

## Final Stop: The CCA Breeder

# CHOOSING YOUR COLLIE

*Puppy? In-Between? Adult? Which is right for you?*

**Y**our breeder will be an invaluable resource when it comes to finding the right individual dog for you, whether that dog is a puppy, an adult or in-between.

When you visit a kennel, there will be many things to see and a great deal of information to process: adult dogs, puppies, seniors, pedigrees, photographs, and the general ambiance and style of the place. The breeder will be your tour guide. Ask all the questions that you like and let the breeder know about any specific activities you would like to do with your dog, such as therapy or a dog sport.

Be prepared to answer the breeder's questions. It is all part of the process of matching your family to an individual dog in the breeder's kennel. You want to find the best possible dog for your family—and the breeder wants to find families that will take the best possible care of a dog for the dog's entire life. When a successful match of family to dog occurs, it is a definite "win-win situation" for the family, the dog, and the breeder that will be well worth the time and effort that went into it.

### **Puppies: 10 -12 weeks and a work in progress!**

Most Collie puppies are placed with their new families at 10 to 12 weeks of age, which is developmentally appropriate for this breed. At this age, Collie puppies are not miniature versions of adults in either appearance or behavior. Downy-coated Rough puppies are quite different from their beautifully coated parents; in fact, sable Rough puppies at about 10 weeks of age look as much like lion cubs as they do dogs and not very much like an adult Collie.

For both Roughts and Smooths, the puppy body is stocky; the head is short and still quite blunt; the coat is short and fleecy and the ears are soft and floppy, not at all in their final tipped-over position. Although a Collie is born with all its white markings in place, they can seem to change a bit in shape and size as the puppy matures, the body beneath them grows bigger and the coat lengthens. All healthy Collie puppies should be interested  
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Newborn Collie puppies



Puppies: 10 to 12 weeks



Puppies: continued

in people and not shy or fearful. Beyond that basic premise, the puppy behavior you see in a visit is only a snapshot rather than the total personality. How puppies act at any given moment is very much determined by factors such as when the last meal or nap took place and what the rest of the litter is doing!



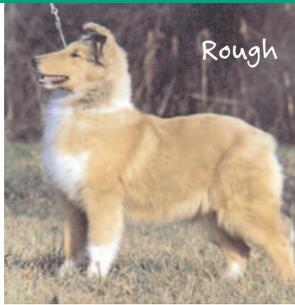
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As a visitor, you may not be able to tell puppies apart, nor be able to identify the nuances of their personalities. The breeder, on the other hand, has known the litter from the beginning and has probably raised at least one parent and grandparent as well as puppies from previous litters. As you talk with the breeder about your concerns and priorities, your needs will be cross-referenced with the available puppies. The breeder's detailed knowledge of the personality of each puppy and their ability to predict how a puppy will grow up will help to ensure a successful match.

IN-BETWEENS: 4 months to 2 years

**Ready to be a part of your family life**

A young puppy is not always the best match of dog to family. In families where all the adults work during the day, an older dog may actually be a better match. It is more common for Collie breeders to have older puppies and young adults available than it is for breeders in other breeds. Collie puppies go through several gawky growth stages as they mature. As the puppy grows, the blunt puppy muzzle pushes out into the long head of the adult; the legs and body grow longer and the adult coat emerges through the puppy fuzz. With all this to go through, breeders will routinely grow out more than one puppy to see how they will turn out before choosing which one to keep for their kennel. These "grow-outs" are available at an older age. They are faster to settle in than young puppies and have had early training and start-up veterinary care taken care of by the breeder.



Rough



Smooth



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ADULTS: 2 years and older



**Developed, primed and ready to be loved!**

Occasionally a fully mature adult (two years of age or older) is available from a breeder. These dogs may be retired show dogs or they may be breeding stock that has already contributed to the kennel's gene pool. All breeders must watch their numbers so that they have the resources to give quality time to all the dogs resident in the kennel. Adult dogs are placed so that they have an improved quality of life in families of their own, while making room in the kennel for upcoming puppies. These adult dogs tend to bond with their new families very well, and they are less expensive to buy and less effort to train than a young puppy.

CHAPTER 9: Homecoming !!

