

Owners Manual

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Now that you are a proud Greyhound Parent, you will find you are also a GPA spokesperson wherever you and your Greyhound go.

The following do's and don'ts are some of the more important things you should know when talking about GPA/Houston and Greyhounds.

DO . . .

- inform the public that greyhounds must live completely indoors.
- clean up after your dog when in a public place. Always carry paper towels and baggies to dispose of waste.
- exhibit a positive, upbeat attitude about GPA and greyhounds.
- realize you represent not only GPA but also all groups attempting to help the greyhounds, conduct yourself in a responsible manner.
- let the Volunteer Coordinator or a Board member know if you encounter any problems while volunteering.
- let someone know if you have volunteered to do something and then find out you cannot possibly fulfill the obligation.

DO NOT . . .

- assume that a potential adopter will be able to adopt. Only placement personnel are authorized to make those decisions.
- answer a question if you do not know the answer. Refer the individual to another member, or simply say you do not know the answer.
- quote statistics regarding the number of greyhounds euthanized, no matter where those statistics are from.
- criticize the racing industry. GPA/Houston remains neutral on the issue of racing, and this is essential to the continued operation of GPA.
- make broad statements such as "all greyhounds get along well with children / cats / etc.". You may say, "some or most greyhounds get along...". Each greyhound (like any other breed) is different and will react to a given situation in a different manner.
- tell people that greyhounds are housebroken. Most have never been in a house and one house is not the same as another house. They are, for the most part "kennel trained", but that is not a guarantee that they will be house trained.
- **EVER IMPLY THAT GREYHOUNDS CAN EVENTUALLY SAFELY BE ALLOWED OFF LEAD.**

For more information on volunteering call 713-866-4466

GETTING TO KNOW US . . .

Greyhounds are not "rescued" from racetracks. Each greyhound has an individual owner whom either directly or through an agent, kennel owner, or trainer must give permission for his or her dog to go into an adoption program for placement as a pet. However, greyhounds do get rescued – these are dogs that are received from a pound, a humane society, or found wandering the streets. The abuses reported in the media are usually isolated incidents, not the norm. If greyhounds were abused they would not make good racers, or pets – just ask anyone who has ever tried to rehabilitate an abused dog.

There are many greyhound adoption organizations in the United States, and several currently operating in the Houston metropolitan area. While each of these organizations appears to have the best interest of the dogs in mind, they do operate differently. GPA/Houston is the local chapter of a nationwide not-for-profit corporation, **Greyhound Pets of America**. As such, there are national bylaws and guidelines that must be followed in order to maintain the local charter.

Since GPA does strive for a cooperative working relationship with the racing industry, the organization must be able to remain neutral. Working closely with the industry benefits the dogs directly. For instance, since GPA volunteers have access to track kennels, breeding farms, etc., if something needs correcting, comments can be made where they will do the most good to someone who is in the position to do something about it. GPA is not funded by the greyhound industry. It does accept donations, however, GPA chapters must depend on memberships, yard sales, fund-raising events, merchandise sales, and donations from the general public to finance their programs.

GPA/Houston receives retiring and otherwise unqualified racing greyhounds for placement from many Texas breeders. Each breeder is screened to ensure that the farm environment is clean and well kept, and that the greyhounds are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve. Upon acquiring a greyhound from a breeder, GPA/Houston obtains as much information as is available about that particular dog's history and the success or failure of their racing career, etc.

Our dogs are adopted with the following medical services provided: spayed or neutered, parasite and heartworm check, teeth cleaned, nails clipped, and all vaccinations brought current. These expenses are included in the \$175 adoption fee. Also included is one year of *On the Right Track*, our informative and interesting newsletter, a leash and collar made especially for sight hounds, and an I.D. tag engraved with our 24 hour emergency phone number.

GPA/Houston not only offers retiring greyhounds for adoption, but also serves as a support group and social environment for retired greyhounds and their families. Our membership (\$25 yearly) is open to anyone, regardless of whether they own a greyhound or where it came from. We have events throughout the year, some involving the dogs and some just for the families. We do our best to keep our members informed of current issues that affect greyhounds such as health problems, etc. While greyhounds do not have any inherited deficiencies in the area of health, there are numerous things that a greyhound owner need to be aware of in order to maintain the good health and happiness of their dog. We do this by way of educational meetings and the newsletter sent to each member.

Our members may be as active or inactive in the organization as their time permits. If all they wish to do is keep in touch with events, that is fine. If they wish to become an active volunteer, we always need help in areas such as fostering, fundraising, and publicity. While we do utilize foster homes when necessary, the majority of incoming greyhounds are kept at our kennel space, which are donated by the **PET HOTEL**, 5602 Royalton. If you would like to visit the kennel facilities, please call (713) 667-3804.

GPA/Houston is not an "animal rights" organization, nor are we self-serving. We operate as a group, not

individually. If you are seriously considering either volunteering in some way or adopting a greyhound to share your life, we believe you will find everything you are looking for and more in our organization.

Retiring Greyhounds . . . they're dying for your support.

GPA/Houston, Inc. P.O. Box 74116, Houston, TX 77274 (713) 866-4466

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT

RETIRED RACING GREYHOUNDS

WHAT HAS THE LIFE OF A RACING GREYHOUND BEEN LIKE?

Greyhounds spend most of their lives in the company of other dogs. When they are born, the average litter size is about 8 pups. Young greyhounds are given a lot of attention and handled as much as possible. As they approach their first birthday, their training begins and they are taught how to chase a lure, eventually progressing to a racetrack. Track life is very routine-feeding in the morning, turnouts in the exercise pen to answer calls or nature, and resting between races in individual kennel crates. Dogs race every 3 days and most racing kennels have about 60 dogs. Amazingly, most trainers have a special story about each and every dog with which they work. So, as you can see, most greyhounds have seen very little of the everyday world, including houses, stairs, mirrors, cats, etc.; and have seldom, if ever, ridden in anything but a dog truck. Life with a family is like being reborn for a greyhound.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT IF I ADOPT A GREYHOUND?

