

SOME CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE BUYING A NEWFOUNDLAND...

WHAT DO YOU WANT IN A NEWFOUNDLAND?

Take some time to answer this question before you begin to search for a Newf. All Newfs should be capable of water work, draft work, tracking and obedience.

However, a dog that is sold as "pet quality" generally does not belong in the show ring, and should not be used for breeding.

DO NEWFS MAKE GOOD HOUSE DOGS?

Yes. However, they shed and are messy eaters and drinkers - some even drool. If you are a fastidious housekeeper or immaculate dresser, perhaps you should consider another breed. It is important that your newf be able to spend time being part of the family every day.

WHAT DO NEWFS COST? Purchase prices vary, however most 8-10 week old puppies start around \$1200. Food, dog house, veterinary and boarding fees can all cost more for a large dog. Professional grooming, wear and tear on your home, yard, and car (you may even need a larger car), all add to the cost of owning a Newf. A properly fenced yard is a MUST also. If you have any doubts about your ability to afford a Newf or to take proper care of one, we ask that you think twice about getting one.

HOW MUCH DO NEWFS EAT? Puppies vary, so check with your breeder. A mature Newf will eat about 4-6 cups of high quality dry food a day, or around 50 lbs. every 3-4 weeks.

HOW MUCH EXERCISE DOES A NEWF NEED?

Usually, a daily romp in the backyard chasing a ball, or a mile walk or job is sufficient.

HOW MUCH DO NEWFS WEIGH? An 8-10 week old puppy will weigh approximately 15-20 lbs. Adult females range from 100-120 lbs. and the males from 130-150 lbs. Your Newf must never be allowed to become overweight, as this can cause a lifetime of orthopedic problems.

ARE NEWFS TRAINABLE? Yes Newfs are natural water dogs and can also be trained to pull a cart, carry a back-pack, track, and do very well in the obedience ring. Obedience training is a must. By the time an untrained Newf reaches a year of age, he can be nearly impossible for a person to handle. So avoid the problem by spending time each day working with and training your puppy.

ARE NEWFS GOOD WATCHDOGS? Although Newfs are not guard dogs like Dobses and Rottweilers, they do have a strong protective instinct. Their deep barks and large size are usually enough to intimidate most intruders.

DO NEWFS SHED? Yes, profusely at times. A Newf is long coated, and frequent brushing is necessary to help remove loose hair, prevent matting, and to maintain healthy skin. A complete grooming session can take an hour or two. If the coat has gone unattended for a long period, grooming can be an all day chore.

WHAT ABOUT GROOMING? This is important to a Newf's health and well-being, and makes him more pleasant to live with. Whether you groom the dog yourself, or have it professionally done, it is important to brush down to the skin so that mats do not form. When the dog sheds his coat (usually twice per year), daily brushing will be necessary for several weeks. If the dead hair is not removed frequently, it will become bound up against the dog's skin and can cause severe and painful skin problems. When you do the regular grooming, be sure to clip nails and clean the dog's ears with alcohol and cotton. You may bathe the dog if you think it's necessary, but be sure to keep him warm and out of drafts until he is dry. Blow-drying the coat is preferable to air drying. A list of necessary supplies is included below.

HOW ARE NEWFS WITH CHILDREN? Usually wonderful. Care and time must be taken to find the right puppy, especially when young children are involved. From the beginning, both the puppy and the child should be taught to respect each others rights.

ENVIRONMENT? Shelter is essential to a Newf. You must provide protection from the heat, cold, and rain, plus plenty of fresh water. An average size, fenced yard that is kept clean is adequate. Daily love and attention from his owners are both important and necessary to a Newfoundland.

HAVE YOU READ ENOUGH? A Newf is a very large commitment, and will be part of your family for the next ten years or so. Therefore, it is very important you understand exactly what owning and caring for one means. Newfs are super dogs, but they do require a lot of time, work and LOTS of love. Attached is a list of some books we feel are very helpful to the Newf owner. PLEASE take the time to be an informed buyer.

