



# SO YOU'RE GOING TO BE A GOLDEN FAMILY

STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL ADOPTION

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COMPANION  
LOVE  
AFFECTION  
HEART  
HOME  
FAMILY  
GOLDEN



## DEAR ADOPTIVE FAMILY:

Congratulations on your decision to adopt a rescued Golden! There is no question ~ there is something irresistible about the Golden Retriever breed, but of course you already know that! Unfortunately, many Golden Retrievers find themselves looking for a new home through no fault of their own and are in need of a second chance.

By deciding to adopt from Golden Rescue, you have both saved a life and helped to reduce the overpopulation of pets. In return, your rescue will become an integral member of your family and provide unconditional companionship, love, and affection. A real win-win for all!

As you begin this exciting new chapter, you might have a number of questions on how to successfully introduce your new Golden into your home and into your heart. The following is a list of tips and suggestions for setting your Golden up for success as suggested by our foster parents and fellow adopters. This list is not exhaustive, and there are a number of invaluable books on Golden training available; however, this guide provides some suggestions for how to integrate your new family member into your home. We highly recommend that you read through the entire guide prior to your adoption and keep it handy for those goofy moments and antics that your Golden may exhibit.

Remember to contact Golden Rescue, or more specifically the placement person you were working with or the foster family, at any point in time if you have questions or concerns specific to your Golden. Either the placement volunteer or the foster home will likely be able to field a lot of your questions based on their experience. They will also be very excited and happy to hear how your Golden is adjusting and would want to help! Alternatively, you may call our hotline (1-866-712-8444 or 416-657-2445) or email us ([info@goldenrescue.ca](mailto:info@goldenrescue.ca)) and a volunteer will contact you as soon as possible.

As always, we would like to offer an immense thank you for thinking to rescue and for welcoming one of our precious Golden Retrievers into your family.

*Golden Rescue's Operations Team*

**ARIEL #2593**



**HEIDI #848 & LINCOLN**

## SUMMARY OF DOS AND DON'TS FOR A SUCCESSFUL ADOPTION...

The following pages give you some suggestions about how to integrate your new family member. This summary gives you a snapshot of what will follow; however, please read the entire document for more comprehensive information.

- ▶ Please bring a crate, barrier or harness to ensure a safe drive home for you and your new Golden.
- ▶ Before you leave to pick up your Golden, dog-proof your home (i.e. put food out of reach and block off any off-limit areas).
- ▶ Have everyone in the family learn the same language ~ sit, down, leave it, off. These are very specific commands and you should all be consistent or your Golden will get confused.
- ▶ If you have another dog(s), we suggest you take your new Golden to a neutral meeting place (perhaps a nearby park but not a dog park!) and 'meet up' along the way with your own dog(s) and do a pack-walk home.
- ▶ For the first couple of weeks, try to have things in the house as calm and ordinary as possible. It is not unusual for your new family member to pace and pant for a few days ~ try not to placate him. Have your home 'business as usual'...he'll soon figure out that he's 'home'.
- ▶ Do not grab his collar or lunge at him as he might mistake those movements as hostile.
- ▶ Be choosy about the toys you provide for your Golden. Tennis balls are a no-no as they can become lodged in your dog's throat and suffocate them. Be wary of toys with squeakers as they are easily swallowed.
- ▶ Spend time with them in his toileting area and praise him verbally every time he does his business. He'll get the message eventually.
- ▶ Never leave children unattended with your Golden until you know him well.
- ▶ When training, ALWAYS use positive reinforcement techniques.
- ▶ Do NOT hug or kiss your new Golden until he solicits it. Initially this can be a sign of dominance to a Golden so we want to introduce this behaviour slowly and only when he's comfortable with it.
- ▶ If your new Golden is timid or skittish, try sitting on the floor ignoring him until he comes to you.

**DREAMER #2579**



**GABRIELLE #1579**

- ▶ If you have another dog, always feed your original dog first (in the case of multiple dogs, feed them in the order they came into your home) and feed them with good separation.
- ▶ In the case of multiple dogs in your home, remove all toys and chew bones prior to bringing your new Golden home. Watch for food aggression or possessiveness issues. Supervise feeding times and limit the use of toys and dog treats (such as bones) initially, until you know there will be peace and harmony. You may also experience some growling or snapping; however, this should subside once your new Golden finds his place in the pack.
- ▶ Do NOT let your Golden off-leash in an unsecure area until you KNOW they have perfect recall.
- ▶ Do not go to a dog park or a groomer for several weeks. Let him acclimatize to your home first.
- ▶ In a couple of weeks, take him to the vet for no reason. Hang out there for 15 minutes. Give him a few treats and leave. This will give him a positive non-threatening experience and he won't be afraid when he goes back.
- ▶ Vet records and microchip information will be transferred to your vet within three to four weeks.
- ▶ Always remember that even though your Golden is 'family', they are a guest in your house, so they have to adapt to your rules and environment.
- ▶ The Golden you bring home will likely be a very different Golden after three months. This adjustment period will give him the time he needs to learn the rules and know that this is his 'home sweet home'.

