

Is a Golden Retriever the Right Dog for You??

Golden Retrievers Need:

YOUR TIME AND COMPANIONSHIP

Golden Retrievers are outgoing “people” dogs. They need to be with, around, near, on the lap of, or underfoot humans, because they thrive on love and attention. In second-hand Golden Retrievers these traits are often exaggerated. Golden Retrievers cannot be maintained as outside-dogs, they are indoor companions. Consider your life-style and household schedule—do you travel a lot, do you work long hours, are you busy with your children’s activities? In other words, do you have time to give the love and attention that a Golden needs?



EXERCISE

Golden Retrievers need to have hard, consistent exercise daily (20-30 minutes twice a day) or they may have trouble adjusting to the calm house-pet role expected by most owners. Dogs will not exercise by themselves. Their owners must interact with them. Golden Retrievers that do not get enough exercise can exhibit behavior problems such as inappropriate chewing, excessive barking, unruly behavior, and digging. Fenced areas for safe exercise are a must! Senior Golden Retrievers also require daily walks and play-time in order to stay healthy.

GROOMING

Golden Retrievers should be brushed every other day, and thoroughly groomed every 6–8 weeks. Professional grooming costs between \$30.00 and \$50.00. Golden Retrievers need to have their toenails cut regularly, and most Golden Retrievers need to have their ears cleaned frequently; both tasks are simple for the dog owner to learn to do.



FOOD AND VETERINARY CARE

Feeding one medium-sized dog for a year will cost about \$300–400. Routine veterinary expenses run between \$200–300 a year. Golden Retrievers, like all breeds, have certain hereditary conditions. They are prone to skin allergies, hot spots, and ear infections, and

occasionally have hypothyroidism (underproduction by the thyroid gland, which is easily treated with daily oral medication) or hip and eye problems. Though many expenses are hidden in the grocery bill (food, dishes, leashes, collars, brushes, shampoos, toys, etc.), they do affect the family budget!

Golden Retrievers Are:

GOOD FAMILY DOGS

Well-bred Golden Retrievers of good temperament are extremely tolerant of children, but, like any other dog teased, frustrated, or physically harmed, Golden Retrievers will growl and can bite. Golden Retrievers can be good family dogs, but training is critical, and no dog should be left alone with young children.

MEDIUM TO LARGE-SIZED DOGS

The breed standard is 23"–24" at the shoulder in height for males, and 21 1/2"–22 1/2" in height for females, with weight 65–75 pounds for males, and 55–65 pounds for females. In our experience with Rescue Golden Retrievers, males can range between 23"–26" at the shoulder and weigh between 75–105 pounds. Females can stand between 21"–23" and weigh between 55–85 pounds.

RELATIVELY LONG-LIVED

Golden Retrievers have an average life span of 10-11 years although fifteen year-olds are not unknown. Consider what your plans might be in five to twelve years. Will you still welcome the responsibility of a highly social dog when you have a family, go back to work, have an "empty nest" when the kids go to college or when you retire and want to travel?



Don't Get a Golden if:

You want a fastidiously kept home.

Golden Retrievers are a long, double-coated breed and they shed constantly. You will always find some dog hair around, especially on rugs, furniture, nicest clothes, and, oh yes, occasionally in your food. Like any other dog, Golden Retrievers can get ticks and fleas and their paws will track dirt, mud, and snow into the house. Golden Retrievers possess active tails, making clean sweeps of coffee tables, and capable of knocking over a small child.

You object to a dog having your personal or household articles in his mouth.

Golden Retrievers are retrievers—genetically programmed to carry laundry, shoes, kids' toys, etc. in their mouths!

You want a guard dog.

Though they may bark and growl defensively, when it comes down to brass tacks, they'd just as soon kiss the intruder and show him to the silver.