

BUYING A DACHSHUND

Advice from Dachshund Health UK

(Registered Charity 1177400)



First things first!

- Contact one of the UK [Breed Club Secretaries](https://dachshundbreedcouncil.wordpress.com/breed-clubs/) for advice on who to buy a puppy from:

<https://dachshundbreedcouncil.wordpress.com/breed-clubs/>

- Most puppy buyers use the internet to look for puppies. There is nothing wrong with that, as long as you are very cautious: both bad breeders and scammers who don't actually even have puppies to sell know exactly what to say to pull buyers in and will claim all the same things as genuine breeders who really care about their pups even after they have sold them.
- Read on to learn more about the breed and how to reduce the risk of supporting bad breeding or getting scammed.

BUYER BEWARE

INTERNET ADVERTS FOR

DACHSHUNDS

KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR

"Delivery can be arranged"

ALWAYS visit the puppies in their home and make sure you SEE MUM.

"Two or more litters available"

Is this a commercial breeder or a puppy farmer?

"Rare colours"

Watch out for potential future health problems and rip-off prices.

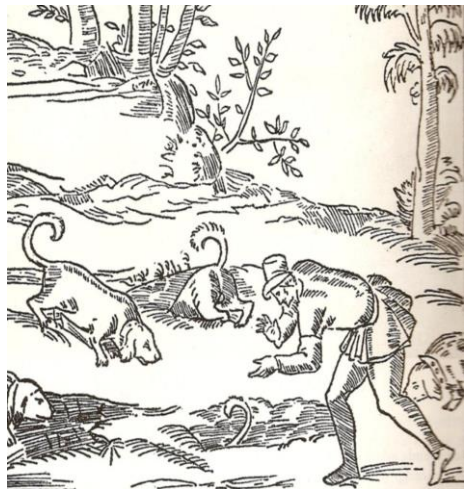
"Double Dapple"

Do not buy a Dachshund with large patches of white.

Dachshunds: an introduction

The origins of the Dachshund can be traced back to working dogs that could go to ground after animals such as badgers, foxes and rabbits.

The breed is described as moderately long and low with a well-muscled body, bold, defiant carriage of head and intelligent expression. Dachshunds are very popular as pets and, in the UK, come in six varieties, two sizes – Standard (ideally 9-12 kg; 20-26 lbs) and Miniature (ideally 4.5-5 kg; 10-11lbs) – and three coats – Smooth, Long and Wire Haired. They are loyal companions and generally make good family pets. Standards are more robust and therefore probably better for families with very young children.



Coats and colours

- Smooth-haired – Dense, short, smooth and shiny requiring little maintenance. Most common colours are Black and Tan, Red, Chocolate/Tan and Dapple.



- Long-haired – Soft and straight with feathering on underparts, ears, behind legs and tail where it forms a flag. Coat requires regular grooming. Most common colours are Black and Tan, Red (ranging from Cream to Shaded Red) and Silver Dapple.



- Wire-haired – A short, harsh coat with a dense undercoat covers the body. There is a beard on the chin, the eyebrows are bushy, but hair on the ears is almost smooth. A Wire coat typically will need stripping (never clipping) twice a year; they don't moult. Most common colours are Wild Boar (formerly known as Brindle) and Red. Chocolate/Tan and Dapple also occurs.



Rare colours: beware!

- Do not be talked into buying a “rare coloured” Dachshund. Generally, anyone telling you a puppy has a rare colour either doesn’t know what they are talking about, or they are a commercial breeder. Avoid buying a dilute colour (Blue or Isabella – sometimes also known as Lilac) as these have a proven increased risk of lifelong skin diseases. For that reason, responsible breeders will NOT deliberately breed these colours.
- The most common colours are shown here:



Black
& Tan



Red



Chocolate
& Tan



Silver
Dapple

The Breed Standard states that, apart from in Dapples which should be evenly marked all over, there should be no white on a Dachshund’s coat, except perhaps a small patch on its chest and even this is undesirable.

Health issues

- Dachshunds generally suffer few health problems providing they are kept well exercised and fed a healthy, balanced diet. On average, they live to more than 12 years old.



