



# How to find a good dog or cat breeder

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Where you get your new puppy or kitten from is important. Dogs and cats inherit genetic and behavioural traits from their parents, and the research time you invest upfront can pay dividends in the long run for a happy, healthy pet.

Many beautiful animals are looking for new homes in animal shelters and rescue organisations. Organisations like the RSPCA, Lort Smith, Animal Welfare League (NSW) and Pet Rescue are good places to start your search.

If you're unable to find the right animal for you or have specific requirements due to allergies, you'll need to find a good breeder.

Here is a list of things to look out for on your search:

## Visit the breeding environment

Ask to visit where the puppies or kittens are living. While you may not

be allowed to handle the puppies, a responsible breeder will allow you to visit their home or breeding environment. It is crucial to see if the animals are raised in a happy and healthy environment and that you are not buying from a puppy factory. There are laws governing the breeding of dogs and cats in Australia. Good breeders keep their animals in a clean and comfortable environment that meet the standards set out by their state's legislation.

## Ask to meet the parents

Puppies and kittens can inherit genetic AND behavioural characteristics from their parents. Meeting the parents allows you to assess how they interact with you and gives you an insight into what your tiny ball of fluff will look like as an adult. Mothers should be with their puppies till they are 8-weeks old.

Fathers may be kept separately, but the mothers should always be there.

## Ask about genetic disease screening

Do some research on your chosen breed. Do not be afraid to ask the breeder how they screen for genetic diseases, how prevalent they are, and if they are present, what their management plan is.

## Receive all veterinary papers

At eight weeks of age, your puppy or kitten should be microchipped and should have received its first vaccination. They should also have had their first parasite protection treatment. The breeder should provide you with papers showing all this information so you can take your animal to your vet.

Continued over page...

### Check any conditions imposed by your breeder

Some breeders stipulate conditions when you purchase animals from them – like not breeding from the animal; returning it to them to show; returning it to them to breed, or returning it to them if you have to surrender it. It is up to you if you agree with these or not, but it is important to be aware of them.

### Do some research beforehand

The RSPCA has a [Smart Puppy and Dogs Buyer's Guide](#) or [Smart Kitten](#)

**and Cat Buyer's Guide.** Downloading and reading these will help make sure you're able to identify a healthy, well-adjusted puppy or kitten. It will also help fight the sale of animals from puppy factories.

### Good breeders

Anyone can become a dog breeder, so you must choose a dog breeder that genuinely cares about their animals' health and welfare.

Healthy puppies and kittens come from breeders who genuinely value the welfare of their animals. Good

breeders help set you up for success by providing a high standard of care and living conditions for all their animals, being open to your questions, and sending you home with a complete history of your new puppy/kitten.

*This article is for general information only. We recommend that you speak to your veterinarian regarding specific advice and help for your pet.*

