

Almost everything you need to know about...

...looking after your Greyhound

This booklet has been written to help give you all the advice you need to care for your new Greyhound.

For additional information, please call

The Retired Greyhound Trust on
0844 826 8424 or visit
www.retiredgreyhounds.co.uk

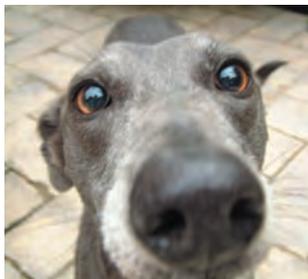


the greyhound trust

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Please note: The Retired Greyhound Trust endeavours to give the best advice but no responsibility or liability is accepted for its usage or applicability.



Welcome!

Thank you for wanting to adopt a retired greyhound. This booklet has been written to help you and your new pet to get to know each other and to build a relationship that will last for many happy years ahead.



Your greyhound will come with a collar, lead and muzzle and will have been vaccinated, wormed and are usually neutered. The insurance company, Petplan, provides the first 4 weeks insurance cover free of charge. It would be helpful if you have two bowls ready, one for water and one for food. An old duvet folded in half will make an ideal bed. A waterproof coat and grooming mitt are essential and a soft collar to wear around the house carrying an ID tag will complete the picture. You may want to have your dog microchipped. Your dog must be walked wearing a greyhound collar and leather lead. A waterproof coat is recommended and can be bought from the RGT.

Two very important points. 1. It is a legal requirement that an ID tag is worn by the dog at all times. 2. Never use an extendable lead. A greyhound can accelerate from a standing start to nearly 40 mph in no time at all and with an extendable lead, the potential for disaster is all too obvious.

The positioning of the dog's collar is very important. It should go up behind the ears, which is the thinnest part of the neck and should be tight enough to get two fingers between the collar and the neck. But don't worry about this as we will show you how to get it right. When you first have your dog, We recommend that your dog wears a muzzle when taken out for a walk. After a while, you will know the social behaviour of your dog and you may then choose to walk without the muzzle.



Arriving home

When taking your new Greyhound home, please bear in mind your dog will never have been in a home environment before.

Your dog will settle at its own pace and there needs to be no rush. At your side is where they want to be. Remember, they will become a precious part of your family. Enjoy the experience of seeing them grow from a kennel dog to a family pet. They will bring you great joy!

Domestic appliances which are commonplace to us, such as vacuum cleaners, washing machines, TV etc. will be alien to them and may initially spook them.

Upon arriving home, take the dog straight into the garden or designated toilet spot, wait until they relieve themselves and then praise them profusely. Use their name, tell them good boy/girl and reward them with a small piece of cheese or biscuit (whichever you are using for training purposes). Repeat this process every hour or so for the first day and then get into a routine of letting them out – ie before meals and straight after meals.

Then take your dog around the house on the lead initially so they can see everything in a calm manner. After 10 minutes or so, take the lead off and sit down, letting them roam around on their own. By this stage the initial excitement will have worn off and they can snoop around calmly. Set the house rules from day one, so they know what they can and cannot do, and ensure all family members are familiar with these guidelines or the dog will become very confused about its role.

Their first few days in this alien world can be quite daunting for them and they may become anxious. Keep in mind the size of the busy, noisy kennel you have taken the dog from and the quiet, new, small world you are introducing them to. Signs of anxiety are pacing, panting, diarrhoea, not eating and drinking and whining at night when left alone. Anxiety can be shown through destructiveness. Please be patient while your dog adjusts. Night-lights and low volume radios left on can help the dog not feel completely alone in the dark. A DAP™ diffuser can also help calm your dog – see page 9 for more information regarding this.



House training

We can't guarantee a house-trained dog but most Greyhounds are clean in their kennels, and once they know where you want them to empty, they will be happy to stick with that routine.

House training should begin as soon as your dog arrives home. Take them straight into the garden, wait until they relieve themselves and then reward them with a small piece of cheese or a dog biscuit.

After this initial visit to the garden, keep repeating the routine at regular periods throughout the day. It is advantageous to take your new pet for a short 5 minute walk at regular periods throughout the day. During this time it is unlikely that the Greyhound will have had a chance to have an accident and they will be thoroughly familiar with the idea that any 'toilets' are to be done outside.

