



GRNZ

Guide for
New Owners



My Greyhound + Useful Information

My Greyhound

Pet Name

Racing Name

Birth Date

Microchip
Number

Colour

Weight on
Adoption

Adoption
Date

Useful Information

Owner's Name

Address

Contact Phone

Vet Clinic

Vet Clinic
Phone

Vet Clinic
Address

Vet Clinic
Email

Great Mates
Phone

Great Mates
Email

Contents

Welcome to the retired greyhound community!

Foreword	2
1. Preparing for your greyhound's arrival	3
- Legal requirements for owning a dog in New Zealand	3
- Food and treats	4
- Exercise and enrichment	5
- Toilet training	5
2. Setting your new greyhound up for success	6
3. Stress in greyhounds	8
4. Predatory chasing	10
5. Understanding fear and anxiety-induced aggression in greyhounds	11
6. Separation anxiety	11
7. Greyhounds and children	12
8. References and further information	13





Welcome to the retired greyhound community!

Whether you are a first time owner or a serial greyhound adopter, I'm sure your new pet greyhound will be a wonderful addition to your life. Greyhounds are known to be super friendly and intelligent dogs generally, so your new best friend shouldn't take very long to transition away from racing and settle into its new home and way of life.

The Greyhound Racing New Zealand (GRNZ) *Guide for New Owners* will help you navigate your way from preparing for your greyhound's arrival to setting your new greyhound up for success – and all the stages in between. A useful feature of the guide is the *My Greyhound* page on the inside front cover to help keep all that essential greyhound information and contact details together in one handy place. I hope you find it useful.

One of our key mantras is 'no greyhound left behind'.

Regardless of whether a greyhound has retired from a successful racing career or never went near a racetrack, GRNZ is deeply committed to ensuring all of its dogs have the opportunity to live out the remainder of their lives on the couch as pets. And despite what you may have read or heard, we take rehoming our greyhounds very seriously and do not allow our greyhounds to be euthanised, with the only exception being if a veterinarian recommends it on humane grounds. The racing industry's independent regulator – the Racing Integrity Board – verifies GRNZ's data which is included in reports to the Minister for Racing and also published on our website.

GRNZ and its adoption agency partners have successfully rehomed over 2,300 greyhounds since 1 August 2020 and there is a very active retired greyhound community throughout New Zealand. I encourage you to join your local greyhound group, as they will have a wealth of local knowledge, social events and gatherings you and your greyhound may enjoy. But don't forget that the adoption team at Great Mates is also happy to provide their advice and support when needed – please don't hesitate to contact them if you have any questions.

And finally, it may be reassuring to know that in a 2022 survey, over 99% of the greyhound pet owners questioned, said they would recommend having a greyhound as a pet. My congratulations on your new family member and I wish you both the very best.

Edward Rennell

Chief Executive
Greyhound Racing New Zealand



1. Preparing for your greyhound's arrival

Before your greyhound arrives, there are a few things you'll need to prepare – here's a list of what your greyhound needs:

- Secure, fenced yard or garden (if available)
- Safe area to sleep in, e.g. laundry, dog kennel or run, crate
- Dog bed and bedding
- Large water and feed bowls (metal is best)
- Harness, lead and muzzle
- Food and treats
- Toys and enrichment activities
- Baby gates – very useful to partition areas in the home
- Love, patience and a sense of humour – greyhounds are great entertainers.

You should have had an opportunity to 'meet and greet' your new greyhound at their current property, and have received their behavioural history form and previous veterinary records from the current owner or trainer. Your greyhound will already be microchipped, vaccinated and desexed when you adopt it, and it will also have had a dental treatment and been recently dewormed.

All greyhounds are registered with the local council when they leave the trainer's or owner's property. When you take ownership of your greyhound, you will need to change its ownership to your name with the corresponding council. If the greyhound is moving into a different council area, you will need to register it with the local council there.

