
Puppy Buyer's Guide

From the Newfoundland Club of Northern California

This guide is offered as an educational publication of the NCNC and may be distributed for educational purposes.

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Introduction

Adding any pet to your family is a large commitment requiring careful consideration. We hope the information in this guide will give you some of the facts you need to decide if a Newfoundland is the right dog for you, and if so, how to go about finding one that will be a great addition to your family. However, there is no substitute for getting “up close and personal.” Attend some dog shows or other events and meet as many Newfs and their owners as you can. You are likely to find many nice, experienced people who are happy to share their time and knowledge and answer your questions about their favorite breed. Consider whether or not a Newfoundland will really fit into your lifestyle, and whether you have the time, money and energy necessary.

Above all, please take your time. Don't talk to one breeder, see a litter of adorable puppies, and make a quick decision you may later regret. Talk to many different breeders and experienced Newf owners. Understand that it may take several months, or even a year or two, to get a puppy from the breeder you choose. The waiting game may be frustrating when you really want that cute new puppy, but remember, that puppy is an important investment and will hopefully be with you for many years to come. Waiting for the right one will be worth it. In the meantime, there are many ways in which you can learn about the breed and prepare for your new arrival. The Newfoundland Club of Northern California welcomes new members, and there is no requirement that you have a Newf to join. In fact, many new members join while waiting for their first puppy. Attending club meetings and events is a great way to learn about Newf-related “stuff” and to meet people who can offer help and advice once your new best friend arrives.

Breed Origin and History

The Newfoundland dog is a native North American breed first developed in the region of Newfoundland and Labrador, on the cold, rugged, windswept northeast region of the continent. The precise origin of the breed is now shrouded in the mists of history. However, the Newfoundland is acknowledged as one of the older dog breeds in existence today. The Newfoundland may have been first domesticated and developed directly from the wild by the Algonquin and Sioux Indians. A giant dog was once a fixture on the great plains and eastern seaboard. Evidence for this dog has turned up in the archaeological record. Although many early naturalists agreed that the Newfoundland is a native North American breed, there is still much disagreement regarding its origins. European fishermen *could have* bred their dogs with the native dogs found on the island-- perhaps a cross with the Great Pyrenees. Interestingly, there is a legend that the Viking Leif Erikson was accompanied by a large black dog when he landed on the coast of Newfoundland, over 1000 years ago. Fact or fiction? You be the judge. We do know that the Newfoundland was first named by George Cartwright in 1775 when he applied the name to his own dog. The first documented etching dates to the late 1700's and was labeled “The Newfoundland Dog -- Original Breed.” It shows many similarities to the modern version: a large skull, massive size, and well muscled legs. The first Newfoundland breed club began in England a century later, in 1886. Before the mid 19th century, the Newfoundland was known as the *Greater Newfoundland* to distinguish him from the *Lesser Newfoundland* or *St. John's Newfoundland*, as the closely related Labrador Retriever was then called. Newfoundland dogs were originally bred for carting and hauling. They were commonly used to haul fishermen's nets out of the ocean, cart wood up and down the hilly streets of the Newfoundland outports, and perform other chores. They were also bred as water rescue dogs and are still used for this purpose. During the 19th century, the Newfoundland dog was a common sight aboard the “dog walk” on the sailing vessels that plied the Atlantic. On many occasions, both at sea and along the shore, these powerful, selfless dogs heroically rescued both passengers and crews from drowning. A Newfoundland is said to have aided the English sailors at the Battle of Trafalgar. A Newfoundland rescued Napoleon Bonaparte during his voyage back from exile on the island of Elba. A celebrated rescue was performed by a Newf during the wreck of the Ethie off the coast of Nova Scotia in 1919. *Tang* carried a line from the Ethie to shore during a storm and helped save all passengers and crew. These stories serve to illustrate the long-held respect and admiration for the breed. Today, the Newfoundland is still valued all over the world for his gentle nature and great loyalty.

By the way, a note on pronunciation: The word “Newfoundland” is not one that rolls off the tongue easily, and many people get it wrong (“newFOUNDland” or other mangled variations). If you want to start off on the right foot with the Newf people you meet, practice saying the name the right way. The accepted American pronunciation is “NEWF-un-lund”, while Canadians say “new-fun-LAND.” You may also hear or read “Newf” and “Newfie” as common nicknames.

Is a Newfoundland for You?

Breed Standard

WHY IS THE STANDARD IMPORTANT TO YOU?

If you are not interested in showing your dog, you may think you don't need to know about the breed standard, but there are important reasons you should. A standard acts as a guideline for responsible breeders who want to maintain those qualities that make each breed what it is. In other words, the breed standard is what keeps Newfoundlands looking like Newfoundlands, with those special Newfoundland characteristics that probably attracted you to the breed in the first place. Any experienced breeder should know the standard well and be able to answer your questions.

THE AKC STANDARD FOR NEWFOUNDLAND DOGS

The official standards of all the breeds AKC recognizes are compiled in its official publication, **The Complete Dog Book**. A breed standard is a word description of what the ideal dog of that breed looks like. It is an attempt to describe "perfection." The standard is the "model" breeders use in their efforts to breed better dogs. Judges use the standard as a guide when evaluating dogs at a show. Each animal in competition is compared with the judge's mental image of the perfect dog described in the standard. The AKC recognizes the Newfoundland Club of America as the National Breed Club responsible for the Standard for Newfoundland dogs.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Newfoundland is a sweet-dispositioned dog that acts neither dull nor ill-tempered. He is a devoted companion. A multipurpose dog, at home on land and in water, the Newfoundland is capable of draft work and possesses natural lifesaving abilities. The Newfoundland is a large, heavily coated, well balanced dog that is deep-bodied, heavily boned, muscular, and strong. A good specimen of the breed has dignity and proud head carriage. The following description is that of the ideal Newfoundland. Any deviation from this ideal is to be penalized to the extent of the deviation. Structural and movement faults common to all working dogs are as undesirable in the Newfoundland as in any other breed, even though they are not specifically mentioned herein.

SIZE, PROPORTION, SUBSTANCE

Average height for adult dogs is 28 inches, for adult bitches, 26 inches. Approximate weight of adult dogs ranges from 130 to 150 pounds, adult bitches from 100 to 120 pounds. The dog's appearance is more massive throughout than the bitch's. Large size is desirable, but never at the expense of balance, structure, and correct gait. The Newfoundland is slightly longer than tall when measured from the point of shoulder to point of buttocks and from withers to ground. He is a dog of considerable substance which is determined by spring of rib, strong muscle, and heavy bone.

HEAD

The head is massive, with a broad skull, slightly arched crown, and strongly developed occipital bone. Cheeks are well developed. Eyes are dark brown. (Browns and Grays may have lighter eyes and should be penalized only to the extent that color affects expression.) They are relatively small, deep-set, and spaced wide apart. Eyelids fit closely with no inversion. Ears are relatively small and triangular with rounded tips. They are set on the skull level with, or slightly above, the brow and lie close to the head. When the ear is brought forward, it reaches to the inner corner of the eye on the same side. Expression is soft and reflects the characteristics of the breed: benevolence, intelligence, and dignity. Forehead and face are smooth and free of wrinkles. Slope of the stop is moderate but, because of the well developed brow, it may appear abrupt in profile. The muzzle is clean-cut, broad throughout its length, and deep. Depth and length are approximately equal, the length from tip of nose to stop being less than that from stop to occiput. The top of the muzzle is rounded, and the bridge, in profile, is straight or only slightly arched. Teeth meet in a scissors or level bite. Dropped lower incisors, in an otherwise normal bite, are not indicative of a skeletal malocclusion and should be considered only a minor deviation.

NECK, TOPLINE, BODY

The neck is strong and well set on the shoulders and is long enough for proud head carriage. The back is strong, broad, and muscular and is level from just behind the withers to the croup. The chest is full and deep with the brisket reaching at least down to the elbows. Ribs are well sprung, with the anterior third of the rib cage tapered to allow elbow clearance. The flank is deep. The croup is broad and slopes slightly. Tail set follows the natural line of the croup. The tail is broad at the base and strong. It has no kinks, and the distal bone reaches to the hock. When the dog is standing relaxed, its tail hangs straight or with a slight curve at the end. When the dog is in motion or excited, the tail is carried out, but it does not curl over the back.

