

QUESTIONS TO ASK A GIANT SCHNAUZER BREEDER

The best way to get a healthy, happy, quality Giant Schnauzer puppy is to buy directly from a breeder. Reputable breeders put the welfare of their dogs and the improvement of the breed above their desire for financial gain. Reputable breeders will take back or replace a puppy who is found to have a congenital defect. Breeders who are members of the Giant Schnauzer Club of America have agreed to abide by a Code of Ethics.

The following are offered as possible questions you should ask the breeder of a Giant Schnauzer puppy you are considering acquiring.

1. Are the parents proven to be clear of the genetic problems discussed in Giant Schnauzer Health and Giant Schnauzer Health Awards? Have the suggested problems tests been performed on the parents? What is the breadth of the testing – just the parents, older siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles? The breeder should be willing and able to produce copies of all test results, at least for the parents – if not offered, ask for them! If the breeder doesn't test, ask why. Do NOT accept the answer that they don't test because they've never had a problem with something. How can they know they don't have a problem if they don't test? Do not accept their vet's opinion on hip dysplasia x-rays. A regular vet is not a trained radiologist. OFA uses three board certified radiologist to examine all x-rays.
2. How old is the dam? How many times has she been bred? How far apart were the breedings? A Giant Schnauzer bitch should not be bred before 2 years of age nor after her eighth birthday without veterinary certification; nor should her breedings, other than in exceptional cases, be closer together than 12 months.
3. Why did they choose the stud dog they used? What traits were they looking for? What was the purpose of this breeding? What improvements were they after? Are the breeders planning on keeping a puppy from this litter? If not, why not? If yes, how did they pick which one? A reputable Giant Schnauzer breeder will have a good reason for every breeding, either to improve their line or solidify and continue traits they already have. A reputable breeder will NOT be breeding just to have puppies to sell.
4. What faults do the dam and sire have? EVERY Giant Schnauzer has some faults. How has this breeding served to correct these faults? What are their good points?



Ch. Karon's Ebony Mystical Dream
Photo courtesy of: Mike & Tami Stoller

5. What clubs do the breeders belong to? At a minimum, they should belong to the GSCA and/or one of regional Giant Schnauzer clubs, thus exhibiting an interest in supporting the future and direction of the breed, as well as being willing to place themselves under the oversight of their peers through the mechanism of the club's Code of Ethics.

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Abby & Jeter (the cat)
Photo courtesy of: Mike & Tami Stoller

6. Have the dam and sire been shown? Conformation showing is intended to identify the dogs that best fit the Giant Schnauzer standard. If the dogs haven't been show, how do the breeders know, objectively, how well they are doing?
7. What are the living conditions of the breeder's dogs? Do they have adequate living space and room to exercise? Are the quarters clean and well kept? Is fresh water available?
8. What steps have the breeders taken to socialize the pups? Are they use to children; other dogs; other animals; public places with lots of people? Early socialization is extremely important for a Giant Schnauzer. The lack of adequate socialization can cause serious problems later on.
9. What are the pups being fed? Are they given supplements? If so, why? Giant Schnauzer pups will eventually grow to their genetically programmed size; it is much better for their health if they do so slowly. Good, quality food is usually all they need.
10. What are the terms of their contract? What guarantees do they offer? What conditions do they impose on your treatment and care of the dog? What penalties are imposed if you violate the terms of the contract? See section 4 of the GSCA Code of Ethics for a list of the minimum terms a GSCA breeder should include in their contract as well as other material they should supply to a puppy buyer.
11. Will the breeder be available to provide assistance with grooming, ear taping for cropped pups and/or behavior issues? If so, what type of assistance will be provided? If not, why not? If you live far from the breeder, does he/she have a network of people that you can be put in contact with to assist you? The Giant Schnauzer is an intelligent, complex dog and new owners will generally need someone to provide assistance with training and behavior issues as a pup matures. It is better to have a support network established before you need one.