



GREYHOUNDS AS PETS

ADOPTION INFORMATION PACK





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ABOUT THIS BOOK

This booklet has been compiled in order to help guide you through the early stages of adopting your greyhound. It is the compilation of responses to the most commonly asked questions from new owners.

The following entities need to be credited for some of the information in this booklet:

- Greyhound Adoption Program of Queensland
- Greyhound Adoption Program Victoria
- Greyhound Adoption Program of Tasmania Inc.
- Greyhounds As Pets New Zealand
- Greyhound Adoption Program South Australia
- Greyhound Adoption Program New South Wales

Please note the information contained in this booklet is aimed to assist you throughout the adoption period, but does not replace or exceed professional assistance.

For more information contact Greyhounds As Pets on 9445 5399 or email gap@rwwa.com.au.



ABOUT US

Greyhounds As Pets WA (GAP) is a program of Racing and Wagering Western Australia (RWWA). Our mission is to promote, encourage and facilitate greyhound pet ownership to the wider community through the provision of safe, healthy greyhounds to homes throughout Western Australia.

Racing and Wagering WA is committed to ensuring that the best levels of care are given to greyhounds throughout all stages of their lives, through a program of investment, education, monitoring and regulation. When a greyhound retires from the racing industry, at any age, RWWA will aim to achieve every healthy and behaviourally sound Greyhound being rehomed.

ABOUT THE GREYHOUNDS WE RE-HOME

The Government of WA has recently amended the Dog Act 1976 to enable appropriately retired racing greyhounds to return to the community as pets without having to wear a muzzle. Exempt greyhounds are granted a “green collar status” and issued with a green collar after passing the National Temperament Testing Assessment. This is great news for greyhounds and helps to dispel the myth that greyhounds are vicious – something we know is far from the truth.

The Dog Regulations 2013 prescribed Greyhounds As Pets WA as a training organisation for the purposes of exempting a greyhound from wearing a muzzle in public. What this means is that when you adopt a greyhound from GAP you will



be issued a green collar and identification card which proves your greyhound does not need to be muzzled in public. GAP is the only greyhound rehoming group recognised in WA able to issue green collars.

The National Temperament Testing Assessment is a rigorous behavioural program developed jointly by all official GAP programs around Australia. It was written by a qualified Animal Behaviourist, in conjunction with each State GAP program and draws upon the collective decades of experience of these organisations. This helps to ensure that when you adopt a greyhound from GAP it will make a great pet and a wonderful addition to your family.

Additionally, all greyhounds re-homed through GAP are sterilized, wormed, vaccinated and microchipped.

BY LAW GREYHOUNDS MUST BE KEPT ON LEASH IN ALL PUBLIC PLACES

Your greyhound will be issued a green collar making it exempt from wearing a muzzle in public, however it is still law for all greyhounds to be kept on leash in public places – this includes off leash dog parks. Greyhounds are sighthounds and are very fast, even a greyhound with great recall can see something in the distance and run off to reach it. A sighthound in chase mode can easily run onto a busy road or through a fence without realising the danger. So for the safety of your greyhound

and in keeping with Western Australian law please keep it leashed unless on a safe, enclosed private property.

ABOUT THE MUZZLE

If you are fostering to adopt or fostering a greyhound you will be issued a wire muzzle. Until you have adopted your greyhound and have received a green collar from GAP, your greyhound is required by law to wear the muzzle when in public – this includes when on walks. Once you have been issued a green collar your greyhound will not need to wear a muzzle in public. However, should you wish to leave the muzzle on when you are introducing your greyhound to other pets, children or new environments – such as a busy dog park - you can rest assured your dog is used to wearing one, it does not hurt and they can drink normally while wearing it.

LEARNING TO BE A PET

Most greyhounds make the transition to a home environment quickly. During the foster period (4-6 weeks) your greyhound will adjust to their new life, however like all dogs, training should be ongoing once you adopt your greyhound.

In the initial stages of taking a greyhound into a new foster or forever home, some dogs may show signs of stress such as pacing, heavy panting, listlessness, lack of interest in food and licking of the paws – these can all be signs of anxiety, and should settle in a few days.