- Because they are a dwarf breed there is an increased risk of back problems (Intervertebral Disc Disease). Up to 1 in 4 Dachshunds may develop IVDD, typically in middle age. Always ask about any history of back problems when buying a puppy. Problems are best avoided by keeping the dog fit and not allowing it to become overweight, or to run up and down stairs which puts extra stress on the back. An IVDD screening programme is run by the [Kennel Club](#) to help breeders reduce the risks of breeding with dogs that have high numbers of calcified discs.
- Mini Long, Mini Smooth and Mini Wire breeding stock should have been tested for Retinal Degeneration (cord1 mutation P.R.A.) which is an inherited condition causing degenerative disease of the retina, resulting in visual impairment, or blindness. Clinical eye screening is recommended for all breeding stock.
- Always consult a Vet if you have any concerns about a puppy you intend to purchase, or health problems with an older dog.
- [Breed Club Secretaries](#) will be able to provide up-to-date advice on any current or emerging health concerns in any of the Dachshund breeds. Visit our [health website](#) for the latest information.

Are you ready for a Dachshund puppy?

- Before buying a Dachshund, ask yourself:
 - Can you afford to keep a dog? Food, vet fees and pet insurance could cost you £80 per week (*).
 - Can you afford vet's fees (often up to £10,000) for IVDD diagnosis and surgery, should your dog be affected?
 - Can you make a lifelong commitment to a Dachshund? On average, a Dachshund will live to around 12 years old.
 - Is my house/flat suitable for keeping a Dachshund?
 - Do I have the time to exercise a Dachshund every day? A Dachshund will need about an hour's exercise every day (not just running around in your garden).
 - Will your Dachshund have company at home for most of the time? Dachshunds can be noisy and destructive if not kept exercised mentally and physically – they like the company of people and other dogs.
- If you have answered “No” to any of these questions, maybe now is not the right time to buy a Dachshund.

* Moneysupermarket survey 2023:
UK average weekly cost of owning
a dog.



Photo © Lisa Roylance

Should I get a dog or a bitch?

- There is little difference in size or temperament between Dachshund dogs and bitches.
- Bitches have the disadvantage of coming in season twice yearly and can suffer from “false pregnancies” when they come into milk and exhibit behavioural mood swings due to fluctuating hormones. Of course, having your bitch spayed will put an end to this, but spayed bitches can become fat and lethargic, and spaying changes the coat texture, making the coat much more “woolly” and softer. Spaying, once adult, reduces the risk of pyometra.

Neutering (spay or castrate) before 18 months is not recommended as there is evidence it increases the risk of IVDD. Neutering may also have negative impacts on behaviour.



Photo © Tayla Dunn

- Dogs make equally good companions and tend to be less “mercenary” than bitches, who, once adult tend to be more food orientated. Dogs tend to be more fun-loving and want to play games and join in, whereas bitches can prefer a quieter life, just sitting on the chair all day. Unless you particularly want to breed puppies, a dog probably makes a better companion than a bitch. Dogs can have antisocial habits, lifting their legs everywhere, and this is more likely occur if a dog has been used at stud.

Dachshund temperaments

- Dachshunds should be bold and outgoing. The Breed Standard describes them as being “Faithful, versatile and good tempered”. It also says they should be “Intelligent, lively, courageous to the point of rashness, obedient”.
- They can be a bit intimidated by other breeds and larger dogs, so it is important to ensure they are well socialised right from a young age.



- As a generalisation, Wires are the most extrovert and active, Standard Longs are the most laid-back, and Standard Smooths are perhaps more “one person” or “one family” dogs.
- All the Miniatures make ideal pets for someone who is less active and who wants a small but affectionate companion.

Do they bark much?

- In general, they are a noisy breed, but some “lines” are noisier than others. They can become persistent barkers, so you do have to work hard with them as puppies to ensure they know when to be quiet.