### **BRINGING HOME YOUR GOLDEN**

The first day that you bring your new Golden home is certainly an exciting one. You might be eager to take your new Golden on a walk, play with him in the yard, show him all his new toys, and give him a big cuddle. Don't worry, you will be able to enjoy all of these activities with your new mate very soon, but the first day and week (or even longer) are very important in allowing your Golden to settle in and setting him up for success.

Remember, you have had weeks or possibly months to prepare for your new pet to come home, and have had the opportunity to talk to foster parents and members of our adoption team to prepare yourself for the new addition. It is important to acknowledge that many of our Golden retrievers have lived in a number of homes and your new family member may feel unsure about you and

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**SQUIRT #1511**



**OWEN #2358**

his new surroundings and may feel 'displaced'. These feelings will soon fade as he realizes he has found his forever family, but there are things you can do to help him feel comfortable and settle in nicely.

## **HOW SHOULD I PREPARE BEFORE BRINGING MY NEW GOLDEN HOME?**

First things first, don't forget to check your local by-laws to verify the number of dogs allowed per household in your municipality.

Before bringing your new family member home, it is best to dog-proof the area where your Golden will spend most of his time during the first few months. This will include taping loose electrical cords to baseboards, storing household chemicals on high shelves, and removing plants, rugs, and breakables. Golden owners have also reported materials made of paper (i.e. Kleenex) may be very tasty to some Golden retrievers. You might also consider installing baby gates for 'off-limit' areas.

*"Don't set up for failure ~ i.e. don't leave food where a Golden can get at it and don't leave stuff around that a Golden might chew. Prepare for the worst and it won't happen. You can relax your guard once you really know him."*

Training your Golden will start the first moment you bring him home. It can be helpful to create a vocabulary list that everyone will use when giving your Golden directions. This will prevent confusion and help your Golden learn his commands more quickly. Not sure which commands to use? Ask the foster what commands and words your Golden understands as consistency will be important. Alternatively, the 'Placement Summary' should encapsulate his vocabulary.

You might also consider purchasing pet insurance in the instance of unforeseen veterinary trips and procedures.

## **I AM BRINGING MY NEW GOLDEN HOME TODAY! IS THERE ANYTHING SPECIFIC I SHOULD REMEMBER TO BRING OR ASK WHEN PICKING HIM UP?**

This is naturally a very exciting day for you and your family; however, you want to ensure that you gather the necessary information and take the appropriate steps in order to set your Golden

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OAKLEY #2297



up for success. First, remember to bring an ID tag with your phone number(s) so that he has an extra measure of safety for the ride home and the first few days. Your Golden will already have a Golden Rescue tag, which we would encourage you to leave on. Also, be sure to chat with the foster parent about the Golden's brand of food, feeding schedule, favourite toys, progress with obedience, and any 'quirks' that you should know about in order to best help your new Golden adjust to your home. You will be sent home with a 'Placement Summary' outlining the Golden's birthday, vaccinations, feeding schedule, and foster home contacts in case any questions should arise.

Finally, be sure to bring necessities such as water and waste bags if you have a lengthy ride home. You will also need to purchase a food bowl, water bowl, bed (there are many different types), brush, toothbrush, toothpaste (only use toothpaste for dogs), toys, poop-and-scoop, and a supply of waste bags for when you are in public. The foster will be sending you home with a supply of food, collar/leash/tag, medications (if applicable), and some personal effects (i.e. bed, blanket, toys) so your Golden has some familiar belongings and smells. It would be best not to wash anything your Golden came with for a few weeks as the familiar scents will bring him comfort.

Ensure your Golden's collar is nice and snug. If your new family member is skittish or becomes fearful, he may try to get out of his collar. A Martingale collar is highly recommended to keep your Golden safe. The Martingale collar fits loosely around your Golden's neck; however, if your Golden attempts to back out of their collar, the collar tightens snugly without choking them. We do not allow prong or choke collars as they may injure your Golden.

On the way home, your Golden should be safely secured in a crate or with a barrier or harness. Some Golden find car trips stressful, so having him in a safe place will make the trip home easier on him and you.

