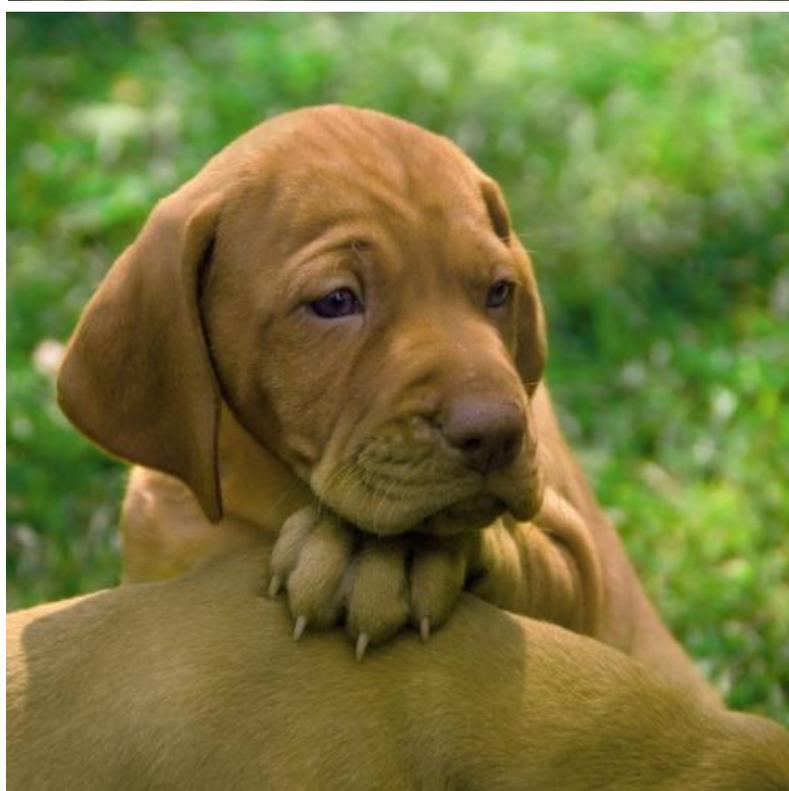


Owning a Hungarian Vizsla

Prepared by: Roxstar Hungarian Vizsla Breeders

www.roxstarhungarianvizslabreeders.co.za





The Hungarian Vizsla

Most people know only one thing about Vizslas - that they are a beautiful breed of dog. Their slick gold rust coat blends with their eyes, nose and nails. They require little grooming other than an occasional bath and regular nail trims. They are very clean in their habits and shed very little compared to many other breeds. This makes them a perfect house dog FOR THE RIGHT PERSON. However, the characteristics of the Vizslas go far beyond physical beauty, and these are the things that make them a breed not suited to every home.

The Hungarian Vizsla is one of the oldest pointer/retrievers in existence. It is believed that the ancestors of today's Vizsla came with the Magyar nomads who crossed the Carpathian Mountains into what is now known as Hungary in approximately 985 AD. Historically, they were possessions of the landed aristocracy. This all changed with the World War I when the social order in Hungary was drastically changed. With World War II and the Russian occupation, the Vizsla was nearly lost. Dedicated lovers of the breed spirited their dogs out of the country to save it. The dogs began arriving in the United States in the early 1950's. In 1960, the breed was recognized by the American Kennel Club.

Size

The Vizsla Breed Standard calls for a medium sized dog

Height:

- Dogs - 56-66cm
- Bitches - 51-61cm

Weight:

- Dogs - 20-27kg
- Bitches - 18-25kg

The short, slick coat is varying shades of golden rust. The eyes, nails and nose should blend with the coat colour. A small amount of white is allowed on the chest.



Gun Dogs

The Vizsla is used as a gun dog that can point and retrieve either fur or feather. The Vizsla is a very versatile dog; you will also find him in the show ring, obedience ring, the field, in agility, in tracking, and working as therapy dogs.

They are very intelligent and love to work. In fact, it is recommended that Vizslas have a "job" of some kind. They do not cope well with boredom. Left with time on his hands, and nobody to keep him company, the Vizsla is likely to become destructive.