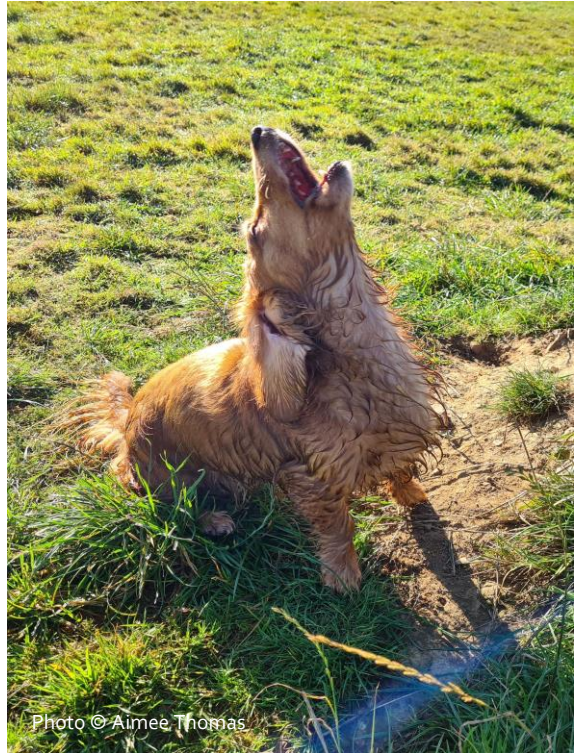


Photo © Aimee Thomas

Reputable Breeders

- A reputable breeder will, as a minimum, comply with the good practice requirements of the [Kennel Club's Assured Breeder Scheme](#) and will always be happy to answer any queries you may have at any stage of your dog's life and will like to hear how your dog is progressing.
- Reputable breeders will want you to be assured that your puppy has been well reared and is a fit, healthy and typical specimen of the breed. Please remember that a puppy bought as a pet may not be suitable for showing or breeding from.
- Reputable breeders will, typically, not charge different prices for dogs and bitches, or for different coat colours.
- Refer to our later page on the paperwork you can expect to receive from a breeder, such as pedigree, contract, and insurance.
- Remember, most good breeders do not have to advertise their puppies, so online adverts are not the ideal place to start your search for a puppy.
- See next page "Finding the right breeder"

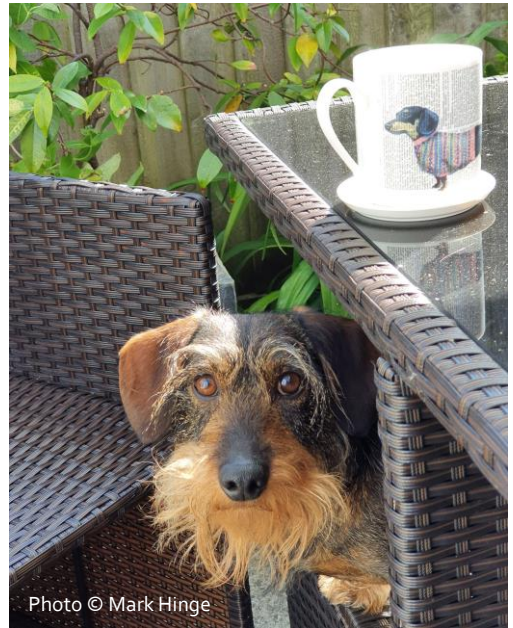


Photo © Mark Hinge

Finding the right Breeder

- We strongly recommend that you ask a [Breed Club Secretary](#) for recommendations of breeders before visiting puppies or committing to buy a puppy:
- <https://dachshundbreedcouncil.wordpress.com/breed-clubs/>
- Breeders who are members of a Dachshund Breed Club will comply with the [Code of Ethics](#) which covers matters such as health testing, the age at which a bitch should be bred from and the maximum number of litters a bitch should have. Breed Club members will be aware of the relevant health tests which are recommended for Dachshunds and should be able to talk knowledgeably about the relevance of these.
- Never buy from a pet shop or “pet supermarket”, however “up-market” they appear to be. Their puppies will almost certainly have come from puppy farms or “back-yard breeders”, where dogs are bred and reared in poor conditions, purely for profit and with little or no regard for health and welfare.
- If you have any doubts about the health advice you are given, please contact us: <https://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk/contact>



