

Are you a Golden Retriever Person?

Find out if the Golden Retriever breed is right for you.

If you are thinking golden thoughts, you should first take a step back and decide what kind of dog you're looking for before your puppy search begins. Golden Retrievers might be all-around, do-it-all dogs, but that does not mean that they're right for every dog lover. Part of the Golden Retrievers intrigue is that no two Goldens are alike. Of course, every dog has his own distinct personality, but in a breed as versatile as the Golden, one can find individuals with extreme differences in personality and ability.

Regardless, all Goldens are, or should be, people-loving fellows who greet both friend and stranger like long-lost buddies. They live best indoors with their families and will not thrive if isolated from the humans they so love. Contrary to some images of the typical Golden, these are high-energy sporting dogs that require a great deal of daily attention and exercise. They enjoy lively outdoor fun and games, which are excellent outlets for their energy and enthusiasm. Are your disposition and lifestyle compatible with those needs?

The Golden is known to be a mouthy creature who loves to carry something anything in his mouth, and that includes your hand, arm, socks and anything else not nailed down. He will happily retrieve your jockey shorts and deliver them to your pastor when he visits. Only many months of training will redirect that oral instinct into proper behavior.

Chewing is a natural by-product of retrieving, and Golden puppies are miniature chewing machines. Many chew their way well into adulthood, leaving telltale scars on the furniture and cabinetry. A wise owner can minimize the damage with diligent supervision, providing appropriate chew toys and teaching the Golden puppy what he may and may not chew.

Owners who fail to dog-proof their homes or supervise their puppies tell horror stories about the impossible things their Goldens have consumed or destroyed. If you are not willing to train your pup or supervise him, be prepared to face the consequences.

Golden Retrievers are great with children, although Goldens can be especially exuberant, so both dog and kids must be supervised to prevent mishaps due to normal Golden rowdiness.

Will dog hair on your suit and sofa drive you wild? The fuzzy charm of a Golden puppy will blossom into a thick long coat that will require frequent brushing to keep it clean and loose hairs off your dinner plate. Goldens lose their heavy undercoat in spring, again in fall, and shed a little every day, all year long. Only regular brushing will keep that dog hair around the home to a minimum. And don't forget those muddy paws, tromping through your garden and across your kitchen floor. Few Golden Retriever homes have spotless tiled floors.