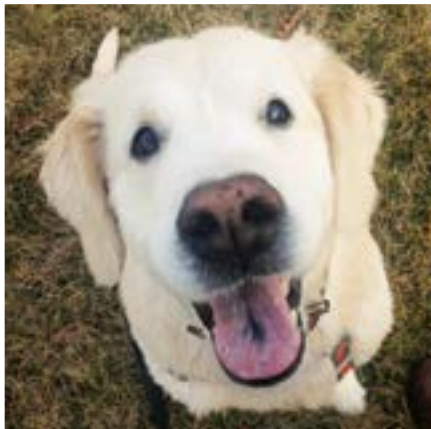
### WE HAVE JUST ARRIVED HOME. NOW WHAT?

As exciting a day as it's likely to be, moving is very stressful for humans...and your Golden will feel the same way! He may be feeling a bit uneasy with these changes and it would be best to be patient for him to settle in...**in his own time.**

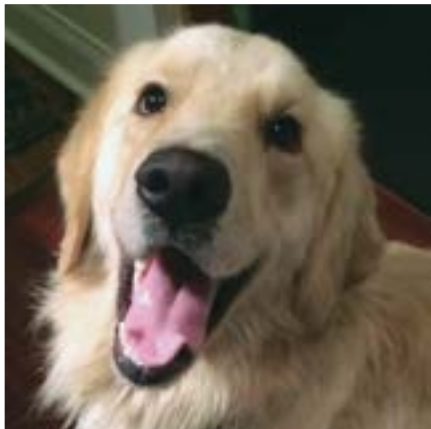
It is also wise to give him time to acclimatize to your home and family before introducing him to other family members and friends. Also, don't make sudden movements or shout ~ make

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CLEO #2250



**KATIE #742**



**SHERMAN #2518**

everything calm, deliberate, and quiet...especially for the first few days or weeks. Allow your new Golden time to explore his new surroundings in a safe and quiet manner.

Try to minimize as many new things as possible for a few weeks, such as visitors, baths, clipping nails, and going to a dog park. It is also very important not to plan any holidays for the first few months where your Golden will need to go to a new home or boarding facility. Your Golden is still learning that your home is permanent and sudden transitions could leave him feeling confused and anxious. It's important to get him comfortable in his own environment (and with his new pack) before exposing him to too many new situations.

Once home, take him to his toileting area immediately and spend a good amount of time with him so he will get used to the area and relieve himself. Even if your Golden does relieve himself during this time, be prepared for accidents. Coming into a new home with new people, smells, and sounds will throw even the most housebroken Golden off-track, so be ready and patient just in case.

From there, start your schedule of feeding, toileting, and play/exercise. From day one, your Golden will need family time and brief periods of being alone. Try not to comfort him if he whines when left alone, as this will feed his anxiety. Instead, give him attention for good behaviour, such as chewing on a toy or resting quietly.

Don't be alarmed if your new family member does a lot of pacing or panting for the first 72 hours...this is strictly anxiety. As a result, he may drink a lot more water than usual, so he may need to go out more often. Your new family member needs a settling-in period so give him time and try not to worry.

Remember, your Golden does not know that this is Home Sweet Home yet! If he seems a little quiet or unsure, remember to give him space. With time, his personality will blossom. Every Golden is different and your new Golden will show you what makes him special as he adjusts and settles in.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR INTRODUCING OUR NEW GOLDEN TO PRESENT PET(S)**

There are a few effective methods of introducing your pets that will set everyone up for a positive meeting. If you have another dog(s), we suggest you take your new Golden to a neutral meeting place (perhaps a nearby park but not a dog park!) and 'meet up' along the way with

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**DUCHESS #1238**



your other dogs and do a pack-walk home. Release the dogs (with leashes attached) into your backyard but remain vigilant for any unwanted behaviour(s). Once they are comfortable with each other, it will be fine to take them inside.

You could also take your dog and your new Golden for a walk together in a neutral territory ~ both should start on a short leash (you'll need two adult handlers for this). They should be side by side. Do not allow them to sniff noses, as this result is two dogs straining at the leash and may result in a confrontation. Taking a calm walk, as long as the circumstances allow, while the adults chat quietly, tends to work best.

A third method is to put your new Golden in the backyard without the other dog to do all his sniffing. Once your new Golden has calmed, you can then let your other dog out to meet and socialize with the new pet. It would be best to put your new Golden on a leash first so you have control over the meeting. Your new Golden can then be brought into the home on his own to sniff and explore. Once he has calmed in your home, your first dog can be let inside as well. Do ensure that all food bowls, toys, and treats are out of reach of the dogs to avoid potential territorial issues.