SO YOU'VE DECIDED TO BUY A NEWF . . . WRITE, call or visit at least three breeders. VISIT with an adult Newf so you are sure you understand what size dog you are committing to. PLAN to wait 4-6 months to get what you want. Quality is worth waiting for. TALK with Newf owners. A good place to meet and visit is a Regional

Club meeting. Or go to dog shows and talk with Newf exhibitors (after the judging, please!). BUY from a reputable breeder, even if it means waiting. A good place to start is with the Newfoundland Club of America, or Regional Club Breeders List. KNOW your local animal ordinances.

WHERE TO BUY? ALWAYS buy from a reputable breeder, someone concerned about the welfare of their puppies. Usually the price of the dog is the same whether you buy from a breeder, puppy mill, or pet store. However, even if you have to pay a little more, the benefits you receive from buying from a breeder are well worth the extra cost. By buying from a kennel with a reputation to uphold, you're pretty much assured you'll get what you want... a healthier, happier puppy that has been socialized. In addition, you gain access to the breeder's knowledge and advice.

MALE OR FEMALE? Both sexes should be sweet tempered, so the choice is a personal one. Neither will wander if properly protected by a fence. If a dog is not to be bred, it should be spayed or neutered for its own health, as well as owner convenience.

PUPPY OR OLDER DOG? Occasionally, a Newf owner must give up an older dog. This Newf can quickly adjust and become a wonderful companion to a new family. Consider the advantages of an older Newf... no puppy stages to cope with, calmer personality, and perhaps already obedience trained.

WHAT SHOULD YOU LOOK FOR AT A KENNEL? Cleanliness of the facilities is very important. Also, all the animals should be reasonably groomed and in good health. There should be adequate shelter, space, and fresh water. All the dogs should be good natured and approachable. The puppies' mother will look her worst usually 8-10 weeks after the puppies are born because she'll lose most of her coat. However, she should be healthy, and the puppies should be clean, sweet-smelling and fluffy.

WHAT ABOUT HEARTWORMS? Heartworms are becoming a problem in Colorado. They are also prevalent in other parts of the country. All dogs should have an annual blood test to check for them. If the test results are negative, the dog should receive a heartworm preventative from early spring through winter, especially if you travel with your dog. Puppies born during this time should also receive preventative medication.

ASK YOUR BREEDER ABOUT . .

THE PUPPY'S MOTHER: She should not have been bred on her first heat, before 18 months of age, or more than 2 out of 3 heats.

Hereditary Defects:

The Newfoundland Club of America recommends that breeders check all breeding stock for at least some of the following things: Hearts (SAS), Eyes (Cataracts), elbows & hips (dysplasia), patellas (knees for dysplasia), cystinuria (a defect causing kidney stones), thyroid.

Heart Defects: Subaortic stenosis (SAS) is a heart disease that can be detected in young puppies as a heart murmur. Most puppies with this disease don't live very long. This defect is best heard **after** the puppy reaches 8 weeks. The entire litter should be checked by a veterinary cardiologist prior to placing any puppies. Ask your veterinarian to check your puppy's heart several times during his first year. Dogs over 12 months of age can be certified clear of being affected by SAS but, unfortunately, they may still also have the ability to produce it.

Hip Dysplasia: This complex, genetically influenced disease results in a deformity of the hip joint. The joint socket is abnormally shallow and the head of the femur is malformed. Dogs with hip dysplasia may not show outward signs of the disease. The **ONLY** way to properly diagnose the presence or absence of hip dysplasia is through radiographic examination. Before using a Newf for breeding, an x-ray examination should be performed. X-rays of dogs over 2 years of age submitted to the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) can be awarded an OFA certification number, if the x-ray shows the animal to be clear of hip dysplasia.

