



Essential questions to ask a breeder.

1. **How long have you been breeding dogs?**
 - The more experience and involvement in breed clubs, shows and competitions, the better. Beware of breeders who breed dogs of more than one or two breeds.
2. **How many litters have you bred?**
 - Experience here is a very good thing too, though more than 2-3 litters per year would be a warning sign.
 - If they are new to breeding, they should talk about their mentor(s) who have helped them establish a breeding program.
3. **Will the puppies be registered with Dogs Australia (Formally ANKC)?**
 - This establishes the puppy's status as a golden retriever. In Australia purebred golden retriever puppies are registered with Dogs Australia. Beware of bogus registries that are not recognised nationally or internationally.
4. **Can I see where the puppies and dam(s) are being housed?**
 - The best way to raise a puppy is in a home environment so it will get lots of handling and human contact.
 - The area should be clean and spacious.
5. **Are the puppies raised in your home from birth?**
 - Puppies should be raised in the home from birth.
 - They should be kept clean, warm, well fed, and with their mother until they leave for their new homes after 8 weeks of age
6. **Were the sire and dam screened for genetic disorders common to this breed?**
 - Good breeders have all their breeding stock screened for relevant genetic disorders and remove affected animals from their breeding programs.
 - The breeder should include copies of the genetic screening results in the papers given to buyers.
7. **What were your goals for this litter?**
 - A good breeder has clear goals when selecting the sire and dam. They know the temperaments of both sire and dam.
 - There will be a variety of temperaments in every litter and the breeder should speak knowledgeably about temperaments in her dogs and puppies.
 - Good breeders will talk openly about their breeding program and breeding practices.



8. **When do you start breeding a dam, and when is she retired?**
 - The breeder should not be breeding dogs that are younger than 18 months.
 - They should stop breeding any female dog once it has delivered 3 to 4 litters if it's or has had two c-sections.

9. **Is the dam current on her vaccines?**
 - If the vaccines are not up to date, the puppies' ability to resist disease will be compromised.

10. **At what age will the puppies be ready to leave?**
 - Puppies should not go to their new homes before 8 weeks old. Any earlier and they may have issues with other dogs in the future.

11. **Have the puppies been seen by a vet?**
 - Puppies need to be dewormed and vaccinated before leaving the breeder. (You will also need to follow up with your own veterinarian, so the puppy gets boosters at appropriate intervals and the risk of it contracting a life-threatening illness is lessened.)

12. **What kind of guarantee do you offer?**
 - A good breeder will offer a detailed health guarantee that specifically addresses genetic disorders and offers more than just a replacement puppy.

13. **Will you be able to help me with care and training issues once I get my puppy home?**
 - Good breeders want to stay in touch and help their puppy buyers with any health, training, or minor behavioural issues.
 - The breeder should also ask *you* questions to ensure your lifestyle, knowledge of dogs and attitude are a good fit for one of their puppies.

14. **Can you provide some references?**