

Information for prospective owners



Dogs with exaggerated features have become very popular. By “exaggerated features”, we mean very flat faces with little or no muzzle, or very short legs, or very wrinkly skin, or sometimes a combination of these. People thinking of buying one of these dogs are often unaware that these dogs can be at risk of poor health and welfare throughout their lives. They include Pugs, French Bulldogs, English Bulldogs, Dachshunds and Shar Peis.

If you're considering purchasing one of these puppies, it's important that you talk to a veterinarian first so you get the pet that's right for you. Some information that may also be helpful include:

- ♥ The RSPCA Smart Puppy and Dog Buyer's Guide provides detailed information on looking for a new pet dog including how to avoid puppy farmers and other irresponsible breeders. It's available online at <https://www.rspca.org.au/news/smart-puppy-buyers-guide.html>.
- ♥ Consider adopting a dog. There are many wonderful dogs and puppies out there looking for new homes through reputable animal welfare organisations and adoption groups.
- ♥ If you can't find the right dog or puppy to adopt, then you'll need to find a responsible breeder.
- ♥ If you're interested in a particular dog breed, it's important that you understand the health and welfare problems characteristic for

certain breeds and the likely costs as a result of veterinary care over the dog's lifetime. It's also important that you discuss with your vet the ongoing special care that will be required for your puppy at home, as well as the time, commitment and resources involved.

If you do decide to go ahead and purchase a breed with exaggerated physical features, you should.

- ♥ Find out if the breeder is registered, and whether they participate in screening programs which seek to eliminate these disorders
- ♥ Visit the breeding facility to meet the breeder, puppy and its parents - don't buy online
- ♥ Visit the breeding facility to meet the breeder, puppy and its parents
- ♥ Look for a puppy with features that are less exaggerated
- ♥ Check that the parent dogs have features which are more moderate
- ♥ Ask for information about the health history of the parent dogs
- ♥ Get a veterinary check as soon as the puppy is purchased
- ♥ Consider a crossbreed of that particular breed instead. Cross breeding is likely to result in physical features that are more moderate, and fewer associated problems. Ensure that this crossbreed is obtained from a reputable breeder.

Some breeds need more than unconditional love.
Your click can help stop the suffering, loveisblind.org.au



Love is Blind is a joint initiative of the Australian Veterinary Association and RSPCA Australia. We're raising awareness of the animal welfare problems caused by exaggerated physical features and how these problems can be prevented.