

# The GAP Guide to Adopting an ex-racing Greyhound



# Foreword

*It has been over eleven years since the adoption of Rosie, the first greyhound, and since then we've helped over 1,500 greyhounds hang up their racing vests and settle into life as a pet. Not surprisingly we've learnt a lot about greyhounds and their owners. In this book we share the many pearls of wisdom we've collected along the way.*

People want to adopt an ex-racing greyhound for different reasons. Many people are attracted to the idea of adopting a greyhound, some people are looking for an adult dog as they don't want to go through the time and training needs of a puppy, others just want an easy to care for, affectionate companion, while for most people the choice of an ex-racing greyhound is combination of these.

People are different too. Some people are experienced dog owners and believe they have already experienced everything there is to know about dogs while others have never owned a dog before in their lives. Homes and lifestyles can also vary wildly. However most new owners have one thing in common and that is the expectation that their new pet will settle in with ease and be a fully formed member of the family within a few weeks.

To their credit many greyhounds make the transition from track to couch potato with startling adaptability, however for some it does take a bit longer.

An ex-racing greyhound is not a puppy but neither is it a 'ready-to-go' adult pet; instead each dog is more like a blank canvas ready to explore the delights of being a pet with its new owner. It will take time to create this beautiful relationship. The dog must learn about the home environment, about living with other animals and about his owner's and society's expectations of him. His new owner will need to understand how his dog is thinking and learn how to convey expectations in a clear and positive manner. Often both will need to learn to relax and have fun to truly make the most of this connection.

Whatever your reason for adopting an ex-racer and whatever your experience with dogs you can be assured that you are starting the most remarkable exploration into a very special human-canine bond.

*Noel*

Noel Brown  
Programme Director

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## Introduction

### *Congratulations on choosing a retired greyhound!*

This booklet is designed to lead you through the adoption process and the first few months of living with your new pet.

The Guide covers basic care and training as well as advice specific to greyhound behaviour. Don't feel the need to do everything straight away – take it slowly. While your greyhound may appear settled within the first few weeks you will find that your dog's personality is continually developing and even a year later you may both discover something new in your relationship.

Keep this booklet as a handy reference guide.

Relax and enjoy the company of your new friend!

# About Greyhounds

*The greyhound is truly a fast friend! Thousands of years of breeding have resulted in today's greyhound – a gentle, affectionate hound capable of running at breath taking speed!*

## History

The greyhound has a long and illustrious history being the favoured pet of the nobility in several cultures. In Egypt the greyhound was valued highly by the pharaohs for its speed, grace and agility and is featured on engravings inside the pyramids. The breed is also the only dog to be mentioned in the Bible. In England in the tenth century, the greyhound was so highly prized that King Howell of Wales made the killing of a greyhound punishable by death, and shortly after King Canute forbade the ownership of greyhounds by peasants and freemen.

These days a good racing greyhound may command a high price but unfortunately most of these dogs have little commercial value as soon as their racing days are over. Their value then is purely in their affectionate companionship.

## Description

Greyhounds usually range in weight between 25-38 kg and in height between 61-75 cm to the shoulder. They have a slender body with a deep chest and narrow waist. The head is



*Diana, Goddess of the Hunt. School of Fontainebleau, sixteenth century. Louvre, Paris, France. Ulrich Loeving/Art Resource, NY.*

narrow and the muzzle pointed giving the classic greyhound shape. Bitches are generally smaller than dogs.

The greyhound coat is short and surprisingly soft. One advantage of owning a greyhound is the lack of smell due to the absence of oil in the coat. The greyhound is also one of few breeds that come in an array of colours. The greyhound coat may be black, white, fawn, red, blue, brindle and white with patches of these colours.

The greyhound is also unusual among canines in that it has very little fat which means, firstly – they are more sensitive to anaesthetics, and secondly – they need a coat in winter!

## Temperament

The greyhound is one of the world's oldest dog breeds. Thousands of years of breeding has made the greyhound what it is today:

- Affectionate and willing to please
- Intelligent and trainable
- Quiet, gentle and enjoys sleeping
- Fast!

The greyhound would traditionally have been a constant companion to its master therefore these characteristics would have been valued and bred for, while unwanted traits such as aggression have now been bred out almost completely.

Many greyhound owners are surprised at the immense love and affection they receive from their hound. Every re-homed greyhound enjoys being a member of the family and will happily snuggle up to anyone who will make a fuss of them. Most adore cuddles and being so gentle can easily be walked by all members of the family.

The gentle and calm nature of the greyhound is notable. Scientific studies have validated what any greyhound owner will tell you – this breed is one of the least aggressive dog breeds you can choose as a pet. The greyhound's placid nature has recommended it for 'pet therapy' and it will happily rest its head on your lap and be stroked all day – therapy indeed! Neither do they bark greatly, as one visitor commented when visiting the GAP kennels, "I couldn't believe how quiet it was!" Greyhounds prefer

to use their eyes when speaking to you – one look from those big pleading eyes will invariably get them the best spot on the sofa!

The greyhound is also intelligent; indeed some may even be called 'sneaky'! Many an owner has wondered what happened to their sandwich when they left the room to answer the phone, only to come back two minutes later to find an empty plate and their greyhound supposedly still fast asleep.

Greyhounds are easy to train as long as you remember the 'what's in it for me?' principle. Your dog will move heaven and earth for love and affection and sometimes food, but will get easily bored if the exercise seems pointless.

Many recently retired greyhounds are confused by the game of 'fetch' – you can see them thinking "why should I go and get the ball if you're just going to throw it away again?"



A beautifully stacked greyhound.





**Greyhounds are born to run!**

Add another dog to give it a racing element, and you're onto a winner!

**“Scientific studies have validated ... this breed is one of the least aggressive dog breeds you can choose as a pet”**

As a member of the sight hound the greyhound was valued for its excellent long distance vision and great speed, and was traditionally used to chase small game such as hare. The instinct to chase is still strong in many greyhounds, however their adaptability and willingness to please means that when re-homed as pets many can be taught not to bother small animals. In fact, as the greyhound is a sprint animal, its other great love is sleeping – so most well fed pets will be too busy snoozing on the sofa to notice the neighbour's cat entering the garden.

Of course every greyhound is different and they'll often break one of the rules, for example, younger dogs

usually need more exercise, some dogs do bark and some even fetch.

If one character trait is particularly important to you then please let us know and we will endeavour to find your ideal companion.



## Racing Life

Just about every greyhound loves to race so while you may be saving a life please don't think you're rescuing a dog from a terrible life on the track. The majority of racing kennels are well kept and the dogs well cared for. You can certainly be sure that if the racing owner put their dog into GAP, then the dog has been well thought of. Although, bear in mind, racing dogs are often moved about so may have had several different owners.

For the very lucky hounds there are even a few really good people out there who take their dogs for an ice cream on the way back from the races! While a few greyhounds may have reached their owners' couch most will have only known a racing life. The change in what their new owner will expect from them is huge. Some of their experiences as a racer are highly beneficial to their new life as a pet and some are not. Most greyhounds adjust with surprising ease, however here are some things from their previous life to bear in mind:

Days have a set routine; feeding and training occur at set times each day.

- They have their own kennel space so sleep is undisturbed.
- They have never been without the company of another dog nearby.
- They will have been used to living in a group of dogs so have a strong sense of pack order.
- They are handled regularly for nail clipping, examined for injuries and even massaged.
- They travel long distances by car and are used to being crated.
- They are taught to walk beautifully on a lead.
- They are taught to chase a small white fluffy lure – usually made of sheepskin.
- And they are never taught to sit or lay down as that could result in a very slow start!

# A Greyhound in your Family

## Greyhounds and small children

Children and dogs can have great fun together. It is often a child who has more time to play with a dog, and owning a dog is a great way to learn about responsibility – but when is the right time to welcome a dog to the family?

The difficult ages are when your child has mobility and curiosity but little empathy, usually between the ages of one and four. As with any breed of dog, it is essential that young children are never left unsupervised with your greyhound, particularly during the early stages when your dog is settling in. Children should be taught to be calm and gentle with the dog and to have respect for its needs and its bed. A “time-out” place is a good idea so that when the dog has had enough he can retreat to his own space for a rest.

Crates can be a very valuable accessory for your home and hound. The physical barrier works better with inquisitive children that may struggle to keep their hands to themselves. Greyhounds, with some training, very quickly learn that their crate is their safe place.

