

Puppy Care



Here are some suggestions on supplies and feeding for your new Golden babies. There is a wealth of information available through the internet; you can just go to Google and type in a question or subject -- such as "bringing home a new puppy" or "house training a puppy" and the information is almost limitless. And, very important, take lots of pictures and share them with us.

Rag Foster Manual and e-Library:

There is a lot of valuable information in the RAG Foster Manual you received via email; keep it on hand. Also, the RAG e-Library is a treasure trove of documents that will assist you through the process of raising your golden. Your RAG Follow- Up Team liaison can email you the order form and documents.

Important Reminder

Keep your puppy at home until all the puppy shots are finished (typically around 12 weeks). Only have in your back yard; don't take to the park, for walks, to PetSmart, etc. They are at risk to disease until all shots have been received.

Crate

You really need a crate. Leave it in the living room or where you are situated the most so the puppy is "with you." When pup is out, leave the door open; they often like to go in voluntarily for a nap, or when you have company and they are a little overwhelmed. You don't need to buy the crate divider. A soft crate mat, or even a blanket or towel can be added; might want to start with towels until the pup is house trained, but they typically won't pee or mess in their crate if they have an option. You can put a soft stuffed animal in the crate so they have something to cuddle with - remember they have all been laying on top of each other for weeks, and a small battery or travel clock outside the cage at night is often comforting, sounding like a heartbeat. Even if you won't be crating later, please crate train the pup now. Start saying "crate" or "kennel" when you put the pup in, and they will learn to go in when you ask them to. They will need to be crated at a vet's office, or when you travel, so this is the time to let them know that their crate is not a bad thing. Also, have the puppy sleep in the crate during the day now, as you will know when they wake up and can immediately take them outside; if they are asleep under your desk or table, when they wake they immediately need to pee, and you might not get them in time. More information is available in the RAG e-Library document, "Crate Training."

Food

Buy high quality large-breed dry puppy food. Add a small amount of water. You may want to use bottled water for a while then start adding your tap water so they can get used to your water. Below is recommended amounts of food for the first months. See RAG e-Library document, "How to Grade Your Dog Food" and "Grading Kibble," for criteria on selecting a high quality food.

PLEASE watch the puppy's weight closely for the first 5-6 months and don't exceed the weight guidelines below. They should be at a "slow growth" weight during this time so they develop healthy hips and joints, as too rapid weight gain could have a negative impact when they are older. They may look a little skinny, but that is fine, they will fill out and fluff out as soon as they are past the 5-month growth period.

Feeding Guidelines

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| - 8-12 weeks 1/2 to 3/4 cup per feeding x 3/day | 1-1/2 cup total |
| - 12-16 weeks 1 to 1-1/2 cup per feeding x 2 day | Vitamin C = 500 mg |
| - 4-6 months 1-1/2 to 2 cups per feeding x 2/day | Vitamin C = 500 mg |
| - 6-12 months 1-1/2 cups to 2 cups per feeding x 2/day | Vitamin C = 1000 mg |
| - 1 year old 1-1/2 cups to 2 cups per feeding x 2.day | Vitamin C = 2000 mg |

Ideal Weight

- 8-12 weeks 10-16 pounds
- 12-16 weeks 15-24 pounds
- 4-6 months 25-40 pounds
- 6-12 months 35-75 pounds (males 65-75; females 55-65)

Vitamins

Vitamin C is good for your golden, and can be added as shown above. Also, a quality vitamin such as Pet Tabs is recommended. Fish Oil and Flax Seed Oil are great - check with your vet for his/her recommendation, dosage and when to start

Loose stools: If your puppy has this problem, you can cook up some rice and give to him/her. Another quick solution is a few spoons of canned pumpkin - not the type with added spices ready for a pie shell, just the plain canned pumpkin. It's easy, can be on your shelf, and works quickly.

Toys: Get stuffed animals. Buy dog toys, take off all tags, but don't get anything with button type eyes. Buy them a small Kong toy; it is a good substitute for chewing on your furniture, and helps keep their teeth clean. Also, some teething toys are made to be frozen and can be helpful when they are going through this period. RAG recommends avoiding rawhide treats due to the chemicals involved with processing. See document, "Rawhide Alert" in the RAG e-Library.

Toothpaste/Brush: Speaking of teeth, start now brushing their teeth, so they are used to it, and you don't have an expensive dental cleaning in a few years. You may prefer using a finger brush instead of a dog toothbrush.

Nature's Miracle: Wonderful cleaning solution for cleaning up pet stains -- removes stain and odor both. Don't be without it.

Waterless Shampoo: This product is nice to have on hand in a spray bottle for "spot cleaning" your golden. You can put it in a spray bottle and then rub the dog with a towel; Good for muddy feet, etc.

Brush/Comb/Nail Trimmer: Start brushing your puppy now and trimming the nails -- very carefully; if you want the vet to trim the nails, put the nail clipper by the nails to the dog is used to them, and play with pup's feet, so they get used to it. Typically they love to be brushed. I recommend a small wire brush but a hairbrush-type is fine also. When they are older, you might want to buy a mat breaker for any mats that develop around their ears, if your pup is very fluffy these can occur even if you brush daily, and please do brush daily. Many golden owners recommend the "Furminator" for adult dogs.