In many respects adopting a retired greyhound is similar to bringing a new puppy home. Life in a domestic environment is a new experience for your greyhound, be patient in allowing your greyhound time to settle in and you will be rewarded with a loving pet.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING WHEN YOU BRING A GREYHOUND INTO YOUR HOME:

1. Don't overwhelm your new dog by trying to be with it all the time, go about your usual routine in a calm manner and allow your greyhound time to watch, see and investigate on its own terms so it can settle in comfortably.
2. Retired racers typically don't have experience with fridges, washing machines or other appliances. While your greyhound is getting used to its new home, be conscious of the noises that household appliances make and understand that this may frighten, confuse or upset some greyhounds. With a bit of reassurance your greyhound will soon understand that these appliances are neither threatening nor frightening.
3. Most retired greyhounds also have limited exposure to glass doors and windows, so make a point of showing them to your greyhound so they know they can't barge through them.
4. While in a kennel environment your greyhound has not had to learn food manners, this means they are likely to steal food from tables or benches. Be patient and consistent with your greyhound as you teach them what is and isn't acceptable.
5. Decide on the house rules including where your greyhound is allowed; what the greyhound's walking/feeding routine will be and who in the family is responsible for what (include the children by giving them 'doggy responsibilities'). This should be done before your dog arrives and start out how you mean to finish.
6. Set up your greyhound's sleeping area before it arrives. This should be in a quiet area, away from drafts and the main thoroughfare of the house, but should also be in an area where they are part of the family – they like to see what is going on around them.



7. Remember your greyhound has spent their life in a kennel situation. They may not feel comfortable with having the run of the house when they first come home. Once your greyhound is feeling more settled and is housetrained you can give them access to other areas of the house. Initially it is advisable to put barriers at doors to confine your greyhound to certain areas of the house. Perhaps they are permitted in the kitchen, laundry, and family areas but restricted from the lounge, office or bedrooms. By confining your greyhound in the initial stages you will make them feel more secure, it will also make housetraining easier.
8. Try to put your greyhound on lead and take them out for a toilet break several times a day. Remember to lavish praise on your greyhound when they go to the toilet in the correct place. Over successive days the time between toilet breaks can be increased and by following these steps, confining, attending to and praising your greyhound, your dog will become house trained in no time. If your dog has an accident in the house, be patient and persevere this is as new to them as it is to you. We have included more details on toilet training in the next section of this booklet.
9. Dogs flourish on routine, so try and keep things consistent. If possible feed and walk your dog at roughly the same time every day. This helps your dog feel secure.
10. Every dog, family & situation is different. What works for one may not work for another. Try not to set your expectations too high. Although some greyhounds will fit in straight away, others may take a little more time. Please be patient and allow your greyhound to settle in at their own pace; they will learn your house rules as they settle in.
11. Although your greyhound is used to being handled, initially they may not feel comfortable being hugged and cuddled like you might expect from pet dogs. Be aware of your greyhound's reaction to being touched and if they back off or appear uncomfortable stop what you are doing.
12. Read the foster carer's comments in the Foster Carer Evaluation booklet carefully as they should have documented how your greyhound reacted to a home environment and stimuli.
13. Read the information in this book carefully – it has been selected to help you through common teething problems such as separation anxiety, toilet training and introducing your greyhound to other pets and children. For more information on anything in this book or for information on feeding, traveling with your greyhound, grooming, basic obedience, veterinary care of other behavioural issues please contact GAP.

CHECKLIST FOR A HAPPY AND WELL BEHAVED GREYHOUND

All dogs have behavioural needs, and if these needs are not met, they can suffer through fear, lack of mental stimulation, anxiety, or confusion which can lead to undesirable behaviour.