The Vizsla is a free spirit, a clown who loves everyone. They are not guard dogs. However, they are great watch dogs, if what you mean by "watch dog" is an animal that barks to warn you of intruders. They will bark like a maniac if someone comes up the drive and rings the doorbell. Once inside, they are likely to grab your visitors by the wrist (or clothing) and escort them to your most prized possessions. They are, however, protective of THEIR people, especially children, and will defend you if they feel there is a real and present danger.

They ARE NOT good kennel dogs and suffer badly if not allowed to be part of the family. They were bred for many centuries to be close companions with their owners; therefore most Vizslas expect your

bed to be theirs, and think they have equal rights with any other member of the family. People who are unfamiliar with the breed often think they are pushy, spoiled, and entirely too "busy" to live with. They are a delight to own. If you are committed to seeing that they get enough exercise and proper training, are kept crated or in an area where they cannot get in trouble when you are gone, and (most important) if you are the sort of person who does not mind having a dog in your face. They are "Velcro" dogs who want to be your constant companion, and they are very persistent!!

Personality

The personality of your dog should be of utmost importance to you. Since many personality traits are inherited, it is wise to choose your pup from parents whose dispositions are characteristic of the Vizsla. Shyness or aggressiveness toward people or other animals is not acceptable.



General Conformation

It is very difficult, even for the experienced eye, to look at a litter at seven weeks old and pick out one that is capable of becoming a Champion in show, field, or obedience. However, it is possible to pick out individuals that/how promise toward fulfilling this aim. Start by taking a critical look at the dam and sire (if he is available), and see how they fulfil the picture you have of the perfect Vizsla. Overall balance is probably the easiest thing to look for. Eyes should be friendly and intelligent, blue at birth but soon turning to green, and eventually turning to blend with the coat. Coat colours are generally lighter in puppies, so it is difficult to tell what the shade of the adult dog will be.

Selection

Temperament, disposition, stability and trainability are all inherited traits. Puppies that have had early handling and socialization have the best chance of a good relationship with their new owners. A puppy should be playful and outgoing. Watching a litter at play can help determine temperament and some emotional traits. In choosing a healthy puppy, check that eyes are clear, coat glossy, baby teeth should be bright white and gums a light pink. Bone structure should be solid and legs should not show curvature or bumps. A healthy puppy is usually lively and hungry.

Preparation should be made in advance of bringing your puppy home. During the first few weeks, your puppy should not have the run of the house, as this makes housebreaking more difficult and gives the puppy an opportunity to get into things which may cause him harm. A puppy should have a place of its own where he can get away from the family. A good quality crate is ideal. If the children in the family are young, they cannot be expected to understand how fragile a small puppy is. The puppy must be protected from their well intentioned, but often disastrous teasing or mauling. Children should be taught to correctly handle the puppy, but not encouraged to do so unless absolutely necessary. No matter how easy-going and strong the dog may seem to be, he should not be expected to tolerate abuse, unintentional or otherwise. Be prepared to give your puppy a lot of time during the first few months; it will pay off in the long run.

General Care

Vizslas shed very little. A brushing several times a week will help distribute coat oils and keep your dog's coat glossy and beautiful. They should not be bathed too often, certainly not more often than every month or two unless they get really dirty. Too frequent bathing will strip the oil from their coats, and dry skin and dandruff will result. You can expect your Vizsla's coat to have a bit of an oily feel about it, and will notice that it is somewhat water repellent. Toenails

should be kept short, hence trimming once a week is recommended. If you hear nails click on the floor, they then need to be trimmed. Remember to check his ears at least once a week and clean them as necessary. Also check for fleas and ticks. Check with your veterinarian or breeder about their preferred methods of flea control.



