

## The Big Four

1. "A" stamped hips on both parents and all generations shown on the pedigree. This is the coveted German "A" stamp, signifying that German experts have viewed the dog's hip x-rays and given one of three ratings: A1-normal (perfect hips), A2-Fas normal (almost perfect), and A3-noch zugelassen (slightly dysplastic). All three are considered "A" stamped. In Germany, no dog can breed without one.

2. A breed survey of KKL1: This signifies that the dog has been breed surveyed and is "highly recommended" for breeding. Although KKL2 is ok, KKL1 is desired. A breed survey confirms a shepherd's conformation characteristics, courage. The dog is also put through a 12 mile endurance test.

3. An SG, V or VA show rating: This signifies that they have been judged as attractive representations of German Shepherds at shows. SG=good, V=excellent, VA=excellent select which is only attainable at national shows. SG is the highest rating in a youth class (jungenklasse). SG1 would be the top dog in that rating class.

4. A SchH3 title for the male and at least a SchH1 title for the bitch: A Schutzhund title is required for breeding in Germany. This triathlon of dog sports including testing for obedience, tracking and protection ability. Schutzhund 3 is the highest protection dog title. A SchH1 is like a bachelors degree, SchH2 a masters, and SchH3 a PhD in the sport.