

## Is the Rottweiler the right dog for me?

The Rottweiler is the current "fad" guard/macho dog of the moment. Don't be swept up by the hype, or the fact that your neighbor, aunt, sister, or best friend has one. The Rottweiler is a large, powerful dog and along with ownership comes much responsibility. Rottweilers require extensive socialization from an early age. Are you willing to carry your puppy for several months, (he shouldn't be walking in public places until he is fully immunized at around 16-20 weeks), exposing him to the sights, sounds and people he will encounter as an adult? Because of their size and strength, obedience training for your Rottweiler is a must. Weekly group classes for 6 to 12 months is generally considered a minimum. Rottweilers are "people" dogs.

They want to be with their masters. As a working breed, the Rottweiler requires daily exercise, a good romp twice a day at least. Left alone or with inadequate exercise for long periods they may become unruly and destructive.

## How are they with children?

A properly bred Rottweiler who receives adequate socialization and training will generally get along fine with children, but tolerance will vary from dog to dog. He must be taught early on what is acceptable behavior and what is not, as should the child. Because of their large size and inherent desire to "herd", Rottweilers should always be supervised around children. A minor "bump" can cause serious injury to a small child. Also, some Rottweilers have a high degree of "prey" drive (the instinct to chase moving objects), therefore should never be left alone with children, who naturally will want to run and play. I normally recommend waiting until the children are at least school age before introducing a Rottweiler into the home. The amount of space in your home, the age of your children and the amount of time the dog will be in contact with the children should be part of your decision.

## Are they vicious?

A properly bred, socialized and trained Rottweiler is not inherently vicious.

## Are they good with other pets?

Problems should be minimal when a Rottweiler is raised from puppyhood with other pets. Introducing a new pet when there is an adult Rottweiler in the household should be done slowly and with care. Dog to dog aggression is influenced by the early socialization of puppies, their bloodlines and sex; males are less tolerant of other males than they are of females. Bitches may also be intolerant of other dogs. The Rottweiler is highly intelligent and trainable, and with perseverance, should be able to learn to co-exist peacefully with any pet you wish to introduce.

### What kind of training do they require?

The Rottweiler has been developed for its working ability and often blooms when given a chance to work with its master, although there are occasional exceptions. It is very necessary to establish your control of the animal and obedience training is often the easiest and most rewarding way to do so. I am able to provide you with guidance in the selection of a training class, however, avoid the very rough trainer, no matter how highly recommended. Rottweilers can often be controlled using verbal reprimands alone, and while they occasionally require strong physical corrections, some trainers tend to be much rougher on Rottweilers than is necessary. Women have been very successful with the dogs in obedience training. Physical mastery of the dog is generally less important than sensitive, patient and positive training methods. Patience is an important factor in training a Rottweiler.

### What about discipline?

The Rottweiler is a sensitive, intelligent and loyal animal and usually wants to please its owner. Occasionally, it can be quite stubborn though, and requires more attention. It is imperative that discipline is consistent and firm without being overly rough. A harsh word will often suffice, although sharper corrections are sometimes necessary. Ownership isn't for the timid or very busy person who cannot or is not inclined towards careful supervision of his/her pet.

### Do they require much exercise?

The Rottweiler is a working breed. He is generally not happy sitting around doing nothing all day. A large yard with a six-foot high fence is ideal, but adult Rottweilers have been kept successfully in large apartments. The yard is essential if a puppy or young dog is being acquired; it will help to keep the dog exercised and reduce boredom which in turn may prevent destructive behavior. If you don't have the space, consider a smaller or less active breed. Personal commitment on the part of the owner is the most important thing. People willing to walk their dog on a regular basis will find a more personal and bonding relationship developing than just letting them run by themselves in the yard. Your Rottweiler will require a minimum of two good walks each day (10 to 20 minutes each). Adequate exercise is necessary to maintain the good health of your Rottweiler, as they have a tendency to gain weight without proper exercise.

### Do they shed?

The Rottweiler is a double-coated breed, with a medium length outer coat and a soft downy undercoat. They do shed, more than one would think by looking at their appearance. The amount of shedding will vary with climatic conditions. They generally tend to "blow out" their undercoats twice a year, in spring and fall.

### Are they noisy?

Rottweilers will bark to announce the arrival of people on the property, and at animals and birds in the yard, but they generally don't bark without reason.

### Which sex makes the best pet?

Opinions vary on this topic. I would generally recommend a female, especially for first-time owners. Females are smaller and easier to control, somewhat less dominant and usually more affectionate. Males are stronger, more powerful and dominant, and therefore somewhat harder to train and control. It again depend on the time you are willing to spend with your dog. Remember exercise, dissipline and affection remains the most important three things to remember while having a rottweiler.

### What is the difference between pet and show quality?

By the time the puppies are 7 wks old each puppy will be tested according to the Volhard Aptitude test have been "graded" against the KUSA Breed Standard. There is no "perfect" dog but the best puppies will be the closest to the ideal as described in the standard and have the highest price. Any deviations from the "standard" are "faults" and are considered according to their severity.

Several faults are described in the standard as "disqualifying" faults. These are faults that will disqualify a dog altogether from the show ring. Other faults may keep a dog from winning in the show ring but won't "disqualify" a dog totally from showing. Disqualifying faults are: entropion, ectropion, overshot, undershot (when incisors do not touch or mesh); wry mouth; two or more missing teeth, unilateral cryptorchid or cryptorchid males, long coat, any base color other than black and absence of all markings. These are considered the most serious faults.

Puppies graded as "pets" may have "disqualifying" or other faults and are sold to homes for companion purposes only.....no showing or breeding allowed. Show or breeding quality puppies have no disqualifying or other significant faults at the time they are sold and may be shown or bred provided no disqualifying faults are present in the puppy as an adult and the dog passes health clearances as stated in the sale contract.

Show/breeding quality does not necessarily mean that this dog must be shown or bred. It is just a description of the quality of the puppy at 7/8 wks. I often let a show or breeding quality puppy go to a strictly pet home that is certain they will not show or breed however some show quality puppies are available only

to homes that WILL show. A pet quality puppy will not be sold to a home intending to show or breed. It is best that you have thoughtfully considered your plans for the puppy before you make a final decision on what type of puppy you want. If you are unsure of what type of puppy would be best for you, I am happy to discuss the situation and help you make the best choice.

Keep in mind that most "faults" on a pet quality puppy are not readily noticeable to someone not use to looking at show dogs and are usually not apparent to a buyer until the breeder points the faults out. Point is that a "pet" puppy with "faults" from a show bloodline is a beautiful dog and will make a wonderful companion for someone not wanting to show or breed and not wanting to pay the higher price. "Faults" have nothing to do with the puppy's temperament or health, just with the suitability to show or breed that individual. Pet/Companion puppies are sold with the same high standards and certification from Kusa, the only difference is that the KUSA registration paper will have a breed restriction on the specific puppy's paper.