

The kind of questions you should expect a breeder to ask:

1. Have you had dogs before, in particular Border Terriers? If so, how long did you own the dogs?

[This is one of the questions that help the breeder to select the puppy in the litter that best suits you and your family.]

2. Are you at work all day, if so, what plans do you have in place for the toileting and feeding of your puppy?

[The breeder needs to know how you will meet the puppy's needs, especially while he or she is still learning to be housetrained. Some breeders will not sell to people who are out at work for 8 or more hours a day. You need to understand the thinking behind this and decide if you really can give the puppy the physical and emotional care and the attention she or he deserves.]

3. Do you have a securely fenced yard?

[This is a most important question from the breeder's point of view. Border Terriers have a strong chase instinct and no road sense and if they escape from your yard, be it urban or rural, the consequences are frequently tragic.]

4. Do you have children? What ages are they? Are you prepared to spend time teaching your children how to respect, handle and play with the puppy?

[Border Terrier pups are high energy, and need to be supervised by an adult when they are playing with younger children. All puppies and all children, in fact, need to be supervised when they are together.]

5. Do you have other pets?

[Border Terriers have a high prey drive, and a rabbit or hamster in the house may prove just too tempting. You must be prepared to be very careful of this. Border Terrier puppies that are brought up with cats are usually great with their own cats, and they will often be found curled up in bed together, but this does require careful introduction in the first instance and you can never assume that they will be friendly to 'strange' cats.]

6. How much exercise are you prepared to give to your dog?

[Border Terrier puppies need little more than a romp in the yard, but as they grow, so does the need for a nice walk once or twice a day.]

7. Have you thought about how much your dog will cost you in terms of vet fees, boarding kennel fees, grooming fees and other costs over the years?

[The breeder needs to know that you can afford to keep your dog in good health.]

8. Do you and your family understand the commitment required to bring up a happy healthy pet, and to fulfil the dog's needs for its lifetime?

[A Border Terrier is from a long lived breed and you need to understand that his needs will change as the years go on.]

9. Do you, or any of your family have allergies to dogs?

[This is something that you really need to find out before you get to the stage of talking with breeders: it would be heartbreaking for all concerned to discover an allergy problem after you have brought your new puppy home. One way to do it is to visit a home where only Border Terriers are kept as pets. You should know the situation within an hour or two and do not believe any website that claims they are a 'hypoallergenic' breed.]

10. What are your plans for your family dog?

[The breeder wants to know whether you want a Border Terrier purely as a family companion, or if you want to become involved in showing, or competing in some of the dog sports. Your replies will again help the breeder to decide which puppy is best for you.]

There are no right or wrong answers to any of the preceding questions. Be honest so that the breeder is able to match you with the best pup for you and for your family's lifestyle. Honest answers will enable the breeder to provide you with the best advice. Remember that reputable breeders always have both their puppies' welfare and your best interests at the top of their priorities.



Finding a reputable Border Terrier Breeder



So you are at the beginning of your journey to find a reputable breeder from whom you will purchase your new Border Terrier who will, most likely, be with you for the next 15 years or so.

In Canada, Border Terriers are not a widely available breed, and the majority of breeders are responsible people who are interested in protecting both the breed and, in particular, their own dogs. Your job is to find the breeder who is the right one for you. This person will be extremely interested in you, that is a given, and he or she will ask a lot of questions about you, your family and your lifestyle.

You may feel that the questions are too nosy and personal. Try not to feel this way: these breeders need to find the very best homes they can for their precious pups. They will have thought long and hard about the breeding of the litter. They will have tried to find a male who best compliments their bitch - temperament, conformation and health wise. They generally only breed when they want a puppy for themselves, but of course females usually have more than one puppy so the breeder has the responsibility of finding good permanent homes for all the pups.

A responsible breeder will also expect you to have questions as you need to be satisfied that the breeder you choose is a reputable person who is doing the best possible job with the litter and for the breed as a whole. Below are some pointers for you to use when searching for your breeder, the questions you should ask and some of the questions you should expect to hear.

You should realize that most people will have to wait a fairly lengthy period of time until getting a puppy and you should get to know a couple of breeders and get on to a waiting list. Litters are usually planned half a year to a year in advance, the pregnancy is nine weeks and the puppies usually go to their new homes some time after they are eight weeks old. That all adds up.