After the initial introduction, never leave your dogs alone together without supervision for the first 30 days or until you feel completely confident in their compatibility. If you have to go out, it is best to separate them, even if both seem to be very docile and unlikely to fight. This same rule is applicable to a cat.

If you have a cat, be sure to introduce your new Golden to your cat properly by having your Golden on a leash while they meet so that you can control the meeting.

### **MY NEW GOLDEN IS SO SWEET! MY FAMILY JUST WANTS TO SHOWER HIM WITH HUGS AND KISSES. THIS IS OKAY, RIGHT?**

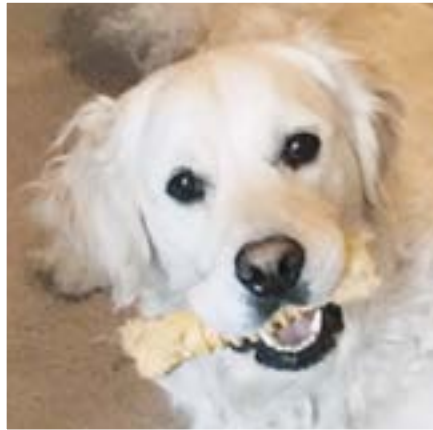
While your new Golden is certainly sweet and utterly irresistible, it is best to give the Golden some time to get used to his new surroundings before giving him loads of affection. Refrain from giving him hugs and kisses at this time. The more successful you are at the beginning of your relationship, the more hugs and kisses you will later be able to give your new family member.

**CHARLIE #2424**





JAKE #2248



To a human, a hug is affection. It symbolizes love. For a Golden, however, a hug is not love at all ~ a hug symbolizes dominance and invasion of space. By hugging your Golden, you will be invading his space. Wrapping your body around him before he has gotten the chance to know you and to figure out his place in his new pack, could lead to dominance issues.

Even if your Golden does not seem to mind your hugs and kisses, in order to properly ease him into his new life, you must refrain from your human affection until you communicate some key rules and boundaries. This will lessen the stress level for the Golden and possibly **prevent a bite** due to a lack of human-canine communication. It is also very important that children know how to approach him without overwhelming him.

Adults should walk the Golden until he is fully bonded with the family and you know his personality. It would be devastating to have a young child pulled down by a big Golden who has a prey drive.

For the first few weeks, remain calm and quiet around your Golden ~ limiting excitement (such as company/guests, the dog park or neighborhood children). Not only will this allow your Golden to settle in easier, it will give you more one-on-one time to get to know him and his likes/dislikes.

**If he is timid, try sitting on the floor in the living room and ignoring him ~ he will eventually come to explore you on his own.**

*“When the last puppy mill girl who I fostered was adopted, I asked the potential adopters to sit on the back deck and not call her or even look at her when I let her out. I asked them to let her come to them. Interestingly enough, the man could do it better than the woman. Guess who the Golden went to when they both sat on the stairs?” (yup, the man)*

Finally, when a Golden shows signs of dominance, he should receive no affection until he understands that he is not the boss and accepts it by being submissive. The more submissive and stable-minded, the more love you can give him. We cannot stress this enough ~ Golden should not get any affection until the dominance is under control. Otherwise your affection will reinforce his behaviour.

Your new Golden will be spayed or neutered prior to adoption, unless there is a medical reason for not doing so. If you have adopted a recently-neutered male, it may take three months or longer for testosterone levels to calm down.

OAKLEY #2017



**STANLEY #1760**



**I LOVE MY NEW GOLDEN BUT HE SEEMS A LITTLE QUIETER THAN I ANTICIPATED. HE ALSO SEEMS TO BE FEARFUL OF HARMLESS THINGS. IS THIS NORMAL?**

People often say that they don't see their Golden's true personality until several weeks to many months after the adoption. Your Golden will likely be uneasy at first until he gets to know you. Be patient and understanding, while keeping to a schedule you intend to maintain for him. Having a schedule will show your Golden what is expected of him as well as what he can expect from you. Remember to give it time!

Although we try to find out as much of a Golden's history as we can, it is often limited at best. If he came from another home, objects like leashes, hands, brooms, rolled up newspapers, feet, chairs, and sticks are just some of the 'training equipment' that may have been used on him. Words like 'come here' and 'lie down' may bring forth a reaction other than the one you expect. Some Golden's might show anxiety, fear or aggression towards innocuous items such as hats, heavy boots, and mops...based on negative experiences. Be alert to triggers for your new Golden because you never know what they might be.