Photo © Bee Phillips

RED FLAG WARNINGS

for Dachshund Puppy Buyers



7 SIGNS THAT YOU SHOULD WALK AWAY

1

THE BREEDER IS NEW TO DACHSHUNDS

- They have recently added Dachshunds to the list of breeds they have puppies with (so they can make more money)

THEY SELL OTHER "COMMERCIAL" BREEDS

- French Bulldogs, Pugs, Bulldogs, XL Bulldogs, Pocket Bully, Teacup Dachshunds

2

3

NO KENNEL CLUB PAPERS OR FAKE ONES

- They say the papers are delayed and will be sent on later - they won't be!
- You should also get a microchip certificate

BIG LITTERS AND MIX OF PUPPY SIZES

- The puppies may be from several different litters
- Standards and Minis might be mixed together, as well as different coat types

4

5

DILUTES AND DILUTE PIEBALDS

- The dilutes (Blue & Isabella) have a high incidence of lifelong skin diseases such as Colour Dilution Alopecia, in all 3 coats
- Their breeders will deny this is a problem

THEY OFFER TO DELIVER THE PUPPY

- Always see the puppy with its mum, where the puppies were born
- Beware of anyone asking for large deposits (e.g. 50%) before pups are born

6

7

RED FLAG WORDS AND WEBSITES

- Bullz, Bullies, Bullys, XL, Teacup
- Dezina, Exotic, Studz
- AI Clinic, Fertility Clinic
- "Bred from champion lines"

Making contact with a Breeder

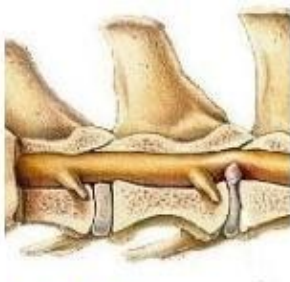
- You must expect to be asked lots of questions by the breeder and of course, you will want to ask lots of your own. If a breeder does not ask you questions about why you want a Dachshund and how you will raise and care for a puppy, this should ring alarm bells! Trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right, or if their advice sounds implausible, don't visit and don't part with any money.
- Most breeders will not ask for a deposit on a puppy before they have met you; they will want to spend time with you ensuring you are the right person to have one of their puppies. If you are asked for a deposit, make sure you understand what the terms are: for example, if you change your mind, is the deposit refundable. Always ask for a receipt.
- Don't agree to meet the breeder anywhere other than where the puppies were born and are being reared. Never agree to buy a puppy "unseen", or where the breeder agrees to ship it to you by courier.



Photo © Karis Jade

Making contact with a Breeder

- Make sure you have done your research before visiting the breeder; know what health tests should have been done and what our current health priorities are, so you can discuss these with the breeder.
- Be prepared for the possibility that a breeder will not wish to sell you a puppy once they have met you. They may simply feel your circumstances are not right for one of their puppies.
- Current health priorities for breeders:



Lafora Disease	Intervertebral Disc Disease	Eye Disease
Mini Wires should be DNA tested for the Lafora mutation	All 6 varieties are affected by IVDD Clinical screening (X-ray) is recommended	Cord1 PRA testing is recommended for all Miniatures Clinical eye screening is recommended for all varieties

How to recognise a good Breeder

BE A CAREFUL PUPPY
BUYER

THE 4 TYPES OF BREEDER

LARGE COMMERCIAL BREEDERS



HIGH VOLUME - LOW WELFARE

Breeding puppies is purely a business. They typically have multiple breeds for sale and advertise regularly online. Bitches are bred from continually throughout their lives, producing puppies that are either sold on-site or via dog dealers. Puppies generally do not receive adequate healthcare and most receive little human interaction.

"I'M NOT (REALLY) A BREEDER"



LOW VOLUME - LITTLE KNOWLEDGE

These breeders may be producing puppies for the right or the wrong reasons. If it's their first litter, they may have little or no knowledge or experience of breeding - but they may have the support of an experienced mentor who has helped them choose a suitable stud dog ... or they might just have used a dog down the road, with little thought. If they have bred 'to make money', 'because it would be nice for Daisy to have pups' or "they have friends who have told them they should", then think carefully before committing to buy.