FOREQUARTERS

Shoulders are muscular and well laid back. Elbows lie directly below the highest point of the withers. Forelegs are muscular, heavily boned, straight, and parallel to each other, and the elbows point directly to the rear. The distance from elbow to ground equals about half the dog's height. Pasterns are strong and slightly sloping. Feet are proportionate to the body in size, webbed, and cat foot in type. Dew claws may be removed.

HINDQUARTERS

The rear assembly is powerful, muscular, and heavily boned. Viewed from the rear, the legs are straight and parallel. Viewed from the side, the thighs are broad and fairly long. Stifles and hocks are well bent and the line from hock to ground is perpendicular. Hocks are well let down. Hind feet are similar to the front feet. Dew claws should be removed.

COAT

The adult Newfoundland has a flat, water-resistant, double coat that tends to fall back into place when rubbed against the nap. The outer coat is coarse, moderately long, and full, either straight or with a wave. The undercoat is soft and dense, although it is often less dense during the summer months or in warmer climates. Hair on the face and muzzle is short and fine. The backs of the legs are feathered all the way down. The tail is covered with long dense hair. Excess hair may be trimmed for neatness. Whiskers need not be trimmed.

COLOR

Color is secondary to type, structure, and soundness. Recognized Newfoundland colors are black, brown, gray, and white and black. Solid Colors-Blacks, Browns, and Grays may appear as solid colors or solid colors with white at any, some, or all, of the following locations: chin, chest, toes, and tip of tail. Any amount of white found at these locations is typical and is not penalized. Also typical are a tinge of bronze on a black or gray coat and lighter furnishings on a brown or gray coat. Landseer-White base coat with black markings. Typically, the head is solid black, or black with white on the muzzle, with or without a blaze. There is a separate black saddle and black on the rump extending onto a white tail. Markings, on either Solid Colors or Landseers, might deviate considerably from those described and should be penalized only to the extent of the deviation. Clear white or white with minimal ticking is preferred. Beauty of markings should be considered only when comparing dogs of otherwise comparable quality and never at the expense of type, structure and soundness.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Any colors or combinations of colors not specifically described are disqualified.

GAIT

The Newfoundland in motion has good reach, strong drive, and gives the impression of effortless power. His gait is smooth and rhythmic, covering the maximum amount of ground with the minimum number of steps. Forelegs and hind legs travel straight forward. As the dog's speed increases, the legs tend toward single tracking. When moving, a slight roll of the skin is characteristic of the breed. Essential to good movement is the balance of correct front and rear assemblies.

TEMPERAMENT

Sweetness of temperament is the hallmark of the Newfoundland; this is the most important single characteristic of the breed.

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Glossary of Common Health Problems in Newfoundlands

The goal of this glossary, authored by the Newfoundland Club of Northern California, is to educate potential Newfoundland owners about the various health problems that are common in the breed. While this glossary is not all encompassing and provides only general information, we hope it will serve as a starting place for your discussions with breeders. Additional questions regarding a specific condition or individual dog should be directed to your veterinarian. Please note that the health problems listed here are in no way confined to the Newfoundland breed. All dog breeds, as well as mixed breeds, are susceptible to a variety of genetic conditions. No matter what kind of dog you choose, it pays to do your homework on health concerns before you buy.

ORTHOPEDIC PROBLEMS

Hip/Elbow Dysplasia – In dogs affected with hip dysplasia, the hip joints and/or elbow joints do not form correctly as the puppy grows. Affected dogs range from mildly to severely affected. Those who are mildly affected often do

not need much treatment when young, but will develop arthritis as they age. Usually anti-inflammatory medications and joint support supplements are effective. If young dogs are more severely affected, they may require medications and possibly surgery, including total hip replacement, at a younger age to enable the dog to live pain free. Dogs must be x-rayed in order to diagnose hip and elbow dysplasia; a positive diagnosis cannot be made simply from watching the dog move. There are three main certifying agencies in North America: the OFA and GDC in the U.S. and the OVC in Canada. The OFA and the OVC require dogs to be two years of age, while the GDC will certify at a year (though they recommend waiting until the dog is older). Dogs free of hip dysplasia receive a rating (excellent, good, fair/acceptable). Dogs free of elbow dysplasia receive a normal certification. The results are available on the Internet (www.offa.org, www.ucdavis.edu). **Please note:** The certification rates only the individual dog and DOES NOT guarantee that dog will not produce a dysplastic puppy. The likelihood of producing this disease can be minimized by considering both depth (number of ancestors) and breadth (number of clear litter mates and parents litter mates) in the pedigree, as well as any offspring prior to selecting a mate.

Elbow anomaly – This is a newly discovered disease in Newfoundlands and has not been written up in any books. The Newfoundland Club of America is supporting research at this time. In this disease the bones in the front legs, the radius and ulna, grow at uneven rates and the elbow joint becomes dislocated. It must be diagnosed by radiographs, and sometimes can be diagnosed as early as four weeks. As the dog grows the front leg(s) bow out in a curve. This condition is considered hereditary although the genetics are not yet understood. To date, there is no reliable surgical treatment and affected puppies are usually euthanized.

Osteochondrosis, Osteochondritis Dessicans (OCD) – This is a disease of joint cartilage in shoulder, stifle, hock or elbow that occurs usually in young, fast growing dogs. Males seem to be more frequently affected than females. The cartilage surface gets damaged, and in more severe cases, a flap of cartilage is created. Sometimes this flap comes loose and forms a chip within the joint. The chip can be removed surgically with fair to excellent results, depending upon which joint is affected. Dogs with this problem are usually lame in the affected leg at sometime during their youth.

Panosteitis (Pano) – This is a painful inflammatory bone disease of young, rapidly growing dogs. Pano causes lameness in the affected limb and the lameness may “rotate” among all four legs. It is usually a self-limiting condition that most dogs outgrow. The dog may require some limitation of activity, i.e. no free play, and anti-inflammatory medication if the condition is very painful. Pano commonly occurs between 6 months and 18 months, but is known to occur in older dogs, and tends to run in families.

Ruptured Cruciate Ligament – This ligament stabilizes the dog’s knee or stifle joint. A sudden rupture of the ligament causes sudden lameness in the rear (i.e. holding up one rear leg or a severe limp) while a partial tear may be subtle, with only mild lameness and muscle wasting apparent on the affected side. This problem may have some genetic basis, frequently occurs in middle-aged dogs, but is also a common twisting injury. Strains and partial tears may respond to rest, medication and rehab while more severe damage will require surgical repair. The newer TPLO or TWO repairs give good to excellent results.

EYE PROBLEMS

There is a registry for eye diseases called the Canine Eye Registration Foundation (CERF). A dog must be checked by a Board Certified Ophthalmologist, who examines the eyes for any signs of disease. The registration is good for only one year as many inherited eye diseases can develop as the dog ages.

Ectropion/Entropion: These conditions cause the eyelids to roll out (Ectropion) or to roll in too tightly (Entropion). Some dogs have both problems in the same eyelid. Poorly fitting lids may cause excessive tear production or allow the eye to become too dry, damaged or infected. Depending on severity, the impact on the dog may be controlled with eye-drops and lubricants or corrected surgically. This is considered to be an inherited problem and dogs that have surgical correction of their lids are not allowed to compete in AKC conformation shows.

Cataracts: In this disease the lens of the eye becomes cloudy, impairing the dog’s vision. Some dogs can be born with this condition (called congenital or juvenile cataracts) and this form is generally considered to be inherited in most breeds of dogs. Other cataracts develop only in old age and are particularly common in dogs with Diabetes Mellitus. They can be surgically removed.

HEART PROBLEMS

Insist that any puppy you are considering purchasing is checked by a Board Certified Cardiologist before you take the puppy home. Also be certain that its parents have been checked when they were over one year of age. A cardiologist is specially trained to listen for abnormal sounds called murmurs. Murmurs are caused by any turbulence in the blood flow through the heart, can be caused by many problems, and are rated I through VI. Murmurs can go away as the puppy grows, stay throughout life, or actually appear later in life as a puppy grows or

a dog ages. If a puppy has a murmur, the cardiologist may recommend rechecking when the puppy is older or performing an ultrasound examination to determine the source of the murmur. The source of the murmur may be indicative of the severity of the heart problem. Many breeds of dogs have inherited heart problems. The Newfoundland is subject to one inherited problem, though it may have other heart problems. The breed can also develop various forms of old-age heart disease. The OFA registry will certify dogs free of Cardiac disease once they are over one year of age. The OFA will accept certification from Board Certified Cardiologists, from individuals who call themselves "specialists" and from general practitioners. If the rating OFCa-C appears, that means the dog has been checked by a Cardiologist.