To ensure your dog leads a well-balanced life and continues to be a good pet, check off the following points:

- ☐ My dog has received adequate socialisation with other dogs and people. It will receive ongoing socialisation for the rest of its life.
- ☐ My dog has received basic obedience training and will receive ongoing training for the rest of its life. This will enable my dog to understand my commands and allow me to control my dog in difficult situations and exercise my dog easily.
- ☐ My dog receives regular exercise, play and human contact. This will provide my dog with adequate mental stimulation.
- ☐ My dog has been encouraged to develop some independence and has been gradually accustomed to being left alone. This will help to prevent anxiety and behaviours associated with separation.
- ☐ My dog receives clear and consistent guidelines for its behaviour and understands its position in the household. This prevents confusion, anxiety and aggression and makes my dog more manageable and responsive to my commands.

RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP

Owning a dog can bring a lot of joy and happiness, as well as providing benefits to human health. Responsible pet ownership is all about ensuring your dog is a well-adjusted member of your family as well as the broader community, and avoiding any potential problems that may arise.

HEALTH

It is important that your dog:

- Has an annual vaccination – your greyhound has recently had a C5 Vaccination;
- Has an annual health check;
- Receives monthly flea and heartworm control – A month's supply is included in your Adoption Bag
- Receives monthly intestinal worm control;
- Is desexed – your greyhound has been sterilised prior to being adopted;
- Is microchipped – your greyhound has been microchipped. We will send you a pre-paid form to change your greyhounds microchip details when we issue your green collar.

TRAINING

- Undergoes obedience training – call Pupi on 1300 887 158 or visit www.pupi.com.au to enrol your greyhound in a free four week AMREX Pupi class near you;
- Is kept on a leash at all times when in public in accordance with West Australian Law.





A SMOOTH TRANSITION FOR YOU AND YOUR GREYHOUND

TOILET TRAINING

House training in greyhounds is generally not a problem. When first brought into the home, your greyhound should be treated in a similar manner to a puppy being house trained. After the greyhounds initial visit to the garden, we suggest you take your new pet for a short five minute walk (or visit to the garden) every hour or so on the first day, every two hours on the second day and every three hours on the third day. During this time it is unlikely that your greyhound will have had a chance to have an accident inside and at the end of this three day regime they should be familiar with the idea that any toilet areas are outside.

If your dog does have an “accident” inside please bear in mind that punishment does not work and can actually make matters worse. Punishing your dog for these “accidents” can cause unneeded stress and can lead your greyhound to urinate discretely in the home. Instead, try to anticipate when your dog needs to eliminate and take it outside and praise it when it does what is expected. Any accidents inside the home should be washed thoroughly with an odour eliminating product, such as “Pet Goe” or “Delete”, this will take the smell away and prevent the dog from returning to the same place.

Be sure to take your greyhound to the toilet immediately after food; when it gets up in the morning and before it goes to bed as these are the most likely elimination times. Do not

expect your dog to be able to spend an entire day locked indoors without having an accident – toilet training takes time and patience; but thankfully only a very small amount of both. If you leave your dog inside while you are out, you should turn the dog out for toileting before you start getting ready to leave.

Pacing up and down, whining, sniffing intently on the ground, scratching at the door and circling are all signs that your greyhound may need to go to the toilet. Greyhounds are generally very clean animals and actively avoid soiling their sleeping quarters. They also learn quickly, so housetraining is rarely an issue, just be patient.

DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Destructive behaviour is a term that humans apply to any behaviour they find unacceptable, such as digging or chewing. However most of this behaviour is normal dog behaviour.

Be mindful that destructive behaviour can be the result of boredom, lack of physical exercise or separation anxiety, amongst many other things. Try investing in a Kong and stuffing it with treats to keep your dog entertained while you are away. You could also use uncooked bones or provide your dog with a sandpit to dig in.

Remember you should never reprimand a dog for any destructive behaviour after the event. Dogs do not understand the reason behind your

anger and will just end up scared of you if you hit or yell at it when you arrive home to find a hole in the garden. Find out the cause of the behaviour and treat it appropriately or consult a professional animal behaviourist.