Greyhounds are generally very tolerant of inappropriate handling but



if you feel you will be unable to prevent a young child from jumping on your dog or poking him in the eye with a toy, then please wait until your child is older for both your child's and your dog's safety. By the age of five most children can enjoy their greyhound's companionship and even take them for a walk.

It is not a good idea to allow your new hound on the human furniture. Your greyhound will not be used to being disturbed when they are asleep. If you do accidentally disturb your greyhound they may wake with a start and could bark, growl or snap because they got a fright. This can be very frightening for you and your family. Also greyhounds (like children) thrive on boundaries and consistency. Without boundaries there is chaos and whilst your greyhound is learning about pet life it is important to have these in place.

## Greyhounds and other dogs

Greyhounds generally love the company of other dogs and learn quickly about pet life from their new companion. Most greyhounds have never played doggy games other than chase, and watching them learn how to fetch the ball and even swim can be very entertaining.

Coming from an environment with lots of other dogs, greyhounds have very good social skills with other dogs. This means that you may find one dog is the boss of the toys and another is the boss of the beds. It is important for owners to accept this as normal doggy behaviour and not try to change this social order. Be aware too that while greyhounds and smaller dogs can play very well together, a significant difference in size can make doggy communication more difficult and it is probably best not to let a large bouncy greyhound play with a toy breed of dog in case of accidental injury.

## Greyhounds, cats and other small animals

Considering greyhounds have been bred and trained for hundreds of years to chase small animals it never ceases to amaze us how many of our greyhounds learn to live contentedly with cats. Indeed many owners tell us that their cat is very definitely the boss.

Many greyhounds can and do live with other animals too. There are GAP greyhounds living on lifestyle farms with horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, ducks and chooks. There are also greyhounds that have learnt to live with other indoor pets such as parrots and even house-trained rabbits.

However it should never be forgotten that like other dog breeds, a greyhound's natural instinct is to chase small animals, but unlike other breeds greyhounds are much better at catching their dinner, therefore caution is always wise.



**'Tug-of-war' is always a great game.**



**It's surprising who your friends are!**

The success of training your greyhound to live with other animals will depend on two things – firstly the temperament of the greyhound, and secondly the time and commitment you can give to teaching your greyhound what is acceptable behaviour.

GAP puts a considerable amount of time and effort into ensuring that our new owners are matched with a suitable greyhound for their family and environment after which it is up to you as the new owner to invest some time in teaching your new family member about his role in life.

**“Many greyhounds  
can and do live with  
other animals...”**



**Two of the biggest snoozers of the animal world, these guys are good buddies.**



# The Adoption Process

*Congratulations! You've decided to adopt a greyhound, now how do you go about getting one?*

## **Application form**

The first step to finding your ideal companion is to complete an application form. You can download the form from our website or we can send you one in the post. On receipt of your application we will post out this Guide for you to read.

We ask you to read through this Guide before your home check as it will answer many of your questions about adopting a greyhound, and it may raise more questions which you can then

ask your Home Checker. Please don't expect your Home Checker to know everything about greyhounds though, as their experience will likely be limited to the hound that they adopted. They will be more than happy to refer you to our kennel managers if they are unable to answer your question.

## **Home check**

It is GAP policy to complete a home check on all prospective homes. We will arrange for a volunteer who is experienced in greyhound ownership to come and visit you in your home. During their visit they will complete GAP's standard Home Check

Questionnaire and check your fencing. Many of our volunteers will also bring their own greyhound with them for you to meet.

The purpose of the home check is to ensure all our greyhounds have a safe, warm and comfortable home to go to, and an owner who will love them regardless of any mistakes they may make, and provide appropriate food and exercise for them.

We want you and your greyhound to be happy together! So if you have any concerns this is the best time to let us know.

## Finding your ideal companion

All our greyhounds go through temperament testing to check their sociability around other dog breeds, cats, children and, in some cases, livestock. What we can learn about the greyhound in a kennel environment is limited as there is only a certain amount of time available for each dog, but we get a pretty good idea of their individual needs, and matching to a home is usually very accurate. If they need a longer period of assessment or further training around cats or other animals, they are placed in an appropriate foster home.

With the information from your Application Form and Home Check Questionnaire, and the information we have on each greyhound, our Kennel Managers then set about finding your ideal companion.

Depending on your situation we may have a selection of greyhounds

available and ready to adopt. If you have a cat, or have particular preferences, a short wait is likely while we find your ideal hound.

As the majority of our owners live some distance from the kennels, and our Kennel Managers have a good understanding of each dog's temperament, they will usually recommend a particular greyhound to you. However if you are interested in a dog you have seen on the website, then do contact the kennels to see if this dog might be suitable for you.



The screenshot displays three greyhound profiles from the 'We Need Homes' section of the website. Each profile includes a photo of the dog, its name, age, sex, racing name, and a brief description of its personality. A red banner at the bottom of each profile indicates 'I've been reserved'.

- Babe**: Age: 2, Sex: Female, Racing Name: Safari Party. Description: 'I'm such a honey; so cute, kind and cuddly.'
- King**: Age: 3, Sex: Male, Racing Name: Triple Tee. Description: 'Apparently I'm a bit of a lad - whatever that means! I'm perfectly well behaved on lead and LOVE cuddles and attention but I do need to learn basic manners before I'm a perfect gentleman.'
- Chris**: Age: 10, Sex: Male, Racing Name: Homebush Chris. Description: 'My foster carer describes me as 'a perfect gentleman and a really sweet dog'. I can be a tiny bit shy of strangers but this just makes me even more endearing. Really I'm just a gentle soul.'

The 'We Need Homes' tab at [www.greyhoundsaspets.org.nz](http://www.greyhoundsaspets.org.nz) is a great place to start looking for your new hound.



Finding your ideal companion is very much a two-way process and you are welcome to come and visit your recommended hound before adoption.

Also, if you have another dog, then we ask you to bring them to the kennels to meet their prospective playmate. If you have children we request you bring them with you to meet a hound too.

## **Administration**

On adoption, you are required to sign our Adoption Agreement and pay an adoption fee.

Payment can be made by cheque or through internet banking. Please note this fee only partly defrays the costs of preparing a greyhound for pet life. The following package costs on average over \$500 for each greyhound, so additional donations are always very welcome!

The adoption fee helps cover:

- GAP temperament assessment, matching and ongoing advice
- Desexing
- Vaccination
- Microchipping
- General health check
- Dental scale and polish (applies to the majority of greyhounds)
- GAP Handbook
- Council Registration Fee

Each greyhound will come with their vaccination certificate and a training muzzle which we recommend you use in any new situation where you are unsure how your greyhound may react.

Your greyhound has been microchipped and registered with GAP's local council. You will need to transfer his registration to your council. There should be no charge for this but they may want to see his microchip and neutering certificates.

Last – but not least – when your greyhound has settled in, please send us a photograph of them with their new family! It is very rewarding for everyone involved, including their previous owner, to see that your greyhound has happily settled into its forever home.

We also love to put your updates on the 'We Found Homes' webpage. Most prospective adopters look at the website for information and the best recommendation the dogs have is you!

## **Transport**

When you have found your chosen companion you can either pick up your greyhound from our kennels or, if you live further away, we can help arrange their transport to a location in your area. If one of our volunteers has helped with transporting your greyhound there will be a travel fee to help cover their petrol costs.



# Before You Get Your Dog Home

*As soon as your application has been approved you need to start preparing for your new addition in much the same way as you would prepare for a new baby! We've likened the arrival of an ex-racing greyhound to the arrival of a toddler. Naturally some dogs settle far quicker into home life than others which is entirely dependent on the sort of upbringing they've had or how much time, if any, they have spent in foster care.*

## Things to consider:

- Where is your greyhound going to sleep at night? A warm spot indoors is essential.
- Does he have a 'safe place' away from noisy or boisterous children?
- Do you need to keep your greyhound separate from your cats when you are out?
- Have you considered toilet training?
- We recommend the use of crate training for all of the above – talk to your kennel manager for advice and guidance
- Are there any holes in your fencing or gate latches that need securing?
- If you are out for long periods of time, does he have access to outdoors such as via a dog door?
- Do you need to install 'baby gates' if you want to teach him to stay out of certain areas of your house? Toddler-proof your home!
- Check for hazards around your home and garden: remove spikes or broken branches, wire or glass that may be lying around.
- Put precious things away! Greyhounds love to 'collect' things such as sheepskin slippers, spectacles, remotes and computer cables.
- Have you explained to your children where your greyhound has come from? The story book, *Bo*, is great for explaining your



- greyhound's past to younger members of the family.
- Set your new routine BEFORE your dog arrives. This could include making sure you have time to walk him before you go to work.
  - Some people choose to crate train their greyhound. Crates can provide a safe haven from boisterous children, can help with toilet training, and can be useful for travelling. Crates need to be at least 120 x 75 x 75cm (Never let a child on a greyhounds bed. It should be his safe space)
  - Ask your kennel manager about the option of renting/purchasing a crate for the settling in period or occasionally other owners will have second hand ones for sale.
  - Set boundaries and make sure the whole family understands them. If you don't want your greyhound on your couch or in your bedroom, make sure everyone knows. Remember – mixed messages lead to confusion and stress.