Because EVERYTHING is brand new to the greyhound, expect him/her to be somewhat confused and very curious. House manners have to be learned, but greyhounds are very intelligent dogs and learn quickly. Your tone of voice should be the only correction needed. If you have stairs, be patient. Place the dog's feet one at a time on the stairs and with your body firmly behind the dog so he or she cannot back down, proceed up the stairs one-foot at a time, giving lots of encouragement along the way. Going downstairs may require a little more muscle, as your dog may want to take all the stairs in one jump. Hold on to the collar and allow him/her to take only one step at a time. In a few days, with patience, your dog will soon navigate them on its own. If you have a cat and your dog even looks sideways at it, jump right in and say NO!

It may take a few times, but your dog will quickly get the idea about what is appropriate behavior with regard to small animals. Never leave your greyhound alone unmuzzled with the family cat, however, until you are positive they can get along. You may find your dog is something of a shadow and follows you everywhere. This is part of the greyhound's bonding process. You are the person the dog has decided to trust first. Be flattered-these dogs seem to pick the humans with whom THEY want to establish a relationship. To help your dog adjust, take him or her everywhere you safely can. They are very curious and sociable dogs and want to know all they can about their new world. The more love and attention you can give your greyhound, the more you will get back.

DOES MY DOG NEED A SPECIAL PLACE IN THE HOUSE?

On the race circuit and in the kennel, your dog has always had its own kennel crate where it felt safe and secure. There are a number of ways of accomplishing this in your house. Using a large crate or having a special bedding area during the adjustment period will help the greyhound adjust at his/her own pace to the unaccustomed freedom of your house. Although many people feel uncomfortable about using a crate, most greyhounds are quite at home in them. Indeed, using a crate can provide for a completely successful transition by affording the dog actual physical security when left alone during the adjustment period and thus preventing any possible damage due to separation anxiety. It can also eliminate any temptation to investigate the garbage, etc. Another advantage to the crate is that greyhounds instinctively WILL NOT soil their own living space. This makes crate usage a very effective tool in the housebreaking process.

ARE GREYHOUNDS HOUSEBROKEN?

Greyhounds are kennel trained. This means that they know not to soil their crates. By taking your dog out frequently to relieve him/herself, and by giving lots of praise when the dog succeeds, you will quickly establish the correct place for the dog to relieve itself. Greyhounds have been on a regular schedule in the kennel. Therefore, they have never needed to let anyone know when they had to go out. Like most dogs, however, they do present certain body signals indicating when they need to go out. These signals may be as simple as heavy panting or serious sniffing of the floor or may consist of restless pacing. Initially, expect a few accidents. It takes a little while for you and your dog to learn each other's language and timing. If you catch your dog having an accident, don't punish your dog, but rather let him/her know by your tone of voice that this is not acceptable behavior and then hurry the dog outside and try to be encouraging. Vinegar and water is good to use in cleaning up as the acid seems to destroy the odor. When you take your dog outside to relieve itself, you will notice that he or she seems to be looking for the "right" spot. This may take some time. Once found, your dog will relieve itself. The next time, take your dog to the same spot and calmly wait for him/her to do what is necessary. Don't distract your dog, as you want him or her to focus on the reason for being outside. Once all business is taken care of, then you can play, walk, etc.

WHY IS ROUTINE IMPORTANT TO A GREYHOUND?

Because greyhounds are used to having a daily routine in the racing kennel, they tend to feel more comfortable in unfamiliar situations if a routine is established with regard to feeding, answering calls of nature, resting, etc. NOTE: in a home situation, until you establish a workable routine with your greyhound, you will need to take more frequent trips outside to avoid accidents.

WHAT ABOUT FEEDING?

When adopted, greyhounds are at what is known as "racing weight". Most will reach "pet weight" within about a month after adoption. Your dog may seem to devour its food at first, but this will gradually lessen as he/she realizes you can be depended upon. Initially, feed your dog between 4-6 cups of dry dog food (kibble) a day. Feed twice a day, ½ in the morning and ½ in the evening. Gradually, as your dogs seems to eat less, and begins to gain weight, you can cut back to 3-1/2 to 5 cups a day. Always feed your greyhound a premium, high quality dog food. You may add a small amount of canned food. Water drained from cooked vegetables can also be added to the dog's food. If your dog gets diarrhea or gas, avoid giving that particular "extra" in the future. Remember, any extras you add to the basic food will be expected every meal. Don't start unless you intend to continue.

RECOMMENDATION: Your Greyhound, especially the larger dogs, might appreciate a raised feeding & water

stand. Inexpensive 15" high plant stands are a suggestion.

A good thick beef marrowbone, knucklebone, or compressed rawhide can be given to the dog and will help keep its teeth clean. This is the only type of natural bone that should ever be given to a greyhound as others, including steak, pork, and chicken bones will splinter and can damage intestines, etc. Dog biscuits are excellent and can be used as a treat before bedtime or as a reward. Change in diet from track to home may also cause diarrhea. Should this occur, give your dog 1 Imodium caplet (or 1 Pepto-Bismol tablet) at the start of diarrhea, then 1-caplet 12 hours later. If diarrhea persists consult your veterinarian. Feed 2 cups each of cottage cheese and rice until stools begin to look solid. Gradually decrease the cottage cheese, adding kibble. As stools become normal, decrease the rice and add a small amount of canned food. It is important to recognize that accidents may happen due to diarrhea and the dog should be treated with patience and care.

WHAT SORT OF MEDICAL CARE WILL MY GREYHOUND NEED?

Your dog **MUST** be kept on heartworm preventive pills and checked periodically for worms. Rabies and distemper/parvo inoculations should be kept up to date on an annual basis. Your dog's teeth have been cleaned before adoption, and they need periodic cleaning throughout the life of the greyhound. Your vet can either do this for you or instruct you on the proper procedures. Nails should also be periodically trimmed, and again your veterinarian can assist you with the proper procedures. Our placement representatives will also be happy to show you the techniques for teeth brushing and nail clipping.

HOW IMPORTANT IS EXERCISE FOR MY GREYHOUND?

A greyhound is an athlete like any other athlete. At the track, they are accustomed to racing every three days. However, as greyhounds get older, their exercise needs diminish. Basically, the younger the dog the more exercise it will require. Several walks plus an opportunity to run off-lead in a fenced in area once a week (weather permitting) are usually all the exercise most greyhounds will require. If you have a fenced in yard, this will take care of most of your greyhound's exercise requirements. NEVER exercise your greyhound in extremes of temperature. Sometimes a young greyhound may exhibit a tendency to chew things- 99% of the time this is because it is not getting enough exercise.

