

GREENhounds



IN-HOME GREYHOUND RE-TRAINING GUIDE



www.greenhounds.com.au

admin@greenhounds.com.au

Phone: (02) 8316 4219

(Tuesdays and Fridays during business hours)

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Welcome to the new and exciting world of NSW 'Greenhounds'. As the owner of a Greyhound you are already aware what great pets and family members Greyhounds make. This guide has been designed to assist NSW pet Greyhound owners in educating and assisting your pet in the transition from a racer to an important family member and the potential for your Greyhound to become muzzle free.

Section 15(1) of the NSW Companion Animals Act states that a Greyhound "must at all times have a muzzle securely fixed on its mouth" except when on the owner's property or when under effective control during a show or obedience trial or if exempted from this section by the regulations.

In February 2011, the NSW Companion Animals Regulation 2008 was amended to provide an exemption to pet and retired racing Greyhounds that have successfully completed an approved Greyhound re-training program and passed the required assessment (Greyhound Adoption Program National Temperament Test – GAPNTT). The NSW Division of Local Government (DLG) has appointed Greyhound Racing New South Wales (GRNSW) to oversee and administer the 'Greenhounds' program.

By working through this guide and the associated workbook your Greyhound will have the opportunity to be assessed and if successful achieve a 'Greenhound' exemption. He/she will not have to wear a muzzle when in public whilst under the effective control of its owner i.e. **whilst on lead**. They must wear a unique 'Greenhound collar' to identify them as being exempt. All other Greyhounds in NSW must continue to be muzzled.

When in public, 'Greenhounds' are required to wear a distinctive 'Greenhound' collar approved by the DLG. This makes the dog easily identifiable by council rangers and the public as being exempt from muzzling requirements. To comply with the Companion Animals Act, a tag with the dog's name and the owner's phone number and/or address needs to be attached to the collar when in a public place.

Most racing Greyhounds have had a very structured routine in their past life. During this time they have not had to make any decisions for themselves. Instead, when they are given food, they eat it, when they are let out side, they toilet. In comparison, pet dog homes and the stimuli that they may encounter vary dramatically. Walks to the park, beach, coffee shop, or encounters with other animals are quite complex situations that Greyhounds need to be able to adjust to in order for them to fit into everyday lifestyles.

The aim of this guide is to assist you and your Greyhound into being able to interact in public in a way that is taken for granted by many other breeds and owners alike. In addition, this guide provides assistance and helpful hints, as well as highlighting the key assessable components of the 'Greenhound' collar assessment (GAPNTT). **The bolded comments within several of the sections will assist you in preparing your Greyhound for the 'Greenhound' collar assessment.**

This guide will assist in the completion of your six week in-home re-training workbook, which will be provided separately for owners that have registered with 'Greenhounds'. At the completion of the minimum six week program your Greyhound will be eligible to be assessed by an approved assessor for the issuing of their 'Greenhound' collar, if they pass the assessment.

Introducing New Adult Dogs into a Home



Bringing an adult dog into your home can be a great alternative to a puppy since you don't have to go through the 'juvenile delinquent' period which pups tend to have. However, adult dogs do have some of their own challenges, which you need to be aware of:

- Toilet training – Whilst your dog is an adult, he may never have been taught where to toilet. Please see the 'Toilet Training' section of this guide for additional information.
- Chewing – Like toilet training, some dogs don't know what they are not allowed to put in their mouths. To help clarify this for them, make a clear distinction. Shoes should be kept out of reach and old shoes should NEVER be provided to your dog as a toy as this will just confuse him. Instead, give your dog lots of appropriate toys (see the 'Entertainment' section) as they are likely to want to chew things when they are a little stressed (similar to us squeezing a stress ball, only dogs use their mouth).
- Unfamiliarity – Your new dog doesn't know the house rules and is going to be a little unsure about what is expected of him. Some dogs respond to this by becoming quiet and withdrawn. Others will release nervous tension through excitable behaviour. Either (or both) are perfectly normal but your dog needs to be shown how to relax by being given activities (see 'Entertainment' handout) and consistent rules.

The best thing you can do to help your new dog settle in is:

- Set him/her up to succeed – Don't leave 'forbidden' objects lying around the house. This will only encourage your dog to put them in his mouth. Instead, give him access to lots of appropriate toys. Likewise, don't wait for your dog to have a toileting accident. Help them get it right from the outset. In addition, give them a very comfortable bed that is close to the family. If they don't have their own bed which is close to you when you are watching TV or eating dinner, they will assume they should sit on the couch with you. Instead, keep a good dog bed in the family and/or dining room, and show them where their bed is and reward them for going there. If your dog gets on the couch, lure them off the couch with food and give the treat to them in their bed.
- Provide a consistent rule structure so that your dog knows what is expected of him. Write a list of appropriate and inappropriate behaviours. Next to each item, indicate how you are going to encourage or discourage a behaviour from occurring.

PLEASE NOTE: you should not physically punish your dog or yell at him. He is new to your home and doesn't know what you want, and punishment will only serve to scare him and hinder the bonding process between you and him. He will become stressed and anxious and therefore more likely to chew more things or urinate in fear. Below, you'll find an example of a set of house rules.

What you'll notice about the rules is that they focus on:

1. Rewarding behaviour you like
2. Preventing behaviours you don't like from re-occurring
3. Redirecting dogs away from an undesirable activity and onto an acceptable one

It is important that you apply your house rules very consistently. Do not make exceptions and occasionally allow your dog on your couch. His learning will be impeded by this and he will become confused, frustrated and anxious. Once you've decided on your rules, stick to them, your dog will thank you for it.

Socialisation

Introducing dogs to one another should always be done one at a time on lead, muzzled and in a wide open area. This area should be on neutral territory and away from other dogs (i.e. not an off leash park). An unused sporting oval or quiet street is ideal. Begin with the dogs 30 metres apart with the handlers walking in the same direction (almost as if on train tracks). When the dogs are paying each other very little attention, gradually drift in towards one another a little as you continue walking. If the dogs get over excited, move apart again. When in the home, ensure that you *always* feed the dogs separately and that you carefully supervise the dogs' interactions for the first week or so. If you can't supervise them for a period, keep them physically separated. You might find that dens may come in useful for this.

Some signs of stress for you to be aware of in your newly arrived Greyhound are:

- Panting/Salivation
- Decreased/lack of appetite
- Dripping nose
- Yawning
- Lip licking
- Drinking excessively or frequently
- Inability to settle
- Following you around excessively
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Urination
- Muscle trembling
- Excessive panting

Your Greyhound should never show signs of 'prey drive' including overt reactions of a fixated stare, trembling/shaking, body tension, salivating, baring teeth, snap/bite when introduced to or observing another dog, particularly small and 'fluffy' dogs. Your dog should view another dog as in fact another dog, and not 'prey' or something they want to attack, harm or consume.

'Prey drive' should not be confused with normal dog inquisitiveness, curiosity, excitement or playfulness.

Your Greyhound's behaviour and interactions with other dogs, particularly small dogs, is a key component for their success in the 'Greenhound' collar (GAPNTT) assessment.

Prey Drive in Greyhounds

What is Prey Drive?

Prey drive is a commonly misunderstood behavioural trait of many breeds, particularly canines. Prey drive refers to a progression of behaviours often including the chasing, catching (and sometimes killing) of a moving object or other animal, often for consumption.