**A warm coat in winter is essential for greyhounds with their short hair and lean bodies.**



Greyhounds prefer soft beds.

## Things you will need

The following items can be purchased through our online shop:

- **Food and water bowls.**
- **Dog bed** – soft and squishy is best. Folded duvets, bean bags or a sofa!
- **Collar** – greyhounds have long slim necks similar in size to their heads, therefore wide collars with martingale attachments are the most secure.
- **Harness and lead** – a harness is the most secure attachment for your greyhound when out walking and is particularly recommended for timid hounds and keen chasers.
- **Coat** – a polar fleece for cold nights inside. Consider a waterproof coat if your hound is outside during the day.
- **Plastic muzzle** – these are essential for training your greyhound around cats or other animals.
- **Food** – take advantage of our Petware ‘Welcome Pack’ and help other hounds find a home

at the same time!

- **Poo Bags** – don’t forget these when out and about!
- **Crate** – these are very helpful for training your greyhound.

## Setting boundaries and routines

Greyhounds are very easy going in many ways but their sensitive and intelligent nature can make them stress-prone if their environment isn’t properly managed.

Establishing routines and clear boundaries about what he can and can’t do are vital to settling your greyhound into pet life. Without them he may become confused, leading to stress and possibly problem behaviours. This can happen at anytime in your dog’s life but is most common within the first few months of taking your greyhound home.

Bear in mind that while racing, greyhounds are used to a strict and very limited routine, as well as an assertive owner who has told them what to do and when to do it. Trainers with large numbers of dogs have limited time so quality one-on-one attention is often minimal. For your greyhound, adapting to the freedoms of pet life can be overwhelming to say the least.

Being consistent about what is acceptable behaviour is crucial and the whole family must know the rules and be prepared to stick to them. In time, as your dog adjusts to his new found freedom, you can relax these rules.



## The First Day

“Keep it simple – your greyhound has a lot to learn about life outside racing.”

*In the initial stages of taking a greyhound into a new home, some dogs will show signs of stress such as heavy panting, listlessness, lack of interest in food etc – these are all signs of fear.*

Even if your new dog has spent time with foster carers, a domestic environment is still a relatively new experience for him. Stairs, vacuum cleaners, washing machines, large areas of glass etc are new to your dog and can cause initial worries. This may also be his first time on his own away from his doggy friends, and he may need several weeks to adjust to his new family.

When you get home, take your greyhound straight into the garden or designated toilet spot and wait until

he relieves himself. Then praise him profusely and offer a treat as a reward. Do this before you take him inside and it will help to prevent him from having an “accident.”

On entering your garden and before you let your dog off leash, check that other animals such as neighbours’ cats etc are given adequate chance to retreat. If your neighbour’s cats are used to wandering through your garden then do keep your dog muzzled outside until the cats have learned to steer clear.

*Keep It Simple* – your greyhound has a lot to learn about life outside racing. Let him explore his new world gradually. Restricting him to your main living areas will help him settle and will also allow you to keep an eye on him. Do not throw a ‘Welcome Home



**Greyhounds are not egalitarian in nature and may take the best bed.**

Party' and invite all your neighbours and relatives to come and give him a hug. In fact the best and often hardest thing to do on his first day is ignore him, so he can get used to his new surroundings in peace.

### **Introducing your greyhound to an existing dog**

If you already have a dog, it is recommended that you arrange the initial meeting between the two in a neutral area, such as a local park or on the street. Go for a walk with the dogs until they are relaxed together and then allow them to smell each other on loose, relaxed leads. Once they appear comfortable in each other's company, take them back to the house and into the garden. Firmly reprimand the dogs if either of the dogs exhibit anti-social behaviour such as snarling etc.

Dogs are not egalitarian in nature

and you will find that dogs will have things they favour above others, be it the best bed, the tastiest treat or being the first out the door. Dogs, like people, have things they really want and then things they think 'meh' and are happy to forfeit. This is perfectly normal behaviour and it is essential that the owner does not interfere by trying to change the order to favour an existing pet. This may upset what the dogs have already figured out for themselves and cause trouble amongst them.

**"The best ... thing to do on his first day is ignore him so he can get used to his new surroundings in peace."**

### **Introducing your greyhound to an existing cat**

Greyhounds which are assessed as being trainable with cats will need some training, even if they have spent time in foster care. Usually our owners find it quite easy, but follow these tips to ensure success!

It's a good idea for your cat and your greyhound to have separate routines, for example, it makes life easier for all concerned if they're not both dashing out of the door together to go outside. Think ahead and if necessary change your cat's routine before your greyhound arrives to ensure clashes are avoided.

Ensure that initial introductions are undertaken inside the house, with the



**A comfy bed makes a happy hound.**

greyhound muzzled and on a lead and the cat on the floor. Do not hold your cat in your arms as this makes it far more interesting to your hound.

Before you begin, arm yourself with a spray bottle set onto a strong squirt setting. At first, practise distracting your greyhound from the cat. When he looks at the cat, call him to you in an excited voice, and give him a treat. When he can easily be distracted allow him to approach the cat and gently sniff it. Again, distract him from the cat and reward him for his lack of interest. If the greyhound lunges for the cat, or attempts to snap at it, reprimand the dog with a squirt in the face with your spray bottle. When the dog behaves correctly and shows no interest in the cat, profusely praise the dog. Gradually allow them to spend more time together until your greyhound regards

your cat as another family member.

If your cat is especially flighty, keeping it at home so that training can take place is essential, and keeping your greyhound well fed and exercised will also help the process. Please note that even if the greyhound completely ignores the cat inside, outside is often another matter and even the most cat-safe dog (of any breed!) may chase cats in the backyard.

Take care to closely monitor the greyhound when it is around the cat during the first few weeks and use a muzzle until you are confident in your dog's behaviour towards your cat.

## **Sleeping arrangements**

The ideal spot for your greyhound's night time bed will vary between homes. However, bear the following points in mind:

- Your greyhound is likely to feel lonely if he can't see anyone and may bark or whine at night. Use a baby gate so he can see his new family around him while staying in his area. Alternatively put the gate across your door so he can see you at night without coming into your room. A radio playing quietly at night can help your greyhound through this period of adjustment.
- If your greyhound is quite clingy then allowing him to sleep in your room may be easiest initially, but it is a good idea to get him used to sleeping on his own in the long term as he



needs to learn independence. Gradually move his bed further away from yours until he is in a more suitable spot.

- Letting your greyhound sleep on the bed is not advisable as he has not learnt yet that it is a privilege and must be earned. Allowing sleeping on the bed may cause problem behaviours as your dog thinks it is his right and may not be too happy when you object.
- If you are not sure about your greyhound's toileting prowess then an uncarpeted floor will be preferable. Letting him out last thing at night and first thing in the morning will reduce the likelihood of night time accidents.
- Crate training is a great way of house breaking and giving your hound a safe sleeping area. Most greyhounds are used to a crate and settle well – your kennel manager can give you more information on crate training your greyhound.







# Feeding Your Greyhound

*Listed below are a number of guidelines which should keep your dog fit and healthy.*

## **The perfect weight**

A greyhound's condition can be quickly assessed by counting how many ribs are visible when he is standing. As a rough guide, he is at his ideal weight when the vague outline of the last three ribs can be seen. His food should be increased if more than three ribs are visible and reduced if the outline of the last rib cannot be seen.

Unlike most dog breeds, greyhounds are more likely to have trouble keeping weight on than losing it. Therefore they are usually fed twice a day and it is fine to give them some

fatty foods. Please contact GAP if you are concerned about your dog's weight.

