

A Guide to Buying a Pet

Your pet is your friend for life. You would definitely want it to be healthy. To ensure that, there are some points you need to pay special attention to when buying your pet. The followings are some guidelines provided by Agricultural, Fisheries and Conservation Department, you are welcome to read them for your reference.

Always buy a pet from a pet shop or a breeder* who has obtained an [animal trader licence](#) issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD).

Never buy pets from unknown sources.

* A licensed dog and cat trader who is allowed to breed

What to ask for before buying a pet

If you are buying a puppy from a licensed pet shop or a licensed breeder, make sure that you are given the following:

1. Documentation proving the source of the puppy

- If the puppy is imported from another place, it should have a valid health certificate issued by the exporting place and a valid [import permit / special permit](#) issued by AFCD.
- If the puppy is obtained from other licensed animal traders or breeders, it should have an invoice / sale receipt showing the details of the transaction.
- If the puppy is obtained from a private pet owner, it should have the [owner's declaration](#) and a veterinary certificate showing the microchip number of the puppy's mother issued by a registered veterinary surgeon.

2. Advice on your selection

Ask for an independent examination of the puppy by a [registered veterinary surgeon](#) before buying. A reputable animal trader should allow a veterinary examination in order to prove that the animal is healthy.

3. The puppy's vaccination certificate

Make sure that the puppy has a valid and up-to-date vaccination certificate issued by a registered veterinary surgeon.

4. The puppy's microchip number

A microchip must already be implanted in the puppy for sale. Ask the pet shop staff to scan the microchip of the puppy in your presence using a microchip reader

(scanner) and show you the microchip number displayed on the reader. The microchip number must be identical to that stated in the vaccination certificate.

5. A receipt of the transaction

Make sure the receipt includes a full description of the puppy you are buying (including its microchip number).

Remember, if you have any doubt about the health of the puppy, or the pet shop staff refuses to provide you with the above documents or refuses to agree with the above requests, **DO NOT BUY THE PUPPY!**

How to choose a healthy pet

Before buying a pet, always examine it closely.

Choose a pet that:	Avoid a pet that:
Is alert and bright	Is tired and weak which can be caused by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - any general illness - poor nutrition
Has bright and clear eyes	Has dull or weeping eyes which can be caused by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - any general illness - infection - poor nutrition
Has clean ears	Has dirty ears which can be caused by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ear infection - ear mites
Has a clean and glossy coat	Has a dull coat or obvious hair loss which can be caused by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fleas, mange or ringworm - intestinal worms - poor hygiene - poor nutrition
Has a clean rear end	Has a dirty rear end which can be caused by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - diarrhoea - flea irritation - intestinal worms

- To prevent rabies (commonly known as mad dog disease), do not buy pets from unknown sources.
- To safeguard your consumer rights, only buy pets from licensed animal traders.

- [Pets are for life. Think before you have one.](#)

- ✧ If you come across unfair trade practices and the trader fails to address your concern, you are welcome to lodge your complaint directly with the [Consumer Council](#) by phone (Tel: 2929 2222).
- ✧ Buying a pet is not the only option, please consider adopting a pet from [animal welfare organisations](#) approved by AFCD. Please visit AFCD's website at www.afcd.gov.hk for more information.