Over the coming weeks and months, you will get to know your new greyhound and help them learn all about their new life as a pet dog. This short guide will give you some tips for settling your greyhound in.

We ask that if you see any behaviours that may indicate that your greyhound is experiencing an abnormally high degree of stress during their transition period to pet life, you contact the Great Mates team for advice.

Legal requirements for owning a dog in New Zealand

As a dog owner, there are legislative requirements that must be complied with, including the [Dog Control Act 1996](#) (provides for the care and control of dogs, and in relation to damage dogs may cause) and [Code of Welfare: Dogs](#) (governs the minimum requirements for keeping dogs in New Zealand). Here's a quick guide to some of the relevant laws for greyhound owners.

As a dog owner you must:

- register your dog with your local council before it is three months old (or when you get it)
- renew the registration for your dog each year before 1 July
- notify the council if you change your address, your dog dies or has a new owner
- microchip your dog when it is registered for the first time or if it has been classified as dangerous or menacing (all greyhounds are already microchipped!)
- make sure your dog does not scare or injure anyone or any other animal and is kept under control at all times
- care for your dog – exercise it and provide sufficient food, water and shelter.

You must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that your dog does not:

- cause any nuisance to any other person, for example by constantly barking, howling or roaming
- injure, endanger, or cause distress to any stock, poultry, domestic animal or protected wildlife
- damage or endanger any property belonging to any other person.

It is recommended that you ensure your greyhound's microchip number is listed on the [New Zealand Companion Animal Register](#) along with your details. This will ensure that if they are ever lost, they are able to be returned to you.



Food and treats

Greyhounds are generally most content when fed twice per day in roughly equal amounts. It is recommended that you feed your greyhound at about the same time each morning and evening. If your greyhound has not long finished its racing career at the time of adoption, it may need to move to an appropriate weight for its new life as a pet. Be careful not to allow them to become overweight – ideally, you should be able to feel your greyhound's ribs but not see them.

While you are getting to know your greyhound and how it interacts with any other animals in your household, it is a good idea to feed it separately from your other pets. That way you will see exactly how much it eats and know that it isn't sharing its meals – willingly or otherwise.

Complete dry dog foods are an effective and efficient way of feeding, and ensure your greyhound gets all the nutrients, vitamins and minerals required to be healthy. Look for a premium brand that contains around 26% protein and a minimum of 15% fat, and lists meat as the first ingredient (cheaper brands tend to have cereals as the main ingredient, while mid-range brands have meat by-products as the main ingredient). Follow the feeding instructions on the packaging according to the weight of your dog, but adjust the amount based on your greyhound's condition. Often greyhounds find dry food easier to swallow if it has been soaked in some warm water.

Greyhounds should **NEVER** be fed cooked bones, as these can splinter and cause serious health issues. Raw, large meaty bones can be good as a regular treat for your greyhound and will help keep their teeth and gums healthy. Chat to your vet or to the Great Mates team about suitable bones for greyhounds. Canned dog foods are generally not recommended, as they tend not to agree with the greyhound digestive system and often result in diarrhoea and/or flatulence.

Fresh water must be **ALWAYS** available – never leave your greyhound without water. Some greyhounds 'play' with their water dishes and might tip them over, so make sure bowls are of a non-tip design.

As with all large breeds of dogs, exercise drinking excessive amounts of water and excessive excitement around meal times should be avoided to prevent a condition commonly called 'bloat' (gastric dilatation and volvulus, GDV or gastric torsion). This is a life-threatening condition which can result in death within a few hours if untreated.

Symptoms include a swollen abdomen, gagging, vomiting, restlessness, rapid pulse and breathing. If you suspect bloat, it is a medical emergency and you must take your greyhound to a veterinarian immediately (day or night).

Preventing bloat involves the following:

- not feeding large amounts of food in one session; instead, spread meals over two smaller meals
- not exercising your greyhound for at least an hour before, and an hour after, eating
- ensuring that water is readily available at all times, so your greyhound does not gulp down large amounts of water at one time
- purchasing special (slow-feeder) bowls which include obstacles to slow eating, if your greyhound is a rapid eater.