## **Settling in**

Your greyhound may go off his food for a few days after the adoption. This is usually as a result of stress and should pass fairly quickly as the dog settles into your home. Your dog also may have slight diarrhoea if he is stressed. If the diarrhoea persists then give your greyhound as little as attention as possible to reduce stress and do not feed him for 24 hours. This sounds

Nutrition the only 1 Full the spirit

# Nutrience

*Nothing but the best*

## GRAIN-FREE, MEAT RICH

Nutrience contains top of the line ingredients including sustainably sourced meat and fish protein, fruits and vegetables and nutrient-rich botanicals to provide the best nutrition for pets. Nutrience Grain Free is made in small batches to ensure quality and supports the immune, cardiovascular, digestive and cognitive health of pets.

### FEATURING



Quality Meat  
& Fish Proteins



Fruit &  
Vegetables



Nutrient-Rich  
Botanicals

*Plus*

## NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

including prebiotics, probiotics, glucosamine & chondroitin.

*with* marine source omega-3



very unsympathetic but it does work as many of our owners can attest!

As he settles in and relaxes you can give your greyhound more attention, calling him to you for cuddles and play time.

## **Feeding problems**

### **The finicky hound**

While racing, greyhounds are likely to have been given fresh meat to build muscle and improve performance, it is therefore not uncommon for greyhounds to be finicky in their pet home. If you find your new friend is turning his nose up at his biscuits then try mixing a couple of tablespoons of pet mince and warm water through his food. Canned tuna or even just the oil can make his dinner more appetising as can left over gravy. Also bear in mind that many greyhounds will leave their food if they're not hungry so if he is a good weight then save his food for another meal.

### **The odorous hound!**

If your hound suffers from wind which makes everyone run for cover, then do realise that this is not his natural state. Try changing his food to something that agrees with him better. Alternatively, a more meat-based diet should improve this condition.

Changes should be gradual, giving his digestive system a chance to adjust to the new diet.

Do not feed vegetables especially brassicas, fibrous foods or any other food that is known for causing wind.

## **Water**

Clean, fresh water should be available at all times. **NEVER** leave your dog without water.

## **Complete Foods**

Complete foods are often the most effective, economical and efficient way of feeding your dog and ensuring he gets all the vitamins and minerals he needs. While in the programme, your greyhound has been fed *Nutrience® Grain Free* which is a premium food made from top quality ingredients. Unlike many brands of dog food which are cereal-based, *Nutrience® Grain Free* is meat-based. So while the protein content may be similar to other brands the quality of the protein in *Nutrience® Grain Free* is far superior, meaning easier digestibility and less doggy doos to clean up! Your greyhound's coat and skin will also benefit from the ingredients in this food.

Greyhounds vary considerably in size and energy level therefore their food requirements also vary.

GAP recommends feeding around three cups of *Nutrience® Grain Free* over two meals each day initially and then altering the quantity depending on your greyhound's rib covering. You can also ask our kennel managers for specific advice concerning your dog's eating habits on adoption.

## Welcome Pack

Thanks to the generosity of our sponsor, Petware, we can offer you an exciting introductory pack including an 5.5kg bag of *Nutrience® Grain Free* PLUS several other goodies. This pack is valued at over \$75 and may be purchased for just \$40, with all proceeds donated to GAP.

## Fresh meat & bones

Most dogs love fresh meat. This can be fed either raw or cooked. Chicken pet mince can be purchased relatively inexpensively, and when boiled with pasta and vegetables, it

becomes a much-relished food for the greyhounds.

Mutton flaps with thick layers of meat, fat and bone are ideal for putting weight on your greyhound while keeping his teeth clean at the same time. So are raw veal & brisket bones.

Never feed cooked bones as these are likely to splinter and can seriously injure your dog's gut and intestines.

## Supplements

Speak to your kennel manager about suitable supplements for your greyhound.



Raw chicken carcasses are ideal for cleaning their teeth.



Mutton flaps are great too.



## Food Warnings

Table scraps are a great way to add interest to your dog's diet but do take care around the following food items –

<b>Chocolate</b>	Chocolate contains theobromine which is a cardiac stimulant and a diuretic (increased urine production). Vomiting and diarrhoea are also common. Theobromine will either increase the dog's heart rate or may cause it to beat irregularly. Death is quite possible, especially with exercise. Cocoa powder, Dark and Cooking chocolate are the most toxic forms. A 10kg dog can be seriously affected if it eats a 1/4 of a 250g block of Cooking or Dark chocolate. A dog needs to eat more than a 250g block of Milk chocolate to be affected. Obviously the smaller the dog the less it needs to eat to create these adverse effects.
<b>Coffee, coffee beans, tea bags</b>	Drinks/foods containing caffeine cause many of the same symptoms chocolate causes.
<b>Macadamia nuts</b>	Dogs develop muscle tremors, weakness and paralysis. Luckily the muscle weakness, while painful, seems to be of a short duration. Most dogs recover from the toxicity.
<b>Onions</b>	Whether fresh, cooked or powdered, onion (and garlic to a lesser degree) can destroy red blood cells and cause anaemia. This is due to the sulfoxides and disulphides found in the onion.
<b>Tomatoes</b>	Can cause tremors and heart arrhythmias (irregular heart beat). Tomato plants are the most toxic but tomatoes themselves are also unsafe.
<b>Potatoes</b>	Avoid raw potatoes especially green looking ones and also potato peelings. Cooked potatoes are fine.
<b>Avocado</b>	The fruit, stone and plant are all toxic. They can cause difficulty breathing and fluid accumulation in the chest, abdomen and heart.

<b>Fruit</b>	Fruits are acidic and sugary but in moderation can be beneficial to your dog. Although, pear pips, plum, peach and apricot kernels, and apple core pips contain cyanide which is – as we all know is poisonous.
<b>Salt</b>	Excessive salt intake can cause kidney problems.
<b>Mushrooms</b>	Various species of mushroom are toxic to dogs so it is safer to avoid all varieties. Eating mushrooms can cause the dog to go into shock.
<b>Grapes &amp; Raisins</b>	These are toxic causing sickness and diarrhoea in small amounts, and renal failure in larger quantities.
<b>Xylitol</b>	A commonly used sweetener used in “sugar free” products. Can cause liver failure. Xylitol is found in many sugarless chewing gums.
<b>Dairy Products</b>	Use caution with dairy products as they are high in fat and could cause pancreatitis, gas and diarrhoea. Usually non-fat plain yoghurt is safe in small amounts.
<b>Grains</b>	Should not be given in large amounts or make up a large part of a dog’s diet, but rice in small amounts.
<b>Mouldy food</b>	Don’t allow your dog to rummage through the rubbish as mouldy food contains toxins that may cause serious illness.

Since many of the signs of toxicity are similar, call your veterinarian immediately if your dog becomes distressed, lethargic or in pain. Vomiting or bloody stools are also possible signs of poisoning.

The good news is that in most cases, treatment can be successful if administered in time.

**NEVER give your dog Paracetamol  
or Nurofen for pain relief.  
It is harmful to the liver and can cause death.**



## House Training

*If your greyhound has been in foster care then his toilet training will be well underway, however it is advisable to adhere to the following procedure as he will still have a new home and routine to adjust to.*

If your greyhound has never been indoors before, then please follow this routine. It is far more effective to spend time making sure he gets it right from the start. It is a good idea to prepare your house by keeping bedroom doors closed and use baby gates to restrict your dog's access to areas which are unsupervised.

Toilet training should begin as soon as your new dog arrives home. After the greyhound's initial visit to the garden, it is advantageous to take your new pet for a short five-minute walk in the same place every hour on the first day, every hour and a half on the second day, and every two hours on the third day. Praise and/or treat him

for every toilet done during this time. It is unlikely that the greyhound will have had a chance to have an accident inside and at the end of this three-day regime, he will be thoroughly familiar with the idea that any "toilets" are to be done outside.

While he is indoors you should also keep an eye on his movements, any indication that he is about to toilet – ie sniffing, circling, and – for boys, raising a leg; for girls, preparing to squat – should be met with a firm "NO" and then take your dog outside and praise profusely when he toilets in the correct place.

If your dog does have an "accident" indoors, bear in mind that punishment



does not work and can actually make matters worse. Anticipate when your dog needs to go and take him outside and praise him when he does what is expected of him. Any accidents inside the home should be washed thoroughly in a solution of biological washing liquid or other cleaning agent designed to take the smell away. Take him to the toilet immediately after food, when he gets up, and before he goes to bed and, of course, in between.

Your greyhound may never actually ‘ask’ to go outside because in his former life in racing kennels he was only let out at set times by his trainer. However, pacing up and down, whining, scratching at the door or circling are all signs that your greyhound may need to go to the toilet. Greyhounds are generally very clean animals and they learn quickly, so house training is rarely an issue.

