

Acquiring a Golden Retriever Puppy from a Responsible Breeder

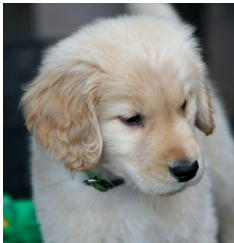
You've decided you want to add a fuzzy golden bundle of joy to your family. You want it to be healthy, happy, and a good match for your lifestyle and circumstances. But where do you find the puppy that's perfect for you?

Internet? Pet Shop? Dealer? Backyard Breeder?

No, No, No and No! Not unless you want to risk getting a poorly bred and raised, sickly pup with temperament issues, at an elevated price. These people generally care only about taking your money, not about you or the dog. That's no way to choose an addition to your family. So let's find a better alternative!

The Responsible Hobby Breeder

Now you're on the right track! Dedicated hobby breeders take responsibility for every puppy produced and stand behind every dog they have bred, *for the life of the dog*. They have carefully researched pedigrees, double-checked health clearances, nurtured the dam, and raised the puppies in their homes. Their goal is to produce superior animals perfect for companionship and the various dog sports. In short, they have put their hearts and souls into breeding YOUR puppy. Most do not expect to make a profit, only to break even, and they set the prices accordingly.



Where do I find a responsible hobby breeder?

Begin by going to www.grca.org. That is the website of the Golden Retriever Club of America. There you will find everything you ever wanted to know about Golden Retrievers, including the breed standard, inherent health issues, and the Golden Retriever Foundation. You can also find your local Golden Retriever clubs, by state. Contact the local clubs and ask to be put in touch with the breeders expecting litters.

How will I know if I've found a responsible hobby breeder?

- S/he will want to meet you face-to-face if at all possible
- Will ask questions about your expectations, home environment, children, other pets, etc.
- Will conduct a home check if at all possible, or ask someone from a local club to do it
- Will provide proof that sire & dam are at least 2 years old and have their health clearances for hips, elbows, heart & eyes
- Will provide a 3-5 generation pedigree
- Will tell you about any possible health issues in that pedigree
- Will provide puppy wellness details from a veterinarian
- Will probably provide a copy of the litter evaluation done by another knowledgeable breeder
- Will provide AKC registration papers
- Will talk to you about feeding, training and care of your puppy
- Will have a contract for you to sign that includes responsibilities on both sides
- Will take back the dog at any time if you no longer can care for it
- Will be a member of the GRCA and probably a local club
- Will be an active participant in at least one dog sport or activity
- Will always be available to advise and consult on diet, vaccinations, injuries, health issues, etc.



Don't hesitate to ask questions! If the breeder fits the profile above, you can feel confident you've found a responsible person.

A Word about Rescue...

There are responsible breed-specific rescue organizations who can provide older Golden Retrievers to people who are not quite ready to raise a puppy. They will ask you the same questions, do a home check, ask you to sign a contract, and provide health and temperament information. They also will take back the dog if it doesn't work out. Find out more at www.grca-nrc.org.