

THE GREYHOUND **ADOPTION MANUAL**

A GUIDE FOR GREYHOUND OWNERS

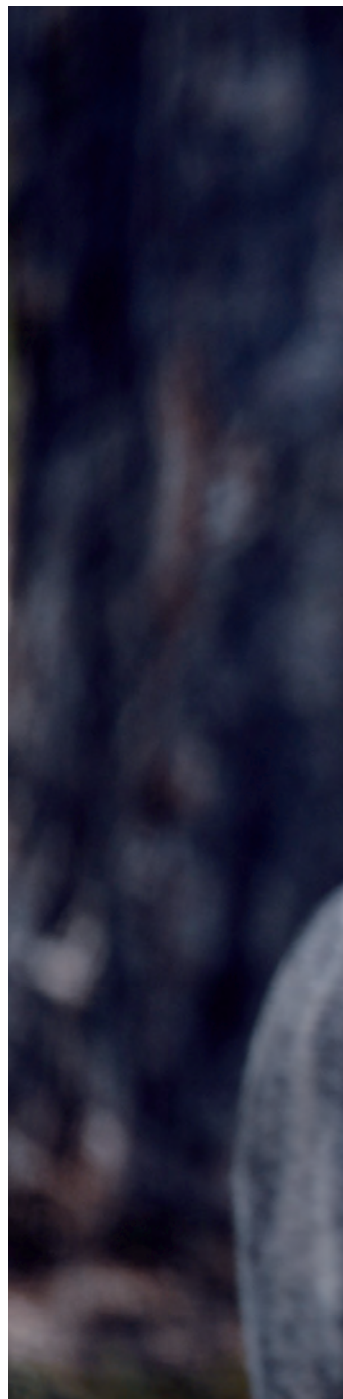
The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission is an independent statutory body which oversees the integrity and welfare standards of racing animals and racing industry participants in Queensland.

The Commission is committed to promotion of practices that improve the welfare of all greyhounds from birth through training and racing to retirement.

This guide provides advice that will assist you in planning and providing a successful transition for your greyhound into your home.

Index

About this manual	P. 1
About GAP	P. 2
Learning to be a pet	P. 2
Tips for the first weeks	P. 3
A checklist for a happy and well behaved greyhound	P. 4
Responsible dog ownership	P. 4
A smooth transition for you and your greyhound	P. 4
Greyhounds and other pets	P. 5
Greyhounds and other dogs	P. 5
Greyhounds and children	P. 6
Separation anxiety	P. 7
Poisons around and in the home	P. 7
Helpful online resources	P. 8





About This Manual

This manual has been produced to guide you through the adoption of your greyhound.

The following Greyhound Adoption Programs have assisted us to provide the information in this booklet:

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

The information contained in this booklet is provided to assist you with your new greyhound, but it does not replace professional assistance.

For more information contact:
GAP QLD on (07) 5424 6092 or email
gap@qric.qld.gov.au



About GAP

The Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) of Queensland is operated by the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission (QRIC).

The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission is committed to ensuring that the best levels of care are given to greyhounds throughout all stages of their lives from birth, throughout their racing career and after retirement from racing.

Greyhounds that are adopted through GAP are issued a unique GAP Green Collar. The Green Collar means that your greyhound is not required to be muzzled in public unless there are specific local government laws which over-ride this exemption.

To earn a Green Collar, greyhounds must pass the GAP National Temperament Assessment. This helps to ensure that when you adopt a greyhound from GAP it will make a great pet and a wonderful addition to your family.

All greyhounds adopted through GAP are desexed, vaccinated and microchipped.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR GREYHOUND ON LEASH IN ALL PUBLIC PLACES.

Greyhounds are sighthounds and they are very, very fast. Even a greyhound with great recall can see something in the distance and run off to reach it.

A greyhound in chase mode can easily run onto a busy road or through a fence without realising the danger. So for the safety of your greyhound please keep that leash on.