“Greyhounds are generally very clean animals and they learn quickly, so housetraining is rarely an issue.”



## General Care

### Bedding

Your greyhound will appreciate having his own bed. Due to their lack of body fat, greyhounds require plenty of soft bedding to make them comfortable. *Soft Sacs* are available through the GAP shop, or a folded duvet complete with cover makes an inexpensive option. Alternatively, if you're planning on allowing your greyhound on the furniture, then buying a second hand sofa will ensure you still keep your place!

### Grooming

Generally greyhounds need very little grooming however most dogs will change their coat on adoption. This

is due to a number of factors. Stress brought about by a change in their routine often results in hair loss and dandruff, but once settled into their new home, a greyhound may then grow a new coat as a result of living indoors, improved diet and reduced stress levels.

This often leads new owners to wonder about the easy care nature of the greyhound coat and ask why their greyhound looks nothing like the gleaming hounds belonging to other owners – the secret is merely time, however aiding your greyhound's transition through dietary treats and a good rub over with a soft rubber brush is fantastic for bonding.

Some greyhounds do have fine fluffy fur and these can moult copiously at the changes of the season. GAP recommends using a soft rubber brush ('zoom groom') or rubber gloves to pull the dead hair from the coat.

Greyhounds can also suffer from dandruff which can be very noticeable on black dogs. This can be brought about by stress – many black greyhounds make a fine show of snow when taken to GAP promotional events, but it may also be caused by a lack of good quality oils in the diet.



**Greyhounds can be amazingly tolerant!**

You will find you rarely need to bath your greyhound but when they have been playing in the mud then use a gentle dog shampoo or eucalyptus wool wash. If it is cold outside, put an old towel in the bottom of the bath to stop then slipping and wash them down with warm water.

## **Nails**

All GAP greyhounds have their nails trimmed before being adopted. Nails should not be allowed to grow too long. If the tip of your dog's nails are touching the floor, often characterised by a tip-tapping sound when walking, then they should be trimmed. Long nails can cause great discomfort as well as nail bed infections, ripped nails and possibly corns (which greyhounds can be susceptible to).

Some greyhounds can be sensitive about having their nails trimmed possibly because they've been cut too short in the past. However, if your greyhound wriggles or yelps then stay calm and firmly hold your dog's paw while trimming. It is very unlikely that your greyhound would snap at you however if you are concerned then using their muzzle will give you extra confidence and authority.

GAP recommends the use of a Dremel grinder, or similar, to grind your dog's nails to a suitable length. Ideally grinders should be around 15-20,000 RPM. Alternatively visit your vet or pet store and ask about their nail trimming service.



**Nails that need clipping.**



**Short nails are much more comfortable.**

## **Muzzles**

If you have small animals, we strongly recommend that you use a muzzle on your greyhound to help in the initial introduction and training period.

Muzzles should also be used when your greyhound is likely to come into contact with any livestock or other animals unless you know him to be entirely trustworthy.



**Use a muzzle for training with small animals and group runs.**

## **Coats**

Greyhounds have a very thin skin and fine coat with very little fat underneath, therefore a coat is essential in cold weather. Polar fleece coats are available from the GAP shop. These are suitable for wearing indoors – if you're wearing a thick jumper then your greyhound will probably need his coat too. For outdoors, a weatherproof coat will be required especially if your greyhound has access to outdoors while you are out.



**Weatherproof coats are fleece-lined with a high collar to keep long necks dry.**



## Exercise

*Although greyhounds are the fastest breed of dog, they achieve their incredible speed in one all-out sprint and do not have a lot of endurance. This means they are content to spend a lot of the day sleeping and have a reputation as ‘couch potatoes’. However, many do enjoy playing, and a 30 minute daily walk is essential to maintain the fitness of these canine athletes. Longer walks and runs can also be enjoyed but your greyhound may need to increase his stamina gradually.*

Most greyhounds enjoy a walk around town and as the majority walk so beautifully on a lead it's a great way to show them off. Our owners are regularly stopped by people curious about the breed so be prepared for a short walk turning into a long one. If you'd like to help promote GAP then please request a promotional vest which will help your dog's buddies find a home too.

One of the joys of owning a greyhound is watching them run at full speed. It is often said that the greyhound takes flight and this is because when running they are in contact with the ground for only a short amount of time. A good run is also good for your dog's mental and physical health and dogs that are able to enjoy sprinting regularly tend to be better behaved. However, a note of



caution, GAP recommends that you do not let your greyhound run off leash in a public place until you are totally confident in your ability to control your dog and then please use discretion in choosing where you exercise your greyhound.

## **When in a public area please be aware of the following:**

### **Prey drive**

All greyhounds have been bred and trained to chase small, fluffy, fast-moving objects. While all GAP greyhounds have passed their sociability with our small dogs assessment, this has taken place in a controlled environment. Do not even consider letting your greyhound off-leash unmuzzled in a public place unless you are totally confident in your greyhound's attitude to any small animals they may encounter. Even then the friendliest greyhound may be unwelcome in the dog park as small dogs can find a greyhound playing chase intimidating.

In town be aware that – to a dog – a walk is not 'exercise' but an adventure and therefore in town, even when on lead, keep an eye out for cats lurking under bushes by the footpath. If your dog is a keen chaser please use a harness and even a muzzle if he is

likely to come across cats on his walks.

Where more than two greyhounds are run off leash we require you to use their muzzles, regardless of their temperament, due to the heightened excitement of greyhounds running as a pack.

### **Hazards**

Despite their excellent eyesight greyhounds often do not see small objects at speed. Wire fences, particularly the 3-strand un-battened type common in rural areas, and forward facing sticks or posts, can result in some very nasty injuries. You will also find your greyhound has absolutely no road sense whatsoever and may even try racing and cutting in front of cars – your hound will be much faster in town. Please keep your dog on a lead near roads or where there are unfamiliar hazards.

Our more sensitive greyhounds can be scared by loud and unfamiliar noises, particularly gunshots, but also trucks and busy streets. Strange objects such as balloons and kites can also spook some greyhounds. When frightened, greyhounds can be surprisingly adept at reversing out of their collars, and



disappearing into the distance. If your dog is sensitive please use a walking harness and introduce them to noisy and busy places gradually.

## **Nipping**

Running greyhounds together on a deserted beach is a joy to behold, however please be aware that some greyhounds resort to unfair practices to get their nose in front! A quick nip on their mate's shoulder will give them an open wound and you a vet's bill. Please note this is not aggression and only occurs with the excitement of racing. We recommend you use their muzzle if this is a problem.

## **Lost Greyhounds**

Ensure you have a collar with identification tags on your greyhound at all times. If your greyhound gets lost, first advise GAP as most animal shelters will call us if a greyhound is handed in to them. Also call animal control, all local veterinary surgeries, the police, neighbours, schools and shopping centres.



**Clear identification on your dog is vital.**





# Training

*Greyhounds are intelligent dogs and may learn all sorts of tricks in time, but in the first few weeks do take it slowly and let him enjoy discovering his new environment.*

## Reprimanding your dog

It may seem unusual to start a chapter on training with how to reprimand your dog, but unless he knows right from wrong, training will be impossible. Greyhounds are a sensitive breed and some people really struggle with the thought of upsetting their hound, but being too soft is the quickest way to 'spoil' your dog.

You can easily show your disapproval with a firm but harsh voice tone which is often more effective than just the word 'No' spoken calmly as he may not understand immediately what

'No' means.

Timing is everything and the reprimand must be given immediately the behaviour occurs so that they associate their behaviour with the reprimand.

If, for example, your dog jumps up to the kitchen bench to help himself to the Sunday roast, say "Aach!" loudly to get his attention. Then call him to you. If the behaviour occurs again quietly but firmly remove him. Most greyhounds will quickly learn to do the right thing if they end up outside in the cold for half an hour.

Never reprimand your dog after the event. For example, if you come in and find your greyhound lying in his bed with a chewed up book, do not scold him as he will associate the reprimand with lying quietly in his bed and not with the book he was chewing some time earlier.

Of course the converse is also true so when praising your dog, make sure he knows he's a good boy with lots of excitement and fussing!

## **Socialisation**

Socialisation is a very important part in teaching your greyhound about life outside the kennels. Greyhounds know all about other greyhounds, but very little about other dog breeds, other animals, and the many experiences that exist outside kennel life. Teaching your greyhound manners is essential if he is to enjoy the pleasures of socialising.

