

GREYS AS PETS



**GREYHOUNDS
AS PETS**

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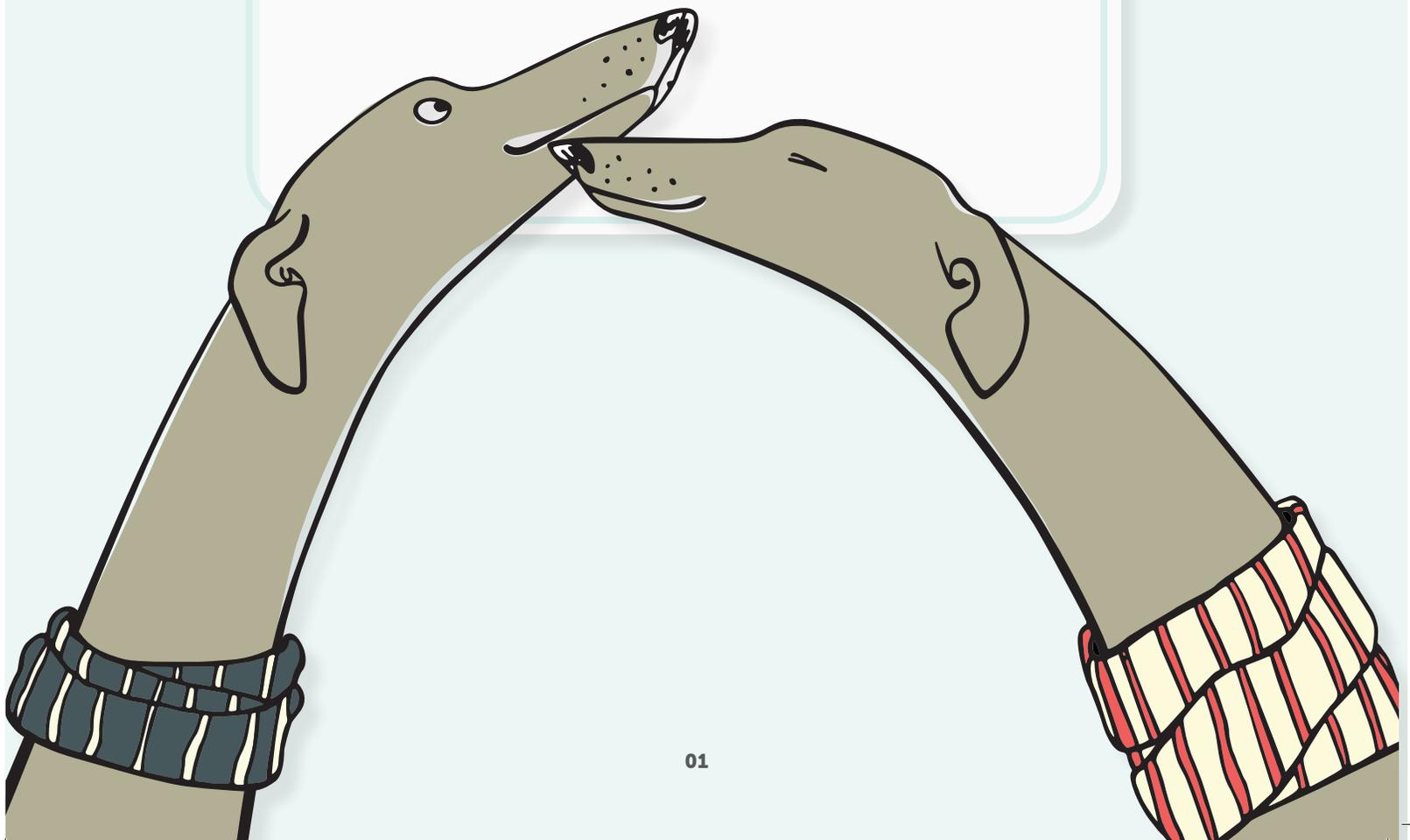


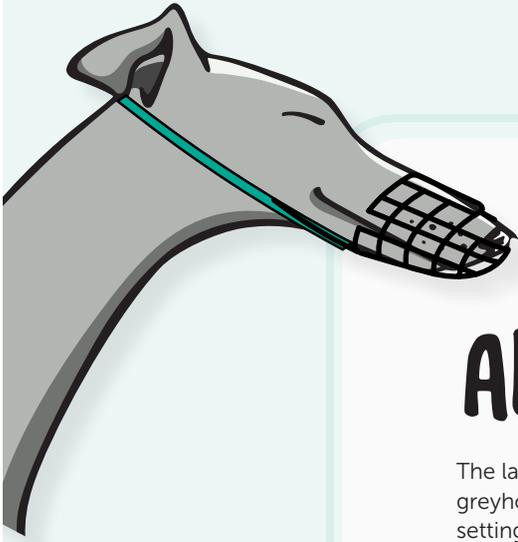
LEARNING TO BE A PET

Most greyhounds make the transition from kennels into a household environment rather quickly. Your greyhound will adjust to their new life, however like all dogs, training should be ongoing. In the first few days in a new environment some dogs may show signs of stress such as pacing, heavy panting, lack of interest in food and licking of the paws – these can all be signs of anxiety and should settle.

Helping a greyhound transition to life outside of kennels is like bringing a new puppy home. Life in a domestic environment is a new experience for your greyhound. Be patient in allowing your greyhound time to settle in and you will be rewarded with a loving pet.

If you have adopted your greyhound direct from a trainer, owner, or breeder, it will not have completed a Behaviour Assessment at Greyhounds as Pets (GAP). We recommend controlled and supervised interactions with your greyhound around children and other animals until you are more comfortable with your dog's reactions in different situations.