WHEN CAN I TRUST MY GREYHOUND OFF LEASH?

YOU CAN NEVER FULLY TRUST A GREYHOUND OFF LEASH. This is why we recommend exercising your greyhound in a fenced in area. They have absolutely no understanding of cars and if allowed off lead would be apt to stand in the middle of the road watching the car approach or try to outrun it. They are sighthounds and are capable of running for short distances at speeds up to 40 miles per hour. They have also been taught to chase fast moving objects. If this turned out to be your neighbor's cat, it could be tragic. Only you and your dog will know the level of trust you have in each other. Basic dog obedience classes will give you good suggestions for building that trust and are really very helpful. When exploring situations off leash, remember that you are in charge of making the decisions, and always err on the side of caution.

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THE ADJUSTMENT PERIOD

Recognizing the adjustment period and successfully managing it is a very important part of any greyhound adoption. It must be remembered that becoming a pet involves a dramatic change in routine which can be stressful for a greyhound, and he must be given time to adjust to his new surroundings. In this regard, a quiet greyhound may be fretful, a good eater reluctant to eat, a perfectly housebroken greyhound may have an accident. Give your pet time to get settled and don't worry about any odd behavior during the first few weeks. Your love, patience and understanding will help your greyhound through this adjustment period, which usually lasts from a few days to a few weeks.

Greyhounds are friendly, affectionate dogs who thrive on attention and human companionship and make terrific pets once they get used to their new homes. Raised with their littermates, where they competed for affection, greyhounds love becoming the center of attention as pets.

HOUSEBREAKING

Your greyhound has been housed in a large crate in his trainer's kennel. He is used to being put outside in a fenced in pen to relieve himself four times a day. He may be used to getting up early (about 6:00 am) to be taken outside. To avoid accidents in the house, we recommend that you take him outside as soon as he gets up. You can gradually get him used to sleeping later. If your dog has an accident in the house, a verbal reprimand should usually suffice-then take him outside and praise him when he relieves himself. Do not hit your dog or put his nose in "the accident", as your dog will respond more quickly and more positively to kindness.

If your dog is a male, he may attempt to lift his leg in a few places around the house to "mark his territory". Watch him carefully as he walks around the house and try to catch him before he does it. If this should happen, it does not usually go on for long, so try to be patient.

If your dog has an accident, clean the spot, and then rinse the area with a solution of white vinegar and water. This will neutralize the odor and discourage his going in that spot again.

For the first few days, it's a good idea to go outside with your greyhound. This teaches him where his new home is and where he's supposed to "go", helps relieve the tension of being in a strange place, and prevents accidents. You can then praise him at the appropriate moment. We also recommend using a kennel crate to help in housebreaking and to eliminate "separation anxiety" while you are gone.

BEDDING

Provide your greyhound with as soft a bed as possible. Greyhounds not only love comfort, they require it. They have very little padding on their elbows and can develop a fluid condition if forced to sleep on a hard surface.

You will be surprised at how quickly your greyhound becomes attached to you, and what a difference your presence makes to him. Do not shut your greyhound in a separate room to sleep-he will much prefer to sleep in the same room with you (in the same bed if you let him). He'll feel more secure and is less likely to cry or cause damage.

OTHER PETS

Your greyhound should get along well with other dogs as he has had lots of "socialization" experience in the racing kennel. Take care, however, to watch them carefully at first as the "old dog" may be jealous of the newcomer.

Separate your dogs for the first few days when you feed them. Dogs can get very feisty over food.

Many of our greyhounds live in homes with cats and get along well with them. They should, however, be introduced carefully. When introducing your greyhound to your cat, put the dog's muzzle on him. Then put them in the same room and allow them to get acquainted. Don't push it and don't be overly concerned. If the dog chases the cat, the cat may swat him and the dog will learn he is not dealing with a "bunny". Reprimand any aggressive behavior from your greyhound. When you totally trust your greyhound, take the muzzle off.

STAIRS

Your greyhound has never had to go up or down flights of stairs. He may find them intimidating at first. He will learn, but you must be patient with him. If you encounter a problem, start by carrying him almost to the top of the stairs. Then put him down and allow him to climb the last few steps. Gradually increase the number of steps he climbs. Reverse the procedure for down stairs. Do not push him-if frightened, he may try to jump all the way down the stairs.

EQUIPMENT

Your greyhound requires a lead (leash) with a heavy-duty clasp. His collar should always be the "Premier" collar your greyhound came with. No other collar will provide the safety this does when used correctly. Your placement representative will show you how to use it. Keep the collar with the rabies tag and I. D. tag on him **AT ALL TIMES.**

Never tie your greyhound outside on a rope, chain or "runner". Greyhounds are not used to being tied and get tangled up and injure themselves. They will pull, wiggle, or chew their way out.

EXERCISE

In retirement, a greyhound's exercise needs are no different than any other dog's.

It helps during the initial adjustment period to keep your greyhound well exercised to work off his tension and nervous energy.

Greyhounds make excellent jogging companions once they learn to adjust their stride to yours. Summer's heat and winter's cold can injure his pads, however. Keep this in mind when choosing a place to jog with your dog. If your greyhound does any strenuous running, give him a chance to relieve himself afterwards and again about an hour later to prevent kidney tie-up.

NEVER take your greyhound outside a fenced area without his leash on. He may become confused and run away or he may chase a cat or other small animal. He does not know about traffic and if permitted off leash, he is likely to run into the street and be hit by a car.

Your greyhound is a sighthound, which means he hunts by sight. Not scent. He can see a small animal move for a distance of half a mile and he can run at forty to forty-five miles per hour. If he sees the neighbor's cat (or a squirrel or rabbit) in the distance, he will not only chase it, he will probably catch it.

NEVER exercise your greyhound within ½ hour before a meal, or 1 hour after a meal to avoid a possible deadly condition called bloat.

