



**T**he Poodle is a highly intelligent breed that thrives on human interaction and makes a wonderful companion. One of the greatest aspects of the Poodle is that it comes in three distinctly different sizes and in a variety of colors. Poodles seem to take readily to obedience and agility training, and are enjoying roles as hospital therapy dogs, hunting dogs, and down home life mates. They are also appreciated for the fact that they do not shed and seem to be tolerated to a higher degree by allergy sufferers. All this coupled with an air of independence and a great sense of humor makes the Poodle one of the most highly sought after purebred breeds.



### BUYING ON IMPULSE

The decision to buy a dog should be the most educated decision you can make. At all costs, avoid making a decision to buy an animal based on emotions of the moment. That can be anything from sympathy for the animal (I had to get it out of that mess it was living in.) to pressure from the family (Please, Daddy, please, please, please...) Dogs can live for a significant number of years so it's extremely important that you purchase the right animal for your circumstances.

### THREE VARIETY OF POODLES

Those interested in the Poodle should be aware there are three varieties of Poodles; Toy, Miniature, and Standard. *There is no officially recognized Poodle variety such as a "Royal" Standard, a "Tea Cup" Toy or a "Tiny Toy" Poodle.* These are all just marketing terminologies to facilitate the sale of animals that are in reality just dramatically over or under in size from the norm.

**TOY POODLE-** The Toy is the smallest of the three varieties of Poodle. For the conformation show ring the Toy should be no larger than 10" high at the shoulder. This more diminutive variety of Poodle is particularly well suited to apartment life or as a traveling companion for retired people.

**MINIATURE POODLE-** The Miniature Poodle is a medium-sized animal limited to 15" high at the shoulder for the show ring. Still it's a sturdy compromise between the Toy and the Standard, suitable both to apartment life as well as the hardy lifestyle of a family with children.

**STANDARD POODLE-** The Standard is the largest of the three varieties with no restriction on size. Typically Standards will be about 21" to 27" high at the shoulder with the females usually a little smaller than the males. Being a larger, more substantial animal, the Standard will usually require a little more room to roam than the other two varieties

### CONSIDERATIONS

**BE REALISTIC-** Certainly the size of the animal and perhaps what color it is can be important considerations when it comes to purchasing a companion animal. However, every breed has advantages as well as some disadvantages. For example, the Poodle is not a low-maintenance animal in that it requires regular, periodic grooming, some of which most people can do themselves, and some they perhaps can not. A buyer needs to learn as much as they can about any breed in which he or she is interested. Purchasing what you thought was a vision can often end up being a nightmare, both for you and the animal. Buyers need to educate themselves before making a purchase.

**HEALTH ISSUES-** Animal health is equally important to consider, and we're not talking about the health of the animal at the time of purchase. While that's certainly important, there are longer-term considerations as well. Genetically-inherited disorders (some of which do not manifest themselves for several

years) are present in virtually every line of living creature in the world and Poodles, unfortunately, is no exception.

All three varieties of Poodles have been diagnosed with hip dysplasia, progressive retinal atrophy, cataracts, seizure disorders, thyroid disorders, Cushings and von Willebrand's disease. Other genetic disorders occur in each variety as well.

The Toy and Miniature Poodles are susceptible to a couple of orthopedic problems called Legg-Perthes and Luxating Patellas. The Standard Poodle may be afflicted with gastric torsion (bloat), sebaceous adenitis with hyper-keratosis, or with an auto immune disorder such as Addison's disease or auto immune hemolytic anemia.

#### **HIP DYSPLASIA-**

*Description-* This is a malformation of the hip joint wherein. The animal experiences pain and discomfort in movement and can exhibit symptoms of lameness.

*Method of Diagnosis-* radiography (x-ray).

*Certification-* There are three registries available for certifications; OFA, GDC, and Penn-Hip.

#### **PROGRESSIVE RETINAL ATROPHY (PRA)**

*Description -* PRA is a gradual deterioration of the retina of the eye. Initially the animal will exhibit night blindness and eventually will experience total loss of sight.

*Method of Diagnosis-* ophthalmoscopic exam (CERF) or electro-retinograph (ERG) by a veterinary ophthalmologist and DNA marker test by OptiGen (PRCD) .

*Certification-* annual examination and registration with Canine Eye Registry Foundation (CERF), plus DNA marker test by OptiGen (PRCD) and registration on OFA database.

#### **VON WILLEBRAND'S DISEASE (vWD)**

*Description-* Inherited bleeding disorder.

*Method of Diagnosis-* DNA test is available through Vet gen and Genesearch.

