

Choosing a Responsible Golden Retriever Breeder

A SIMPLE CHECKLIST FOR FINDING A HEALTHY, HAPPY PUPPY



A great puppy starts with a responsible breeder.

1

LOOK FOR THESE SIGNS

A responsible breeder should:

- ☐ Be knowledgeable about the breed and follow the Golden Retriever Club of America (GRCA) Code of Ethics.
- ☐ Provide verifiable health clearances for both parents (e.g., OFA for hips, elbows, heart and eyes).
- ☐ Be open about health and temperament concerns.
- ☐ Raise puppies in a clean, safe, home environment.
- ☐ Socialize puppies and give them positive early experiences.
- ☐ Offer a written sales contract.
- ☐ Remain a resource and be willing to take the dog back if you can no longer keep it.



TIP

A responsible breeder puts the health, temperament and well-being of their dogs first — not profit.



2

ASK THESE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Be prepared to ask:

- ☐ Can I see verifiable health clearances for both parents? (Check the OFA database at ofa.org.)
- ☐ Can I meet the mother (and father, if possible)?
- ☐ Where and how are the puppies raised?
- ☐ How are the puppies socialized?
- ☐ What health or temperament issues exist in the family lines?
- ☐ May I review a sample of the sales contract?
- ☐ Can I speak with previous puppy buyers as references?



REMEMBER

Good breeders welcome your questions and will be open and honest about their dogs, their breeding program and their practices.



3

EXPECT QUESTIONS IN RETURN

A responsible breeder will also want to know:

- ☐ Your experience with dogs.
- ☐ Your household and lifestyle (including children and other pets).
- ☐ Your plans for exercise, training and socialization.
- ☐ How you plan to care for your Golden throughout their life.
- ☐ If you are prepared for the time, commitment and expenses of dog ownership.



WHY?

They want to be sure their puppies go to loving, well-prepared homes — and that you are a good match for their dogs.



A Good Breeder Is a Lifelong Partner

Take your time, ask questions and be prepared to wait for the right puppy. A responsible breeder welcomes an informed buyer and will be there to support you throughout your Golden's life.

