



Greyhounds as Pets of Northeast Florida Inc.

OWNER'S MANUAL

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PREPARATION

Before the big day, you will need to make a few preparations:

Purchase supplies such as food and water dishes, resting bed, identification tag and play toys. A martingale safety collar and leash may be purchased at our Adoption Center.

Our Adoption Center will advise you on the type of food, and treats you should purchase.

Prepare your house for your new family member by removing fragile knickknacks, checking your fencing for holes or weak spots and placing clips or locks on your gates. You will also want to check the latches and locks on screen doors and mark large windows and sliding glass doors with a band of tape for easy visibility. Clear your kitchen counter of any tempting treats and cover your waste container with a secure lid or place it inside a cabinet.

Select the sleeping place and arrange your greyhound's pillow, crate or blanket. Our usual suggestion is in the master bedroom with the door closed. Place his bed next to yours. This serves several purposes. If the greyhound needs to go out, you will know. It reassures the greyhound, who after all, has never slept alone in his entire life. It also continues the plan of making good habits, not bad. If he had the run of the house, he could get into all kinds of trouble; sleeping in your room means you know what's going on.

Scout nearby parks for suitable completely fenced in areas to exercise your greyhound if you do not have a fenced yard.

Discuss greyhound pet rules with all family members, particularly children, to ensure an easy transition period.

Review the background information about greyhounds and do not hesitate to contact Greyhounds as Pets if you have any questions.



THE RIDE HOME

Greyhounds are good travelers. Normally they settle right down once the drive is underway. The following are a few tips to make the drive easier.

Plan on having two adults to bring your new pet home. A friendly greyhound that decides to help the driver could cause an accident.

Prepare your car by putting a blanket over your backseat. Not only will the seat be more comfortable for your greyhound, but the blanket will protect your upholstery as well.

Take off your greyhound's leash while traveling to prevent him from getting himself tangled and hurting himself. Once you arrive home clip on the leash inside your vehicle before you open the door.

If your trip is longer than four hours, you will need to bring water and stop to walk your greyhound.



COMING HOME

Bring home your new greyhound is an exciting and rewarding experience. For the greyhound, adjusting to the life of a pet from that of an ex-racer can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. The following are a few suggestions to make the transition easier.

Once you get home, you should first offer your greyhound a chance to relieve himself. Walk your greyhound back and forth in a small area until he relieves himself.



HOUSEBREAKING

The main difference between greyhound hygiene and average pet habits is that the greyhound expects you to tell him when it is time to go. They have always expected their trainers to let them out in to the yard on a schedule, unlike a pet puppy, which is taught to scratch at the door to be let out. However, because your greyhound is used to living indoors and going outdoors to relieve himself, adjusting to his new lifestyle is relatively easy. Here are some tips to follow.

- Develop a schedule and stick as close to it as you can
- The basics to keep in mind are:
 - Out first thing in the morning
 - Out after meals
 - Out after naps
 - Out before you leave
 - Out before bed

It is important that you supervise your greyhound, especially at first. This gives you the opportunity to praise him for doing the right thing and also to keep an eye on him.

Greyhounds are used to going out in their yard with a human around. If you just shove your greyhound out the door, he'll spend more time worrying about where you are than on what they are supposed to be doing.

If he doesn't go when you expect him to during the first few days, you should make an extra effort to keep him close to you so that you can prevent a mistake.

- If you are busy, you should crate him.
- If he looks antsy or paces, he probably needs to go out.

It is important to differentiate between bathroom walks and exercise walks. The scheduled bathroom walks should be in a restricted area where the greyhound is taken to do his duty. You should walk back and forth in this area or stand in one spot and let him walk around you. Do not distract him with talk. When he goes, praise him.

Allow your greyhound to explore his new home at his own speed, but always under your supervision. It will be much easier to establish good habits early than to correct bad ones later.

Although your greyhound is used to living indoors, everything is new to them in your home. As they sniff their way through the house, you can offer words of encouragement or discouragement.

The patterns you set in the first few days are the ones you will live with the rest of your greyhound's life. If you do not want him on the furniture, do not break down a 3 am and cuddle him on the couch.

Verbal commands and reprimands are generally enough to train your greyhound, they will know by the tone of your voice what is acceptable and what is not.

Remember you are the boss!

This will be very stressful for a few days for your greyhound. It is best to keep things quiet. Delay the welcome home party for a week or two.

It is not unusual for your greyhound to refuse to eat for a day or two. He will probably drink more water than normal and consequently need to go out more often. Also, he will need more rest than normal.



FEEDING

DO feed your greyhound once or twice a day depending upon your schedule. Four to six cups of a good quality dry food is appropriate depending on the size of your greyhound. You may need to modify the amount after the first few weeks according to your greyhound's activity level and age.

