

JapSpitz Puppy Buying Guide

When you first get the urge to want to buy / own a new puppy dog it is difficult to contain the excitement and the urgency and it is common for people to want to go out and buy that puppy 'today'. This really is the very last thing you should do - what you should do is to step back, start to do your research, look at what different breeds can offer, consider the impact this is going to have on your lifestyle, and take the time to get your choice of both breed and of breeder correct - but, most of all, enjoy the planning phase it can be so very rewarding.

So, where do you start? Start here by reading, absorbing, and applying this guide - it will reward you in the long run by helping you get a puppy that fits with you and your lifestyle and will become a huge part of your life for many years to come.

Buying a puppy should never be an impulse buy, there is a lot to research:

- 🐾 What breed is best for our lifestyle
- 🐾 How large is the adult dog
- 🐾 How much exercise do they need
- 🐾 What kind of environment are they suited to (house; garden)
- 🐾 Will they cause allergies
- 🐾 What health problems can they suffer from

There is a lot to consider.

When looking for a Japanese Spitz Puppy, there are a few things you need to know.

Firstly, puppies are a **HUGE** commitment, so before you start the process, it's important to take time to consider whether it's the right choice for both you and the puppy. Sit down and think through all the implications first, as a dog is a life-changing commitment and a puppy should never be bought on impulse.

For Example - You may be working at home at the moment but what happens when you go back to the office?

Also bear in mind, under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 you are obliged by law to provide the five fundamental welfare rights to your new pet, so can you commit the next 10 – 16 years to the following:

Health Provide protection from pain, injury, suffering and disease and treatment if they become ill or injured.

Japanese *Snow Flakes* Spitz

- Behaviour** Provide the environment / stimulation to permit them to behave naturally for their species eg. Play, run, dig, jump, fly etc.
- Companionship** Provide facilities for them to be housed with, or apart from, other animals as appropriate for the species.
- Diet** Provide a suitable diet. This should include feeding appropriately for the pet's life stage and feeding a suitable amount to prevent obesity or malnourishment, as well as constant access to fresh clean water.
- Environment** Provide a suitable living environment. This should include the right type of home with a comfortable place to rest and hide as well as space to exercise and explore.

Insurance is also a consideration because should your puppy / adult dog need medical help then veterinary costs are not inconsiderate. If your puppy is KC registered, it will often come with 4 weeks free insurance (speak to your breeder) but before this cover expires this is something you need to factor into the cost of ownership of your puppy moving forward as cover cannot be obtained once your pet becomes unwell.

Japanese Spitz are a numerically small breed, in 2021 just over 200 puppies were registered with the UK Kennel Club so it is statistically known as a numerically small breed.

A little insight in to the breed:

- 🐾 They are a very sociable breed and love company; they therefore don't like being left for long period of time (short periods are fine)
- 🐾 They are hugely loyal and intelligent making them easy to train
- 🐾 They can be prone to weight gain so need a balanced diet to maintain their weight, treats are fine but need to be deducted from their daily food allowance.
- 🐾 They need as little or as much exercise as you want them to have, the breed is fine with short walks or happy to run with you too, so a really adaptable breed.
- 🐾 They are little warning dogs which is great but that means they can be barkers.
- 🐾 They moult - a lot. Typically girls shed twice a year and boys once yearly. They need regular brushing (although they don't need bathing that often and they don't smell doggy). They are double coated so their coat must NEVER be cut or shaved (only paws are trimmed) and they do lose fur/hair all the time (lint rollers will become your "must have" accessory)
- 🐾 It really can be hard to stay at one.

Do Your Research:

A puppy is a huge commitment, our breed can live to 16 years (and beyond in some cases), and we are fortunate that we don't get many into breed rescue, we don't want this to change either.

The [Kennel Club Assured Breeder](#) section of the Kennel Club Website is a great place to start looking for a breeder, as is [ChampDogs](#) which will also have a list of breeders - please bear in mind that ChampDogs is not always up to date. Also, not all reputable breeders choose to appear on either of the above, which is why speaking to a Breed Club is a good idea - they will put you in contact with the right people from the onset.

As there are not a huge number of breeders in the UK it is unlikely that you will find one on your doorstep, so you must be prepared to travel. You'll need to visit your breeder at least twice, once to choose / meet your puppy and the second to collect it once it's ready to leave mum. You will need to add this to your list of considerations as this could be a lengthy journey for some.

Also be aware that your puppy cannot leave its mum until it is at least 8 weeks old, but don't worry if it's a little older, this is quite normal - however try not to make it later than 12 weeks as these early days are when you will create the greatest bonds with your new puppy.

Some questions to consider when talking to a breeder:

Who are the Parents: ask for their KC registration names, these can then be checked on the [Kennel Club Health Check Results Finder](#) area of the Kennel Club website, this enables you to find any dog that has been registered with the Kennel Club. All you need to do is to type the KC Registered Name in the box and it will appear; if the name doesn't appear, it isn't registered.