Let him adjust slowly to his new environment. Make sure you are feeling relaxed and at ease and introduce him to new experiences one at a time. Greyhounds are intelligent and sensitive and your dog will be very aware of your feelings. Hence, if you are stressed, they will also become stressed, resulting in a vicious circle of escalating tension.

For example, when you are out walking, if you feel anxious when an unfamiliar dog approaches and tighten the lead, chances are that your dog will sense your anxiety and see the other dog as a threat. This increases the likelihood of them growling at the dog thus confirming your anxiety. The result is that the owner's behaviour rather than that of the dog can easily create a problem with socialisation. It doesn't take long to train your dog to respond in an aggressive manner to anything new, but likewise when



**Introductions are taken slowly.**



**Each gets a chance to say "hello".**

approached correctly he can soon learn that new encounters can be fun!

The easiest solution to this problem is simply to use your dog's muzzle when first out and about. That way you can ensure you remain relaxed and confident and he will learn to see unfamiliar dogs as new friends. "Pet in training" dog vests may be borrowed from the GAP shop to help explain why your dog is muzzled.

## **Sit/Down**

Many greyhounds find the sit position uncomfortable, so teach them the down position unless your greyhound sits naturally. Whichever method you use, once your greyhound understands the object of the exercise, he will usually willingly oblige, especially if a treat may be involved!

If your greyhound does sit naturally then sitting on command is relatively

easy to teach. From a standing position draw a tasty treat backwards over his nose, so that in order to follow it with his nose his bottom must go down. If he wriggles his whole body back then position him against something he cannot go back against like a wall or piece of furniture until he gives way to the sit position.

To teach the down position from sitting, hold a tasty treat on the floor in front of them and as they lean down, draw it towards you until they stretch down into position.

If your greyhound does not sit naturally then you need to teach the down position from standing. This usually takes more time for your greyhound to understand what you are asking him to do. The easiest method is probably learning by association, so every time you see your greyhound



**The ability to recall your dog gives you confidence and builds trust between you and your hound.**

lying down of his own accord you say “Good boy, down” until he associates words with the action. To hasten the process you could show him a treat and then simply hold it until he gets bored and lies down, whereupon you instantly command “down” and give him the treat. This does require some patience in the initial stages so perhaps do the crossword while you’re waiting!

For alternative training ideas and advice do ask for a recommended obedience instructor.

## **Recall**

The ability to call your greyhound’s name in a wide open space and have him speed instantly to your side gives every owner a special thrill and sense of pride. Whereas, calling your greyhound’s name in a wide open space to have him continue trotting into the distance is highly embarrassing to say the least. So why do dogs behave differently and what can owners do to improve their chances of recalling their hound?

*There are many reasons why your dog might not come sprinting back to you:*

**Firstly**, his obedience is dependent on his respect for you. Are you someone to look up to, who is fun and fair and worth listening to? And have you trained your dog to understand the “Come” command?

**Secondly**, is coming back a good experience or does he get told off and kept securely on his lead when he

does return? He’s going to be pretty reluctant if ‘bad’ things happen when he does come back.

**Lastly**, remember he is a sight hound and if he focuses in on something interesting on the horizon, then you have minimal time to attract his attention before he’s at full speed and disappearing rapidly into the distance.

### **So, to make your recall work reliably you need to:**

- Train your dog to understand the “Come” command
- Make coming back fun
- Be aware of things that might attract your dog’s attention.

Start your recall training at home with minimal distractions and build on that as your hound learns what is expected in his new life.

“For most greyhounds, treats do have to be tempting to inspire them ....”

If you’ve just adopted your hound or have changed his name then do make sure he knows his name first. You can usually test this by standing in the kitchen or by his food bowl and calling him.

When calling him do make your command clear. Dogs are quite capable of understanding sentences, but keep it simple to begin with and use his name followed by the command, eg. “Lucky” – “Come.” When he reaches you then give him a treat and lots of praise.

For most greyhounds treats do have to be tempting to inspire them, so try cubes of cheese or slivers of steak. If these fail, find something that does motivate your greyhound; most are only too pleased to be close to their owners but if your hound's attention is still focused elsewhere then try distracting him by throwing a can filled with small pebbles close to him. This noise will make him turn around, giving you the opportunity to call him enthusiastically to your side.

Once he is used to coming to you at home and in the garden then practise somewhere less familiar, for example a friend's garden, until you feel confident enough to let him off-lead in a larger area. Dog training clubs have suitable areas for practise so join a class and see if you can practise at other times too.

At some point you will want to let him off-lead for a run. Watching your greyhound racing his buddies at full speed is an amazing sight and even more enjoyable if you know he will come back when called. When running him off-lead do make sure it is in a safe area where there are no cars, cats or other small fluffies, or hazards such as wire fences.

It does take time for your greyhound to learn all that's expected of him and he does need to be taught, so take it slowly and don't expect him to know things automatically. Bear in mind that – like people – you only get back what you put in. The more time you spend together the more fun that time will be.

## Cars

Nearly all greyhounds love travelling, which is not surprising as they have done a fair bit going to race meetings. However during the racing careers dogs have usually been taught not to jump into vehicles. This is because of the possibility of them injuring themselves before the big race.

Therefore you may find your greyhound happily puts his front feet in the boot of your car and then waits for you to lift the rest of him in. If you are not happy doing this then you will need to train him to jump up. This can usually be done using treats and teaching him the command “up” in an excited voice.

## Obedience Classes

Obedience classes are invaluable for teaching both *you* and *your dog* about



A soft mat, a good mate, and a comfy car.



basic commands. They are also an excellent opportunity to socialise your greyhound with other dog breeds.

Ask your local coordinator for a recommendation and if possible try and find an instructor who is used to working with greyhounds.

## **Play**

A greyhound's favourite game will always be chase, but in the company of other breeds many can learn to play other games such as fetch, doggy wrestling and swimming. Once your dog has grasped the concept of a game he will usually prove to be quite adept at it, however most hounds will only play for short periods of time before retiring for a snooze.

Most greyhounds love toys, especially the fluffy squeaky kind which they enjoy throwing into the air and generally being quite silly with. Many of our dogs have collections of these which they keep in their own toy baskets.



**Some dogs like a collection of soft toys.**



**Some prefer balls or squaky toys.**





## Health

*Establishing a good relationship with a vet is a must for any pet owner so take some time finding the right vet for you. A good vet will be happy to spend some time with you discussing treatment options and won't charge a fortune for unnecessary work. Ask GAP owners in your area for recommendations or inquire at your local vet clinic to establish their knowledge of treating and dealing with greyhounds.*

It is a good idea to register your greyhound with your chosen vet and ensure they have your dog's information and weight recorded. We recommend you take your greyhound for a general health check six months after adoption.

### **Pet Insurance**

Veterinary costs can be an expensive part of pet ownership so consider taking out pet insurance. Insurance policies can differ considerably

though so do check the exclusions and limitations carefully.

### **Anaesthetics**

Greyhounds react differently to anaesthetics than other dog breeds because of their higher muscle-to-body weight ratio, and it is very important to make sure your vet is aware of this.

Older types of anaesthetic have killed greyhounds, however more modern anaesthetics are fine. If in doubt, ask your vet for a more sensitive

anaesthetic but be prepared to pay a little extra.

## **Coat and skin**

Bald thigh syndrome is a relatively common greyhound problem causing far more concern to owners than their dogs. The exact cause of this lack of bottom fluff has not been established. For some greyhounds it may be stress related and the fur will often grow back in time.

Occasionally it may be related to thyroid function.



**Bald thighs are a common syndrome.**

Greyhounds do have a low thyroxine count though so do not treat with medication unless your greyhound is being overly lethargic and showing less interest in life than normal.

A poor coat and skin, brittle nails and cracked paws can be the result of zinc deficiency. If you have had your greyhound for longer than six months and he's shown no improvement, then ask your vet about zinc supplements.

## **Fleas and worms**

Check your dog regularly for fleas, especially where cats share the same household. Frequent scratching, raised red patches and small dark particles of flea dander in the coat are all signs of an infestation. To check whether the black particles are actually from fleas, dampen them with water and if it is, it will turn dark red from the blood.

All dogs are treated with Advocate on entry to GAP as this product treats fleas. Bayer kindly donates Advocate for this purpose. GAP recommends the use of Advocate for the treatment and prevention of fleas, lice and mites. Fleas can multiply quickly especially in warm weather therefore Advocate should be used every four weeks when fleas are apparent.

Your greyhound has been treated for worms with Drontal kindly supplied by Bayer. Regular worming benefits the health of both your dog and yourself as some worms can be transmitted to humans by animals.