Exercise and enrichment

Although greyhounds are the fastest breed of dog, they achieve their incredible speed in one all-out sprint and do not have a lot of endurance. For this reason, greyhounds require less exercise than most breeds of dogs and are generally happy with one or two short walks per day of around 15-20 minutes. If you intend to walk your greyhound for longer periods, you will need to start at 20 minutes and gradually build up their stamina. Please seek advice from your veterinarian before increasing exercise if your greyhound has a history of previous injury. Remember your greyhound must always be kept on a leash when in public.

All dogs need mental exercise as well as physical exercise to help keep them happy and well-adjusted as a pet, and to prevent any undesirable behaviours that may occur as a result of boredom, such as digging and barking. Your greyhound should be provided with toys to play with such as:

- chew toys
- rope toys
- Kongs® (rubber dog toys in which food can be hidden)
- puzzle feeders
- lick-mats
- other commercially available enrichment toys.

Other activities include hiding small amounts of food outside for your greyhound to find, or freezing a treat in an ice block (water or stock) for your greyhound to lick and chew (also good for cooling in summer).

Some more forms of enrichment include:

- training activities
- playing music (dogs love classical music according to the research)
- TV programmes
- introducing a weekly bone treat
- car trips
- walks in new environments
- grooming/bathing
- playtime.

Toilet training

Greyhounds are generally quite clean dogs, but as they are often unfamiliar with indoor living, you will need to train them where the appropriate places are to toilet at their new home. In order to avoid accidents from occurring, it is essential that greyhounds are given lots of help and time to learn where to toilet.

You also need to ensure that your greyhound is given sufficient opportunity to toilet in that area. After all, humans don't automatically know where the bathroom is in a strange house until they've been shown. Greyhounds are the same, but may need to be shown many times before they'll get it right all the time.

As soon as you get your greyhound home, take them straight out to where you want them to toilet. They may have had a long car journey, and you can't be sure when they last toileted.





Tips for avoiding toilet mistakes

Watch Your Greyhound

- If you see your greyhound circling or sniffing, or if they become restless, take them to their toileting place immediately. Give them some time and space and praise them when they do go. You can take them out on a loose lead for 5-10 minutes or you can accompany them on a free toilet time in the yard.

Use Common Sense

- If you know your greyhound hasn't toileted for several hours (e.g. during the evening or while you've been out), don't delay in taking them outside. This ideally would be your first task in the morning, or when you return.

Greyhounds Usually Need To Toilet

- After a meal.
- When they first wake up.
- After exercise, or during a walk.
- Before bed.

Keep Your Greyhound Visible

- Prevent your greyhound from going into rooms where you cannot watch them. You can keep doors closed or restrict areas with the use of baby gates. You may also like to use a crate to confine your greyhound when they are asleep or when you can't supervise them (e.g. for half an hour while doing something else). Read more about crate training [HERE](#).

Keep Your Back Door Closed

- Keeping your back door closed will allow your greyhound to indicate to you that they need to go outside. A common mistake made by many new owners and foster carers, is thinking that your greyhound understands that while the door is open, they know to go outside to toilet. Opening the door and signalling that it's time to toilet is an easy concept for greyhounds to grasp as they are always taken out of the kennel to toilet rather than just going on their own accord.

Whenever your greyhound toilets in the right place, reward them with pats, praise and treats as soon as they have toileted. There is no point giving your dog a treat when they come back inside. If you do that, you are rewarding your greyhound for returning, not toileting.

When accidents happen

- Do not punish your greyhound for toileting in the wrong place! This is crucial. If you yell or chastise your greyhound, they will believe they are being punished for what they are doing (i.e. toileting), not where they are doing it. This will make your greyhound reluctant to toilet in front of you for fear of punishment.
- Soak up whatever you can with a paper towel and then clean up using an enzyme-based cleaner from your vet or pet shop. Alternatively, laundry powder can be diluted and used in a similar manner.
- Do not use common household ammonia-based cleaners, as it attracts the greyhound back to that area to toilet again. Remember, when a greyhound urinates, there is often a large volume that soaks in and under the carpet, so you will need to use a considerable amount of product to cover the area completely.

