The pups are often shipped, several to a small carrier, can arrive sickly, malnourished and without a caring person at this end of their journey. Dog brokers/importers have little or no useful knowledge about the Bernese breed or the families of dogs used to produce pups. Profit is their motivation and goal. Brokers mark up the price to at or above an amount for pups sold by reputable caring breeders. These resellers are making a lot of money selling imported puppies to unwitting buyers. The brokers who receive these imports care nothing for where the pups came from, and care nothing about who gets them or what the new owners end up doing with the dogs. Not only that but if something goes wrong with the dog, support for owners with dogs facing serious health or behavior problems is often lacking. Get references and check them! Do not believe for one second the stories concocted to sell you on the idea that imported Bernese are healthier, longer-lived, and are always raised under the best of conditions if you have no way to verify what is being told to you has any truth to it.



BEWARE

Of anyone willing to sell you a breeding stock animal without first making sure you will be committed to becoming a responsible breeder and you are prepared to assume lifetime involvement with and responsibility for any offspring produced by your dog.

BEWARE

Do not send money as a deposit before you've seen a written sales contract. Count on the fact that if you do not have a written contract, pre sale verbal agreements made between sellers and buyers often result in seller and buyer confusion and dissatisfaction. Written contracts can be confusing as well. Do not sign any contract with terms or conditions you do not fully understand. If you have questions about any phrasing or obligations you may be agreeing to by signing a breeder's contract – discuss your concerns! ***Special note - Pet Store contracts should be reviewed by an attorney since most of them contain fine print which may limit refunds and returns or affect conditions under which 'guarantees' are applicable.**

A word on Contracts

Buyer/seller obligations and responsibilities are typically covered in written contracts.

✓ **If you are looking for a 'pet' quality companion dog, it is advisable to locate a breeder who sells pups on AKC Limited Registration with the stipulation the dog be spayed or neutered.** Getting involved with a breeder who wants you to return your dog for breeding or showing can become burdensome for pet owners, not to mention the extra stress the dog experiences when uprooted from the owner's home and care. Terms and conditions in contracts pertaining to the buyer's responsibilities and requirements to feed, exercise, attend training classes, conditions for return of dog, as well as replacement/ refunds and any other seller/buyer obligations should be clearly understood. If you can not agree to terms in a breeder's contract, take that as a cue that you and the breeder do not share the same focus which can create problems for you, the breeder and the dog. Written contracts for co-ownership of breeding dogs, arrangements for sharing custody of a dog, requirements to finish an AKC Championship before breeding, requirements to conduct genetic testing, future breeding management decisions and processes for choosing mating pairs, arrangements for puppy placement if a litter is produced, guarantees related to quality, should be clearly spelled out and financial obligations for both buyer and seller well defined.

PUPPY SHOPPER SOLUTIONS

We suggest you contact a Bernese Club member breeder.

Club breeders, just like non club breeders have different approaches to dog ownership and management and to breeding and selling dogs. As a puppy buyer, you should be focused on finding a breeder that you both like and respect. You should have the same or similar views on raising and keeping dogs. Remember... in all likelihood you will choose your pup's breeder months before the puppies are actually born. Since many conscientious breeders have waiting lists, you are truly choosing a breeder and not choosing a puppy.

There may be times during the dog's life when you need advice or help. When talking with breeders ask how much time the breeder has to spend answering your questions after you have purchased the dog. Ask breeders about how they approach resolving problems that might arise related to the puppy's or adult dog's health and behavior management. Ask if phone or email communication post sale is preferred. Don't assume every breeder, particularly those who produce and sell many pups, has an unlimited amount of time to commit to answering questions on demand. Better breeders make themselves available to answer their puppy buyer's questions and want owners to touch base from time to time.



BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG BREEDERS - BREEDER REFERRALS

National Breed Club Websites in North America

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America (BMDCA) <http://www.bmdca.org>

BMDCA Breeder Referral (database - searchable by location) <http://www.bmdca.org/olbr/>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Canada <http://www.bmdcc.ca/>

Bernese Mountain Dog Regional Clubs - Websites / Breeder Referral Contacts

Regional Bernese Mountain Dog Clubs are the place to start your search for a breeder if you want to purchase a Bernese Mountain Dog puppy.

► Make plans to attend a Regional Club event!

Club events offer a friendly, casual environment in which you can meet dogs and talk with their owners and breeders. Regional Club websites list dates and times for club events.