DIET

We recommend dry food (a higher quality dog food than most grocery store brands) such as:

Canidae

Sensible Choice Lamb and Rice

Nutro Lamb and Rice

Precise Lamb and Rice

Natures Recipe Lamb and Rice

IAMS Lamb and Rice

Many greyhounds also love raw, cooked or steamed vegetables, and you may experiment with adding these in small amounts to his dry food if desired.

Regarding treats for your greyhound, any high quality cookie or biscuit is recommended. They also enjoy treat ideas such as chew hooves; pig's ears (once a week), compressed rawhide, and knucklebones all bones should be monitored for safety (sharp edges, small pieces, etc.).

GROOMING

There are four points to grooming a dog: coat, ears, nails, and teeth. Greyhounds are shorthaired dogs who shed little if kept indoors. Bathing can be with any mild, conditioning shampoo as often as you feel is required. Usually every month or two is enough if you are brushing regularly. Frequent brushing will eliminate shedding. We suggest a rectangular rubber grooming mitt instead of a brush. The outer ears can be cleaned with a Q-Tip and mineral oil. Nails can be trimmed at home or by your vet probably every two weeks will be sufficient. It is very important that your greyhound's teeth be kept clean, as plaque build-up will result in a gum infection. If plaque is built up on your greyhound's teeth, have the teeth scaled (you can buy a tooth scaler or have your vet do it). Depending on the condition of your greyhound's teeth, chewing on hard, safe rawhides, sterilized beef bones, or knucklebones may be enough. Your dog's teeth may require brushing with dog toothpaste, one or more times a week.

PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

FIRST AID ADVICE

From Dr. Phillip Elmer, Porter animal Hospital

GENERAL SUPPLIES

Peroxide
Di-Gel or Pepto-Bismol
Antibiotic Ointment
K-Y Jelly
Hydrocortisone Cream
Saline or Isotonic Eyewash
Gauze, Clingwrap, Vetwrap (or tape)

POISONING

If the dog ingested something that is NOT caustic, give 1 Tbsp. of hydrogen peroxide. This is better than Ipecac, as it will make them vomit once. Ipecac will result in continued vomiting, which is not necessary. If you can give the peroxide within 30 minutes, you should not have a problem. If it has been more than that length of time, or if you are not sure of what was ingested, call your vet, emergency hospital, or poison control for advice.

WARNING: If the dog has ingested something caustic, DO NOT INDUCE VOMITTING.

ANESTHESIA

Greyhounds need special consideration when being anesthetized for surgery, teeth cleanings, etc. They can't tolerate some anesthetics at normal dog doses. So PLEASE consult your vet about these considerations before allowing your animal to be anesthetized. Greyhounds have no fat to absorb the anesthetics and their liver works a little differently also.

FLEAS, TICKS & INSECTICIDES

PLEASE BE CAREFUL WITH INSECTICIDES!!!

Greyhounds are sensitive to flea/tick sprays and shampoos. Pyrethrins are the insecticide of choice. They are very safe and do not affect the nerve endings. Pyrethrins are biodegradable and come in alcohol and water based formulas. Water based is better if your dog has dry skin or a dry coat. There are many good, safe products in the market. Two brands are ADAMS and ZODIAC. Your vet can also recommend several other very good brands. Stay away from eyes and mouth. For the ear area, use a cotton ball dabbed in the solution to wipe around and behind the ears. If your dog may be exposed to ticks, a Lyme Disease vaccination is recommended. Four monthly products that are safe for your Greyhound are Frontline, Advantage, Sentinel and Program. Talk to your vet.

WARNING: NEVER USE A FLEA COLLAR ON YOUR GREYHOUND!!

VOMITING AND DIARRHEA

If the dog is not acting depressed, or is not passing or vomiting blood (dried blood can have the appearance of coffee grounds), give Pepto-Bismol or Di-Gel over 4-6 hours at a dosage of 1 Tbsp. per 20 lbs. of weight. Or give 1 Imodium A-D tablet at the onset of the diarrhea and 1-tablet 12 hours later. Call your vet if the dog is not improved after 24 hours. If the dog is vomiting blood, you can give it Di-Gel until it gets to the vet. Do not give Pepto-Bismol if you see blood, as Pepto-Bismol contains aspirin.

WARNING: Do not ever give Tylenol or Ibuprofen to a dog – it causes liver damage. Aspirin can be given for pain (such as arthritis or sore muscles). Ascriptin (Maalox coated aspirin) is the best. Check with your vet for the appropriate dosage for your dog.

CUTS

An antibiotic ointment (Neosporin) is good for keeping cuts moist and clean until you can get to your vet. This should minimize the amount of tissue your vet may need to trim when suturing the wound. In the case of puncture wounds to the chest, cover the wound with gauze and tape in place, and then get to the vet ASAP. This will help prevent air from rushing into the chest and collapsing the lung

EYE INJURIES

Keep the eye moist with K-Y Jelly and you might be able to save the eye. For a foreign body in the eye, use saline or isotonic eyewash to remove it. If it doesn't wash out, do not pull it out. Your vet should remove it. If the dog has a puncture wound to the eye, the cornea will become cloudy. Get the dog to the vet ASAP.

INJURED PADS

Pads cannot be sutured except to control bleeding (or between the toes).

First Aid:

1. Control bleeding with pressure bandage.
2. Apply antibiotic salve or spray.

3. Wrap gauze padding around the paw.
4. Wrap with gauze and/or clingwrap.
5. Finish wrapping with tape or vetwrap (a sticky, stretchy gauze- like material, which you can buy from your vet).

If you have a wound further up the leg, try to incorporate the foot in the bandage, as this will keep the foot and lower leg from swelling.

HOT SPOTS, FLEA ALLERGIES

Clean the area off down to the bare flesh by washing and soaking with soap and water. Then apply hydrocortisone cream. Repeat treatment several times a day. Burrows solution will help clean it up faster and it can be purchased at a drug store.

BLOAT

Bloat occurs mostly in large, deep chested dogs such as greyhounds, Dobermans, and whippets, for example. It happens when the stomach flips over, cutting off circulation to the rest of the body. Gasses build; the dog goes into shock and dies painfully. Get the dog to the vet (or emergency clinic) as quickly as possible. Surgery is the only means for correcting this, if it is caught in time. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of dogs live even with the surgery. To prevent bloat, do not allow your greyhound any vigorous exercise within 1/2 hour before or 1 hour after eating his/her meal. If you do exercise your greyhound, choose a time other than around mealtime.