*"I once had a very calm Labrador (a rescue) and nothing seemed to bother her, until one day we found her cowering and terrified in the bottom of the hall cupboard. The trigger had been my son hitting balls with a baseball bat. He was nowhere near her, but it was enough to bring back bad memories".*

**MY GOLDEN CAME FROM A VERY UNPLEASANT SITUATION. I FEEL SO SAD AND WANT HIM TO KNOW HE WILL NEVER HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT AGAIN. HOW CAN I SHOW HIM THIS?**

The simple answer is...time! If you have a Golden who has come from a less-than-ideal background, don't feel sorry for him. He is beginning his wonderful new life with you! Be upbeat and cheerful and matter-of-fact. He will pick up on this from you. Also, don't expect the Golden to be "the same as my last wonderful companion". Each Golden is different so don't try to make him into something he's not.

**LILY #2253**



**HENRY #2225**



It is also possible that your Golden led a sheltered life (i.e. was not socialized to children, walking in communities or dog parks). Your Golden may be the product of a never-ending series of scrambled communications and unreal expectations that will require patience on your part. Commitment and consistency will do your new Golden a great service and give him the tools to blossom and flourish!

### **PAWSITIVE PRAISE ~ TEACHING GOOD MANNERS**

Teaching good manners is one of the best things you can do to ensure that you and your new pet co-exist peacefully and that your Golden is set up for success in your home. The moment your Golden first enters into your home, the ground rules must be set and adhered to. To do this is not difficult but you must be very consistent. Golden retrievers cannot understand ‘special circumstances’ and the more consistent you are with your training, the quicker your Golden will learn. To have a long and happy life together with your Golden, stick to the original schedule you created, ensuring your Golden always has the food, bathroom breaks, and attention he needs. You’ll be bonded in no time!

### **I HAVE HEARD OF POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN AND HOW CAN I USE IT WITH MY GOLDEN?**

If you encounter behavioural issues with your Golden, ask your veterinarian or Golden Rescue for trainer recommendations. Select a trainer who uses positive reinforcement techniques to help you and your Golden overcome behavioural obstacles.

Using punishment to train a Golden is very stressful for a Golden ~ they can get confused and it can destroy the bond that you have. He needs to trust you and if you punish him, your trust will be broken and you may never fully earn it back. Punishment is negative and because a Golden cannot relate to something that happened five seconds earlier, they won’t know why they have been punished. Golden retrievers relate the punishment to what they are looking at when the punishment occurs. So, if they are looking at another Golden or a child, they could think that is why they are being punished.

Most professionals say that Golden retrievers do not feel guilt...that they don’t know what it is. When a Golden lowers his body, tucks his tail between his legs, folds his ears back, and is trying to hide, this is not guilt...he is trying to tell you that he is submitting or very nervous. Many people

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**ADELE #2386**



**FOSTER #2601**



**CELLO #2556**

regard this as guilt and punish the Golden, which results in a very confused Golden who does not understand why you are annoyed or punishing him.

Goldens read our body language. He can tell when we are happy, sad, annoyed or angry and it is our job to make sure that we are showing the right body language to our Golden so that he can fit into our family.

Goldens do not communicate the same way that we do and have to learn by trial and error what we want. We can make this much easier by teaching him what our 'command' words mean. When your Golden does do what you ask, give him loads of praise to make him feel wonderful. Treats can be used at first; however, your Golden should be able to obey a command without a treat, so treats should be gradually reduced until they don't need them.

**MY GOLDEN IS DEVELOPING THE BAD HABIT OF 'DOOR DARTING'. HOW CAN I PREVENT THIS FROM BECOMING A MORE SERIOUS ISSUE?**

You need to communicate to your Golden that he is not alpha over humans. Therefore you must make your Golden heel on the lead without pulling and you must go through all entrances and exits such as doorways and gates before the Golden...not just on his first day, but from this point forward.

Don't let him barge through doorways ~ this can be dangerous because it can knock someone down. Before you open the door, ask your Golden to sit, then open the door and give your Golden permission to go through. This will keep your Golden a lot calmer and not as likely to knock someone over.

*"I have always told adopters that the first thing I taught all Goldens in my home was to sit at an open door, and that they were not allowed out until I gave the 'okay' command. This included going into the backyard. I did this because of the flight risk".*

**IT JUST BECAME A SERIOUS ISSUE. MY GOLDEN RAN OUT THE DOOR AND IS RUNNING AMUCK. WHAT DO I DO?**

In most cases, do not chase your new Golden. Some Goldens think it's a game...others are

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**SCOTCH #2582**



frightened of the chase. Above all else, try to remain calm and don't get hysterical. You might try to go after him quietly (but not in a chasing format). You might try getting down on the ground and calling him while making silly noises (and losing humility) but piquing his interest. If your Golden likes the car, quietly follow your Golden if he's going a distance. If the Golden comes to you, it is very important that you do not make sudden movements to grab your Golden. Never grab your Golden by his collar. This also applies to any forms of discipline and play with your Golden. Some Golden retrievers can get pretty ornery if you grab them by the collar, particularly if they have been roughly handled in the past. Grabbing their collar can be a trigger for negative memories. If you need to bodily remove a Golden from a situation, put their leash on. This is very important...until you know your new Golden.