Congenital Heart Diseases

Subaortic Stenosis (SAS): This is an inherited disease in Newfoundlands, although the mode of inheritance appears complicated and is not yet completely understood. A ring of tissue forms below the aortic valve in the heart, restricting the blood flow and increasing the pressure within the heart. The heart tissue overgrows in response to the increased pressure, outgrowing its own blood supply and causing scar tissue to develop that interferes with the electrical impulses in the heart. Puppies can develop a murmur throughout their first year of life, but usually those with significant disease develop murmurs within the first 9 weeks of life. Occasionally, a puppy will have no murmur at a young age, but when checked again at one year, will have developed the disease. This disease can only be positively diagnosed by auscultation (listening to the heart) in combination with cardiac ultrasound. The ultrasound will usually show the physical defect and is also used to measure the velocity and pressure of blood flow and show heart function. The results enable the cardiologist to grade the murmur and the severity of the disease. Murmur sounds do not always correlate with the severity of the disease. Some of the signs of SAS include lethargy, exercise intolerance, fainting, and sudden death. Mildly affected puppies have about a 1% greater chance of sudden death while moderate disease increases this risk by nearly 15%. Affected puppies can have their lifespan extended with medication. If left untreated, severely affected puppies have a life expectancy of under three years. The following are other heart diseases that are commonly inherited in other breeds, but that may occur in Newfoundlands, sometimes in conjunction with SAS.

Pulmonic stenosis (PS): In this disease a ring of tissue forms below the pulmonic valve in the heart. It causes murmurs and may affect the dog's health and lifespan, depending on the severity and if it appears in conjunction with other defects.

Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA) : In this disease the passageway between the two sides of the heart that normally closes at birth fails to close and the dog has a murmur. This can be surgically repaired.

Tricuspid Valve Dysplasia (TVD): This is a malformation of the tricuspid valve in the heart allowing blood to "leak" through the valve in the wrong direction. It causes murmurs. Effect on the dog's health and lifespan depends on the severity of the malformation. This disease is known to be inherited in Labrador Retrievers.

Non-Congenital Heart Disease

Dilated Cardiomyopathy (DCM): This is a disease that usually develops later in life in many breeds of dogs, including the Newfoundland and other large and giant breeds. A weakening and thinning of the heart muscle occurs, leaving the dog with a large, flabby, and inefficient heart. It eventually causes heart failure. There is research being done in Newfoundlands and other breeds to determine if a lack of certain dietary elements may increase a dog's risk. At this time some forms of the disease respond to diet changes and/or medications that may slow down the heart failure. In many dogs this disease is also accompanied by atrial fibrillation, which is where the heart beats very irregularly and too fast. Medications are sometimes effective at slowing the heart rate.

OTHER HEALTH ISSUES

Cystinuria: Affected dogs have an abnormal absorption of cystine (an amino acid) by the kidney that results in the formation of crystals and/or stones in the urine. This can lead to recurrent or frequent urinary tract infections and causes painful urination especially in males. Males, because of the anatomy of their urinary tracts, are at risk for a blockage by a stone. This is an emergency that often requires surgery to remove the stones. Some cases may be managed by restrictive diet. This is an inherited disease in Newfs and is caused when a puppy inherits two copies of a recessive gene, one from each parent. Dogs that carry only one copy of the defective gene are called "carriers" and do not have the disease or show any symptoms of the disease. However, if two carrier dogs are bred together, approximately 25% of their offspring will have the disease. DNA testing is available to determine the clear (no copies of the gene) or carrier (one copy of the gene) status of unaffected animals. Additionally, a dog may be determined clear by pedigree since it must be clear if both its parents are clear.

Allergies : Newfoundlands, like most other breeds of dogs may have allergies to food, fleas, pollen or other environmental allergens. Typically allergies cause skin problems, recurring ear infections or digestive problems. Medications, proper parasite control, and sometimes diet changes can effectively manage many allergies.

Hypothyroidism: A hypothyroid dog does not produce enough thyroid hormone. Some of the more common signs are lethargy, poor coat and weight gain. However, some dogs do not show any distinct signs. It is usually a disease of middle aged or older dogs, but occasionally young dogs are affected. Blood testing is the only method for diagnosis. Daily medication can manage the disease.

Bloat: This is an emergency, life threatening condition in which the stomach fills with gas and may twist back on itself cutting off the blood supply. A dog with bloat may act distressed and may try, unsuccessfully, to vomit. This disease requires immediate veterinary attention in order to save the dog's life. Outcome of the surgery is dependent on the dog's general condition and the damage done to the stomach and other internal organs during the bloat.

HEALTH SUMMARY

As a giant breed, the Newfoundland has various health problems. Potential owners should familiarize themselves with these problems. Progress has been made in identifying some of the genes responsible for these diseases and their mode of inheritance. It is estimated that every dog carries 5 or more "bad" genes. **Responsible breeders don't guess, they test!** They follow their puppies, help new owners learn the ropes and want to know the results of their breeding, good or bad. A responsible breeder needs this information to continue to improve their breeding program. Knowing the hip, elbow, heart and cystinuria status of all breeding stock allows an appropriate mate to be selected and the risk of producing health problems minimized. However, anybody purchasing a Newfoundland should be aware that, even with every precaution taken, an individual puppy still could develop health problems. If your puppy develops a problem, contact your breeder. A responsible breeder can help you understand the problem and assist in any future decisions. Further, NCNC may be able to help by putting you in contact with individuals who have had similar experiences with their own Newfoundlands.

Training and Working Activities

Newfoundlands, by breeding and temperament, are true working dogs. They enjoy participating in a wide variety of activities, the following listed ones being just a few. Even if you are looking for "just a pet," you may find that you and your dog are happiest when you are working together on a shared activity. These exercises help to establish and maintain the bond between dog and owner, and have added benefits in keeping your Newf trained, active, and well-socialized. Other activities well suited to the Newfoundland include pet-assisted therapy programs such as visiting nursing homes, hospitals, or schools, and marching in parades. Some Newfs and their owners also participate in competitive activities such as AKC Agility or Fly-Ball. You should always make sure your dog is fit and orthopedically sound before beginning a strenuous, "high-impact" sport.

AKC CONFORMATION AND OBEDIENCE

Conformation compares each dog to the Breed Standard, a written description of perfection for the breed. The dog and bitch that "conform" best to the Standard are awarded Championship Points, the number of which are based upon the number of other dogs entered of the same sex. Conformation events (commonly referred to as "Dog Shows") allow breeders to compare their breeding programs with others and have their progeny evaluated by a non-biased judge.

Obedience training teaches your dog (and you) the manners he will need to be a good companion for life. If you choose to pursue obedience training more competitively, the AKC offers four title levels: CD (Companion Dog), CDX (Companion Dog Excellent), UD (Utility Dog), and OTCH (Obedience Trial Champion.) Each has a set of exercises which dog and handler must perform as a team. NCNC provides matches for practice as well as a wealth of experience in advice from members who have trained their own dogs to these levels. Whatever your goal is, a perfect 200 or just a qualifying score, obedience training develops and strengthens the bond between you and your dog.

NCA SANCTIONED DRAFT WORK

Many Newfoundlands take naturally to pulling carts, and the Club sponsors cart pulls for both profit and community service. This type of carting requires a dog two years or older with good manners, handler control, and minimal instruction from an experienced handler. Formal draft work is much more involved. The dog must demonstrate the skills required to be truly useful in an actual working situation. Working as a team with his handler, the dog must back up, negotiate a maneuvering course, wait in position when commanded, and

complete a one-mile freight haul with only verbal commands and signals as a guide. The NCNC sponsors two Annual Draft Tests where dogs can earn NCA Draft titles.

NCA SANCTIONED WATER TESTS

The Newfoundland Club of America Water Test is a series of exercises designed to show the instinctive and learned skills that have been a recorded part of the breed history for centuries. Unsurpassed as a functioning companion, the Water Rescue Newfoundland combines the ability to take commands from his handler while using his own intelligence and skills. The Newfoundland Club of Northern California members meet for training sessions during the Spring and Summer, and the NCNC sponsors two annual Water Tests.

