

# Ten Ways You Can Help Fight Puppy Mills

## 1. Do Not Buy Your Puppy From a Pet Store

That puppy who charmed you through the pet shop window has most likely come from a large-scale, substandard commercial breeding facility, commonly known as a puppy mill. In these facilities, parent dogs are caged and bred as often as possible, and give birth to puppies who could have costly medical problems you might not become aware of until after you bring your new pet home.

## 2. Make Adoption Your First Option

If you're looking to make a puppy part of your family, check your local shelters first. Not only will you be saving a life, but you will ensure that your money is not going to support a puppy mill. There are many dogs waiting for homes in shelters all across the country—and an estimated one in four is a purebred! Your second option is breed rescue. If your heart is set on a specific breed you haven't been able to find in a shelter, you can do an Internet search for a breed-specific rescue organization.

## 3. Know How to Recognize a Responsible Breeder

If you've exhausted your options for adopting and are choosing to buy from a breeder, remember that responsible breeders have their dogs' interests in mind. They are not simply interested in making a sale, but in placing their pups in good homes. A responsible breeder should screen you as thoroughly as you screen them! Read the ASPCA's responsible breeding statement to find out more about how a responsible breeder behaves.

[www.asPCA.org/pupmills\\_statement](http://www.asPCA.org/pupmills_statement)

## 4. See Where Your Puppy Was Born and Bred

One sign that you are speaking to an unscrupulous breeder is that they will not let you see the facility in which your puppy was born. Always ask to see the breeding premises and to meet both parents (or at least the mother) of the puppy you want to take home. You should also ask for an adoption contract that explains—in terms you understand—the breeder's responsibilities, health guarantee and return policy.

## 5. Internet Buyers, Beware!

Buying a puppy from the Internet is as risky as buying from a pet store. If you buy a puppy based on a picture and a phone call, you have no way of seeing the puppy's breeding premises or meeting his parents. And those who sell animals on the Internet are not held to the Animal Welfare Act regulations—and so are not inspected by the USDA.

## 6. Share Your Puppy Mill Story with the ASPCA

If you have—or think you have—purchased a puppy-mill puppy, please tell us your story. Every bit of evidence gives us more power to get legislation passed that will ban puppy mills. [www.asPCA.org/dogsurvey](http://www.asPCA.org/dogsurvey)

## 7. Speak Out!

Inform your state and federal legislators that you are disturbed by the inhumane treatment of dogs in puppy mills, and would like to see legislation passed that ensures that all animals bred to be pets are raised in healthy conditions. You can keep up-to-date about current legislation to ban puppy mills by joining the ASPCA Advocacy Brigade. [www.asPCA.org/lobby\\_joinbrigade](http://www.asPCA.org/lobby_joinbrigade)

## 8. Tell Your Friends

If someone you know is planning on buying a puppy, please direct them to our puppy mill information at ASPCA.org. Let them know that there are perfectly healthy dogs in shelters waiting to be adopted.

[www.asPCA.org/cruelty\\_pupmills](http://www.asPCA.org/cruelty_pupmills)

## 9. Think Globally

Have a webpage, a MySpace profile or a blog? Use these powerful tools to inform people about puppy mill cruelty by adding a link to our puppy mill information at ASPCA.org.

## 10. Act Locally!

Copy this flyer or download it at [www.asPCA.org/pupmillflyer](http://www.asPCA.org/pupmillflyer) and ask to leave them in the offices of your local practitioners.