DO pick a quiet corner of the room to place your greyhound's feed pans. If you are using a crate, you can feed your greyhound in his crate.

DO monitor your greyhound's eating habits. It is not unusual for him to refuse to eat for a day or two. To encourage eating you may want to add a couple of tablespoons of good quality canned food or a little chicken or beef broth to the dry kibble.

DO pick up any food that is not eaten in 90 minutes and discard. Repeat this routine at the next feeding time and your greyhound will quickly learn mealtime is limited.

DO watch for itchy and flaky skin. Cold dry weather can irritate a greyhound's coat. A tablespoon of coconut oil daily will work wonders on your greyhound's coat. And, they love it!

DON'T let your greyhounds eat everything in sight. Greyhounds generally have excellent appetites and will eat anything. Unfortunately, everything does not agree with them. Your greyhound will be happiest with the same food every meal.

DON'T ever feed your greyhound chocolate!!! Reactions to this tempting sweet vary from dog to dog but none are good. Chocolate contains ingredients that can cause allergic reactions, even death.

DON'T feed your greyhound from the table. This will only encourage bad habits that will be hard to break and maybe cause severe gastric distress.

DON'T leave alluring items on kitchen counters. Greyhounds are curious by nature and may sample items left on the counter.

DON'T be alarmed at your greyhound gulping down his meal, this normal.

DON'T exercise your greyhound for at least 90 minutes before or after eating.



GREYHOUNDS AND OTHER PETS

DOGS

Introduce them on neutral ground. This means having each dog on a leash allowing them to meet in an area your other dog doesn't own. After initial sniffing, you should walk the dogs together for a short time and then bring them into the house together. This is almost like having your other dog act as a host to the new greyhound. Any sign of growling or aggression should be met with a quick jerk of the leash and a sharp, 'NO'. Although greyhounds are used to sharing attention, your other dog may feel jealous and need a little extra attention.

The dogs should be separately, not side by side

Until you feel confident that both dogs are comfortable with the new arrangement, you should not let them out in the yard together unattended. Once you feel that they have accepted each other you'll be in for a treat as you watch the two of them play. If your other dog is older or overweight make sure he doesn't overdo it trying to keep up with his sleek, new roommate. If your other dog is a very small breed, you should supervise play situations closely, especially at first. Your greyhound's playful chase and lunge could be too rough for a toy breed. You will need to teach them otherwise. **REMEMBER YOU ARE IN CHARGE**

CATS

If you are introducing your greyhound to a cat, you should shut the cat in one room as the greyhound explores the house.

After the initial exploration, one adult should take the muzzled greyhound on his leash while the other adult lets the cat out. You don't need to lead the greyhound, but you should follow him and be able to jerk the leash and correct sharply if he tries to dart for the cat.

After the initial introduction you may remove the leash but keep the muzzle on until you feel confident. If your cat is familiar with dogs, this process usually goes quickly. If your cat is older or very shy, the process could take several weeks. Your greyhound should be crated when one is home.

Cat food has an irresistible smell to dogs and should be placed in a high spot so that your greyhound cannot get to it.

Little boxes should be hooded and turned into a corner to ensure peace for the cat and no access for the greyhound.



CHILDREN AND GREYHOUNDS

Teaching your new greyhound his manners must go hand in hand with teaching the children their manners around this new pet. Please keep in mind that you are dealing with a live, adult animal with all the accompanying instincts and needs. The greyhound is one of the most easy going dog breeds, but it is nonetheless a dog. In order to establish a loving relationship between greyhound and child, it is a wise idea to review the following ideas and discuss them.

- The greyhound is not a toy.
- It deserves respect and responsible care.
- A greyhound needs a place of his own to rest, undisturbed. A crate is an excellent choice.
- If a greyhound is in his place, then he is not to be bothered.
- No living creature enjoys being pounced on while sleeping.
- Call his name before startling any sleeping dog.
- If the greyhound is sleeping, he needs rest. When he is ready to play, he will let you know.
- Small children often want to express their affection for the pet greyhound by hugging or clinging to him. Teach your children that this can be scary for the greyhound and encourage gentle stroking of the neck and shoulders or brushing instead.
- Speak quietly.
- Tails are private things, not play things.
- It is important to reinforce to your greyhound the idea that children are part of the human coaching team, not littermates. Even though a child may be eye level, your greyhound must understand that the child is still a person and must respond accordingly. For this reason we strongly recommend that your greyhound does not share your child's bed or bedroom
- Outdoor games with your greyhound should be closely supervised, especially initially and until both child and greyhound are fully trained.
- Instead of running and jumping with your new pet, have your child join you as you stand in place and happily encourage your greyhound to come to you, with each person taking a turn. This provides exercise for the greyhound and reminds him that all people are in control – large or small.