The typical sequence of the prey drive behaviour:

1. Search/tracking/scenting
2. Stalk/crouch/intense visualisation of target
3. Chase/bark
4. Grab/bite/pounce
5. Kill
6. Consume/bury

(Cunnington, 2011)

Prey drive is a natural behaviour which can be 'hard wired' in many Greyhounds due to their instinctive tendencies and thousands of years of ancestral breeding, yet can be evident in any dog to varying degrees. Such historical ancestry led to the use of Greyhounds throughout North Africa and the Middle East to provide food for humans (see image below).



George Stubbs, "Greyhound coursing a stag", 1762.

Although prey drive is considered a 'normal behaviour' it is **NOT** socially accepted in modern society.

Factors leading to often high prey drive in Greyhounds include genetic predisposition, selective breeding for the chase aspect of the sequence of the prey drive behaviours, whilst the grab and kill aspects may be enhanced via training methods, as well as lack of socialisation with other breeds therefore leading to some Greyhounds being unable to distinguish such as 'dogs', but rather, prey.

Prey drive in Greyhounds should not be confused with aggression (or play), however it can still be very dangerous to the object (prey), the Greyhound (predator) and bystanders. In **some cases** no precursor behaviour or warning signs may be exhibited by the Greyhound. Prey drive is about excitement and catching an object, item or animal which is not seen to be part of the same species (no threat detected), whereas aggressive behaviours is often seen in response to a perceived threat.



Evidence of the varying degrees of Greyhounds prey drive instinct and their ability to also put this behind them!



When prey drive is exhibited the object of focus (e.g. rabbit, cat or small dog) is not considered by the predator (Greyhound) as a member of its own species (e.g. if the Greyhound pursues a small fluffy dog, it does not view it as a dog, but instead, as prey). Prey drive is considered as a subconscious behaviour as the dog offers little or no control over their actions and, as the chemical adrenalin is released the outcome of an expression of prey drive (chase and grab) may offer a chemical reward (e.g. the release of serotonin ['feel-good' hormone]).

Signs of Prey Drive

Some signs of prey drive may include some or all of the following:

- *Fixed and focused eyes*
- *Stalking*
- *Freezing*
- *Lip licking*
- *Salivating*
- *Jaw trembling*
- *Lunging*
- *Whining*
- *Pawing*
- *Body/muscle stiffness*
- *Tail often wagging, may be excessive*

It is **important** to note that your dog may be fine with other household dogs that it knows, however it may be a different story with strange dogs, for instance those met on the street or at the park in day to day occurrences.

Your Greyhound must not exhibit any of the above mentioned behaviours upon seeing or interacting with other dogs, particularly small dogs at the time of their 'Greenhound' collar assessment. Competency in this area is a key component for success.

It is in the interest of public safety and that of other animals encountered in day to day happenings that Greyhounds exhibiting any of the previously mentioned behaviours not be unmuzzled in public, and it is advised for strict supervision and muzzling to occur should any of these behaviour be present.

Normal Behaviour

Normal dog behaviour in response to the previously mentioned situations may include:

- *Curving (not approaching other dog head on)*
- *Head lowering*
- *Bottom sniffing*
- *Soft eyes*
- *Wagging tail(not excessively)*
- *Play bow*
- *Friendly interest shown*
- *Soliciting polite interactions*
- *General relaxed body language*
- *Able to be easily distracted*

Resolving Prey Drive

Overcoming the issues of, and associated with, prey drive, depend on numerous factors. Such include the severity of the exhibited prey drive. Regular, **safe** exposure to many different dogs may be effective in assisting in the issue as well as rewarding calm behaviour. *Don't punish or reprimand the staring behaviour as it may only hype the Greyhound up OR teach it to show 'ignoring' behaviours until the small dog is within immediate reach.*

The bottom line is that prey drive cannot be trained out of the dog, however it may be controlled within your/owners presence but never within an off lead environment (Cunnington, 2011).

Unleashed Unlimited Dog Training (2010) suggests:

*"One of the most useful assets in controlling prey drive is a solid recall. Coming when called will get your dog back mid stride. Although a chemical change does occur in a dog's brain during prey drive, it's still very possible to override that and have an effective recall; it just takes a lot of training in order to be able to effectively interrupt it. Besides a recall command, a solid sit and down stay, along with a focused heel, can also be used to manage high prey drive dogs." **



(Alvina Narayan, 2011)

* Unleashed Unlimited Dog Training (2010) *Understanding prey drive.*
<<http://unleashedunlimited.com/understanding-prey-drive/>>.

Setting the Boundaries

Desirable Behaviours	How to promote/encourage
Lying quietly	Reward with treats every time we see this.
In his bed	Reward with treats every time we see this.
Chewing or playing with toys you've provided	Make sure that toys are rotated so that there is some variety otherwise the dog will get bored.
Moving towards people in a friendly/non boisterous manner	Reward with gentle pats and praise (not over the top excitement as this may frighten or over excite the dog).
Toileting in the right place	Reward with treats and praise.

Undesirable Behaviours	How to prevent/ discourage
Toileting inside	Clean area thoroughly and appropriately, take dog outside more often, wait with him, praise and reward when him goes in the right place.
On the couch or your bed	Provide a comfy bed near that area for your dog to enjoy. Coax the dog off the couch/bed with treats and place them in his bed. Gently pat and quietly/calmly praise the dog. Do NOT physically drag the dog off the area as this can frighten the dog or cause pain!
Chewing inappropriate items	Provide a range of toys that you rotate regularly to prevent the dog getting bored. Any time you see the dog use these, praise and reward. If your dog has an inappropriate item, exchange it for something that your dog likes better (toy or treat). Don't 'steal' it from your dog or he may feel he needs to guard it from you.
Frightened or wary behaviour	Let your dog explore the new item or situation in its own time. Don't drag the dog towards the source of his fear or frighten him further. Instead, provide food rewards for any acts of 'bravery' when your dog moves close to the area.



Settling In



If your dog is a recent addition to the family, the first few days in a new home can be a bit unsettling for any dog including Greyhounds - most of which have never been entirely alone as they've had the company of other dogs in kennels. Knowing how to prepare and cope during this time can help you and your new housemate throughout this time.

From the first day your dog arrives it is advisable that you do not make them overly reliant on you. Give them time to themselves and don't fuss over them too much. If you want your dog to sleep in its den at night, place the den in a room that the dog has had access to during the day (that way it is in a familiar area). During the day, move your dog to its den and then drop a treat inside. Don't close or lock the door during this time – you just want him to associate moving into the den with good things. Do this 5-10 times during the day to ensure that your dog moves happily into the den and then receives a treat. In addition, you can 'secretly' place treats in the den throughout the day. This will encourage your dog to go into the den on his own and make him more comfortable with the situation.

To further help settle your dog during the first nights, place some food (or left over dinner) as well as their water bowl in the den with your dog. This gives them further opportunity to snack during the night.

Leaving a light and radio/TV on and providing your dog with a soft toy may also help.

When you go to bed, some dogs stress because all of a sudden you've disappeared and left them alone for many hours. To help your dog adjust to this, put them in the den and sit nearby ignoring them (reading a book or watching the TV often helps). Once your dog has settled down, leave the room (so you're just out of sight) and then return immediately. Return to your seat. It is quite likely that your dog would have stood up - ignore him completely and return to your book/TV. Once your dog has been settled for a few minutes, repeat the exercise. Continue doing this until your dog no longer stands up when you leave (probably 10 or 15 times). Then, increase the time you are gone to 2 seconds. Repeat 3-4 times before increasing your absence to 5 seconds (assuming your dog is still settled). Again, do this 3-4 times before increasing to 10 seconds, then 20, 30 40 and then a minute. This program may take 30-60 minutes, so plan ahead and start the process an hour or so before you plan to go to bed. During the last few times you leave, do all your bed time routines (turning off lights, cleaning teeth etc) but leave the TV and one light on. That way when you leave the last time, it will feel no different to all the other times you've left.

