

Make your next family pet a Retired Racing Greyhound!

The GREYHOUND is one of the oldest breeds of dogs, dating back to before the era of Egyptian kings and pyramids. Its long legs, sleek body and agility make it perfectly suitable for chasing small wild game which eventually led to the gambling "sport" of Greyhound Racing. Unfortunately, this also contributed to the demise of the Greyhound as a family pet. In the past decade, many thousands of retired racers have been adopted out to pet homes, and people are once again discovering the wonderful nature of the greyhound.

Sighthounds

Greyhounds are a member of the larger sighthound family of dogs, a group which includes Whippets, Italian greyhounds, Basenjis, Salukis, Afghans, Irish Wolfhounds, Borzois, and others. Sighthounds were bred to hunt by sight, not by scent, as do most other dogs. Greyhounds are able to see clearly at long distances. Raised in fenced enclosures on greyhound farms and spending their adult lives in racing kennels, racing greyhounds are unfamiliar with cars and other hazards. Because of their keen sight, inquisitive natures, and tremendous speed, greyhounds need to be on a lead or in a fenced-in area at all times for their own safety.

Size

Adult greyhounds usually range from 26" to 29" in height at the shoulder and may weigh between 50 and 80 pounds. Female greyhounds tend to be smaller.

Coloration

Greyhounds come in a wide range of colors, including brindled ("tiger striped"), black, fawn, blue, and white with ticking (spots). Even within these color groups there is considerable variation. For example, a black hound might have beautiful white "tuxedo" markings, while a white hound might have black, fawn, blue, or brindled spots! They are all beautiful and graceful, and we urge potential adopters to consider personality, temperament, and activity level over physical appearance. We promise you that your hound's coloration will soon come to seem the most beautiful!

Greyhounds at the Greyhound Friends of North Carolina, Inc. kennel are released to us from

racing kennels in Florida, West Virginia and New England. Our greyhounds usually range in age from 2-5 years, although we sometimes have older dogs that were used for breeding purposes or younger dogs that, for various reasons, did not complete their training.

[Click here for Greyhound color chart](#)

Greyhounds in the Home Environment

Because of their short coats, thin skin, and low body fat ratio, grey hounds must live indoors. Although the majority of the greyhounds at our kennel have never lived in a home, most acclimate quickly. They are companionable animals and want, and need, to be a part of family life. They'll be happiest if their crate is placed in a bedroom and they can also have a blanket in a quiet corner of the family room. Their short coats also mean less shedding than many other dog breeds, along with low maintenance grooming. Greyhounds are very clean and need bathing less frequently than other breeds.

Greyhounds and Children

Many Greyhounds are wonderful with children. They are very docile and have extremely sweet temperaments. Racing greyhounds are muzzled on the racetrack, which often gives people the impression of being aggressive in nature. This is not true. Racing greyhounds are muzzled for their own safety and protection and to provide clear evidence for photo finishes.



Of course, children must know how to respect animals and give them their space. Since greyhounds have been confined to their own crates and beds, they are possessive of these areas. Eating and sleeping have been very private times in the past for greyhounds, and children should be taught not to disturb them during these times.

Greyhounds are wonderful playmates for children but have to be taught "to play" like other dogs. Their lives in the past seldom included playtime or affection. Pets of any kind and young children should never be left unsupervised, in order to guard the children's welfare as well as the pet's.

Benefits of Crate Training

Although we do not require that adopters use a crate, we strongly recommend it, for several reasons. Racing greyhounds are used to being kenneled. For most dogs, crates provide a safe, comforting environment for them when their owners are not home or cannot supervise a new dog properly. The key to making the crate work is to make it a pleasant environment: Place in it a fluffy comforter, and always praise your dog when it enters its crate. Give it a special treat to enjoy only when it is crated. A spoonful of peanut butter in a rubber Kong toy will make almost any dog happy! Crate training can also make house training easy, as greyhounds are very unlikely to soil their crates unless they are sick. Crating a new dog when you are gone means that you will not come home to soiled carpets (or chewed furniture)!

If you will be sure to take the dog outside as soon as you return and praise it extravagantly for taking care of its personal business in the proper place, you will soon have a house trained pet! Some adopters choose to wean their dogs from their crates after they have adapted to home life, but others find that their dogs continue to enjoy napping in their crates.

Greyhounds are intelligent dogs that learn quickly. They respond best to positive reinforcement and enjoy praise. Their gentle temperaments make them sensitive to correction, and most very quickly learn what a firm "No" means.

Activity Level

Most greyhounds break into the "easy" life very quickly. Walks are usually enough to satisfy their activity level, although all greyhounds enjoy the opportunity to "stretch their legs." Younger or more active greyhounds will particularly enjoy running in their own fenced in yard, at dog parks, or at organized greyhound play groups.

Greyhounds and Other Pets

Many racing greyhounds never see dogs of a different breed until they leave the racing environment. However, most greyhounds will soon treat other dogs as members of their families.

After an initial visit, potential adopters are welcome to bring their dog to our kennel to test them for compatibility with a particular greyhound. However, please check with kennel staff before bringing dogs of another breed into the kennel environment.

Some greyhounds are cat friendly while others seem more anxious with cats. In our organization, we test our dogs for this purpose. We have many families which consist of cats and greys. We recommend, however, that owners not allow cats outdoor in the yard with greyhounds, as their kitty companions may try to tempt the greyhound to play "chase."

A Few Final Words

Greyhounds make wonderful pets. Many retired racing greyhounds find their happiness and best friends because of your decision to adopt. After you adopt one, you'll agree that they are the best breed you'll ever own. Many Greyhound owners come back for more, sometimes for a companion to their present dog, or because of their own love of Greyhounds.