AKC TRACKING

Tracking involves following an aged trail which may contain several turns and include an article "dropped" by the track layer. All dogs can track, and many Newfs have earned their "TD." Several have gone on to the more involved "TDX" level. The NCNC has recently started sponsoring an annual tracking test, and has hosted tracking seminars as well.

A Special Note for Homes with Kids and Other Pets

For many people, one of the biggest factors, if not *the* biggest, attracting them to the breed is the wonderful Newfoundland temperament. If you already share your home with children and/or other pets, you may dream of your Newfoundland being their new best buddy. The good news is, most Newfoundlands, if properly bred and socialized, do get along very well with kids, dogs, and even cats and other small pets. Many Newf owners enjoy happy households full of Newfs and kids and cats, etc. all peacefully coexisting. However, there are several important points to consider:

Newfoundlands, by nature of their very size, can be overwhelming to small children and animals. Especially, when they are young and boisterous puppies, Newfs are not aware of their own size and strength, and may knock down a child or play too roughly with another pet if not trained and supervised adequately.

- ALL small children must be supervised at ALL times with ALL dogs. Newfoundlands, even with their sweet disposition, are not an exception to this rule. Besides the point mentioned above about a large dog accidentally being too rough, small children may unintentionally hurt a dog, causing the dog in turn to become wary of children. If you want both your kids and your Newf to get through their early years together happily, you must be vigilant.
- If your child is really the one who is pushing (begging/pleading/promising) desperately to get a dog, remember one thing: YOU are the one who is ultimately responsible for the health and welfare of the puppy you buy. Helping to care for and train a dog is a wonderful learning experience for a responsible older child, but you must be prepared to supervise and to step in and take on the work yourself when necessary. To expect otherwise is not fair to the child or the dog.
- Finally, if you do have those beloved kids and/or pets in your home already, or someday hope to add them, it is all the more important that you act carefully in choosing a sound puppy with a good temperament from a reliable breeder.

Can You Afford A Newfoundland?

What will it really cost you, both in financial terms, and in time and energy, to own and care for a Newfoundland, and can you really afford it? This is perhaps the most important question you need to answer before taking the plunge and buying that puppy. Do you have to be rich to own a Newf? Certainly not, but besides the obvious cost of food, there are many basic expenses throughout the year you should consider. Keep in mind that the costs listed below are estimates for a healthy Newfoundland with no special problems. Should your dog have a serious health problem, the veterinary costs can skyrocket. This is yet another reason to take your time finding a healthy puppy from a responsible breeder who will support you through any health issues you may encounter.

How much does a puppy cost?

Depending on the breeder, region, show potential, and other factors, a Newfoundland puppy can cost anywhere from \$1,000 - \$1,800. Does this seem expensive to you? Remember that a reputable breeder has a lot invested in that puppy and is unlikely to be making much if any profit on the deal. The breeder will have spent countless hours and dollars on the care of the dam and the puppies. Stud fees, health clearances, veterinary care, immunizations: these are just some basic costs of a litter that a good breeder will have spent long before you pick up your puppy. Shopping for your puppy is not a good time for bargain-hunting. This is a long-term investment for you and your family, and the quality of the puppy, as well as of the breeder, should be your highest priority. Consider that if the price of the puppy alone seems like a stretch, you may not be financially prepared for the many other costs of caring for a giant-breed dog over his lifetime.

Feeding

It is important to the health of your Newfoundland to feed a high-quality diet in appropriate amounts. You want to keep your Newf properly nourished at each stage of his development without allowing him to become overweight, which can lead to serious health problems. Your vet and your puppy's breeder are your best sources of guidance in this area. Most breeders and experienced owners will recommend feeding a "premium" brand of dog food, available at pet supply and feed stores. Although more expensive than supermarket brands, they typically offer higher quality ingredients and more nutrition ounce for ounce, which more than makes up for the added cost. Many owners supplement this with some meat, yogurt, eggs or other fresh food for both variety and nutrition. Others choose to feed a completely "raw" or home-made diet, which should only be done under experienced guidance. There are also nutritional supplements for various purposes. You should consult your puppy's breeder about what and how much she feeds her dogs, the benefits of this feeding program, and the approximate cost per month. For the sake of simplicity, let's say you feed one of the premium feed store brands. Your dog may consume about 30 to 50 lbs. per month, depending on age and activity level. That's about \$20 - \$30 per month, not including additional supplements.

Grooming

The price Newfoundland owners pay for that lovely soft, furry friend is a lot of time with the brush and comb. A heavy-duty weekly grooming session is the absolute minimum. Depending on the dog's coat type and the time of year, short daily sessions may be necessary and more effective. For supplies, you'll want at least: a good comb, a slicker brush, a rake, nail clippers, and trimming scissors. Other items many owners find useful are mat-splitters, thinning shears, and high-powered dryers. Although it is possible to groom your dog on the floor, for the sake of your back you are likely to want a good, sturdy grooming table. And if you plan to show your dog in conformation, your equipment needs may become more elaborate. You can check the price of grooming supplies at pet supply stores, catalogs and web sites.

For most owners, bathing a full-grown Newf in the regular bathroom tub is impractical. In nice weather, you can bathe your Newf outside using the garden hose, although using warm water is recommended – it penetrates the coat more effectively. Some people set up large dog-washing tubs in a laundry room or basement. Another option is the self-service dog wash at PetSmart or other stores, which costs about \$12 per half-hour. Professional

grooming services can cost up to \$30 - 50 per hour. A typical wash, dry and groom for a Newf who wasn't too tangled to start with may run about \$75.

Vet costs

What does your pup need other than his shots? Well, he does need those, which run about \$130 -200 during the first year of a puppy's life, and about \$50 annually for an adult. Other basic veterinary costs: Spaying or neutering your Newf (which is highly recommended unless you have agreed, with his breeder, that he is a show prospect) will cost about \$150-300, with spaying more than neutering. In Northern California, most people treat for heartworms, fleas and ticks year-round. A year's worth of Advantage or Frontline (flea and tick control products) for a dog over 100 lbs. costs approximately \$180-300. A year's worth of Heartguard costs about \$80-120. If your dog is injured or sick, a visit to the vet can cost anywhere from \$40-70, not including any lab tests, surgery or medications. And remember that medications cost more for a large dog, as larger doses are required.

Veterinary care is another area in which bargain-hunting does not pay in the long run. Look for a vet with whom you feel comfortable and who has experience caring for giant-breed dogs. Get a referral from your breeder or another experienced Newf owner if possible.

Exercise

One of the many side benefits of having a Newfoundland is exercising with him. When your Newf is a young pup and his bones and joints are still soft and developing, you should offer moderate exercise, without excessive jumping and pounding on hard surfaces. Adult Newfs require a couple of brisk walks of a mile or more a day, plus some play time running around the local dog park or your yard to maintain healthy muscle tone and release their excess energy. Swimming is also great, and most Newfoundlands love it. An under-exercised Newf is more prone to weight and other health problems, as well as behavior problems. Even if you live on a large piece of property, don't be fooled into thinking your dog can just "exercise himself." Newfs can be a little on the lazy side, especially as they age, and may need your active participation to get them up and moving. Also, on-leash walks are a vital opportunity to train and socialize your dog. Once again, think realistically of your own lifestyle. This may sound harsh, but if your biggest physical activity now is walking to your car in the driveway, can you really commit to meeting the daily exercise needs of a big, active young dog every day for years to come? Newfoundland rescue groups have seen too many dogs who were kept confined, miserable, and ultimately unhealthy because their owners could not make this commitment. If your schedule or health doesn't allow exercising your dog adequately, there are dog walking services, or you could hire a reliable neighbor to do the job. Again, this is just another expense to consider if you feel you will need it.

Housing needs

Most owners have a crate, at least for traveling, for use while housebreaking, and as a safe place to confine their dog when necessary. Most dogs consider their crate a "den" where they can retreat for a quiet snooze. However, no dog should be left confined to a crate for extended periods of time. The crate should be big enough for the dog to comfortably turn around and to lie down stretched out. For a Newf that often means the biggest size available. Crates this size cost from \$90-\$200 depending on material and quality. You may also find you want a portable crate and/or exercise pen for traveling, dog shows, or other events. Outside, any area where your Newf will be left alone should be securely fenced (at least 6-foot fencing), free of poisonous plants and other hazards, and at least partly shaded during the heat of the day. A dog house or other shelter from the elements is also a good idea. Unless you want to give over the landscaping of your entire yard to your pup, you may want to consider fencing off a separate run area just for him. Recommendations for size vary, but a minimum of 12 ft. x 12 ft. allows some room for exercise.