HEAT STROKE

Greyhounds do not tolerate the summer heat very well. If you are going to be exercising your dog in the heat, take along ice packs, or some means of wetting down towels in cool water to cool the dog, as well as plenty of drinking water. Symptoms of heat stroke are hyperventilation, staggering, and vomiting. Cool the head and abdomen and inner thigh area **AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE!**

Rubbing alcohol can also be used to help cool the dog. The temperature may reach 106 – 108 degrees. As the dog starts to cool down, then quit applying the cooling measures because the temperature will keep dropping. When the dog quits panting and hyperventilating, he/she has begun to cool down. Check the temperature. The dog will stop hyperventilating when the temperature reaches about 103 – 104 degrees. Very often, the dog will need to stay at the vet for observation for several days after having heat stroke, as the temperature must be monitored very closely and will be very unstable for several days. Once the dog has had a heat stroke you have to be very careful about exercising it for the rest of it's life due to possible organ damage.

Also remember a hot pavement can burn your dog's feet, so be careful when walking your dog on pavement. A good rule of thumb is "if you can walk on it barefoot, so can your dog".

PLEASE REMEMBER ... This information is only for immediate first aid. Your vet is your first source of information in the care of your greyhound.

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FOODSTUFFS TO AVOID!

as compiled by Jeannie Wehrman, New Adopter Liaison for GPA/Houston

Items to avoid	Reasons to avoid
Alcoholic beverages	Can cause intoxication, coma , and death.
Baby food	Can contain onion powder, which can be toxic to dogs. (Please see onion below.) Can also result in nutritional deficiencies, if fed in large amounts.
Bones from fish, poultry, or other meat sources	Can cause obstruction or laceration of the digestive system.
Cat food	Generally too high in protein and fats.
Chocolate, coffee, tea, and other caffeine	Contain caffeine, theobromine, or theophylline, which can be toxic and affect the heart and nervous systems.
Citrus oil extracts	Can cause vomiting.
Fat trimmings	Can cause pancreatitis.
Grapes and raisins	Contain an unknown toxin, which can damage the kidneys.
Hops	Unknown compound causes panting, increased heart rate, elevated temperature, seizures, and death.
Human vitamin supplements containing iron	Can damage the lining of the digestive system and be toxic to the other organs including the liver and kidneys.
Large amounts of liver	Can cause Vitamin A toxicity, which affects muscles and bones.
Macadamia nuts	Contain an unknown toxin, which can affect the digestive and nervous systems and muscle.
Marijuana	Can depress the nervous system, cause vomiting, and changes in the heart rate.
Milk and other dairy products	Some adult dogs and cats do not have sufficient amounts of the enzyme lactase, which breaks down the lactose in milk. This can result in diarrhea. Lactose-free milk products are available for pets.
Moldy or spoiled food, garbage	Can contain multiple toxins causing vomiting and diarrhea and can also affect other organs.
Mushrooms	Can contain toxins, which may affect multiple systems in the body, cause shock, and result in death.
Onions and garlic (raw, cooked, or powder)	Contain sulfoxides and disulfides, which can damage red blood cells and cause anemia . Cats are more susceptible than dogs. Garlic is less toxic than onions.
Persimmons	Seeds can cause intestinal obstruction and enteritis.
Pits from peaches and plums	Can cause obstruction of the digestive tract.
Pork or pork fat	Can cause pancreatitis, an infection or inflammation of the pancreas, can be life threatening.
Potato, rhubarb, and tomato leaves; potato and tomato stems	Contain oxalates, which can affect the digestive, nervous, and urinary systems. This is more of a problem in livestock.
Raw eggs	Contain an enzyme called avidin, which decreases the absorption of biotin (a B vitamin). This can lead to skin and hair coat problems. Raw eggs may also contain <i>Salmonella</i> .
Raw fish	Can result in a thiamine (a B vitamin) deficiency leading to loss of appetite, seizures, and in severe cases, death. More common if raw fish is fed regularly.

Salt	If eaten in large quantities it may lead to electrolyte imbalances.
String	Can become trapped in the digestive system; called a "string foreign body."
Sugary foods	Can lead to obesity, dental problems, and possibly diabetes mellitus.
Table scraps (in large amounts)	Table scraps are not nutritionally balanced. They should never be more than 10% of the diet. Fat should be trimmed from meat; bones should not be fed.
Tobacco	Contains nicotine, which affects the digestive and nervous systems. Can result in rapid heart beat, collapse, coma, and death.
Yeast dough	Can expand and produce gas in the digestive system, causing pain and possible rupture of the stomach or intestines.

[TOP]

A PET OWNER'S GUIDE TO THE DOG CRATE

A MESSAGE TO THE PET OWNER:

People are often uncomfortable with the idea of confining their pet to a dog crate. However, when used correctly and humanely, crating can offer advantages.

A crate can be a "home" for the pet – his own secure place – and the sense of confinement is comforting for most dogs. For the pet owner, the crate is a way of preventing inappropriate behavior so that the dog may be left home alone without worry.

Far too many potentially good pets are misunderstood, unfairly punished/abused, isolated, or simply "gotten rid of" by otherwise kind and well-meaning owners who are unable to prevent, control or live with the common "problem" behavior of dogs. The correct use of a dog crate could give many of these innocent animals the chance they need-and deserve-to spend their lives as the appreciated pet of a satisfied owner.

Although most pet owners will be able to use the crate, there are some dogs that cannot adjust to being confined in this manner. Give the method time though; many animals will object in the beginning.

WHAT IS A DOG CRATE?

A dog crate is a rectangular enclosure with a top and a door, made in a variety of sizes proportioned to fit any type of dog. Constructed of wire, wood, metal, or molded fiberglass/plastic, its purpose is to provide guaranteed confinement for reasons of security, safety, housebreaking, protection of household goods, travel, illness or just general control.

CRUELTY- OR KINDNESS?

As the pet owner sees it:

"It's like a jail-it's cruel-I'd never put MY dog in a cage like that!" If this is your first reaction to using a crate, you are a very typical pet owner. As a reasoning human being, you really value your freedom. And, since you

consider your pet an extension of the family, it's only natural to feel that closing him in a crate would be mean and inhumane, would probably cause him to resent you, and might well result in psychological damage.