If your dog is quite unsettled or arrived late in the day (so he has had less time to become accustomed to his surroundings), placing the den near your bedroom where your dog can see you often helps them to settle. If, in the following days, you would then like your dog further away from your bedroom, move the den to an area where the dog spends considerable time and follow the instructions above.

Leash Manners



Walking your Greyhound can be a rewarding and stimulating experience for both you and your dog, but there are some important things to remember.

In general, Greyhounds tend to be well behaved and walk well when on lead. Much of their training during their racing careers may have involved being walked on a regular basis on lead for exercise/fitness purposes. Additionally Greyhounds are led to the starting boxes and from the catching pen at the race/trial track on a lead and collar and therefore have generally had a lot of exposure to this kind of activity. Alternatively, young Greyhounds and puppies which have not been subject to as much, if any, training or racing may not be as familiar or pick up lead walking as well as their racing/older

counterparts.

In addition to their training a Greyhounds leash manners can be arguably linked to their level of prey drive. For instance, a Greyhound deemed to have a high prey drive, *may* tend to pull strongly when walked on the lead, and be very alert to their surroundings, often walking in an unorderedly fashion, as opposed to many others which will walk sensibly by your side with a slackened lead. However, a Greyhound with a low/no prey drive may in fact just be very excitable and want to pull on the lead.

It is important to note that a Greyhound with a high prey drive, may also be deceiving and walk well (on its toes) on lead until the time when something may be of interest to them and they want to pursue it. Dogs that prove challenging on the lead and want to pull excessively may be a good candidates for the utilisation of a walking harness, readily available at pet supply shops. It is important to note that, like any breed, there is a level of unpredictability therefore it is important to always have a firm, conscious and sensible (i.e. not wrapped around the arm or held too loosely) grip on the lead.



Automatically extending leads are *not* recommended for Greyhounds, as they can quickly take off after something and injure themselves on nearby obstacles or when the lead comes to full extension and rapidly halts their journey. Greenhounds recommends that the martingale style of collars are the safest for Greyhounds, as when the dog pulls in any direction the collar tightens slightly to the neck of the dog and they are unable to slip out of the collar.

NOTE: Greyhounds should ALWAYS be under the effective control of the owner (or a responsible person over 16 years of age) and muzzled when in public

unless they have been granted their Greenhound muzzling exemption.

Your Greyhound's leash manners will be a component for their success in the 'Greenhound' collar (GAPNTT) assessment. They do not have to be an obedience champion, just safe and controllable whilst on lead.

Greyhounds & Children



Some of us have been lucky enough to experience a loving relationship with a dog during our childhood. To obtain such a relationship, both dog and child have to learn to respect and trust each other.

During the racing career of a Greyhound he receives only limited socialisation and might not have met a child until he has left the racing kennels. It takes time and patience from both parties to build a relationship. It must also be stressed that regardless of how good either the dog or child is, they should NEVER be left alone unsupervised.

When introducing children and dogs, there are some steps you might like to follow.

1. Explain and discuss with your child the need for calm and quiet behaviour around the dog, especially during the first days.
2. Teach your child to be considerate and respectful of the dog.
3. Do not force your child to interact with your Greyhound. Let your child stand behind you or a baby gate, if this will make them feel more confident.
4. **Greyhounds (or any dogs) should NEVER be awoken by children (or adults) by touching them. If they are sleeping deeply, they may be severely startled by such an awakening and may inadvertently lash out via a snap or bite. If you wish to wake your Greyhound, stand a distance away and call their name, do not approach until they are fully conscious and sitting up. The saying 'let sleeping dogs lie' exists for a reason!**
5. Explain to your child(ren) that some areas such as beds, dens/crates are off limits to them. If the dog is in his bed or den/crate, this is 'out of bounds' for children. This ensures that your dog can have some peace and has a 'safe' area into which he can retreat if things become too busy for him.



6. During introductions, place your dog's muzzle on (as we said, we expect no problems, but first introductions are best done with safety in mind).

7. Reward both child and dog when they are quiet when they are together. It is important to teach the child to stand still if it gets a fright and play 'statues'. The child should stand still, turn his back to the dog and cross his arms whenever you say 'statues'. Then, if the dog jumps up and inadvertently gives your child a fright, your child will know what to do to discourage this behaviour in the future.

8. Discourage loud and boisterous play between dogs and children. We suggest that the child does not roll around on the floor while playing with the dog, instead, playing fetch or hide and seek are fun and controlled games. Never allow your child(ren) to lay on your Greyhound. Rolling/laying on feet/tails etc could cause the dog to snap, no matter how tolerant the Greyhound is.

9. Whilst Greyhounds may be a little fussy at first, they generally love their treats (especially BBQ chicken) and such special treats from your child will build a special bond between the two. Firstly, the dog has to learn to take food from your hand as many Greyhounds have never been fed from a hand before. Place a few treats on the ground for the dog to eat. Then, place some treats on your upward facing, flat palm and put the back of your hand on the ground so the dog is almost eating off the ground. When your dog is confidently eating off your hand whilst it is on the ground, you can gradually start raising your hand up. To teach the dog to eat gently from your child's hand, you can ask the child to put their hand UNDER yours and continue feeding in this way. This will enable the child to 'help' feed the dog without coming into direct contact with him. When your child is confident, they can progress to place their hand on top of yours with the food on the flat palm. The dog is now taking food directly from the child but with your support and assistance.



10. Children love to teach dogs new tricks such as “shake hands” and “lie down”, but often do not have the skill or patience for the exercise. It is suggested that you practice all tricks first with the dog, and when a new behaviour is almost mastered, enlist the help from the child to “polish” the trick.

We also have handouts available that visually outline how children should and shouldn't interact with dogs which can be helpful for you to teach your children appropriate behaviour. Please ask staff if you would like a copy of these.



Introducing Your Greyhound to Cats



Introducing any dog and cat to each other is a delicate issue. Whilst it is not essential as part of the **'Greenhound' collar** assessment for a Greyhound to tolerate cats, it may be desirable in your family environment.

Most dogs naturally want to chase a moving object. The particular issue to introducing cats and Greyhounds is that if the Greyhound wants to chase, it can do so at speeds of 60km/h. For this reason, the following section has been developed to assist you with the safe introduction of your pets.

Curiosity is a perfectly natural reaction in response to something that the dog has never seen before. This natural curiosity *may* result in acceptance of the cat as the novelty wears off, thereby making it suitable to live with cats. However, for some dogs the curiosity may not decrease to a level that they will be safe in a home with cats. It is not possible to determine which curious but not fixated dogs will relax around cats and which others will remain overly interested. For this reason it is important that dog and cat introductions are undertaken slowly and carefully. It is critical that this process is not rushed.

It is also important to note that Greyhounds and cats will generally do better when indoors as cats are less likely to run and Greyhounds less likely to give chase in this situation. We therefore start the introduction process indoors before beginning to introduce them outdoors.

Indoors

Step 1: Fit your dog with a heavy duty muzzle as a safety net for early introductions. The dog should also be fitted with a specialised harness to which the lead attaches at the front to give you more control.

Step 2: Conduct the first introductions slowly, ensuring the safety of all parties.