## Stitches

At some point in his life your greyhound may need surgery, following which you may find he is adept at removing stitches. Most vets will supply Elizabethan collars to prevent a dog reaching its stitches however, because of the greyhound's long neck, these are often ineffective. A plastic muzzle could be an option instead. Your greyhound may be very offended at having to wear his muzzle but please do persist as another trip to the vet may result from being too soft-hearted.

## Tail infections

Some of our dogs are so happy that they literally wag their tails to pieces. Greyhounds have very little covering on their tails and seem to have very little sensitivity too. Many will wag their tails against hard objects with such enthusiasm as to cause bleeding. While the skin will heal, further wagging usually breaks it open again and if left unattended the wound may become infected. The end of the tail is hard to bandage, however we

have had some success with taping a plastic hair curler around the affected part to protect it. Or, alternatively, try strapping the tail to one of the back legs. In severe cases it may be necessary for the vet to remove the end of the tail. Vaseline can be useful in helping to seal minor tail wounds.

## Teeth

Dental problems are common among greyhounds, therefore give your dog plenty of treats designed to keep his teeth clean (see page 25).

Dog chews, large raw bones, raw chicken necks and frames and dry food help to maintain good dental hygiene. Bad dental health is indicated by bad breath, inflamed gums, and rotting and tartar covered teeth.

While all GAP greyhounds have their teeth checked and any necessary dental work completed before adoption, tartar can build up quickly if dental hygiene is not maintained. A considerable build-up of tartar should be removed by your veterinarian. If your dog needs a general anaesthetic



Good, clean and healthy teeth.



Signs of tartar build up and decay.

for any other reason, it is a good idea to ask your vet to clean your dog's teeth at the same time.

## **Vaccinations**

Your new greyhound will have been vaccinated and may require booster shots. *Your Kennel Manager will explain all vaccinations at time of adoption and it is important to talk to your vet about these.*

## **Weight**

Keeping your greyhound at his ideal weight is important for his health. Being such a slim sleek breed it is easy to see whether their feed should be adjusted.

Just count how many ribs you can see. Your greyhound is at his ideal weight if you can see the vague outline of the last three ribs. Any more then increase his food, if you can't see the outline of the last rib then cut back a little.







Flea



Larvae



Roundworm



Hookworm



Whipworm



Otodectes



Sarcoptes



Demodex\*



Lice

## Protect your pets - inside and out

**Advocate®**, the most complete all-in-one parasite protection for cats and dogs, protecting against common internal and external parasites.

Available from your vet without consultation.



Comprehensive parasite protection



**advocate®**



## Common Problems

*Most behavioural problems with greyhounds fall into one of two categories – problems in understanding what is expected, and separation anxiety. The greyhound is one of the least aggressive dog breeds. Signs of aggression are usually related to problems with lack of training and socialisation, whilst signs of destructiveness, barking and inappropriate toileting are often caused by separation anxiety.*

### Problems in behaviour

Dogs are social animals and believers in social order and consistency. They also operate in a “what’s in it for me” mind set. Clear rules that the whole family follows are very important especially at the start of a greyhound’s new life. It gets very confusing for a hound if some family members let him

jump all over them and even on the couch and the next family member gets angry at this behaviour. Consistency is key!

Whilst the new addition is learning the ways of his new world he may test boundaries to simply learn them. An example of this is trying to take all the food. Once he has finished his meal,



he will then try to raid another dogs bowl. It is important to remember dogs think now. We know another meal will be served in about 12 hours. A dog, especially a new dog, does not. Food is essential to a dog so it is usually at the top of his wish list. If you have more than one dog you can avoid issues at feed time by feeding your new greyhound separately from the rest of the pets. Integrate him with the rest by bringing his bowl closer to the others a little bit each day.

Sleeping spots are very important to a greyhound as he likes sleeping a lot! So a comfortable resting place is imperative. A dog's bed should be his sanctuary, a place to relax and rest and not be disturbed. But not completely out of the action either - a corner in the living room is usually a good place. Greyhounds are not used to being disturbed at all in their sleep and as they adjust to their new pet life it is very important that they are not disturbed when they are asleep on their bed. Obviously your couch and bed are very comfortable so you may find your new hound makes a beeline for these in the early days. The key is to watch him and as soon as you see him starting to climb on or even looking like climbing on the furniture, distract him with an 'uu-uh' and re-direct him to his bed. Then praise and even treat him for lying on his bed. It is very important that you don't let your new hound on the furniture (if you want to at all) until you have some basic control and can get them off easily.

Dogs come in all sorts of personalities and some are more adaptive than others. Our problem cases are often those who are confused from receiving mixed messages from different family members and are consequently under a great deal of stress. These are often dogs where one minute they are encouraged to beg or be at the table as they are given tit-bits from their owners' plates. The next minute (usually when friends come for dinner) they are growled at for this behaviour.

Fortunately the answer to these problems is usually very simple and quick to implement. With a little bit of thought and some understanding of the dog's way of looking at things, it is easy to correct and prevent problem behaviours.



The command "wait" before eating.

## Teach respect

Whatever your dog's attitude he should always show respect to people and be well-mannered around other dogs. It is perfectly acceptable to have him on the sofa or even share your bed, as long as he respects your decision when it's time to get down.

Actively teach your dog to understand and obey commands such as 'get down', 'out', and 'wait' and

always give praise when he gets it right. Practise getting up and down from the sofa on command. Make him wait a moment before tucking in to his dinner. Make sure he stands nicely before putting his lead on for a walk. Teach him 'say hello' when meeting other animals so he knows he should greet them as a friend.

The more opportunities he has to listen and obey you, the more he will



It is perfectly acceptable to have him on the sofa or even share your bed, as long as he respects your decision when it's time to get down.

look upon you as his leader and the greater the bond between you.

## **Separation Anxiety**

Dogs are chosen as a pet because they make great companions. Historically humans and dogs had a lot in common – both lived in groups and enjoyed hunting and playing together. So it's not surprising that dog became man's best friend, and up until very recently, a dog and his adopted family could be found enjoying each other's companionship throughout the day.

In the last decade or two though, family life changed as everyone started going out during the day. Not surprisingly a dog now feels lonely by himself during the day.

Fortunately for the greyhound their predilection for sleeping long hours has made the breed an ideal pet for today's society. However they are a sensitive and affectionate lot and do need to feel secure and loved before they will contentedly snooze through

the day on their own.

Even then they have their limitations, and six hours on their own five days a week is probably enough for most dogs. After that a second greyhound to play with is a good idea or a visit from a dog walker.

Alternatively, opt for a modern solution to this modern problem and send your hound to doggy day care once or twice a week. If you're away from home ten hours or more five days a week then another type of pet altogether is probably a better option.

## **What is separation anxiety?**

Separation Anxiety occurs when a dog becomes so distressed at being separated from his family pack that he exhibits problem behaviours such as barking, destructiveness and inappropriate toileting when left on his own. The behaviour normally starts shortly after being left and may continue for some time. It is not done on purpose to annoy the owner



**Separation anxiety exhibits itself in many ways, even a favourite toy isn't safe!**

– rather, the dog obtains some relief from his actions – for example chewing is known to release calming chemicals in the brain.

Separation anxiety can also be seen while the owner is still home with less confident dogs following their owners around the house in the first few days/weeks after adoption. The new owner often exacerbates the problem by seeing it as cute and rewarding the dog for his behaviour with lots of cuddles and affection. On the positive side these dogs are usually very responsive and easy to train.

### **How can it be prevented?**

GAP assesses the dogs carefully while at the kennels and will aim to match owners with dogs which will adapt easily to their situation. However all dogs should be encouraged to feel confident on their own.

When your dog arrives it is important to give them some space and time on their own to adjust to their new surroundings. Time on their own doesn't mean being shut away, but rather time on their bed without interaction. It is all too common for a new family to swamp their dog with attention over the first couple of days and then disappear to work on a Monday morning and expect their dog to be fine. For a new dog, both the excessive attention and the sudden desertion is a lot to cope with.

Instead, when he arrives let him explore the garden and living area of the house and then show him his bed

and praise him when he lies down on it. Then ignore him for an hour or so even if he wanders round, and let him get used to your family's activities going on around him.

Over the course of the first few days intersperse fun time with time on his own. Leave him on his own in a room or outside for short periods of time always aiming to return before he starts to worry. For a clingy dog this may only be a few seconds while an independent type may not even notice your disappearance.