Elbow Dysplasia: Newfoundlands are one of 20 breeds which now have a registry with the OFA for elbows. It is a developmental disease manifested as degenerative joint problems. These problems include deformed bones, improper fit of bones, chips in the socket, and early arthritis. The registry for elbows was opened in December of 1991 and many dogs have not been x-rayed for this disease.

Cystinuria: The inability to process cystine proteins. The unprocessed proteins become kidney stones, causing a blockage of the urethra resulting in grave illness and death if untreated. This is a recessive in Newfoundlands and a DNA test has been developed by the University of Pennsylvania to screen dogs that are affected, carriers or clear. It takes two carriers to produce affected offspring. Two clear dogs cannot produce carriers or affecteds.

Eyes: All breeding stock should be checked annually for eye problems by a Board Certified Ophthalmologist. This test usually is called a CERF test (Canine Eye Registry Foundation). The primary thing checked for in

Newfoundlands is cataracts. There is also a condition called Entropion which is considered to be a structural fault (due to the shape of the dog's face) that a dog can have but which will still allow a Newfoundland to received a CERF certification number. With entropion the eyelid is inverted and the lashes rub the cornea. This condition can and should be corrected by surgery at a young age to prevent possible scratching of the cornea which could result in blindness.

Cryptorchid: Undescended testicles in a male dog. This condition is a disqualification in the show ring, and we recommend neutering to avoid future health problems.

TYPE OF BITE: A scissors bite is correct for a Newfoundland (inside of upper front teeth meet the outside of the lower front teeth). The type of bite is a consideration if you plan to breed or show your Newf.

TEMPERAMENT: Avoid a timid or shy puppy. A shy or fearful adult is unreliable. The Newfoundland is a sweet-dispositioned dog that never acts dull or ill-tempered.

AGE: A puppy should never go to a new home before 7 weeks of age. Usually by 8-12 weeks a puppy has been checked for possible hereditary defects, received initial vaccinations and worming, and is ready for his new family.

SALES CONTRACT: A written sales contract, stipulating all terms and conditions of sale, including health guarantee, should always be obtained.

WHAT ELSE YOU SHOULD GET FOR YOUR MONEY:

- * Individual AKC registration slip, properly completed and signed, unless there is a written agreement signed by both buyer and seller stating when, and under what circumstances, the registration slip will be provided.
- * a pedigree of 3 or more generations.
- * Written instructions in feeding and care of the puppy.
- * A sales agreement.
- * An immunization record and schedule including date and type of serum, and dates future inoculations are due.
- * Worming record and schedule, if necessary.
- * Veterinary certificate of health.

THINGS YOU WILL NEED . .

- * **A crate.** Highly recommended, but not mandatory. A crate aids in housebreaking, and provides a safe haven for the puppy when close super-vision is not possible. Be sure to get one big enough for him when he is a grown-up dog.
- * **Grooming tools.** Pin brush, slicker brush, nail clippers, and scissors.

- * **Chew toys.** Rawhide or nylon bones, or latex toys.
- * **Food/water dishes.** Buy stainless steel pans and buckets, large enough to grow into. Avoid plastic -- they will be eaten.
- * **Food.** It is important to feed the same diet the breeder has been feeding - at least initially. If a change in diet is desired, gradually switch the puppy after he's settled into his new environment.
- * **Collars.** A lightweight buckle-on nylon collar should be worn by the dog at all times, including his ID tags. A slip chain (choke) should be worn only for walks and training sessions. It should fit snugly over the head. You will need several sizes before the dog is grown. NEVER leave a dog unattended with a choke collar on.
- * **Lead.** A 6-foot leather or webbed lead.

WHAT ELSE?

In addition to the above, you will need lots of love and patience. Patience to remember that when your Newf weighs 90-100 lbs and 8 or 9 months, he is still a puppy. Just because he is big doesn't mean he's mature. He needs love, patience, and firmness to allow him to develop the full potential of his breed.

Once you have loved and been loved by a Newfoundland, you will never seem whole without one.

Enjoy your dog. Each day will bring new rewards.

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