Learning To Be A Pet

Most greyhounds make the transition into a home environment quickly.

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

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

Tips For The First Weeks

- 1.** Don't overwhelm your new dog by trying to be with it all the time, go about your usual routine in a calm manner and allow your greyhound time to watch and investigate on its own terms.
- 2.** Retired racers may not have had experience with fridges, washing machines or other appliances. While your greyhound is getting used to its new home, be conscious of the noises that household appliances make and understand that this may frighten, confuse or upset some greyhounds. With a bit of reassurance your greyhound will soon understand that these appliances are neither threatening nor frightening.
- 3.** Most retired greyhounds also have limited exposure to glass doors and windows, so make a point of showing them to your greyhound so they know they can't run through them.
- 4.** While in a kennel environment your greyhound may not have had to learn food manners, this means they are likely to steal food from tables or benches. Be patient and consistent with your greyhound as you teach them what is and isn't acceptable.
- 5.** Decide on the house rules including where your greyhound is allowed; what the greyhound's walking/feeding routine will be and who in the family is responsible for what - include the children by giving them 'doggy responsibilities'.
- 6.** Set up your greyhound's sleeping area before it arrives. This should be in a quiet area, away from drafts and the main thoroughfare of the house, but should also be in an area where they are part of the family – they like to see what is going on around them.
- 7.** Remember your greyhound may have spent much of its life in a kennel situation. This means that they may not feel comfortable with having the run of the house when they first come home. Once your greyhound is feeling more settled and is house trained, you can give them more access to other areas of the house. Initially it is advisable to put barriers at doors to confine your greyhound to certain areas of the house. By confining your

Greyhound in the initial stages you will make them feel more secure, it will also make house training easier.

- 8.** Put your greyhound on lead and take them out for a toilet break several times a day. Remember to lavish praise on your greyhound when they go to the toilet in the correct place. Over successive days the time between toilet breaks can be increased and by following these steps, confining, attending to and praising your greyhound, your dog will become house trained in no time. If your dog has an accident in the house, be patient and persevere this is as new to them as it is to you. We have included more details on toilet training in the next section of this booklet.
- 9.** Dogs flourish on routine, so try and keep things consistent. If possible feed and walk your dog at roughly the same time every day. This helps your dog feel secure.
- 10.** Every dog, family and situation is different. What works for one may not work for another. Try not to set your expectations too high. Although some greyhounds will fit in straight away, others may take a little more time. Please be patient and allow your greyhound to settle in at their own pace - they will learn your house rules as they settle in.
- 11.** Although your greyhound is used to being handled, they may not feel comfortable being hugged and cuddled like you might expect from pet dogs. Be aware of your greyhound's reaction to being touched and if they back off or appear uncomfortable stop what you are doing.
- 12.** Read the information in this book carefully – it has been selected to help you through common problems such as separation anxiety, toilet training and introducing your greyhound to other pets and children.

For more information on anything in this book or for information on feeding, travelling with your greyhound, grooming, basic obedience, and veterinary care of other behavioural issues please contact GAP.

A Checklist For a Happy And Well Behaved Greyhound

All dogs have behavioural needs, and if these needs are not met, they can suffer through fear, lack of mental stimulation, anxiety, or confusion which can lead to undesirable behaviour. To ensure your dog leads a well-balanced life and continues to be a good pet, check off the following points:

- ✓ My dog will receive adequate socialisation with other dogs and people.
- ✓ My dog will receive ongoing socialisation for the rest of its life.
- ✓ My dog will receive basic training and will receive ongoing training for the rest of its life. This will enable my dog to understand my commands and allow me to control my dog in difficult situations and exercise my dog easily.
- ✓ My dog will get regular exercise, play and human contact. This will provide my dog with adequate mental stimulation.
- ✓ My dog will be encouraged to develop some independence and has been gradually accustomed to being left alone. This will help to prevent anxiety and behaviours associated with separation.
- ✓ My dog will always receive clear, gentle and consistent guidelines for its behaviour and understands its position in the household. This prevents confusion, anxiety and aggression and makes my dog more manageable and responsive to my commands.
- ✓ My dog has a safe and comfortable place to retreat to and to rest where it will not be disturbed.