2. Setting your new greyhound up for success

It's important to understand that racing greyhounds live a very different lifestyle to pet dogs, prior to retirement. Most racing greyhounds are bred and raised in rural environments, surrounded by other greyhounds, and spend most of their days relaxing in paddocks or kennels between training and racing activities.

Your greyhound will have started the process of transitioning to pet life before leaving their trainer or owner's care, however, they still have a lot to learn about living in your home with you and navigating the world beyond the racetrack.



It's normal for greyhounds to experience some stress while they adjust to a new home. After all, they are experiencing a lot of change in a short time, and while this change is not as difficult as with a new puppy, there are some things you can do to help them through this period. To support your budding relationship with your new dog, it is crucial that you help them feel safe and secure, and take things at a pace they are comfortable with.

Greyhounds naturally want to please you and be a good pet, but they need some patience while they adjust.

Training your new greyhound using rewards-based methods is a great way to help them understand and enjoy their new living situation. This will allow your greyhound to bond with you and your family quickly, and to learn from positive experiences in your care.

You can think of your greyhound's ability to cope with life changes like a bucket - the more things in the bucket, the less space (i.e. ability) they have available to cope with extra challenges. There is a great explanation of the 'Stress Bucket' concept [HERE](#).

Greyhounds can be quite subtle in how they communicate their stress, so you will need to be a good observer while you learn about your new greyhound - everybody loves a great listener and greyhounds are no exception. Find out more about recognising signs of stress in greyhounds [HERE](#).

To make the transition as smooth as possible, here are some tips to help you understand your recently retired greyhound and smooth their adjustment to pet life.

- **Assume a puppy level of knowledge about how to live in a house**

This means starting from scratch with everything, including toilet training, chew training, teaching your greyhound where to rest, where and when to eat, and how to calmly share a living space with others.

To your greyhound, your home is a giant kennel filled with lots of new and interesting things. They don't understand that they live in a space where they are not allowed to rest on, chew on, or play with anything within reach. Take the time to teach your greyhound what belongs to them and what does not, and what your expectations of their behaviour are. As with new puppies or young children, a set routine is easiest for them to follow and understand. Greyhounds love a routine, so always stick to the same routine as much as possible to help them feel safe and that life is predictable.

- **Everything is new, so take it slow!**

Your greyhound must learn all about how to live in a house before they can tackle more challenging unfamiliar situations, like navigating a walk down a suburban street, or how to behave when visitors come over to your house.

Remember how overwhelming it was when you first learned to drive? Your greyhound is experiencing all of that and more. So, break it down and take it slow - when they seem curious and willing to try new things, it's a good sign to make their world a little bigger. Don't try to cram all new activities into the first week together; pick one thing each week and repeat those things until they're familiar and easy to achieve, e.g. a visit to the park, the beach, a walk, a visit with friends, a trip to school, etc.

- **Feeling safe while they sleep is important to your greyhound**

Your greyhound is used to sleeping in their own bed, in their own kennel, where no person or dog can get close to them without their knowledge. Learning to sleep soundly in a household full of people and pets takes adjustment and can be stressful.

If you're not going to use a kennel or crate, place your greyhound's bed in a corner against at least two solid objects or walls (e.g. in the corner of a room, or against a wall and large bookcase) in an out of the way area of the main living space, so that they can lie with their back to the wall. This helps them feel secure.



It might be helpful to place a masking tape line across the floor, about one metre from your greyhound's bed and implement a 'no crossing while there's a greyhound on the other side' rule to help the family learn how to keep the new greyhound feel secure.