Thereafter, if your dog has an accident indoors, bear in mind punishment does not work and can make the dog worse. Anticipate when your dog needs to go, take them outside and praise and reward them when they 'go'.

Any 'accident' in the home should be washed thoroughly with a solution of biological washing liquid, as this will take away the smell, otherwise they will constantly re-mark over that spot.

Take them to the toilet immediately after food, when they get up and before they go to bed and, of course, in between.

Some signs to look for when your dog needs to go to the toilet are restlessness, pacing up and down, whining, scratching at the door or circling.

Of course, at first, there may be no signs as the dog will have been used to living in a kennel, but Greyhounds are generally clean animals and learn very quickly.

Remember, all pet owners have a responsibility to pick up any mess your dog does while walking anywhere on public ground. It's not only illegal, with fines to be paid, but also very nasty to tread in and offensive in a modern society. Poop scoops can be bought from your local pet store or vet practice or you can use 'Nappy sacks' which are a cheaper alternative.



Feeding

Many new owners already know how and what they want to feed their dog, based on past experience. There is a huge range of food products to choose from. These guidelines will help to keep your Greyhound fit and healthy. Ask the kennel for details of the feed your dog has been fed and introduce change gradually.

Water

Should be available at all times and changed regularly. Never leave your dog without fresh water.

Complete Foods

Are the most effective, economical and efficient way of feeding your dog the proteins, vitamins and minerals they need. When you buy, look for a complete food with approximately 20% protein, which is ideal for a pet dog. Use cold water only to soak or the vitamins will be destroyed. Follow the feeding instructions on the packaging according to the weight of the dog. Feeding the main meal early in the afternoon can assist with housetraining.

Keep an eye on your dog's stools. Should they become loose, you may need to change the brand. Generally complete foods are based on biscuits or cereal, tinned food is not necessary but can make a meal more appetising.

Fresh Meat & Vegetables

All Greyhounds will enjoy this treat and are very appreciative of any left-overs. However, this is not needed everyday and should form part of the main meal.

When to feed

It is generally agreed your Greyhound will benefit from a small cereal breakfast in the morning. Warm milk or milk and water will be much appreciated! A main meal can then be given at lunch time or in the evening – whichever suits your routine, but try to stick to regular feeding times each day.

Biscuits and chews

These will aid the dog's digestion and help to keep their teeth clean. They can also be used as training aids and of course as an extra treat!



Additional items

A teaspoon of sunflower/vegetable/fish oil added to the main meal will help maintain a glossy coat. Cooked eggs in any form can be enjoyed once a week or so. Cheese, an excellent training aid, can be crumbled on top. Oily fish, such as sardines or pilchards and other filleted fish are a healthy treat.

Human chocolate, raisins, salt and raw onions are poisonous to dogs. They simply cannot digest it. Only give doggy treats. Make sure all children and visitors are aware of the significant danger to your pet. Be aware of danger if your pet gets into household waste bins from open tins and glass etc. Keep the bin secure. Never allow your Greyhound to scavenge or pick up bits of food outside the home. There may be poison or vermin bait present and the consequences can be a serious illness or even death.

Common sense will tell you not to feed the dog before a long journey, just carry water for the comfort stops. Never feed just before or just after exercise. Always wait about one hour. It is recommended that you feed your greyhound from a raised bowl on a stand whenever possible as greyhounds have such long necks and legs that it is awkward for them to eat from a bowl placed on the floor. For them, an elevated dog bowl on a stand (as pictured below), available from pet supply stores or catalogues may be the answer. An upturned bucket may serve the same purpose. Contact any member of our team for help with feeding problems. We will have encountered them before and are happy to help.



Making friends

If you already have a dog, please bring it with you to our kennels when you are considering a Greyhound - the dogs will pick each other!

The first meeting should always be in a neutral area, this does not include any areas where your dog regularly walks, as these are considered secondary territories. Allow them to smell each other on loose relaxed leads whilst muzzled. Continue walking until the dogs are relaxed with each other and then take them back to the house and into the garden. Ensure your existing dog's toys, beds, bones, food and water bowls are taken up and put out of sight so there is nothing for them to argue over. Your existing dog might not like another dog playing with their possessions at this stage. When you put the possessions down, make sure there are more than enough for both dogs.

