



One of the biggest decisions most people, especially first time dog owners, will make is whether to adopt a dog from a shelter or rescue group or buy a puppy from a breeder. Please choose not to support pet stores by purchasing a puppy from them.

Adopting a Shelter or Rescue Dog

The stigma that all shelter dogs are unpredictable and come with behavioral issues is simply not true. Many dogs are surrendered to shelters because of a change in family situation, not because of the dog's behavior, and many shelter dogs have already had some training.

The Benefits:

- You are saving two lives – the life of the dog you adopt and the space that opens up for another dog in the shelter or rescue.
- Most dogs will already have all of their vetting completed, including a microchip and spayed / neutered. From a shelter there is a program that gives you a voucher to help cover the cost.
- If adopting from a rescue group, they will be able to tell you all about the dog's personality so there are no surprises when you bring the dog home as most have lived in foster homes. They will also be able to tell you if the dog has any issues and what to do to be able to assist the dog to overcome such issues.
- Many adult dogs are already housebroken, saving you a lot of time and training and clean up.
- Private rescue groups will generally take the dog back if the dog is not a good match and this provides a safety net so the dog never ends up back in the system.
- The love and gratitude you will receive from a shelter/rescue dog is unlike any other.

The Challenges:

- If adopting a dog straight from a shelter, you may not know much about how they will act in your home. It is very important to know how to pick the right shelter dog. Also testing of most dogs is limited (dog, cat, kids). A shelter isn't a home but remember that most have lived in a home already.
- You may not know exactly what breed the dog you pick is mixed with, although there are many purebred dogs in shelters.
- The cost of adopting from a shelter is much lower than the cost of purchasing a puppy from a breeder

When considering where to get a new dog to add to your family, you should certainly consider adopting a dog from a shelter or a rescue.

Dogs end up in shelters and with rescues for a variety of reasons. People who do not spay/ neuter their pets have unwanted litters, sometimes a dog's owner becomes too sick to care for their animals, and far too often people are not willing to take the time to train and care for their dogs.

Their loss is your gain. Shelters and rescue groups are full of gorgeous, sweet, and well-mannered dogs – the stigma that all shelter dogs have behavioral problems is simply untrue.

If you are considering giving a home to one of these unwanted and abandoned dogs, consult the Animal Control division or rescue group so they can help you to find a dog that will be the best fit for your family

Top 3 Dog Adoption Myths Debunked:

Myth #1: You don't know what you are getting with a shelter or rescue dog.

The reality is that you will know even less about a puppy from an irresponsible breeder or pet store. A responsible breeder will show you pups with their mothers, but even then there is no guarantee that the puppy you are getting will have the same temperament as its parents. A lot of dogs in most private rescue groups live in foster homes, so you will have a better idea of the dog's temperament before adoption.

Myth #2: I want a purebred dog, so I have to go to a breeder.

You would be surprised how many beautiful purebred dogs end up in shelters and rescue groups. Check your area for a breed-specific rescue—you may find a group that specializes in rescuing the breed you are looking for.

Myth #3: Dogs in shelters are given up because there is something wrong with them.

Some statistics:

- People are moving to housing that will not allow pets (7%)
- Owners having personal problems (4%)
- Too many or no room for littermates (7%)
- Person can no longer afford the pet (5%)
- Owner no longer has time for the pet (4%)

Finding the Right Rescue Dog

If you have made the wonderful decision to adopt a shelter or rescue dog, be sure you know what to look for before you head to your local shelter.

- Do your research on breed characteristic
- For example, do not choose a Border Collie mix if you are looking for a couch potato or a Greyhound mix if you have cats or a Labrador if you don't have a ball.
If you choose a dog that you like, make sure you interact with it outside the shelter environment, preferably in an outdoor, fenced-in area.
- If applicable, make sure you bring your children and dogs to meet the dog you are considering before you adopt. Surprises are never a good idea for anyone when a new dog is involved.

Now on the Flip Side

Not all Breeders are bad, I personally own a Labrador Retriever (my breed of choice) that I purchased from a breeder. If you are going to purchase a dog from a breeder and are looking for a dog for a specific use or job:

- Do your research on that breeder
- Make sure it is a reputable breeder and properly licensed
- Go to the location of the breeder , home / facility
- Contact prior purchasers / owners / ask for references
- Ask to meet the parents

- Check with veterinarians
- Check with local Animal Control Officers or State Officials

PLEASE DO NOT THINK YOU ARE PURCHASEING A DOG FROM A BREEDER BY PURCHASING A DOG FROM A PET STORE YOU ARE SUPPORTING PUPPY MILLS!!!!!!

I ask that you ADOPT DON'T SHOP , EDUCATE YOURSELF , and THANK YOU for your support for those who help the voiceless !!!!!

Wolcott Animal Control

ACO Roslyn Nenninger