- **Don't be stingy with treats during training!**

As elite athletes, racing greyhounds are fed high value foods to sustain their health and wellbeing – just like human athletes.

It's not uncommon for a newly retired greyhound to initially turn their nose up at commercial dried dog treats. Some great high value treats for your greyhound are roast chicken, steamed or microwaved chopped chicken hearts and livers, or low fat cooked meats or cheese chopped into small pieces.

Don't forget to adjust their dinner to compensate for the extra kilojoules too! Read more about basic training for new greyhounds [HERE](#).

- **Leashes and muzzles are your friend during the transition period**

While you are getting to know how your greyhound reacts when out in public, using a six-foot leash and a well-fitted yard muzzle is a great safety net for you both. Greyhounds are curious, and their previous training involved chasing and grabbing fluffy things with their mouth, so until you know how your greyhound responds in new situations around other animals, use the best tools you have available to make the experience relaxing and positive for everyone.

If your greyhound raced, they already have a positive association with wearing a muzzle, so you don't need to worry about this being a negative experience for your new friend. More information on how to introduce your dog to new friends of other breeds can be found [HERE](#).

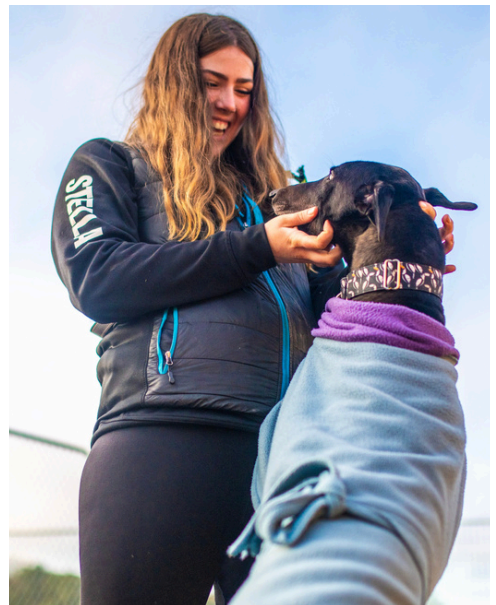
- Slippery floors can be a challenge for your new greyhound, so consider adding some non-slip matting or carpets to slippery tiled or wood flooring.

- Put some stickers, coloured tape or other marker on glass doors (French or sliding), to stop your greyhound running into them, thinking they are open – until they learn when the door is open or closed.
- If you have a cat at home, remember to take introductions extra slowly and at your cat's pace to ensure both the cat and the greyhound are comfortable throughout the process.

Just as for dog-to-dog introductions, leads and muzzles are your friend when introducing your greyhound to your cat. Don't rush to face-to-face introductions or skip the all important preparation steps. You can read about cat-friendly introductions to dogs [HERE](#).

3. Stress in greyhounds

Greyhounds, like all dogs (and people), show some predictable behaviours when they are stressed or just tired with a full bucket from all the changes they have experienced. When you notice any of the common signs of stress in your greyhound, it's time to slow down and give them some time to rest, relax and find their curiosity again.





Some common signs of a greyhound who is experiencing transition stress are:

- **Poor appetite** or pickiness about their food
- **Poor sleep quality** (e.g. they always seem 'half awake' and aren't sleeping deeply overnight)
- **Inability to 'switch off'** and relax (e.g. they are always watching what is going on and ready to react)
- **Reluctance to engage** with the family or in day-to-day activities (e.g. they seem very uninterested in life)
- **They never leave your side and become stressed if they are put behind a barrier** (e.g. they seem to only feel safe if they are with you)
- Their **stomach is easily upset**, and/or they have loose bowel movements.

Some greyhounds will experience a higher level of anxiety during their transition to pet life and need more help adapting to their new role in life. If you see any of these signs, please reach out to the team at Great Mates, who will help get you and your greyhound back on track.

