

BUT I JUST WANT A PET!

Lee Hanrahan (unlimitedGSD.com)

Good breeders frequently hear puppy buyers say “but I just want a pet!”

For some inexplicable reason, many puppy buyers think well-bred dogs and pets are two different types of dogs. They don't want a rescue, they want a purebred German Shepherd puppy - but they 'just want a pet'.

What is the difference between a pure/well-bred dog and a pet?

All good dogs must be first and foremost good pet dogs because that is the main reason we have a relationship with the dogs.

If they are healthy, and have good working drives, it is a plus.

Ajay Singh (vom Patiala German Shepherds)

Is it price? I will agree that most people are not willing to save up to buy something they want. We are a society of impulse shoppers who do it on credit. It is much easier to buy a cheaper version of what you really want than to save up and buy quality. *(I have a sneaky suspicion that if good breeders accepted credit cards they would probably sell more puppies!)*

I have witnessed it explained to many people that the initial selling price of a puppy is just a drop in the bucket and that buying from a breeder who health tests will increase the odds their new puppy will live a healthier life. This they seem to get Yet I have seen these same people still purchase from bad breeders. A puppy is not something you can just toss in the garbage if it breaks in 6 months – this is a living creature that you will hopefully cherish for over a decade. Stack the odds in your dog's future!

Some shoppers will agree that health testing is important, but then they get hung up on titles... Good GSD Breeders title their breeding dogs in Schutzhund (IPO) or HGH. Is this some bizarre, unique, crazy, ridiculously excessive practice? No - they do it to preserve the traits that make the German Shepherd Dog a German Shepherd Dog. Does it mean you must train IPO with your new puppy? - No. Does it mean your new puppy will have over-the-top, out of control drive and will be a horrible house dog? - No. Does it mean your new puppy will eat small children and attack your neighbours? - of course not!

Some will tell you that because the GSD is a herding breed and since very, very few people actually need a dog to herd sheep, that these working titles are useless. The German Shepherd Dog was created around 1899 – Schutzhund was developed in the early 1900's – I think someone saw that

coming! Schutzhund has been testing the breed for over a hundred years. The breed is, and has always been, a working breed. Don't let a fast talking 'breeder' cover up this fact. If it is a German Shepherd Dog that you want (and be sure to research the breed thoroughly to make sure it IS what you want) - then you should buy a German Shepherd Dog - Not some bad breeder's watered down version of one.

But you just want a pet right?

The free classifieds are full of German Sheperds, Shepards, Sheppards and the like - most under \$500. These puppies are as cute as a button! Does it matter that the 'breeder' can't spell the name of the breed they are trying to sell? (and really, what else don't they know?). These people do not health test the parents of these puppies. They do nothing but produce poorly bred animals to make a buck.

Bad breeders are making a fortune off buyers who think “they just want a pet”. They breed their pets and produce sub-standard dogs at cheaper prices to sell to uneducated buyers. And when the deal is done - they are gone.

There are really just three choices when it comes to getting your next puppy. First, you can find a **reputable rescue** organization and give a dog a chance. Second, you can buy your puppy from someone who is taking shortcuts to produce puppies and you can deal with that for the life of the dog.

Or third, you can find a good breeder who has invested their lives in the breed, health tests and titles their breeding stock to ensure ***your pet is a well-bred dog.***