**MY FAMILY LOVES TO PLAY WITH OUR NEW GOLDEN. IT CAN SOMETIMES GET ROUGH. IS THIS OKAY?**

This is one area where common sense plays a critical role in ensuring that your Golden and family, particularly children, play safely. First, NEVER leave any children unsupervised with a new Golden until he is well adjusted and you are confident in reading his signals. Children need to be taught to treat him with respect ~ to not grab his ears, eyes, or tail...to not sneak up on your Golden...and to leave him undisturbed when eating. Always supervise play time and be quick to end it if it escalates to uncomfortable levels.

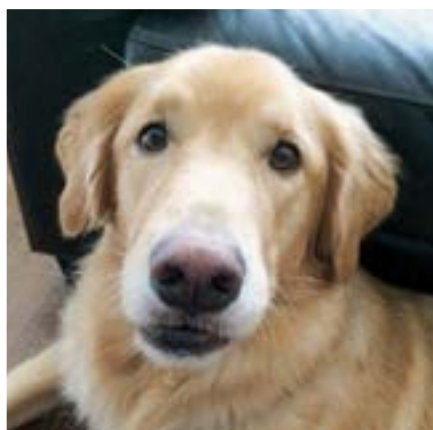
This being said, playtime is very useful. It strengthens the bond between you and your Golden ~ the more you play, the quicker and stronger the bond. Also, try to avoid playing tug-of-war initially ~ it can cause dominance issues and unwanted future problems. The bottom line is... if you are feeling uncomfortable with the way your Golden is playing, you are probably right to stop the play.

**I WAS TOLD THAT MY GOLDEN SUFFERS FROM SOME 'SEPARATION ANXIETY'. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN AND HOW CAN I MANAGE THIS?**

Separation anxiety is typically diagnosed when a Golden becomes distressed in the absence of his owner and medical conditions have been ruled out. There are a few things that you can do to lessen his anxiety and ensure his safety in your absence. Most importantly, when you are leaving,

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**FOREST #2499**



**AUTUMN #1123 &  
STANLEY #1628**



**CORY #1700 & FRIEND**

ensure that any safety hazards or items he might chew are removed from his environment. Leave the home without saying good-bye or making any fuss...as if you were only leaving for a moment. When he has been left alone, whether for a short or long time, do not make a fuss over him when you arrive home. Keep your entrance very low key...almost to the point of ignoring him. Do not use excited voices that will cause him to be even more excited to see you. Once you have taken your coat off or put your shopping bags into the kitchen, give your Golden a positive command, such as 'sit, then reward him (with either treats or copious amounts of praise). This is giving him something to do instead of jumping all over everyone. So the bottom line is to not make a fuss when you leave or return ~ your Golden needs to understand that coming and going is ordinary and that you will come back.

### **MEET AND GREET ~ SOCIALIZATION AND YOUR GOLDEN**

One of the main reasons you may have decided to get a Golden is companionship but also to enjoy walks and social outings. Most Goldens are very social pack animals and often enjoy socializing with other humans and dogs. There are a few things you can do to ensure that your outings are both fun and safe.

Remember to familiarize your Golden to the neighbourhood, beginning with short frequent walks gradually increasing in length, with your Golden always on his leash until you are confident in his recall abilities (**keep him on a leash for at least three months if not forever**). Avoid off-leash parks or trails for a long time unless your Golden has great recall, no prey drive or stays by your side (velcro-Golden) at all times.

When you're ready to try off-leash (if ever), keep a very long leash on (so you can step on the leash) and only do this if they have given you reason to trust them. Finally, it is a wonderful experience to share family walks with your new Golden. Do remember that adults in the home should do all the walking until the Golden has bonded with the family and you know the Golden's personality. It would be devastating to have a young child involved in an aggressive confrontation or is pulled down because your Golden has decided to chase a squirrel.

**SOLOMAN #1998 &  
MELODY #1999**



**JODI #2419**

## **WE HAVE A DOG PARK IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. IS THIS A GOOD PLACE TO TAKE MY GOLDEN?**

It would be best to wait until your Golden is nicely adjusted in your home and with your family before making a visit to the dog park and only do so if your Golden is good with other dogs. Pay close attention to your Golden's body language to be sure he's having a good time ~ and is not fearful or a dog park bully. Remember that a situation can quickly escalate with unknown dogs so you want to be watching for any change in behaviour. Also, be conscious of whether other owners are watching their dogs or are 'tuned out'.