Some less common signs that your greyhound is not coping as well as anticipated with their transition are:

- **Poor sleep quality and waking up in a state of panic**

We call this '[sleep startle](#)', and for some greyhounds their panic can be accompanied by defensive behaviour. This can happen when you touch or disturb a sleeping greyhound and they startle and sometimes even growl or snap. Sometimes, your greyhound's eyes may be partially open, and you may think they are awake, yet they startle, growl and even snap when they are touched. This is because despite the partially opened eyes, your greyhound was sleeping. The best management for this behaviour is to ensure sleeping areas are away from high traffic areas or areas where people move around and can accidentally wake a deeply sleeping greyhound. If your greyhound likes to sleep/rest with the family while you are watching television or reading or talking, make sure the family is aware and is careful not to accidentally wake the greyhound.

If you need to wake your greyhound, or you are unsure if they are awake, begin by calling their name (or rattling their food bowl) until they show definite signs of wakefulness. Then you may approach or begin to move them.

- **Protecting their most valued resources**

Just like some humans do when times get tough, some greyhounds will defend their valued possessions using aggression if they are pushed beyond their ability to cope with the situation. This is called resource guarding and is a common behaviour of dogs who are experiencing chronic stress. You can read more about how to help your greyhound learn to feel better about sharing their resources [HERE](#).

To address resource guarding successfully, you need to work with your greyhound to teach them that the approach made by you or another human to their food, toys, bed or space is a good thing. Read more [HERE](#).

- **Irritability and poor tolerance of people and other dogs**

Again, much like humans, dogs can have a bit of a short fuse when they are tired and stressed. Greyhounds are no exception to this, despite their gentle nature. If you see signs that your greyhound is using aggression to manage interactions with people and other dogs, the most likely cause is that their bucket is overflowing, and they need help to cope better.

- **Repeatedly freezing on walks or persistently actively avoiding places or situations**

Most greyhounds cope passively with stress; this means they tend to hold it all in when they are becoming overwhelmed and when their bucket is full, it almost looks like they run out of batteries and just stop reacting to the world and retreat inside themselves.

While there is not much happening on the outside, your greyhound is feeling some BIG feelings when this happens. If you notice this, your greyhound is not coping well and needs help.



- **Persistently showing stress behaviours, even in familiar environments.**

This includes displaying behaviours such as panting, drooling, lip-licking, looking away from things or people that stress them, and tense or stressed body posture throughout the day – even when there is nothing out of the ordinary going on at home.

If you are concerned that your greyhound is displaying any of the behaviours above, please contact the Great Mates team and they will be able to provide you with advice on how to manage them.

4. Predatory chasing

There is no denying that greyhounds love to chase! For most sighthounds, including greyhounds, chasing fast moving objects or small animals comes naturally and is extremely fun. As such, you should expect that your greyhound will show some interest in chasing other animals, particularly small ones who are moving fast. You can find out more about the Canine Predatory Instinct or 'prey drive' [HERE](#).

It is important to understand that 'prey drive' is very different to aggression, which is usually based in fear or anxiety. Chasing animals it thinks are prey, comes naturally. You must remember that while your greyhound may know and accept that your other dogs and pets are not prey, and it doesn't chase them, it may view a strange dog or animal differently when out and about. Introductions to new dogs and animals are best facilitated safely, on a leash and potentially with a muzzle until you are sure that there is no excessive 'prey drive' being demonstrated.

While you are getting to know and developing a bond with your greyhound, focus on teaching them to:

- give you their attention on [cue](#)
- come when [called](#)
- walk on a [loose](#) leash.

In these early stages, you should avoid running your greyhound [off leash](#), especially in public areas and never in an unfenced area. Many experts agree greyhounds should never be off leash in an unsecured or open public area.

Some greyhounds have a particularly strong predatory instinct and will show intense predator behaviour towards other animals, even other breeds of dogs. While you are getting to know your new greyhound, you should pay attention to their reactions to smaller dogs, cats, and other pets (rabbits, guinea pigs, etc) especially if they have a long or fluffy coat and are running at speed.

