

5 places to avoid when purchasing a new pet

It's pretty hard to resist a cute, adorable, cuddly puppy. And it's easy to get caught up in the gratification of finding a puppy and taking it home immediately. Maybe you've found a great deal on a pure breed puppy or a puppy with all the right traits and characteristics. (Possibly the puppies are just to darn cute to pass up.)



We're not saying that all puppies acquired at the places below will be somehow inferior or defective. We do know that these puppy sources are much more risky for both you and your potential puppy than working with a reputable breeder, dog owner or rescue group.

1. **Pet Stores.** The majority of these pups come from puppy mill breeders. Every time a puppy mill puppy is purchased, it grows the puppy mill "industry". As long as there is money to be made, there are people that will be happy to keep breeding regardless of the suffering they cause to innocent pets. Reputable pet stores offer adoption days to local rescue groups and shelters these are the places that we want to support.
2. **Back yard breeders & newspaper ads.** Over the last 10 years, more people that see their dogs as an extra source of income rather than valued members of the family. I am not referring to the couple that want a puppy from their dog to carry on the legacy or the family that does not realize the benefits of altering their pets. Although this is never a good idea. The problem arises when someone purchases a pup and thinks

“wow I can recoup my money by having pups of my own”. Many times these dogs are left in the backyard with little or no interaction and bred every season and left to drop their puppies in the garage or under the house. These owners do not realize the importance of medical care, proper shelter and socialization which can result in heartbreak for a new owner.

3. **Flea markets.** Flea markets are never a good place to find your new best friend. Again we must think about where the puppies come from and how they had the great misfortune of becoming just another commodity. The transient nature of flea markets may also make it difficult for you to contact the seller if you encounter health issues with your new puppy. They have your money; you have a puppy.
4. **Side of the road.** On an impulse you stop and purchase a cute cuddly puppy. You have no way of knowing where these pups come from. Most likely come from a backyard breeder or puppy mill environment. Again, you probably won't be able to contact the seller again. Balance the risk with your investment.
5. **The Internet.** This is always a buyer beware situation. There are many online scams that show adorable puppies for sale or adoption, and they come with high costs both financially and emotionally.

By being risk averse and approaching these puppy sellers with caution, you may be avoiding potentially expensive health and behavioral issues. You and your puppy benefit greatly from knowing more about your puppy's health care, potential issues and personality before you bring him home. Verify references. Meet the puppy's parents. Ensure the puppy is healthy.

As always, there are exceptions to any rule.

- If you see that cute pup on the side of the road do not buy buy on a whim. Ask to meet the parents, see if they welcome you to drop in and actually see

where the pups were raised. They may very well be just individuals with a random litter that raise their dogs as as a true family member. But the majority of the time you will discover otherwise. This does not mean that they should not be breeding puppies, it just means that they are unaware of the impact extra puppies add to the overpopulation problem that exists.

- The Internet can be a valuable asset in your search for a new friend. There are many legitimate sites that can help you locate reputable breeders in your area. Other valuable Internet resources include the sites www.petfinder.com and www.adoptapet.com. Research multiple rescue organizations and shelters in your area to see what dogs are available. They can help you locate adoptable dogs both mixed and pure bred.

Dogs are a ten to fifteen year commitment. This is not a decision to be taken lightly. It is worth the effort to take your time and do your homework. Choose your next puppy from a rescue organization or shelter. If you feel that you must purchase a puppy rather than rescue, then take the time to research your area for a [reputable breeder](#).