

PROFILE OF THE GOLDEN RETRIEVER



ALL FOR THE LOVE OF A GOLDEN

Personality

Golden retrievers are well known for their temperament. Kindness, loyalty, devotion, and an eagerness to please are characteristics of this breed. A Golden is very aware of the moods of its owner, and responds with extraordinary sensitivity.

What a Golden Retriever needs most is the emotional maintenance that comes from being with his owner and family, being an integral part of the family, the Golden's pack. Golden retrievers are excellent with children.

History

The Golden was born in Britain in the 1800s. Breed ancestry includes the extinct Tweed Water Spaniel, a small Newfoundland, the Irish Setter, and other water spaniels. The Golden was developed by Lord Tweedmouth at his estate on the Tweed River near Inverness, Scotland, for the purpose of retrieving shot waterfowl.

Lord Tweedmouth's ideal retriever was a dog with an outer coat that sheds thorns and brambles in the field, with an undercoat that offers protection from icy waters; a balanced, symmetrical dog that works equally well on land and water, while remaining highly pleasing to the eye. He wanted a dog strong enough to perform as a retriever of upland game and good-sized water fowl, yet not so big and clumsy that it rocks the boat from which it works. Above all, Lord Tweedmouth wanted a dog that was cheerfully ready to do all this for every member of the family. He was fabulously successful in attaining these goals, and as a result the golden retriever became one of the most highly respected multipurpose field dogs.

In the early 1900s, Golden retrievers were shown in England as *Flat-coated Retrievers, Golden variety*. The dogs made their way to the US with travelers in the 1890s and were used to hunt, but they gradually migrated to the show ring.

Behavior

Do not expect a Golden Retriever to be a guard dog. They are much too gregarious and trusting of people. A wagging tail and excited bark may be indicators of the kids coming home from school, the UPS delivering a package, or an intruder. The eager to please Golden is quick to forget past hurts and expects the same from others. This breed of dog has been used in therapy work, as a guide dog, and assistance work with disabled people. The Golden's keen nose makes it an excellent tracker. In addition to search and rescue operations, police have used this dog in arson and drug detection.

The Golden Retriever is often used in hunting and field trials. They love agility - although it isn't the fastest dog on an agility course. Fly ball isn't really a Golden's forte, either, although the dog loves to retrieve tennis balls and will do so until your arm falls off. Also, the dog loves water and playing in water. When water is not available, do not be surprised if your dog chooses mud as the next best thing. Do not assume that a golden knows how to get of swimming pools, however. This needs to be taught.

Maturing

Golden Retrievers go through a long adolescence, some dogs do not calm down until they are five years old. Puppy-like behavior can be expected at least until age 3. Being young at heart lasts a long time. For this reason, RAGofAZ does not place a dog under 3 years old in a home with children under 3 years old.

This dog loves without reservation. When training a Golden, patience, persistence and praise is by far the best method. Lots of consistent, positive reinforcement, not brutality, works most effectively.

Grooming

Golden retrievers shed all year long. However, their fur tends to curl up into lightweight fur balls that end up in the corners of a room or under furniture. The fur does not burrow into upholstery. These dogs require daily brushing and combing. In addition, monthly toenail clipping and trimming between the toes can prevent paw problems in later years.

Physical Traits

A Golden Retriever is a large breed of dog. Male dogs stand 23-24 inches at the shoulder, while the females average 21-1/2 to 22-1/2 inches. Their weight usually is between 55 and 75 pounds. They have an 11-15 year life expectancy.

Physically speaking, the Golden Retriever is a beautiful dog, with a richly colored coat. The coat color can range from light, almost flaxen, tones to the rich mahogany red. It is a very solid, muscular, sturdy dog.

Rankings

3rd most popular pet behind its relative, the Labrador retriever, and the German Shepherd

4th most intelligent breed, according to Stanley Coren's "The Intelligence of Dogs"

1st in showing love to its family and receiving love back