

GPA Wisconsin Greyhound Adoption

... a chapter of Greyhound Pets of America



GREYHOUND ADOPTER'S MANUAL

... A guide to what you've gotten into as a Greyhound family!

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Introduction

Congratulations and thank you on your decision to adopt a former racing Greyhound from the Wisconsin chapter of Greyhound Pets of America! You're on the way towards an exciting and rewarding journey. As pets, Greyhounds are known for their gentle, loving nature. We're confident that your Greyhound will become a loving addition to your family.

As you prepare for your new Greyhound's arrival, we've made this journey easier through helpful hints and recommendations provided in this Adopter's Manual. The information contained here is a combination of our volunteers' experiences, other Greyhound adoption groups' recommendations, and additional Greyhound resources. This manual is not designed to be "the ultimate source" for all your Greyhound-related questions, but rather a starting point that may help you with a specific situation, or provide background information that may help you in the future. But please don't think this manual is "all you get". At GPA-Wisconsin, we pride ourselves in providing a lifetime of support for our adopted hounds and their families. We're just a phone call, e-mail, or visit away. And we'd enjoy hearing from you, even if you're not experiencing a problem, or have a question. We love to simply stay in touch with families who have adopted through our organization.

Greyhound adoption and ownership is truly a labor of love. These gentle dogs take our affection and attention, and return it a thousand-fold. Their gift is special: unconditional love. And you can take pride in the knowledge that while their racing career has ended; their life has not. Indeed, you have given these dogs a new life, one of being a treasured companion.

From all of us at GPA-Wisconsin, thank you once again.

1. Adoption Day

As “the day” draws closer and closer, you begin to feel a heightened sense of anticipation. You’re getting a Greyhound! This section helps you identify what exactly the adoption event will cover, what you’ll need to have on-hand before your Greyhound arrives, and what GPA-Wisconsin will include with your new Greyhound.

Adoption Day will involve delivery of your Greyhound to your home or other designated location by a GPA-Wisconsin adoption volunteer at a designated time. If this is your first Greyhound adoption from GPA-Wisconsin, please plan to set aside approximately one hour or so. This is needed to sign the adoption contract and transfer, and to review items GPA-Wisconsin is providing you, and immediate action items you need to help your Greyhound transition from an ex-racer to a beloved family pet.

We understand that Adoption Day is a time filled with excitement and anticipation; after all, *you’re getting a Greyhound!* We do however recommend that Adoption Day and the first few days in the home be as low-key as possible. Save the neighbor visits and other disruptions for later, if possible. Your Greyhound will probably need some time to explore its new surroundings and to feel comfortable with its new home (see Section 2, “The First Few Days”).

The Key to a Successful Adoption

Congratulations! You will be bringing home a splendid companion and friend. Thank you, you have helped the volunteers of GPA-Wisconsin save the life of an outstanding canine athlete.

The information and advice in this Manual for Greyhound Adopters is, we believe, essential to assist you in keeping the commitment you made in your adoption agreement “to take good care of the Greyhound for the rest of its natural life.” It is drawn from the years and years of experience of our volunteers and other Greyhound adoption groups in helping thousands of racing Greyhounds make the transition from track and kennel life to home pet life. We hope you will read it – and heed it – “cover to cover”!

Those of our adopters who have owned dogs most of their lives may be tempted to think that “a dog is a dog” and that their previous experience with other dogs is a good substitute for following the guidelines in this Manual. Please trust us: racing Greyhounds have been bred, raised, trained, and kept like no other breed of dog. Their unique background is part of what makes them such wonderful pets, but it is also what creates a few challenges in helping them complete a successful transition from one “career” to another.

We truly believe that if you will follow the advice in this Manual and call us early and often to discuss any problems, you will decrease the chances of an unsuccessful adoption and a return of the Greyhound to us to almost zero. The return of a Greyhound is a “no win” situation for everyone involved – it is an emotional wrench for the adopter, it requires GPA-Wisconsin to find a foster home for the dog (thus displacing another Greyhound which could have been brought from the track), and it is difficult for the Greyhound, who must make yet another transition into a new home. We recognize that some returns are unavoidable, but we believe that many returns can be prevented with a healthy mixture of adherence to the guidelines in this Manual, commitment, patience, and love. We can assure you that your time and effort in working with your new Greyhound will be repaid many times over by his unconditional love and affection!

