

Retired Racing Greyhounds For Dummies

by

Lee Livingood



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Synopsis

"The next best thing to having an experienced Greyhound owner living with you."—Joan Belle Isle, President, Greyhound Project
"Anyone who reads this book and follows its guidance will have a happier, healthier dog and be a happier, more relaxed dog owner."—Hal and Karen Hawley, Greyhound Friends Northwest
The Greyhound has been celebrated in song and legend for thousands of years. Nowadays, Greyhounds are bred almost exclusively for racing. In the bad old days, prior to the 1980s, dogs that didn't make the grade at the track, and those past their primes, were destroyed. According to official estimates, 60,000 of these noble, mild-mannered dogs were destroyed each year! Fortunately, a number of organizations now exist devoted to rescuing these unwanted dogs and placing them in good homes.
Thinking about adopting a retired racing Greyhound? Or maybe you're already sharing your life with one of these charming animals. Either way, this friendly guide tells you everything you need to know to:
Understand the Greyhound personality
Find a retired racing Greyhound to adopt
Choose the right ex-racer for you and your family
Educate yourself and your retired racer
Give your new pal the diet and exercise it needs
Keep your dog healthy and happy for years to come
With plenty of good humor and straight-talk, Lee Livingood drawing on her forty-years of experience training adult rescue dogs to cover all the pros and cons of being a retired racing Greyhound owner, and she fills you in on:
The amazing 8000-year history of the Greyhound
Deciding whether an ex-racer is the right do for you and your family
Physical and behavioral characteristics
How to get a retired racer used to living in a home and be a companion
Dealing with common behavioral and health problems
Feeding, grooming, and exercising a Greyhound
Fun things to do with your hound
Bursting with expert advice on all aspects of living with an ex-racer, *Retired Racing Greyhounds For Dummies* is must reading for anyone considering adoption or who's already taken the leap.

Sort review

From the Inside Flap
From the Back Cover
"A no-nonsense guide to the joys and pitfalls of adopting the retired racing Greyhound."
Bruce Skinner, Editor in Chief, *A Breed Apart*
Find out about your retired racing Greyhound's special needs
Get the lowdown on keeping your dog healthy and content
Are you thinking about adopting a retired racing Greyhound, or are you already sharing your life with one? This fun and friendly book is bursting with expert advice on all aspects of owning an ex-racer: understanding the Greyhound personality, taking care of your new friend, teaching good manners, and much more.
Praise for *Retired Racing Greyhounds For Dummies*®
"The next best thing to having an experienced Greyhound owner living with you."
Joan Belle Isle, President, Greyhound Project
"Anyone who reads this book and follows its guidance will have a happier, healthier dog and be a happier, more relaxed dog owner."
Hal and Karen Hawley, Greyhound Friends Northwest
Discover how to:
Find a retired racing Greyhound to

adoptChoose the right ex-racer for youManage your new friendEducate yourself and your retired racerMaintain good health, proper exercise, and dietGet Smart!@www.dummies.comFind listings of all our booksChoose from many different subject categoriesSign up for eTips at etips.dummies.comAbout the AuthorLee Livingood has been training adult rescue dogs for nearly 40 years. She lives with two adopted ex-racers, volunteers for her local Greyhound adoption group, and writes for Greyhound and other dog publications.Read more

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Look inside the book

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Love Has No Age Limit-Welcoming an Adopted Dog into Your Home

What people say about this book

Jeanne Smith, "Wonderful book. We are considering adopting a Greyhound. We have always had rescued Labs and know the breed well, but wanted to educate ourselves on Greyhounds. With so many race tracks closing, either temporarily due to the CORONA-19 or permanently, they need good forever homes. We don't jump into adoption and began visiting different Greyhound Rescue websites. Some in the area where we live and some national organizations. The one thing they all had in common was the need to understand the breed and this book is always recommended. There is a tremendous amount of information that can't possibly be digested with the first reading. What we have done is read the first few chapters to fully understand the personality, needs of the breed, and the commitment you will be making. We read the training and is similar to a Lab, but has some great ideas it would have been nice to know with our other pups. I would highly recommend this book before you take the leap of adopting a Greyhound. They do have different needs than the average dog with a winter and summer fur coat, or the need to always be leashed, and no dog should ever be yelled out, but this breed appears to be more sensitive. Great book, well written for those of us new to the breed or a refresher for anyone that is a long time owner, and good for reference to go back to often."

