

I'm not a bot



























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Unfortunately, some physical signs of inbreeding are as endearing as the Frenchies' stunted snout. Inbreeding not only results in reduced litter size, but it also leaves inbred pups smaller than non-inbred dogs of the same breed. In some cases, inbred dogs have asymmetrical features, ranging from eyes of different sizes to misaligned jaws. Inbreeding also makes dogs much more likely to develop a genetically predisposed disorder at some point during their life. Can a vet tell if a dog is inbred? misgabriel / Pixabay When it comes to determining the degree of inbreeding in a given pup, the experts use a method of calculation called the coefficient of inbreeding, or COI, developed by Sewall Wright in 1922. The most inbred dogs breeds on record are Norwegian Lundehunds, pugs, English bulldogs, basset hounds, golden retrievers, Labrador retrievers, and boxers. Yet, genetic testing, such as this genetic COI kit, is the only way to know conclusively how inbred your dog is. However, as we mentioned earlier, inbreeding can leave behind physical clues. If a dog from a breed known for being inbred is small for his breed, has congenital birth defects, or shows symptoms of having special intellectual needs, it's highly likely that inbreeding is a contributing factor. What is inbreeding vs. linebreeding? Karen Dole / Shutterstock So long as you are the one breeding dogs, you don't need to know the particulars of mating selection, but it's good to have an idea about acceptable practices. Unlike inbreeding, linebreeding means you specifically don't mix closely related animals. As in, you would never put together two pups from the same parents or even grandparents. Instead, breeders look to pick dogs that have a more distant relationship but still have similar traits it's basically the equivalent of you marrying your second cousin. While there's no way to totally rule out some of those negative recessive traits any time you try to mate dogs of the same breed, linebreeding certainly assumes many of the fears and can reduce the prevalence of birth defects. What problems do inbred dogs have? Ahmed / Adobe Stock Not only does inbreeding cause health issues, but inbred dogs are also more likely to display behavioral problems than outbred dogs. Here are the five major signs of inbred dogs. #1: Damaged DNA makes health problems more likely Inbreeding results in broken genetics. The three forms of harmful mutations (additive, dominant, and recessive) are easily bred out of dogs with greater genetic variance, especially when it comes to a damaged sequence responsible for recessive genetic traits. With inbred dogs, a damaged or broken genetic sequence is passed down by both parents. #2: Inbred dogs tend to have fertility problems According to the Institute of Canine Biology, dog breeds with greater than 5% inbreeding are at an increased risk of reduced fertility and smaller litters. Unfortunately, there are very few dog breeds without high degrees of inbreeding. Shockingly, it's estimated that only 20 breeds in the world have less than 25% inbreeding in their genes. #3: The strange phenomenon called inbreeding depression Inbreeding depression, known as an unspecified decrease of fitness, drastically reduces the quality of an inbred dog's life, leading to higher incidents of mortality in puppies and shortened lifespans due to a weakened immune system. Common health issues include neurological conditions, skin problems, gastrointestinal matters, and joint problems, such as hip dysplasia. #4: Inbreeding can lead to aggression Inbred dogs tend to be less intelligent than other members of their breed, and while it's not always the case, inbreeding can lead to higher rates of behavioral issues. Aggressive behaviors, such as rough play, snapping at or biting people or other animals, and even serious attacks are all more common in inbred dogs. #5: Inbred dogs are more likely to suffer from anxiety In addition to aggressive behaviors, inbred pups are more likely than other dogs to have personality disorders. Severe separation anxiety, impulsive behaviors (compulsively chasing vehicles or running out into the street), fearfulness, and even a complete lack of affection for their human family are all more common in inbred dogs. Do inbred dogs live long? Laura Stanley / Pexels That's relative. However, inbreeding does shorten a dog's life, according to research. A recent study from 2021 found that there were significant differences in life span between pups that had low levels of inbreeding versus ones with high levels of inbreeding. Other estimates put the reduction in the life span of an inbred dog at 6 to 10 months shorter than had they not been inbred. What's more, inbred dogs are more likely to have health problems that can decrease the number of years you have with them. You can always control whether your dog is inbred all you can do is give them the best life possible and keep an eye out for health issues. However, its best to avoid contributing to the issue of inbreeding. What is the most inbred dog breed? Nikita Telenkov / Pexels The Norwegian Lundehund ranks by far the most inbred dog, but a couple of mainstream breeds top this list as well. The bull terrier, corgi, Airedale terrier, and pug all wind up there with pretty significant inbreeding. On the flip side, the Sloughi, Chihuahua, Spanish water dog, and Jack Russell terrier mark the bottom of the list or the least amount of DNA overlap. Just because an animal makes it on the wrong side of this graph doesn't mean you can't get that breed. Look for a reputable expert breeder who does genetic testing and takes care of moms and dads. Or, better yet, decide to adopt a mix that has enough variable parentage to avoid the common pitfalls of pure-bred dogs. While many dog breeds have high degrees of inbreeding, some are worse than others. If you want to ensure your new pup is as healthy and well-adjusted as possible, we recommend thoroughly researching breeders and requesting a genetic COI before you purchase a puppy. Another great idea? Try your local animal shelter. You'd be surprised by how many purebred dogs you can find right around the corner. (And don't forget about mutts! Some of the best dogs are mixed breeds.) 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