

Bolognese Buying Guide: Things to Know Before You Buy a Bolo

Bringing a dog into your life is a big commitment, both of your time and finances. Buying a Bolognese also brings a commitment to be a conscientious and responsible buyer. A Bolognese could live 14 -15 years or more, so this is a big investment of your time and affection. Unfortunately, not all who breed and sell these beautiful dogs adhere to the Breed Standards set by the FCI or do health testings to assure that only the healthiest dogs are produced. **Each breeder listed on the Breeders Page of the American Bolognese Club website is committed to adhering to Breed standards and health testing on their breeding stock. Click [here](#) to go to our Breeders Page.**

Before you set out to buy your Bolo, please consider the following:

- **Read about the breed.**
 - ★ While adorable, Bolognese have special needs and may not fit into your lifestyle or family arrangement. Please take the time to read about breed characteristics and the costs involved before you fall in love with one. There's nothing worse than picking out a dog and then finding out that you don't have the ability (financial, emotional or environmental) to provide the best home for the breed. There are always exceptions, so be sure to have an honest conversation with your breeder about your lifestyle.
- **Be careful from whom you buy.**
 - ★ Do not buy from a pet store or puppy mill. Often puppy mills and unscrupulous breeders send their substandard dogs to pet stores.
 - ★ Beware of online ads (craigslist.com, puppyfinder.com, puppyfind.com and nextdaypets.com.) that claim to sell Bolognese for \$250 or \$300. You can expect to pay \$1800 to \$2500 or more for one purebred Bolognese puppy, plus shipping, absent special circumstances.
- **Talk to Breeders.**
 - ★ Visit the kennel. If you live near the breeder, go and visit. Look at the parents of the dog, the kennel facility and hygiene practices. Well balanced dogs have had interactions with other animals, children and adults. Ask for references and call them.
 - ★ Unmanaged kennel. Be careful of a kennel where all dogs run together, with several males and multiple females. Are the males permitted to run at will with the females? Does it look like hoarding dogs? Are there unplanned breedings or breedings where the sire is not identifiable? What was the age of the Dam (mother) at breeding? With small dogs, many breeders wait until at least 18 months to breed the female.

★ Ask questions. We have provided some questions below to help you do this.

- **Trust your gut.** Yes, you want a puppy as soon as you can get one, but you don't want to deal with health issues. If your intuition tells you something isn't "right", waiting for a breeder that has the best interests of the breed and puppy is worth the wait.
- **Financial Common Sense.** Do not give your credit card to someone you do not know or do not trust. Do not wire money. Check and verify all information.

Things to consider when looking for a puppy:

1. **Waitlist.** There is often a waiting list for purebred Bolognese. If you are told that you can have the puppy immediately, that should be a red flag. (Of course there are exceptions, but this is rare.)

2. **Breeder.** Choose the right breeder and ask the right questions.

- Do you have references?
- Will you be available before and after the sale?
- Do the dogs and puppies have social time interacting with people?
- Do you health test for eyes and patellas? May I see the results?
- Do you register the litters? With what registry?
- Ask the breeder to show you the pedigree and registry for both sire and dam (parents).
- At what age do you place puppies?
- Are all of their dogs running together? How many different breeds are they currently breeding?

3. **Get a Purebred.** Be sure you are buying a Bolognese and not a poodle mix from a puppy mill that is being advertised as a bolo. Be sure to obtain a three generation or longer pedigree.

Common Breeder Practices:

1. **Breed club.**

A reputable breeder is usually active in the breed club and wants the best interest of the breed.

2. **Application and deposit.**

Breeders often ask prospective buyers to complete an application to assist them in finding the best dog for your life and family. Often a breeder will ask for a

deposit to hold a puppy.

3. Contract.

The breeder may require a signed contract which includes a first right of refusal if the dog is re-homed (placed in another home) for any reason. This application will also assist the breeder in finding the best dog for your life and family. Obtain a receipt of all transactions and make a copy of the contract.

4. Health Guarantee.

A prudent breeder will health test their breeding stock and feel comfortable giving a guarantee for one year.

5. Registration of puppy.

The breeder should register the litter with the American Bolognese Club and give you an individual dog or puppy application which you must mail in to register your dog. It is important that you register your puppy. The registration certificate verifies the identity of your Bolognese, as well as helps us keep accurate records of the Bolognese Breed in the USA.

6. Puppy placement age.

Age of placement varies by breeder. Some breeders of toy breeds, such as the Bolognese, prefer to wait until the puppy is 8, 10 or 11 weeks old. Ask the breeder what they normally do.

7. Vaccinations.

Be sure the breeder gives you a written record of the vaccinations your puppy has been given, and the protocol for further vaccinations as recommended by your breeder. Remember that white toy breed dogs are somewhat more susceptible to chemicals, which includes those in vaccinations, so discuss with your vet the protocol that your breeder recommends for this breed.

8. Food.

Most breeders will give you the food the puppy has been eating. Ask your breeder the name of the food. If you are changing foods, be sure to do so slowly. Check with your breeder and vet if you have questions.

Contact the American Bolognese Club at americanbologneseclub@gmail.com or on our facebook page if you need any assistance.