



The best places to go for different cat breeds & purebreds

All cat lovers have their favorite breeds and mixes. Some love orange tabbies for their loving nature and gentle dispositions. Others are drawn to the intelligence of the Maine Coon. Still others view the beautiful Persian with their regal posture and demeanor as, well, the cat's meow.



If you are thinking about giving a home to a particular breed of cat, first become familiar with the breed's personality traits, habits and health issues. For information on a variety of cat breeds, go to www.tica.org/public/breeds.php.

Once you have decided upon a particular breed, it may or may not be important to you for the cat to be a documented purebred. There are many cats that exhibit the characteristics of a particular breed, however may not come with papers to establish their heredity. Papers will be important if you plan to enter the cat in certain shows and competitions.

You may also have it in your heart to consider a **SPECIAL NEEDS** kitty. There are many cats and kittens with health conditions that are highly manageable, yet may reduce their chances of finding a home. Many of them do just fine and do not even know they are different from other cats.

In any case, your search should include these sources:

- Purebred cat rescues
- Breed specific cat rescues
- Animal rescues and shelters
- Breeders



Purebred cat rescues

Overall, about 40% of the cats and dogs given up to rescue groups and shelters are purebreds. Look for cat rescue groups that specialize in purebreds such as the Backdoor Friends Purebred Cat Rescue in Michigan (www.backdoorfriends.com/rescue). Find more such groups at www.petfinder.com, a large national website devoted to finding homes for homeless pets around the U.S. Enter the breed you are looking for and rescues that have these breeds will pop up. You can search for groups within specified distances from your home.

Breed specific cat rescues

Similar to the above, there are also rescue groups devoted to a single breed of cat, for example, Siamese. Again, the easiest way to locate them is to go to www.petfinder.com and enter the particular breed you are seeking.

Animal rescues and shelters

Also consider checking general animal rescue groups and your local shelters. Again, you will find that about 40% of the animals abandoned are purebreds originally purchased from breeders. So you never know what kinds of cat breeds you will find.

Cat breeders

If you are looking for a papered purebred cat, different breeders typically specialize in different cat breeds. There are many good breeders who are responsible and truly care about their cats. Remember, even though the breeder will be interviewing you as a potential owner, you should also interview the breeder. In choosing a responsible breeder, look for the following:

1. **Health testing**

Any good breeder will have their cats tested by a veterinarian for breed-specific diseases prior to breeding. In addition, breeds such as Maine Coons, Persian, American Shorthairs and Ragdolls should have echocardiograms to rule out heart disease, a condition prevalent in these breeds.

2. **Showing/titles**

Anyone can breed a cat, but a good breeder will be active in breed-specific organizations and feline shows. Participating in shows and putting conformation titles on their breeding animals shows that they conform to the accepted breed standards and are good representations of the breed.

3. **Number of litters per year**

Unethical breeders will continually breed litters and have kittens available all the time. They are more concerned with "quantity" than "quality." A responsible breeder puts time, effort and money into breeding, plans litters ahead of time and will usually only have a couple of litters a year.

4. **Website**

When searching online for breeders, some people are drawn to flashy websites. Anyone can hire an expensive web designer, but that doesn't mean they are a good breeder. Most reputable breeders make little money on their litters due to the cost of testing and care, and have little money to put into flashy websites. It's usually the "greeders" who produce too many litters and will sell to anyone with a credit card who have the fancy websites.

5. **Kitten vaccines/deworming**

A good breeder will have FeLV/FIV tests done on each kitten (not just the mother), and will have all age-appropriate vaccines and deworming up to date when the kitten is ready to go home. The breeder should provide the cat's new family with due dates for the kittens next vaccines.

6. **Age when going home**

A responsible breeder will not send a kitten home before 8-10 weeks of age. Kittens need time to mature socially with littermates and mom. If a kitten is separated early, he or she may have social development problems such as destructiveness or biting.

7. **Family screening**

A good breeder screens potential families to make sure their pets are going to good homes. They usually ask families to keep them updated on how the kitten is doing, and offer to answer future questions.

8. **Red flags**

Beware of breeders who make up their own medical rules about rabies vaccines or cat food. Some breeders do not follow standards for good veterinary care. Also beware of breeders who don't encourage you to visit where the cats and kittens are kept. If a breeder seems reluctant to have you see the environment, there is usually a reason - so beware.