

A Gordon Setter in your Family

Congratulations on the recent addition of a Gordon Setter to your family! The Gordon Setter Club of America (GSCA) would like to help you enjoy your new Gordon by providing some basic information about the breed. If you'd like to learn more about your Gordon, GSCA, regional Gordon Setter clubs, or the GSCA Rescue program, we've included a form at the end of this brochure which you can use to obtain more information.

History of the Breed

Beauty, brains and bird sense: these words describe the Gordon Setter. History suggests the existence of black and tan setters as far back as the 16th century in Scotland and England. Alexander, fourth Duke of Gordon, is credited with establishing the breed with its present characteristics in the 1820s. George Blunt and Daniel Webster imported the breed to America in 1842 with the purchase of two dogs from the Duke of Gordon kennels, Rake and Rachel. These dogs were the foundation of the breed in this country, which AKC officially recognized in 1884.



Most Gordons demonstrate their heritage as hunting dogs but are equally at home as companions, performance competitors and show dogs. The official standard of the breed, a blueprint of the ideal Gordon Setter, allows a considerable range of size and weight to suit a wide variety of hunting terrains. Gordons are heavier in bone and muscle than the other setters. Males range from 24 to 27 inches at the shoulder, weighing from 55 to 80 pounds. Females are generally smaller, measuring 23 to 26 inches at the shoulder and weighing 45 to 70 pounds. A copy of the breed standard can be obtained from GSCA or the AKC.

The Gordon Personality

Gordon Setters are alert and lively, pleasant and exceedingly loyal. They are devoted to members of their household, but not all Gordons readily accept strangers. Some Gordons tend to tolerate attention from people they do not know, rather than seeking out such attention.

gordon setter club
of America inc.



There is no denying a Gordon would prefer to stay a "puppy" forever, but with proper techniques, a young Gordon can be trained without breaking his spirit. Gordons are highly intelligent dogs, as quick to spot an advantage as to spot game, and basic obedience training will make your Gordon a better companion and a better canine citizen. Although Gordons are bright, they are not blindly obedient, and may seem stubborn. Firmness and consistency are the keys to handling Gordons; harsh treatment is *NEVER* necessary. Obedience classes, ranging from puppy kindergarten to advanced competition are available in most areas through local kennel clubs and/or professional training organizations.

Gordons are capable of adapting to a variety of living situations, as long as they are assured of the love of their owners. They do, however, need plenty of daily exercise to maintain peak physical and mental condition. Gordons need a safe, fenced area in which to run and play, and/or should be taken for frequent on-leash walks or exercised in a safe space, under control, never unsupervised. A Gordon will hunt for herself, if she is not hunting for you. This breed should never be allowed to roam freely because their powerful hunting instinct might lead them to follow a bird or a squirrel across a busy highway.

Children and Gordon Setters are a good combination, but each dog is an individual. Introduce your Gordon to children with care, making sure each is comfortable. A young child should never be left alone with any dog. Children are not always aware of how to treat a dog and should be taught to respect a dog's boundaries, giving the dog the opportunity to remove himself from an uncomfortable situation. A dog should never be forced to tolerate an activity with children he clearly does not like.

Many Gordons are great talkers. They can develop quite a vocabulary with various tones to express themselves: pleasure at seeing the food dish prepared, 'explaining' they need a drink, greeting the family, or warning of strangers. Constant wagging of the tail seems to be part of their style as well.

As hunting companions, Gordons are frequently described as "personal gun dogs," with emphasis on the word personal. Gordon Setters thrive when they share both hearth and field with their owners. They do not enjoy being part of a kennel string.

Gordons possess top quality "bird sense." They quarter the ground thoroughly and tend to stay close to the gun. Yet they won't hunt for just anyone; a Gordon works best for his or her owner. In other words, the same qualities that make Gordons an ideal family member make these dogs ideal personal hunting dogs.

Health

Gordon Setters are basically healthy dogs. Still, as with many other breeds, Gordons are subject to hip and elbow dysplasia and eye disorders. Gordons are also prone to 'bloat,' (gastric dilatation volvulus) and to several other hereditary disorders. Screening is available for many of these conditions and information about these tests is available from the GSCA.

Care of Your Gordon Setter

In addition to regular exercise, your Gordon needs regular grooming to keep the coat looking its best. The hair under the legs is likely to mat at any age unless it is brushed at least weekly. With puppies, short daily brushing sessions are a good way to get the dog used to being groomed.

Weekly grooming should include toenail trims and ear cleaning. Nails that are too long weaken the feet because they cause the toes to spread, and ear infections can develop in long ears that are not cleaned regularly because the ear leather keeps moisture in the ear canal.

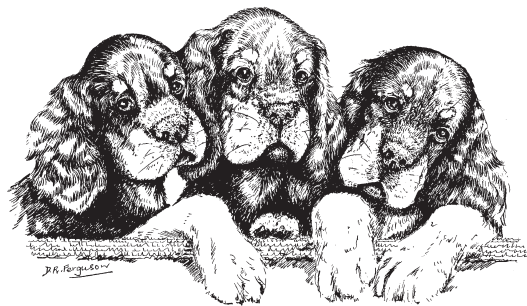
Handling your dog in this fashion helps to socialize him or her and will make it easier for veterinarians to examine your Gordon during a routine physical. Perhaps most important, it allows you to spot problems before they have a chance to develop into something serious.

Even if your puppy arrived "with shots," a trip to the veterinarian is in order. Puppy shots continue through 16-18 weeks of age to provide full protection, followed

by regular vaccinations and continuous heartworm preventative.

Should I Breed My Gordon Setter?

A responsible breeder plans each breeding with the goal of improving the breed, avoiding genetic defects, and producing puppies that are not only better than their parents but one step closer to the ideal Gordon Setter described in the breed standard. Improving the breed means more than just appearance; the standard also describes the breed in terms of temperament and hunting ability. This is why field events, conformation shows, companion and performance events are considered important proving grounds for breeding stock.



So, should you breed your dog? Only with careful research and a commitment to improving the breed.

For more information about GSCA (a national organization of some 1,000 members dedicated to the betterment of the breed), regional Gordon Setter clubs, or the GSCA Rescue program (a nationwide network for placement of Gordon Setters who need to be re-homed), please complete and mail the form on this page or email your request to GSCA Membership Chair Marcia Perry:

mperry167@hotmail.com

More information is available on our website at

www.gsca.org

Gordon Setter Information Request Form

Please send me information about

- the Gordon Setter Club of America
- a local Gordon Setter group in my area
- Gordon Setter Rescue

Mail this form to

**Marcia Perry
13757 Seven Cedars D
Grass Valley, CA 95945-9686**

or send an email request to:
mperry167@hotmail.com

Name _____

Address _____ **City** _____

State _____ **Country** _____ **Postal Code** _____ **Phone** _____

Email _____