To avoid future problems between your dogs, remember to 'back up' your pack leader. The pack leader will be first through the door, first to seek attention and the first at the food bowl.

Given that racing greyhounds have only ever really known other greyhounds it is surprising how quickly they get on with other dogs after a certain amount of initial caution. Most greyhounds that leave our kennels will have been neutered and it shouldn't be too long before they are perfectly happy with their new 'house mate'.



Fireworks

Any pets, including Greyhounds can be terrified of loud noises. Fireworks, storms, thunder and lightening may scare your dog. Don't leave them alone if possible. During firework season, take your greyhound out for their walk before dark. Draw the curtains at dusk and put the radio or television on. Your greyhound will look to you for your response to the sounds so try not to react. Let your dog go to where it feels safe and do not keep pampering them – they will only respond more to the noises around.

DAP™ diffusers, available from your local vets are very good at calming your greyhound. This is a plug-in device which emits 'dog appeasing pheromones' similar to those produced soon after a puppy is born by it's mother. The pheromones create a 'safe feeling' for your dog and are very effective. Alternatively seek medication from your vet, if the firework season causes undue distress. Prior to the firework season, you can also prepare your greyhound by buying a 'Noise Phobia CD or cassette'. This imitates the sounds of fireworks and should be played at a very low level for a couple of days. Gradually increase the volume of the CD over a few days and your greyhound will become used to the strange noises and hopefully begin to show no fear when hearing them. There are also Homeopathic remedies such as Kali-Phos, Bach Rescue and Serenity.



General care

Greyhounds do make wonderful pets, but it's important to bear a few simple ideas in mind.

Neutering

Most Greyhounds that leave our kennels are usually already neutered but occasionally this operation has to be carried out at a later date. However, if you receive one directly from a trainer, or another source that has not been neutered, we strongly recommend this be done as soon as possible so as to prevent future unwanted pregnancies/unwanted mating. This also prevents problems in later life.

Ears

Ears should be checked regularly, as although ear infections are no more common with Greyhounds than other breeds, they can occur. Regular cleaning of the outer ear with cotton balls, plus warm salt water, will keep the ears free of wax that can trap germs leading to infection. Special wipes can also be purchased from pet stores and vets. If your dog is flapping their head and rubbing or pawing at their ear, and the problem persists, seek veterinarian advice. An infection will quickly be cleared up with antibiotic ointment or drops. Many Greyhounds are sensitive with their ears due to racing (due to tattoo checking) so take care when handling them.

Parasite Control

Regular grooming of your Greyhound will ensure you are quickly aware if they pick up fleas or ticks. There are a variety of products available to control parasites, however the more effective ones need to be obtained from a veterinary surgery. Remove fleas with a flea comb (pictured on page 11), and bathe your dog with a flea shampoo, but remember, the bath only takes care of the adult fleas on your dog at that time. For more extensive protection, as well as control over pre-adult fleas, you will have to treat your dog and your home especially carpets and bedding. A house spray from the vets is available for this.

Your dog will have had a worming treatment at the kennels before you take them home to ensure their intestines are free from infection. Regular doses with a complete wormer available from the vets are necessary. We recommend worming at 3 monthly intervals.



Feet & Nails

The feet and nails have been very important to your Greyhound while they have been racing and need continuing care from you. Their nails will have been clipped short on a regular basis and you will notice they grow quickly. Once they have settled and they allow you to brush them. Once you have their trust, hold their feet firmly and gently clip a small amount from their nails straight across with sharp nail cutters. Alternatively, file with a nail file. We are always happy to cut their nails at the kennels if you feel unsure. Check your Greyhounds pads, feet and legs for cuts after they have been exercising outdoors. This is particularly important if they have been running in a large area that you cannot examine completely. Sharp stones, sticks, thorns and glass can cause cuts or become embedded in the foot. Wash their feet in warm soapy water and seek veterinary advice if necessary.

Skin & Coat

In order to keep your Greyhound's coat healthy, a grooming mitt or good brush with firm bristles (pictured below), will be required. They will have been used to regular grooming in the racing kennel and most will stand and enjoy this special attention from you. If they require a bath, ensure they are dried quickly and can lie down somewhere warm.