Step 3: For the first 2 weeks ensure that your Greyhound is muzzled and leashed (and that you maintain a hold on the leash) unless he is in his den/crate or the cat is securely locked in another room. Please note that the room the cat is in, should be locked with a sign on the door so that it is not accidentally allowed out. Please ensure that your Greyhound is given the opportunity to have a drink (i.e. that you take its muzzle off and take it to its water bowl) every 30 minutes to prevent dehydration. When you go out, ensure that the dog and cat are physically separated (so they are safe) and the muzzle and leash taken off the dog to allow it to move freely and drink.

Step 4: If after the 2 weeks of having your Greyhound muzzled and leashed around your cat it has shown no:

- **Chasing**
- **Stalking**
- **Staring**
- **Freezing**
- **Excessive interest**
- **Aggression**

and you are confident to do so, you may take the leash off. Ensure that the muzzle is still securely fastened and make sure that you supervise interactions carefully. You will still need to allow your dog the opportunity to drink with its muzzle off every 30-60 minutes.

Step 5: If after 2 weeks of having your Greyhound muzzled and leashed around your cat it has shown no signs of behaviour as listed in step 4, and you are confident to do so, you may take the muzzle off and put the leash back on (attached to the front of the harness). Some Greyhounds behave differently when their muzzle is removed, so it is crucial that it has its walking harness on and the lead attached to the front at all times during this next phase. Supervise all interactions between your dog and cat and ensure that an adult has a firm hold on the leash at all times.

If after 2 weeks of having the leash on (but the muzzle off) and your Greyhound has shown no signs of behaviour as listed in step 4, and you are confident to do so, you can allow the dog to be unleashed and un-muzzled whilst indoors and supervised with your cat.

It is recommended that dogs and cats never be allowed to be in proximity of one another without supervision. That means that when you go out they should be physically separated to ensure safety of all. If you want your dog and cat to be outside together, it is important that you start this process from the beginning and follow all the instructions as you did indoors.

If at any stage your dog show any of the behaviours as listed in step4, or other behaviours that concern you, it is important that you contact the agency from whom you adopted your Greyhound, an animal behaviourist, your veterinarian or refer to the 'Greenhounds' website.

Other Animals

If your Greyhound is regarded as "cat tolerant" this gives no guarantee that it will be safe around other small animals such as rabbits, guinea pigs and birds. They should always be kept separate and under supervision at all times. A small animal can be under extreme stress just by being in the presence of a dog even if they are safe in their cage or enclosure.

If you live around horses, cattle and sheep, it may be a good idea to introduce your Greyhound to the livestock so it can get used to them but always do so in a safe controlled environment, i.e. dog on lead with a fence in between. Allowing your Greyhound off lead where it might follow its natural instinct to chase livestock could not only result in injury to your dog and/or the livestock but may get you into trouble with the farmer and possibly the law.



Socialisation

Life Experiences

Greyhounds' lives are often a little sheltered during their racing careers. Where the life of a racing Greyhound involves kennel time, play time with other greyhounds, chasing moving objects and travelling, the life of a pet is often more varied. Pet life generally involves indoor and outdoor time, interaction with a larger number of people, furniture, stairs, outings, distinguishing between their food and human food, glass doors, cars, slippery floors, toilets flushing, vacuum cleaners, time alone, other breeds of dogs and, sometimes, other species of animals.



Many Greyhounds take introduction to these stimuli in their stride. However, for others such situations may be stressful. It is important that if your dog is worried by a situation that you:

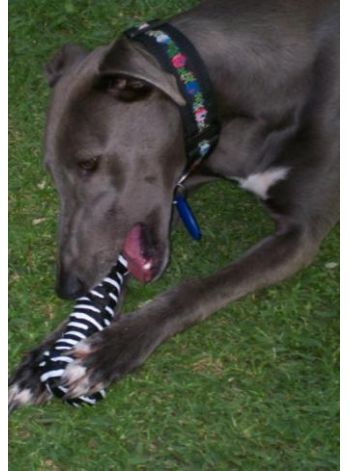
1. Don't fuss over the dog to try and comfort it (this only makes the problem worse).
2. Allow the dog to move away from the frightening object/situation (or assist the dog to relax by removing either it or the object from the room).
3. Once everything has settled (this may be minutes, hours or days later) re-introduce your dog to the stimuli very gradually, safely and making the experience fun (using games and food rewards).
4. If, after 1 or 2 attempts, your dog is not improving significantly (or your dog worsens at any stage), you may consider contacting the program from whom you adopted your Greyhound or refer to the 'Greenhounds' website. The longer these problems persist, the harder they are to change.

Some of the stimuli to which your dog may become concerned about are included in your fortnightly feedback forms located at the end of this guide. This will assist you with suggested stimuli that you may like to gradually introduce your Greyhound to. It will also help you to keep abreast of your dog's progress over time.

Other examples of exposure to incidents/situation that are imperative to your dogs success in the 'Greenhound' collar (GAPNTT) assessment include reaction to: loud noise (e.g. metal object dropping on a concrete surface), unusual behaviour (e.g. people waving arms and strange voices), mildly threatening behaviour (e.g. dog being reprimanded in a firm voice and with hand signals) and general handling including a brief physical examination of ears, eyes, teeth, bite and muzzle, feet, tail and all over physical contact.

Separation Stress/Anxiety

Greyhounds are very sociable creatures which have grown up in the company of other Greyhounds. Consequently it may take a little while for them to get accustomed to spending time on their own. There are several ways we can help them make this adjustment:



- Ensure your dog is tired when you leave him – Greyhounds are generally exhausted by 25-30 minutes of exercise. If you can take your dog for a good long walk before you go, they are less likely to get overexcited or stressed by your absence if they are sleeping.
- Don't say goodbye as this may distress your dog. Instead, just get up and casually leave.
- Do NOT make your return (or departure) exciting – Just say 'hello' to the dog and make a phone call or put the shopping away. Five to ten minutes later you can give the dog attention and a cuddle. Your dog will always be pleased to have you come home, but don't encourage him to become overexcitable as this can make their time alone at home more difficult to cope with.
- Don't allow your dog to get accustomed to your undivided attention – When you're at home, your dog doesn't need to be with you at all times. It is healthy for them to remain asleep and warm indoors whilst you do the laundry or pick up the mail. Allow them to spend time outdoors while you are indoors and provide them with things to occupy themselves with outside to make the experience rewarding for them. Encouraging your dog to be your shadow will make him emotionally dependant on you that he won't be able to cope without you.
- Once your dog has settled, you can gradually start spending some time away from him. Initially, only leave your dog for a minute or so like when you go to get the mail from the letterbox. Then, slowly increase the length of time for which you are away so your dog learns how to spend time by himself. If you have other dogs in your house, teach your Greyhound how to spend time away from them too. Have a friend or partner walk your other dog(s) whilst you take your Greyhound. This way your greyhound learns how to be an individual (rather than always being part of a doggy family). You can also take each of your dogs for separate walks, first taking the Greyhound (so he's tired) and then your other dog once your Greyhound has settled down for a nap.
- Ensure they have entertainment – when you leave (even for just a short period) ensure your dog(s) have something to occupy their brains. This will take the emphasis off you leaving and redirect him to the good things that are associated with your absence (such as food and toys). Please see the 'Entertainment' section of this guide for more information.
- Make sure your dogs are warm, safe and dry when you leave them so they are not distressed.

Greyhounds that exhibit extremely high levels of anxiety may have difficulty in completing the 'Greenhounds' assessment successfully. We recommend you seek advice from your vet (to rule out any underlying medical concerns) or contact an animal behaviourist.

Toilet Training



Greyhounds are generally quite clean dogs but as they are unfamiliar with indoor living, you will need to spend some time teaching them where the appropriate places are to toilet.