Samuel, "If you want the Greyhound to be a watch-dog or a buddy for your child, this book will dispel such illusions.. I had my first dog when my dad took me to the pound in Loves Park, Illinois, and a frisky medium-sized adolescent dog immediately came over to me. Something--perhaps a fictional character from a cartoon--which one?--prompted me to call her Trixie, a name my best friend for life seemed to treasure and respond to above all others. I proudly announced that she was "part Fox Terrier" and "part Pointer," not sure what the terms meant but remembering what the vet had told my dad. No boy could have had a better friend, no family a more loyal pet, ready to go through hell and high water to prove herself over and over. Once, we lost her at a campground and left without her, my parents consoling me with the promise that we'd come back to look for her the next day. After the car had left the park and retaken the highway, I looked through the rear window, then immediately shouted to my dad, "Stop!" Way in the distance was a speck that my eyes could still discern and that my heart intuitively could identify. Sure enough! Trixie was determined to run us down. On another occasion we had gone with my uncle to motorboat across wide and deep Pelican Lake in Minnesota on an errand to get supplies. It was half way on the way back that I saw a speck moving in the water. I hollered, "Uncle Tony, please stop! I think I see something!" Thank God he heard me. It was Trixie, determined to hang with me, no matter how far, how long, how dangerous and potentially irretrievable the endeavor. All of this is a preface to a retired (and increasingly retiring) professor's request (this time of his wife) to adopt a dog to replace the one that (unbelievably, upon reflection) stuck with me like glue from first grade through college. (During my senior year, I received news about the inevitable--and, later, my father admitted that the immediate cause of

Trixie's death was sun-stroke due to his leaving her tied up too long (to begin with, the neighborhood was sparse enough to allow her to have free run; by the time I was in college, she no longer had the luxury of being a "free ranger"). The creator couldn't have made a better dog. She remained trim and slightly under medium size but had a heart bigger than that of any creature on earth. When I recently screened some of our old home movies, my children commented: "That dog, it shows up in every scene! Was Trixie really like that, Dad?" That was Trixie, the quintessentially all-American "mutt." I would not expect the same "unconditional love" from a greyhound, which has been programmed to have a very different mind and thought process from my old pal. As Mr. Livingood explains, Greyhounds are not for everyone. They're not apt to be as responsive to your commands because from the beginning they've been bred not to be sociable companions but far-sighted predators, capable of spotting prey from distances inaccessible to humans and then to reach their targets in less time than any other canine breed. Whether they might behave differently as pups may remain up in the air. It's next to impossible to get a greyhound pup. They're more likely to be several years old. But the good news is that they're adaptable--extremely so. Exercise them once a week--preferable in an enclosed field with running space, and they can become accommodating lap dogs for the rest of the week, spending time in front of a TV set while on the couch and even sharing bed space with you til morning. They're quiet and easily intimidated--unusual for a "predatory" animal, but a greyhound is not intimidating; it's not a good watch dog. And it's not necessarily the best buddy you could have. So why get a greyhound. For me, it's because of a memory--of my favorite dogs running at our race track, Dairyland Park (Wisconsin has since outlawed greyhound racing, as I recall). I watched them closely, kept records, even bet on one that won 11-12 straight races--and then, it broke its pelvis coming out of the gate. The track's most invincible runner and the area's biggest draw--over with in a split second. And the dog couldn't be restored (today, I'd donate far more than my fair share if there were the slightest chance of saving its life--the least that could be done for all of the excitement and joy (and profits--but, actually, small winnings) that it had given those at the track and the community as a whole. So why get a greyhound? Because of its noble history, its sleek and royal features, its configuration, and tender and peaceful demeanor, and finally as "reparations" for its sacrifices on behalf of our pleasure (and greed). Why not get a greyhound? I can't think of any reasons. They're not for children. They're not for rough-housing. They're friendly, though not in the "love as all" perfect-buddy of an all-American mutt (all the more reason for my adopting an animal not expected to replicate Trixie). The negative case is, with all due respect, my wife's. She's quick to point out that it's a fairly large animal (70 pounds and up for a male; 50 and up for a female). It's not soft and cuddly like many smaller home-bodies (Cockers? Poodles? Beagles? Mutts?) It's downright boney and weird looking. My response is that it depends upon the angle from which you're viewing it. Also, one man's Mona Lisa is another's caricature of Rose-Anne or, going way back, Twiggy. Personally, I love the breed's combination of a shetland pony's size and strength with an anemic-looking, bony vulnerability. In sum, the foregoing reflects what I picked up from reading

this book, but I brought to the book a disposition and bias that was only supported. I doubt the book will persuade fans of a Toy Poodle or Yorkie to look for a Greyhound instead. P.S. As a 2-cat owner, it was reassuring to learn that most greyhounds are perfectly good with feline housemates. With rabbits or hamsters, best tread with more care.”

