

# The **CRUELTY** Behind the Cuteness

## You Can Stop It

The dog breeder or pet store you've picked to buy your puppy from might be supporting the notorious "puppy mill" industry. Puppy mills are breeding businesses that raise dogs in shockingly poor conditions. "Breeding stock" animals are caged and continually bred for years, without human companionship and with little hope of ever becoming part of a family. After their fertility wanes, breeding animals may be killed, abandoned, or sold to another mill. The result of all this breeding? Millions of puppies, many with behavior and health problems not easily seen at the time of purchase.



## Without Pet Stores, Puppy Mills Wouldn't Survive

They may seem to know what they're doing, but behind the friendly façade of pet stores often lies the ugly reality of puppy mills. There's only one sure way to combat the tragedy of puppy mills—don't support them. No matter how cute the puppy in the pet store is, please don't buy her. You may feel like you're "rescuing" her, but in reality you're only freeing up space for another puppy mill "product" while supporting and encouraging an industry based on abuse. Unless you personally visit the place your puppy was born and raised—and where the puppy's parents live—there's no way to know that your puppy didn't come from a puppy mill, no matter what a sales clerk tells you. →



## Online Shopping—the New Face of a Terrible Business

You think you've found the perfect breeders, with a website filled with pictures of cute puppies, claims of how much they adore their "furry babies," and warnings that they only sell to "qualified homes." Everything feels right about this place, but beware—such websites are one of the newest scams puppy mills are running, and there's no way to know by looking at a website or talking to someone over the phone whether you're dealing with a puppy mill.

Websites allow puppy millers to "cut out the middleman" by selling directly to consumers. Not only is this more profitable, but in most states it allows the puppy mill to avoid being inspected by government agencies.

Websites loaded with pictures and promises of a loving home may seem like an ideal spot to find the right puppy for you, but remember that puppy mills house dogs in deplorable conditions, and they churn out puppies for quick sale and shipment. Your purchase could be supporting cruelty.

## Heart Set on a Purebred Dog?

Shelters and breed rescue groups have purebred dogs available for adoption every day. Contact The Humane Society of the United States Companion Animals staff at 202-452-1100 or 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, or visit [humanesociety.org/puppy](http://humanesociety.org/puppy) for help finding a purebred rescue group or shelter in your area.

For more on puppy mills, and for help finding a breeder who isn't running a puppy mill, visit [humanesociety.org/puppy](http://humanesociety.org/puppy).



Celebrating Animals | Confronting Cruelty



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