

# What Can a GERMAN WIREHAISED POINTER Do For You?

The German Wirehaired Pointer was originally bred to be a “versatile” gun dog. They had to be adaptable to a myriad of situations. Not only were they used on many types of game – upland birds, waterfowl, fox, hare, roe deer – but in many types of cover, from the forest to the open fields. Their purpose not only included hunting to put food on the table or for sport, but to be a family companion and often to be the guardian of a small farm or business in town. The standard states “the German Wirehaired Pointer is an intelligent, energetic and determined hunter. It also says that the GWP is a “loyal and affectionate companion who is eager to please and enthusiastic to learn”. What do these things mean in terms of “what can a Wirehair do for you?”

Most people interested in this breed enjoy hunting or competing in events that utilize the dogs’ abilities in that area. However, finding land and opportunities to actually hunt are ever decreasing. Considering the numbers of GWPs registered with AKC, the percentage of “Dual” dogs (Dual Champions or Bench Champions with an Amateur Field Championship or Master Hunter title) is quite high. Those involved in this breed have worked hard to keep it that way, breeding for correct conformation and natural ability in the field. The breed was created to hunt both feather and fur, in varied terrain, to retrieve both on land and in water and to have the capability to track wounded game. These capabilities go a long way in preparing the dog to compete in multiple venues. The AKC provides the GWP with many sports to test its natural instincts in the field. German Wirehaired Pointers are currently one of only four Pointing breeds that are required to earn retrieving points and one of just two breeds that must pass a water test to become an AKC Field Champion. Field trials, both horseback and walking,



are readily available in all areas of the country for those that enjoy the competition and want to see their dogs win! For those who get pleasure out of working with their dogs but are content to see them succeed rather than compete against others, AKC offers Hunting Tests, from the Junior level, which evaluates natural ability, to the Master level, for a more polished gun dog. NAVHDA (North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association) and some other organizations also offer tests for Pointing dogs. All these events allow a dog to be judged according to a written standard of excellence with a pass or fail score. Due to the historical nature of this breed’s versatility and the requirement of its parent club that it must have the ability to retrieve on land and in water, the German Wirehaired Pointer is now allowed to also enter Retriever Hunting Tests as well as those for

Pointing breeds. All these events could certainly keep a GWP and its owner busy for a while!



Not everyone hunts but there are many who admire the breed and think they might like to have one as a pet. They can make excellent pets and housedogs but they have a natural inclination to “do something” besides lying quietly at your feet! Wirehairs are an active and inventive breed! If they’re unable to use their basic talents to hunt, they need an alternative job. If you don’t provide them with a constructive pathway, they’ll find activities on their own to occupy their time. As a pet owner, you may not appreciate a GWP’s idea of entertainment. Left to their own devices, without attention and guidance from their owner, they might delve into redecorating your home or redesigning your collection of shoes! They also have a very strong sense of self, so they need an environment where there is patience, understanding and an ability to set limits. A Wirehair has a strong desire to be part of a family unit and if you include them, they are loyal and devoted companions. They are perfect for a family with an active lifestyle. Something as simple as walking or jogging with “their person”, hiking, camping or going to work with you on a daily basis is satisfying for this breed. If you want to own a German Wirehaired Pointer, you must not only meet their physical need for adequate exercise but also engage their minds in a productive way. They just need to be involved. Isolation and boredom are their worst enemies!

How about general care of a Wirehair? Those adorable, fuzzy faces are very appealing however, they do enjoy cleaning their beards on the couch after they eat. Coat care is important and coats in this breed are inconsistent. Plan on learning about how to keep them looking good from the breeder you purchase your puppy from. Be aware that the best coats are relatively easy but the ones with more coat require more care.

Their excellent scenting ability and desire to “find” make them intuitive tracking dogs. There are many



opportunities to utilize these qualities. Tracking Tests are one venue. Teaching a dog to follow scent and find an object at the end of their quest is a natural pursuit for a GWP. There are also new and evolving sports such as Barn Hunt and Nose Work that are natural activities for these dogs. Besides structured sports, Wirehairs make very good Search and Rescue Dogs and are often utilized by law enforcement as narcotic or explosives detection dogs. Their natural prey drive also makes them good candidates for the C.A.T., or Coursing Ability Test. This is an activity that’s lots of fun for dogs and owners alike. These are certainly not Coursing dogs, per se, but chasing without getting in trouble seems to be something that they thoroughly enjoy!

They are well suited for both Agility and Obedience. But, keep in mind that they have a unique sense of humor and may try and teach you a variation on an exercise! They are definitely team players but often think of themselves as the “MVP”! They are fun

and satisfying to train but they will always tend to keep their individuality. Repetition and drilling may sometime need to be put aside for praise, reward and well-earned play time.

If there is something you enjoy doing, your GWP will gladly have a go at it! Most importantly, they want to be part of whatever you do. Versatility. Adaptable, flexible, resourceful and useful. A German Wirehaired Pointer is a wonderful companion but not without an investment of time, love and resource.

For more information on GWP’s visit the German Wirehaired Pointer Club of America website.

[www.GWPCA.com](http://www.GWPCA.com)