- Adults kneeling at greyhound eye level can discourage jumping up.

The main rule to keep in mind concerning children and greyhounds is easy – SAFETY FIRST – This applies to both the greyhound and the children. DO not leave young children and greyhounds alone together if you cannot supervise, crate your greyhound!



PLAYING

Greyhounds love to play with their new family and you need not spend a lot of money on special fancy toys. Here are a few suggestions.

- One of the most popular toys is cotton rope toss.
- Some greyhounds like to play with tennis ball. Remember, your greyhound was bred to chase so roll or bowl the ball, don't throw it,. Once the ball is punctured it should be thrown away.
- A shank or marrow bone at least five inches long from your butcher will provide hours of enjoyment for your greyhound and can be a great doggie pacifier. Supervision is recommended, especially as the bone dwindles.
- Many greyhounds we have placed have done their own adoption of a stuffed animal, throw pillow, or scatter run. This breed just seems to need something to snuggle up with – so be prepared.
- A nylabone may seem rather expensive at first, but will last forever and provide a good cleaning action for your greyhound's teeth.

You may not get to see the silly side of your greyhound for a while. They will probably not feel like letting their puppy personality out until they feel quite secure in their new surroundings. When you see the bottom up, front end down pose bouncing in front of you, you will know it's time to play.



HOME ALONE

Up until now, your greyhound has led a very different life than that of a house pet. Even the most simple, common things in our everyday life can be completely foreign to a greyhound and a little intimidating. A little patience and a lot of love will help you and your greyhound make the adjustment. When leaving your greyhound home alone remember.

- One of the hardest things for your greyhound to adjust to will be loneliness. This greyhound has lived its entire life with either littermates or kennelmates and people coming and going most of the day. Leave a radio on for company and to disguise new outside noises.
- Never leave your greyhound outdoors, particularly on hot summer days and cold winter days. With their short hair, and little body fat, greyhounds are very susceptible to the heat and cold.
- Never tie your greyhound outside on a rope, chain or runner as greyhounds are not used to being tied to something stationary. They can get tangled up and injure themselves, or will pull, wiggle or chew their way out. They also could forget they are tied, take off running at their blazing speed and snap their neck when they hit the end of the line.
- A big asset in this adjustment period is the crate. This portable cage provides security your greyhound needs as well as protecting both greyhound and your house from each other. Your greyhound is used to having his own crate in the kennel, where he can rest on his soft bed. Using a crate is not cruel, it provides the sense of security your greyhound needs. The crate should be placed in quiet spot where there are no windows to offer visual distractions. Remember a radio will provide soothing background noises.
- Before you leave your greyhound for an extended period, you should practice leaving for short time intervals and then build up.

If you decide not to use a crate because someone is home most of the time, you should choose a quiet space for your greyhound's bed. You can use baby gates to restrict the area when you leave. NEVER lock your greyhound in a small room, laundry room or bathroom. He will scratch and chew on the door to get out.



EXERCISE

A popular myth about greyhounds is that, as ex-athletes, they require a lot of exercise. In reality, your greyhound is pretty lazy. However, we do recommend a certain amount of exercise which not only is good for your greyhound, but is good for you as well.

The most obvious and easiest answer is in your own backyard. The typical greyhound enjoys a few laps around the yard at top speed and then is finished. Care should be taken to introduce your greyhound to your yard or any new fenced area before turning him loose in it. This means a walk around the fence so that he can familiarize himself with the boundary. You should let him investigate hazards in your yard such as BBQ grill or planters.

The first time he exercises in your yard off leash should be in daylight and under supervision.

If you plan to use your greyhound as a walking or jogging partner, you should have an enthusiastic partner as long as you start slowly. Greyhounds are exercised primarily on sand in their kennel situation which means the pads on their feet are smooth and soft. A little time must be taken to build up the calluses needed to exercise with you on cement or blacktop. Start his regime slowly. Walk or jog two or three blocks at first and then gradually increase. Greyhounds are sprinters so don't expect them to take a 5 mile jog with you. A mile or two is about the limit.

Care should be taken during extreme temperatures. Your greyhound is susceptible to heatstroke, just as you are. During hot weather it is wise to exercise early morning or late evening. Make sure your greyhound is completely cooled down before feeding, and, do not feed at least an hour or two before exercise.

Cold weather presents hazards also. A warm blanket (coat) made for greyhounds is an excellent idea for walking in extreme cold. Check his feet for snow packing which can cause split webs or ice cuts. It is a good idea to swish his feet in lukewarm water to rinse off salt after your walk.

Each greyhound is an individual with different activity levels. Generally younger greyhounds enjoy higher activity than older greyhounds. A romp in your yard and a 30 min walk every day will keep your greyhound happy and healthy.