In order to avoid toilet training accidents from occurring, it is essential that dogs are given lots of help and information to tell them where they are to toilet. You also need to ensure that your dog is given sufficient opportunity to toilet in that area. After all, humans don't automatically know where the bathroom is in a strange house until they've been shown. Greyhounds are the same (but need to be shown many times before they'll get it right all the time).

Once a dog learns to toilet in the wrong place, it quickly becomes a habit that can be difficult to break. Conversely, each opportunity your dog gets to toilet in the right place is an opportunity for him to learn the right thing and form a good habit.

Preventing Mistakes

- As soon as you get your dog home, take him straight out to where you want him to toilet. They may have had a long car journey and you can't be sure when they last toileted.
- Watch your dog – if you see him circling, sniffing or he become restless, take him to their toileting place immediately.
- Use common sense – if you know your dog hasn't eliminated for several hours (i.e. during the evening or whilst you've been out shopping) don't delay in taking them outside. This should be your first task.
- Put your dog on lead and stand with your dog whilst he toilets to prevent him from becoming distracted.
- If your dog doesn't toilet, you can try walking in circles, starting at about 3-metre diameter and gradually making the circles smaller and tighter (replicating your dog's sniffing and toileting behaviour).

Prevent your dog from going into rooms where you can't watch them. You can keep doors closed or restrict areas with the use of baby gates. You may also like to employ the use of a den to



- confine your dog when he is asleep or when you can't supervise him (i.e. for half an hour whilst you're bathing the kids). To make use of a den, read the 'den training' section of this guide.

NOTE: whenever your dog toilets in the right place, reward them with pats, praise and treats as soon as he has toileted. There is no point giving your dog a treat when he comes back inside. If you do that, you are rewarding him for coming back inside, not toileting.

When Accidents Happen

- Do not punish your dog for toileting in the wrong place! This is crucial. If you yell at, smack or chastise your dog, he will believe he is being punished for what he's doing (i.e. toileting) not where he is doing it. This will make your dog reluctant to toilet in front of you for fear of punishment.
- Soak up whatever you can with paper towel and then clean up using an enzyme based cleaner from your vet or pet shop. Alternatively, Biozet (laundry powder) can be diluted and used in a similar manner. Do not use common household ammonia based cleaners which attracts dogs back to that area to toilet again. Remember, when a dog urinates, there is often a large volume that soaks in and under the carpet so you need to use a considerable amount of product to cover the area completely.
- Change your dog's meal times – by changing the time of day when your dog eats, you will also change the time of day when he needs to eliminate. If your dog is unable to make it through the night without toileting, try moving dinner forward or backwards to change the pattern. Alternatively, you can try feeding a larger proportion of your dog's meal in the morning and less at night or feeding a portion at lunchtime.

Obedience Training

It is not a requirement of the 'Greenhound' program that your dog receive any formal obedience training. However, dogs learn something every time they interact with us or their environment. Consequently, what they learn might as well be something of benefit to them.

The principle behind all training is that:

- Your dog will continue performing behaviours which result in a good outcome for him (i.e. he is rewarded).
- Your dog will cease performing behaviours that do not result in rewards.

We can therefore alter our dog's behaviour by rewarding those behaviours that we like. This now makes the behaviours we like also the ones that 'pay off' for the dog so he now wants to perform them more often - everyone wins!

To make this easier, make a list of behaviours you want your dog to perform. These might include:

- Lying on their bed.
- Being quiet.
- Toileting in the right place.
- Staying out of the kitchen whilst you are cooking.

All of these behaviours should be rewarded with food and praise.



It is also worth making a list of behaviours that you don't like. These may include:

- Barking
- Jumping up
- Being over excitable

These behaviours should be ignored and one of the aforementioned desirable behaviours rewarded instead. This will help your dog realise that there are more 'productive' behaviours which could be performed that benefit him (and also benefit you).

It is critical that you don't yell at or punish your Greyhound as this will frighten him and possibly make the situation worse. Instead, keep your dog out of trouble with ideas from the 'Entertainment' section, set your dog up so they get the right answer and reward behaviours that are incompatible with the behaviour you don't want (i.e. if your dog is rewarded with food and attention for lying down or sitting calmly he is much less likely to jump or become over excitable in an attempt to get your attention).

Should you choose to take your Greyhound's obedience beyond the basics, there are many opportunities to become involved with clubs who offer training and run competitions. Please refer to the agency from whom you adopted your Greyhound or the 'Greenhound' website for more information.



Den Training



In the wild your dog would have a safe place (their den) to which he would retire each night. Dens are generally small, dark, cosy, comfortable and safe. In their racing life, his kennel was his den. Now, as a pet, your Greyhound will also benefit from having a small and cosy safe haven that he can snuggle up in.

In addition to providing security for your dog, **you may consider** den training as dens also help with their toilet training (since Greyhounds are clean dogs that don't like to mess in their immediate vicinity). A den also facilitates interactions between your Greyhound and children/other pets and also provides your Greyhound with a bedtime area into which you can place him at night (so you know he is not wandering the house).

Greyhounds generally take very well to their new den because of their racing history (including kennelling, starting boxes, travelling etc). Therefore, small enclosed areas are familiar and welcomed. However, it is important that your dog is given the opportunity to explore this new area at their own pace. It's vital that they want to enter this area (rather than being forced). Placing food, toys and treats into the den often make it more appealing for them to enter and explore. Once your dog is comfortable in entering his new den, you can gradually accustom him to having the door closed for increasing periods of time.

It is very important that dogs are placed in their den with the door closed for no more than 1 hour at a time (except at night when they can generally remain in there for up to 9 hours). It is also important that your dog's den not be used for punishment. Your dog should only associate good things with their den and it should be a safe haven from everything else going on in the household.

If you think your dog might not cope or will be over excited in certain situations such as when there are guests, small children or tradesmen in the house, you can tuck your Greyhound in its den ahead of time and then let them out later when it is appropriate.

Stairs

Stairs are a common source of concern for Greyhounds. Most Greyhound properties are flat, so many dogs have never had to negotiate more than one step at a time. Stairs are also a challenge for Greyhounds because of their physique. Their long legs and small feet can make them feel unsteady especially on slippery stairs. In addition to this, their deep chest mean most of their weight is forward from their waist. This means that, when coming down stairs, all of their considerable weight is unevenly balanced and over their front feet (making them feel as though they will fall forwards). Consequently, many Greyhounds will balk at stairs and/or try to rush them (jumping down a whole flight).

Because of the dangers associated with them rushing stairs (such as broken legs), it is important that we help guide and show them how to negotiate these.



Going Up

There are many ways to teach your dogs to negotiate stairs. Below are two good options to try:

1. If possible/practical, carry your Greyhound to the second top step and put them down gently. Then, holding the lead loosely (no pressure on the dog's neck) walk up the one remaining step and encourage them to join you. Then, carry them to the second bottom step, place them down and, holding the lead, walk down the one remaining step, encouraging them to follow. Repeat this process, having your dog walk up/down one extra step each time. Once they have learned to negotiate about 5-6 steps, they will take the whole flight with few difficulties.

2. Start with a short, and easy flight of stairs (concrete or carpeted) on which the treads are widely spaced. Keep your hand on your dog's collar to help steady them. You might also find it helps to fashion a sling out of a towel or sheet to place under their tummy or use a harness to help support them. If all else fails, you may have to physically show your Greyhound how to position its feet. Dogs will often get their front feet too far forward without allowing their back feet to join them. Have one person stand next to the dog, holding its collar. Then, have a second person position your dog's front feet on the second or third step. Then, move its right back foot up onto the first step, then its left back foot onto the first step. Then, position its left front foot up onto the next stair, then its right front foot. Repeat the process until your dog starts to understand how to negotiate this challenge. Again, use a short flight of non slippery stairs to begin.