When coming and going don't make a fuss of him as he needs to learn that your departure and return is no big deal. If this is going well then leave the house for half an hour and observe his reaction. Gradually build up the time spent out of the house until he has adjusted to your normal routine. This might mean taking time off work, coming home for lunch or arranging for someone else to visit during the day. It is far better to manage this adjustment period carefully than close the door and hope for the best!

**“Whatever your dog's attitude he should always show respect to people and be well mannered around other dogs.”**

## **My dog has separation anxiety**

If you think your greyhound has separation anxiety then please contact the GAP kennels for specific advice.

Dogs which suffer from separation anxiety usually show it in the first few days, however dogs which have been part of the family for some time can become anxious when there is a change in routine. Returning to work after a period of unemployment is a classic example.

Unfortunately there is no magic cure and the owner of a dog which is chewing the door, toileting in the bedroom or barking incessantly will have to go through the process of getting their dog used to being on his own. Starting with very short periods of time and gradually extending it until the dog is confident being left.

First check that nothing else is upsetting your hound; for example a urinary infection can cause toileting accidents, unusual loud noises such as bird scarers or large trucks going past can cause stress, and flea allergies can make your hound nibble at his skin.

The worst of a dog's hysteria is often during the first hour after departure.

Diffuse the emotion of your leave-taking with a good walk. Then, after feeding him, scale back your attention to the point of ignoring him during the last 15 minutes before you leave. Turn on the television or radio and, with no more than a whispered "Be Good," leave the house.

Some dogs will read the signs of imminent departure and become agitated. If packing a lunch or shuffling papers in your briefcase distresses the



**There's nothing better than a good romp with your mates.**

dog, desensitize him to these or other actions by doing them frequently and at other times so they lose their direct connection to the dreaded departure. Presenting a toy stuffed with goodies can draw the focus of less seriously afflicted canines toward cleaning out the item and away from your leaving. Kong toys work well as canine diversions. The seriously afflicted dog, however, will not give the treat a second look until his pack is together again.

If your dog's separation anxiety is severe you may need to seek professional help from your veterinarian. While drugs are never an answer in themselves they can help calm your dog so that effective training can take place.

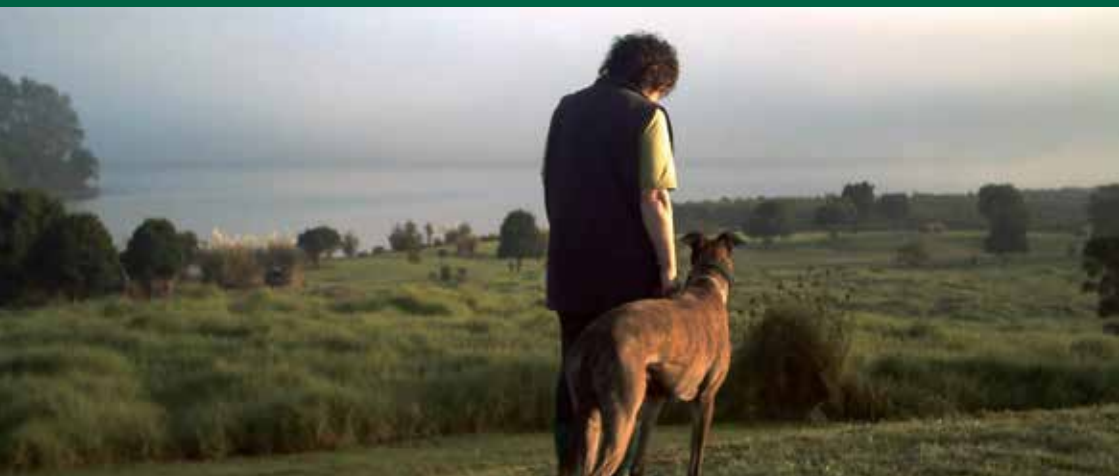


Being tired out after a long walk can help with separation anxiety.

### Tips for easing anxiety

- Make sure all the family give him walks, treats and affection so he is less likely to see your departure as the end of his world.
- Give him access to a window so he can see what's going on outside.
- Leave the radio/TV on so he can hear people talking.
- Keep him occupied with a Kong stuffed with peanut butter or scatter treats around the house/garden/yard for him to find.
- Tire him out by taking him for a long walk/run before you leave.
- Use baby gates which allow him to see you but not be with you when you're at home to get him used to being on his own.





## When your greyhound leaves

*Many people ask us what is the expected life span of a greyhound but this can be a difficult question to answer.*

A greyhound that has had a relatively comfortable and stress free life with good diet and exercise is likely to live longer than one that hasn't. Good genes will also help. We do know of greyhounds that have made it to the ripe old age of 17, while others have departed at a relatively young age. Illness and injury can also take our pets away from us long before their time is due.

Older greyhounds bring their own special joys, and constant devoted companionship is yours in return for a comfortable bed, a regular meal and very little exercise. However at some point you will need to make the decision on euthanasia. This can be a very difficult time and fraught with emotion, but your vet will guide you through the process and advise you when your greyhound is suffering and should be put down. To make it easier

for both you and your hound, ask your vet if they will come to your home, or alternatively ask them to put your greyhound down while he is still in your car. You may choose to take his ashes home to keep or perhaps bury under a favourite plant; you could also consider a pet cemetery.

The loss of your greyhound will leave a hole in your life which people cope with in different ways. Some may choose to adopt a second dog straight away, while others may need a period of mourning. While your pet can never be replaced, another greyhound will give you a focus and will also honour his memory as well as give a second chance to another hound.

Our best advice for humans and greyhounds alike is to make sure you enjoy the time you have so that those who are left behind have good memories to cherish.



## What Next?

*So you've fallen in love with this endearing breed and want to meet up with other hounds and owners as well as help more greyhounds find loving homes?*

### **Become part of the GAP community**

GAP is more than an adoption centre - it's a community of greyhound lovers too. Our supporters enjoy walks and social occasions together. They read GAP's monthly email newsletter, *Hounding Around*, and they share photos and stories on Facebook.

### **Become a volunteer**

There are many ways you can help GAP find more homes for these wonderful dogs:

- **Become a foster carer**

Help the dogs adjust to pet life before going to their permanent home. Foster carers usually look after the dogs for around 2-4 weeks. All food, equipment and advice are provided.

- **Help at events**

GAP attends events throughout New Zealand to introduce the public to the ex-racing greyhound and explain why they need homes. Volunteers bring their dogs along and enjoy

talking to the public about their pet.

- **Help with transport**

GAP greyhounds go to homes throughout the country and we always need people to help with their journey.

- **Help with fundraising**

If you can organise a sponsored event or help collect donations then please contact us. We're always interested to hear about new and exciting fundraising ideas as well as tried and tested ones!

- **You tell us!**

GAP supporters have volunteered to help with everything from sewing to marketing campaigns. You tell us what your skills are and we'll tell you how you can help!

## **Donate**

GAP is a registered charity and whilst we are fortunate to receive

funding from the racing industry, we still need donations to help us cover the costs of re-homing. Even though we charge an adoption fee this doesn't cover the actual cost to the programme of re-homing a greyhound, so the more dogs we rehome, the more donations we need.

***As well as a one-off donation, please consider:***

## **Steadfast Friends**

Join *Steadfast Friends*, and make a regular donation to help with our kennelling costs and veterinary expenses. Our *Steadfast Friends* receive a 10% discount on purchases made through the GAP shop and receive a free subscription to *Fast Friends*.

## **Make a Bequest**

In the future we'd like to own our own GAP kennel base. Help make this a reality so that future greyhounds will always have a place to go after racing.

Volunteering at events can be very rewarding, such as the Christchurch Christmas Parade.





## Recommended Resources

### Websites

[www.greyhoundsaspets.org.nz](http://www.greyhoundsaspets.org.nz) - official GAP website

[www.greyhound-data.com](http://www.greyhound-data.com) - For your greyhound's family tree.

[www.thedogs.co.nz](http://www.thedogs.co.nz) - To find out about your hound's past life and check out their racing career.

### Facebook

Join us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GAPNZ](http://www.facebook.com/GAPNZ)

### Twitter

Follow us on [twitter@GAPNZ](https://twitter.com/GAPNZ).

### YouTube

Subscribe to our YouTube channel [GreyhoundsAsPetsNZ](https://www.youtube.com/GreyhoundsAsPetsNZ).

# Contacts

Please see the Meet The Team page on the GAP website for contact details.

[www.greyhoundsaspets.org.nz](http://www.greyhoundsaspets.org.nz)





