



Sourcing Breeders – What does a responsible breeder do?

	Puppy Farmer	Back Yard Breeder	Hobby Breeder	Responsible Breeder
Motivation for Breeding Is	Profit	Accidental matings Profit False belief that “a bitch needs a litter” “For the kids to see new life born”	They want a pup for themselves or someone they know	For the betterment of their chosen breed or for a particular purpose such as working dogs.
Choice of Breeding Stock	What's available on site	What's available or found on Gumtree or other classifieds	Dogs of good pedigree.	Pedigreed dogs selected for health, temperament, longevity and breed type and/or performance
Activities with Breeding dogs	None	None	Possibly conformation showing or performance activities	Conformation showing and/or performance activities
Care of Breeding Stock	Whatever is cheap. Dogs do not receive individual exercise or attention. Dogs that can no longer reproduce are moved on.	Same as for any pet	Vet care and special diet for bitch. Dogs may be rehomed to good pet homes.	Best care available for stud dog and bitches. All dogs receive regular exercise and individual attention. Dogs may be rehomed to good homes.
Number of Breeding Dogs	Many	One or more	One or more	One or more
Whelping practices	Bitches often whelp unsupervised. Pups generally whelped in sheds	Often unsupervised in back yard or home	Under supervision in home	Under supervision in home with vet on standby if required.

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How are pups socialised before sale	Not at all	With family dogs and members	With family dogs or members	As extensively as possible with strangers, reliable dogs and family members. Socialisation inside to life in a house is conducted.
Are pups temperaments assessed prior to sale	No	No	Sometimes	Always
Cross Breeding?	Yes, particularly designer crossbreeds	Yes	No	No
Breeders or Breed Association Member	Sometimes	No	Yes	Yes
Health Testing of Breeding Stock	No	No	Sometimes	Usually
Sells to pet shops	Yes	Yes	No	No
How often has pups available	Usually	Occasionally	Occasionally	Occasionally
Age pups sold	As early as possible	As early as possible	Not before 8 weeks	Not before 8 weeks
Pups registered with ANKC or Breed Register ?	Rarely	No	Yes	Yes
Are prospective buyers carefully interviewed?	No	No	Usually	Yes

NOTE:

A range of terms are used to group dog breeders according to their breeding standards and ethics. Explanations of how to evaluate breeders are not new and a number of examples are available on the internet, on social media and in books such as Your Purebred Puppy; A Buyers Guide, Completely Revised and Updated (Michelle Welton, Holt Paperbacks; Second Edition 2000). The authors of this table started with determining the attributes and practices that, in their opinion, define a 'responsible' breeder of purebred dogs.

The authors then used that benchmark to characterise what are likely to be the standards of practice used across the spectrum of descriptions of Australian breeders to assist puppy buyers to identify a responsible and ethical breeder from which to purchase a pup.