



GREYHOUNDS AS PETS

FOSTER CARER INFORMATION PACK





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GREYHOUNDS AS PETS

The retired racing greyhound makes a great pet. Greyhounds are most content sitting on the couch beside you with their long, elegant head nestled snugly in your lap. If this is what you are looking for in a pet, a greyhound may be the dog for you!

Greyhounds As Pets (GAP) is the only officially sanctioned greyhound adoption program in WA. It is an initiative of RWWA dedicated to finding homes for greyhounds that have retired once their racing career is over.

Each greyhound that enters GAP is cared for by a foster carer for a period of approximately six weeks in order to expose them to as many different experiences (eg. cats, children, small animals etc) as possible. All of our greyhounds are temperament tested prior to entering a home but the foster care process enables us find out more about the greyhound once it is living in a home environment.

GAP greyhounds are desexed, have their teeth cleaned, vaccinated and microchipped; an adoption fee exists only to recover some of these costs. More importantly, these dogs can give as much, if not more, affection than they receive. It is our hope that GAP can improve the image of these beautiful hounds and find loving homes that will bring happiness to both owners and dogs.

Whether you are thinking about the possibility of adopting a retired racing greyhound or have made the decision to offer a home to one, we have compiled this information to help you and your family understand some of the experiences you may have owning a greyhound.

COMMON QUESTIONS

WHY DO GREYHOUNDS MAKE GOOD PETS?

Greyhounds are quiet, well mannered, and very easy to live with. They are friendly, lazy, calm, affectionate, clean, loving, trusting, good-natured and very social. They do however, have to learn manners in a home environment and that's where foster carers come in!

DO RETIRED RACING GREYHOUNDS ADJUST QUICKLY TO LIFE AS A PET?

Yes. Greyhounds are fostered by GAP for around six weeks to expose them to as many new experiences as possible. Evaluation of the greyhound as a companion animal is an important part of helping GAP to ensure that the right dog goes to the right home.

Foster carers introduce their greyhound to new things like vacuum cleaners, glass doors, stairs etc. Remember that life in a kennel is a relatively sheltered existence and your home will offer many new experiences for most greyhounds.

DO RETIRED RACING GREYHOUNDS ADJUST QUICKLY TO LIFE AS A PET?

Most greyhounds do not come toilet trained. However, they are generally very clean dogs. Living in a kennel environment, most dogs do not like to soil their sleeping quarters, and will wait until turned out to relieve themselves. When first brought into the home, the greyhound should be

treated in a similar manner to a puppy being housebroken - taking the dog outside every couple of hours for the first week or so, especially after meals, play and long naps.

It is important over the first few days to watch the greyhound closely when it is inside your house, so that you may correct it immediately if it tries to go to the toilet. When catching the dog in the act, say a firm NO and immediately take the dog outside. When it then continues to go to the toilet outside, praise the dog profusely. Do not chastise the dog if it has an accident inside but you are not there to catch it in time. Correcting the dog after the event will only serve to confuse and frighten the dog - corrections must be made at the time of the discretion, and not afterwards.

ARE GREYHOUNDS GOOD WITH CHILDREN?

Although not all foster homes will have children, it is necessary to ascertain a dog's reaction to young children. This could be done to some degree by visiting a local park or sports field, especially on weekends. Otherwise, your foster dog can be moved to another foster home in order to interact with children. The majority of greyhounds are excellent with children in the home environment, preferring to walk away if harassed by a persistent child, but close supervision is essential as with any breed.

CONTINUE >>





ARE GREYHOUNDS GOOD WITH OTHER DOGS?

GAP aims to ensure that all of our greyhounds are sociable with other dogs. They generally get along well with other dogs, although they may not play with them. Common sense should be exercised during the introductory period and supervised feeding is ALWAYS recommended in a multi-pet household. Throughout the foster period, your foster greyhound must be introduced to other dogs. In order to experience different living arrangements ie living alone or with other dogs, foster dogs will be moved between foster homes accordingly.

DO GREYHOUNDS HAVE TO BE MUZZLED IN PUBLIC?

In 2013 the Dog Act was amended to include a special provision for greyhounds. Greyhounds who successfully complete a prescribed training programme are permitted to be muzzle free in public and are awarded a green collar.

Foster greyhounds are still in the process of completing this programme; therefore they are still required to wear a muzzle. As the person responsible for the dog you can be fined if they are not wearing one in public. All foster carers MUST ensure their greyhound is muzzled in public.

ARE GREYHOUNDS GOOD WITH OTHER ANIMALS?

Like all breeds, it depends on the individual dog. While some greyhounds are not suitable for homes with small animals such as rabbits and cats, a lot are. At GAP we test our dogs to ensure that a correct match between greyhound and adopter is achieved. It should be remembered that greyhounds have been bred for centuries to chase and the prey drive in some individuals means they can never be fully trusted with small animals. Many, however, will learn to accept other pets if introduced slowly and carefully, always with strict supervision. Any introductions should always be carried out on lead, and with the greyhound properly muzzled, until the dog's reactions can be assessed. Risks should never be taken with the safety of your own pets.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THINGS DON'T WORK OUT WHEN I TAKE THE FOSTER DOG HOME?