M. L. Asselin, “Should You and How to Raise a Needlenose. Adopting a rescue Greyhound after the conclusion of its career on the track is not like adopting any other kind of dog, we're told. I don't personally know how true that is; it's been ages--since I was a child--that I've had a dog. But it makes sense: the Greyhound has lived its youth and often much of its adult life in a racing environment, and is used to calling a crate home, living mostly with other dogs in a track kennel, and having periodic short bursts of activity. Bringing an animal from that environment into a home, where it will live intimately with people and have to learn manners, must be significantly different from raising a dog that's always lived in a house. Knowing whether one is ready for that challenge and, having decided one is ready, how to do it is the purpose of Lee Livingood's **RETIRED RACING GREYHOUNDS FOR DUMMIES**. Livingood's book covers the following topics in some depth: (a) whether a retired racing Greyhound is the right dog for one's life situation, (b) preparing one's home for a Greyhound, (c) basic training ("click-and-treat approach), (d) grooming, feeding and keeping your dog healthy, (e) dealing with health emergencies and end of life matters, and (f) traveling with your Greyhound. The book mentions dealing with behavioral issues, and the challenge of raising a needlenose in an environment with young children, but does not go into any great depth on those topics. The prospective adopter will need to seek other resources to supplement the information here; the author provides some print and multimedia resources in the back of the book. (Curiously, Livingood doesn't list other books on raising Greyhounds.) Livingood does a great job inspiring the prospective adopter with the joys of raising a Greyhound without overselling the idea; the Greyhound is not the best breed choice (nor is a dog the best pet) for all individuals and families and in all situations. What **RETIRED RACING GREYHOUNDS FOR DUMMIES** lacks are handy checklists. I would have appreciated checklists for, for instance, (1) what to buy before your Greyhound's arrival, (2) skills your dog should acquire and the steps in training her, and (3) health and general grooming procedures. These are topics covered in the text, but checklists in the back matter of the book would have been most welcomed. As might be expected, Livingood's advice doesn't always agree with other guides to raising Greyhounds on the market. Another excellent, if much shorter book, is Cynthia A. Branigan's **ADOPTING THE RACING GREYHOUND**. One will occasionally find that the two experts do not agree, for instance, whether a wire or a plastic crate is the best choice for your Greyhound friend. To their credit, the two authors admit that some of the advice they dish out is not hard-and-fast and is preference based on their own extensive experiences raising Greyhounds. I would recommend reading these two books (at least), and making one's decisions informed by the views of these experts. (I've never been particularly enamored of the title of this series, and am amazed that we readers would, in purchasing such books, allow

ourselves to be insulted in that way. Then again, maybe I should lighten up. I must say, one of the things I like about this particular volume is the author's name. Livingood is an awesome name.)”

JAS, “Excellent for the greyhound fan!. Interesting book for the greyhound novice or greyhound Pro. Our greyhound had other ideas though and didn't believe we needed it and ate the front cover and chewed a few pages a good read all the same!”

Davies, “Dummy no longer. As a dummy soon adopting 2 retired greyhounds (but having 'owned' dogs before), I knew we would need help for this somewhat specialist hound. This book did not disappoint (despite USA bias).The level of detail (covering most, if not all that you need/want to know) is such that I needed breaks to try and absorb the info' & prevent overload. Repeated reading, particularly re training, helps, but I've not worked out yet the order in which to do things, or, do I go for a more holistic (do lots at once) approach? (Perhaps such guidelines in a separate chapter for this, would be useful) Things are still whirling around in my head , but hopefully all will come together, and if we succeed in turning out 2 happy, reasonably well-behaved greyhounds, this book might be the reason why.”

K. C. Simm, “I Heart Greyhounds. Owning rescued greyhounds for a while now, I suppose I am qualified to look at this book. I can't fault it. Like all dummies guides, it is not. It is well written, informative and extremely useful. The only fault I can lay at its doorstep is the over American bias. All useful contacts are over that side of the pond. There are many useful charities over this side that do sterling work for these wonderful and sometimes much abused animals. That aside a very helpful addition to the library. If you are thinking of getting a rescue greyhound it is a must purchase. You can then teach your dog to get upstairs. Rescue greyhounds don't know what stairs are for. As the author says there are many areas of training that are peculiar to these special dogs that you do need to be aware of. Include other long dogs, and Lurcher's in this statement.”

The book by Lee Livingood has a rating of 5 out of 4.8. 920 people have provided feedback.

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Book Information

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