As the dog sees it:

"I love having a room of my very own; it's my 'security blanket' and the closed door really doesn't bother me." If your dog could talk he might well tell you that the crate helps to satisfy the "den instinct", and that he is not afraid or frustrated when closed in. He would far rather be prevented from causing trouble than be punished for it later.

So . . . to you it's a "cage" – to him, it's "home".

WHY USE A CRATE?

A dog crate, correctly and humanely used, can have many advantages for both you and your pet. With the help of a crate you:

- Can enjoy complete peace of mind when leaving your dog home alone;
- Can housebreak your dog more quickly by using the close confinement to establish a regular routine;
- Can effectively confine your dog at times when he may be over-excited or ill;
- Can travel with your dog without many of the risks associated with unfamiliar surroundings.

USE – BUT DON'T ABUSE

The use of a dog crate is NOT recommended for a dog that must be confined during the day AND at night. If the dog must be left alone for extended periods of time, such as all or much of the day while the owner is away at work, school, etc., the dog must be well exercised both before and after crating and given lots of personal positive attention. A dog that is crated during the day MUST be allowed complete freedom at night (including sleeping near his owner). A dog that must be crated during the night MUST be allowed freedom during the day.

Crate or no crate, any dog constantly denied the human companionship it needs and craves is going to be a lonely pet – and may still find ways to express anxiety, depression, and general stress.

WHAT KIND OF CRATE IS BEST?

The most practical crate for a greyhound is the lightweight plastic airline crate. It may be possible to use the wire mesh variety, however if left alone for an extended period the dog may be able to chew his way through the wire mesh.

WHAT SIZE SHOULD A CRATE BE?

A crate should always be large enough to permit the dog to stretch out fully on his side, and to sit up without hitting his head at the top. The dog should be able to turn completely around inside the crate. For greyhounds, extra-large or giant airline crates should be used. It must also be equipped with a clip-on dish for water.

HOW TO USE IT

Most retired racing greyhounds are already familiar with the crate and adjust to a crate in the home environment rather quickly. However, if the dog resists the crate initially, the following guidelines may be of help. Place the crate in a location where the dog will feel part of the human family. Secure the door open so that it can't unexpectedly shut and frighten the dog. Encourage the dog to investigate, luring him inside with treats if necessary. A soft blanket or dog bed should be placed on the floor of the crate. Continue this

pattern, encouraging him to use the crate as much as possible and shutting the door briefly while you are nearby. Expect to meet moderate resistance with consistent firmness and authority. As soon as you feel confident that the dog will remain quietly in the closed crate you may safely leave him alone. Give him a toy or safe bone, but be sure that he has nothing around his neck that might become caught.

Make it very clear to children that the crate is NOT a playhouse, but a "special room" for the dog.

Unfortunately, a crate does not always work – although it is always worth a try. There are always those animals that do not tolerate this form of confinement. If, despite every effort at positive conditioning and firmness, a dog is obviously frantic or totally miserable when confined to a crate, forcing him to use one is indeed inhumane and can in a real physical or psychological injury. A reliable obedience trainer may be of assistance at this point. GPA/Houston can assist you in locating such a trainer.

WHERE CAN I GET A CRATE?

GPA/Houston has crates that can be borrowed on a short-term basis for a small deposit charge. If you wish to purchase a crate there are several retail outlet in the Houston area that stock extra-large and giant airline crates.

[TOP]

SPOOKY GREYHOUNDS

By Ann Smith

Very shy or spooky greyhounds present their own unique set of challenges. Shyness may be hereditary, developmental or learned. Some of the racing industry literature seems to indicate that spookiness is a hereditary trait. The noted dog trainer, Carol Lea Benjamin, identifies two canine developmental periods where fear behavior appears: one at approximately two months and a second during adolescence. She notes that the second fear period appears suddenly and results in behaviors that, even when worked with, are extremely difficult to get rid of. Regardless of how the behavior developed, the fact remains that shy dogs need special homes and special handling. The following article gives some insights into handling a spooky greyhound from a woman who has worked with the dogs for more than 20 years.

One of the most common statements made to adopters is, "My greyhound is petrified of everything. He must have been severely abused."

Just because a greyhound exhibits these fears does not necessarily mean that he was abused. Timidity in racing greyhounds is usually hereditary. You see, greyhound breeders only breed for speed and not for behavioral deficiencies. Many times this trait does not affect the dog's performance on the track.

Most of the time a spook can get over these fears and build his confidence to the point of being a well adjusted family pet but it will take a lot of time and patience on the part of the adopter or foster care provider.

The worst thing you can do is trying to push yourself on him. It will just scare him further and you may never be able to earn his trust. He must be the one to make the first move.

There are two approaches that I use when working with spooks. Both have been very successful.

If he is the type who cannot be approached in your fenced in back yard without fleeing or just staying out of reach, try standing with your back turned to the dog. Do not make eye contact. His curiosity will get the best of him and in time, he will sneak up behind you and sniff you to get your scent. Do not make any sudden

moves; he will flee. Just stand perfectly still until he loses interest.

Don't expect this to happen instantly. It can sometimes take several days. You may still be able to handle the dog but you may also notice that he will cringe when you reach for him.

During the next session, again, stand with your back turned to the dog but this time place your hands behind you. Your greyhound will try to sniff your hands. If he doesn't flee, try to touch the dog by just jiggling your fingers. Don't reach for him. If he still doesn't move, you can then try to pat him on the head all the while not making eye contact. Talk to him reassuringly. He really wants to be friends but his fear overpowers the need to be loved.

Once he allows you to pet him, you will be on your way to having a wonderful, loyal friend. You can now face him directly. He may still not want to make eye contact, but that will come with time. All that is left now is plenty of love and affection. Once he gains his confidence, his fear of loud noises and other people will slowly diminish.

