**TailWaggers**
*Training and Enrichment Activities
(for both K9s and their humans!!)*

# Puppies!! Puppies!! Puppies!!
# 10 Things to Consider & Why
### (from a trainer's perspective!!)

## 1) Do you have the right breed for you?

*There are 1000s of different breeds and cross breeds, all have different traits. You should expect to see some these traits in your chosen breed. Accept that hound dogs (beagles, coonhounds etc.) are well known for being vocal animals, sight hounds (Afghan Hound, Saluki etc.) see things at what appears to be a million miles away and chase them. While not all traits are passed genetically and with cross breeding some do get dropped along the way. Check the breed or breeds characteristics before you go to the "oh he's so cute" phase…… teaching a sight hound not to run and chase can be a long and challenging process, if you are looking for a dog to go on long hikes off leash, this might not be the right choice…….Poodles jump, Golden Retrievers love to be wet, just saying!! If you are thinking to train your pup not do something natural to their breed, is that breed right for you.*

## 2) Is a high energy dog the right fit for your lifestyle?

*Many dogs will keep going, they will keep following the family, the owner or the handler. When we refer to high energy dogs we are referring to dogs that need a high level of mental and physical stimulation. High energy dogs have a want to be challenged, and while hiking for hours on end day after day will keep them physical tired, the mental stimulation should be there too. Active breeds used in herding have several skills beyond the traditional sit, stay and downs that we teach most of our pets. Indeed these breeds are considered some of the more intelligent breeds, be prepared to train a beyond the average pet skills. While many do form fantastic pets, there are also many that resort to unwanted behaviours such as shredding, chewing, running away because they are under challenged. If you have an active lifestyle, do you have time to train and work your choice of pup?*
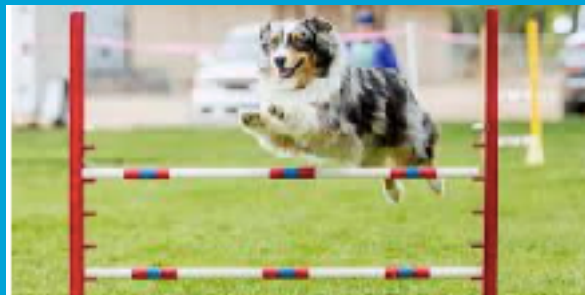
### 3) Do you have a role in life for your new pup to play?

*If you have a task in mind for your dog, a Therapy Dog, Search & Rescue or even a specific sport in mind. Make sure the breed is suitable. Short nose dogs such as Pugs and Mastiffs can have breathing difficulties, long hikes, running may not be suitable for the breed. Consider what everyone in the family is thinking and expecting of your new pup.*



### 4) Did you see the parents?

*It's not a surprise to know that many personality traits are passed down genetically. Often when this question is asked the response tends to be, 'yes, mum was there'. Well Mum should be there, the puppies if under 6 weeks are still feeding from Mum. But did you notice how the parents were, an anxious parent can often make an anxious pup (due to the changes in the mother's body chemistry). Deficiencies in the diet of Mum or Dad, can affect the health of the pup (not necessarily now,  but maybe as the pup grows). How was Mum during the pregnancy? Don't be worried to ask the breeder, (you would ask if you were buying a second hand car). Ask about Mum and Dad's personality/temperament, were they active confident dogs? Or timid? These do not give you any concrete answers, but if you were told both Mum and Dad did not like other dogs, or strangers……...be prepared to work with your pup (just in case).*

### 5) Have you consider breed specific ailments?

*Many breeds, especially purebreds are known to be more susceptible to specific issues. It's great to be able to ask the breeder about history of the known concerns - but not all potential issues are genetic. Some issues arise through the environment the puppy/dog lives in, for example if you have a floppy eared dog that is always in the water, you may want to be informed about ear infections.*

**6) Select your breeder?**

*Do you know where you will be getting your new pup from? Many breeders with years of experience have a long waiting list. So if you are looking for one of these breeders contact them well in advance - it's not unheard of to be waiting over a year.*
*New breeders do start up (we all need to start somewhere), but ask your new breeder about the parents, where did they come from? If the parents were bought from another breeder do they have the website (you can often glean lots of information from the webpage). Do they have a health history or do they know the temperament of the parents?*

*7)* **What will your breeder being doing with the pups before they are collected?**

*The early weeks of a pup's life are crucially important, not only for their physical development but also it is a period where they have no fear (the fear gene starts to activate from 8 weeks up and varies with breeds). But this means it is important to have your young pup starting on their socialization activities at an early age. Socialization means allowing the pup to experience a variety of different sights, smells, noises allowing the pup to feel different textures etc.....this helps to build a confident adult dog. Does your breeder offer any form socialization (it could be as simple as allowing the pups to play with toys in the garden or to allowing new people to come and play with the pup's).*

**8) Do you or any one in your household have allergies?**

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*Most of the time we know before we decide to get a puppy, whether there is any one in the household that has allergies to pets (fur, dust etc.) As trainers we still many people that didn't know their young child or elderly relative had developed allergies. Also many people believe that all doodle's (Berniedoodles, Labardoodles in fact any thing that prefixes the 'doodle') are hypoallergenic. Goldendoodles do exhibit a lower to non shedding ability, but it is very much down to the genes the puppy inherits and not necessary mum and dad didn't shed so neither will the pups, all doodles are in this same boat. There are also many other breeds (other than doodles) that are described as low or non-shedding.*