

VEVEY BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOGS (Australia)

Why an Ethical Breeder won't cross their Bernese Mountain Dog with another breed*

Breeders in Australia and World Wide are increasingly being asked for 'Berner-doodles' or other crosses of the Bernese Mountain Dog. Some reasons I have heard for people wanting these crosses are: my partner and I can't agree on which breed so we would like a cross of both, I want a dog that doesn't shed, I want a smaller Bernese, I want a hypoallergenic dog.

Crossing a Bernese Mountain dog with another breed will not give you a cute mix of both or eliminate health issues, often it can double up on health issues and add more, new, and or different ones in the progeny.

Your dog generally won't look like either breed and sometimes ends up really not very attractive or certainly less attractive as an adult as the individual breeds used to make it up.

Hybrid vigor being a reason for someone to cross 2 breeds to supply a fad demand isn't real. It is a catch phrase invented by someone who wished to create bigger demand for the 'product', a cross-bred dog with a 'cute' or 'clever' name. They have no proof that their 'product' will be healthier especially as in 99% of cases not a single official health test is done on either parent, a Vet check prior to breeding is NOT 'Health Testing'

How do they know they aren't breeding dogs with terrible health histories together? Poodles and Bernese both can have a propensity for Hip Dysplasia and also Eye issues, many eye issues don't show in dogs (for example progressive retinal atrophy) until they are older and they will go blind, there is no cure. Bernese may also add to the mix different Cancers, Elbow Dysplasia, Bloat, Auto Immune issues, Poodles may add Patella Luxation, Heart issues, Cushings disease, Epilepsy, von Willebrands Disease, Degenerative Myelopathy and Bloat amongst others.

By then the 'breeder' will only be able to say 'sorry I didn't know' and you are left with the heartbreak.

Often they have purchased the parents from other back yard breeders who do not health test or purchased underhandedly from Registered Ethical Breeders who would be horrified to know what they were doing.

An Ethical Registered Breeder should have health data on their dogs, their dogs' parents/grandparents/siblings and progeny. They can predict the health, size and temperament that will be produced to a fair degree, they know the lines well. A 'breeder' who cross-breeds for a fad will most certainly not. Mixing temperaments of two totally different breeds can also mess with their heads, they don't know if they are rounding up or retrieving, guarding or fighting. Many mixes can have general anxiety and separation anxiety issues and occasionally aggression due to these clashes of purpose.

Ethical Registered breeders must agree to and abide by a code of conduct, which includes, not cross breeding dogs and not breeding unregistered dogs (no pedigree papers)

Crossing two breeds will not give you a Bernese that doesn't shed. It will give you a coat that is half and half, a coat that is a Bernese coat or a coat that is a poodle coat. As a puppy the 'breeder' will likely have no idea which coat will be which and chances are you could get a bigger shedding or harder coat to look after than either breed by themselves.

An Oodle coat must be brushed and Combed to the SKIN very regularly or it will matt tightly and cause the dog pain. Many people brush the outer coat and think they are doing a good job but the coat is tightly matted to the skin underneath and is very, very painful for the dog to have groomed out and most groomers will refuse to cause this pain to the dog (rightly so) the dog will need to be shaved to the skin and start again. To maintain a long coat the dog will need to be professionally groomed every 4 weeks and thoroughly combed out several times a week. This is more work than a Bernese coat.

It is not less work to have a cross so you can vacuum less and not brush your dog. (**Added) While you may have less shedding on your floor, you will now have MUCH more work to do brushing daily, grooming and preventing matting. This will not be less time consuming than simply vacuuming. **

In fact THIS is what happens if an Oodle coat is not regularly maintained.



So even if you do get one that does not shed it certainly will matt like crazy.

Please look for a naturally non-shedding breed like a Lagotto, Portuguese Water Dog, Irish Water Spaniel, Afghan Hound, Bedlington Terrier, Bichon Frise, Chinese Crested Dog, Poodle, Maltese, Soft Coated Wheated, Lakeland terrier, Schnauzer, Coton De Tulear, or a short haired breed.

Or even get the breed you want and have him professionally groomed every 4-6 weeks and you will have minimal up keep at home. Don't fall for a fad and support 'breeders' who don't care to preserve the wonderful temperaments, physical and working abilities of the Bernese Mountain Dog, there is no other reason to purposely ruin a beautiful and special breed other than fad breeding for money to fill a niche market.

Just remember..... even Wally Conron, the man who invented the 'Labradoodle' in Australia regrets what he did <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/canine-corner/201404/designer-dog-maker-regrets-his-creation>

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