

## Boxer



Devotees of the Boxer need to be fit to stand up to their charges; a gentle, meek Boxer does not exist; extrovert and energetic are two adjectives which spring to mind as soon as the breed is mentioned, along with loyal and fun-loving. Once converted to the Boxer, owners never give up the breed.

Home for the Boxer is Germany and behind the breed are believed to be dogs such as the Great Dane and the Bulldog. It is thought his name may have come from a corruption of the German word *beisser*, the Boxer being a refined version of *bullenbeisser*, meaning 'bull biter'. The breed has been in its present form since the late 1800s and in Germany and America has its ears cropped (upright) but in Britain this is not so.

A guarding breed of a high order, the Boxer is intelligent and, with patient firmness, tractable, but he needs to be convinced of the rightness of what he is asked to do. On the other hand, he will enter into the spirit of the most riotous of family games.

Hardy and full of stamina, his idea of a country walk is to get as wet and muddy as possible, but the shortness of his coat permits easy cleaning.

A good trencherman, he is rarely finicky or faddy. Truly a delightful breed, he is not quick to pick a fight but ready to prove that his slightly pugnacious face with its upturned chin can be backed to the hilt.

### **What about Health Issues?**

You may be aware that some breeds of dog (and crossbreeds too) can be susceptible to inherited disease. Of course you want to be sure that the puppy you choose is as healthy as possible, and you would like to know that it has not inherited any undesirable disease-causing genes from its parents. There is some help in that DNA tests for diseases in purebred dogs are available for some conditions in some breeds, but there are not very many such tests just yet! There are also, however, a number of clinical veterinary screening schemes that dog breeders can use to increase the probability of producing healthy puppies.

**Details of the various screening schemes, both veterinary and DNA, that are available to breeders in the UK can be found on the Kennel Club's website at:**

[www.thekennelclub.org.uk/doghealth](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/doghealth)

Puppy buyers should be aware that, at present, the application of various health screening results to breeding programmes is not always straightforward, and breeders may make choices for various reasons. A responsible breeder though, will always be willing to discuss relevant health issues with you. Breed clubs are often useful sources of breed-specific information.

### **And what health screening is relevant for the Boxer?**

Kennel Club Accredited Breeders must use, or are strongly recommended to use, the following screening schemes and/or advice for sires and dams:

- BVA/KC Hip Dysplasia Scheme
- Breed Club Heart Test (Aortic Stenosis)

This list is not necessarily comprehensive and you should still ask breeders and refer to breed clubs about health issues in the breed.