



MANS BEST FRIEND

## VISITING A PUPPY CHECKLIST ✓



When you visit a puppy you're thinking of buying, take this checklist with you. It contains useful questions and things to look out for to help you make the right choice of puppy for you. **Don't forget to read our full 'Things to Check on a Visit' guide at [www.getpuppysmart.com](http://www.getpuppysmart.com) before you go.**

### WHERE WERE THE PARENTS BRED AND REARED?

- ✓ Make sure they were bred and reared where you see them. Look for clues like whelping pens, food bowls and bedding. If the puppies appear scared in unfamiliar surroundings they may not have been bred there.
- ✓ Compare the breeder's home with your own – is it a close match to your own? It's best to get a puppy from a similar environment.
- ✓ Check how the puppies respond to you. Nervous puppies need lots of time with an experienced owner to build their confidence and may not be a good choice for a first-time buyer.

### MEET THE PARENTS

- ✓ Meet both parents or at least the mother and siblings. Be sure she's the mother - look for enlarged nipples or that she is still producing milk.
- ✓ Ask lots of questions about the mother's health and behaviour. Watch and see how she behaves towards you. Does she greet you in a calm, friendly manner?
- ✓ Look out for exaggerated physical features in the parents, such as a very short flat faces or very wrinkled skin which may affect the puppies' health and welfare.

Read our fact sheet on exaggerated features at [www.getpuppysmart.com](http://www.getpuppysmart.com).

### CHECK THE PUPPIES' HEALTH

Check their age - puppies should be eight weeks or more when they leave their mother.

Look for signs of medical problems including:

- ✓ Visible ribs
- ✓ Dull, dandruffy coat or sore patches of skin
- ✓ Red or runny eyes or nose
- ✓ Coughing, noisy or heavy breathing
- ✓ Signs of diarrhoea around the tail/bottom
- ✓ Scratching or areas of hair loss
- ✓ Weakness, wobbliness or difficulty standing up
- ✓ Getting tired very quickly
- ✓ Limping, difficulty walking or lifting legs
- ✓ Hunched or crouched body
- ✓ Straining going to the toilet

If you notice anything doesn't look quite right, ask a vet to check the puppy before you buy.



## CHECK THE RECORDS

- ✓ If the puppy is micro-chipped, or vaccinated - check the records and get copies.
- ✓ Vaccination records should be stamped by a veterinary practice. Beware if you can't read the details or the vet is from outside the UK. If in any doubt, phone the vet to make sure they're genuine.
- ✓ If the puppy has not been vaccinated arrange this for soon after it arrives.
- ✓ Get records of worming or parasite control. The puppy should have been wormed at 4, 6 and 8 weeks of age.
- ✓ Remember your research on inherited diseases.  
**Read our guide on inherited diseases at [www.getpuppysmart.com](http://www.getpuppysmart.com).**
- ✓ Get records of any screening tests. Check they are genuine and if you are in any doubt consult a vet.
- ✓ If buying a pedigree puppy - look at the names on the certificate carefully. Avoid dogs whose pedigrees show matings between close family members - brothers with sisters or half sisters parents with offspring, or grandparents and offspring. This can increase the chance of the puppy having genetic defects.
- ✓ Check that the registered address on the certificate is where you are viewing the puppy

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT PUPPY FOR YOU

- ✓ Spend plenty of time with the puppies - 5 mins is not long enough.
- ✓ Sit down amongst the puppies. Is the puppy confident, happily exploring you and its surroundings?
- ✓ If you're an inexperienced owner - don't choose the sad looking puppy sitting on its own.
- ✓ Take the puppy to a different environment e.g. garden or another room to see its reaction.
- ✓ If you're happy so far, plan a second visit and take the rest of your family.
- ✓ Find out what and when the puppy is fed so you can continue with the same routine at home.

**GOOD LUCK!**