So, read on, and above all, have fun with your new friend!

“He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog. You are his life, his love, his leader. He will be yours, faithful and true, to the last beat of his heart. You owe it to him to be worthy of such devotion.”

-Author unknown

Items You Need to Acquire Prior to Adoption:

1. **Feeding and water bowls.** We strongly recommend the 2-quart, stainless steel variety. They're indestructible, easily cleaned and last a lifetime.
2. **A dog bed or thick quilt.** Greyhounds have little body fat, and as such they require cushioning for their elbows and other joints. If you have allergies, we recommend a thick quilt or blanket because it is easier to put in a washing machine and be fully cleaned. The dog bed should be the soft-sided "pillow" variety, as many Greyhounds like to paw at their beds and shape them just right (called "nesting"). Some Greyhounds will spot "their" bed right away and snuggle in, while others may seem totally baffled by the contraption. Time always wins the converts, so don't worry if your Greyhound takes a little extra time to figure out it's okay for them to lie down.
3. **Food.** We recommend a premium quality, dry kibble such as California Natural, Canidae, Eagle Pack Holistic Select, Dr. Foster & Smith Adult Maintenance Formula Chicken and Brown Rice, or Nutro Ultra. Try buying a small bag (5 or 10 pound size) to see if it agrees with your Greyhound. Some warm water should be added to the kibble and if you wish, you can add canned food (preferably no more than 1 or 2 tablespoons). Consult your GPAW Adoption Coordinator for current food recommendations. In all cases avoid food that contain soy or corn (see also Section 6 "Feeding and Nutrition").
4. **Toys.** These provide entertainment for your Greyhound. Some Greyhounds love to chew and tear their stuffed toys apart, leaving you with little more than stuffing and a pelt after only a few moments. Other Greyhounds delicately carry them around like prized possessions or surrogate babies. Still others look at a stuffy toy with no comprehension at first; that's part of the joy of discovering your Greyhound's individual personality. In general, GPA-Wisconsin recommends toys that do not have sewn-on eyes or other small, hard parts that could be chewed off and swallowed.
5. **Dog biscuits or treats.** A high quality treat is helpful for those training sessions or just to give, but we caution against overuse. Treats are high in fat and can result in obesity or the dreaded "Greyhound gas" if given in too high a quantity (see also Section 6, "Food and Nutrition").
6. **Nature's Miracle.** This is a highly recommended cleaning solution to treat "accidents" or odors.
7. **Grooming glove or brush.** Greyhounds do not require much grooming, but a weekly brushing is recommended. Your hound will love it!
8. **Nail clipping equipment.** Your Greyhound will require nail trimming approximately once every week. A heavy-duty clipper or cordless electric grinder is recommended.
9. **Pooper-scoopers and plastic bags.** We recognize that this is probably the least glamorous part of owning a dog, but a very necessary one. We recommend a heavy-duty metal rake-and-shovel variety for backyard cleanups. Avoid the in-ground, bacterial disposal systems, as they require more time than you probably want, and they do not function below 40 degrees. For walks, please remember that part of being a responsible pet owner is "stooping and scooping" while out on walks. No one enjoys an unexpected deposit left on his or her lawn. For walks, we recommend plastic grocery bags-- they fold up into your pocket, and best of all there's a never-ending supply of them at your store!

Items Provided by GPA-Wisconsin:

1. **Safety collar and matching leash.** Greyhounds require a special collar that helps prevent them from backing out of their collars. Included is a matching leash.
2. **Application for a personalized ID tag.** An application for a personalized ID tag with your name, address, phone number and dog's name is provided.
3. **GPA-Wisconsin's ID tag.** Our kennel tag imprinted with GPA-Wisconsin's registration number and emergency phone number should be kept on your Greyhound's collar at all times.
4. **Pre-adoption veterinary services.** GPA-Wisconsin's vet partners will bring your Greyhound up-to-speed on DHLPP and rabies vaccinations. Your Greyhound will also be spayed or neutered, dewormed, and teeth cleaned.
5. **1 month of heartworm medication.** Heartworm is a disease transmitted by mosquitoes, and can be fatal to canines. While GPA-Wisconsin will provide you with an initial supply of heartworm medication, your Greyhound will need an annual heartworm test and continuing heartworm medication.