If your foster dog doesn't fit in with your household, just let the GAP staff know and we'll make arrangements to move the dog. This may require you to drive the dog to another foster carer or to kennels; however, we will act as quickly as we can to ensure the safety of the greyhound, your pets, and your family.

This is most likely to occur in foster homes that have cats, where a greyhound doesn't settle well around the cats. We ask that you exercise common sense until we can relocate the dog and keep the greyhound separate from your cats.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE THE GREYHOUND TO THE VET?

All GAP greyhounds are vetted prior to being adopted. They receive the following services:

- Vaccination (Some hounds will be vaccinated in kennels - just check there info book in there bag for a vaccination certificate)
- Sterilization
- Teeth cleaning if required.

It is the role of the foster carer to take the dog to the vet, and care for them post operatively. The cost of the above general vetting is covered by GAP.

GAP has a network of vet clinics that offer support and we will book the greyhound into the closest surgery to you.

In the case of an emergency please contact a GAP staff member immediately and then proceed to get the dog to the vet - on arriving if you haven't spoken to a GAP Staff member please advise the vet clinic to stabilize the greyhound and then get the vet to contact GAP straight away for further instruction.

DOES IT COST ANYTHING TO BE A FOSTER CARER?

GAP provides dry dog food, bedding, a collar, lead, muzzle and ongoing support. Foster carers just need to supply love, patience, water, a food bowl and a bit of petrol.

GAP also provides advice for foster carers, an opportunity to attend Pupi training and online networking with other foster carers via our closed Facebook group.

HOW DO I BECOME A FOSTER CARER?

Just call or email GAP - we'll get a foster dog into your home as soon as we can!

WHAT IF I FALL IN LOVE WITH MY FOSTER DOG AND DECIDE TO KEEP IT?

Don't worry, this is a common occurrence! Often foster carers become very attached to their foster dog and wish to keep them. GAP is more than happy to accommodate this as long as a potential adoptive family has not already met the dog and agreed to adopt it.





WHAT DOES GAP PROVIDE FOR ITS FOSTER CARERS?

Every foster carer will receive dry dog food and bedding for the greyhound. Every greyhound comes with its own collar, lead and muzzle and Adoption pack.

The Adoption pack contains:

- A Foster Carer Evaluation Summary (for the foster carer to report on the dogs progress)
- Certificate of Sterilization, Vaccination and microchip papers (that you as the foster carer will collect from the vet when you pick the dog up)
- A month supply of heartworm and flea treatment
- A voucher for a free four week PUPi training session
- Adoption Agreement and Road Test Contracts
- Change of Microchip Details form

In addition, GAP provide foster carers with ongoing support via phone, email and face to face. All foster carers are also invited to join our online forum to network with other foster carers on our closed Facebook group.



WHAT DOES GAP EXPECT OF ITS FOSTER CARERS?

LOVE AND PATIENCE

To put up with the soiling accidents, the sleepless nights and the little mistakes the dog's make while they "learn the ropes"! All they really want is a bit of love!

SOCIALISATION

GAP asks that all foster dogs receive socialisation with other dogs in foster care. PUPi training is provided free of charge for all foster carers and provides opportunities for all dogs to receive socialisation. If you are unable to provide socialisation for your foster dog, GAP can easily arrange moving them to a new foster home where they can receive additional socialisation.

FLEXIBILITY

GAP asks foster carers to be flexible and we do our best to return the favour. This means we may ask you to take the dog somewhere or switch dogs at short notice. We know life sometimes gets in the way of a good plan, and we do our best to work with every foster family to get the best outcome for the dogs.

DRIVING

This might include trips to our office to collect your foster dog, to the vet for surgery, to a prearranged location for the adoption of your dog, or to another foster carer's house to switch foster dogs.

VET CARE

GAP has a network of vet clinics that allow us to provide greyhounds to people at the lowest possible cost. Therefore we ask foster carers to take dogs to our

preferred clinics if the dog requires veterinary attention.

EXHIBITIONS AND ADOPTION DAYS

GAP often attends large scale exhibits such as the Perth Royal Show to educate the public on the gentle nature of our breed and to encourage people to consider fostering or adopting a greyhound. We often ask our foster carers to attend these events. The GAP program has grown rapidly over the last few years and we now try to organise mass adoption days where a number of foster families and dogs, plus prospective forever families are invited to come along to a designated venue for a meet and greet.

FEEDBACK

This is the most important aspect of fostering as it is your information that allows us to place the greyhounds in the most suitable homes. We ask that you provide us updates on the dogs behaviour such as what type of home it will be suitable for, and what type of experiences it may still require before being ready for a forever home.

We love receiving photos of greyhounds in foster care. A picture really does paint a thousand words and is an essential part of the rehoming process. Please send any photos of your foster dog to gap@rwwa.com.au.

And finally, THANK YOU for helping us rehome these beautiful dogs. We couldn't do it without you.



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