Exercising your greyhound off leash in an area not completely enclosed is asking for disaster to happen. Your greyhound has been bred to scan the horizon and run after moving objects. Something as small as a paper cup blowing in the street from the park could mean your greyhound's death. Once your greyhound is focused on a moving object, he no longer hears you. He is running on pure instinct.

Most greyhounds walk very well on a leash. If your greyhound starts to pull or freezes as he sees something on the horizon, snap the leash to quickly jerk the collar and give the command, "Heel".



TRAINING

One of the main reasons greyhounds make such wonderful pets is that they are easily trainable. Retired racers believe that people are all knowing and all powerful, making you the natural choice to set the ground rules. Keeping your greyhound under this illusion will be a great benefit to your relationship. A few tips that will make the training process go smoothly.

- The role as leader or coach of your greyhound is a serious responsibility. The message you send will shape your greyhound's idea of the world.
- Outline ahead of time what is acceptable and not acceptable behavior for your greyhound and make sure all family members abide by the rules.
 - Can they get on the furniture?
 - Where can he sleep?
 - Where can he eat?
 - What will be his treats?
- Be consistent. Don't allow him to do one thing on day and not the next
- Once your greyhound knows the family rules, another effective way to reprimand him is to firmly scold him and then totally ignore him for several minutes. Greyhounds crave attention and this approach will reinforce his guilt.
- Remember that your greyhound will respond to your reaction, not your words. If he seems afraid of something new and your cuddle and coo over him he will quickly get the idea that he should react timidly to any new situation. Instead in an upbeat tone encourage him to try the new situation and reassure him by stroking his neck.
- ALWAYS PRAISE YOUR GREYHOUND WHEN HE IS GOOD!!!
- Be aware that home life is a new experience for your greyhound and simple things such as stairs, glass doors, ceiling fans and shiny floors may frighten him at first. Take the time to show him that these new things are not a big deal and easily mastered.

Throughout the greyhound's life, he has relied on someone to set boundaries for him. First his mother, then his trainer, and now you. He is counting on you to tell him what is good and what is not.

Always remember, you are in charge, he is not.



GROOMING

One of the nicest features of your pet greyhound is that he is virtually permanently pressed. Grooming needs are minimal and take just a few minutes a day. Here are some tips.

- Your greyhound should be bathed when soiled. Greyhounds have little oil in their skin, thus they have little “doggy odor” and rarely need a bath.
- When buying shampoo, select a conditioning shampoo designed for animals from a good pet supply store. Never use human shampoo. When using a flea shampoo, use any products containing the safe element Pyrethrin.
- Be sure to rinse, rinse, rinse after bathing. Any soapy residue left can be an irritant to your greyhound’s sensitive skin.
- Once a week, you should inspect your greyhound’s ears and clean them gently with a cotton ball lightly dipped in baby oil. A dogs ear cleaner can also be used, follow directions on bottle.
- Most of the year a quick brushing with a soft bristle brush once a day will keep him looking great. During the spring and fall shedding weeks, you may need to repeat this routine twice a day.
- A short nabbed rubber brush will aid in the removal of more stubborn element such as dead hair and dried mud.
- Most greyhounds will need to have their teeth professionally cleaned before adoption. When you take your greyhound for his check-up, have your veterinarian inspect his teeth.
- Greyhounds are used to having their nails trimmed while they stand. Just lean over and bend each foot backwards, so that you can see the underside of the nail. If you are nervous about trimming the nails, ask your veterinarian or local groomer to show you how much to trim.



VETERINARY CARE

Greyhounds are very healthy breed with a few of the inherited health problems commonly found in other large breeds. Prior to your adoption your greyhound was spayed or neutered, given all vaccinations, teeth cleaned, and had a full physical which includes heartworm, fecal test and basic blood work. You will receive a medical record for your greyhound. The following are a few things you will want to do to help your greyhound lead a long and healthy life.

- Heartworm prevention will be one of the most important things you can do for your greyhound. We recommend one of the chewable monthly preventative tablets. A six month supply will be given to you at the time of adoption. Further tablets can be obtained from your veterinarian. There are lots of new medications on the market which include heartworm and flea preventative. Discuss these medications with your veterinarian to decide which works best for you.
- Annual check-ups and revaccinations should be planned near the anniversary of your adoption. This will serve as a good reminder to renew your local dog license as well.
- Before allowing your greyhound to be anesthetized or tranquilized, be sure your veterinarian is familiar with the procedures and dosages appropriate for greyhounds. Because greyhounds have so much muscle bulk and so little fat, these drugs react more powerfully on them. The normal dose of anesthetic for another breed of dog of the same weight could be fatal to your greyhound.

We have included the name and phone number of the veterinarian who treated your greyhound. Please encourage your veterinarian to contact him if there is a question.