*Certification-* Test results

#### **THYROID MALFUNCTION-**

*Description:* (various)

*Method of Diagnosis:* Blood test

*Certification:* Normal thyroid levels

#### **PATELLAR LUXATION (SLIPPED STIFLES)**

*Description:* Dislocation of the kneecap from abnormal structure of the stifle joint, as well as muscles and tendons.

*Method of Diagnosis:* Radiograph (x-ray)

*Certification:* Results from Veterinary orthopedic specialist exam.

#### **LEGG-PERTHE'S DISEASE**

*Description:* Losses of blood supply to the cap of the femur bone in the hip joint leading to deterioration of the joint cartilage.

*Method of Diagnosis:* Radiograph (x-ray)

*Certification:* Results from orthopedic specialist exam.

#### ADDISON'S DISEASE

*Description:* Destruction of the adrenal gland resulting in depression, lack of appetite, vomiting and or diarrhea with abdominal pain, hypotensive shock with weakness and shivering.

*Method of Diagnosis:* Blood test for sodium/potassium ratio as a screening test.

*Certification:* Blood test results.

#### SEBACEOUS ADENITIS (SA)

*Description:* Skin disease leading to progressive loss of hair and hair follicles.

*Method of Diagnosis:* Microscopic examination of a skin biopsy by approved veterinary pathologist. (*Punch Skin*)

*Certification:* Annual Pathologists report.

*The Purchaser should see all test results before considering purchasing a dog!*

#### YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the poodle buyer to ask for and examine results of x-rays, blood tests, eye examinations, and punch skin biopsies for the sire and the dam of the puppy. Responsible, conscientious breeders screen all breeding stock for hereditary health problems for which we have testing available prior to utilizing any dog in a breeding program and are delighted to answer any questions about the health of the puppy's sire and dam. However, even when the sire and dam have been tested and found free from specific hereditary health problems, there is no iron clad assurance that the puppy will not develop one of these problems. Buying a puppy from a breeder who tests breeding stock considerably increases your chances of getting a healthy puppy.

#### SHOW QUALITY VERSES PET QUALITY.

A show quality puppy is one which, in the breeder's opinion, should be able to become a champion. A pet quality puppy is less likely, in the breeder's estimation, to become a champion. However, when buying a puppy at 8- 16 weeks of age, trying to guess what that puppy will look like when it is an adult is just that-a guess.

A pet quality puppy is one that has a minor fault which would disqualify it from being shown, i.e., a white spot on the chest or elsewhere, one testicle, oversize or undersize Toys or Miniatures, or an improper bite. However, the feature(s) which disqualify the puppies from the show ring, in no way, affects their ability to be a wonderful companion.

Most pet quality puppies are sold on the AKC's limited registration form and a spay/neuter contract. The limited registration form is a simple way of saying that although your pet is an AKC registered purebred dog, it cannot be bred. If it is bred, the offspring cannot be registered with the American Kennel Club. Using this form is the breeder's way of ensuring that the puppy will not be bred and pass along the disqualifying feature to future generations. Neutering your dog also increases its chances of leading a longer, healthier and happier life.

#### ALTERNATIVES TO PUPPIES

Occasionally, adult dogs are available from breeders. Some may even be champions. Rescue dogs, too, are

available from time to time from area Poodle Clubs. Both can make excellent pets and generally readily adapt to new homes and loving families. It is unlikely that any genetic testing will be available for rescue dogs.

#### CONTRACTS/GUARANTEES

What should you expect in writing from the breeder?

The AKC registration slip (or CKC in Canada)

- Copies of the test results of genetic screening for health problems of the sire and dam.
- A pedigree.
- A printed contract including, health guarantee.
- A timeframe to determine if the pup will fit the buyer's household.
- A time period for the buyer to secure a veterinary check (24 to 48 hours).
- A statement of the breeder's refund/return policy.
- Feeding instructions, Vaccination and worming schedule.

Puppies can be safely shipped by air to their new homes. Generally the sales price does not include the airfare and the shipping crate. Additionally, if the buyer decides to return the puppy, the cost of the return airfare is the responsibility of the buyer.

#### RECOMMENDED READING

##### Resources

The Complete Poodle-Dahl, Del  
The Illustrated Breed Standard-Poodle Club of America inc  
The New Poodle- Irick, Mackey  
The Poodle Owner's Medical Manual- Brown, Robert, DVM  
Poodle Clipping and Grooming- Kalstone, Shirley  
Training you to train your dog- Saunders, Blanch

##### Magazines

Poodle Review- 4401 Zephyr St. Wheat Ridge, Co. 80033- 3299  
Poodle Variety- PO Box 30430, Santa Barbara, Ca. 93130

##### Internet Resources

There are lots of information about Poodles on the web. Some of it is even accurate. Two of the best sites with the most reliable information are:

Poodle Club of America-  
<http://www.poodleclubofamerica.org>

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