

TETHERED TIPS

Thoughtful PAIRINGS

Good pairings are about more than looks.

Responsible breeders consider the whole dog—health, genetics, temperament, structure, pedigree, and the traits each dog may contribute to the next generation.



1. TEMPERAMENT MATTERS

Temperament influences how a dog experiences and responds to the world. It should be stable, functional, and appropriate for the breed and the lives their puppies may live.

Traits to evaluate may include:

- 🐾 Confidence
- 🐾 Sociability & resilience
- 🐾 Ability to settle
- 🐾 Trainability
- 🐾 Recovery after stress
- 🐾 Environmental sensitivity
- 🐾 Interactions with people & dogs
- 🐾 Handling tolerance
- 🐾 Sound sensitivity
- 🐾 Guarding tendencies
- 🐾 Fearfulness, reactivity, aggression
- 🐾 Breed-specific instincts



Temperament should always be considered alongside physical health.



2. LOOK FOR PATTERNS, NOT MOMENTS

A single moment doesn't define a dog. Look for patterns over time and across different situations.

Ask yourself:

- 🐾 How does this dog respond to new situations?
- 🐾 How quickly do they recover from stress?
- 🐾 Can they settle after excitement?
- 🐾 How do they respond to handling & unfamiliar things?
- 🐾 Are concerning behaviors isolated or recurring?
- 🐾 Would I be comfortable seeing these traits passed to puppies?



One good day doesn't define temperament—look at the whole picture.



3. GENETICS & ENVIRONMENT WORK TOGETHER

Behavior is shaped by both genetics and environment.

- 🐾 Inherited tendencies can influence behavior, but they are not destiny.
- 🐾 Prenatal care, early development, socialization, training, health, and life experiences all matter.



Thoughtful breeding and thoughtful raising work together.



4. WHAT MAKES A THOUGHTFUL PAIRING?

Evaluate both dogs carefully and look at the bigger picture.

- 🐾 Ihealth & genetic testing
- 🐾 Temperament
- 🐾 Structure & movement
- 🐾 Breed type & working ability
- 🐾 Pedigree & family history
- 🐾 Previous offspring & outcomes
- 🐾 Longevity & reproductive history
- 🐾 Strengths, weaknesses, and how they complement—or compound—one another



The goal: What could this pairing contribute to the next generation?



5. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES MATTER

No dog is perfect. Be honest about what each dog brings to the table.

- 🐾 Consider what you love about the dog.
- 🐾 Consider what you'd like to improve.
- 🐾 Avoid doubling up on the same weaknesses or concerns.
- 🐾 This includes health, structure, temperament, and more.



Protect what you love. Don't reinforce what you don't want.



6. LOOK BEYOND THE TWO DOGS

Pedigrees tell a story. Look for patterns in relatives involving:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 🐾 Health | 🐾 Reproductive health |
| 🐾 Longevity | 🐾 Inherited conditions |
| 🐾 Temperament | 🐾 Causes of death |
| 🐾 Structure | 🐾 Previous litter outcomes |
| 🐾 Working ability | |



A pedigree is more than a list of names—it's a map that can help guide better choices.



7. TITLES TELL US SOMETHING—BUT NOT EVERYTHING

Titles can demonstrate skills, structure, trainability, and more.

- 🐾 Titles are valuable information.
- 🐾 They are not health clearances.
- 🐾 They don't guarantee good breeding decisions.



Consider titles alongside health, temperament, genetics, pedigree, and overall welfare.



8. BE WILLING TO CHANGE THE PLAN

New information can and should change a decision.

- 🐾 Unexpected health results
- 🐾 Behavioral concerns
- 🐾 Family history
- 🐾 Previous offspring outcomes
- 🐾 The dogs may not be the right match after all



Changing the plan isn't failure. It's responsible breeding.



TETHERED TIP: ASK "WHY THIS PAIRING?"

A thoughtful breeder should be able to explain the reasoning behind a pairing.

Listen for conversations about:



Health



Genetics



Temperament



Structure & Movement



Pedigree & Family History

Be cautious when the reason is based only on convenience, appearance, color, popularity, or availability.

There isn't one perfect formula—there should be a reason.



QUESTIONS PUPPY FAMILIES CAN ASK

- ☐ Why did you choose these two dogs?
- ☐ What do you like about each parent's temperament?
- ☐ What strengths are you hoping to keep or improve?
- ☐ What weaknesses or concerns did you consider?
- ☐ How do the parents respond to new environments?
- ☐ How quickly do they recover from stress?
- ☐ Have either parent had significant behavioral concerns?
- ☐ What are their close relatives like?
- ☐ Have either parent produced puppies before?
- ☐ How have those puppies developed as adults?
- ☐ What health and genetic information influenced this pairing?
- ☐ What are you hoping these puppies will be like as adults?



WHAT WE WANT YOU TO REMEMBER

*Know the dogs.
Know the pedigree.
Know the risks.
Know the goal.
Choose thoughtfully.*

Every pairing leaves something behind.

*Our dogs are family.
Our choices leave a legacy.*

