



Myth versus Reality: Choosing Gender and Age

Myth versus Reality: Male versus Female

Typically, we receive a higher ratio of males to females into our program; however, we typically have a higher demand for females. When completing your application, if you select a female, you should be prepared to wait approximately four to six months.

Frequently, when we talk with people about male Goldens, we encounter beliefs that females are more affectionate than males. This is simply not true! At a recent meeting of our Board of Directors, we discussed this very subject. In a poll of staff and board, they were predominantly adopters of males. And none of us would trade our "boys" any day because they're loving, affectionate, and as one member said, "big teddy bears."

Another misconception is that males will mark inside the house. The Golden Retriever is a very clean dog, and unless it is ill or is very stressed and confused, would rather hold its bladder forever than soil its "den." Most neutered males squat to urinate just like females.

The difference between males and females is predominantly size. A female usually weighs 50 to 60 pounds, while males are 65 to 80 pounds. Of course, genetics presents many variables in this figure.

Myth versus Reality: What age Golden Retriever do you really want?

Younger is not necessarily better!

We've found through our conversations with people over the years that there are many misconceptions about age. We'll try to clear some of those up for you.

A younger dog will bond more quickly and better than an older dog.

False! We have story after story about people who've adopted senior dogs and are astounded at how quickly they become part of the household and bond with family members and at their energy levels.

Sure you may not want a ten-year-old Golden, but maybe you don't want a youngster, either!

Okay so what age is best?

Well, if you are a thirty-something or more, or have a young, active family, we're going to suggest a Golden around age five. Why? Because the puppy stage is just about over. Yes, we said puppy stage. (For more puppy information, please read [So You Want a Golden Retriever Puppy?](#)) You see, many

people see the Golden Retriever as a great family dog. While this is true, don't lose sight of what the Golden Retriever was originally bred for and what is a very strong gene in the Golden. That is: Standing by his master for hours on end, jumping into icy waters retrieving ducks, and doing this on and on all day long. Okay, so you and your family don't go duck hunting, but that energy has to go somewhere! So if you have a life that is a little more prone to trying to relax after a rough day at work, eating dinner, watching television, and curling up for an early evening, a Golden age five or above may be a better choice for you.

How can an older dog possibly learn to love me?

You are interested in the Golden Retriever because of its reputation as a loyal companion. This is also why many service organizations use Golden Retrievers. As puppies, they live in a home that teaches them basic obedience training. Then at age two, they usually go to the organization for training and live with someone else. When training is done, they move on to the person they will serve. If you've ever seen devotion in the eyes of the service Golden and those of its adoring master, you will have no further doubts about an adopted Golden loving you.

Our adopters usually report that they literally bond in a few days, and this bond grows stronger as weeks and months pass. You will soon forget, regardless of what age you adopt, that you have not had this Golden from the very beginning of its life. Still concerned? We can put you in touch with literally thousands of adopters who have adopted Golden Retrievers from 5 to 13 years of age and many are still going strong.

I'm afraid to adopt an older Golden because of losing the Golden to death.

You know there are no guarantees in life. Death is a part of life, and dogs die at varying ages. Some young dogs die. We know it is particularly hard with canine companions because of the unconditional love they so generously give. Again, we have countless stories from adopters who took in senior dogs and cherished every day they shared together, not willing to trade it for anything... no matter how long it lasted.

But look at another angle. When you purchase a puppy, you may not know about genetic problems that usually don't appear until the Golden is two years old. By adopting an older Golden, it's pretty much "what you see is what you get." Just think: no housebreaking or getting up in the early morning hours to take the Golden outside. No teething to destroy your lovely furniture. No obedience commands to train as most Golden Retrievers know the basic commands.

You get a ready-made companion; all you need to do is add love.