

## How to Become a BMD Owner

For those looking for a Bernese Mountain Dog, you should first know that there is very little breeding here in Southern California. Many people look to other areas to find a Bernese. The BMDSC Club contact person can advise you of any litters that are being planned by Club members. It may be necessary, however to seek help from the club contact person in clubs in adjoining areas - this includes Northern California and Arizona.

But, before you obtain a Berner, we recommend some preparation.

- Go see Bernese Mountain Dogs; touch them and understand what they are like; decide what you want in a dog and the appropriate energy level for your family.
- If you're looking for a serious jogging companion, or if you don't want your dog to join you inside the house, the Bernese is not the best choice.
- The various breeds have varied characteristics that make them all special; but not to everyone.
- Learn about the health problems in BMDs. All breeds have problems, but the problems may not be the same. Learn what costs might be involved should your Berner need medical attention.
- Read one of the serious books on Bernese Mountain Dogs. Suggestions are:
  - The New Bernese Mountain Dog, by Sharon Chesnutt Smith, Howell Book House 1995.
  - The Beautiful Bernese Mountain Dogs, by Diane Russ and Shirley Rogers, Alpine Publications, 1993.
- Research carefully before you buy. Any breeder that says that "their lines have NO health problems" should be considered with suspicion.
- Come to BMDSC activities and get acquainted with owners. Talk with them about the breed and find out where they got their dogs.
- Contact the BMDSC for a referral to responsible breeders.
- Look at the contract before you sign. A responsible breeder should ask you to sign a detailed contract. More detail in a contract is a usually good sign.
- Be prepared for the new arrival. Remember these puppies will grow into wonderful adults if they get lots of love. Treated harshly, they will grow into just another problem.

For breed information in general, the [Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America](#) provides an information package.