

## Breed Character and Temperament

### **Temperament**

*Friendly, reliable, and trustworthy. Quarrelsomeness or hostility toward other dogs or people in normal situations, or an unwarranted show of timidity or nervousness, is not in keeping with Golden Retriever character. Such actions should be penalized according to their significance.*

**Comment:** Proper temperament is absolutely essential, and one of the hallmarks of the breed. Expression should be indicative of intelligence, adaptability, and nobility. Under General Appearance, the Golden's personality is described as "eager, alert and self-confident". This responsiveness and high level of trainability make it the versatile dog it is today, whether family companion, hunting dog, service dog or competition dog in conformation, obedience, rally, agility, tracking or in the field. In the ring, the Golden must demonstrate qualities such as calm awareness, acceptance, and readiness to comply with the handler's wishes along with compatibility and tolerance of other dogs.

While many qualities of temperament cannot be assessed in the ring, the AKC and the breed standard are quite firm on the matter of certain actions warranting penalty. Dogs which attack must be disqualified; dogs threatening any person are to be sent from the ring forthwith; and proper notation made in the judge's book. Dogs which attack another dog should also be excused. Dogs which evidence unwarranted hostility or aggressiveness towards other dogs must be penalized, even to the extent of being sent out; they should not usually receive any award, and certainly not championship points. There should be zero tolerance for this type of behavior in this breed.

While puppies and novices may be somewhat unsure in an unfamiliar situation, qualities such as excitability, nervousness, shyness, fearfulness, aggressiveness in the sense of hostility, or senseless hyperactivity are all definitely undesirable. The judge must be encouraged to leave unplaced, to excuse from the ring or even to disqualify under the AKC regulations, any Golden Retrievers which demonstrate serious faults of temperament.

The Golden Retriever is beloved as a family companion largely due to its friendly, trustworthy and tolerant nature. Temperament must always be a foremost consideration in this breed.

