



IRISH WOLFHOunds

– A GUIDE TO BUYING A PUPPY

Thinking of an Irish Wolfhound Puppy?

Bringing an Irish Wolfhound into your family is a long-term commitment. These gentle giants can bring years of companionship and joy, but they also require careful planning and research. Taking the time to understand the breed and find the right breeder now will pay off for years to come.

This guide will help you navigate the process, highlighting the key considerations when choosing a breeder, questions to ask, and important resources.



Why Choosing the Breeder Matters

A responsible breeder prioritizes the health, welfare, and future of their dogs. They breed carefully to maintain strong bloodlines and will want to ensure their puppies go to suitable homes. Asking prospective buyers many questions is a positive sign that they care about their dogs.

Unlike commercial breeders, responsible breeders often have limited litters and may maintain waiting lists. Litter sizes are unpredictable, so puppies may become available sooner than expected. Choosing the right breeder is the most important step you can take — even more important than picking an individual puppy.

Where Not to Buy

Many websites and classifieds offer Irish Wolfhounds for sale. While some appear professional, things are not always as they seem. Behind many adverts are commercial breeders or puppy farms, and some may even be scams.

It is best to avoid:

- Free advert websites such as Gumtree, Preloved, or Pets4Homes
- Local newspaper classifieds

Buying from these sources can carry a high risk of health or behavioural issues and may unintentionally support unethical breeding practices.

Finding a Responsible Breeder

The best place to start is with official Irish Wolfhound Breed Clubs. They provide impartial advice and can guide you to conscientious breeders. Membership in the club is not required, and whether you are looking for a show dog or a family pet, the club can point you in the right direction.

You can also contact members of the Irish Wolfhound Health Group (IWHG). They are happy to answer questions and help you find a breeder who puts the dogs' welfare first.

Things you need to Consider Before Buying

Taking on an Irish Wolfhound is a long-term commitment for you and your family. Before deciding, consider the following:

Family Agreement: Is everyone in the household on board with bringing a dog of this size into your home?

Lifestyle Impact: How will holidays, travel, and your vehicle accommodate a large dog?

Work Schedule: Do you work full-time, can you avoid leaving the dog alone for more than three to four hours at a time?

Time and Commitment: Do you have the time to socialise a puppy, exercise an adult dog, groom them regularly, and provide mental stimulation?

Health Considerations: Does anyone in your family have allergies, or are there elderly relatives to consider when interacting with a giant puppy?

Other Pets: How will existing pets react to a new puppy, and can you provide separate spaces while they adjust to each other?

Puppy Care: Puppies require significant time and attention. Do you have the availability to care for and train a young dog properly?

Space Requirements: Do you have enough room in your home for a large dog bed and a garden big enough for a dog of this size to move and play comfortably?

Safety: Is your fencing secure and high enough to prevent escapes, especially since Irish Wolfhounds are sighthounds and may chase livestock?

Financial Considerations: Beyond the initial purchase, have you researched ongoing costs, including veterinary care, health insurance, food, and other expenses over the dog's lifetime?

Things you can ask a breeder over the phone

Before committing, ask potential breeders questions to ensure you understand the breed, the puppy's background, and your responsibilities as an owner. Some key questions might be:

- How long have you been an Irish Wolfhound owner?
- How long have you been breeding Irish Wolfhounds?
- How many litters do you typically have each year?
- Are you a member of a breed club?
- Do you own the sire of the litter?
- How many of these puppies will you keep yourself?
- What health problems does the breed commonly have?
- What is their average life expectancy?
- How much grooming do they require?
- What endorsements, if any, do you put on the puppy's KC/IKC papers?
- What health tests have the parents of the litter had and what health tests will the puppies have?

Asking these questions helps you understand not just the breeder, but also the breed itself, and ensures that you are prepared for life with an Irish Wolfhound.

Additional Considerations:

- **Always** visit breeders in person to meet them and view the premises where the puppy was born. Reputable breeders will not sell puppies without meeting prospective buyers.
- Check if it is acceptable to bring children or extended family when viewing a litter.
- Confirm that the following health checks have been carried out (required by the Code of Ethics of the four UK Irish Wolfhound clubs):
 - Heart testing of the puppy's parents within the last year, in accordance with the IW Health Group heart testing scheme.
 - Puppy has been tested clear of Portosystemic Shunt and has confirmation of the test in writing.
- Expect the breeder to let you take your new puppy only when it is at least 9–10 weeks old.
- Ensure you can see the puppies with their mother and ask to view where the other hounds live; reputable breeders will be happy to show you.

If you buy – make sure that

When picking up your puppy you should be provided with:

- A written receipt and any contract or conditions from the breeder
- Puppy's registration papers (with any endorsements noted)
- Veterinary certified vaccination record
- Copies of parents' heart certificates and puppy liver shunt results
- Current diet sheet and preferably a few days' supply of puppy food
- Certificate of health insurance covering the first few weeks
- Written information on exercise, kennelling, and nutrition from puppyhood to adulthood

By the time you have read this and exchanged some of the above questions with the breeder, you should have come away, hopefully, not just with your puppy, but also with an enhanced understanding of the requirements and responsibilities of ownership of our wonderful breed. The breeder will be there for any help that you may need in the future.



You may also wish to become a member of one of the breed clubs and join some of the Facebook pages such as the Original Irish Wolfhound Community and the Irish Wolfhound Health Group Page.

Contacts & Resources

These contacts can provide impartial guidance and help you locate a breeder who prioritizes the health and welfare of their puppies.

Irish Wolfhound Health Group – www.iwhealthgroup.com

Irish Wolfhound Rescue – www.irishwolfhoundrescue.co.uk

Irish Wolfhound Club – <http://www.irishwolfhoundclub.org.uk>

Irish Wolfhound Society – <http://www.irishwolfhoundsociety.com>

Irish Wolfhound Club of Scotland – <http://www.irishwolfhoundclubofscotland.co.uk>

Irish Wolfhound Club of Northern Ireland – <http://iwcni.co.uk>

Irish Wolfhound Puppies – <http://www.irishwolfhoundpuppies.co.uk>