If your greyhound displays any of the following behaviours while they are focused on another dog, get in touch with Great Mates immediately:

- **Intensely staring** at a small dog with a stiff body position and an upright tail, that may be wagging quickly. They may have trouble turning their attention back to you when you try to distract them
- **Stalking** – your greyhound may look like a herding breed when they are 'eyeing' livestock
- **Increasing excitement** as they focus on the other dog, including when their **teeth are chattering**, they are **drooling**, or they are **barking excitedly**. They may be very difficult or impossible to calm down while they can still see the other dog
- **Pulling or lunging towards** another dog, especially if they then hover their face above the neck or shoulder of the other dog once they reach them
- **Pushing a small dog** around with their nose, bunting them on the back of the head or neck, or **pawing at** the dog and trying to pin them down
- **Chasing** another dog with a high degree of focus, especially if they appear to be focusing on the back of its neck or head
- Attempting to **grab another dog in** their mouth, or grabbing the other dog in a predatory manner which may include shaking their head from side to side.

Predatory behaviour is usually quiet and will never be accompanied by growling, snapping, or snarling from your greyhound. These are signs of social aggression and most likely indicate that your greyhound is overwhelmed. If you have any concerns, please contact Great Mates.



5. Understanding fear and anxiety-induced aggression in greyhounds

While greyhounds are generally considered a very gentle breed, all dogs, including greyhounds, may respond with aggression if they are fearful. This behaviour displayed when a dog is fearful can be viewed as them trying to protect themselves from whatever they are afraid of. Fear is a normal response to situations that the dog perceives (this may be a real threat or just a perceived one) could threaten their health and safety. So what do you need to look for?

Signs of fear might include:

- licking the lips
- yawning
- turning the eyes
- turning the head
- a type of grimace with their brow furrowed and lips pulled back
- shaking or trembling
- a desire to avoid or remove themselves from the situation (flight).

Greyhounds are notorious for showing a 'freeze' response. They just get a bit of a glazed look and do nothing. Doing nothing does not mean that they are okay. You need to look for this response in the context of the situation and act on it in the same way you would if the dog was showing more obvious anxious behaviours.

When a greyhound indicates it is fearful or anxious (not coping) with an environment or interaction with another animal or person, removing the greyhound from the situation and distancing them from the threat is the best answer.

If an owner does nothing and the warning signs are ignored, the greyhound may move from mild arousal and anxiety to a more overt fearful response- the fight, flight, freeze or fidget response and the situation may possibly escalate to aggression.

Never ignore a growl. A growl is a warning to any threat - warnings should always be respected.

If your greyhound's behaviour is ever a concern, your first step should be a veterinary health check. This can help rule out medical causes for your greyhound's behaviour. If a greyhound is unwell, or in pain, they may show signs of aggression because they are protecting themselves. It may not be their normal reaction.

Aggressive behaviour can usually be managed. If your greyhound has displayed behaviour such as growling or snapping at other dogs or people, please contact your veterinarian for referral to a veterinary behaviourist - **not** a dog trainer. The Great Mates staff are also available to any greyhound owner if they need immediate advice or a referral to the right help.

6. Separation anxiety

Most greyhounds have lived their lives in the company of other greyhounds. This means that when they are adopted into a home as a pet, they can become anxious if suddenly left on their own. It can take time for a greyhound to get used to the new living arrangements. Most trainers will have started isolation training before rehoming, so be sure to ask about this.

To help your greyhound adjust to pet life, encourage them to spend an increasing number of hours a day outside in your backyard, or in a separate secure area, for the first few weeks. Start with 30-45 minutes and work up slowly. Your new greyhound will likely adjust more quickly and be less likely to develop separation anxiety.

If you have them with you constantly as they are settling in, the greyhound will become deeply bonded very quickly and will more likely become stressed when you need to leave them. After the first few weeks, when the dog is settled and comfortable in your backyard, or other secure area, you can then allow them more free access to you.



