

Once you decide a whippet is indeed the breed for you, the next thing you'll learn is that it may not be easy to find one. Whippets are not an extremely popular breed and are not usually readily available.

Buying a puppy is not like buying a household appliance and we don't recommend "ordering" one from a website. This is a very protected breed and the people who love them are careful not to overbreed. Don't count on bringing one home tomorrow. Be prepared to spend some time on a waiting list, to drive several hours, or to pay for shipping. But if this is the right breed for you, it's worth the time and trouble.

You won't often see a whippet in the classified ads and please don't call a pet store looking for one. Be patient...as your mama always said, anything worth having is worth waiting for!

Contact the [American Whippet Club](#) to talk with someone who can give you the names of breeders in your area. Spend the waiting time deciding on and buying the supplies you'll need. Join some whippet email lists, visit some websites, and read books about whippets. You'll find suggestions at [Links/Resources](#). Whippet owners are a close-knit community and you'll find lots of friends online while you wait for your whippet.

Most whippet breeders are extremely conscientious and sell their puppies to the very best homes they can find. Most will ask you to agree to spay or neuter your pup if you don't plan to show, and may furnish limited (non-breeding) registration from AKC.

There are three good reasons for this requirement: 1) to prevent overbreeding to the point that there are not enough good homes for them; 2) to maintain the quality of the breed by breeding only the best dogs in health, appearance, instinct, and temperament, and 3) to prevent accidental breeding.

Breeding healthy, sound dogs requires an understanding of the breed's form and function, a basic knowledge of genetics and heredity, and some study into health problems specific to the breed. Too often people simply buy a male and a female of the same breed and breed them without regard to genetic health, temperament, or conformity to the breed standard. That's why so many dogs of the more popular breeds bear little resemblance to the breeds their owners say they are. If you are interested in breeding, say so. Any breeder who won't talk to you about the possibility isn't someone you want to deal with.

Puppies should never leave their mothers before eight weeks, and by that time should have been dewormed or checked negative for parasites, and had at least one set of puppy shots (distemper/hepatitis/parvovirus). Ideally, you want a puppy who has been raised "underfoot" in the home of the breeder. Kennel-raised puppies are a good bet only if they have received lots and lots of attention and socialization.

Also expect a lot of questions from your breeder like the ones on our [puppy questionnaire](#) . A good breeder raises her puppies with love, and she wants to find the best homes for them. A lot of responsibility comes with bringing new life into the world, and a breeder sends a little piece of her heart home with each pup. Don't take offense or think she's just being nosey. It's difficult to let go of little ones you've brought into the world and totally devoted yourself to for eight to ten weeks. The breeder will need to assure herself that you're going to take very good care of the puppy you take home.

Most of all, a breeder should be someone you like. When you buy a puppy, you also should be making a friend for life. The breeder is your most valuable resource should problems arise, and you want to feel completely comfortable calling on her. She'll appreciate it if you stay in touch and keep her updated on your pup's progress. If you get the impression she'll blame *you* for anything that goes wrong, keep looking. It's very, very important that you feel comfortable with this person and you know that even if something

is
your fault, you can call on her for help. We all make mistakes!

Just as in any hobby, business, or other field, there are nice people and not-nice people involved in dogs. You don't have to put up with rudeness or a person who cannot give up control of the puppy even after you take it home. Find a breeder you really like, even if it means waiting a little longer. It's important.