NOTE: Dogs should never be kept chained or tied out. This practice is not only unsafe, but can lead to many behavior issues.

Other expenses

Leashes, collars, and miscellaneous supplies: Check stores or catalogs for prices. At a minimum, you'll want a good-quality 6-foot leash, a buckle collar for your Newf to wear every day with his ID tag on it, and some kind of training collar. Depending on how much and what type of training you do, you'll probably end up buying many more leashes, collars, harnesses, etc. Of course you'll also need food and water dishes - stainless steel ones will last the longest. It is important to keep a clean water supply available for your dog. Since bowls can be easily

knocked over, some owners clip large steel buckets to the fence in the dog's run instead. Others prefer drinking fountain type "licky" devices, which can be set up to provide a constant water supply.

Obedience classes: For the sake of your dog, yourself, and your neighbors, you should enroll in some kind of obedience classes. At a minimum, a puppy class, followed by a basic manners class, is essential, even if you plan to go no further in competitive obedience. Group classes can cost anywhere from \$50 - \$120 for a 6-8 week course. Private lessons are more, of course.

Travel issues: If you ever travel, or are sometimes called on to work longer hours than your Newf can be left alone, you may need a pet sitter, dog daycare, or dog walker. Prices vary widely depending on the services offered - one dog walker in the San Jose area charges \$15 per visit. Pet sitters may charge \$20-\$40 per day. (If you travel frequently and/or work long hours often, you should reconsider whether owning a dog is a good choice at this stage in your life. *Newfoundlands are social creatures who are miserable when left alone for long hours.*) Will your car fit a Newf? Don't laugh at this question. Of course, *technically*, a Newf can fit into almost any car, but is that practical, especially if you have family members who would like to use the back seat occasionally too? Most people don't expect to buy a new car just to accommodate their pet, but when you are talking about a giant breed, it is a serious consideration. Also note: Your Newf should never ride loose in the back of a pick-up.

Dog Shows: If you plan to show your Newf in AKC conformation, obedience, and/or NCA events, entry fees range from \$25.00 on up. That amount doesn't include gas, hotels, and other travel fees, professional handling or grooming, that Newf coffee mug souvenir you just couldn't resist at the show, etc.... Of course, these are not "necessary" costs of owning a Newfoundland. But if showing your dog is one of the reasons you are buying one, you should factor these expenses into your decision as well.

Home Maintenance: You have undoubtedly heard by now that Newfs shed and drool, and this is true. A big dog also tracks in more dirt, leaves, and other stuff from the great outdoors. All this means a house with a Newf is unlikely to be perfectly spic and span at all times. Only you can decide how much of a messy house you can tolerate. If a dirty footprint on your newly scrubbed kitchen floor really bugs you, you're headed for trouble. A house with a Newf does not have to be a doggy, smelly mess, but it *will* take much more time and elbow grease on your part to keep it clean. Of course, you could hire a maid service to keep up with the extra work, but that takes us back to what you can afford...

Finding and Purchasing a Puppy

If you've gotten this far and still want to continue, you've probably decided that a Newfoundland is for you. (If you skipped the first 2 chapters, no fair cheating! Go back and start from the beginning.) Now comes the tricky part: actually finding the perfect puppy. If you thought it would be a simple matter of looking in the classified ads, calling a number and then going to pick up your little furball and live happily ever after, we are sorry to break the bad news. Unfortunately, there are people trying to make money selling purebred puppies who do not have the dogs' or your best interests in mind. There are also well-intentioned people breeding their family pet without adequate knowledge of genetics, health issues, etc. There are also wonderful, responsible breeders who are constantly striving to produce the best dogs they can, and who will offer you as a buyer a lifetime of support to go with your new puppy. We feel it is important to let you know the full range of what's "out there" when you go shopping for a puppy, so you can make the most informed decision possible.

FINDING AND EVALUATING A BREEDER

(Tips from the Newfoundland Club of America, www.newfdogclub.org)

Finding the right breeder can be the most important step you take in selecting your Newfoundland puppy. For this reason, the NCA offers the following suggestions.

- * Talk and visit with many breeders
- * Be prepared to wait for a puppy
- * Expect a written contract and a health guarantee
- * Request references
- * Documents that should come with your puppy

Talk to, and visit with as many breeders as possible, even if it means a long drive. This will enable you to meet the breeder and see the conditions in his kennel. Although elaborate equipment is not a necessity, the facilities can and should be clean. To be healthy, the puppies should be kept clean at all times with a warm dry pen, clean papers on the floor, and a clean bedding area. Ask to see the mother and the father of the puppies. Keep in mind that many times the father will not be on the premises, but the breeder should offer information about him. Also, the mother might not look her very best - taking care of pups is hard work. It is not unusual to have to wait six months for your Newf puppy from a breeder. **Quality is worth waiting for.** A Newfoundland puppy should never go to a new home before the age of 8 weeks. Usually, by 8-12 weeks, a puppy has been checked for possible hereditary defects, received initial vaccinations and wormings, and is ready for his new family. Reputable breeders have written sales contracts and health guarantees. As with any contract or agreement, these should be read carefully and discussed in detail with the breeder before signing. Most breeders will offer a contract or agreement concerning puppies crippled with hip dysplasia or found to have a heart defect. Such contracts or agreements may also cover neutering, or the care required to be provided by the buyer. Newfoundlands are subject to heart defects, hereditary in nature, and should be examined by a veterinarian for such before being placed in a new home. No bloodline is absolutely free of all hereditary problems, but a breeder should be ready to openly discuss any dogs in his kennel and their pedigrees as they are affected, for example by hip dysplasia and heart defects. A good breeder will be happy to supply you with references of satisfied customers. In return, the breeder may ask you for references such as your veterinarian. He will also question you about your lifestyle, why you want a Newf, and your own facilities for a Newfoundland. He would be rightfully concerned if you do not have a securely fenced yard or kennel run with appropriate shelter.

A Newf puppy should come with the following information:

- an AKC Registration application, properly completed and signed
- a pedigree of 3 or more generations
- written instructions on the feeding and care of the puppy
- an immunization record and schedule including date and type of serum, and dates future inoculations are due
- a worming record and schedule
- a written sales contract and guarantee stipulating all terms and conditions of the sale including when and what health defects the puppy has been examined and is guaranteed for.

Finding the right puppy and breeder for you, is often time consuming and difficult. Once found, you will have friends for life ! Take your time; a few months spent in your search will be well worth it.

Checklists

Here are some questions you should ask and every responsible breeder will gladly answer:

- May I see the puppies and their mother? *You should always be able to see the mother, and you should be able to observe the puppies -Newfoundland puppies are curious and friendly, they should be coming to you.*
- May I see the AKC registration for the father and mother?
- Have the mother, father and puppies been cleared by a cardiologist?
- Has the mother or father produced "heart puppies" before? *Unfortunately heart problems exist in every Newfoundland line all over the world.*
- Have the mother and father been cleared by the Genetic Disease Control (GDC) for hips and elbows, or have the mother and father been rated by the [Orthopedic Foundation for Animals](#) (OFA) and what was the score (excellent, good, fair or not cleared)? *GDC and OFA check for orthopedic problems.*
- Have the parents been screened for cystinuria and have they been cleared? *If both parents have been cleared your puppy will not be affected.*
- Do the mother or father have any working titles?
- Can I talk to your vet?
- Are you a member in good standing of the Newfoundland Club of America ? - *Members must sign and abide by an ethic guideline.*
- What local dog organizations are you a member of? - *Regional Newfoundland clubs, local All Breed Clubs, tracking, agility, obedience*
- Will you take the dog back if circumstances prevent me from taking care of it?

Questions a good breeder may ask you:

- Where do you intend to keep the puppy?
- How much time will the puppy stay home alone?
- Can I talk to your vet?
- Have you owned a giant breed dog before?
- Are you aware of the problems the breed has?
- Are you aware of the costs involved if your dog should develop medical problems?