HOBBY BREEDERS



LOW VOLUME - EXPERIENCED

These breeders have extensive knowledge of the breed and are up-to-date on the latest health and genetics information. They are likely to be involved in some type of dog activity such as showing, working or obedience. They carefully vet their potential puppy buyers and will usually provide a lifetime of support to their puppy owners. They understand how to rear puppies well.

PROFESSIONAL BREEDERS



EXPERIENCED - LEGITIMATE BUSINESS

Similar to hobby breeders but breed more often, with more dogs. They usually show their dogs and may have a grooming or kennel business associated with their breeding business. They may own several breeds and will be very knowledgeable about all these. Their puppies will be well-reared and will usually have a lifetime guarantee of support.

Beware illegal Dachshund puppy imports



28% of illegal imports are Dachshunds

Dogs Trust found that, in 2020, Dachshunds were the most frequent breed imported illegally. They accounted for 28% of all dogs intercepted at UK ports.



Illegal imports have grown by 26%

Research from Direct Line Insurance shows illegal imports have grown by 26% over the past 3 years. The research also found that a third of adults would consider buying an imported pet.



78% of buyers had a problem importing

The most common problem was that the animal was seized under suspicion of being imported illegally and they had to pay for it to be quarantined and vaccinated.



16% of illegal imports became ill and had to be euthanised

One in six (16 per cent) reported the animal became ill and had to be put down. A further 15% reported the pet became ill once they had taken it home and had to be treated by a vet.



See Mum (preferably twice)!

Always see a puppy and its mum together at their home. Good breeders will always allow you to see the puppy and its littermates interacting with their mum. Ideally, you should see the puppy at its home at least once before you go to collect it. A Pet Passport or non-UK Vaccination Certificate should be a red flag warning.

Questions to ask the Breeder

- How long have you been a Dachshund owner?
- How long have you been breeding Dachshunds?
- How many litters do you typically have each year?
- Do you own and breed other breeds?
- Which Breed Clubs do you belong to?
- What successes have you had when showing or working your Dachshunds?
- What are the positive traits of this breed?
- What are the negative traits of this breed?
- What health problems does the breed suffer?
- What is their average life expectancy?
- What endorsements, if any, do you put on the puppy's KC papers?
- What should we do if we ever need to re-home a dog we have bought from you?
- What written information on diet and rearing do you provide?
- What inoculations, if any, will the puppy have had when we get it?
- Have the parents or puppies been tested for known hereditary problems?
- What insurance cover, if any, do you provide with the puppy?
- How many of these puppies will you be keeping yourself?
- Will you be showing or working any of this litter?
- How much grooming do they need?
- How much exercise do your dogs get and how much will my puppy need?



Photo © Mandy Dance

Expect the Breeder to ask you...

- Are you out at work all day?
- If you work part-time, how long will the dog be left alone?
- Have you had a Dachshund before?
- What other dogs do you have, if any?
- What other pets, if any, do you have?
- If you have children, how old are they?
- Do you have a garden?
- Is your garden well-fenced?
- Do you live in a flat, or a house?
- Do you live in the town, or country?
- Why do you want a Dachshund?
- Do you intend to show or work your Dachshund?
- Do you intend to breed from your Dachshund?



Photo © Bee Phillips

Buying your puppy

- Except in exceptional circumstances, you should always be able to see the mother of the puppy. Visit where the puppy was born, regardless of how far you have to travel. Never buy from a pet shop. Get a written receipt for the puppy. Carefully read and understand any conditions imposed by the breeder.
- A responsible breeder will let you see all the puppies in the litter, with their mother and you should be able to handle them. You may not always be able to choose the puppy you want, as the breeder will probably pick their first choice to keep and other buyers may already have chosen, before you.
- If the puppy is KC Registered, Registration papers should be available when you pay for the puppy. It is the responsibility of the breeder to register the puppies with the KC and they must then give you the certificate for transfer of ownership. All puppies should be provided with free health insurance to cover the first few weeks with their new owner. The breeder should give you a diet sheet and preferably also a few days' supply of their current food. Reputable breeders will not be prepared to sell puppies without meeting prospective buyers and will not sell to people who are out at work all day, leaving the dog unattended.