It is also important to note that not all Golden Retrievers need or want interaction with other dogs ~ some are more people-oriented than dog-oriented, happier with their two-legged friends. If your Golden does not seem to enjoy a dog park scenario, don't put them into this situation as it may be stressful instead of fun.

## **I WOULD LIKE TO CRATE TRAIN MY GOLDEN. ANY TIPS FOR SUCCESS?**

Some Golden Retrievers who come through our program have been crate trained so having a crate in their new home would be 'ordinary'. Others are fearful of enclosures so if you plan on using a crate, it would be best to adopt a Golden who has had a positive experience with crate training.

If you're using a crate, leave the crate door open so that he can go in and out whenever he feels like it. It may be a good place for him to retreat to if he gets overwhelmed. If introduced properly and the kennel is large enough for him to stretch out, stand up properly, and turn round, it will become his refuge and he will be happy and secure there.

*"Golden Retrievers who are anxious when left alone may cause considerable damage to your home and could do some serious harm to themselves. One Golden I knew emptied the fridge each time she was left and there was not a child lock on the market that could keep her out. She was very stressed and unhappy but settled when someone was home. The change in this Golden when she was put in a crate was remarkable. She settled and was happy, confident, and obedient. Her kennel was large enough for her, her bed, bowl of water, toys, and chews to keep her occupied."*

ZOEY #1526



EMMA #2482

Remember, a Golden’s crate should not be used as punishment otherwise he will learn to dislike it. He should also not be left in there for extended periods of time ~ the crate is not meant as a baby-sitting mechanism.

**MY GOLDEN IS NOT HOUSED TRAINED. IS THIS HOPELESS WITH AN OLDER GOLDEN?**

No! Puppies and some older Golden’s may not be completely housetrained but it isn’t difficult to teach but it may take some time and patience. Getting mad at him when he has had an accident will not be useful. If anything, your Golden will become nervous because you are obviously not happy with him. Because he may be under a lot of stress with the change of environment, he may forget his bathroom habits.

Take your Golden outside and watch to see if he relieves himself. When he does, give lots and lots of praise and be really excited so that he feels good. He will soon pick up the reason why. Take your Golden outside frequently if he’s not housetrained...when he wakes up, before and after he’s fed, and when you have finished playing. It would be wise to take a pup out every 30-45 minutes or for an older Golden’s every hour or so.

Do not yell at or punish your Golden...use only positive reinforcement.

If your Golden does have an accident, put him outside before cleaning it up. Normal household cleaners will not take away the smell of dog urine. White vinegar or cleaners from a pet store will eliminate those odours.

If your Golden is not making any progress with housetraining, take him to a vet to rule out any underlying medical conditions.

**I HAVE HEARD THAT GOLDENS LIVE FOR THEIR NEXT MEAL. WITH SUCH A HIGH VALUE PLACED ON FOOD, ANY TIPS FOR FEEDING MY GOLDEN?**

In the beginning, it is best to feed your new Golden the same kind of food the foster home did for at least a week. Since your new family member has a lot of things to get used to, be kind to his digestive system. The foster will inform you if he is on a specific diet due to allergies or other

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**BELLE #2188**



**BALOO #2389**

sensitivities. If you wish to switch to a different diet, do so over a period of about two weeks. Start by adding one part new food to three parts of the old for several days, then switch to half new, half old for several days, and then one part old to three parts new. Many Golden Retrievers can get an upset tummy if there is a sudden change.

Typically, it's best not to make a change except for good reason. If you're changing a diet because of allergies, it can take three months for hypo-allergenic food to have an effect. For more information about dog nutrition/food, visit [www.dogfoodanalysis.com](http://www.dogfoodanalysis.com).

Typically pet food purchased at a reputable pet store is a significantly better quality of food than pet food purchased at a supermarket or department store. If you want to verify the quality of the dog food, visit [www.dogfoodanalysis.com](http://www.dogfoodanalysis.com).

### **WHAT THINGS CAN I DO TO ENSURE THAT MEAL TIMES REMAIN PEACEFUL AND POSITIVE?**

Many Golden Retrievers, rescued or not, feel they must gobble their food ~ maybe they're afraid they won't be fed again.

