

Educate Yourself

As thoughts turn to spring and warmer weather you might also be considering the patter of tiny puppy feet. We at **hope-UK** would like to try and point you in the right direction, and save you from what might become heartache and misery – to one of joy and happiness.

First and foremost research the breed you are looking to buy. Do not just go and buy the first puppy you see. This is not good advice even if buying from a reputable breeder.

Please do not resort to going through the block ads in local papers. Yes, it might seem like the easiest solution - but be warned you could be buying into a whole lot of misery, both financially and upsetting. Stay away from any breeder who offers you a multiple choice of breeds. This is not how puppies should be kept or sold. You are looking for a small breeder who really only has 1 perhaps 2 different breeds, and will let you come and see the puppies with their Mum and will answers all of your questions. Never ever let anyone bring the puppy out to you - you need to see the puppy and Mum together. If the person selling you the puppy tells you that this is not possible walk away.

Never be tempted to purchase your puppy from a pet shop. We cannot stress enough that the pet shop trade is a life of misery for the breeding bitches, stud dogs and puppies. The wastage from this inhumane trade is sickening. You might think that you are saving any puppy that you purchase from these shops - but all you are doing is condemning even more puppies and older dogs to a life of more suffering. These poor puppies are bred on Puppy Farms. Puppy Farms are breeding facilities that produce purebred puppies in large numbers. The puppies are sold either directly to the public via the Internet, newspaper ads, pet shops at the Farm itself, or are sold to agents and dealers. **Please stay away from them.**

So you have finally located your breeder and you have made arrangements to go and see them. They sound really nice; they also run a boarding kennels and tell you that dogs are their life. When you get there they tell you that the mother of the litter of puppies is not well - and it is best if they bring you out a puppy to see. Be very careful... This could mean that these people have a pet shop license and buy puppies in, to sell. If this is the case they are still bred on puppy farms. Start asking questions; ask to see all of the puppies. Take a look at the conditions they are living in, look at the condition of all the puppies (if you are allowed to see them). Are you able to tell what age the puppies might be? Do they seem happy and socialised or do they cower away. Do they look clean? Ask who their Vet is? The breeder (always assuming that they are the breeders) might be telling the truth, the bitch might be ill... then again there might not be a bitch at all. It is not easy is it? But if you do all of your home work before you go and see the puppies, you should be better armed and able to spot anything that is not right. If in doubt ask for time to go away and think about it! A good breeder will not put any pressure on you.

To go back over some of the points:

Be careful if using the papers to locate your breeder.

Never buy from a pet shop or persons who buy puppies into sell (this can be from a boarding kennels even a private dwelling address).

Research the breed you are interested in. Many dog magazines have contacts for breed advice, ring and ask what you should and should not be looking for. Do you know of anyone who has the breed you are interested in - if so then ask them where they bought their puppy? A good recommendation has a lot going for it.

Check that the person you are about to contact does not have multiple listings for several breeds. These days they use different mobile telephone numbers. Ring a few if in any doubt and see if it is the same person that is answering.

At the end of the day the choice of where and who you buy your puppy from is down to you. All we at hope-UK can say is this...

Puppies purchased from pet shops and people who buy into sell are not any cheaper then buying from a good reputable breeder. The puppy you buy is hopefully going to be long term member of your family. The newspapers, the internet is full of people who have done just that - and they have lived to regret it. In many cases it has cost them dearly in Veterinary expenses. Many have lost their dog at a very early age due to inherited defects and poor rearing as a puppy.

The choice at the end of the day is obviously yours - but please make the right choice. Only by refusing to buy these sad little puppies will this trade ever cease.

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