GREYHOUNDS AND CATS

Greyhounds are sighthounds and have been bred for thousands of years to chase things. If you own a cat you will need to spend time introducing your greyhound to your cat and teaching them not to chase. Some greyhounds can be taught to get along with cats and live alongside them peacefully, but for the safety of your cat we recommend constant vigilance during the early months of co-living. We recommend leaving the muzzle on your greyhound if it is in your garden with the cat. You should also never leave them alone together until you are certain they are comfortable with each other and the greyhound will not chase the cat if it moves quickly. You need to constantly reinforce to your greyhound that it is not OK to chase cats.

The first time you introduce your greyhound to an existing cat try following these steps:

- Ensure that initial introductions are undertaken inside the house, with the greyhound on a lead and muzzled and the cat on the floor (not in your arms). Before you begin, arm yourself with a water spray bottle or a water pistol (have the nozzle set to a strong squirting spray, not a mist).
- Allow the greyhound to approach the cat and gently sniff it while you still have hold of the lead. If the greyhound lunges for the cat, or attempts to bite at it, reprimand the dog with a firm NO, followed by a squirt in the face

with the spray bottle (make sure you don't squirt the cat).

- When the dog behaves correctly and shows no interest in the cat, praise the dog profusely, you may even like to provide it with a small treat or food reward.
 - Please note that even if the greyhound completely ignores the cat inside, outside may be a different matter. Even the most "cat tolerant" dog may chase a cat in the backyard, especially if the cat runs away from the dog. Take care to closely monitor the greyhound when it is around the cat during the first few weeks. For added piece of mind don't forget that you can always put your greyhound's muzzle on, think of it as a training device until you are certain your greyhound and cat will get on.
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GREYHOUNDS AND OTHER DOGS

Greyhounds may not be used to the behaviour of other breeds of dogs, and they may not have interacted with them in a way we would expect of other pet dogs. Most of the time this is about allowing the greyhound to become familiar with other breeds. Your greyhound has been tested around small dogs while at GAP and proven to be sound.

However, even after you have been issued a green collar, while you are still getting to know your new greyhound we recommend walking them with their muzzle especially if you are expecting to interact with a lot of new dogs. Remember the first few weeks of home life is full of new experiences for your greyhound and they can often feel overwhelmed. Wearing a muzzle in the short term can give you piece of mind.

Introducing your greyhound to an existing dog

If you already have a dog it is recommended that you arrange the initial meeting in a neutral area such as a local park or on the street. This way your new greyhound isn't entering your current dog's territory. Allow them to smell each other while they are still both on loose leads. Go for a walk with the dogs until they are relaxed together, and then take them back to your house or garden. Firmly reprimand your dogs in a low, deep voice with a stern NO if either dog exhibit anti-social behaviour such as snarling or persistent animated growling.

GREYHOUNDS AND CHILDREN

As with any breed of dog, it is essential that young children and babies are never left unsupervised when around your dog. Children should be educated to be calm and gentle with the dog and to have respect for its space particularly its bed. A dog's bed provides the dog with a "timeout" area so that when it has had enough it has somewhere to retreat for a rest. Children should be taught not approach a sleeping or resting dog. Instead, ask the children to call out the dog's name and have the dog come to them. Remember the adage "let sleeping dogs lay".

Unlike adults, children tend to move rapidly, not always in a coordinated manner, and may shriek out in high-pitched tones. To a young excitable greyhound, this may be an incentive to play. Such a desire may be exacerbated when rollerblades, skateboards or bicycles are involved. The majority of greyhounds are excellent with children in the home environment, preferring to walk away if harassed by a persistent child, but as with any breed of dog, close supervision is essential.

Children should be involved in obedience training with their dog. It is important that the dog understands its position in the household hierarchy is below any children. Your dog can be taught its position through regular obedience training. However, it is often a case of teaching a child how to behave around the dog as well as training the dog how to behave.



To establish this hierarchy with babies and small children we suggest an adult holds the child while giving commands to the dog to follow. If the child is old enough to follow simple instructions assist them to do basic obedience training with your greyhound.

Children should be taught to always ask permission before touching a dog, they should never approach from behind as this could result in a dog biting from surprise. Children should also be taught not to try to pat a dog on the top of the head as this may be a threatening gesture to the dog. Ideally the dog should be given time to sniff the stationary child by moving towards them; not the children moving towards the dog.