Going Down



Going down can be more challenging because of the position of your dog's weight. Hold your dog's collar with one hand and support its chest with the other. Again, a harness might assist in supporting your dog's forward weight (so they don't feel as though they will fall forwards). Then gradually make your way down the stairs, one step at a time. Don't try to physically move your dog's feet when going down as this reduced stability will make your dog even more worried. Instead, move down the stairs in a zig zag pattern using their whole width of the flight so your dog is not looking straight down, rather they are looking and moving on the diagonal which is less steep

and scary and gives them more space on which to place their feet. Do not allow your dog to rush down the stairs or lose their balance or they may injure themselves or get a terrible fright (making the whole process more difficult next time).

Only do 1-3 repetitions each time and try to finish on a good note. So, if your dog does really well on a set, don't push your luck by trying to repeat it. Dogs seem to improve at tasks when they are given the opportunity to go away and think about their progress. Then, the next time you come to repeat the activity they will often have improved significantly and gained additional confidence.

Entertainment...Keeping your Dog's mind active

All dogs need mental exercise as well as physical exercise to make them a happy and well adjusted member of the family. In the wild, dogs would spend the majority of the day in search of enough food to survive. In our homes, dogs are generally fed twice daily and spend the rest of the day with little to occupy their time. Instead they often resort to destructive behaviours, digging in the lawn, barking, following their owners like 'second shadows', pulling washing off the line or doing 'zoomies' around the yard. To prevent these often undesirable behaviours, we have to give dogs tasks on which they can focus their energies. Below are some examples of challenges that you can use to keep your dog busy. It should be remembered that any food used in these activities should be deducted from the dog's daily meals to prevent them from becoming overweight.

Activities

- Kong™ - Kongs are cylindrical rubber dog toys in which you place your dog's food or treats. It is important that when you first give Kongs to your dog that they are very easy. Food should easily fall out. A good mixture for this is 80% dog food and 20% treats. This encourages your dog to continue working at the 'puzzle' for his everyday food as well as something special. As your dog gets better at extracting food from the Kong, you can increase the level of difficulty, including canned fish, yoghurt, wet food, roast chicken and eventually freezing the contents to make it even more challenging. However, if you make this toy too challenging in the early stages, your dog will lose interest in it.
- Treat balls – Similar to Kongs, the objective is for your dog to extract the contents from inside the toy. These toys are commonly spherical, but may also be a cube (this increases the level of difficulty). Again, dry food mixed with some treats (such as dried liver or kangaroo) is ideal for this toy.
- Scatter feeds – Rather than giving your dog his food in a bowl, you can scatter it on the lawn. When you start doing this, scatter it in a reasonably small area (approximately 1m x 1m). As your dog learns how to use his nose to find kibble in the grass, you can scatter the food further, increasing the complexity of the task as the dog's skills improve
- Iceblocks – Freezing treats or toys in a large block of ice is a fabulous game, especially in summer. To add additional interest to the task you can flavour the ice with diluted chicken or beef stock or puppy milk. The more treats you add to the ice, the more easily the iceblock will crumble. To increase the difficulty, reduce the number of treats, or increase the size of the iceblocks.
- Digging pits – if your dog loves to dig, you can purchase a hard sided children's paddling pool. This can be filled with sand and



treats placed on the surface of the sand. Gradually, you can place the treats deeper and deeper, so that your dog realises that digging in that area is productive and fruitful whereas digging elsewhere is not.

- Paddling pools – the same children’s paddling pools can be filled with water and treats (including some fruit and vegies) thrown into it for the dogs to catch and eat throughout the day. Please be aware that this shouldn’t be used if you have young children living in or visiting the house as it can pose a drowning hazard.



Exercise



Despite the fact that Greyhounds have an athletic physique, they are short distance runners as opposed to marathon runners. Consequently, they do not require nearly as much exercise as you might expect. A walk on lead each day (for 15-20 minutes) is usually sufficient to keep them happy and healthy. In the case of younger dogs, they may need a little more than this (approximately 2 x 20-30minute walks).

Because Greyhounds are not endurance dogs, they are not the ideal pet if you are an avid, long-distance jogger who wants company on your trip. However, most Greyhounds will build up stamina over time if started out slowly, but they will still tire much more readily than other dog breeds. This is what makes them such great pets!

Greyhounds tend to be affected adversely by temperature extremes, so heat and humidity during exercise should be avoided by limiting it to the cooler parts of the day or evening.

We highly recommend that Greyhounds are exercised on lead at all times in public places as these dogs have no road sense and with their exceptional speed would almost certainly be killed if allowed to venture near a road. They can also do exceptional damage to themselves should they be allowed off lead and run into posts, sticks or fences. These dogs are accustomed to walking on a lead and generally heel readily, without pulling.

Your dog does not require regular free running exercise for his physical or mental health, but he may enjoy the occasional burst if you have a private fully fenced and safe area nearby, such as a friend's fully enclosed backyard. However, even in these environments, please be conscious of any potential hazards on the ground and avoid off leash running if the safety of the environment is in doubt.

Many rural properties are not considered safe areas for Greyhounds to gallop, due to barbed wire fences (which a Greyhound will run straight through) and other obstacles (e.g. tree stumps) that may cause serious injury. Because the Greyhounds are running at approximately 65km/h and are thin-skinned with little coat to protect them from cuts and scrapes they can do themselves a lot of damage in an unsafe environment (even their own backyard). We ask that you carefully inspect any area in which you are considering allowing your dog off leash to ensure his safety at all times.

Dogs often benefit more from 'outings' whereby they get to see the big wide world rather than walking the same path each day. Trips to different areas and the opportunity to experience different environments such as the park, beach, or walking tracks means that the dogs are learning whilst simultaneously being exercised!



Off-lead Dog Parks

As mentioned previously, Greyhounds do not require regular free running exercise for their physical or mental health, however some Greyhound owners still like the idea of bringing their new family member to socialise at their local dog park.

We highly recommend **against** this for several reasons. Greyhounds are sighthounds and even though you may feel that he is quite safe around other dogs, it only takes a second for his prey instinct to kick in and for him to mistake the quick fluffy dog running around as something he wishes to chase.

Additionally, off-leash dog parks are a common place for injury or incident which in many cases is not the fault of the Greyhound owner. By letting your new friend off-lead at the local dog park before you get to know really him, you can actually cause more behavioural damage than good despite your intentions. Some Greyhounds can become intimidated by the array of different dogs rushing at them and this may lead to them forming a negative association with dogs of a certain breed or demeanour.

If you do wish to take your Greyhound/s to the dog park, we only recommend that this is done in an area that is fully fenced. Greyhounds can run extremely fast and often have no road awareness therefore adequate fencing is paramount to any area you wish to let your dog of lead, for its own safety.

Furthermore, we recommend commencing this process by taking your Greyhound to the park muzzled and on-lead. This allows you to gauge how your Greyhound may behave in such an environment and allows you more control of the animal.

If you feel your Greyhound is behaving and socialising appropriately and safely you may progress to off-leash after a number of exposures. We strongly recommend keeping your Greyhound (whether a Greenhound or not), muzzled when off leash.



Feeding

Your Greyhound will be happiest if fed twice a day in roughly equal amounts. For the average Greyhound, 2-2.5 cups of a well balanced dry food along with 400-600 grams (give or take) of quality meat (of a pet variety) is sufficient **per day**. Whilst under our care, our Greyhounds are fed a diet of semi lean beef (and occasionally chicken mice) as well as a good quality dry dog food.



