

Golden Retriever

Puppy Buyer's Checklist



YES **NO**

	1. Do you see AKC registration papers for the sire and the dam?
	2. Do you see AKC litter registration papers for the puppies?
	3. Are the surroundings clean?
	4. Are the puppies clean?
	5. Are the puppies in the house? (on a nice day, they can be outside)
	6. Do the puppies have clear eyes?
	7. Are the puppies plump, not fat, but well covered?
	8. Do the puppies want to be petted?
	9. Is the breeder a member of GRCA or an affiliate Golden Retriever club? WARNING! Unethical breeders have slipped through the net.
	10. Do you see OFA or PennHip certificates on the sire and dam?
	11. Does a Certified Pedigree have OFA numbers in the second and third generations and back further?
	12. Do you see some sort of cardiac screening on sire and dam?
	13. Do you see thyroid test results (full panel done by MSU, Cornell, University of Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Lab, UC Davis, Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Lab and/or Oxford Labs TgAA Negative)?
	14. Are there CERF numbers?
	15. Any other health screening like VwD or other OFA numbers?
	16. Is the sire a champion of record?
	17. Is the dam a champion of record?
	18. Do you see championship certificates?
	19. Are the sire and dam being shown in the conformation ring?
	20. Do you see any show pictures with the word "Winners", "Best of Winners", "Best of Breed", or "Best of Opposite Sex"?
	21. Do you see any obedience title certificates?
	22. Do you see any agility title certificates?
	23. Do you see any Canine Good Citizen certificates?
	24. Do you see any Therapy Dogs, Inc. tags?
	25. Does the breeder ask you if you have a fenced in yard?

	26. Does the breeder want to see your home?
	27. Does the breeder have a sales agreement?
	28. Will the breeder take back dogs he/she has bred?
	29. Does the breeder have any warranties against health problems?
	30. Do these warranties last longer than two years?
	31. Does the breeder require limited registration on strictly companion puppies with a spay/neuter clause in the sales agreement?
	32. Was the dam bred when she was at least two years old or older? It is preferable if the dam is at least three years old. They have more physical and mental maturity
	33. Have the puppies been checked for worms, proven in writing?
	34. Have the puppies been wormed?
	35. Have the puppies received age appropriate shots?
	36. Does the breeder have a schedule of vaccinations?
	37. Do you see the dam in person?
	38. Can the breeder point out conformation faults of the sire and dam?
	39. Can the breeder point out conformation faults of the puppies?
	40. Does the breeder have on hand a copy of the AKC standard?
	41. Does the breeder supply you with at least two references?
	42. Does the breeder ask you for references?
	43. Does the breeder ask you for the name of your vet?
	44. Have you screened this vet for emergency bloat procedure capabilities?
	45. Does the breeder breed two litters or less (preferable) a year?
	46. Are you supplied with a color coded pedigree of at least 3 generations (champion names are written in red, non champion names are written in black)?
	47. Do you see an AKC Certified Pedigree on both the sire and dam?
	48. Are there at least three champions on each side of the pedigree in the first three generations? (a minimum of six total)
	49. Are colors, i.e. Dark Golden, Golden, or Light Golden marked on the pedigree beside each dog's name?
	50. For a fully Dark Golden litter, do you see only Dark Golden marked on the pedigree?
	51. For a mixed Dark Golden, Golden, and Light Golden litter, do you see only Dark Golden and Golden dogs marked on the pedigree?
	52. For a fully Light Golden litter, do you see only Light Golden dogs marked on the pedigree?
	53. Does the breeder offer you a health history of longevity and illnesses of the sire and dam, going back at least three generations and preferably five generations?
	54. Is the breeder willing to disclose health problems in the line? Be sure to focus on the Big 4 (Hips, Elbows, Eyes, and Heart), Bleeding Disorders, Cancer, Flea and Tick Diseases, Hereditary Problems, Hypothyroidism, SAS, bloat, glaucoma, ichthyosis, pigmentary uveitis, Progressive Retinal Atrophy (PRA), swallowing problems, autoimmune deficiencies (hair loss and food allergies are signs), etc. There are problems in EVERY line.

	55. Does the breeder have pictures of the relatives of the litter as far back as five generations?
	56. Is the dam of the litter permanently identified either with a microchip or with a tattoo? A DNA number alone is not sufficient.
	57. Do you see proof of either microchip or tattoo?
	58. Do you see DNA certificate for the sire and dam?
	59. Are you able to see the WHOLE litter? If not, why not?
	60. Has the breeder been participating in showing and training Golden Retrievers for over fifteen years?
	61. Do you see proof of past achievements of the breeder?
	62. Do the names on the registration papers match names on all paper work?
	63. Has the breeder resided at this address less than a year?
	64. Has the breeder resided at this address less than five years?
	65. Has the breeder resided at this address less than ten years?
	66. Does the breeder have a mentor(s)?
	67. Can you talk to the breeder's mentor(s)?
	68. Does the breeder listen and answer questions more than talk?
	69. There is NOT an emphasis on one particular dog in the pedigree.
	70. Has the breeder ever owner-handled a dog to an AKC championship?
	71. Does the breeder tell you NOT to breed this puppy?
	72. Do you see dogs older than five years old residing with the breeder? If not, ask where the older dogs are? Maybe the breeder hasn't been breeding for as long as claimed or there is no longevity or there is a pattern of disposing of "useless" (no longer breedable) dogs.
	73. Are the puppy instructions authored by the breeder with procedures taken from the breeder's experiences and not a collection of readings copied off the internet?
	74. The breeder is not willing to ship the puppy.

If there are a number of checks (more than 25) in the NO column, reconsider buying a puppy from this breeder. Health screenings are VERY important. Be wary of excuses. There is absolutely NO excuse for not performing health tests. Ask to see proof. Health tests are NOT the same as vet checks. Know the difference.

The dam and sire should be participating in some sort of activity. These activities are ultimately temperament tests and will assure you that the dam and sire are stable in their temperament.

Ask questions and feel comfortable with your purchase. Don't let the breeder belittle you and make you feel ignorant. You are spending your hard earned money for a companion for many years to come. You want the best.

The longer a breeder resides at one address, the better proof of stability. You may not have a "disappearing" breeder.

Also, remember that conscientious breeders have spent their time and money to raise their litters. Think of it in these terms. If everything has been done correctly, a litter of six puppies has probably cost a conscientious breeder \$4,800 or more. They are not getting rich by having these puppies. Conscientious breeders breed for the love of the Golden Retriever so respect their questions and don't take them personally. Conscientious breeders want to be assured that their precious babies will have the best of everything.

As a test, ask the breeder why this litter was bred in the first place. The CORRECT answer is that the breeder wanted something to keep for himself/herself, to show, to train, to improve the conformation of the dam, not because it was money in the bank or the kids wanted to see the miracle of birth or the dam needed to have a litter of puppies before she was spayed or since they had the two dogs, they thought it was a good idea to let them mate. These are the people who have no business breeding dogs.

Good Luck!