Many Greyhounds have bare patches, especially on the bony prominences or on their rumps. This is usually due to poor bedding or the hounds preference to lying on concrete or wet paddocks or stress. With good food, soft bedding and regular brushing, your dogs coat will soon improve and look shiny and healthy. Some dogs may come with scars from their racing days. These, once healed, rarely give any trouble.



Teeth

The importance of good dental hygiene cannot be overstated.

Dogs, like people, can get gingivitis (inflammation of the gums caused by bacteria) and can suffer from decay and lose teeth without proper care. Gingivitis is a primary cause of bad breath in canines.

When the greyhound is admitted to be neutered by our vets, they will do a thorough teeth cleaning. Once this has been done, maintenance is down to you. Regular chews, cooked bones and dental treats (available from pet stores) will help with some of the plaque build-up, however brushing their teeth is the most effective form of dental care. Some dogs will let you brush their teeth straight away, however, others will need to have their confidence built up.

You can do this in stages:

- For the first few days gently stroke your dog's muzzle.
- Once your greyhound accepts this happily, you can then progress to lifting their lips up and praising them for their co-operation.
- Once your dog has gained confidence in you, they will allow you to gently brush their teeth. Use a soft bristle toothbrush and a canine toothpaste, usually flavoured with chicken or beef. This will be a real treat for your dog, who will find the taste so delicious they will try to chew on the brush! Dog toothbrushes/finger brushes and canine toothpaste are available at pet stores or from your local vet.

Regular attention to the mouth will save money for you and pain for your dog later. Check your greyhound's teeth and gums regularly and seek veterinary advice if in doubt.



Heat and cold

Greyhounds are particularly susceptible to extreme temperatures, as they only carry a small portion of fat on their bodies.



This may be more obvious in the cold weather, but not so obvious in the heat. In the colder weather pop a coat on them to keep them warm. They could develop pneumonia should they become too cold. Coats should be big enough to cover from the neck to over the tail.

Like all dogs, greyhounds get very hot on warm days. They will pant, possibly be grumpy (like us really) and try to find cool places to lie. In hot weather, leave your greyhound in peace as much as you can. Remind children to cuddle a lot less, if at all. Help to keep them cool with damp flannels on their bodies and protect them from the sun with cream or shade if they decide to lie outside. This might sound crazy but if there is a breeze in the garden it might seem to be the coolest place, however dogs don't know about UV rays and can get badly burnt.

Please remember to take care to only walk your greyhound before it heats up in the morning or at night when it has cooled down. If they are reluctant to go for a walk, then just give them the opportunity to toilet in the garden and let them lie.

It is best to feed earlier/later, if they don't eat much – don't worry unless there are other symptoms of illness.

Never leave a dog in a hot room or car – they can die within ten minutes.

Symptoms of heat stroke are distress, severe panting and collapse. If you think your greyhound is showing signs of this, cool your dog as fast as possible with cold water or ice applied to the head and back. If there isn't an immediate improvement get veterinary help immediately.



Special needs

The majority of greyhounds settle happily into family life. However there are those with specific needs who are also looking for homes. These are dogs with behavioural problems, extreme timidity or who are simply just so overwhelmed by the world outside the kennel doors that they experience adjustment problems or separation anxiety. All of these dogs require special homes to meet their individual needs, where they can find inner peace to join the world outside of kennels.

Typical symptoms of adjustment problems are howling, barking, scratching or chewing furniture and fittings or even excreting around the house during your absence. Your greyhound has been used to the company of their kennel mate, trainer, re-homing staff and volunteer walkers and to be left alone can be initially distressing for them. Try giving your greyhound an item of your worn clothes.

What you need to do is desensitise them and build their confidence. If your greyhound follows you everywhere around the house you must stop them, encourage them back to their sleeping area and try to leave the room again until they become confident with letting you out of their sight. Your greyhound will also associate the going out procedure of putting on your coat and picking up your keys as the start of a time alone and will begin to get anxious. To stop them fretting at the prospect of being alone, you should take off your coat, put the keys back and carry on with the normal household routine. After a short while, put your coat back on, pick up those keys again, then, without any fuss, put the keys back, remove your coat and repeat these actions until your greyhound gets positively bored!

You can build their confidence by closing them in the room where they sleep and moving around the house for a very short time, then for just a short time, gradually acclimatising them to being left alone. When leaving the room you should make as little fuss as possible, so they learn that being left is a normal everyday occurrence.