It is recommended that you add warm water to the feed to ensure that your Greyhound remains adequately hydrated and to bring the meat to a more acceptable temperature (rather than cold, right from the fridge). You may add 'extras' to improve palatability and prevent boredom. Some Greyhounds are accustomed to eating vegetables, pasta, rice and the like cooked up into a 'stew'. You can also include cheese, partially cooked eggs, milk, raw or cooked meat and **raw** bones especially if they are having trouble eating whilst they settle in and in moderation. Partially cooked eggs and boneless fish (such as sardines) are generally loved by Greyhounds and are wonderful for their coats! These extras or the meat from a BBQ chicken (make sure there are no bones) are great tools to help encourage your Greyhound to eat over the first few weeks.

If you are having difficulty getting your Greyhound to eat, you can try changing the amount of water that you use to moisten the food and/or add some stock to make it more palatable. You may like to try exercising your dog at different times of the day (to stimulate their appetite), adding Weetbix with some milk or try different types of mince (chicken, beef, turkey or roo etc.). Some dogs eat better if the mince is cooked before feeding. If your dog is eating very little he can be placed on a rice and mince diet or rice and BBQ chicken. Then, you can try adding the kibble in gradually to familiarise him to it. If you think your dog is losing weight and his appetite is not returning, please contact the agency from whom you adopted your Greyhound, your Veterinarian or refer to the 'Greenhounds' website.

Raw bones can be offered regularly to help maintain healthy teeth and gums. **No** cooked bones of any type should be fed. Cooking renders the bone indigestible, often resulting in splintering or impaction in the gut. It is important to be aware that some dogs may become constipated or may get loose stools from eating bones.



Whilst large bones can be great, some Greyhounds cannot handle large beef or lamb bones and will sometimes vomit small bone fragments along with bile a few hours later. Raw chicken bones, are much softer, and rarely seem to cause gastric upset. Chicken carcasses (often sold as soup bones) can be bought at most poultry outlets relatively inexpensively. These can be fed whole, as a meal, but can also be cut into smaller segments with poultry shears. Small sections such as chicken wings or necks should be avoided on their own as they may be swallowed whole. Instead, leave them attached to the carcass so they are part of a larger object.

Certain food should **never** be given to dogs. These include raw or cooked onion (can cause blood disorders), chocolate (contains a toxin even in moderate doses), grapes and avocado.

Many Greyhounds are grazers and may benefit from being left with their food bowl overnight or for a few hours in the morning. Others are easily distracted from their meals so consumption may be assisted by placing breakfast or dinner in their den/crate with them for a while. If you have multiple dogs in the household, feed each dog separately and never leave uneaten food available as this may cause dogs to fight.

It is essential that a supply of fresh clean water is available at all times. If you have multiple dogs, it is important that there are multiple water bowls in several places, so that each has ready access to the resource.

A key component for your Greyhound's success in the 'Greenhound' collar (GAPNTT) assessment, allowing them exemption under the new muzzling laws, is their reaction when 'boring' food (e.g. kibble), high ranking food (e.g. a bone or liver treat) and toys are given to them and then attempted to be removed by the assessor. In order to be eligible for the 'Greenhound' collar your Greyhound must not exhibit any resource guarding or aggressive tendencies, as deemed by the assessor.

As with all large and giant breeds of dog, exercise, excitement and drinking excessive quantities of water around meal times should be avoided to prevent 'bloat' (gastric dilation or torsion). This is a life-threatening condition and is a true medical emergency, which will result in death within a few hours if untreated. Symptoms include a swollen abdomen, unproductive attempts to vomit, restlessness, rapid pulse and respiration rate, leading to death. If you suspect bloat, get your dog to the nearest vet immediately (regardless of whether it is day or night).

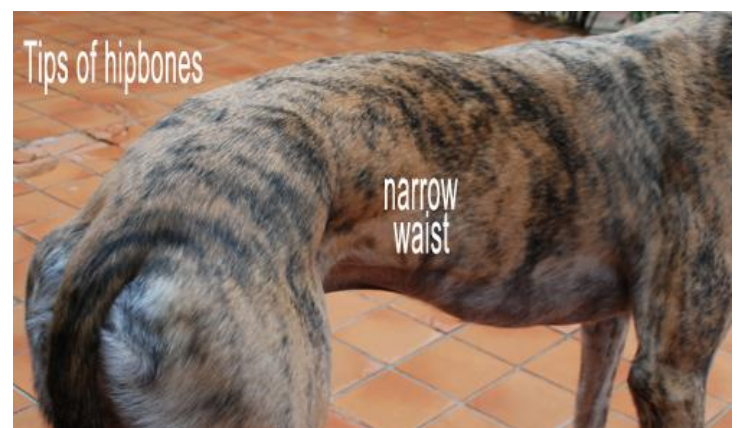
Body Condition and Weight

A Greyhound is a naturally lean, athletic animal, especially during their racing careers and this physique should be respected in retirement also. It is acceptable and recommended that a Greyhound is allowed to put on some weight and 'let down' in retirement and be a few kilo's heavier than their racing weight.

Your greyhound should never be allowed to 'get fat'...yes Greyhounds can get fat! An ideal weight is one that is visually pleasing, as opposed to their physical weight on the scales. A Greyhound in ideal 'retirement condition' is a few kilo's heavier than its racing weight, has the last rib or two defined without being predominant and where the tips of the hip bones can just be noticed, again without them being predominant. When you look at your Greyhound from above, you should still be able to make out a slight waist and not a 'plank-like' back. Below are some reference pictures highlighting an 'ideal pet weight'.



Image courtesy of: 'How To Know If Your Greyhound Is At A Proper Weight'
<<http://greyhoundcrossroads.com/index.php?page=weight>>



Bedding, Grooming and Shelters



Greyhounds are very angular and so may have trouble getting comfortable on hard or cold floors. It is recommended that you make a comfortable and cosy bed area for your dog in the family room so that your dog can be with you. Placing the bed near the couch will enable you to pat and reward your dog easily (without you having to go out of your way to have that interaction). It will also mean your dog will be less likely to feel the need to climb on your furniture.

Greyhounds often sleep very soundly and it is advisable that you call their name and get their attention as you approach their bed (before you touch them) as they may startle if woken suddenly. When you approach your dog on its bed, you should initially reward it with treats so that he realises that you approaching his bed is a good experience and that you do not pose a threat (i.e. you are not going to steal this precious resource from him). It is also important that you teach your dog to get off its bed (or your couch) by calling him to you and rewarding it with your dog's favourite treats (rather than pulling him off which may frighten or hurt him and make him believe that you can't be trusted). Similarly, to encourage your dog to go to its bed and remain there, you can coax him to their bed using food and then periodically reward them for remaining there.



Greyhound grooming requirements are minimal. They generally don't smell or shed much and will often thoroughly groom themselves. If your dog does seem to be losing hair, a rubber based brush (such as a 'zoom groom') or mitt is the best tool for use on a Greyhound. Bathing should not be done too often (only if the dog has rolled in something) as excessive bathing can dry out their skin and coat. If your dog does have some dandruff, you can try feeding him some tinned fish (such as sardines) or fish oil. Greyhounds generally love this treat (sardines) which can be given daily if necessary in conjunction with their normal food. If the problem persists, please contact the agency from whom you adopted your Greyhound or your veterinarian.

Outdoor shelters

We get many adopters enquiring about what the best kennel is to provide for their new family member whilst he/she is outdoors and our response is often "one that the Greyhound can get into!"



