

"AKC REGISTERED"

The public demand for puppies that are "AKC registered" has created a market for the unscrupulous dog breeder, whose only aim is to raise dogs for money. Such breeders give little thought to the selective mating of their dogs, with the result that physical and temperament attributes of the various breeds sometimes change or vanish.

AKC "papers" specify only that the parents of the registered dog are each of the same breed and were, in turn, registered by the AKC. Registration by the American Kennel Club does not guarantee the quality of the registered animal. Quality puppies are most likely to be found with breeders dedicated to maintaining the true type and temperament of the Irish Terrier breed, such as those breeders listed by the ITCA puppy referral service.

THE BREEDER

An Irish Terrier breeder should show a great deal of interest in you, your family, and the provisions you have made to care for your prospective puppy. He should be full of advice about grooming, feeding, ear-setting, health care, and be eager to answer all your questions. The breeder should be familiar with his dogs' pedigrees and ready to explain them to you.

While the breeder is evaluating your situation, you evaluate his. Is his kennel clean? Do the adult dogs adjust to your presence after a few minutes or do they shy away or snarl? Do not expect an outpouring of attention from an adult Irish Terrier such as you might receive from a sporting breed, but be wary of shyness.

QUALITY

Quality in a puppy is difficult for the experienced breeder, let alone the novice buyer, to establish. Physical characteristics change rapidly in the growing puppy. This makes choosing show and breeding stock difficult until the pup is six to eight months of age. Many breeders retain their best pups for final selection at this age. Be wary of breeders who advise that their whole litter is show quality.

The basics of quality in any puppy are a solid constitution and an outgoing personality. Beyond that, the novice buyer is largely dependent on the reputation and good advice of the breeder. The breeder may be able to evaluate, better than you, which pup is the right one for your situation or family. The active, hard-headed puppy with so much appeal at the kennel may not be the ideal terrier for an apartment dwelling family with two infant children. Explain your situation to the breeder and let him help with the selection.

OLDER THAN EIGHT TO TWELVE

There is little in the canine world to match the appeal of a tiny Mick puppy. Most dog buyers are shopping for the eight to twelve-week-old puppy and will settle for nothing else. However, older puppies and dogs are sometimes available and bear investigation. Often they are housebroken, leash broken, trained to stand for grooming and nail clipping and all this for less money than the prime-age puppy. If the exuberance of puppies and young dogs is altogether too much for you but you want that Irish temperament in your terrier, then perhaps there is an adult terrier with a more sensible disposition available for you.

COST

Consider the purchase price of your Daredevil as a long-term investment. Spreading the cost over the ten to fifteen years your dog will be with you, will make the cost seem more reasonable. The price of dog food and veterinary services do not become cheaper each year, so there is an economic commitment to owning a dog that goes beyond that first lump sum. As far as your dog is concerned, your biggest contribution to him is your time.

INSPECTION

After you have purchased a puppy, take him to your veterinarian. Have that special Irish Terrier inspected, his record of inoculations brought up to date, and a fecal specimen examined.

FOOD

The best food to begin feeding your puppy is the one he has been raised on. A good breeder should provide a written diet, stating the kind of food, the amount, and how frequently the puppy should be fed. Among the items you should NOT feed your puppy are pure raw meat or milk. Either may give him severe diarrhea and make him ill.

There are several commercial dog foods available that will give your dog adequate nutrition and keep him in good condition. The dry foods are less expensive than the wet varieties and offer a complete meal. Canned dog food contains nearly seventy-five percent water ... that is, only a quarter-pound of food in each one-pound can. You also have the option of mixing in a small amount of wet food with the dry.

It is best to feed a puppy three or four small meals per day until he is four to five months of age. After that, two meals per day will suffice. Adults may be fed once or twice per day depending on their habits and yours.

WATER

A constant supply of fresh, cool water is essential to your Irish Terrier's good health. At no point in his day, inside or outside, should he be without it. Puppies have a tendency to tip their pans over, so use a tip-proof bowl or secure their drinking pail firmly.

VACCINATION

Provided the dam of a litter of puppies is properly inoculated, her puppies are generally protected from some of the more common dog diseases until the age of seven to eight weeks by the antibodies passed through the mothers' milk. Hence, at seven to eight weeks your puppy will need his globulin or puppy shots. At eleven to twelve weeks he should receive his Distemper/Hepatitis-Leptospirosis vaccine. Both a rabies shot and a DHL booster should be given annually. Your veterinarian may recommend these shots at different ages and perhaps different forms of these vaccines. Your dog should also receive a parvovirus vaccination and a heartworm examination.

PARASITES

Your puppy should be kept free of parasites, both external, such as fleas, lice and ticks, and internal, worms of several varieties. Fleas carry tapeworm larvae and a dog continually infested with fleas will eventually have tapeworm. Some commercial treatments for fleas and worms can have adverse, even lethal, effects on your dog. Check with your vet for flea prevention and worm treatment.

FENCE 'EM IN

Irish Terriers need exercise to keep them fit and happy. A properly fenced back yard is a great playpen. It keeps your dog safe from cars and unnecessary human interference while you are away, yet allows the dog plenty of room to run. Keep in mind terriers are fond of digging. Be prepared to discourage them from burrowing under your fence as well as climbing over it.