Leaving a radio on a low volume is quite reassuring for them. Following this you should be able to leave the house for short periods, perhaps walk to the end of the road and back, so your greyhound learns that you do actually return.

If your greyhound is particularly sensitive and even increased confidence does not improve their behaviour, then the use of an indoor kennel may be required, or perhaps a relative, dog walker, friend or neighbour could act as 'baby sitter' whilst you are out.

The indoor kennel can be effective to help with both separation anxiety and house training. Providing they are taught that the kennel is their sanctuary and it is furnished with their normal bed, a small bowl of water and their favourite toy, they will feel confident and relaxed. The kennel will prevent them from chewing furniture and it is unlikely they will soil in an area where they may have to lay.

Once your greyhound is confident enough to sleep in the kennel, you can begin to shut the door for periods whilst you are in the room and soon you will be able to leave the room for brief time. Tell them to stay as you move away from the kennel and if they begin to whine say 'NO' firmly and continue to leave. When you return and they have been quiet, you should praise them without fuss.

Greyhounds with special needs can take up your time and energy in the early days and weeks, but your efforts will be rewarded. However we would advise that you give careful consideration to your experience in handling special / problem dogs and the work involved when considering these dogs. With the correct care, all of these dogs have great potential to enjoy a happy retirement in a home. Handling advice on each dog will be given and post-adoption support is available, should you require it.

There is nothing worse than taking on a dog and giving up on it. A dog is for life – not to be given up on. Returning them to the kennels after being in a home can often disturb them more. Please think carefully before committing to take on a dog. If, after you have tried everything and things are still not working out – the dog must be returned to the kennels to prevent further distress.



Training

Dogs must learn basic commands. Why? ...because like people, dogs need a basic level of education and socialising to enable them to feel confident and behave in a socially acceptable manner in public.

You will need to give your dog verbal praise and reinforcement. Treats of small pieces of cheese can reinforce your verbal commands and are an effective training aid – as is a water sprayer! Should your dog be doing something they shouldn't ie. Jumping up at visitors, paws up on the kitchen counter etc, a quick 'blast' from a water sprayer in the face will quickly prevent your dog from committing the same crime!

Be quick to praise your dog for good deeds and reinforce bad behaviour with the word 'NO' spoken loudly. Please refrain from hitting your dog – it will not understand and may become distressed.

As with young children, do not leave things lying around that your dog could get hold of – either something they could destroy or harm themselves with. It is better to prevent accidents before they happen. Dog training classes can be good fun and can help your greyhound socialise with other dogs.

Babies and children

It is essential that when introducing a canine into a home where babies and small children are present, special care is taken. There is no exception with a greyhound. Children and babies should never be left unattended with the dog. Children must be educated to be calm and gentle with the dog and have respect for its needs and its bed. An escape place is an excellent idea so when the dog has had enough, it can retreat to its own space.

Greyhounds are people orientated, gentle, placid and docile but all breeds have a breaking point when taunted by children. Please teach children respect for your dog and soon they will be best of friends. Never let a child disturb a greyhound when it is asleep.



Cats

It is important to remember that not only greyhounds chase cats – so do many other dogs! Greyhounds are sighthounds after all and their instincts have been deliberately bred for chasing and they have been trained to chase something small that is moving. Humans might not even realise this because a greyhound may see something seen to be worth chasing that could be up to half a mile away. But just as Greyhounds show different degrees of competitiveness in a race, they show greater and lesser degrees of interest in small animals.

Some greyhounds CAN LIVE WITH CATS.

You will have been advised if the dog you are choosing is considered suitable or not to home with a cat. It is **IMPERATIVE**, however, that the following sensible precautions are taken until you are confident of your dog's temperament.

- When you make the initial introduction, keep your greyhound muzzled and on a tight collar and lead.
- Keep your cat in the room and if your greyhound pulls towards the cat, pull them back and say, "no, leave," in a firm voice. You may find that a quick shot in the face with water from a water sprayer is also a great deterrent! If your greyhound reacts to your commands as you wish them to – don't forget to praise them – treats of small cubes of cheese are often favoured!
- Do not pick your cat up as this will heighten your dog's interest.

