

OldeEly Portuguese Water Dogs: spring 2024 update

Portuguese Water Dogs are fantastic dogs and we would suggest you look at our website www.oldeelypwd.co.uk to help with your search. It is designed to help people understand the breed and help find a healthy, well-bred puppy irrespective of who you eventually get the puppy from. The first thing to say is if you are serious about a PWD or simply want to learn about the breed then give us a call for a chat as personal contact always works best.

Without knowing a little about yourself, your experience of dog ownership, why you specifically want a PWD, your lifestyle, space or where you are in the UK it will be difficult to know if a PWD is a suitable match, so we trust that you find the following helpful in your search for a healthy PWD.

They are lovely dogs but to help we always advise that it can often take 12+ months for a puppy to join your family. There are several reasons for this:

- PWD are very scarce with only around 300 pedigree puppies born each year: compare that to 61,000 Labradors and you will appreciate why they are so hard to come by.
- Demand is already incredibly high for very few puppies. We receive hundreds of enquiries for each litter of 10 puppies. (During lockdown we had well over 1000!).
- As you are probably finding out, there are only a handful of breeders in the UK and few have achieved **Kennel Club Assured** Breeder status.
- With one litter a year, at an average of 7 - 10 puppies in a litter - those wanting one of Wendy's puppies can expect to wait.

Many good breeders are already inundated with requests so don't be surprised if some breeders simply respond to your puppy enquiry with a simple "no" or "contact us again next year." However, as advocates for PWD we are committed to ensuring all prospective owners know more about the breed and how to find a well-bred, healthy PWD.

We tend to find that those who want a puppy and want it 'now' are impulse buying whereas those who are willing to wait are often more considered and become better informed owners. If you want a PWD then patience has always been a requirement. The vital question to ask yourself is "Do I want a dog & it would be *nice* if it were a PWD" **or** "I definitely want a PWD" Many people enquiring with us simply want a dog in their life and they end up getting a completely different breed because they didn't have to wait.

12 months may seem a long wait but there are simply no shortcuts to a healthy, well-bred PWD from a reputable breeder. Do not give up hope: those who have a Portie say they are well worth the wait! We can't stress enough that the personal touch is vital and it is always worth giving us a call and having a chat as we may be planning a litter or know of available litters from other reputable breeders.

People always want to know the cost of a PWD but often don't like to ask. The current UK rate in 2023 from a reputable & experienced breeder (who does all of the health tests) is around £2500. However, the cost of a puppy and finding a reputable breeder can be a minefield and what makes it harder is that price is no clear indicator of a healthy puppy or the quality of the breeder. Some people (without knowledge or experience) simply charge more to make money without regard for healthy breeding and ongoing support.

- Paying more than the going rate is **no** indicator of a better breeder nor does it get you a better-behaved, healthier puppy. Nor does it guarantee ongoing lifelong support from the breeder. During lockdown, we heard of breeders doubling the price, simply because they could. We also get calls for help and advice from people reaching out to us because their breeder won't help, advise & support them with ongoing issues. Their support ended when they bought the puppy!
- Puppy adverts at far lower, bargain prices often indicate poor, irresponsible breeding. The massive demand for dogs means some people breed untested, unhealthy & unregistered dogs to make a quick buck.
- Beware of the frequent scams with puppies offered on national websites (including Pets4Homes, Gumtree & Facebook) Many of these advertised puppies do not exist and people only find out when they have parted with considerable amounts of money without ever meeting the breeder or meeting the puppies. To beat the sophisticated scams do not part with any money until you have met the breeder and puppies in person, in the family home at the 5-week visit.

Good breeders rarely need to advertise their litters on national websites as demand for their puppies means their lists are usually full. All good breeders will insist you visit, happily share their health testing and breed coefficients, answer any questions, and not accept payment until you have actually met and agreed on your puppy, usually at 5 weeks. You can probably appreciate why it can take 12 months to find a well-bred PWD from a good, reputable breeder.