What to look for in a puppy

When you visit the puppies, look for the following:

- Health – do they look in good condition, well-covered, not under-weight and not pot-bellied?
- Health – do they have runny eyes or noses? Are they coughing, or do they have diarrhoea?
- Welfare – are they being kept in hygienic conditions that are obviously cleaned regularly?
- Behaviour – are they playing with their siblings?
- Behaviour – do they come up to you for a fuss and to play, or are they nervous and lacking in confidence?



Photo © Zsofia Balazs-Hirt



Be prepared to walk away

- If something doesn't feel right when you visit, walk away. Unscrupulous breeders rely on people "falling in love with a puppy" or "feeling sorry" for puppies and feeling obliged to buy one. Don't make this mistake, which could result in expensive vet bills and lots of heartache. It only encourages bad breeders to breed again because they find it so easy to sell poorly bred and poorly reared puppies.

8

CLUES YOU'RE BUYING FROM A PUPPY FARMER OR DEALER

1

YOU CAN'T MEET MUM

Always see the mother of the puppies interacting with the litter. Try to visit the litter at least once before the day you collect your puppy.

2

MULTIPLE BREEDS FOR SALE

Look out for multiple "commercial breeds" such as Pugs, French Bulldogs and Bulldogs as well as dogs advertised as "rare colours".

3

REGULAR ADVERTISER

Search for other adverts by the same seller and do a Google Search for their phone number to see what else they are advertising.

4

NOT MEETING AT THE BREEDER'S HOME

Always visit the breeder at their home. Never arrange to meet at a motorway service area or the breeder's "friend's house".

5

NO PAPERWORK

You should receive the puppy's KC & microchip registration, temporary insurance cover, a copy of its pedigree and an advice leaflet (feeding and rearing).

6

NO MICROCHIP

It is a legal requirement that the breeder microchips the puppy by the time it is 8 weeks old (so they can be identified as the breeder).

7

PUPPIES AVAILABLE UNDER 8 WEEKS

Puppies should not be sold under the age of 8 weeks. Beware of large non-refundable deposits asking you "to secure your puppy now".

8

DIRTY OR SICKLY PUPPIES

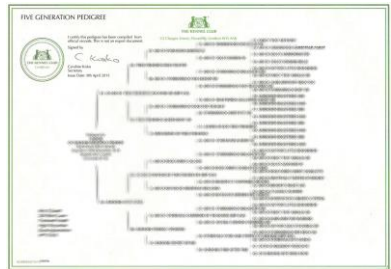
Your puppy should be active, clean and not have a "pot belly", dirty ears or runny eyes. It should not be lethargic or fearful.

Paperwork to ask for

You should be given:

- A Contract of Sale or receipt (The Kennel Club has published an example of a [Puppy Sales Contract](#)).
- Written advice on feeding, training, socialisation, exercise and worming.
- Written advice on vaccination – if any have been given already, or when they are due.
- A Pedigree Certificate which shows your puppy's parents' names and those of their ancestors.

The breeder may either show you, or give you, copies of any relevant health testing certificates for the puppy, or its parents



Rehoming an older Dachshund



Dachshund Rescue

- Our Breed Rescue organisations always have a waiting list of people who would like to rehome dogs.
- Contact details:
 - www.dachshundrescue.org.uk
 - www.theredfoundation.net



Photo © Michaela Halliwell

Are you on the road to being the perfect Dachshund buyer?

Do...

