

Approaching breeders

For those looking for a puppy, here is some advice about how to approach breeders...

The people most likely to have success in the process of finding a puppy are those that email breeders with their name, information about themselves and their family, their previous experience with dogs and what their lifestyle is like. Give some information, be polite, use the breeder's name and give your own name.

The one line emails, texts and messages received from people who don't mention their name and are along the lines of

"Hey, we want a golden puppy. How much are they?" or

"Hi, I was wondering if you had any puppies" will likely not get very far. Of the 72 emails and texts one breeder received in less than a week more than HALF were pretty much one-liners.

These people may be offering a perfect home and be wonderful people, but if the initial contact doesn't tell breeders that, they are likely to not be considered. Breeders aren't mind readers....there may be no pups available at that moment, but they are more likely to keep emails from families who sound like they can provide a great home for one of their pups for when they DO have a litter.

With hundreds of enquiries being received by breeders at the moment, you need to stand out from the crowd. Imagine if YOU were selling a treasured pup...what sort of home would you like it to go to? Breeders have the choice of hundreds of homes, and they want the BEST. They won't know it may be you unless you tell them.

Breeders have every right to be selective about where their puppies go, so if you make the effort in your initial contact you are more likely to get noticed (rather like applying for a job). If they happen to have puppies available, the people who take that extra step are more likely to be considered....first impressions count.

Good breeders are dedicated and committed to their dogs... they have a genuine love of the breed and put their heart and soul into their pups. They want to know the pup will be loved and cared for and that you have considered the purchase.

Send an email to each ANKC registered breeder outlining what you are looking for in a puppy (male / female/ pet / show /therapy etc) and what experience you have had with the breed (past or present goldens) or other dogs. Tell them about your family situation (children & ages, partner, other pets), whether someone will be home with the puppy and whether the puppy will sleep inside or outside. Do you have secure fencing and if in rental accommodation do you have permission for a dog. If you work what hours will the puppy be alone, can you take some leave to be with the puppy full time when you first take it home etc etc

You need to tell your story so that the breeder thinks "That would be a good home for one of my puppies" .

Ask when they are planning their next litter and whether they have a waiting list. Also ask whether they show their dogs or are involved in retrieving or other activities. If they have a litter planned ask about what health and genetic testing is done on the parents (eg hip, elbow, eye, heart etc). Say you would like to speak to them in person and will follow the email up with a phone call. The best breeders are very choosy about who they let their puppies go to so you need to tell your story and show your interest in the breed and them as breeders and clearly set out how you can provide a good home for their puppy.

Breeders are busy people so if you don't hear back within a couple of weeks follow up with a phone call or another email.

It's a matter of being patient and keeping in contact with breeders - many breeders do not keep a waiting list so you need to follow up with them every few months so they know you are still interested.

You may well be waiting 12-18 months for a puppy from a reputable ANKC registered breeder. Demand for puppies has skyrocketed all around Australia and there are very few litters from reputable ANKC registered breeders around where there are puppies that have not already been spoken for (these people would have been waiting for 12 months or more). Good breeders don't need to advertise their litters - they always have a list of people waiting for a puppy. Don't wait to see a litter advertised, contact the breeders and let them know you are interested in a puppy.

Most breeders only have one or two breeding bitches which come into season every 6-9 months and responsible breeders do not breed their girls on consecutive seasons. A litter may be any number from one puppy to ten or eleven....sometimes puppies don't survive and sometimes the mating is unsuccessful.

You could consider attending some dog shows at Dogs SA (Cromwell Rd Kilburn) and talk to breeders and start building a relationship. Shows have restarted after a long break due to COVID 19 restrictions.

Be patient, do your research and put some effort into your contact with breeders - the wait will be worth it. Put in the time and effort and show your interest in the breeders and they will show interest in return to you.