Exercise

Inactivity is probably the best way to ruin a good dog and cause him to become destructive. Yes, Vizslas can be very destructive if left to their own devices. They will chew furniture (and anything else you value), dig pits in the backyard, jump fences, and become a general nuisance. Many are talkers, and some are recreational barkers. They like to bark at and chase small furry animals. This is a hunting dog; you cannot expect a dog that is bred to hunt to ignore game!! The Vizsla is an active breed that requires a good deal of attention and exercise. Turning your dog loose inside a fenced yard does not guarantee he will exercise. They are excellent companions to joggers. Being a natural retriever, most Vizslas will enjoy chasing balls or Frisbees. If you are fortunate to have a lake nearby, take your Vizsla swimming. Most Vizslas love water and will enjoy fetching bumpers, sticks, or balls out of the water. A Vizsla who is properly exercised will be much calmer and quieter in the house. If you cannot guarantee the proper amount of time, attention and exercise to your dog please do not choose a Vizsla!!

Training

From the day your puppy comes home, start a routine, keeping in mind that it will take time and patience for the learning process to take place. As your puppy matures, simple lessons pave the way for more complex ones, but remember that training should always be

fun with emphasis placed on repetition. Whether you plan to show or not, a good obedience class with the proper instructor is imperative and also a wonderful opportunity for you and your dog to really get to know each other.

Gender

The sex of your puppy is your individual choice. If you are not going to show, hunt and/or ultimately educate yourself to responsibly breed the dog, spay or neuter it.

Hereditary Concerns

Vizslas are prone to epilepsy, Von Willibrand's disease (a form of canine hemophilia), allergies, and autoimmune disorders. Dogs that have these conditions **should not be bred**.

Your Investment

In your search for the right dog, you may have noticed prices that vary widely. Though all of the dogs may be registered, you can see from this discussion of health, personality and structure faults that AKC / KUSA 'papers' are no indication of the quality of the pup or his trueness to the Vizsla standard.

The price of a well bred pup is not exorbitant when divided over the life span of the dog and weighed against veterinary expenses on poorly bred dogs. You do have the right to expect certain things from your breeder. First, the litter must be kept in clean surroundings with adequate room to play. If not kept in clean surroundings, your pup will be more difficult to housebreak. They should appear trim in weight - well fed, but not fat. Constant scratching is a sign of skin trouble or parasites. (Note: it is not unusual for the mother of a litter to shed after the birth of puppies.) They will be a bit unsure and cautious in new surroundings but should not be overly fearful or shy of people. The breeder should have had them to the veterinarian and they should have had their first puppy shot and deworming.



House Training your puppy

You will want to train your puppy to use the toilet outside the house, as soon as possible. There are two principles to remember, a) praise your puppy for doing the right thing, and do not punish him when he gets it wrong, and b) take him on regular (every hour when awake) toilet walks out in the garden. When your pup has been sleeping and wakes up, he is likely to need the toilet, so take him for a walk straight away. After he has eaten, he will need the toilet, so it is a good idea to feed him outside or close to his toilet. If he eats inside, it may be a good idea to carry him out afterwards, as he may not make it to the door. When he does use the toilet, be sure to praise him, stroke him and tell him what a good boy/girl he is. When he gets it wrong and does his wee in the house, pick him up and take him outside, as he may still be able to continue with the remainder of the job outside, in which case you should praise him. If he has made a pooh inside, just clean it up and make no fuss.

If your pup has to stay indoors, give him a room covered completely with paper. The pup will eventually start pooping in one area, at which time you can reduce the papered area. You will have a paper trained pup, which is a useful start.

Another tip is to feed your pup on regular set times during the day. This way he will be likely to use the toilet on a predictable schedule.

Remember it could take up to 3 months to completely house train your dog, so be patient!

Feeding your puppy

Feed your puppy at regular intervals, and at set times gradually reducing the intervals. A guideline is:

Age	Feed Intervals
Before 12 weeks old	4 times a day
3 - 6 months	3 times a day
6 - 12 months	2 times a day
After 12 months	Once a day

Feed a high quality puppy dry food. Let your pup eat his fill, then take the food away until the next meal. Make sure there is always ample fresh water available.

Your Role

You are sure to be successful if you keep in mind that a lovely, obedient, healthy Vizsla does not accidentally grow that way. Thoughtful breeding and many consistent hours of work, love, understanding, and patience go into developing the finished product.