6. **Squawker.** This is the same noise/call used during your Greyhound's racing career. Most Greyhounds instinctively travel at full speed to the squawker due to their training. We strongly recommend refraining from using the squawker as a squeaky toy; instead, use it only for emergencies such as if your Greyhound gets loose.
7. **Support and advice from GPA Wisconsin for the life of your Greyhound.** GPA Wisconsin's commitment to you and your Greyhound do not end on Adoption Day. We're a phone call, e-mail, or visit away to answer your questions or assist with any situation.
8. **A guarantee to take back the Greyhound if it's ever required.** GPA-Wisconsin firmly believes that anyone who wants to adopt a Greyhound should be prepared to make a commitment for the lifetime of the animal. We do recognize however, that circumstances may change that are beyond your control. Our offer is to take back any Greyhound at any time, no questions asked.

Items You Can Acquire at your Leisure

1. **Muzzle.** A plastic kennel muzzle is an excellent safety device when introducing your new Greyhound to other family pets. These are Greyhound specific muzzles that allow the dog to do anything except bite and eat. Muzzles are available from GPA-Wisconsin for a nominal charge.
2. **Kong toy.** This hard rubber toy is virtually indestructible, and is a great way to relieve boredom and satisfy a Greyhound's desire to chew. The toy has a hollow interior that can be filled with peanut butter or other treat. The Greyhound must "work" to get the treat, and can provide hours of activity for a Greyhound. The Kong toy initially has a rather strong "rubber" odor to it, so bury it your dog food bin for a couple days to remove the rubber smell and make it more enticing to your Greyhound. Kongs are available at any better-quality pet store.
3. **Ear cleaner.** We recommend Oti-Clens or a product recommended specifically by your veterinarian.
4. **Flea and tick products.** *Use these with care and caution!* Greyhounds, due to their different physiology, must use specific products that are covered in detail in Section 8, "Greyhound Health".
5. **Dog toothbrush and toothpaste.** Brushing your Greyhound's teeth is important to help reduce the buildup of tartar and other disease-causing conditions.
6. **Coats and tummy warmers.** Greyhounds can be sensitive to cold conditions due to their low body fat content and short fur. A variety of Greyhound-specific coats and tummy warmers are available from GPA-Wisconsin recommended Greyhound specialty shops, or through mail order.

2. The First Few Days

The first few days in your home can be bewildering and overwhelming for a Greyhound fresh from the track. There are a variety of new experiences, sounds and smells that are unknown to your Greyhound. Some Greyhounds are curious and fearless, always interested in what's new. Others will view new experiences with trepidation. One of the biggest early joys is watching your new Greyhound relax and realize that this is their new, safe home.

Post-Operative Care Following Spay or Neuter

Your Greyhound may come to you relatively soon after spay or neuter surgery. If this is the case:

- Expect your Greyhound to be groggy for the first few days after surgery. Each day the dog will get better.
- Expect that your Greyhound will need to go to the bathroom more frequently for a few days.
- Expect that your Greyhound may vomit the first night from the anesthesia. Nothing is wrong.
- Expect that the anesthesia may cause coughing.
- Expect your Greyhound to be lethargic, tender and sore for a few days.

In addition, there are a few recommended **Do's** and **Don't's**:

- **Do** give your Greyhound only a very small amount of water with ice cubes the first night following surgery.
- **Do** check the incision every day for the first week following the surgery. If it is red or inflamed, call your GPA-Wisconsin adoption coordinator or veterinarian.
- **Do** go to the veterinarian for suture removal if the sutures are not the dissolvable type.
- **Do** keep your Greyhound in a crate more or quiet spot for the first week. Rest and relaxation are key to a speedy recovery.
- **Do** call your GPA-Wisconsin adoption coordinator or veterinarian with any questions.