7. Greyhounds and children

As with any breed of dog, children must not be left unsupervised with your greyhound.

Regardless of how long you have known the dog or how good either the dog or child is considered to be, they should never be left alone unsupervised. The biggest risk factor for dog bites (all breeds) to children is lack of parental supervision.

It is important to remember that many racing greyhounds will not have had much, if any, exposure to children before retirement and, therefore, may find children a little frightening at first. Children will not usually be able to tell when a greyhound is scared or uncomfortable. Children should be educated to be calm and gentle with the greyhound and to have respect for their space and time-out area, i.e. the greyhound's bed.



The whole family should follow these rules:

- do not hug the greyhound, especially around the neck
- never kiss or put your face near the greyhound's face
- do not approach the greyhound when they are laying down, even when awake – instead, call the greyhound over to you
- do not approach the greyhound when eating or try to take away their food while eating
- do not tease the greyhound or play roughly by pushing, grabbing, poking or climbing on the greyhound
- avoid yelling, screaming or making very loud noises around the greyhound.

It is important that parents understand the signs of the greyhound becoming uncomfortable or scared when interacting with a child. If you notice the greyhound displaying any of the following behaviours, you should immediately separate the child from the greyhound:

- yawning
- blinking excessively
- lip licking
- turning the head away
- showing the white part of the eye
- stiffened posture
- ears pulled back
- attempting to get away
- growling or snapping.



8. References and further information

References

Legal requirements for owning a dog in New Zealand

Dog Control Act 1996

<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1996/0013/latest/DLM374410.html>

Code of Welfare: Dogs

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/46030-Code-of-Welfare-Dog>

New Zealand Companion Animal Register

<https://www.animalregister.co.nz/>

Crate training

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/4-crate-training>

Setting your new greyhound up for success

The Dog's Stress Bucket

<https://susanmckeeon.co.uk/dogs-stress-bucket/>

Signs of stress

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/2-fear-and-anxiety>

Basic training

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/training-and-basic-manners>

Muzzles

<https://www.kiwikiwhounds.co.nz/muzzles>

Introducing other dogs

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/sites/default/files/DOG%20INTRODUCTIONS%20%20210303.pdf>

Introducing cats

<https://icatcare.org/advice/introducing-a-cat-or-kitten-to-your-dog/>

Stress in greyhounds

Sleep startle

<https://greyhoundcare.grv.org.au/rehoming/new-owners/>

Resource guarding

<https://www.patriciamconnell.com/theotherendoftheleash/resource-guarding-treatment-and-prevention>

Difference between sleep startle and resource guarding

<https://www.mayhounds.org.nz/sleep-startle-and-resource-guarding>



Predatory chasing

Understanding highly predatory dogs

<https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/behavior/understanding-highly-predatory-dogs/>

Getting your dog's attention

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/3-teaching-eye-contact>

Training your dog to come when called

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/7-training-your-greyhound-come-when-called>

Training your dog to walk on a loose leash

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/1-loose-leash-walking>

Training your dog to walk on a loose leash

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/1-loose-leash-walking>

Understanding fear and anxiety-induced aggression in greyhounds

Companion Animals NZ accredited animal behaviour consultants

<https://www.companionanimals.nz/canz-accredited-abcs>

Further information

Living & learning with ex-racing greyhounds

<https://susanmckean.co.uk/greyhound-behaviour/>

Greyhound care and training

<https://www.greyhoundtrust.org.uk/home-a-greyhound/greyhound-care-training>

Training

<https://hounds4life.nz/episodes/>

Training guide

<https://s37590.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/GAP-Training-Guide.pdf>

Guide to your greyhound

<https://s37590.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Guide-to-Your-Greyhound-wo-Medical.pdf>

Post adoption care guide

<https://greyhoundcare.grv.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Rehoming-package-New-owners-Booklet.pdf>



Greyhound Racing New Zealand
PO Box 38313
Wellington Mail Centre 5045

© GRNZ 2024
