

GREYHOUNDS AS COMPANIONS



A massive number of greyhounds are bred and rejected every year by the greyhound racing industry. It is estimated that over 10,000 greyhounds are “retired” from racing every year. Sanctuaries are full of these hounds, most will stay there for years before they are homed, while others will die without ever knowing the affection and stability of a real home.



GREYHOUNDS MAKE GOOD COMPANIONS

Greyhounds are very affectionate, mellow dogs who are at their happiest when in the company of people. They enjoy poking their noses at you, and they love lying on a couch next to you. Most are sensible, sweet and happy.

They are intelligent and independent thinkers - though this means they quickly learn to open doors, get to rubbish bins and access kitchen work surfaces with dinner plates on!



Greyhounds are clean with a definite lack of doggy odour! Their coats are short and fine with no undercoat, which means they need little grooming. Due to little fur loss they are good option for people with asthma or allergies. They are not known to be “barking mad” dogs - a lot of greyhounds never bark, at all!

EXERCISE

One of the biggest myths about greyhounds is that they need large amounts of exercise. This is not true. They need no more exercise than any other breed of dog. As with other breeds, they should be walked and, where possible, allowed off the lead at least twice a day. They tend to wear themselves out with a few sprinting runs or chasing after balls or sticks. They will happily sleep for the rest of the day - they are the original couch potato. Because of their backgrounds many greyhounds have no idea about how “to play”. However with encouragement and love they soon get the full enjoyment of chasing a ball instead of just looking at you throwing it as if you were mad!



OTHER ANIMALS

Greyhounds tend to be good around other dogs, however they have a bad reputation with small dogs, cats, squirrels and other small animals. This is because greyhounds have been bred for hunting for many centuries and racing dogs are often trained with live bait of cats, rabbits and other animals. Despite this, with time, patience and common sense it is possible to train almost all greyhounds to no longer pose a threat to cats and other small animals. Training may involve the use of a muzzle. Once relatively used to the cat presence, the muzzle can be removed, though still supervising his/her behaviour. After a few weeks most greyhounds will be relaxed in the presence of cats, however not every greyhound can be converted. It depends on the character of the individual dog. Care must still be taken when outside, as it takes longer to prevent greyhounds chasing a running or fast moving animal.



HEALTH

Greyhounds are a very healthy breed and have few genetic health problems. However as most greyhounds are rejects from racing, many of them have ligament and muscle damage which can lead to arthritis in later life. Intensive racing around tight oval tracks does take its toll on their sleek, slender frames. The life expectancy of greyhounds is between 9 - 15 years.



HOUSE TRAINING

Most greyhounds coming from the track or from sanctuaries will have never been in a house before, however they are very clean dogs and although accidents will sometimes happen, they become house trained very quickly. They look at staircases as if they were Mt. Everest. If dogs do have accidents indoors it should be remembered that physical punishment does not work and actually makes matters worse. Praise them when they get it right. Dogs soon learn that good behaviour equates with attention from you and good things happening, while undesirable behaviour gets no reward. There are many excellent dog behaviour therapists from which to seek advice.



THESE DOGS DESERVE THE CHANCE TO ENJOY LIFE

Greyhounds have historically been cherished and respected for their beauty, companionship and elegance but have now become the hidden victims of the racing industry. Please consider giving a permanent home to a greyhound - a breed of dog that is not hyperactive, aggressive or just a “dumb racer”, but who are sweet, quiet, clean, intelligent and loyal companions.