Will the Puppy be KC Registered? Importantly this is less to do with showing or breeding it's more about traceability. When your puppy is registered the history of your puppy and its heritage is there for you to see, this is vital if there have been any health issues within the line, or should your puppy suffer a health issue in the future, it will help research what can be done within the breeding line to minimise that defect.

How old are mum and dad? A bitch should not be mated until she is at least 12 months old (this is a Kennel Club requirement), 18 months to two years is much more preferable. It is also preferable that a stud dog is no younger than 12 months at the time of mating although there is no KC rule which says they cannot be used at this younger age. Note: The KC will not register litters from a bitch who has given birth at 8 years or older.

Are both Parents Checked for Patella Luxation? This is where the kneecap slips and although it is not proven to be hereditary most good breeders will check out the patella scoring of the intended parents and will avoid using dogs or bitches that already have a disposition to patella luxation. Ask your intended breeder about the PL scoring of the parents of your puppies' litter.

How many litters? It is good practise not to breed from a breeding bitch on every season - the result of this practise is that a typical bitch can only breed 4 litters in her breeding lifespan. If a bitch has given birth to 4 litters, any further litters will not be registered by the KC. **Unfortunately, this does not mean that a breeder**



will not overbreed from a bitch though, they simply won't register them to try and hide the fact that they are overbreeding. Always check, as breeding from a bitch who has already had four litters is not ethical.

Ask how many litters has the bitch had, the number of KC registered litters can be checked out via the Kennel Club website.

What support does your breeder offer? From a reputable breeder you will get a lifetime of support, your breeder will also be happy to receive updates on their progress too.

When you buy a puppy, you are often buying a breeder's legacy, they have put years of love, devotion and effort into creating the perfect dog and they are entrusting it to you, of course they'll want to ensure the puppy matures into a happy, healthy dog.

You will also be expected to sign a **puppy contract**, this is a binding contract between you and the breeder which will stipulate such things as:- whether you're allowed to use the dog to breed from in the future, and restrict you from offering the dog as a prize, or deliberately abandoning the dog, etc. (these are known as endorsements and some can be lifted by mutual agreement) but most importantly, it should state that if something unforeseen happens and you can no longer care for the dog, that the breeder will take it back and may then rehome it appropriately.

Most good breeders will not ask you for a deposit to go on a list and **NEVER** pay a deposit without meeting the breeder, seeing the mum and hopefully choosing your puppy.

Speak to people in the breed - there is no better advertisement than someone who already owns one of these amazing dogs and social media is a great place to meet other owners; there are also Facebook Groups such as "**JapSpitz Together**" or breed club groups who have plenty of owners most of whom are just itching to share their experiences and you can also ask all the questions you want to learn more about the breed.

Also there are **JapSpitz Meet Ups** which take place across the country - our meet ups are always publicised on the "**JapSpitz Together**" Facebook Group and are a great opportunity to chat to owners and get as many cuddles as you can take from the dogs.

The Price of a Puppy:

The price of a Japanese Spitz puppy will vary but you should not expect to pay more than **£2,000** (£1,500 to £2,000 is the norm) for a well-bred, healthy puppy from an ethical breeder.

We would suggest that if puppies are advertised at much higher prices, the breeder is capitalising on the increased demand for puppies as a result of the pandemic. Of course the converse also applies, if a puppy / dog is being offered to you at a very low price, this should also ring warning bells as research has shown that in many instances, these are scams or worse still, puppy farmers. If you're unsure, always ask.

Choosing your breeder and getting on a List:

When you're looking for a puppy, the most important relationship you will form is with your breeder.

This is the person who will be taking care of your puppy, who will feed and nurture it and then they will entrust part of their legacy to you. For many breeders, this is hard and they will want to make sure their puppies are going to the best possible homes, so be prepared for lots of questions.

Your breeder will also be the person you turn to if you're worried, so it's important you choose your breeder with care and then stick with them.

Many potential owners make the mistake of getting on lots of different lists as they feel it will increase their chances of getting a puppy sooner, or cheaper. Buying a puppy is not like choosing a pair of shoes, you don't see what you want in the store then search Amazon for a quicker / cheaper version.

With ethical breeders, this actually has the opposite effect. They are entrusting you with their puppy, they want to see your commitment from the start, so once you've chosen your breeder and you're on their list, keep in touch with them, check to see how their litter plans are coming along, remain "front of mind" with them and demonstrate your commitment and always be patient.

BEWARE the Perils of the Internet:

More and more online adverts are springing up, so please be very, very careful from sites such as Preloved; Gumtree; Pets4Homes etc; Sadly all too often these are scams with the puppies not existing, or worse are puppy farmers who keep their breeding bitches constantly pregnant and often in terrible conditions.

If you have concerns it is advisable to speak to someone so the adverts can be checked.

There have been reports of adverts offering puppies via email or courier and phone calls where they offer a place on a list for a large deposit. DO NOT PAY A DEPOSIT these are scams - there are often no puppies.

