

A MUST READ FOR TM OWNERS AND PUPPY BUYERS



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This post from a closed TM group in Europe may be of interest and relevance in this group. We have been given permission to copy and paste it from the writer, Claudia Bomhof, who has had many, many years of experience with Tibetan Mastiffs.

It is a long post, full of good information which is well worth reading. :) :)

I often give breed info to people who contact me. I thought it would be a good idea to post here too what I always tell them. The Tibetan Mastiff is an independent stubborn proud self thinking breed. They are territorial guards!! This means proper fencing so the dog cannot get out and nobody can simply enter the property is a must! What does a territorial guard mean? Your TM will guard your house property and belongings and you have to keep that in mind when you have visitors! If you have an open setting such as

a business at your house or lots of people coming over, realise this and make sure there is a place where you can safely put the TM when needed.

In public space the same guarding dog, properly socialised, can be different and is aloof and will accept a stranger's attention with dignity. It's important to socialise, socialise your puppy!!! Let it encounter other dogs and animals and people. Practise with visitors coming over to your property!!!! TMs are independent guardians. They make their own decisions. If they have something in their mind, it's hard to convince them otherwise! You have to teach them what is a threat or what isn't, and let them experience all kinds of situations. You do not have to teach them to guard!!!! It's instinctive!

A properly socialised TM is no trouble maker and tolerant of small dogs and kids. Small kids and animals of the TM's owners become part of the pack. But do not leave the kids alone with the dog. This is like with other (big) dogs. A friend of your child can take a toy and your kid cries and the TM might misunderstand and want to protect your kid. Proper socialising does not mean they do not guard and that they are only cuddle teddies. They are just able to make a better judgements about situations.

They are very intelligent. Training sessions must be short, or else they get bored. They will think do I have to do it again, didn't I already show I know it? It has to be useful in their eyes. Drilling, yelling and force do not work on these proud dogs. It will make them reluctant and "shut down" and distance themselves from the owner. It must be based on a bond of mutual respect! Give them time to do it in their own way and at their own tempo. Be calm, assertive, stand your ground. Reward good behaviour. If you want a dog that simply follows and does ball games, this is not the breed for you! You can imagine that walking such a dog off leash is hard. I only do it in a fenced safe area with good open vision and when I have the time. As they will have their own idea when it's time to go home! It will help for them to learn the command 'stay'. So you can make them stand still and get them, as you cannot expect them to reliably come back! A walk is important to let them know the world and create a bond of respect with you.

With a pup this all really takes time! Are you up for this? They are dogs of habit and clarity and like a set routine. Also consider that TMs hate to be locked up. In this way they cannot perform their duty to watch over you and patrol and guard. If they are alone for too long, they can get destructive and mischievous. I recommend to take them inside the house when it gets dark. At night their guarding instinct is the strongest, and they will certainly bark when they hear or see something if outside. Especially the first years, till puberty is over, it's a lot of work. After that it will get easier and is maintenance and repeating now and then. You will have the most loyal relaxed sweet dog that will love you and is so sensitive to how you feel and loves you and will be there for you for life! I remember a saying among TM owners from the old days: you can buy them but never truly own them.

Be careful if they ever need anaesthesia. Lower doses and given bit by bit, as with many Asian breeds and sight hounds. Do not let the vet use Ketamine. Monitor and gas is perfect if the vet offers it. Then it will be fine.

Before summer they shed their coats and lose a lot of hair. It grows back before winter. At other times I do not find the coat needs that much work. If you have plans like a business at the house or other animals or day care or whatever, you want to get them used to doing what you do when they are young, as it is easier then to allow them adjust.

Do you want such a dog? Think carefully. It's a big responsibility. They are proud to show it, but if a dog is loyal and attached to its people it's a TM. And they become old for a big dog, 12 is no exception.

If the answer is yes, what do you look for in a breeder? Look for a breeder who gives information about the parents' pedigree and health tests results! Health tests that are important are hips, eyes (the parents must be free of PRA, entropion, cataracts etc.), and also the thyroid. Even better if elbows are also done. A breeder who cannot show results is a NO! A good breeder will ask you about your dog experience and setting and social situation, other animals and dogs and if you have a proper fence. Ask what the breeder does for socialisation and the temperament of the parents. If the answers are not to your satisfaction run away from this breeder! A breeder who advertises puppies for sale without any info and even ships everywhere and asks no questions and starts with the price is a bad one. A good one has a buying contract and offers support when you need it and will want to know how the pups are doing at their new home. Go over to the breeder's in person and see the personality of the dogs!!!!!! If you see raging dogs in kennels you cannot go near and want a TM that must do well in a town or suburb, it is not a smart choice to buy there.

Yes, this is all a lot of work and takes time, but it's important. Your national breed club might be able to help you too to find a good breeder and give more information. Go to shows and events where there will be TMs. Talk to owners. See them in person. If you made it to the end of this long post and feel they are for you, congratulations. Search for a good breeder and additional info :-)

Feel free to share with the share button if you like this post but I do not appreciate it if you copy and paste without mentioning me as the writer!!!

Claudia Bomhof, TM addicted for almost 29 years :-)