

Campbell's Test

One can predict a Doberman puppy's temperament by using the Campbell's test if the pup is not more than 6 to 8 weeks of age. William Campbell developed a test for evaluation of the future temperament of a dog this test will help you to make a judgment about the puppy's aptitude. The test was tried for eight years on more than ten thousand of canines of different breeds.

Basic rules: You have to be alone with the pup. When you choose an environment for the test, choose a calm area to avoid disturbances. Don't talk to the puppy, don't pet him. This test should be performed only once. Each subtest lasts about 30 seconds.

1. Test his Trust

Set the pup on the ground and walk away from him, a few steps. Then kneel and clap your hands several times. Pay attention of how the puppy reacts to the clapping. See if he comes to you, tail, high or low. The puppy will show you right away the level of trust he has placed upon you. Note the result.

- A. Comes easily, tail high, hopping and nibbling hands
- B. Comes easily, tail high, while yelping toward your hands
- C. Comes easily, but with the tail lowered
- D. Comes hesitantly
- E. Does not come at all

2. Test his willingness to follow

Set the puppy on the ground, beside you. Then walk away from him. If the puppy does not follow, it could mean that he is independent. If he follows you, it might mean that he is obedient.

- A. Follows easily, tail high, hopping and nibbling feet
- B. Follows easily, tail high only
- C. Follows easily, tail lowered
- D. Follows hesitantly, tail lowered
- E. Does not follow, keeping it's distance

3. Restraining test

Flatten the puppy and roll him on his back. Hold a hand upon its sternum for at least thirty seconds. His attitude should tell you whether he is accepting or refusing this physical domination. Note the result.

- A. Struggles vigorously, wants to get away, bites
- B. Struggles vigorously, wants to get away
- C. Struggles a moment, but surrenders
- D. Does not struggle, licks hands
- E. Lays still, very frightened

4. Social dominance test

Again, flatten the puppy against the ground. Stroke him, from head to back, a few times. A dominant dog will resist such fondling; he will even try to bite you. An independent puppy will go away. You may repeat this test many times. Note the result.

- A. Jumps, yelps, scratching, bites, growls
- B. Jumps, yelps
- C. Squirms, licks hands
- D. Welters, licks hands
- E. Gets away, does not budge

5. Lifting test

Raise the dog, hands across the puppy's belly. Hold him at a reasonable level. At this point, the puppy has lost all control. The way he reacts will tell you how submissive he his. Note the result.

- A. Ferocious, bites, growls, cries
- B. Kicks a lot, cries

- C. Struggles, soothes himself, licks
- D. Does not struggle, hanging or licking hands
- E. Noticeably frightened

Test Results

2 A's or more, with B's. This Doberman is a leader and will try to dominate. He can be aggressive and can bite if mishandled. Not recommended for babies and elderly persons. Excellent watchdog if trained by an experienced trainer with calmness and gentleness.

3 B's or more. This Doberman is calm and confident with a tendency to dominate. Strong aptitude for training; Will be good for obedience competition in IPO or agility. If trained, this Doberman will become a great and obedient friend. You will find him equally great in the crowd or on the sofa.

3 C's or more Excellent family dog. Perfect for children and elderly persons. No major problems. Might be less capable to serve as a protection dog.

2 D's or more, especially if combined with E's Puppy is submissive. Has a great need of love and tenderness. Will be good for family with children, though can bite if treated badly.

2 E's or more (including one in the D Test) Has a hard time socializing. Can attack due to fear, stress, especially if punished. Not recommended for families with children and elderly.

A and E's mixed. Start over the test elsewhere. If the result is the same, the puppy is unpredictable.

If you have never had a Doberman before, you might consider a female. The female is easier to train and is less dominating. For a man a male Doberman can be more suitable. Males are more impulsive, have to be trained and exercised. They are more inclined towards leadership, but the rewards of having a well-trained beautiful noble Doberman by your side outweigh the efforts that you will need to put into training of this great intelligent animal.