HOT WEATHER

Dogs do not bear up well under hot weather. Any temperature over ninety degrees may severely endanger your dog. During the summer be sure he has plenty of shade and cool water to last him all day. Never leave your dog in a car in the hot sun. Dogs lose body heat through radiation. If trapped in a hot environment, they overheat, and reach a point of distress quickly.

EAR CARRIAGE

All puppies are born with their ears closed. Irish Terrier puppies begin to pull their ears up somewhere between six and twelve weeks of age. If the pup has not pulled them up by fourteen weeks he will need some

help in doing so. Contact the breeder for the best instructions and advice on how to set the ears of your puppy.

At four months of age puppies begin to lose their puppy teeth, which are gradually replaced by adult teeth. This teething period continues until the pup is eight months of age. The stress of this teething period is reflected in two significant ways: the pup is compelled to chew on things (either dog toys or furniture, which ever is handier), and the cartilage of the ears is affected, commonly altering the position of the ear carriage.

If you have purchased a show-quality pup, ear setting may entail more taping and persistence than for a pup, which will never see the show ring. If you have purchased a pup for a pet and companion and the ears look OK to you, you may decide not to bother setting the ears at all.

COAT CARE

Irish Terrier puppies begin to lose their puppy coats around six to twelve weeks of age. By five months the coat will need to be plucked out. Plucking (or stripping as it is also called) is the process of pulling the old dead hair out of a dog's coat. This method of grooming is used primarily on the wire-haired breeds. It is important to pull the hair out rather than cut it off. Cutting the hair ruins both the color and texture of the coat. Stripping is done with thumb and forefinger or the aid of a comfortable stripping knife with a dull blade.

Ask the breeder of your pup for a reference on a good brand of stripping knife, and a list of grooming implements. The basic grooming tools are: a metal toothed comb, a natural bristle brush, scissors and nail clippers or a nail file. Your dog should have his nails clipped or filed regularly and be brushed at least once per week.

STRIPPING

Stripping begins by combing out all the tangles in your Irish Terrier's coat from just behind his eyes to the tip of his docked tail. Choose your spot and begin pulling hair. If you use a stripping knife, hold the blade almost parallel to the surface of the dog's skin and curl hair over the serrated edge of the blade with your thumb. Using your entire arm, pull the knife in the direction the hair lies down. Use your other hand to hold the skin above where you are stripping. This will keep the loose skin from rolling and jerking while you are pulling out the long, dead hairs.

Strip the hair from atop the skull behind the eyebrows and off the cheeks, behind a line from the

corner of the eye to the corner of the mouth. Strip down the neck, across the back, sides, loin, croup, rear flanks and tail. Strip the long hair off and out of the ears. The longer hair on the face and legs is best shaped by using thumb and forefinger to pull the dead, overly long hair. The legs are shaped into round columns. Riffs of eyebrow are left over the eyes. The beard is tapered from almost nothing on the sides of the muzzle (between the eyes and back corner of the mouth) to the full length of hairs on the chin and end of the muzzle. You can find helpful grooming tips and demonstrations of stripping on YouTube.

Newly stripped dogs are more sensitive to extremes of heat or cold. For several weeks after stripping exercise care in exposing them to the elements.

Patience is the primary necessity of those who would strip an Irish Terrier. Tenacity is next. In time you will be come more proficient and quicker at stripping. Your Mick will become more patient.

EARLY TRAINING

A puppy is ready to begin learning about the outside world shortly after he is seven weeks of age. You may get a great deal of pleasure from teaching him such simple commands as "sit", "come", and "stay." As well as increasing the rapport between master and dog, this informal puppy training will increase his responsiveness and prepare the dog for more formal obedience training as he approaches six to eight months of age. Your local library will have many books available on the subject of dog training. Consult these for training tips and procedures. Check with the local kennel club: it may sponsor classes in both obedience and conformation exhibition training.

THE IRISH TERRIER CLUB OF AMERICA

The Irish Terrier Club of America was founded in 1897 to further the interests of the Irish Terrier. If you have questions concerning the Irish Terrier, please direct them to this friendly group of breeders, fanciers and enthusiasts. We hope we can be of service.

National Breeder Referral

Jane DiPietro (dalestails@comcast.net)

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or

www.itca.info.com

AN INTRODUCTION TO OWNING AN IRISH TERRIER



CHARACTERISTICS

The Irish Terrier is a breed with a distinctive appearance and personality. The size is ideal. Eighteen inches tall at the top of the shoulder. The Irishman stands just below the average human knee. Large enough to be a robust worker in the field, this terrier is small enough to be a house pet or be transported easily in the family car.

His wiry, golden-red, double jacket protects him well in all types of weather and terrain. Less prone to shed than long or smooth-haired coats, this "broken" coat is easy to brush and tend, and should be plucked out once or twice per year.

It is the temperament of the Daredevil which has gained him admirers. Game and aggressive towards his quarry and his adversaries, this resilient terrier is gentle and forbearing with those he loves. The merriment reflected in his dark eye is his special gift from the Emerald Isle.

LOCATING A PUP

When you hunt for an Irish Terrier call or write to as many breeders as you can. Tell them what you are looking for: age, sex, your price range, whether or not you are interested in showing, etc. Though you may wish to purchase a pup locally there is a good chance, owing to the rarity of the breed, that none will be available in your vicinity. Puppies are often shipped by air at a moderate cost.

If you have not gotten in touch with the Irish Terrier Club of America puppy referral service, you should do so. The referral correspondent will give you the names and addresses of ITCA members who currently have puppies available for sale.