

# Greyhound

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## Greyhound

The Greyhound is a breed of dog that has been primarily bred for coursing game and racing, but with a recent resurgence of popularity as a family pet. It is a soft and intelligent breed that often becomes attached to its owners. It is the fastest breed of dog on the planet. A combination of long, powerful legs, deep chest and aerodynamic build allows it to reach speeds of up to 72 km/h (45 mph) in less than one and a half seconds, or within 3 strides.

## Description of the Greyhound

### Appearance

Males are usually 71 to 76 cm (28 to 30 inches) tall at the withers and weigh around 27 to 40 kg (70 to 100 pounds). Females tend to be smaller with shoulder heights ranging from 68 to 71 cm (27 to 28 inches) and weights from less than 27 to 34 kg (60 to 75 pounds). Greyhounds have very short hair, which is easy to maintain. There are approximately thirty recognized color forms, of which variations of white, brindle, fawn, black, red and blue (gray) can appear uniquely or in combination.

### Temperament

Although greyhounds are extremely fast and athletic, and despite their reputation as racing dogs, they are not high-energy dogs. They are sprinters, and although they love running, they do not require extensive exercise. Most are quiet, gentle animals. An adult greyhound will stay healthy and happy with a daily walk of as little as 20 to 30 minutes. Greyhounds have been referred to as "Forty-five mile per hour couch potatoes."

## Roles of the Greyhound

### Racing

Until the early twentieth century, greyhounds were principally bred and trained for coursing. During the early 1920s, modern greyhound racing was introduced into the United States and introduced into United Kingdom (Belle Vue) in 1936 and Northern Ireland (Celtic Park) on April 18th 1927 and immediately followed by Shelbourne Park in Dublin very soon after. The greyhound holds the record for fastest recorded dog. At 39.35 mph, it is one of the fastest land animals, and the only Canids that can top its speed are the African Wild Dog, Coyote and Wolves. This means that, bar the American Quarter Horse, it is the fastest widely domesticated animal.

### Greyhounds as pets

Greyhound owners and adoption groups generally consider greyhounds to be wonderful pets. They are pack-oriented dogs, which means that they will quickly adopt humans into their pack as alpha. They can get along well with children, dogs and other family pets. Rescued racing Greyhounds occasionally develop separation anxiety when re-housed or when their new owners have to leave them alone for a period of time (the addition of a second greyhound often solves this problem).

Greyhounds bark very little, which helps in suburban environments, and are usually as friendly to strangers as they are with their own family. The most common misconception concerning greyhounds is that they are hyperactive. In retired

racing greyhounds it is usually the opposite. Young greyhounds that have never been taught how to utilize the energy they are bred with, can be hyperactive and destructive if not given an outlet, and require more experienced handlers.

Greyhound Adoption groups generally require owners to keep their greyhounds on-leash at all times, except in fully enclosed areas. This is due to their prey-drive, their speed, and the assertion that Greyhounds have no road sense. Due to their strength, adoption groups recommend that fences be between 4 and 6 feet, to prevent them being able to jump.

Greyhounds do shed but do not have undercoats and therefore are less likely to trigger people's dog allergies (Greyhounds are sometimes incorrectly referred to as "hypoallergenic"). The lack of an undercoat, coupled with a general lack of body fat, also makes Greyhounds more susceptible to extreme temperatures, and most sources recommend that Greyhounds be housed inside.

Greyhounds are very sensitive to insecticides. Many vets do not recommend the use of flea collars or flea spray on greyhounds unless it is a pyrethrin-based product. Products like Advantage, Frontline, Lufenuron, and Amitraz are safe for use on Greyhounds and are very effective in controlling fleas and ticks.

It is often believed that Greyhounds need a large living space, however, they can thrive in small spaces. Due to their temperament, Greyhounds can make better "apartment dogs" than some of the smaller hyperactive breeds

## Welfare

In the late 20th century several Greyhound adoption groups were formed. The early groups were formed in large part out of a sense of concern about the treatment of the dogs while living on the track. These groups began taking greyhounds from the racetracks when they could no longer compete and placing them in adoptive homes. Prior to the formation of these groups, in the United States over 20,000 retired greyhounds a year were euthanized; recent estimates still number in the thousands, with about 90% of National Greyhound Association-registered animals either being adopted, or returned for breeding purposes (according to the industry numbers upwards of 2000 dogs are still killed annually in the US while anti-racing groups estimate the figure at closer to 12,000.).

Accidents and disease are also common killers among racing greyhounds. In 2005, an epidemic of respiratory failure killed dozens of dogs and left over 1200 quarantined in the U.S., particularly in Massachusetts, Colorado, Iowa and Rhode Island.