The Regional Clubs' Breeder Referral programs goal is to help buyers find a Berner puppy that has the best chance to live a long healthy life from a conscientious, supportive, knowledgeable breeder. When contacting Regional Club breeders, be honest and open about what you are looking for in a dog and talk with the breeder about why you think a Berner would be a good match for your goals and reasons for keeping a companion dog.

Club breeders will want you to tell them about:

- type of dog, pets(s) you own(ed);
- your current household members, schedule and lifestyle;
- whether you are looking for a 'Pet' or 'Show' or 'Working' dog;
- activities you think you might have an interest in pursuing with your Berner;
- the area in which you live, type of housing, and safe areas where you can exercise your Berner.

Regional Clubs, listed on the next page, have up to date information about their Club's member breeders who are expecting litters and are looking for caring homes for Bernese Mountain Dog puppies and Berner breeders or owners who want to place older dogs.

Regional Club Rescue Programs may have a rescued Berner available for adoption.

Regional Bernese Mountain Dog Clubs 2009

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Alaska

Geographic Area Served - Alaska

Web Site: <http://www.bmdcofak.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Central Virginia

Geographic Area Served - Central Virginia

Website: <http://www.bmdccv.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Finger Lakes

Geographic Area Served - New York

Web Site: <http://www.bmdcfl.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Greater Seattle

Geographic Area Served - Washington State, Oregon

Web Site: <http://www.bmdcgs.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of the Greater Twin Cities

Geographic Area Served - Minnesota, Western Wisconsin, North

Dakota, South Dakota and Iowa

Web Site: <http://www.twincitiesbmd.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Hampton Roads

Geographic Area Served - Southeastern and Coastal Virginia

Web Site: <http://www.bmdchr.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Nashoba Valley

Geographic Area Served - New England - Connecticut - Massachusetts -

Maine - New Hampshire - Rhode Island - Vermont

Web Site: <http://www.bmdcnv.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Northeastern Illinois

Geographic Area Served - Northern Illinois

Web Site: <http://www.bmdcni.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Northern California

Geographic Area Served - Northern California

Web Site: <http://www.norcalbernese.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Oregon

Geographic Area Served - Oregon

Web Site: <http://www.bmdco.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of the Rockies

Geographic Area Served - Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, Idaho,

Utah

Web Site: <http://www.bmd.org/bmdcr.html>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Southeastern Wisconsin

Geographic Area Served - Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Northern Indiana

Web Site: <http://www.bmdcsew.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Southern California

Geographic Area Served - Southern California

Web Site: <http://www.bmdcsc.org>

Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Watchung

Geographic Area Served - New Jersey, Southern New York, Eastern Pennsylvania

Web Site: <http://www.bmdcw.org>

Blue Ridge Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - North Carolina and Southern Virginia

Web Site: <http://blueridgebmdc.org>

Chattahoochee Valley Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, Alabama

Web Site: <http://www.cvbmdc.org>

Grand Canyon State Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - Arizona

Web Site: <http://www.gcsbmdc.org>

Heartland Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas

Web Site: <http://www.hbmdc.org>

Heart of Michigan Bernese Mountain Dog Club, Inc.

Geographic Area Served - Michigan

Web Site: <http://www.hmbmdc.org>

Helderberg Bernese Mountain Dog Club of New York

Geographic Area Served - New York (Capital district, central-eastern New York)

Web Site: <http://www.hbmdcny.org>

Inland Northwest Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - Idaho, Montana, eastern Washington, eastern Oregon

Web Site: <http://www.inwbmdc.com>

Kentuckiana Bernese Mountain Dog Club Inc.

Geographic Area Served - Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee

Web Site: <http://www.kbmdc.org>

Lone Star Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - Texas

Web Site: <http://www.lonestarbmd.org>

Mason Dixon Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - Maryland, Pennsylvania

Web Site: <http://www.mdbmdc.org>

North Coast Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Ohio

Geographic Area Served - Ohio, Western Pennsylvania, Western New York

Web Site: <http://www.northcoastbmdco.org/>

Northern Arizona Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - Northern Arizona

(President) email Steve.Dudley@nau.edu

Pike's Peak Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - Arizona

Web Site: <http://www.ppbmdc.org>

Potomac Valley Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - Maryland, Northern Virginia, District of Columbia, southeastern & south central Pennsylvania

Web Site: <http://www.pvbmdc.org>

Sierra West Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - Northern California

Web Site: <http://www.sierrawest.org>

Three Rivers Bernese Mountain Dog Club

Geographic Area Served - Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, New York, Ohio

Web Site: <http://www.trbmdc.org>