- **Don't** allow unregulated water drinking the first night following surgery.
- **Don't** let your Greyhound jump! If you must go up/down from a high place, pick up the dog by placing one arm behind the rear legs at the knees and the other arm on the dog's chest. Gently lift and place the dog.
- **Don't** feed your Greyhound the first night following surgery. If guilt gets the better of you, feed only ¼ cup. Then get out your cleaning supplies to clean up the vomit that will result!
- **Don't** let your Greyhound run or jump for a full two weeks following surgery.
- **Don't** give your Greyhound a bath for a full two weeks following surgery. Greyhounds by nature are very clean dogs, and require bathing infrequently. Your Greyhound has also been given a flea and tick bath prior to surgery.
- **Don't** let your Greyhound lick or chew the stitches. If this occurs, use a muzzle with the bottom half-taped smooth. Alternatively, you can spray the incision area with Bactine; it tastes foul and is a good antiseptic. You can also use a pair of men's underwear on the dog, with the dog's tail coming out the fly (remember to remove them when you take the Greyhound outside, or they will get soiled).

Expectations

Several topics are introduced in this section, but are explained in greater detail in other sections of this manual.

Because everything is brand new to your 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. 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.

On the race circuit and in the kennel, your Greyhound 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.

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. Please note that 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.

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. Your new Greyhound may pace, pant and be wary of lying down and relaxing, especially the first day or two after adoption. Give your pet time to get settled and don't worry about any odd behavior during the first few weeks. Along the same line, some Greyhounds may react adversely or with nervousness if exposed to *a lot* of affection right at the start. A little restraint works wonders with these Greyhounds—let them come to you. Your love, patience and understanding will help your Greyhound through this adjustment period, which usually lasts from a few days to a few weeks. Remember that Greyhounds are friendly, affectionate dogs that 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!

3. Life at Home

Your Greyhound's transition from being an ex-racer to becoming a beloved companion is a journey filled with love. One of the joys of bringing an ex-racer into your home is helping your Greyhound learn what it's like to become a pet.

Learning New Things

Your Greyhound will be curious, but this won't always result in snooping, exploring or other outward behavior. During the first few days especially, your Greyhound may be subdued, and need an adjustment period to "relax". Remember that their new life as your companion is one that's totally different than their highly structured prior life as a racer. Some Greyhounds may not even know how to play!

The key to life at home is to establish a set of ground rules first, before your Greyhound arrives. If your Greyhound will not be allowed on your furniture, set that boundary from the beginning. If you want your Greyhound to stay out of certain rooms, teach that right away (a helpful prop with this is an in-expensive baby gate—a Greyhound could easily jump them or knock them over, but they view them as an effective barrier). Make sure you are gentle, firm and consistent about enforcing household rules, but enforce them you must. The consequence of not enforcing rules is that your Greyhound, like any other breed of dog, will assume he is "alpha" over you. That's a recipe for all sorts of potential problems (see Section 10, "Training and Obedience").

Windows and Patio Doors

If your Greyhound is fresh off the track, your home may be the first time they have seen (or not seen!) windows and patio doors. It's not uncommon for Greyhounds to bump their heads into windows and glass doors. Help prevent this by placing Post-It style notepaper at the Greyhound's eye-level. In addition, bring your Greyhound close to the glass, tap on it with your hand, or rub his/her paw on the glass. This helps them understand that there's actually a solid barrier between them and the outdoors. The Post-It notes give them a visual cue, and can be removed after one or two weeks, or when you're confident your Greyhound is aware of the glass.

Teaching about the dangers of windows and glass doors is important. In cases where this has not been done, the Greyhound runs the risk of seeing something outside, assuming they can run out to catch it, and break the window or door, and severely injure themselves, as well as damaging your home.

Stairs

And now for a match *not* made in heaven: Greyhounds and stairs take some getting used to! Racing Greyhounds have no exposure to life in a home prior to their adoption. One of the things they have to learn about is climbing stairs. If your Greyhound was in a foster home, he may have learned how to do it. Not all foster families live in houses with staircases, however. If your dog doesn't know how to climb stairs, you'll need to teach him. This is a wonderful way to bond with your new Greyhound, and get him to trust you.