Some general tips for dogs and children:

- Children should not follow after a dog that is trying to move away from them, the dog may feel threatened and bite in self-defence.
- Children should be taught not to hug and kiss dogs. While for humans this is a show of affection for dogs being grabbed around the neck can make them feel threatened.
- Children should be taught to handle animals gently and carefully.
- If a child is feeling uncomfortable or threatened around a dog they should be taught to stand still, arms by their side and turn sideways to the dog. Squealing or running away will most likely excite a dog and exacerbate the situation.



SEPARATION ANXIETY

What is Separation Anxiety?

Separation anxiety is when a dog has formed a strong attachment to somebody or something and the dog becomes anxious when that thing is taken away. Most domestic dogs suffer from some form of separation anxiety.

There are three main types of separation anxiety:

1. Anxiety when owner is absent.
2. Anxiety when separated from owner by a barrier.
3. Anxiety when the dog doesn't get owners attention. This can include having to share the owners' attention with another person, dog or other pet. This is the most common type of separation anxiety.

What are the symptoms of Separation Anxiety?

There are multiple behaviours that can be associated with separation anxiety including:

- chewing,
- digging,
- barking,
- escaping,
- over-excitability when interacting with people,
- stealing or hoarding,
- chasing tail,
- not eating,
- not toileting,
- vying for attention, and
- aggression (an extreme form of separation anxiety – uncommon in greyhounds).

Many of these behaviours can be caused by conditions other than separation anxiety so the condition can sometimes be difficult to diagnose.

Separation anxiety can also make other existing behavioural problems worse. For example a dog with a fear of thunder will be worse if it also has separation anxiety.

The main thing to remember with treatment is to avoid causing the dog additional anxiety. First you have to manage the condition, then gradually increase the dog's independence, and then increase control and treat the condition. Always seek the help of a professional if you are unsure. Alternatively contact the staff at GAP for more information or to book an appointment with an animal behaviourist.

POISONS AROUND THE HOME

Having a dog in your home is like having a small child, you must ensure that the dog does not have access to poisons and toxins commonly kept in homes and sheds. Don't assume that your greyhound will not eat something because it smells or tastes bad, or because it has never eaten it before. Dogs have been known to eat all sorts of foul smelling or tasting toxins, including some products which are marked as repellent to pets.

Inside the house, make sure that all containers of detergent, shampoo, soap, cleaning agents, insect sprays etc are kept out of the dog's reach. Overhead cupboards are safer for storing such products. Alternatively you could fit child proof locks to low cupboards.

If you use cockroach baits or sprays ensure that they are placed out of reach of your dog.

Human drugs and medications (including recreational drugs) must also be kept out of reach. Dogs may be poisoned by accidentally eating their owners' pills. Some human drugs can be toxic to dogs, you should never give your dog any sort of medication without first asking your vet.

In the garden, ensure that your dog does not have access to areas where poisons have been applied. Remember that dogs may walk or lie on areas which have been sprayed, and may also chew on grass or plants.


Check your garden for toxic plants. If you are not sure if a plant is safe, check with a nursery or poisons information line. Remember that some plants may grow toxic fruit at certain times of the year.

Snail pellets are one of the most common causes of poisoning of dogs. If you use snail pellets, only use them in dog proof containers, or in fenced off areas of your yard. Store the packets out of reach, preferably in a locked cupboard.

Rodent baits are another common cause of poisoning. Depending on the product, a dog may be poisoned by eating dead or dying rodents which have eaten the bait, or by eating the bait itself. Dogs poisoned with rodent baits may not show any symptoms for up to two weeks.

When walking your dog, it is a good idea to keep a close watch to make sure the dog does not pick up and eat things it finds. When walking near rivers or on the beach, be aware of dead fish and other animals washed up near the shore. Blowfish, for example, can be fatal in a very short time if eaten by a dog.

It is also a good idea to familiarise yourself with foods that are toxic to dogs.



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MAKE WONDERFUL PETS AND
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MAKES A GREAT ADDITION TO
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HESITATE TO GET IN TOUCH!



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