My other approach is to be alone in a room with your greyhound. Make sure that he is not cornered. He needs to feel that he can escape if he gets frightened. Approach your greyhound on your hands and knees. You will not be so intimidating if you are at his eye level. If he backs away, stop. Once he settles down, reach out to him slowly, leaving your hand limp. He will most likely try to sniff it. There is a good chance that he may even give your hand a lick. Remain like that until your greyhound appears comfortable and relaxed. If you know any special treats your greyhound likes, you can offer it to him now. Remember; talk softly to him all the time while you are working with him. If your greyhound is lying down, sit next to him but act like you are ignoring him. If he is uncomfortable with this, he will get up and move. If not, try stroking his back gently. He'll probably twitch when you touch him but will soon settle down and allow you to pet him. Once you've reached this point. It will be all down hill from there on. He now realizes that you mean him no harm. Another comment I'd like to make about a "spook" is that it is very rare that a spook will try to bite. Their fearful nature causes them to be very submissive.

The practices that I have explained are for extreme "spooks". There are various levels of timidity ranging from mild to extreme. If you consider your greyhound to be mildly timid, then all it will take is time and patience for your greyhound to come out of his shell.

[TOP]

WHAT IS MY GREYHOUND TRYING TO TELL ME ?

OR

WHY DOES MY GREYHOUND DO THAT?

By Marcia Herman

VOCALIZATION

Your new greyhound is like other dogs in most ways, but there are certain things that greyhounds do or "say" that other dogs may not. When I write "say", I mean just that. Greyhounds, who from now on will be referred to as "greys", often vocalize. This behavior is sometimes puzzling, if not downright frightening, to many new grey adoptive parents. I will try my best to describe the various sounds greys make and then explain what your new grey is trying to tell you.

BARKING

Usually, the first thing you will notice about your new grey is that it is quiet. Most new owners swear that their grey doesn't know how to bark. This is not true. Once your grey relaxes and begins to adjust to life in a home, it will indeed bark if the occasion calls for it. Many people jump out of their skins the first time they hear their grey bark. It may well sound like the "Hound of Baskervilles" or perhaps the shriek of the

coloratura soprano.

One thing that is really puzzling is that greys often will not bark when they want to go out to relieve themselves. If you are lucky, your grey will stand at the door and whine. But usually, it will stand quietly at the door, expecting you to notice and let it out or take it for a walk. If no one comes to take the grey out, it will often relieve itself at your doorway!

Some greys bark when a person or other dog comes to the front door. Some bark only at strangers. This behavior is entirely individual and depends on the way your grey reacts to certain people. Some barking is very ominous, yet it may be accompanied by tail wagging. There are different types of tail wagging, but more about this later.

MOANS AND GROANS

Before you hear the first bark, you are likely to hear moans of satisfaction when your grey lies down on a soft bed. Or some grunts if you happen to pet your new friend in a particularly satisfying place on its body, often behind the ear (or even IN the ear!).

TEETH SNAPPING AND CLICKING

Then there's the snapping or clicking of teeth. No, your new grey is not trying to nip at you and rip your flesh; it is telling you how happy it is to be with you. Sometimes, it means, "How about a cookie?" or "Let's go!". And, if it clicks or snaps at your hair or throat (like my girl does), it means, "I love you". This click/snap is actually a replacement for the lick; you will find that most of these dogs aren't lickers. Also, sometimes they yelp, bark or make throaty noises while clicking. I call the whole thing "snorfling" because that is often how the sound ends up.

GROWLING

This is a scary thing to hear. The depth of a grey growl can make one's hair stand on end. Greys don't growl often. When they do, it can mean several things, depending on the rest of the body language.

First, the growl can mean that you have invaded a personal space. You may have disturbed it while it was sleeping or dozing. Greys often sleep with their eyes open. You may think the dog was awake, but it was in fact not awake. The phrase "Let sleeping dogs lie" certainly applies here. The fact that your grey has always lived among many other dogs and now does not may emphasize its newfound freedom from crowding. It may well just wish not to be crowded any more.

Second, some greys may growl when hugged or when a hand is placed on its body for too long a period of time. Some other dogs will object to this invasion of space, but it just seems worse when your up-till-now sweet greyhound does it to you or, more often, to your child. Some will growl when you want your grey to do one thing and it wants to do another! But that's just general dog behavior. That is not "greyhound only" behavior.

Third, any dog, grey or not, will growl when it is leaned on, stepped on, or poked at too hard. Many times a grey will have a racing injury or an ailment that no one could possibly know about without knowing the dog's complete history (next to impossible) before being adopted. Often, a visit to the vet will uncover an injury or disease, such as arthritis, which may have been brought on by past broken bones or just plain hard life of running and lying around on hard surfaces.

Fourth, but very common, is the play growl. This is very important to remember because, as you already know, greys are not barkers. They seem to communicate more with a throaty assortment of sounds than the common barks. All my greys (I've had 5 so far) have growled in combination with the "Let's Play" stance of rump up in the air, elbows on the ground and tail wagging happily. Some will growl, wag their tails and stomp their feet when they want your attention. When they are running around the yard racing with each other,

some will growl. There is no meanness here. It is part of the race.

Fifth, even more interesting, some will growl while making a talking sound or "Err-ow, wow wow". It sounds exactly like a combination growl and a serious attempt to speak in vowel, mostly "a" and "o" and "ow" and "ooh". This is a serious attempt to have a conversation with you. Enjoy it and respond!

WHINING

Oddly, whining is part of the conversation. It is often a precursor to the greyhound solo or chorus, coming up in the next section. Of course, it also means "I'm unhappy", "I'm lonely", or "I hurt".

SINGING/SIRENS

When you have a few dogs living with you, you will probably discover that your dogs will form a chorus, ranging from soprano to bass. This can start out of the blue or may be brought on by hearing a siren or other dogs howling. This can be very frightening when heard for the first time, but when it becomes common, it's great fun for everybody. People who don't live in the house where this is happening but hear it from the street REALLY get nervous. To them, the singing/howling sound like a death knell. But those of us "in the know" smile and tell them "All is well".

THE TAIL

Most people love to see a dog wagging its tail. "Gee, what a happy dog!" is the first thing that comes to mind when a dog wags its tail. Is it true when a dog is happy it will wag its tail? Yes, but the TYPE of tail wagging is the key to how a dog feels. Most times, friendly dogs will greet people with the tail wagging wildly back and forth so hard and fast you think its tail will fall off. But there are other types of tail movements that mean something besides happiness and friendliness.

