

## Our thoughts on grooming, pest control, teeth, etc.

Make this a fun time for your pup! The Golden should be brushed **at least** once per week.

We are a bit more relaxed because we love the hair! 😊 However, some people get their Golden **groomed** regularly for either a basic cut (just cleaned up) or a summer cut (almost shaved!). We get our dogs groomed twice a year after they shed. However, the fur on the pads of their feet may need to be trimmed during the winter months to avoid snow and ice buildup while outside playing.

In between grooming in the Spring and the Fall, we take them to get their **nails cut** because we don't like to do it ourselves. It's easy to do if you know how, but be careful of cutting too close into the "quick" – the nerve ending. Our groomer offers free nail clippings in between grooming appointments, so it's an easy/cheap option for us.

**Confession: Confession: We aren't good at remembering to brush their teeth!** There are many good toys out there with bristles that help! However, we know we are pushing our luck as plaque builds with age and by then, your dog won't be used to having it's teeth brushed. You should try to start earlier and more often than we did!

Here is Justice's favorite teeth brushing toy. It has a few different kinds of bristles and there are cookies hidden in between to get her attention! I went right for the bigger one to start with and the cookie refills are not that expensive!



**Pest Control:** This is the one area I really hate. We live as chemical free and organically as possible, but we but we are pressured to use all kinds of toxic chemicals. We used Frontline for several years, but have recently switched to a more natural alternative and are LOVING the results. We order a spot-on treatment AND a collar from Dr. Mercola @ [www.mercola.com](http://www.mercola.com). He is a holistic doctor and has many supplements in his online store for people and pets. Cancer rates are so high in all breeds, but especially Golden Retrievers. We try to limit our dogs exposure to chemicals as much as possible to limit any environmental factors that could trigger an illness. (As long as we are on the subject of toxins, please do research on the frequency of vaccinations and also fertilizing/treating your lawn!)

**Heartguard:** Don't skip this monthly biscuit you buy from your vet! It protects your dog from several **internal parasites** from other dogs! More naturally leaning vets are ok with giving Heartguard every other month, but never cut this out completely. Heartworm is a nasty disease!

**Hot Spots** are common with this breed for a variety of reasons but usually because they got wet and were not dried well. Their under-coat stays damp and causes a rash, which they lick and make worse. Keep some old towels in your car, because you WILL have an unplanned swimming incident or two! Water is a magnet! There are some sprays and creams you can get for hotspots, but our best trick is cutting away the hair around it and dropping from hydrogen peroxide on it to dry it up. Justice got a few as a "toddler" and hasn't had any in over a year. There are theories that they can grow out of them or they are also caused by allergies or bug bites. She got some in our previous home but none since we moved, so I think hers were environmental.

**Bathing** isn't required frequently and can dry out their skin. We give Justice a bath if she's been on a hike and is extremely dirty – but even then, it's usually a quick spray down with the hose out back and no soap. Justice gets a full bath with soap about twice a year. When she was a pup and it was warm, we used a kiddie pool outside. After that, we got a hose attachment for our shower, which is so helpful!

Other notes on water: The Golden's ears should be inspected regularly and cleaned as needed. The inside flaps of the ears should be quickly dried after playing in water and monitored for moisture.