



## Buying a Boxer Puppy

Please find below some information formulated by the Boxer Breed Council (from the 15 Boxer Breed Clubs across the U.K.) to help you find a pedigree boxer puppy that will delight your family for years. Please read it all, it really is worth a few minutes of your time to open your eyes and ensure all the important areas of puppy purchasing are covered.

You will be looking for a puppy bred for quality, good health, soundness and a good temperament. It is important to take the time to get this purchase right. Puppies are not easily returned; this decision will affect your life for many years.

Buyers always ask about reputable breeders and this can be hard to define, essentially reputable breeders breed for themselves usually to keep a puppy to show, profit breeders will be breeding high numbers of litters and charging top end prices they will be less interested in the right home for the puppies, ask about the breeders' motivation to breed puppies.

The breed is not for the faint hearted, research the type of dog that suits your situation. The Boxer is intelligent, enthusiastic, bold, loyal and fun, but needs a firm hand, parameters to work within and to know who the boss is.

Bobtail boxers: Not to mention the Bobtail would do you as the reader a disservice. A Boxer some 20 years ago + was crossed with a Pembroke Corgi to produce naturally short tails, quite an intensive breeding plan commenced, and this was successful to a large degree, but was never embraced by the Boxer Breed Council or the larger breeding kennels, hence they have not been used widely in breeding programs. It is particularly important when looking at Bobtail Boxers to be clear about health, pedigree and cost.

## Where to start the search?

Using the breed club secretaries who may be able to help you get in touch with local respected breeders and using the health information on the (Boxer Breed Council) website.

The Kennel Club website, especially their "Find a Puppy" service. Remember that the Kennel Club is essentially a registration agency and will register all puppies with pedigree parents, this does NOT bring any guarantee of health or breeding conditions or experience of the breeders.

Licensed breeders will be licensed in accordance with local authority guidelines and will be visited periodically by the council issuing the licence - currently breeders who have 2 or more litters a year should apply for a licence. There are several levels (Stars) within the structure ranging from one to five stars.

You should research the local council requirements in your area and that of the breeder.

Kennel Club Assured breeders can be found on the KC Website, they will be visited periodically by the KC in accordance with the scheme guidelines - this is a voluntary scheme to join. There are several levels (Accolades) within this scheme.

You should research the guidelines on the KC website.

It should be noted the membership of either of the above is NOT a guarantee of experience, knowledge or quality, hence the importance of your visit.

## What to pay?

Another difficult to define question, in the region of £2000 would be our best guess as an average cost in 2020, this is a sensible cost to buy a healthy pedigree boxer puppy, well-bred with a typical temperament. If you are buying a puppy to show or breed from, extra care must be taken and you could pay much more than above, dependent on terms and location.

You should expect to pay a sensible deposit having seen the litter and, in some cases, even chosen your puppy, (this may not always be possible if breeders are selecting a show puppy from the litter).

**ALWAYS** talk to breeders...text and emails may get you started but are too impersonal for you to really get a feel for the breeder. You will need to understand their motivations, their location, the cost, how the buying process works with them, in terms of meeting them, choosing a puppy, visiting again, when you will be able to collect the puppy and what support they will offer you following the purchase. Expect to be grilled on your potential as a new owner!!!

Responsible breeders are very selective about where their puppies go.

## Simple Do's and Don'ts

We strongly recommend **Don't** buy from any online websites or social media.

**Do NOT** buy a puppy because you feel sorry for it.... Report anything you are not happy about to Local Council and or The Kennel Club.

**Do NOT** send any money up front or any deposit before you have seen the puppy and are happy with the breeder and the puppy. It is usual to pay the balance on collection of a puppy but **NOT** before 8 weeks old.

**Do NOT** agree to collect the puppy from a third party or at anywhere other than the premises where you saw the puppy (motorway services for example).

**Do NOT** choose colour over health (Recognised colours Red, Brindle, both can have white markings and White which can have red and or brindle marks/patches. We would not expect White boxers to be bred from.

**DO** be prepared to wait for the right puppy, buying in a hurry is never a good idea.

**DO** always see the Dam with all the puppies, it is important to assess their temperaments with you and each other.

**DO** ask about the Sire, it is common not to see the sire, but a pedigree and any health information should be available.

**DO** ensure that both the Sire and Dam are heart tested. This should have been done by a specialist cardiologist and not your local vet on animals over one year of age, look for grades zero and one, these can be checked on the Breed Council website.

**DO** ask the breeder if there is any history of Juvenile Kidney Disease (JKD) in the parents of the litter or any litters born to those parents

**DO** read the articles on Puppy Heart Murmurs and What is an 'Innocent or Physiological 'Murmur in a Boxer dog? both can be found on the Breed Council website, links at the end of this guide.

**DO** ask about the breeding COI (Breeding Coefficients) The breed average is currently 5.3%. At some established kennels it may well be higher, those breeders should know their lines well and be happy to explain their reasons for using specific dogs/breeding lines *if it does result in a higher COI*. Please be aware that keeping the breeding coefficients low is a risk reducing method to reduce health issues transmitted via genes, but it is NOT a health guarantee.

NB imported animals will have a low or 0% COI as breeding information is not held on the Kennel Club website this does therefore NOT reflect their breeding history.

**DO** check that the puppies are clean, warm, look well fed and have space to sleep and play in.

**DO** ask lots of questions on your first visit.

**DO** ask about the puppies' routine, most important before you take a puppy home.

**DO** check what information you will get when you do take the puppy home, if there will be a contract get a copy and take away to read thoroughly before you commit to anything. It is in your own interest to have a signed Contract of Sale between you and the breeder.

## **What you should expect to Receive with your puppy**

KC Registration document, this will need to be transferred into your name.

Pedigree papers ideally a 5-generation pedigree.

Microchip document, this will need to be transferred into your name.

Insurance information, most breeders will offer 4 to 6 weeks free insurance to you which needs to be in your name.

A contract of sale signed by buyer and seller, which details your puppy specifically.

A vet check confirmation and any vaccination record.

Puppy information pack, information re: worming dates and products, feeding instructions and a few days' supply of current food, exercise instructions now and over the coming months.

## **What you need to organise before bringing a puppy home:**

A local vet to make an appointment for a few days after arrival home.

Local training.... never let anyone tell you a boxer is stupid they can do anything you ask, if you ask and train them appropriately.

A warm soft bed, a secure area to sleep in, if a crate is to be used ensure it is large enough for an adult boxer and provide a bed and a papered area initially.

Water and feed bowls think practical not pretty.

Collar and lead, think about training, we would not normally recommend a harness for this breed, especially for puppies as they do not allow for education of the puppy and they can put extra pressure on the dogs front and shoulders.

Secure your garden and decide what areas the puppy will use to toilet in, have a good supply of poop bags at all times, in every pocket!!

Toys, ensure they are safe, think about educational and fun.

Think about your own routine and how you will incorporate the needs of your puppy into your daily life.

And finally, we should also mention Boxer Rescue, this can be a very rewarding experience, the breed club secretaries will be able to put you in contact with local Boxer Rescue contacts, if this is an area you would like to explore, with dedicated people who will help you find the right Boxer for you.

Please also consider membership of your local breed club for support and activities with your boxer.

Most of all we wish you good luck in your search for your SPECIAL BOXER.

### **Useful links**

<http://www.boxerbreedcouncil.co.uk>

<http://www.boxerbreedcouncil.co.uk/heartlist.html>

<http://www.boxerbreedcouncil.co.uk/breedclubs.html>

<http://www.boxerbreedcouncil.co.uk/health.html>

<https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/getting-a-dog/>

10<sup>th</sup> February 2021