Whoever you eventually get your PWD from we are always willing to offer help and advice, especially about the breed and the **vital** pre-breeding health tests. [Please look at our health page to understand the tests and their importance.](#) You must search out a reputable breeder who does all of the pre-mating health tests and breed coefficient. The sad thing is that not all breeders do all of the available health tests, sadder still is that KC Assured Breeder status is no guarantee they do all the tests either.

Prospective owners also play an equally important part. All too often people email breeders asking if they have puppies and want to go on a waiting list. The Kennel Club says the most important thing is to ask about them as a breeder, their dogs, welfare standards, and the health tests rather than just asking if they have a puppy. It is the responsibility of both prospective owners and breeders to ensure the healthy continuation of this wonderful breed while helping to eradicate poor, irresponsible breeding.

PWD are truly fantastic and with love and consistent training, PWD can be delightful and excellent family dogs capable of anything you ask of them including obedience, paddle-boarding, wild swimming, agility, dance, therapy and canni-cross. But as a working breed, with their energy, **willful behaviour**, and **high maintenance coat**, they are definitely **not** suitable for everyone.

Most people enquiring about PWD have never met the breed and are making their decision based upon internet research or possibly briefly meeting them when out for a walk. This isn't a problem as we all have to start our PWD journey somewhere. But don't be fooled by cute puppy photos and videos: they look delightful but they certainly do have their challenges! [Please read our temperament page to see what PWD owners say about owning a Portie.](#)

Before you make any decisions all prospective owners **must** take the time to meet the breed and breeder in person so you can really appreciate the size, characteristics and challenges of an adult dog. This is especially true if you are

- inexperienced dog owners (if you have never owned a dog as an adult)
- have young children
- someone in the family is nervous around dogs
- or you are looking for a so-called "hypoallergenic" dog. [Please look at our hypoallergenic page because it is vital you understand there is no such thing as an allergy free dog.](#)

To help prospective owners, we regularly have people visiting from across the county to meet our dogs. This helps you find out more about PWD, the challenges they pose, and experience any allergy issues **before** you commit to having a PWD. Another way to meet the breed is to attend **Discover Dogs at Crufts** every March or join the facebook page such as "Portuguese water dogs owners group UK" and see if anyone local to you is willing to let you join them for a walk. Whilst this is no substitute for meeting the breeder it helps you understand a little more about them. If you just want to know more about PWD and would like to visit to ensure they are a suitable breed for you, then please feel free to ring us up for a chat.

For those who are genuinely committed to a PWD please note that we do not hold an open-ended waiting list - as you can imagine, with the number of enquiries, it would be incredibly long. If you are serious please take the time to phone us and if **after** our chat you remain:

- **committed to a PWD** (*and it isn't just one of many breeds you are looking at*)
- **fully understand & are prepared to wait** (*It is likely to be 12 months*)

we will then happily send you our questionnaire. We use these as expressions of interest to ensure people can meet the needs of a dog. Then we will arrange a visit and if everyone is happy to proceed only then will we put you on a definitive list when we know that our bitch is pregnant. We insist that all prospective owners must complete and return the questionnaire, must have visited us before any litter and must stay in contact. This is always to your advantage as Wendy often becomes aware of other litters from other reputable breeders.

However much you want a dog and before you commit to having one for its entire life, please consider very carefully whether you can really meet the needs of a dog: especially if you do not have the time or space for an energetic, coated, working breed. If you are unsure please have a good read our website and Google the Defa leaflet "**Code of practice for the welfare of dogs**". Many breeders and rehoming charities will not home a dog if you work full time or live in a flat or home without suitable inside and outside space. Like them, we will always put the needs and welfare of the puppy above the wishes of a potential owner to have a dog. Please do not ask for a PWD if you can not meet the needs of a dog.

If you do decide to get a puppy please follow all of the excellent Kennel Club advice <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/getting-a-dog-or-puppy/>. Do your research well, and find a reputable breeder who does the tests and breed coefficient. Please have a look at our website and if we can help in any way please feel free to email or phone us for help or advice.

Our number is on our website and it is often easier and more personal to have a chat.

Best wishes

Nicholas & Wendy Smith  © OldeEly Portuguese Water Dogs www.oldeelypwd.co.uk