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Where do I start?

The internet is a good place though you should always be aware that puppy mills advertise widely on the internet. Visit the Border Terrier Canada website at <http://www.borderterriercanada.ca>. This site will give you useful information and some good links to follow regarding the breed. Visit the page for 'Upcoming Events', and if you have decided a Border Terrier might be the dog for you, but have not actually met one yet, you could go to one of these events and chat to breeders and meet some of the dogs.

Other good links include: <http://www.btco.ca/> (Border Terrier Club of Ontario) and : <http://www.bcoa.org/> (Border Terrier Club of America). The BTCA site in particular has lots of very good information about the breed, what to look for in a breeder as well as a host of Frequently Asked Questions.

Do an internet search for Border Terrier breeders. The questions below will help you avoid unscrupulous breeders and puppy mills. Many good and reputable breeders now have websites dedicated to their own dogs with their show, agility, obedience or earthdog achievements. They may also have a page dedicated to prospective puppy buyers showing the contracts the breeder uses and the particular issues that are of importance to that breeder.

Telephone or e-mail is likely to be your first point of contact, so be explicit, give a brief description of your knowledge of the breed, and of any other dogs you may have owned. Tell the breeder that you have been doing your research, that you have decided you are interested in a Border Terrier, and are looking for information about the breeder and any puppies they may have or are breeding in the future.

If the breeder does not have any litters planned they may still want to get to know you so that they can refer you to other breeders or they may suggest that you get in touch with Canadian Border Terrier Welfare (www.cbtwelfare.org).

If your first contact with a breeder is at a dog show remember the breeder is going to be very busy for a lot of the time especially before it is their turn to enter the show ring so try to ask your questions when they have finished showing their dogs when they will have more time to talk with you.

Questions for you to ask.

1. Can you tell me how long you have been in the breed, and your particular interest in the breed, for example do you take part in conformation showing, agility, obedience, earthdog or other dog activities?

[If the response is "Oh I don't do any of those things, we just like to have a litter of puppies every now and then," you should turn and walk away. A responsible breeder will take part in one or more activities and should be happy and willing to give you lots of info about his or her interests.]

2. Are the parents of the pups health tested, and if so what tests have they had?

[You should expect Border Terriers to have had their hips, hearts and eyes tested, and to have had their patellas (knees) checked as well. Although not necessary it would be good if the parents had a CHIC (Canine Health Information Centre) number. A CHIC number is given when a dog's test results are added to the CHIC database satisfying each breed specific requirement, and when the owner of the dog has opted to allow the results to be published.]

3. Are the parents CKC registered, and will the puppies be registered?

[There is no good reason for any breeder to reply to this question in the negative. If they do...walk away.]

4. Do you use a contract that specifies all parties' responsibilities and rights?

Does the contract state the breeder is prepared to take back the puppy/dog if the owner has to relinquish the dog for any reason?

5. Do you guarantee the health of the puppy for a certain time and what is your policy in the case of an unforeseen health issue arising?

[Despite all the careful selection and testing, congenital health issues can still crop up, how your breeder will respond to such a situation is important.]

6. When I go to see the puppies, will I be able to see mum with the pups?

[There are very few valid reasons for not being able to see the mother interacting with the pups. You may or may not get to see the father of the pups as breeders often take their bitch to a dog from another kennel to be mated.]

7. How old are the puppies when you allow them to go to their new homes?

[No puppy should leave the breeder until at least 8 weeks old.]

8. Will I receive a "puppy pack" when I collect my puppy?

[This should include, your receipt, any vet check paperwork the puppy has had, a record of the puppy's first immunization, any registration paperwork (this will often come to you a few weeks later) some food the puppy has been eating, and a diet sheet giving times of feedings etc, what to expect in the first days and weeks, maybe a toy and a piece of bedding that smells of mum and siblings.]

9. How have the puppies been raised and socialized?

[They should have been born in the house, handled daily, played with, and introduced to new sights and sounds of the household. All of these things will help your new puppy to go from the breeder to your home with the least fuss, and the puppy will be willing to take new things in his stride.]

10. Are you a member in good standing of the Canadian Kennel Club and a member of the National Breed Club?