The next step is to get your greyhound to lie down and relax close to your cat. This step may well depend on your cat's willingness to co-operate. Some cats may spend time watching the dog from the highest and furthest place possible:- others may be willing to give the newcomer a blow to show who's boss. It is always best to favour the cat above the dog as this will give the cat higher authority in the eyes of the dog and it should not be forgotten that we have two temperaments to work with in this introduction.



If your greyhound is scratched by a cat, bathe the scratch immediately with warm water. When you think you are making progress, take away the muzzle, keep the tight collar and lead on and feed your greyhound and cat together. By doing this they are alongside each other but do not have their minds on each other. When you are feeling confident, replace the muzzle and take away the collar and lead. In time, the muzzle can also be removed. Your greyhound will quickly accept the rules and accept the cat as a member of the family. However, a sensible approach and all necessary precautions should be taken. Ensure the cat has a place to escape. If necessary, put a baby gate at the bottom of the stairs so that the cat can get through but the dog cannot.

Even when the dog accepts your house rules, remember strange cats outside the home may well still be regarded as fair game for a chase, so always be alert when out exercising. Until you are confident, it would be unwise to leave your dog and cat alone in the same room. If your cat is not used to dogs in its home there is a risk that it might leave. It is essential that your cat has a collar and identity disc to cover this possibility.

Feel free to contact a member of our Trust and we can put you in touch with one of our many happy dog and cat owners to talk through any of your concerns and questions with you.

Getting older

Ageing is a genetic process and your dog ages at a much faster rate than you do. Dogs are classed as mature at 18 months. The life expectancy of a dog ranges from 8 to 16 years and varies according to state of health.

Signs of ageing

Ageing changes occur gradually and may not be obvious to you as you see your dog every day. You might see changes in coat colour, greying of the muzzle, sleep pattern, appetite and thirst, body shape, reluctance to exercise and behaviour. Many of these changes also develop as symptoms of diseases, so have your dog checked by your vet regularly.



Many veterinary practices run senior or geriatric clinics dedicated to offering advice on diet and care for the older dog. Routine healthcare such as annual vaccination boosters, worming and flea control should not be overlooked and should be continued throughout your dog's life into old age.

Diet

There are some notable differences in the nutritional requirements of the older dog. Senior life stage diets take into account altered life styles, levels of activity and declining organ function. Your vet will be able to give you advice when changing from an adult to a senior diet.

Some older dogs require up to 20% fewer calories as they become less active, so weigh your dog regularly (every 3 months). Many veterinary surgeries have scales as well as breed weight guidelines. Adjust the food intake to maintain optimum weight. Obesity is likely to put more strain on the heart, lungs, muscles and joints and may result in a shorter life expectancy. If your dog is overweight, speak to a vet about a calorie control diet.

As activity levels fall, older dogs may start to demonstrate muscle wastage. Supplements such as Cod Liver Oil capsules and Glucosamine will help prevent joint deterioration. Normal healthy senior dogs should receive the same levels of protein as younger dogs but it must be of high quality. Feeding them little and often avoids overloading their digestive system. Their appetite may reduce as the sense of smell and taste diminishes. Old dogs require extra attention from you. Be kind and considerate and recognise this need for greater input into your dog's life. Older dogs also tend to need to go to the toilet more often as a result of muscular weakness. Give them more opportunities to go out during the day, later at night and earlier in the morning.

Accessories and gift ideas

The RGT Homer Magazine carries a merchandising section with gift ideas for you and your new greyhound and can be ordered from the RGT on 0844 826 8424.



Dealing with anxiety

It is extremely important to remember that your greyhound has never been left alone before. So if you have to leave him at home alone, he may be scared and confused. He's wondering... Where did you go? Will you return? Where am I?

Here are a few tips to help ease this common separation anxiety:

Practice leaving your greyhound for a few minutes at a time, to start with.

Don't make a big deal about leaving (If he thinks you're going somewhere and having more fun than he is then he'll definitely be upset!) and just leave for 15 minutes at first. If possible, gradually increase this time away to a few hours. He'll soon get the idea that you're coming back and his anxiety about you leaving him forever will be eased. An item of worn clothing can provide comfort.

Dog-proof your home.

Keep your windows unobstructed from knick-knacks and blinds. Your greyhound will go to the window first to look for you and if there are blinds or other objects in the way, they could get eaten when he gets anxious! Be aware of the danger that your greyhound may try to run through transparent glass in patio or other doors, unless the glass is obscured in some way.