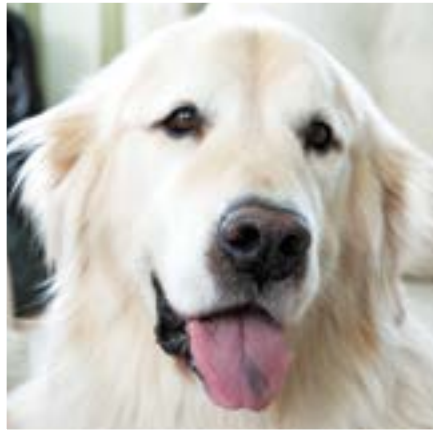
If you already have dogs, it is best to feed them in the order they entered your family to maintain a feeding hierarchy. It is also best to feed them with separation and supervision, especially initially until you know how your dogs will interact with each other. Ensure that one doesn't finish the other's food. Pick each bowl off the ground after feeding to prevent territorial issues from developing.

If you allow your Golden to grab his dish as you are putting it down, he might knock the dish out of your hand. This can also be the start of unwanted dominance issues. It is best to ask your Golden to 'sit' nicely before you put his food on the floor and to wait for a release word such as 'okay'. Your Golden needs to understand that eating is a calm activity.

As a side note, the 'sit' and 'down' commands are very useful and can be used often (i.e. when putting his food down, before putting his lead on, before grooming, before crossing the street, before greeting visitors).



KILO #1367



WHISKEY #2178

## I AM TEACHING THE 'T' OR 'C' WORD. ANY TIPS FOR GIVING TREATS OR COOKIES?

Goldens should be taught good manners and to take food gently from our hand. You can teach this by closing your hand to stop your Golden from getting the treat ~ he will try to get it from your hand but don't let him. Once he has backed off, open your hand and give him the command to take it. Also, it is crucial to remember to give treats in moderation ~ they can be highly caloric and extra weight on a Golden can introduce a whole host of health problems.

## WHY DO I NEED TO GROOM MY GOLDEN?

Grooming is an important part of owning a Golden. It reinforces the bond while your Golden enjoys the full attention of his owner. If grooming is introduced quietly and firmly, most Goldens learn to enjoy it. We do, however, recommend that you not groom your new Golden until he has settled in and you have formed a bond of trust.

It is also very important for your Golden to be touched all over including his ears, eyes, mouth, legs, and toes. Vets appreciate a Golden that they can handle easily and you never know when critical situations might arise where you must handle and touch different body parts.

Brushing will help keep your Golden's coat in top condition, prevent hot spots, and improve their overall health and appearance.

Try to give baths on an as-needed basis. Many Goldens have sensitive skin and too many baths can cause irritations and hot spots. Towel drying is a good idea; however, it must be done quietly and firmly or your Golden will try to turn it into a game.

## ON THE ROAD ~ TRAVELLING WITH YOUR GOLDEN

Travelling with your Golden can be a very positive experience ~ in fact, most Goldens simply love to go on car rides! It is critical to remember to **NEVER LEAVE YOUR Golden IN THE CAR IF THE SUN IS OUT, WINTER OR SUMMER or for long periods of time when it is cold, warm or hot.**

Even leaving a window open is not sufficient because the sun heats up your car very quickly,

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which could harm or kill your Golden. If you do leave your Golden in the car and it looks as if he is suffering, the police have the authority to break a window and remove your Golden.

Your Golden can travel in a crate, wear a harness attached to the seatbelts in the back seat or with a wire barrier installed between the rear of the vehicle and the passenger section. Never allow the Golden to sit in your lap or in the front seat of your car, as this can be very distracting to the driver and pose a serious threat to the Golden in the event of an accident. Your Golden needs to be fastened somehow in case there's an accident. If your Golden isn't secure, in the event of an accident, they can go through the windshield or if someone opens the car door, they could escape into an unsafe situation (i.e. traffic).

Always have a water dish, water, paper towels, and poop-bags in the car.

Ensure he has a collar with an ID tag with your cell number on it at all times in case he gets separated from you.

### **FINAL THOUGHTS...**

Always remember that your Golden is an invited guest in your home and, as such, has to accept and adapt to your rules and environment, not the other way around.

Golden Rescue will always be here to help you with any questions/concerns you may have. Call the placement volunteer (who brought you and your Golden together), our hotline (1-866-712-8444 or 416-657-2445) or email [info@goldenrescue.ca](mailto:info@goldenrescue.ca) or [adoption@goldenrescue.ca](mailto:adoption@goldenrescue.ca).

**ENJOY YOUR NEW FAMILY MEMBER! MOSTLY, HE JUST NEEDS LOVE AND YOU WILL GET LOVE TEN-FOLD IN RETURN!**

**Thank you for adopting a Golden  
and giving him a second chance!**

[www.goldenrescue.ca](http://www.goldenrescue.ca)