

Retired Greyhounds

INFORMATION SHEET

www.gbgb.org.uk

The Greyhound: About the Breed

As an owner of a retired greyhound, you are joining a community of enthusiasts across the globe. A much-adored breed, many will say that no home is complete without a greyhound in it. This Welcome Pack seeks to give you a general overview of the breed and point you in the direction of additional resources so you can find out more.

A noble history

Greyhounds are the oldest domesticated purebred dog, with a rich history tracing back over 8,000 years. There are references to the breed in classical literature and even within several translations of the Bible. They have held a reputation as highly-revered sighthounds and have had many royal and aristocratic owners.



Eos, Prince Albert's beloved greyhound accompanied him to Britain when he married Queen Victoria in 1840.



The thrill of the chase: greyhound racing today is a highly regulated sport.

Their distinguishing feature through the centuries has been their outstanding athletic ability. With their streamlined and muscular physiques, greyhounds are built for speed and outpacing their prey. Until the early 20th century, they were principally bred for hunting and coursing before the invention of modern-day greyhound racing rose in popularity, where greyhounds chase a mechanical hare around a racecourse.

Today, modern greyhound racing is a highly regulated sport in Great Britain and is overseen by the Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB).

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All greyhounds which are registered to race at GBGB-licensed tracks have a registered owner alongside a trainer, who cares for them, day-in-day-out, at their residential kennels. On average, greyhounds retire from racing between the age of 3 years and 6 years. While many racing greyhound owners decide to bring their greyhounds home with them as pets when they retire from the track, some choose to use the expertise of excellent homing centres across the country to find forever homes for them.

Temperament

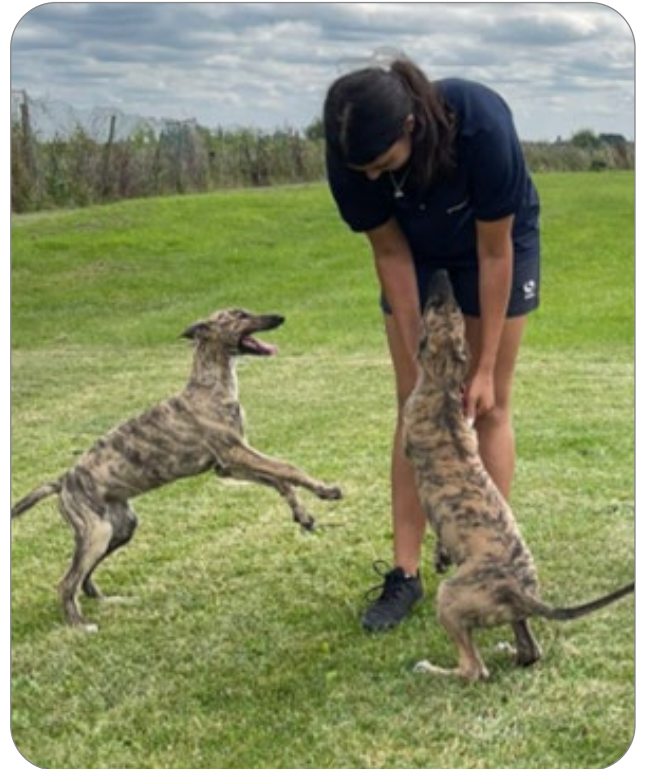
Greyhounds are an intelligent, gentle and kind-natured breed. While every dog will have its own individual character, the majority are laid-back and enjoy human company and affection. Due to their dependable and calm character, they make excellent pets for a variety of individuals and families.

Despite their outstanding ability to run, many greyhounds are content to spend a lot of their day sleeping and relaxing. They require less space than other breeds of a similar size and can often be found curled up around the house; they are affectionately known as the '40mph couch potato'.

Greyhounds are sprinters and while they will all differ in their energy levels and exercise requirements, most are content with two 20-minute walks a day. They should, however, be given the occasional opportunity to run and fully stretch their legs in a safe and contained environment.

Average life expectancy

The average lifespan of a greyhound is between 11 and 14 years.



As puppies, racing greyhounds spend lots of time outside playing with their littermates.

Coat colours

Greyhounds come in a variety of colours from black, brindle, blue, red, fawn or a combination of these colours with white.

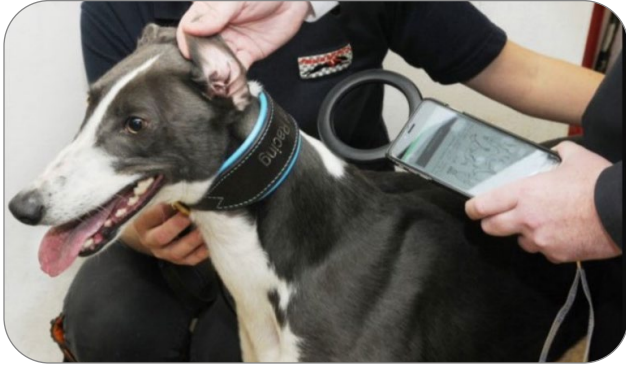
Earmarking

You will have noticed that your greyhound has a tattoo on either one or both of their ears. All racing greyhounds have these unique combinations of numbers and letters which are used alongside their microchip to ensure traceability and integrity throughout their racing careers:

- If your greyhound has one ear (right) earmarked – your greyhound is British-bred.
- If your greyhound has both ears marked – they were born and raised in Ireland.

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A greyhound's earmarks and microchip are checked before they race to confirm their identity.

- If you are uncertain of your greyhound's racing name or trainer, you can contact GBGB directly. We are always happy to help owners find out more about their greyhound's history (contact details below).
- The volunteer-run Facebook group, 'Your Greyhound's History' is a welcoming community of retired greyhound owners, trainers and kennel hands who help provide in-depth histories of retired greyhounds. You may also find out more about your greyhound's littermates.

A star on the sofa

The pedigree of every racing greyhound can be traced back through the generations. Whether or not your greyhound was a top-class racer, they are likely to have champions in their ancestry. If your greyhound was an active racer and had trials or races at a GBGB racecourse there is likely to be filmed footage you can watch – or even mementoes from their career such as racecards and trophies or winners' jackets.

There are a few ways you can find out more about your greyhound's history:

- If you adopted your greyhound directly from a racing kennel, they can let you know more about your greyhound's pedigree and history. They may even have some puppy photos or racing photos and videos which they can share.
- If you adopted your greyhound from a homing centre or charity, they should provide you with the racing name of your greyhound – you can then search for their racing name on Greyhound Data.com to find out more information.

Greyhound Retirement Scheme

GBGB runs the Greyhound Retirement Scheme (GRS) to support the successful retirement of racing greyhounds. While many owners decide to bring their greyhound home with them when they finish their racing careers, some are unable to do so and use the expertise of homing charities throughout the UK.

Under the GRS, a bond – paid for jointly by owners and GBGB – is attached to each newly registered racing greyhound. The bond is unlocked when a greyhound enters an approved GRS homing centre. This funding supports homing centres to care for the greyhound until their perfect forever home is found.



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Find out more:

Here are additional resources which you may find interesting or helpful as you learn more about your new canine companion:

GreyhoundData.com providing information about greyhounds from all over the world with pedigree information going back for the last four centuries. You can update your greyhound's information in their database and create a 'page' for them with information and photos.

Greyhound Stud Book which is the official registry of British-bred greyhounds. All British-bred greyhounds must be registered with the Stud Book to be earmarked and eligible for racing on GBGB tracks.

You are always welcome to contact GBGB directly to ask any general questions about greyhounds or racing.

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