Borrow an indoor kennel for the first few weeks.

If anxiety is bad, then borrowing a good-sized indoor kennel for the first few weeks at home, can make a real difference. Your greyhound has always lived in a kennel, so it can be familiar and re-assuring for him, whilst making the transition from racer to pet. The plan might be to place him in the kennel when left home alone, during the first 2 weeks. Then, when he starts to know the family routine, he's again placed in the kennel, but now with the door left open, to give him the choice of whether to stay in it or not. After 2 more weeks, the kennel can be returned as your greyhound will now have settled in properly. But do wait to see how he fares at first before borrowing or even purchasing a kennel - he may be just fine!



Frequently asked questions

Q. Are greyhounds highly strung?

A. No. They are naturally calm and rather self possessed. As a breed they have been around for a very long time. They are genuine thoroughbreds.

Q. Are greyhounds good with children?

A. As good as any dog and better than most, because of their characteristic gentleness.

Q. Are there character differences between a dog or a bitch?

A. The differences tend to be less pronounced than in many other breeds and spaying or castrating can normally cope with most behavioral problems and is recommended.

Q. How much exercise do they need?

A. Toilet considerations apart, very little indeed. Twenty minutes, twice a day is usually more than enough. Greyhounds are sprinters and their energy gets used up in short bursts.

Q. Is muzzle wearing obligatory?

A. No. But it is better that the dog is muzzled when you are out and about. They are quite used to it and associate it with pleasurable walks. If you feel you need to let your dog off the lead, a confined space and the wearing of a muzzle is recommended.

Q. Will I need a special bed for the dog?

A. No. An old quilt folded in two is perfect. But they are used to sleeping off the ground and will need no encouragement to take over your bed as well as your settee. They do like to stretch out.

Q. How do greyhounds get on with other dogs?

A. Normally ok. There will be an initial wariness, but familiarity and common sense is the order of the day. Not easy when you are such a superior breed.

Q. Are greyhounds easy to train and do they come back when you call?

A. Yes, but it needs patience and understanding. Like any dog, a greyhound loves to please and tasty rewards are highly appreciated after the racing regime.



Homing

Greyhounds are very adaptable and our rehoming policies are very flexible. Even if you work, have children, cats or are unable to go for long walks, it is still worth calling us.

We may have the perfect greyhound for you in our kennels.

The policy of the Trust is that dogs are normally: 1. Neutered 2. Vaccinated 3. Wormed
The Trust does ask for a donation towards the cost of this veterinary treatment. All new homes are subject to a home check.

A DVD about "Caring For Your Dog" is available from the Retired Greyhound Trust.

Call our Greyhound Pets Hotline on;

Tel: **0844 826 8424**

Or write to;

The Retired Greyhound Trust

2nd Floor, Park House, 1-4 Park Terrace, Worcester Park, Surrey. KT4 7JZ

Or email us at;

greyhounds@retiredgreyhounds.co.uk



Your dog in the countryside

Whether ambling along leafy lanes, rambling through forests, or exploring new access land, the countryside is a great place for you and your dog to explore and enjoy.

Six steps to worry-free walkies by following the Countryside code:

1. Control your dog so that it does not scare or disturb farm animals or wildlife.
2. When using the new access rights over open country and common land, you must keep your dog on a short lead between 1st March and 31st July - and all year round near farm animals - and you may not be able to take your dog at all on some areas or at some times. Make sure you follow any official signs.
3. As a general rule, keep your dog on a lead if you cannot rely on obedience. By law, farmers are entitled to destroy a dog that injures or worries their animals.
4. If a farm animal chases you and your dog, it is safer to let your dog off the lead - don't risk getting hurt by trying to protect it.
5. Take good care that your dog doesn't scare sheep and lambs, or wander where it might disturb birds that nest on the ground and other wildlife - eggs and young will soon die without protection from their parents.
6. Everyone knows how unpleasant dog mess can be and how it can cause infections, so always clean up after your dog and dispose of its mess responsibly.

Wherever you go, following these six steps will help keep your pet safe, protect the environment and demonstrate that you are a responsible dog owner.

Find out more about these rules from www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk or for specific queries, call 0845 100 3298.





Photo by Richard Lindley

Contact your local RGT branch at:



the greyhound trust