

Picking a Puppy

Now that you have pick a breed, and picked a breeder, it is time to pick a pup.

I recommend that you go and visit the breeder before the pups are ready to go home. This will give you some idea as to which pups have the disposition you are looking for. Also you can ask to see just 1 gender if you have a preference.

If it is a retriever and a hunting dog some “puppy tests” you can do both with litter as a group and with each individual pup are as follows. Throw something for them to retrieve; now they may pick it up or just chase it. You are mainly looking for natural drive to chase at this age. If you have done your home work the breeder has toys, puppy bumpers, and/or birds on hand for you to use. Another “test” is how do the pups react to loud noises, banged pots or hand clapping. Do they just startle and then recover or do they run and hide for a noticeable time. Being startled like you or I then recovering is normal and fine. If they seem scared then how are they going to be as a hunting dog around gun fire?

This next test is not always possible but is a very good indication of hunting drive when it can be done. It is allowing the pups a chance to chase a live bird, I prefer ducks. As a professional retriever trainer I keep live ducks on hand so this is routine for me. If the breeder does not have birds you can take your own, pigeons can be used and are cheaper and more readily found than ducks. This test is best down at an older litter age, I do this between 7-8 weeks old with all my Chesapeake litters. I also make it available for buyers to see, if they so desire.

When it is time to take your pup home I suggest that the 1 person who this dog is supposed to belong to the most sit down on the floor with all the pre-choices and take home the 1st one that climbs in their lap. This is how I pick all my personal dogs.