

Q: Do you have a USDA breeding license and if so, what is the number?

Professional breeders need a license if they have 3 or more breeding hedgehogs. If they have less than this, it's possible that they aren't professionals and are merely breeding a pet and selling the hoglets from the litter. USDA registration doesn't guarantee they are a high quality and ethical breeder, but it is an indicator that they take breeding seriously. If they don't have a USDA breeding license, they could just be starting out and you will have to rely on the answers to your other questions. Also, trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

Q: Do you have a lifetime guarantee against congenital diseases or wobbly hedgehog syndrome (WHS)? If so, what are the specifics?

Just because a breeder has a guarantee doesn't necessarily mean that you won't get a hedgehog that has congenital issues or WHS. If they require a necropsy, and don't have an inexpensive source where it can be performed, you will likely wind up spending as much as a new hedgehog costs, which doesn't make financial sense and some unethical breeders will play the odds that they won't have to satisfy warranty claims.

Q: Do you have a return policy and if so, what are the terms?

Many breeders have an "All sales final" policy but if you find that you aren't capable of caring for the hoglet you have purchased, many will allow you to either trade the hoglet within a set period of time or surrender them without refund.

Q: Do your hedgehogs have a pedigree and are they registered?

A baby hedgehog from a pedigree lineage is less likely to encounter congenital health issues or WHS. Also, you should ask to be given the lineage. Some breeders will not give you the lineage because they are trying to guard against backyard breeders. You'll have to decide whether or not this is a deal-breaker for you.

Q: How long is your typical weaning period?

Avoid a breeder that specifies anything less than 6 weeks. You don't want any health issues that can arise from weaning too soon. 6-8 weeks is typical.

Q: If I have any questions, can I contact you to answer them?

Most breeders want you to successfully bond with your baby hedgehog and will allow a period in which they can be contacted for support. Many provide lifetime support.

Q: What kind of food do you wean with and do you provide a starter supply?

Look into whatever brand you are told and compare it to the nutritional values found in our article: [The Best Hedgehog Food List](#). If you haven't read this article yet, please take the time to familiarize yourself with the nutritional guidelines. If you find that they are not using something that falls within our guidelines, it doesn't mean they are negligent. There are varying schools of thought on hedgehog nutrition. It is one of the most hotly debated topics.

Q: What kind of bedding do you use?

Many breeders will use fleece. Others will use paper products like recycled paper pellet or paper shreds. Some will even use wood shavings but we don't encourage the use of that.

Q: Can I see video or pictures of the siblings from the litter and how many siblings do they have?

If a breeder won't allow you to see the siblings, this should give you cause for concern. Seeing nice healthy siblings can help put your mind at ease.

Q: How much are the baby hedgehogs handled in order to socialize them?

If a breeder cannot give you a straight and reasonable answer to this then use caution. A hoglet that isn't handled can become resistant to being handled. A hissy hedgegie makes the experience stressful on you and them. Some breeders even go to the extent of litter training new hoglets (which is a MAJOR bonus)!

Q: What price do they charge for their hoglets and if there is a price difference, what drives the difference?

This question is not to persuade or dissuade you from purchasing from the breeder. Do not assume that expensive means high quality and inexpensive means poor quality. You need to understand the investment cost you are about to make.

Q: What is their process if the hoglet you reserved is not one you want when you meet them?

Most breeders know that personality compatibility is a key factor in successful bonding and therefore quality of life for the hoglet. If they will not allow you to get back on the waiting list for the next litter without further deposit, walk away and find another breeder. At the same time, do realize that most breeders have a non-refundable deposit. Ask your questions before putting a deposit down.