There is not a great availability of commercially made kennels that can accommodate the Greyhound's height and so we often suggest that if you know someone who is handy, to have one custom made. As long as the Greyhound is protected from the elements, they can get in and out of the kennel and comfortably lie down, some soft bedding to protect them from the hard floor and pronto, you have yourself a Greyhound kennel!



Emergencies and Veterinary Care

Greyhounds have a unique physiology that makes them quite different from other breeds of dog. They can have sensitivity to certain drugs and anaesthetics. It is recommended that you take your Greyhound to a vet who is familiar with the breed. You may also want to consider taking out pet insurance for your new friend which will help with covering any unexpected vet trips!

It is advisable to have up to date contact details of your closest or local veterinarian as well as the contact details of after hours veterinary services in your area, in an easily identifiable area, such as on the fridge or next to the phone. In the case of an emergency (such as bloat, dog bite, tick or other poisoning, suspected broken bones etc.), please take your Greyhound to the closest veterinarian immediately (after hours if necessary).

Physiology

- Greyhounds have a larger heart and higher blood pressure than other breeds of dog.
- Their blood is extra rich in oxygen carrying red blood cells and they have about 4% more blood than other dogs. The special qualities of their blood makes Greyhounds highly valued as canine blood donors.
- Their body weight is on 16% fat which is less than half the amount of other dog breeds of similar size.
- The high percentage of fast-twitch muscle fibres in their bodies aids speed, not endurance.
- Greyhounds run and hunt using their sight (60%), sense of smell (20%) and hearing (20%). Other dogs use their senses differently depending on what they were bred to do.

General Health

- Due to centuries of selective breeding, Greyhounds have very few inherited health conditions.
- The most common breed ailments are digestion related and they can be susceptible to bloat.
- They can be prone to some forms of bone cancer.
- Some Greyhounds can be fussy eaters and they are generally not prone to overeating and becoming overweight.
- They can have sensitivity to certain drugs (including some flea treatments) and anaesthetics.



For general health and safety fact sheets from Greyhound Racing NSW's Health and Welfare Unit, refer to the [Greenhounds](#) website. These include topics such as pannus, bloat, ticks, dental care, heat stress, bush fire safety, etc.

Bloat/Gastric Torsion



Photo credited to Dr J. Vidt <http://www.drjvw.com/article.php?view=0014.php&name=Bloat>

Bloat is a disorder which is sometimes seen in large dogs with deep chests (such as the Greyhound). Bloat is often associated with a twist in the gut which inhibits breathing, damages the gut and can result in rapid death.

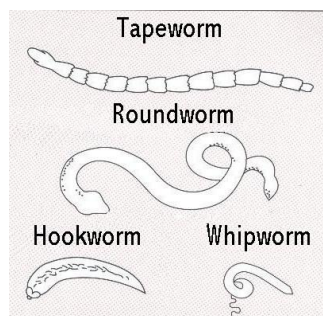
Bloat is often characterised by a restlessness, swollen stomach, shortness of breath, attempts (although often unsuccessful) to vomit and/or passing of larger amounts of faeces and gas often within a few hours of eating. If your dog shows such signs, this is a medical emergency and the dog should be taken to a vet immediately (regardless of the time). You should also call your vet before leaving home or whilst you are on route to ensure that they can prepare for your arrival. Many dogs with this condition die within 1-2 hours of showing signs so it is crucial that veterinary attention is sought immediately.

Prevention of bloat involves the following:

- Do not feed large amounts of food in one session. Instead, spread smaller meals out over the course of the day (i.e. a breakfast **and** dinner rather than just one big meal).
- Do not exercise your dog ½ an hour before eating or 1½ hours after eating.
- Ensure that water is readily available at all times (so that he can lap at it throughout the day) and that your dog does not gulp large volumes in a session
- Know who your local vet and after hours vets are so that you can contact them quickly in an emergency.
- If your dog is a rapid eater special bowls which include obstacles to slow your dog's eating can be purchased.

Continuing Care

Intestinal worms, heart worms and fleas



Dogs require regular worming and flea control in order to remain in good health (and to prevent some types of worms being passed on to humans). There are multiple products available on the market that control intestinal worms and/or heart worms, as well as combination medications that in some cases also control fleas and mites. They come in various forms ranging from tablets and palatable chews to topical applications (often applied to the back of the neck)



and medicated collars. An annual heartworm injection is also available. If you have any questions about flea or worm control please contact the agency from whom you adopted your Greyhound, refer to the 'Greenhounds' website for fact sheets or consult your veterinarian for the most appropriate treatment for your dog.



Ticks

There are three main types of ticks that affect dogs; the brown dog tick, the bush tick and the paralysis tick. The first two can prove carriers for a range of infectious agents, but rarely cause fatalities.

Paralysis ticks is a deadly parasite found in many areas in and around Sydney and New South Wales. They are at their peak from October through to April, however, can be present at any time of year. As the Greyhound has a short coat, ticks should be obvious upon inspection. Check your dog daily for ticks (which look like blue or grey lumps ranging in size from a few millimetres to approximately 1.5cm on your dog). Ticks can be anywhere on your dog and it is recommended that you check the head, ears, neck, under the collar, body, 'armpits', between their toes, along and under their tail – basically everywhere.

If you find a tick, the best course of action is to remove it immediately (if possible). Tick removing devices are available inexpensively for purchase from veterinarians, pet and produce supply stores, and make removing ticks straightforward. If you can't remove the tick, please take the dog to the vet as a matter of urgency to have it removed.

Signs of tick poisoning include:

- Unsteadiness on their feet particularly in their hind limbs (especially down stairs)
- A dry cough
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Lethargy

If you see any of these signs (even if you've already removed the tick) it is imperative that you get the dog to the vet immediately! Tick poisoning can lead to death in a matter of hours. If you suspect tick poisoning or you are unsure, please err on the side of caution and seek veterinary advice straight away. Multiple products are available on the market to assist in preventing ticks, however nothing can be 100% foolproof and it is imperative that you check your Greyhound daily for ticks, particularly during the peak period. Examples of such products include 'spot on' treatments and tick collars.

Safety Issues- House and Yard



Around the house we often keep many products that are potentially toxic to our pets. Ensuring that these products are out of reach and locked away is crucial. Poisons and hazards can come in many forms. They may include:

- Drowning (never leave dogs in and around swimming pools unsupervised)
- Hills hoist (the handle should be tied into the upright position to prevent your dog running into it)
- Building material and rubble which may lacerate your dog
- Stakes and other obstacles that Greyhounds can run into
- Holes in the ground and other trip hazards
- Fertiliser
- Rat bait
- Snail bait
- Cleaning products (generally from bathroom and shower cupboards but also garages)
- Antifreeze
- Paint
- Nail polish and remover
- Shoe polish
- Matches
- Chocolate (or cocoa mulch)
- Onions or garlic (causes anaemia)
- Avocado (the leaves, fruit, seeds and bark contain a toxin dangerous to dogs)
- Grapes and raisins (less than 10 is fine but more than this can cause kidney failure)
- Dental floss, string and other elongated objects (gets stuck in the gut and severs it)
- Drugs and medications (including pain killers, contraceptive pill, vitamins and some herbs)
- Asthma inhalers (they might look like a fun toy but can be fatal)
- Moderate size objects (like corn cobs) that get stuck in the gut
- Poisonous plants (see your local vet or nursery for common plants of concern)



Stay In Touch!

We love keeping up to date with all our Greenhounds' adventures in their new homes so please stay in touch here:



Feel free to share photos or videos of your Greenhounds on our page and stay in touch!