Finally, before you take your puppy home, make sure:

- **All parties have signed a written contract**
- **The breeder has supplied an individual AKC registration application for the puppy. Without it you will NOT be able to register your puppy in the U.S.**
- **You have care and feeding instructions.**

Breeder Red Flags

When visiting a breeder, or talking with one before a visit, there are a number of things that should alert you of possible trouble. Read this list carefully beforehand and take notes during any phone conversation or face-to-face meeting.

- Breeder using other registries besides AKC (usually stating they are "just as good as...")
- No questions asked about anything except payment methods
- Breeder "not believing in that silly health testing"
- Bitches being very young or very old and pregnant
- No concern about what you will provide the puppy with in terms of daily care, exercise, paddock, crate, training experience
- Breeder who doesn't believe in spay/neuter agreements-- "what you do with your puppy is your business."
- Huge numbers of dogs
- Numerous breeds that the breeder deals with
- Refusal to let you visit the facilities housing all the dogs
- Refusal to let you meet the dam and/or sire
- What you can do if you have doubts:
- Contact your local S.P.C.A. for complaints
- Contact local dog clubs and breed clubs for references
- Ask breeder for references
- Has breeder ever been sued? Suspended?
- Contact AKC for complaints

Rescue

NCNC has had an active Rescue Service for more than 15 years. Our goal is a loving home for every Newf. We accept all purebred Newfoundlands regardless of age or condition. Local Humane Societies normally call us when they get a Newfoundland. We do accept owner-surrendered dogs if referrals are not possible. Rescued Newfs are housed, cared for, and rehabilitated (if necessary) by various club members. NCNC strives to match each Newf to the right family, and we have been successful - we have rescued and placed well over 100 dogs. If you are interested in knowing more about Newf Rescue please contact our [Rescue Chair](#) who will answer your questions and furnish you with a Rescue Application if requested.

HOW DOES THE NCNC OBTAIN DOGS?

Our phone numbers are distributed all over Northern California to vet's offices, shelters, groomers, and other rescue groups. In addition, we are listed with the NCA through their literature and web site. Most of the dogs we get are owner-surrendered. Reasons vary from moving, divorce, allergies, etc., to owners who think it's the dog's fault, for example, because he's "untrained," barking, too hairy, slobbers too much, and so on. Sometimes the dogs are completely healthy, and other times they desperately need veterinary care.

ADOPTION FEE

Currently the fee is \$250 regardless of the club's investment in the dog. Sometimes the fee is waived for dogs that have long-term health issues. We also require those adopting dogs to sign a contract. The contract asks you to care for the dog and be his best friend. It also advises adopters that we will remove the dog from a home if his needs are not being met adequately.

CAN I COUNT ON CONTINUED HELP WITH MY NEW RESCUE DOG?

Absolutely. Help and advice are always a phone call or personal visit away. New adopters are automatically enrolled as members for one year in the NCNC and receive our monthly newsletter, "The Newf's Paper," informing them of upcoming events and activities.

PET SHOPS, NEWSPAPER ADS, AND OTHER SOURCES

So far we've discussed the sources we recommend: reputable breeders or a rescue organization. But we understand that it can take time to find an available Newf from these sources, and you may be tempted to search elsewhere. Why not just buy that adorable puppy who's available right now from the local pet store or an ad in the paper? Why not? Read on. The following sections on purchasing puppies from Pet Shops, or via newspaper ads and web sites are reprinted with permission from the informational web site, www.nopupppymills.com. What is a puppy mill? It's a commercial breeding operation that mass-produces purebred dogs for sale in pet shops across the nation, basically, a dog factory. You may be saying to yourself, "I would never buy a puppy from a puppy mill! I don't need to read this." But thousands of unsuspecting buyers DO purchase puppies who came out of mills every year without even knowing it. Please do yourself, and future generations of dogs, a big favor by educating yourself before you go shopping so you don't inadvertently support this sadly growing industry.

PET SHOPS

If you are a recent pet shop customer, does this sound familiar? "We don't buy from puppy mills." *Well, believe it or not, this is usually true. Pet shops do not normally buy from puppy mills. Pet shops buy from brokers, who buy from puppy mills.*

"Our puppies come from private breeders in the Midwest." *Ask yourself (or better yet... ask the pet shop), what the heck a private breeder is. I guess a puppy mill is private when they have No Trespassing signs posted all over the place and they don't let anyone enter the barn where the dogs are raised.*

"We only buy from local breeders." *Again, this is usually true. Many pet shops will buy from local breeders, but most of their puppies come from Midwest brokers.*

"We have personally visited every breeder we buy from." *Some pet stores are sending people out to inspect the brokers. The brokers usually take them on a guided tour of facilities they buy from. Of course only the nice facilities are seen. I think the pet stores are as much in the dark as the consumer is. Many pet stores take for granted that the broker has showed them what most of the kennels that supply puppies look like. This is NOT the case!*

"Our puppies come with a 2 year genetic defect guarantee." *This is usually true. But the pet shops rely on the fact that no person in their right mind will just hand over a dog they have owned for two years and trade it in for a new one. What do you think would happen to a dog that is crippled with hip dysplasia after it is given back to the pet shop? No guarantee in the world will alleviate a dog's suffering and no disease in the world will make you stop loving your dog.*

NEWSPAPER CLASSIFIED ADS

The Sunday newspaper in metropolitan areas is probably the easiest way for a breeder to sell puppies. So how do you know if the breeder is a good breeder or a bad breeder? First and foremost, VISIT THE KENNEL! As long as you do this, you can certainly be sure you aren't buying puppies from a puppy mill... right? *WRONG!* Below are actual ads which ran in a single edition of the Buffalo News in Buffalo, NY., placed by one individual. This man's advertisements don't disclose that he is a 'retailer': Cocker Spaniel pups, MC/VI; Jack Russel pups, shots; Pugs, AKC, wormed; Bichon Frise; Poodle Pups; Pomeranian Pups So, when looking through ads in newspapers, be sure to search for other breeds with the same phone number. Always go to the breeder's house and meet the sire and dam of the litter. Don't listen to any excuses! If they show you an adult dog of the same breed, be alert and look to see if this dog is really the mother of the litter. Use your common sense! Don't let the cute little puppies fool you. Watch for warning signs, like odd dollar amounts (\$495 or \$688). Watch for older puppies, like 12 weeks and up... these are usually puppies that did not sell in a pet shop. Ask for AKC papers on the spot. Brokers and wholesalers normally promise you papers in 6-8 weeks. A breeder will always have litter papers on their puppies. If papers are available, make sure the address matches the house that you are at. With all that is going on, you will often look past that and not even notice that the papers are issued to a breeder in Missouri or Kansas. If you call a number and get a recording telling you to leave your name and number, be leery... unless it is a regular home recording like, "You have reached the Jones Resident. We're not home right now..." If you get a message like "Thanks for calling about our puppies, sorry we can't take your call..." This is usually a business. All and all, be careful. Remember that 'they' don't want you to know that the puppies are coming from the Midwest. They are trying every trick in the book to fool you into thinking they raised these puppies in the home. Finally, there are always exceptions to the 'rule.' There are many wonderful breeders (especially of toy breeds) who would never sell a puppy before 12 weeks. There are also many problems that can occur when a breeder is waiting on AKC papers on the puppies, so there are cases where a good breeder may not have papers back in time, although they can give you all the info needed, such as the sire and dam's AKC numbers, and you can call AKC to verify that the litter is existent.

PUPPY PURCHASING OVER THE INTERNET

Many commercial breeders are now using the internet to sell puppies. They get twice the money they got from brokers and the customer never sees how their dogs are kept. Any puppies that aren't sold through the internet are brokered. So what is a person to do? How do you know you are not supporting the suffering of adult breeding dogs? How can you tell if a puppy mill is hiding behind a web site? There are many red flags that you should watch for. Everyone's opinion of a puppy mill differs, so you must decide what is acceptable to you. The most important thing is that the adults are properly cared for and the puppies are healthy. Here are some questions to ask of a breeder when considering buying a puppy over the internet:

1. Are you the breeder of these puppies? Many 'brokers' are now online, selling other people's puppies for them.
2. How many adult dogs do you and your family own and co-own? Be sure to ask about the family. Many puppy mills put dogs in friends and families' names so to avoid detection by USDA, state, and AKC inspectors.
3. How many breeds do you have? Some good breeders may raise more than one breed, but these are few and far between. Normally a breeder specializes in one breed and knows everything about that breed.
4. Are you state or USDA licensed? Many states require breeders of all kinds to be licensed, but USDA only requires breeders to be licensed if they have over 3 breeding females **and** sell through brokers and pet stores. I emphasize 'AND'. Just because someone has over 3 females does not mean they have to be USDA licensed. In fact, they can have 1000 females and if they DO NOT sell through brokers they DO NOT have to be USDA licensed.
5. Can I call you and talk? This is the best way to get a good idea what a breeder is about. If for some reason they won't give you their phone number, DON'T BUY A PUPPY FROM THEM. Don't let them call you... get their phone number and call them!