The vast majority of greyhounds are bred for racing (registered with the National Greyhound Association or NGA), leading American Kennel Club registered dogs about 150:1. Each NGA dog is issued a Bertillon card, which measures 56 distinct identifying traits with the Bertillon number tattooed on the dog's ear to prove identity during their racing career.

Not all dogs bred for racing are able to do so, due to speed, temperament, or physical problems. Most NGA greyhounds finish racing between two and five years of age. Some retired racing greyhounds have injuries that may follow them for the remainder of their lives, although the vast majority are healthy and can live long lives after their racing careers are over.

There are currently two online databases to easily lookup or search for all past and present registered dogs: Greyhound-Data.com and Rosnet2000.com Dogs can be searched by their Bertillon number, race name, and other attributes. Data includes dog photos, race statistics, and pedigree.

## Health of the greyhound

Greyhounds are typically a healthy and long-lived breed, and hereditary illness is rare. Some Greyhounds have been known to develop esophageal achalasia, Bloat (gastric torsion), and osteosarcoma. Because the Greyhound's lean physique makes it ill-suited to sleeping on hard surfaces, owners of companion Greyhounds generally provide soft

bedding; without bedding, Greyhounds are prone to develop painful skin sores. Greyhounds typically live 10–13 years.

Due to the unique physiology and anatomy of greyhounds, a veterinarian who understands the issues relevant to the breed is generally needed when the dogs need treatment, particularly when anaesthesia is required. Greyhounds cannot metabolize barbiturate-based anesthesia as other breeds can because they have lower amounts of oxidative enzymes in their livers. Greyhounds demonstrate unusual blood chemistry, which can be misread by veterinarians not familiar with the breed; this can result in an incorrect diagnosis.

Greyhounds have higher levels of red blood cells than other breeds. Since red blood cells carry oxygen to the muscles, this higher level allows the hound to move larger quantities of oxygen faster from the lungs to the muscles. Veterinary blood services often use greyhounds as universal blood donors.

Gastric torsion can occur which causes the stomach to twist, heavy vomiting, pain and death within a few hours if not treated with surgery. This condition is common to many deep chested dogs.

## The Greyhound's History

Popularly, the breed's origin can be traced to ancient Egypt, where a bas-relief depicting a smooth-coated Saluki (Persian Greyhound) or Sloughi was found in a tomb built in 4000 BC. Analyses of DNA reported in 2004, however, suggest that the greyhound is not closely related to these breeds, but is a close relative to herding dogs.

Historically, these sight hounds were used primarily for hunting in the open where their keen eyesight is valuable. It is believed that they (or at least similarly-named dogs) were introduced to the area now known as the United Kingdom in the 5th and 6th century BC from Celtic mainland Europe although the Picts and other hunter gatherer tribes of the Northern area (now known as Scotland) were believed to have had large hounds similar to that of the deerhound before the 6th century BC.

The name "greyhound" is generally believed to come from the Old English grighund. "Hund" is the antecedent of the modern "hound", but the meaning of "grig" is undetermined, other than in reference to dogs in Old English and Norse. Its origin does not appear to have any common root with the modern word "grey" for colour, and indeed the greyhound is seen with a wide variety of coats. This may be confusing, however, as the deerhound and wolfhound are more commonly grey in colour and possibly the true origins of the greyhound. However, the deerhound and wolfhound, both being reconstructed breeds, probably cannot have had any genetic influence on the much older greyhound. It is known that in England during the medieval period, Lords and Royalty keen to own greyhounds for sport, requested they be bred to colour variants that made them easier to view and identify in pursuit of their quarry. The lighter colours, patch-like markings and white appeared in the breed that was once ordinarily grey in colour. The greyhound is the only dog mentioned by name in the Bible; the King James version names the greyhound as one of the Four things stately in the Proverbs. However, in the modern version of the Bible this has been changed to strutting rooster, which appears to be a more correct translation of the Hebrew term זָרְזִיר (zarzir).

According to Pokorny the English name "greyhound" does not mean "gray dog/hound", but simply "fair dog". Subsequent words have been derived from the Proto-Indo-European root \*g'her- 'shine, twinkle': English gray, Old High German gris 'grey, old', Old Icelandic griss 'piglet, pig', Old Icelandic gryja 'to dawn', gryjandi 'morning twilight', Old Irish grian 'sun', Old Church Slavonic zorja 'morning twilight, brightness'. The common sense of these words is 'to shine; bright'.

Quelle: Wikipedia.org

## Links:

Greyhound puppies for sale