BUY ONE BECAUSE:

- you've researched the breed
- you understand what they're like to live with
- you've got one already and you're sure another one will be a good fit with your lifestyle

UNDERSTAND THE POTENTIAL RISKS OF BACK DISEASE (IVDD):

- invest in pet insurance (diagnosis & surgery could cost £10,000)
- visit www.dachshund-ivdd.uk for all the facts

GET A RECOMMENDATION OF A GOOD BREEDER:

- ask a Breed Club Secretary
- ask for advice on one of the Dachshund Facebook Groups

VISIT THE RECOMMENDED BREEDER(S) TO:

- see the Mum of your potential puppy
- see what their dog(s) is/are like in a home environment
- talk about your lifestyle and why you want a Dachshund

BUILD A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHOSEN BREEDER TO:

- ensure you both understand the commitment you are making
- have an honest conversation about whether you want to show, or breed from, your puppy

VISIT YOUR BREEDER AT LEAST TWICE:

- firstly, to see the puppies together as a litter (good breeders will be happy for you to visit several times)
- finally, to collect your puppy

FIND OUT WHAT HEALTH TESTS ARE RECOMMENDED:

- IVDD for all, Lafora for Mini Wires, Cord1 PRA for all Miniatures
- ask which ones your breeder has done
- check out www.dachshundhealth.org.uk and www.laforadogs.com
- if your puppy is KC registered, you can check this on the KC website

Enjoy a long and happy life with your well-bred and well-reared Dachshund who is a typical example of the breed

Don't...

BUY ONE BECAUSE:

- you think they are cute from all the adverts you've seen
- you've seen a celebrity with one
- you really like the idea of owning a "rare coloured" Dachshund

BELIEVE IVDD HAPPENS TO EVERYONE ELSE'S DACHSHUND:

- 1 in 4 will experience some degree of IVDD, with Mini Smooths and Smooths more likely to be affected

FIND SOMEONE "DOWN THE ROAD" WHO:

- thought it would be nice for their bitch to have puppies
- always has puppies available

MEET SOMEONE IN A CAR PARK TO:

- pick up your puppy from the back of a car/van
- save time travelling to see the pup and its Mum at home

VIEW YOUR PURCHASE AS A PURELY COMMERCIAL ARRANGEMENT:

- be wary of paying a large, non-refundable, deposit without seeing Mum or your puppy
- don't tell your breeder you "only want a pet" when you really fancy the idea of having puppies and recovering your purchase costs

FIND A PUPPY FROM AN INTERNET ADVERT AND:

- buy it today because you MUST have it now
- collect it from the "breeder's house" without seeing Mum

ASSUME YOUR PUPPY WILL BE HEALTHY BECAUSE:

- your breeder says so
- your breeder says KC registration doesn't matter

Take home a badly-bred, poorly-socialised, puppy that is noisy, destructive, hard to house-train and that might turn into an expensive, unhealthy adult

Where to find out more

- Visit our Dachshund Health UK website – we are a registered charity, and you will find lots of advice for buyers and owners at: www.dachshundhealth.org.uk
- Contact any of the Dachshund Breed Club Secretaries listed at www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk who should be able to recommend a reputable breeder. All Breed Club members have to abide by a Code of Ethics.

Your checklist before you visit

When was the puppy born?	
Will you be able to see the puppy with its mother?	
Was the puppy raised with its mother?	
Where did (or will) the puppy spend most of its time up to when it is 8 weeks old?	
Does the puppy have litter brothers & sisters with which it interacts?	
Are you able to meet the father of the puppy?	
Is the puppy friendly?	
Has the puppy been socialised with different people and experienced a variety of household sights, sounds and sensations?	
Has the puppy been fully weaned and is now on solid food?	
Is the puppy healthy?	
Is the puppy registered with the Kennel Club?	
If you are buying from an online advert, can you see a picture of the puppy?	
Have the puppy's parents been tested/screened for any health conditions?	

Your checklist when you visit

Can you see the puppy with its mother?	
Is the mother healthy?	
Is the mother confident and happy to interact with you and her puppies?	
Are there many other dogs or litters in the home?	
Is the puppy's environment clean and does it have fresh water available?	
Does the puppy look healthy? Ears, eyes, nose, coat?	
Has the puppy been treated for worms?	
Will the puppy be vaccinated when you take it home?	
Will the puppy be microchipped when you take it home? (This is a legal requirement in the UK)	
Will the puppy be insured?	
What food is the puppy eating and will the breeder give you a supply of this when you collect the puppy?	
Will the breeder give you a Puppy Handout with information on how to feed and rear the puppy?	
By the end of your visit, was the puppy happy and confident to interact with you?	