Once you know who you are dealing with, you can use web links for researching breeders, brokers, AKC suspensions, USDA licenses, USDA Press Releases, etc. Don't be afraid to ask questions of a breeder. Ask them if they keep their dogs on wire. Ask them how many times the dam has been bred. When you get them on the phone, ask them the sire and dam's name. This usually throws a lot of commercial kennels because they seldom name their dogs for anything other than paper work. The dogs go by assigned USDA numbers. Ask for references of past puppies they sold. Ask their vet's name and number. You are buying a puppy that will live with your family for the next 10-20 years. Don't be in a hurry. Research your breed. Consider a rescue. Do your research and you should end up with a happy, healthy, loving puppy that comes from a reputable breeder.

MAKING THE PURCHASE

So you have found the right breeder and after some waiting, that breeder finally has puppies available. Now come the final steps: selecting a puppy and closing the deal. The following tips should give you some idea of the procedures and forms involved.

EVALUATING A PUPPY

Once your breeder of choice has an available litter, how do you evaluate an individual puppy? Well, let's start with some basics. The puppy you want will show all the following signs of good health and good temperament:

- Is active and playful.
- Eagerly greets people and does not appear overly shy.
- Has no sign of discharge from the eyes, nose, or ears. Gums are pink and firm.
- Does not have a distended belly
- Moves easily without signs of lameness. (Newf puppies may appear awkward and "floppy" when running around playing. Observe over a period of time to establish if the gait appears sound and even.)
- Look for a puppy that watches and follows you.
- Watch the puppies' reactions to new situations and sudden sounds. A normal puppy may be startled by a noise, but recovers easily and does not become hysterical.
- Notice puppies that have the confidence and explore new areas without fear.

Show or Pet Quality? And what does that mean? This is another area in which it pays to find a breeder you trust and with whom you feel comfortable. You can and should study the breed standard, but as a first-time buyer, you are very unlikely to be able to evaluate the show potential of a young puppy effectively. Ask the breeder to guide you. If he or she feels a particular puppy has show potential, ask why. **Remember that no one can guarantee exactly how a twelve-week-old puppy will turn out.** The point is, the breeder should be able to explain the different qualities of individual puppies in the litter, and help you choose the best one for you based on your criteria.

THE PAPERWORK

Refer to the "Registration" section of the American Kennel Club's website, www.akc.org or contact the AKC at (919) 233-9767 to order sample forms and publications. It is very important that you understand the forms and procedures involved in registration *before* dealing with a breeder. You should know what forms you can expect to receive from the breeder, what the various parts of a registration certificate mean, and what special terms like "Limited Registration" refer to. All of these and more are explained in detail on the AKC's web pages and in their available documents.

The Pedigree (From the [NCA Web site](#))

The pedigree is a four or five-generation history of your dog's ancestry (a family tree). A conscientious breeder who has spent much time studying and working with the breed should offer to explain the qualifications of the parents and why they were a proper mating. It is nice to have a Newf of champion parents, but it is even more important that the parents be of proven breeding quality. Many great breeding quality dogs have never been shown, but do produce quality puppies when properly mated.

Written Contracts

Many breeders have sales contracts or agreements. As with any contract or agreement, these should be read carefully and discussed in detail with the breeder before signing. Most breeders will offer a contract or agreement concerning puppies crippled with hip dysplasia or found to have a heart defect. Such contracts or agreements may also cover neutering, or care required to be provided by the buyer. As there is much discussion and controversy concerning this subject, the buyer should discuss these items on an individual basis with the breeder. Newfoundlands are also to some degree subject to heart defects, hereditary in nature. No bloodline is absolutely free of all hereditary problems, but a breeder should be ready to discuss openly any dogs in his kennel and their pedigrees as they are affected by hip dysplasia and heart defects. All breeds have tendencies toward various hereditary defects that require consideration in choosing a puppy.

More on Contracts

You may be nervous when faced with the idea of signing a contract, especially if you are not a lawyer. But a good contract is meant to protect the buyer, seller, and the puppy. Be sure to ask your breeder of choice for a copy of his/her standard contract to review *before* you get to the point of selecting a puppy. The contract is a legal agreement between two people, not just a bill of sale. If you do not understand or do not agree with anything in the contract, talk to the breeder openly about it. Some items may be negotiable. Finally, when the time comes to sign the contract, **both you and the breeder should review all the details once more, and then both parties should sign the contract.**

All contracts should include some basics, including the following:

- Kennel name, breeder's name, address, and phone number
- Puppy's date of birth
- AKC litter registration number, AKC registration name and registration numbers of sire and dam
- Description of the dog including breed, sex, color and/or markings
- Designation of "pet" or "show" quality
- A statement certifying the current health of the puppy
- Copies of all genetic disease certificates (OFA, CERF, heart, etc.)
- Replacement puppy or reimbursement options in the event of unforeseen genetic disorder.

The contract may also include:

- Stipulations on what the puppy is to be fed, how he is to be housed, etc.
- Requirement that the puppy be spayed/neutered
- Requirement that the puppy not be sold or given to another owner without the breeder's consent
- Contracts for show quality puppies may include showing and/or breeding requirements. Be sure you fully understand the commitment you are making, in both time and money, before signing a contract with such requirements.

What are the NCA and the NCNC?

WHY JOIN THE NCNC?

1. Access to many knowledgeable "Newf experts" who can give you advice on training, health issues, etc.
2. Get involved in activities such as obedience, draft, water rescue, and conformation.
3. Get the monthly Newf's Paper, a great source for upcoming events and education.
4. Hang out with individuals who don't think you're crazy for putting up with all that slobber.
5. Great Christmas party.

WHAT THE NCNC DOES

The Newfoundland Club of Northern California (NCNC) is a non-profit organization of Newfoundland owners centered in the San Francisco Bay Area. Its primary purpose is to promote the betterment of the Newfoundland Breed through educational programs and support of activities designed to bring the natural qualities of the breed to perfection. Through our National Breed Club, the Newfoundland Club of America, Inc., NCNC sponsors AKC Specialty Shows, Obedience Trials, Tracking Tests, Draft Tests, and Water Tests. Quarterly meetings of our Club provide educational seminars as well as an informal exchange of information on health and care issues. The Club publishes a monthly "Newf's Paper" to keep the membership informed on upcoming events, and it contains many informational articles.

Breeders List Requirements: The NCNC asks its members every year to apply for inclusion on its Breeder's List. A copy of the list with its requirements can be found in the Appendix.

Membership Application: The Newfoundland Club of Northern California welcomes new members. To apply, complete the Membership Application, available at www.ncnc.org or by contacting the Membership Chair, and mail it with appropriate fee to the Membership Chair.

WHAT THE NCA DOES

The Newfoundland Club of America, Inc. (NCA) is a not-for-profit organization formed in 1930 to encourage and promote the quality of pure-bred Newfoundland dogs and to do all possible to bring their natural qualities to perfection. The NCA is the sanctioned parent breed club for the Newfoundland and is a member of the American Kennel Club.

The NCA has many regional Newfoundland clubs that create a network of support to Newfoundland dog owners. Members include breeders, owners and fanciers who are committed to protecting the Newfoundland. Various educational efforts of the NCA, including the publication of *Newf Tide* (an awardwinning quarterly magazine), cover every aspect of Newfoundland ownership. The NCA also publishes various pamphlets on the Newfoundland such as the Newf & You, a Breeder's List, and various manuals and publications for water and draft work. Draft and water tests are among the various activities sponsored by the NCA and its regional clubs to showcase the natural talents of the Newfoundland. Sound and responsible breeding practices are important to the NCA, as evidenced by an enforced Ethics Guide. The NCA and Regional Clubs actively support canine health research and provide adoption assistance for Newfoundlands.