Stair climbing is serious business to the Greyhound. Some of them are very scared at first. Encourage your dog, but do not coddle her. Dogs can read our facial expressions, so remain calm, reassuring, and upbeat while teaching stair climbing. Don't scold your dog if she is having trouble learning. It may seem silly to you, but it's not to her!

Start at the bottom of the staircase by putting your knee behind the dog's rear end. You may need to put the dog's front feet on the first step. Start your walk up the stairs by gently placing the front feet on the next step. Encourage your Greyhound by saying "Come on, let's go!" or something equally encouraging.

Remember to speak in a positive, upbeat tone of voice. If the dog does not respond, gently push up on the dog's rear with your knee. As the dog's hindquarters start to elevate, place one hind foot on the next step.

Proceed this way, by moving the front feet and either letting the dog move the hind feet or by doing it for her. When you get to the top, praise your Greyhound in a happy voice. Let her relax for a few minutes.

When you start back down, stand in front of your dog and help her move her feet from step to step. Place your hand on her chest if it makes her feel more secure. Praise her again when you reach the bottom.

Greyhounds learn best on carpeted stairs. If your stairs are not carpeted, or are steep or open-backed, expect that the whole process will take longer. Be patient. When your Greyhound has really bonded with you, she will follow you anywhere, including up and down stairs. Most Greyhounds fly up and down stairs in a short period of time. There is no reason to consider moving your bedroom furniture to the first floor!

Housebreaking Tips and Techniques

Greyhounds are crate-trained at the racetrack. They are used to being let outside to relieve themselves on a regular schedule. Housebreaking is a relatively simple matter of convincing them that your house is just a large crate. Your dog may have been housebroken in a foster home. In any case, you will need to be sure that your new dog understands the housebreaking rules.

Crate training can be an effective way to housebreak your Greyhound. Greyhounds are raised in crates and are very comfortable with them. The basic principle with crate training is that Greyhounds are very clean animals and will not eliminate where they sleep. Therefore, if a Greyhound is in the crate, it will not eliminate either in the crate or in the "big crate," the house (also see "Crate Training" in this Section). Place the crate in a room where the dog feels included in family life. A remote location such as the basement or an unused room far away from family activity will make your dog feel as though he has been abandoned. Don't do that.

The first rule of housebreaking is if you can't watch your dog closely, crate him. Be alert and don't let your dog out of your sight until you are confident that he is housebroken.

The second rule of housebreaking is DON'T punish for accidents. Don't use the crate for punishment. NEVER EVER shout at the Greyhound, hit him, smack him with a newspaper, or rub his nose in the mess! These only frighten your already confused pet. A simple "NO!" in a low-pitched voice, followed by a quick trip outside, are all that is needed.

Greyhounds as a breed respond much better to positive reinforcement. When your dog does his duty outside, PRAISE him warmly! Hugs, pats, and a "Good dog!" in a happy voice are in order. Dogs (like people) are more motivated by praise than by physical punishment. In this important training, please realize that you cannot over-praise for a job well done. Your neighbors may think you've gone off the deep end for being so excited about your Greyhound's "business", but it's highly motivating and important for your Greyhound.

Following are additional pointers to make housebreaking go smoothly:

- Keep your Greyhound on a consistent schedule for feeding, walking, and trips outside.
- Don't vary the schedule, even on weekends. Greyhounds are used to living on a schedule, and that makes training easier.
- At a minimum, your dog should be turned out first thing in the morning, first thing when you come home from work, 15-30 minutes after each meal, and last thing before bed.
- Keep the diet consistent. Don't vary the diet, feed table scraps, or give lots of between-meal treats.
- Watch your pet's stool. If it is too loose, cut back on the amount of food by 1/4 cup per feeding until it becomes firm.

If you walk your Greyhound for turnouts, walk in a small area where you want her to go to the bathroom. Dogs like to relieve themselves in familiar surroundings. Limit bathroom walks to 10-15 minutes so the dog

can understand what you expect from her. Save the long exercise walks for another time. After the dog does her business, PRAISE! Positive reinforcement is truly the best teacher.