ABOUT THE MUZZLE

The laws in Western Australia have recently changed. Adopted greyhounds are no longer required to wear a muzzle when in a public setting. GAP recommends leaving the muzzle on your greyhound when you are introducing them to other pets, children or new environments – such as a busy dog park, or grandchildren visiting.

You are getting to know your new greyhound and them you. Your dog is accustomed to wearing one. It does not hurt, and they can drink normally while wearing it.

GREYHOUNDS AND LEASH LAWS

Despite recent changes to the Dog Act 1976 regarding muzzles, it is still law for all greyhounds to be kept on leash in public places. This includes off leash dog parks. Greyhounds are sighthounds and are very fast. Even a greyhound with great recall can see something in the distance and run off. A sighthound in chase mode can easily run onto a busy road or through a fence without realising the danger. For the safety of your greyhound, and in keeping with Western Australian law, please keep it leashed unless on a safe, enclosed private property.

You may be aware of 'Zoomieland', a greyhound-specific, off lead exercise area. We would suggest waiting until your new greyhound is settled and comfortable in its new environment before venturing to this off lead area.

A GREYHOUND IN THE HOME

When bringing your dog home, it is important to stick to your usual routine. Don't overwhelm him or her by trying to be together all the time.

Allow your greyhound time to watch, see, and investigate on their own terms. This way, they can settle in comfortably, at their own pace.

Retired racers typically don't have experience with fridges, washing machines or other appliances. Be conscious of the noises that household appliances make and understand that this may be confusing and frightening in a new environment. With reassurance, your greyhound will soon understand that these appliances are nothing to be worried about.

Most retired greyhounds also have limited exposure to glass doors and windows. Make a point of showing them to your greyhound so they know they can't barge through them.

In a kennel environment, your greyhound has not had to learn food manners. This means they may steal food from tables or benches. Be patient and consistent with your greyhound as you teach them what is and isn't acceptable.

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. Dogs flourish on routine, so try and keep things consistent. Feed and walk your dog at roughly the same time every day as this helps your dog feel secure. Ensure all members of the household are abiding by the same rules and routine. This will make things less confusing for your greyhound.

Set up your dog's sleeping area before it arrives. This should be in a quiet area, away from drafts and the main thoroughfare of the house. It should also be in an area where they are part of the family, such as a corner of the living room. Greyhounds like to see what is going on around them.

Your greyhound may not have experienced a home environment before and therefore may feel uncomfortable having the run of the house. Allow your grey to settle in and grow in confidence before pushing them to explore other areas of the house.

To begin toilet training, put your greyhound on a leash and take them outside for a toilet break, multiple times a day.

Praise your greyhound when they go in the correct place and remember to have patience when accidents occur – this is new to them, and it will take them time to learn.

Over successive days, the time between toilets breaks can be increased.

By following these steps and reinforcing positive behaviour, your dog will understand what is requested of them, and will become house trained.

Your dog will be used to being handled. However, they initially may not feel comfortable being touched and cuddled like you may expect from a pet dog.

Be aware of your greyhound's reaction to being touched.

If they back off or appear uncomfortable, stop what you are doing.



TIPS FOR TRAINING YOUR GREYHOUND



1

YOUR GREYHOUND IS CONSTANTLY LEARNING

Every interaction you have with your greyhound is a learning opportunity. Try to take advantage of this.



2

BUILD A STRONG RELATIONSHIP

Effective training relies on a strong relationship between handler and animal. Greyhounds are sensitive to your mood and actions. Try to be mindful of both verbal and nonverbal communication.



4

REWARD GOOD BEHAVIOUR

We are all good at pointing out mistakes, but not as good at rewarding good behaviour. If you notice your greyhound being quiet or happily playing with a toy, be sure to reward the behaviour.



3

SET YOUR GREYHOUND UP TO WIN

While your greyhound is learning what is expected of him, manage his world to minimise the chance for him to do the wrong thing. Don't overcomplicate your training, and keep distractions, such as other dogs or people, to a minimum.



5

MAKE IT FUN

Fun training is effective training. Draw on your greyhound's natural abilities and interests. For example, try to find ways to incorporate his love of running or toys. Be creative and engaging and make watching you more fun than anything else going on around him.

6



KEEP IT SIMPLE

Training will be more successful if you break tasks into small manageable bits. If your greyhound is not picking up a command, chances are you are moving too fast or trying to teach too much at once. Even the simplest behaviours have multiple parts and actions. The more complex the command, the more important it is to break into small pieces and teach each piece separately.

7



KEEP IT SWEET

Rewards are key. Make your rewards memorable, but also ensure variety to keep your grey interested. Try to end every training session on a high note. A "jackpot" of treats is a great way to do this.

8



THERE ARE NO 'MAGIC WANDS'

Reliability, patience and consistency are all key to ensuring your greyhound picks up new skills through training. If your greyhound continues to do something "bad", it is most likely because their behaviour is being rewarded in some capacity.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- > Always remain calm and assertive.
- > Maintain positive body language
 - head up, looking forward and walk at a confident pace.
- > Visualise your success. You need to believe that your greyhound will succeed.
- > Ensure your greyhound is exercised before training. This will help with their concentration.
- > During training, make sure your greyhound is wearing the training collar and make sure it is fitted correctly (high up on the neck).
- > Consistency is key. Train in sessions of 5 – 10 minutes, once or twice a day.
- > Give rewards for correct behaviour immediately. A reward should be praise, and at times it may also include treats, toys, or play.
- > Any corrections for incorrect behaviour should be short, clear, and given at the right time. A correction is not a punishment - it is a way for you to communicate with your greyhound.

Once you commit to training your greyhound, they will be learning from you all the time. Be ready to teach.



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