Newf Tide: *Newf Tide*, an award winning quarterly magazine, covers every aspect of Newfoundland ownership. It is included with an NCA membership but you can also subscribe without being an NCA member. The yearly subscription price is \$40 for four issues. Please make your check payable to the NCA. Send subscription requests to: Sue Mendleson and Todd Bennett, PO Box 335, Washington, ME 04574

Breeders List standards: In an effort to help people interested in purchasing a Newfoundland dog, the Newfoundland Club of America, Inc. has a list of breeders who have met certain qualifications.

For a copy of the NCA Breeders List and details of the qualifications, see the NCA website at www.newfdogclub.org, or contact the Breeders List chair listed in Chapter 5.

For Further Information

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

NCNC Contacts (2004 Officers):

President: Summer Poris poris@aol.com

Vice President: Cherrie Brown aukainewf@aol.com

Membership: Linda & Merle Maggy MerleM3@aol.com

Rescue: Nancy Bynes jnbynes@ncws.com

NCA Contacts (2004 Officers):

President: Roger Frey jollyroger.jollyroger@verizon.net

Rescue Network: Mary L. Price mlprice@mhtc.net

General Education: Ann Marie Thibault h20newf@juno.com

Membership: Robert Rogers membership@newfdogclub.org

NCA Membership Applications

Applications for membership can be obtained from and returned to the Membership Chairman: Mr. Robert Rogers, P.O. Box 5858, Derwood, MD 20855.

NCA Breeders Lists

For a written copy of the complete NCA Breeders List, please contact: Mrs. Johanna S. Davis, 8950 S Blue Sage, Colorado Springs, CO 80908 (Email: newfy@tri-lakesonline.net). Please note: if you send her an e-mail you MUST have the subject line state "Breeders List Request" and in the body of the message list only your name, full postal address and telephone number.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Newfoundland Books:

- *Newfoundlands* by Kitty Drury, Bill Linn
- *The Newfoundland* by Emmy Bruno
- *The Newfoundland: Companion Dog-Water Dog* by Joan C. Bendure
- *The Newfoundland* by Betty McDonnell and Jo Ann Reilly
- *The Newfoundland Handbook* by Betty McDonnell
- *This Is the Newfoundland* by K. Drury and Maynard Drury
- *Newfoundlands: Everything About Purchase, Care, Nutrition, Diseases, Breeding, Behavior, and Training (A Complete Pet Owner's Manual)* by Joanna Kosloff
- *The New Complete Newfoundland* by Margaret Booth Chern

General Books:

- *Your Purebred Puppy: A Buyer's Guide*, by Michele Welton
- *The Art of Raising a Puppy*, by the Monks of New Skete
- *Dog Behavior, an Owner's Guide to a Happy, Healthy Pet*, by Ian Dunbar
- *The Other End of the Leash*, by Patricia McConnell
- *The Power of Positive Dog Training*, by Pat Miller

SUGGESTED WEB SITES

Official organizations:

www.ncnc.org (The Newfoundland Club of Northern California)

www.newfdogclub.org (The Newfoundland Club of America)

www.akc.org (The American Kennel Club)

www.offa.org (The Orthopedic Foundation for Animals)

www.caninehealthinfo.org (A health clearance information site sponsored by the AKC and OFA)

Other Newf sites:

www.rodley.com/NewfDB/ (The Newfoundland Dog Database)

www.k9web.com/dog-faqs/breeds/newfies.html (Newf FAQ site)

www.mindspring.com/~atlnewf/newfl/ (Home of Newf-L email list)

Dog supplies:

www.jandjdog.com (Obedience and other training equipment)

www.drsfostersmith.com (General supplies)

www.sitstay.com (General supplies)

General dog sites:

www.dogpatch.org (Great general Obedience training section)

www.vetinfo4dogs.com/ (Health issues)

www.infodog.com (AKC Show schedules and results)

www.bayareadogs.com/ (Nor. California canine events and news)

Appendix

NEWFOUNDLAND CLUB OF AMERICA ETHICS GUIDE

Love and respect for the Newfoundland is inherent in membership in the Newfoundland Club of America. Therefore all members agree to foster the goals set forth in the Code of Ethics.

I. Responsibilities of Members

- A. To provide for all dogs in their keeping
 - 1. Physical Requirements of
 - a. Appropriate food, water, and shelter.
 - b. Protection from bodily harm.
 - c. Proper health care, including sanitation, immunization, and veterinary attention as needed.
 - 2. Emotional requirements of
 - a. Attention and affection.
 - b. Appropriate training as needed.
- B. To abide by AKC rules applicable to activities in which they engage.
- C. To refuse to sell Newfoundland dogs to any pet shop, or any wholesale dealer in dogs, or knowingly to sell or aid or abet the sale of any Newfoundland to a person or agent who will sell the animal through a pet shop.

II. Responsibilities of Breeders

- A. To be familiar with the Standard and to be aware that the purpose of breeding is to maintain or improve the quality of the Newfoundland in accordance with the Standard.
- B. To be familiar with the AKC rules applicable to litter registration and individual registration.
- C. To use for breeding only bitches in good health.
- D. To represent accurately the health history and breeding records of the bitch when negotiating for stud service.
- E. To negotiate all terms of a breeding agreement prior to a breeding. A written contract is recommended.
- F. To produce puppies only when he/she has the time, facilities, and resources to provide attention to proper physical and emotional development.

III. Responsibilities of the Stud Dog Owner

- A. To be familiar with the Standard and to be aware that the purpose of breeding is to maintain or improve the quality of the Newfoundland in accordance with the Standard.
- B. To be familiar with the AKC rules applicable to litter registration.
- C. To accept for servicing only bitches who appear to be in good health.
- D. To represent accurately the health history and breeding records of the dog.
- E. To negotiate all terms of a breeding agreement prior to a breeding. A written contract is recommended.
- F. To complete the chain of registration by signing and returning the stud service certification promptly on satisfaction of the terms of the contract.

IV. Responsibilities of Sellers

- A. To ascertain that the prospective buyer is aware of the needs of a Newfoundland and has the knowledge and facilities to care properly for a growing or grown dog.
- B. To transfer registration papers to the buyer at the time of sale or to withhold papers only in accordance with AKC rules applying to individual registration, or by written agreement with the buyer.
- C. To advise a buyer, or prospective buyer, of any probable delay or difficulty in registration.
- D. To provide the buyer with a written Bill of Sale to include a description of the dog, the whelping date, the name of sire and dam, and the litter or individual registration number if available.
- E. To advise the buyer of any known health defects.
- F. To advise the buyer in writing of any or all health guarantees and compensations offered by the seller.

V. Advertising

It should be borne in mind that advertising may be read by persons having little or no knowledge of dogs. Each member is responsible to see that all advertising in his/her name does not promote his/her Newfoundlands through misleading or exaggerated statements or distortion of fact, or through stated or implied depreciation of the Newfoundlands of others.

VI. Contracts

Written contracts are strongly recommended for all transactions such as sales, co-ownerships, breeding rights agreements, compensation for future puppies, leasing a bitch and stud services.

VII. Discipline

The following are prima facie grounds for disciplinary action.

- A. Neglect or abuse of any Newfoundland in the care of a member documented by the affidavits of three witnesses or by investigation of an authorized humane organization.
- B. Suspension of privileges by the AKC for violation of its rules.

- C. Advertising found to be in violation of the Code of Ethics.
- D. Knowingly to sell, or to aid and abet the sale of a Newfoundland to or through a pet shop or its agents.
- E. Refusal to comply with the terms of a written contract involving a Newfoundland without showing just cause.
- F. Refusal to complete the chain of AKC registration without showing just cause.
- G. Refusal to transfer registration papers to a buyer without showing just cause.
- H. Refusal to honor guarantees and agreements made in writing without showing just cause.

VIII. Enforcement

Enforcement of the disciplinary section of the Code of Ethics will be handled in accordance with the disciplinary procedures outlined in Article VI of the By-Laws. In the case of any business transaction involving Newfoundlands, the NCA will refuse to entertain any grievance brought against a member unless a written contract or other document signed by both parties is submitted with the grievance.