



Expert Grooming Article



PHOTO - Sage, Carolyn Ryan

Golden Retriever

In the early 1800s game was plentiful in England and Scotland, and hunting was both a sport and a practical way of obtaining food. Retrievers came into prominence because of the desire for a medium-sized dog that would do well in wild-fowling, both waterfowl and upland game. During the 19th century, gamekeepers at the Guisachan Estate of Lord Tweedmouth at Inverness-Shire, Scotland, kept records of the development of the Golden (read more over page..)



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Your Golden is symmetrical, balanced, active, powerful, level mover; sound with kindly expression. Biddable, intelligent and possessing natural working ability. Kind, friendly and confident.

His coat should be dense and water repellent with a good undercoat and neither coarse nor too silky. His outline should be natural and untrimmed. As this coat also needs to be a rich lustrous golden colour, whatever you use should enhance the shine of the coat without making it fluffy or soft.

Between shows I recommend oiling the coat with **Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil** at a ratio of 1 tablespoon to 1 gallon/4 litres water. Saturate the coat and work well into the coat with a sponge or carefully pour over and squish well through. Then use the oil straight from the spray, applied undiluted to the areas around where they pee. This is a bad area for breakage, keeping it oiled will help to prevent the coat getting brittle or tangled and will dissuade the accumulation of debris from the yard. This is a super oil as it is water soluble and won't build up or be nasty to live with. It is also all naturally derived and there is nothing quite like it. I like the depth of colour it tends to add to the coat and the wonderful healthy vigor that goes with continued use.



For a show routine, I recommend using **Plush Puppy All Purpose Shampoo with Henna** for great shine diluted 3:1 (3 parts water to 1 part shampoo). At times when the Golden's coat gets a little greasy, use **Plush Puppy Deep Cleansing Shampoo** on the areas needing a deep clarifying clean. If your Golden is out of coat, then I suggest **Plush Puppy Body Building Shampoo** which gives a bodified appearance to the silhouette. Dilute all shampoos for a show bath at the ratio of 3:1.

After shampooing, condition using **Plush Puppy Silk Protein Conditioner** diluted up to 1:10 (1 part shampoo to 10 parts water). Only condition the feathers at this ratio. Then use a much weaker ratio of 1:15 for the top-line – you don't want to over soften this area or to make it fluffy.

The head and expression is an important part of the breed. Use **Plush Puppy Let's Face It Shampoo**. This is a hypoallergenic sulfate-free, low foaming shampoo designed for faces. It's a nil fragrance, no tear formula with the highest quality Blue Cypress Extracts, Panthenol with Pro Vitamin B and SugaNate. These special ingredients clean, soothe, add moisture, aid healing and have anti-inflammatory benefits. A small golf ball sized amount directly to the face and eye area allows you to thoroughly clean without causing irritation. Can be used in and around ears also with the same benefits. Its low foaming design allows easy rinsing yet complete cleaning. Best used first and left on whilst using all other shampoos and rinsing off with the final shampoo rinse.

Okay here's where the harder stuff begins. In order to get that soft draping fall to the lengths without wave, use **Plush Puppy Swishy Coat**. There are those who like to apply it undiluted, but I always recommend dilution as you have a large dog and it is easier to get it evenly applied and just right this way. Dilute at a ratio of 1 tablespoon to 750 ml of water depending on the texture of the coat. You can dilute further or less. Sponge or pour thoroughly through the coat ensuring even distribution. Squeeze out excess and blow dry. Even for show baths, include a small amount of Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil to this final rinse. Use 1-2 teaspoons which can include with the Swishy in 4L or 1 gallon of water and left in.

Use a **Plush Puppy Ultimate Pin Brush** for this as you don't want to rip the coat or overstretch at this point. When $\frac{3}{4}$ dry, switch to an oval $\frac{1}{2}$ bristle $\frac{1}{2}$ dialon brush such as the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Anti-Static Porcupine Brush** this will give you that smoother, straighter and glossier finish to your drying that the pin brush won't do. Never entirely dry with a top brushing action only, this just flicks the short pieces in the coat outwards and gives that fly away look to the coat. You are

after a polished professional look that once you have mastered, is just breathtaking.

Finish with a **Plush Puppy Professional Grooming Comb**, built for absolute ergonomic comfort in various sizes. The lightweight oval shaped spine combining fine and coarse pins made of hardened stainless steel with anodic oxide finish that reduces drag and static to the coat. Perfect for use for this breed of dog.

At times due to various reasons including the weather static electricity can create flyaways. If this occurs use **Plush Puppy Anti-Static Coat Control**. This is a lightweight spray is infused with organic extracts that offers a UV filter to stop sun damage and protect against heat strength for the perfect finished look of the coat.

Should you have a coat that is too curly or wavy, you can add 1 tablespoon of **Plush Puppy Blow Dry Cream** to the Swishy Coat mix as this will further flatten the coat.

The very best grooming spray is **Plush Puppy OMG**. A revolutionary grooming spray that lives up to its name and the perfect product for this coat type. A light spray of OMG and brushing in allows this product to refresh the coat leaving it feeling wonderful. It separates the coat and leaves the most amazing finish. Using at an approximate mixture of 1-part OMG to 20-40 parts water using this break down from the OMG Concentrate or OMG ready to use. The stronger the mix the stronger the effects. Different dogs at different coat stages require different mixtures. Using OMG can be a one off at shows or during the drying process after bathing. Ideal for regular brushing also as it hydrates the coat and reduces stress and coat loss. OMG and as its active ingredients smooth the cuticle and protect the coat. For this coat type that you still wish to retain the texture at a higher breakdown will still allow you to brush the dog and refresh to coat without over softening. If you need more softening and hydration to a fuller or larger coat then a higher mixture is needed. OMG can also be used on topcoats and brush/polished in for that wonderful smooth and flatness to the coat. OMG never builds up, never goes stringy.

The trimming is relatively easy but does need attention and time. The Standard states feet may be trimmed, and stray hairs neatened, but the natural appearance of coat or outline should not be altered by cutting or clipping.

The featherings need perhaps just a gentle shaping with thinning scissors for a softer effect giving a fairly natural look to the curve. You are only removing the stray ends and the end result is still to shape the dog to his best without looking totally contrived. All excess feathering is to be removed from the feet.

On Show day, spray with **Plush Puppy Odour Muncher** and **Plush Puppy Shine and Comb** for that final glamour. I do like a dusting of **Plush Puppy Pixie Dust** just lightly applied on strategic areas with your brush.

The secret is just a dusting and not to turn it into the glitter fairy.

Your Golden with his kindly expression, all alert and full of confidence, is now ready to compete, showing himself with good reach and co-ordination as a retriever of the gundog group should be, all fit and in hard working condition. This loveable and trustworthy dog is always reliable and always a delight to behold.