If your Greyhound does not relieve herself, confine her to the crate for another 30 minutes, and then try another short bathroom walk. If she goes, PRAISE! If not, back to the crate for another 30 minutes, and so on. Eventually she'll go. PRAISE! When she finally does her duty.

Once your pet does start eliminating outside you can give her some freedom in the house, but still keep an eye on her. Do not let your dog out of your sight until you are confident that your dog is completely housebroken. This should be several days, at least. If you cannot watch your dog, crate her.

If you catch your dog in the act of having an accident, say "NO!" or "STOP!" in a firm voice. Do not punish or frighten your dog. Clip on the leash and take her out immediately to the bathroom area. When your dog finishes, PRAISE! Clean the accident area with an effective stain/odor remover to remove the scent of urine or stool from the carpet or floor. We recommend Nature's Miracle. You can also try white vinegar, lemon juice concentrate, and warm water. If possible, do not let your dog see you clean up the accident—your Greyhound may interpret this as something it's "supposed" to do, and something YOU will take care of.

If you are still having trouble, make sure the dog is not sick. Worms or urinary tract infections are easily cured, but can interfere with housebreaking.

Here is a sample schedule for a hypothetical family where everyone is out of the house during the day:

1. Upon rising, take the dog for a bathroom walk. PRAISE! (if your dog doesn't go, bring him in, crate him, feed him, and then walk again within 10-15 minutes of eating. Skip to step 3.)
2. Feed and water, wait 10-30 minutes, and walk again. PRAISE! If during this waiting period you can't watch the dog in the house (perhaps you are getting ready for work) crate him.
3. You should walk your pet one last time right before leaving for work. PRAISE!
4. Put your dog in his crate in a familiar room. Praise him. Leave a radio or the TV on to keep the dog company. You might leave a Kong toy or cow hoof for him to chew. (Don't leave him with a rawhide, as he might choke.)
5. When you return from work (or any time you are out), take the dog out of the crate. If you discover your dog whining or barking in the crate, do not let him out. Be sure your dog is quiet before you let him out of the crate. Take the dog outside immediately. This will reinforce the housebreaking routine. PRAISE!
6. After your dog is fed dinner, wait 10-30 minutes, and walk. PRAISE! Once your dog relieves himself, you can go for your recreational walk. That's a big reward, as Greyhounds just love to go for walks!
7. Just before bed, take your Greyhound for a final bathroom walk. PRAISE! Initially you will want to withhold water for 3 hours before retiring and through the night. Confine your Greyhound in his crate in the bedroom with you. Once you know your dog is housebroken you can let him sleep on a dog bed in your bedroom, or in whatever room you want him to sleep in.

Even if you have a fenced yard for turn-outs, it's important to walk your new Greyhound for potty breaks the first week, so you can be there to PRAISE him when he does his business outside. After you establish that pattern for a week or so, you can begin to turn him out in your fenced yard for elimination.

Eventually your dog will become trustworthy in the house. You can adapt the above schedule to suit your own situation and needs. Some families keep using the crate, but many families find their dog refuses to go in it after he feels thoroughly "at home" in his new environment. You will have to be the judge of when or if to stop crating.

Use your common sense when letting your dog have a little more independence in the house. Don't leave your dog alone for the first time for 8 or 10 hours! Start with short trips, like to the corner store, and gradually extend the period of time you are away from the house.

Greyhounds may not know how to ask to go out when they first come off the track. Eventually they develop their own set of signals, but sometimes we don't recognize those signals. Some common signs of needing to go out are:

- Pacing nervously
- Walking in circles
- Excessive sniffing at the floor
- Walking to the door and looking back at you
- Standing by the door
- Listlessness
- Whining
- Barking

When your Greyhound indicates a need to go outside, respond immediately. Don't wait for the next TV commercial, or the resulting mess will be your fault.

