

Dear Perspective Black Russian Terrier Owners:

Congratulations on making the decision to look for a Black Russian Terrier (BRT) puppy! You will be amazed at what these regal, brave, engaging, and loving puppies can bring to your life. We at the BRTCA applaud you for doing your homework to assure that you find the healthiest puppy possible by using this tool.

To use this simple tool, you will first want to do some homework. Before you begin calling breeders who have puppies, please review the following web sites regarding health testing. This is essential. Only through a brief but careful study of these health tests can you become expert in selecting a puppy. They are:

- CHIC (Canine Health Information Center) at: <http://www.caninehealthinfo.org>
- OFA (Orthopedic Foundation for Animals) at: <http://www.offa.org>
- CERF (Canine Eye Registration Foundation) at: <http://www.vmdb.org>
- CHF (Canine Health Foundation) at: <http://www.akcchf.org>

Then, you will want to print out this check sheet and begin your research based on the documented health testing of the parents of each of your possible puppies. Print out one sheet for each litter (Dam and Sire mated) you are examining. The small spaces are intended to keep your notes brief and focused on the important points when you perform your research or talk with the breeder!

Now fill in the first two columns regarding name and contact information of each breeder, and begin calling breeders and researching the names of the dam and sire from which your potential puppy came. Commonly you can do this from the breeder's website or by calling them from their listing on their website or from the BRTCA listing. Then take the dam and sire names and begin your research at www.offa.org. Use the OFFA search function by one at a time typing in the name of the dam and sire of your perspective puppy. Place the appropriate number in each square based on the results of your puppy's parents testing results. Use the other sites above as necessary then tally up the points for the dam and the sire then the mated pair. The pair with the highest numbers is the litter from which you will likely have the healthiest puppy. That is all there is to it! Enjoy the journey!

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Other Questions to ask the Breeder and a place to jot down their responses:

- 1) Did the Dam or Sire have any allergy problems?

- 2) Did the Dam or Sire have any indications of Auto-immune Disease?

- 3) Did the Dam or Sire have any indications of seizure-related or neurological diseases?

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- 4) Would it be possible to review the Dam and Sire's medical records?

- 5) What can you tell me about the bloodline's longevity? (Are the Dam and Sire still living? Grandparents still living, etc.)

- 6) Have this Dam and Sire been bred together before?

- 7) Can I get the contact information from you for owners of puppies that have come from this Dam/Sire in previous litters? (If applicable)

- 8) Do you have a contract for adoption that you can send me? Do you sell puppies outright or do you require co-ownership? Are there health guarantees and associated refunds?

- 9) How long have you been involved in this breed?

- 10) Do you show your dogs in conformation? Obedience? Do you compete in working activities? Does the Dam or Sire have championship, obedience, or working titles? Overall, how did they do?

- 11) Do you have a questionnaire for perspective homes and what are you looking for in a suitable home for your puppies?

- 12) What is the price of your puppies?

- 13) What is the status of the puppy's vaccinations?

- 14) (NOTE – Decide whether you want a puppy with or without a tail, then ask. If the litter is already on the ground and more than a few days old, it is too late to change, but the breeder may have bobbed some and left others in tact.) What about tails?

(NOTE – Now it is the Breeder's turn to ask you about your house, kids, finances for taking care of the puppy, fenced in yard, expected use of the puppy, vehicles, previous dog experience, neighborhood, exercise habits, health, and anything else they want to know to ensure their puppy is going to a good environment.

OTHER THOUGHTS OR NOTES ABOUT THIS BREEDER AND LITTER: