

IS A GOLDEN RETRIEVER THE RIGHT DOG FOR YOU

Goldens may seem like the ideal pet but there are disadvantages! Listed below are some breed characteristics you need to consider before you decide to make a lifelong commitment to a Golden.

TIME & COMPANIONSHIP: Goldens are “people” dogs. They need to be with, around, near, on the lap-of or underfoot of humans because they thrive on love and attention. Goldens cannot be maintained as outside-dogs. Consider your lifestyle 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 love and attention to your adopted Golden?

PERSONALITY: Goldens are active, exuberant, inquisitive, busy, nosey dogs who have a naturally outgoing disposition. Goldens are generally good family dogs, but no dog should be left alone with children. Many Goldens are extremely tolerant of children but, like any other dog, frustrated or physically harmed Goldens will growl and bite. Goldens are retrievers and they love to carry items in their mouths and will steal anything on the ground—toys, laundry, shoes! Male Goldens are just as affectionate as female Goldens (some people would say more affectionate).

EXERCISE: Goldens 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. They must have another dog to play with or YOU must interact with them. Goldens 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 Goldens also require daily walks and playtime in order to stay healthy!

SIZE: Goldens are medium to large-sized dogs. Males range between 23”-26” at the shoulder and weigh between 75-105 pounds. Females stand between 21”-23” and weigh between 55-85 pounds. Goldens possess active tails, making clean sweeps of coffee tables.

LONGEVITY: The average life span of a Golden is twelve to thirteen years although we have encountered a few fifteen-year-olds recently! 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?

SHEDDING: Goldens are a long, double-coated breed and they shed constantly. Because of the coat, brushing every other day is to your advantage or professional grooming costs \$30 to \$50 every 6-8 weeks. Goldens need to have their toenails cut regularly and many Goldens need to have their ears cleaned frequently; both tasks are simple for the dog owner to do. Like any other dog, Goldens can get ticks and fleas and their paws will track dirt, mud, and snow into the house. If you want a fastidiously kept home, DON’T GET A GOLDEN! You will always find some

dog hair around, especially on rugs, furniture, nice clothes and, oh yes, occasionally in your food.

HEALTH AND CARE: Goldens, like all breeds, have certain hereditary conditions. Goldens are prone to skin allergies 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. Feeding one medium-sized dog for a year will cost about \$300-400. Routine veterinary expenses run between \$200-300 a year. Though many expenses are hidden in the grocery bill (food, dishes, leashes, collars, brushes, shampoos, toys, etc.), they do affect the family budget!

TRAINING: A trained Golden is a joy to live with, but Goldens are large, energetic dogs that need structure, consistency, and clear rules to become well-behaved. We highly recommend classes or private lessons to teach your dog the skills needed so he/she can participate in family activities. A good beginner's course costs between \$80 and \$150. Training is an essential investment for a fulfilling relationship.

GUARD DOG: Goldens are not protective guard dogs. Though they may bark and growl defensively, when it comes to brass tacks, they'd just as soon kiss the intruder and show him to the silver.

ADDICTIVE: Few people own only one Golden. They simply are habit forming! Contrary to popular opinion, they are not cheaper by the dozen. If you have two Goldens, it will cost you twice as much and so on and so on... If you are still interested, and we hope you are, welcome to the family of Golden Admirers!

Source: [Yankee Golden Retriever Rescue, Inc.](#)