Responsible Dog Ownership

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

HEALTH

It is important that your dog:

- Has an annual vaccination – your greyhound has recently had a C5 Vaccination
- Has an annual health check
- Receives flea, tick and heartworm control
- Receives intestinal worm control
- Is microchipped in your name with your current details. You will need to update your dog's details with the microchip register/s when you adopt the dog.

TRAINING

- Continue to work with your greyhound to establish a bond with him/her and teach at least basic obedience and manners.
- Keep your greyhound on a leash at all times when in public.

A Smooth Transition For You And Your Greyhound

TOILET TRAINING

House training in greyhounds is generally not a problem. When first brought into the home, your greyhound should be treated in a similar manner to a puppy being house trained.

After the greyhound's initial visit to the garden, we suggest you take your new pet for a short five minute walk (or visit to the garden) every hour or so on the first day, every two hours on the second day and every three hours on the third day. During this time it is unlikely that your greyhound will have had a chance to have an accident inside and at the end of this three day regime they should be familiar with the idea that any toilet areas are outside.

If your dog does have an "accident" inside please bear in mind that punishment does not work and can actually make matters worse. Punishing your dog for these "accidents" can cause unneeded stress and can lead your greyhound to urinate discretely in the home. Instead, try to anticipate when your dog needs to eliminate and take it outside and praise it when it does what is expected.

Any accidents inside the home should be washed thoroughly with an odour eliminating product to take the smell away and prevent the dog from

returning to the same place.

Be sure to take your greyhound to the toilet immediately after food, when it gets up in the morning, and before it goes to bed as these are the most likely elimination times.

Do not expect your dog to be able to spend an entire day locked indoors without having an accident – toilet training takes time and patience; but thankfully only a very small amount of both. If you leave your dog inside while you are out, you should turn the dog out for toileting before you start getting ready to leave.

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

DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Destructive behaviour such as digging or chewing is actually normal dog behaviour. However, when this occurs in an inappropriate manner it becomes a problem for owners.

Destructive behaviour occurs in the absence of other activities such as play and physical exercise or because of separation anxiety.

By providing toys that the greyhound can safely chew, and even a sandpit in which they can dig you can reduce destructive behaviour.

Remember you should never reprimand a dog for any destructive behaviour after the event. Dogs do not understand the reason behind your anger and will be frightened if you hit or yell.

Find out the cause of the behaviour and treat it appropriately, or consult a professional animal behaviourist.

GREYHOUNDS AND OTHER PETS

Greyhounds are sighthounds and have been bred for thousands of years to chase things. If you own other pets you must spend time introducing your greyhound to them and teaching them not to chase.

Some greyhounds can be taught to get along with other pets and live alongside them peacefully, but we recommend constant vigilance during the early months of co-living.

We recommend leaving the muzzle on your greyhound when introducing your greyhound to new animals and never leave them alone together until you are absolutely certain they are comfortable with each other.

You need to constantly reinforce to your greyhound that it is not to chase other animals.

GREYHOUNDS AND OTHER DOGS

Greyhounds may not be used to the behaviour of other breeds of dogs, and they may not have interacted with them in a way we would expect of other pet dogs.

Your greyhound will need time to become familiar with other breeds. Even though your dog has been issued a green collar, while you are still getting to know your new greyhound we recommend walking them with their muzzle, especially if you are expecting to interact with a lot of new dogs.

Remember the first few weeks of home life is full of new experiences for your greyhound and they can often feel overwhelmed. Wearing a muzzle in the short term can give you piece of mind.

