

LCGB PUPPY BUYER'S GUIDE

Leonbergers are not a breed to get involved with lightly. They are giant, fast growing, robust, water and mud loving dogs. They can grow from an irresistible bundle of joy at 8 weeks into a boisterous 70kg tearaway by 12 months. Before setting your heart on a Leonberger, just try to imagine how you would deal with something that has the mind of a toddler, is the size of a small donkey, and has the emotions of a randy teenager all rolled into one! Puppy buyers should certainly be as prepared as they can before taking the plunge.

It pays to do your research

Having thought about it thoroughly, if you still have your heart set on bringing a Leonberger into your life, it is probably best not to start by viewing puppies as they are very cute and difficult to resist. It is a good idea to meet adolescent and adult Leonbergers before deciding to have one. Many Leonberger owners and breeders are only too happy to open their doors to interested newcomers keen to learn more about the breed. By doing this you will come to know more of what to expect from life with a Leo. Read books on the breed, and look at the code of ethics of the Leonberger Club of Great Britain (LCGB), which can be found on the Club's website (<http://www.leonbergerclubofgb.com>) and where you will also find lots of other information about the world of the Leonberger. It is the responsibility of the puppy buyer to enquire about the complete health and temperament of the puppy's parents.

Finding your puppy

It is a good idea to look at the links page of the LCGB website, where you will find links to the websites of many club breeders, who often post future breeding plans on their own pages. Also check with the Secretary of the Club (contact details available on the website), who may often have heard of litters on the way, or pups who may still be available. Visiting shows or breeders who live in your area is another way of getting to know more about the UK Leonberger community. After a while, you will probably have found out who has plans to breed in the months ahead. Many breeders have a list of potential buyers long before the dogs are even mated, and some will not produce a litter unless they have such a list in place. To get the Leo you want, you are probably going to have to wait for him or her, which is not a bad thing because it allows you to get to know the breeder and them to know you. Good breeders will usually be very picky about what sort of home their puppy is to go to, so do not be offended if they quiz you about your suitability and preparation. Most good breeders will have a life-long interest in the puppy, and will usually be available at the end of a telephone day or night, for help and advice, and will take an active interest in your dog's health, welfare and behaviour throughout its life. Responsible breeders will not ask for a deposit prior to the puppies being born and will want to meet you first. The current (2020) guide price for a Leonberger puppy from Kennel Club registered and health-tested parents is around £1300 - £1600.

Things to look out for when buying a Leonberger

Ask for advice, and if possible, take someone with you who has sound knowledge and experience of large dogs, ideally Leonbergers.

Make sure you see your potential puppy's mother, and look for a kind tolerant temperament. It is also useful to meet and assess other immediate relatives whenever possible. Never buy a puppy if you have not seen it with its mother, and seen where and how it was raised. If you are unhappy about anything, walk away. If your concerns are serious, please consider contacting the local council or the RSPCA.

A good breeder will have had their breeding dogs (both parents) health tested under the British Veterinary Association (BVA) schemes for Leonbergers. This will include hips, elbows and eye testing. Hips and elbows are x-rayed and scored by a specialist veterinary panel – each hip is given a hip score out of 53. This score should not be over 15 on a single side, or over 25 for both hips when added together (i.e. the lower the better) Elbows are scored 0 to 3 on each side. A score of

o-o being preferable. Parents should both have current eye certificates. Eyes are tested for hereditary cataracts and glaucoma. Leonbergers should also be tested for the hereditary diseases LPN1, LPN2 and LEMP. (See more about this on the LCGB website)

What to expect from your puppy's breeder:

You should expect to be given a "puppy pack" with your new puppy, which must include :

- Kennel Club registration document (which will include details of how to transfer the puppy into your name)
- Full accurate Pedigree (min. 3 generations)
- Microchip registration details (by law in the UK, every puppy must be microchipped before sale or transfer, which ensures its identity can always be verified)
- Puppy diet sheet
- A puppy purchase contract and receipt
- Copies of the parents health certificates
- Worming details and advice (your puppy should have been wormed by the breeder)

Most breeders will also give you:

- Enough food to feed your puppy for the first few days to ensure consistency of diet
- Health sheet
- Vaccination advice
- Photos of Sire and Dam
- Several weeks' free insurance cover from time of purchase
- Training and socialisation tips
- Information on the LCGB and how to join

Having done all your research, be prepared to wait a little longer for a healthy well-bred and well socialised puppy, from a breeder that you like and trust, as this should be the person that you can go to for help and advice throughout your dog's life.

PUPPY WEIGHT CHART

Average birth weight is around 500g. Boys tend to be larger than girls, and grow more quickly.

(Remember this is only a guide)

Age(mths)	Min (kg)	Max (kg)
1	3	6
2	6	12
3	12	20
4	16	32
5	20	38
6	25	45
12	35	55
18	40	60



