

10 reasons I'm using a breeder for my next puppy

We have committed. We found our breeder and we have put a deposit down on a puppy so there is no turning back now. We chose to get a puppy from a responsible breeder. I've already been asked by a few friends **“Why didn't you rescue a dog? There are SO many homeless dogs!”** So, if you are secretly wondering the same thing here's a list of why we chose to buy from a breeder instead of buying a dog from a rescue.

1. **Compatibility.** My dog is well mannered and socialized with a rock-solid temperament, however I want the new dog to be compatible with him. I want my dog to have a voice in the new dog we bring into the house. This is far easier with a puppy than an older dog. I know he would get along with any puppy we bring home but there may be a puppy that really clicks with him so Stanley will be with us when we pick our puppy.
2. **Timing.** When you work with a responsible breeder you know when the puppy will be born, when they are weaned and ready to come home. This allows us to plan accordingly and be ready. No spur of the moment decisions here or waiting endlessly for the “right” rescue to come along at the “right” time.
3. **Epigenetics.** Many people get a puppy from a shelter or rescue thinking that they are getting a blank slate. Quite often these puppies have behavior problems. Especially fear. Puppies are NOT blank slate. Why? Because of epigenetics. In a nutshell, the experiences of the parents affect the offspring. I want a dog with behaviorally sound parents.
4. **Early learning.** The eight weeks the breeder has the puppy is super important. Why? Because the foundation of every animal starts the minute they come into this world. There are critical and important phases that all dogs must go through to develop into sound animals. I want a dog from someone who understands these phases and meets all their needs - especially at critical times.
5. **Health guarantee.** Reputable breeders carefully select the best health qualities in the dogs that they breed. Every puppy born to a reputable breeder has parents that have gone through a series of genetic tests to ensure that the dog you get has the best possible chance of being healthy. So, our new puppy will come with a health guarantee that states “This puppy is guaranteed to be in good health and has been vaccinated and de-wormed properly for the puppy's present age. The puppy has been thoroughly examined by a licensed vet, and given a clean bill of health. This puppy is guaranteed to the original buyer for two years against hereditary/genetic diseases, and hip dysplasia.” That is not only piece of mind for me but also for my pocketbook.
6. **Back-up Plan.** Reputable breeders stand behind their work. Here is what my breeder has to say “I can tell you my dogs will NEVER end up in a shelter. Not only will I buy back dogs if they can't be kept, but if, by chance, a dog I produced ends up in shelter, it's microchipped with me as a secondary contact that can't be removed. I am responsible for all my puppies for life. Shelters wouldn't even be needed if all breeders did the same.” Again, piece of mind for many owners.

7. **Love of the breed.** I don't want to end up in a world that just has "dogs". I love the variety of the breeds we have and don't want to see them disappear. Did you know that many breeds today have very small populations? If some breeds were any other kind of animal, they would be considered endangered. You may find it hard to believe, but breeds can become extinct. If we don't support reputable breeders, we will lose them and lose the wonderful variety of dogs they breed.
8. **Stacking the deck.** Right now, I don't have a lot of free time and the time I do have I don't want spend on a lengthy behavior modification program with my own personal dog. I've been there and done that with my previous dog, Jasper, so I know what it entails but that doesn't mean I want to go there again. At least not right now. There is no perfect dog. Getting a dog from a breeder doesn't guarantee that you won't have problems or challenges. Not all breeders are reputable but that's a topic for another day. By using a reputable breeder I believe I am going to stack the deck in my favor of getting a temperamentally sound and healthy dog.
9. **Truth behind the curtain.** Rescues aren't always what they seem. Some are great and some are not. "Don't buy while shelter dogs die" is great marketing. It tugs at your heart strings. But unscrupulous rescues and shelter organizations are responsible for importing almost double the number of dogs euthanized. Why are "rescue organizations" not placing the dogs we have in the United States? Why are they spending donation money on importing more? There is such a thing as irresponsible rescue. "670,000 dogs are euthanized in US shelters every year. 1,000,000 dogs are imported from overseas by rescues every year." (Source – CDC & ASPCA) in addition, these dogs are often not healthy. Here are just two examples from this year of poor health in imported dogs. New strain of distemper and Rabies from Egypt dog.
10. **High expectations.** My new dog will be a working partner with me and that requires a level of skill that the average dog owner doesn't need. It gives me piece of mind knowing that I will know everything my dog has experienced in his life so I am not surprised by an unexpected response in the middle of a training class or private session.

Where you get your dog is a personal individualized decision. What is right for one person may not be right for another. Rescuing a dog doesn't make you a better owner, nor does it give you the right to judge anyone who hasn't rescued a pet. Being a great dog guardian isn't based solely on where you got your dog but how you treat the dog for the rest of their life. The quality of the relationship and life you provide the dog is what matters at the end of the day.