INTRODUCING YOUR GREYHOUND TO AN EXISTING DOG

If you already have a dog it is recommended that you arrange the initial meeting in a neutral area such as a local park or on the street. This way your new greyhound isn't entering your current dog's territory. Allow the dogs to smell each other while they are still both on loose leads.

Go for a walk with the dogs until they are relaxed together, and then take them back to your house or garden. Firmly reprimand your dogs in a low, deep voice with a stern NO if either dog exhibit anti-social behaviour such as snarling or persistent animated growling and do not allow them to continue to interact if either dog becomes aggressive, frightened or stressed.

GREYHOUNDS AND CHILDREN

As with any breed of dog, it is essential that young children and babies are never left unsupervised when around your dog.

Children should be taught to be calm and gentle with the dog and to have respect for its space particularly its bed. A dog's bed provides the dog with a "timeout" area so that when it has had enough it has somewhere to retreat for a rest.

Children should be taught not approach a sleeping or resting dog. Instead, ask the children to call out the dog's name and have the dog come to them. Remember the adage "let sleeping dogs lie".

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

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

Children should be taught to always ask permission before touching any dog, and they should never approach from behind as this could result in a dog biting from surprise.

Children should also be taught not to try to pat a dog on the top of the head as this may be a threatening gesture to the dog. Ideally the dog should be given time to sniff the stationary child by moving towards them; not the children moving towards the dog.

Children should not follow after a dog that is trying to move away from them, the dog may feel threatened and bite in self-defence.

Children should be taught not to hug and kiss dogs. While for humans this is a show of affection for dogs being grabbed around the neck can make them feel threatened.

Children should be taught to handle animals gently and carefully.

If a child is feeling uncomfortable or threatened around a dog they should be taught to stand still, arms by their side and turn sideways to the dog. Squealing or running away will most likely excite a dog and exacerbate the situation.

It is very important that you provide your greyhound with a safe place that he/she can escape to if feeling anxious or uncomfortable. Children should be taught not to disturb the greyhound when they are in their safe place. Dogs that are startled while sleeping or woken from sleep may be frightened or even react aggressively.

A growl is a warning from your dog that he/she is uncomfortable. Do not place your children or your greyhound in positions where either are uncomfortable.



SEPARATION ANXIETY

WHAT IS SEPARATION ANXIETY?

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

There are three main types of separation anxiety:

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

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF SEPARATION ANXIETY?

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

- Chewing,
- Digging,
- Barking,
- Escaping
- Over-excitability when interacting with people,
- Stealing or hoarding,
- Chasing tail,
- Not eating,
- Not toileting,
- Vying for attention, and
- Aggression.

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

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

The main thing to remember with treatment is to avoid causing the dog additional anxiety. First you have to manage the condition, then gradually increase the dog's independence, and then increase control and treat the condition.

Always seek the help of a professional if you are unsure. Alternatively contact the staff at GAP for more information or to book an appointment with an animal behaviourist.

POISONS AROUND AND IN THE HOME

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

GAP NSW <https://www.gapnsw.com.au/>

GAP Victoria <http://gap.grv.org.au/>

GAP Tasmania <https://www.gaptas.org.au/>

GAP WA <https://www.greyhoundsaspets.com.au/>

GAP SA <http://gap.sa.org.au/>

HELPFUL ONLINE RESOURCES:

Dr Sophia Yin

- lots of advice and information about dogs
<https://drsophiayin.com/>

Common Plants Toxic to Dogs

<http://www.aecvets.com.au/docs/Common-Plants-Toxic-to-Dogs-and-Cats-NATIONAL.pdf>





THE GREYHOUND **ADOPTION MANUAL**

A GUIDE FOR GREYHOUND OWNERS



For more information visit gapqld.com.au

P: (07) 5424 6092

E: gap@qric.qld.gov.au

 [gapqld](https://www.facebook.com/gapqld)