Another type of tail movement is the fast and stiff variety. Sometimes just the tip of the tail will wag. This generally indicates aggression or dominance but not attack. The rest of the body will likely be erect, the legs stiff and slightly spread apart and ears up. If you see this, be careful. The dog probably isn't going to attack; it just wants you to know that it is there and is something to be noticed. It more likely is saying, "For crying out loud, look at me!" I say, "generally indicates aggression" because one of my dogs does this when he wants a "cookie", but the behaviorists will tell you that this means aggression. Plus, the deep, loud bark he also utters at the same time would scare a new owner the first few times it happens. Many inexperienced greyhound owners are ready to return their dog when they see or hear these things. Not necessary! You have to know your dog. And you'll have to see what the ears, eyes, and mouth are doing too.

Frankly, I've never seen a greyhound actually do all the following things. But if you see a dog's pupils are dilated, if the corners of the mouth are down and the tail is not still and straight out, watch out. You have a dangerous dog on your hands. If this happens, do not stare at the dog. At this point, the tail will be held out stiffly; the tail is not wagging anymore. As you can see, tail wagging means both friendliness and possible aggressiveness. Another straight out tail position has nothing whatever to do with aggression. It can mean your dog has to move its bowels. This is a perfect instance of observing what the entire dog is doing, no just watching the tail.

Another tail position is the "hang-dog" look. This is when the tail droops straight down and doesn't move. This dog is feeling kind of neutral about things. The lower the tail, the less happy it is. The tail between the legs means one thing: fright.

When the tail is held low but is wagging, it means it needs comfort and is being submissive. Often a dog will also grin; the lips will pull back. This is sometimes mistaken for a snarl, which is quite different and wouldn't happen with the tail wagging low. Again, you'll have to look at several parts of the dog's body to determine what is really going on in the dog's mind.

THE EYES

Dogs have a way of staring adoringly at you. But sometimes, the stare means aggression. It all depends on the rest of the body language, especially if the body is stiff. If you want to be dominant over your dog, you would stare it down. However, if your dog is being aggressive at the time, staring back at the dog is definitely not the thing to do! It could escalate into a battle that you don't want.

Pupils of the eyes are the keys to the dog's mind. If they are dilated, the dog is afraid and may become aggressive. Occasionally, dilated pupils mean the dog is not feeling well, but, again, it depends on the rest of the body language. If the pupils look normal then the dog is feeling that way. Another way dogs use their eyes is for active aggression. When a dog stares at you but its head is sideways and tilted upward, it means the dog and you are in for a hassle. I get this look when I am trying to give a pill and the dog is going to give me a hard time about taking that pill. Using the phrase "active aggression" is a misnomer in the pill situation, that may mean trouble of a very serious nature.

Then there is the dog that won't look at you at all. This dog is showing you submission. This is the look of the greyhound who recently got adopted and doesn't know much about you or where it is living and is still nervous about its new life.

THE EARS

Greyhound ears are truly amazing. Most breeds of dogs have an "ear set" that is predictable. Cockers have ears that flop. Shepherds have erect ears. But greyhounds! Anything can be expected here. The average greyhound has ears that hug the head for aerodynamic reasons. Their ears do, however, do many tricks. They stand straight up like the Shepherd or Doberman; they go out like your average mixed breed; they go back tight to the head like a normal greyhound. And, often one ear will go one direction and other in a totally different direction and position. Many greyhounds have what we call a "chapeau". "What hat are you wearing today?" we ask.

In a greyhound, when the ears are straight up, it is listening. In any other dog, it is aggression. In this writer's opinion, the ears held out perpendicular from the head may be the clue to possible aggression or dominance. It is also a clue that the dog is simply expecting something, like a treat or a trip outside. The forward ear position is the classic sign of aggression in a non-greyhound. I have never seen such a position in a greyhound, probably because there are very few aggressive greyhounds and possibly because their ears can't do this.

In a greyhound, ears held back tightly to the head is normal. In most other breeds, that very position is the sign of a dog about to attack. To sum it up, the ears don't tell very much about the emotional state of the greyhound like they do in other dogs.

THE MOUTH

Many of our wonderful greyhounds like to smile. As mentioned before, smiling can mean submission. But in the greyhound and some of their cousins, smiling is an art form. A smile means just that – a smile. When a dog shows its teeth, it is assumed there is going to be trouble. A snarl means trouble; if the nose is wrinkled and the lips rise vertically, you have a snarl. But here we go again to break that rule. There are greyhounds that do this and are not being aggressive. One of my greyhounds (the same one who looks fierce when he wants a cookie) does this exact same thing with his lips when he TAKES the cookie he just weaseled from me. And he is very gentle when he takes that cookie, too. Again, you must know your dog before judging what the "snarl" look means.

POSTURE

The play posture is fun. The elbows and torso are on the floor, the rump is up in the air, there may be a smile on the face, and there is leaping, nuzzling, nipping and slamming the front feet up and down with great noise

and enthusiasm. Sometimes the play posture is stiff with the feet stomping, although this is more unusual.

The stiff posture is the beginning of aggression or dominance. This was covered in the section on tail wagging. Another show of dominance (and this can be with people or animals) is the paw on the shoulder or other body area. It can also mean, "you are mine". It's not really serious; take it at face value if it is with a person. With another dog, just monitor the situation. Some of these actions will take place between dogs and children who are smaller than they. This is entering the subject of pack behavior and can't be covered now, but consider this: the dog considers a small child as a lesser member of the pack and may try to push the child around. I emphasize MAY. Most greyhounds are fine with children, even babies. If the child is shy (submissive from the dog's point of view), the dog MAY try to take a higher place in the "pack" than the child. Make sure that the dog knows the child is higher in the pack than he is. The dog needs to become submissive to the child. Which leads us to the subject of submission.

SUBMISSION

If your dog won't look at you, if it lies on its back and shows its belly, if it urinates or defecates when it sees you or an animal, it is being submissive. If your dog shows signs of dominance and you can get it to lie on its back and show you its belly, you have become the boss, the "leader of the pack" so to speak.

Marcia Herman is a member of the Board of Directors of WAG, Inc., Adoption Committee Co-Chair, an adoption representative and staff writer for WAG TALES.

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