



WHAT ARE *Tethered Tips?*

Tethered Tips are short, meaningful resources created to help families learn, ask better questions, and make informed decisions about the dogs they invite into their lives.

Each tip is rooted in research, experience, and a deep commitment to health, welfare, and responsible breeding.

Our goal is simple: to help families feel confident, prepared, and empowered on their journey.



EXPLORE THE TETHERED TIPS LIBRARY

Visit the Tethered Tips Library for more helpful guides on puppy development, responsible breeding, health, temperament, training, and more.

VISIT THE LIBRARY >



TETHERED TIPS GUIDE: UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCES



PUREBRED

A purebred dog belongs to an established breed and comes from dogs of that same breed.

Established breeds generally offer greater predictability in characteristics such as adult size, appearance, coat, temperament tendencies, instincts, and working traits.

WHAT PUREBRED DOES NOT MEAN:

Purebred does not automatically mean healthy, ethically bred, or responsibly raised. Registration papers document ancestry—they do not replace health testing or responsible breeding practices.



MIXED-BREED

A mixed-breed dog has ancestry from more than one breed or population.

That ancestry may be known or unknown, and the breeding may have been accidental or intentional.

Mixed-breed dogs can be wonderful dogs, but mixed ancestry doesn't automatically guarantee better health or eliminate inherited conditions.



CROSSBRED

A crossbred dog is generally the intentional offspring of dogs from two different breeds or populations.

Because multiple breeds are involved, families may see greater variation among puppies in things such as:

- Adult size
- Coat and shedding
- Appearance
- Energy level
- Temperament
- Working drive
- Grooming needs
- Structure

Responsible crossbreeding requires understanding the health and characteristics of all breeds involved, not simply testing for one side of the pedigree.



PURPOSE-BRED

Purpose-bred describes the intention behind the breeding rather than the dog's ancestry.

A purpose-bred dog may be purebred or crossbred.

A breeder might intentionally produce dogs for companionship, service work, hunting, herding, detection, sport, performance, preservation of a breed, or another clearly defined goal.

Purpose alone, however, doesn't automatically make breeding responsible.

The breeding still needs thoughtful selection, appropriate health testing, temperament consideration, parent-dog welfare, responsible puppy raising, transparency, and accountability.



PURPOSEFUL BREEDING

For Tethered, purposeful breeding is the bigger conversation.

It means being able to answer:

- Why these dogs?
- Why this pairing?
- What is the goal?
- What are the risks?
- What information supports the decision?

Purposeful breeders should understand not only what they hope to produce but also what each parent could potentially contribute—both desirable and undesirable.



A SIMPLE WAY TO REMEMBER IT

Purebred

→ describes established breed ancestry.

Mixed-breed

→ ancestry includes more than one breed or population.

Crossbred

→ generally describes an intentional cross between different breeds or populations.

Purpose-bred

→ describes dogs intentionally bred toward a particular function or goal.

Responsibly bred

→ describes the care, knowledge, testing, welfare, transparency, and accountability behind the breeding.



A dog can fit any of these categories and still deserve the same standard of care.

DIFFERENT DOGS. SAME RESPONSIBILITY.

Look beyond the label. Look at the choices behind the litter.