

# ASK OUR VETERINARIANS



## How Do I Find A Good Dog Breeder?

While it is always nice to rescue a dog from a shelter or rescue organization, sometimes we have our hearts set on a specific breed of dog. So, how do you find a responsible breeder? A reputable breeder should have his animals as top priority. Breeding, after all, is meant to showcase the best of the best of that breed and to minimize genetic disease. A good breeder will allow you to visit his home. The home should be clean and spacious, and the dogs well-kept and friendly. Breeding more than one or two types of dogs in one facility or having puppies available all the time should be red flags that you may not be dealing with a reputable breeder. A good breeder should know and explain possible genetic and developmental problems associated with their breed and provide documentation that the parents are reasonably free of genetic abnormalities. A breeder who is not spending money to screen her breeding stock for potential problems is not likely to be a good breeder. Breeders should also be providing vaccination and proper veterinary care for both adults and puppies. Ask for references from those who have purchased puppies from the breeder and ask whether you can talk to the breeder's veterinarian. The breeder should also question you to make sure you are a good fit for the breed and will provide a good home. He should also insist that you will return the pet if you are unable to keep it at any point and should provide a written contract and health guarantee for your pet. Where do you find a reputable professional breeder? Try checking the American Kennel Club, attending a local dog show or checking with a local breed club. And remember, a veterinarian would never presume to tell a breeder which dogs to pair to create the best puppies, so, while most breeders have a wealth of information and experience about their breed, they may not be the best people to offer medical advice. Find a good breeder and a good veterinarian that you trust and take the appropriate advice from each.

**Submitted by:** Dr. Sabrina Walters



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