Having found your Breeder

This is the time when you can complete your research on your new planned puppy - the breeder will be able to tell who the Sire and Dam is (or is going to be) and some further research will most probably uncover some pictures of the parents, and/or their show ring successes, and the breeding line possibly leading back through many Champions. Now although there are no guarantees as to looks, proportions, etc. these lines can give you an indication of the quality of the puppy you are about to own.

Most importantly your breeder will be able to predict (with reasonable accuracy) the birth date anticipated and leading on from that your most probable collection date(s) - **NOW** is the time to really start planning the impact this is going to have on your life, especially when you consider that in the early days with your new charge he/she should not be left alone for anything but the shortest of periods. This is the time when bonding starts with your puppy and the most important development lessons are taught / received.

Once your puppy is born ...

You'll no doubt have kept in touch with your breeder and as soon as your puppy is born, you'll be the first to know. Ask your breeder for updates on the progress of your puppy including lots of pictures as well, although your breeder will be very busy caring for their new arrivals they're always happy to oblige.

You'll now be thinking about your first visit to see your new puppy too, this would normally be around the 5/6-week stage.

They are Here ...



Puppies at around a week old, notice lovely round, full tummies and a healthy, happy mum in clean surroundings

Puppies at around 2-3 weeks old. Again, lovely full tummies and mum looking relaxed and happy with her babies



Pictures of your puppy will enable you to follow their progress

NOTE: it is imperative that you see mum with her puppies.

Planning to bring puppy home:

You will have lots of time to prepare for your puppy coming home and there are lots of things to consider. First and foremost, you need to puppy proof your house / garden to ensure puppy is safe at all times.

Puppies love to chew a lot so beware of anything that can harm your puppy such as loose cables, some flowers such as lillies, chocolate is poisonous to dogs, and hide those books, magazines, slippers, socks, remote controls, sweets and biscuits, etc, etc. and DO NOT give your puppy cooked bones they can fracture into very sharp shards which can puncture your puppy's tummy.

Distraction works well here so buy your new puppy a tough, safe, puppy toy for him/her to chew on but do avoid the thin plastic/rubber ones as his/her very, very sharp teeth will make short work of them. Should your puppy ingest some rubber shards from a toy, although not ideal, it will most likely pass through and re-appear in their poo. We've experienced part chewed socks in our dogs poops - makes them very spongy.

Japanese Spitz are also escape artists so make sure you have secure fences, borders, gates, etc. and protect your garden pond - you will also need to be extra vigilant during those early visits to your garden so you can keep an eye on your puppy as he/she will find those escape routes you had not even considered - or may even DIG !!

The Japanese Spitz Facebook Groups really come into their own during this phase, there are lots of news and experienced owners in the Groups (together with experienced breeders) who can share the experiences and offer you support.



Puppies love to have access to outdoors for play and socialisation?

The day finally arrives:

Your puppy must be at least 8 weeks old before it's ready to leave mum and you will already have made plans with your breeder to collect him/her, if it's a little more than 8 weeks, don't worry, this isn't unusual.

You will need to think about how you're going to transport your new fluff ball home, it's against the law for a puppy to be loose in the car so think about a crate for the car that will keep him/her, and you safe. Ask your breeder not to feed your puppy in the 2 hours prior to travel (helps to avoid the puppy being sick) and DO have a lead and collar or harness that is a very snug fit and DO use it if you stop for a puppy toilet break - the last thing you want is a puppy escapee in the motorway service area !!

When you collect your puppy, you'll have lots of time to talk to your breeder.

They will go through the puppy contract with you, they'll also discuss your puppies diet and feeding regime. Most breeders will also send you away with some of the food that your puppy currently eats to get you and your puppy started. Should you wish to change your puppy's food, this **MUST** be done very gradually so as to not upset tummies and cause the runs.

Your breeder will also advise you on what injections the puppy has already had and what injections need to follow and in many cases will already have had the puppy microchipped. Ask for the vaccination record card and the microchip registration details and chip number.

Remember is it law that your dog has to be microchipped.

Most breeders will have registered your puppy with 4 weeks of free Kennel Club Health Insurance - before this period expires make sure you purchase some suitable Health Insurance Cover for your puppy (remember you cannot obtain this cover after your puppy gets sick) - it does not have to be with the Kennel Club so shop around.

Finally, if your puppy has been registered with the Kennel Club then your breeder should provide you with Registration Documents that permit you to transfer ownership to yourselves and will also supply a Pedigree Certificate. Once ownership is transferred you can get further pedigree certificates directly from the KC.

You're now ready for your journey to begin enjoy every moment. Probably start with cuddles and play - but remember your puppy also needs loads of sleep, then a gradual introduction to food and water (but do not leave food down as it encourages 'grazing'), immediately after food or play or drink or sleep take your puppy to where you want it to toilet as puppies want to wee every time anything happens in their life !!

One last point - your puppy needs fresh water **ALWAYS AVAILABLE**.

Our website www.japspitz.co.uk contains lots of essential information on puppy care together with an excellent grooming guide.

Japanese *Snow Flakes* Spitz 

Mum content with her puppies