If, after following these guidelines, you are still having trouble with accidents in the house, review the following checklist carefully and see if there is something you're not doing. Call your GPA-Wisconsin contact if you need more information or advice:

1. Are you keeping your Greyhound confined when you are not at home or when you cannot supervise her?
2. Are you limiting bathroom walks to 10-15 minutes?
3. Are you walking after meals and at the appropriate times?
4. Did you keep a chart/diary for at least 5 days?
5. Are you feeding your Greyhound at the same time every day, measuring the food with a measuring cup to assure accuracy, not overfeeding, keeping treats to a minimum, and not giving table scraps?
6. Is everyone in the family cooperating with the housebreaking effort?
7. Are you adding to your Greyhound's confusion by shouting at, hitting, or otherwise punishing her?
8. Are you certain your Greyhound isn't sick and needs to be examined by a veterinarian? (Worms or urinary tract infections are easily cured but can interfere with housebreaking).
9. Are you removing the scent of your Greyhound's urine/stool from the affected area?
10. If you have a fenced yard, are you going outside with your Greyhound so that you know whether or not she has relieved herself?
11. Are you praising your Greyhound when she eliminates outside?
12. Are you giving your Greyhound too much freedom in the house?

If you have considered all these factors and are still having problems, please call GPA-Wisconsin and let us help you with housebreaking.

Crate Training

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. There are two types of crates: the fiberglass/plastic "airline" variety, and the wire-type. Wire-type crates allow the dog to see the outside a lot better, and some Greyhounds prefer this type, as it more closely resembles the racing kennels they are familiar with.

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 some Greyhounds. 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 Greyhounds that cannot adjust to being confined in this manner. We recommend you give the crate training method a trial; many animals that initially object to the crate become willing participants after the initial "test your resolve" phase.

As the Greyhound 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 most Greyhounds see 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".

It's important to note however, that some Greyhounds do not react well to crates in a home situation. In this case, your Greyhound will exhibit behavioral problems far worse than just a reluctance to go into the crate, such as crying for hours, excessive drooling, attempting to bite or chew their way free, or urinating/defecating in the crate. In these more extreme cases, crating is probably not the wisest choice for this specific Greyhound. 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 result in a real physical or psychological injury. Communication with your GPA-Wisconsin contact can help resolve doubt and can provide you with alternative solutions or recommendations.

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.
- Housebreak your dog more quickly by using the close confinement to establish a regular routine.
- Effectively confine your dog at times when he may be over-excited or ill.
- Travel with your dog without many of the risks associated with unfamiliar surroundings.

The use of a dog crate is NOT recommended for a Greyhound that must be confined during the day AND at night. If the Greyhound 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 Greyhound 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.**

The most practical crate for a Greyhound is the wire style since it more closely resembles the racing kennels greyhounds are familiar with. If you find your greyhound is chewing at the wire crate during the day, the plastic airline style crate may be a better option. Consult with your GPAW Adoption Coordinator if your greyhound is having problems being crated. 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.

Separation Anxiety

Greyhounds are dogs that have been bred specifically for speed and temperament—an easygoing, intelligent dog is easier to train for racing, and has a higher potential to be successful. Part of your Greyhound's past, however, has been constant interaction and socialization with other Greyhounds, from the moment of birth up until adoption. Because of this, your Greyhound may be alone in your home for the first time in its life, and find the experience unsettling, scary and potentially terrifying. When alone, the Greyhound may become overly anxious or stressed, and fear that she has been abandoned. This condition is known as separation anxiety.

Because Greyhounds are such social dogs, they tend to blend in well with other pets in your home, or if there are none, bonding very intensely with humans. After the initial adjustment period, you'll more often than not find your Greyhound following you from room to room, enjoying the comfort and security of being near you. This is a very strong trait in Greyhounds, hence their nickname of being "Velcro dogs".

Because of this bonding-with-humans process, the single Greyhound can be more prone to separation anxiety. Separation anxiety manifests itself in a variety of ways:

- Excessive drooling or panting.
- Scratching around doors or windows in an attempt to escape the isolation.
- Housebreaking or soiling accidents in an otherwise well-housebroken dog.
- Barking or crying.
- Other nervous behavior, such as shredding magazines, bedding, or other household items.

If your Greyhound will be by herself as part of its normal routine, it's important to plan for a smooth transition that includes a gradual introduction to her being alone. Two items can assist in this; finding a way to keep your Greyhound occupied while you're gone; and providing enough exercise prior to your leaving (i.e., "a tired dog is a good dog").

Begin your efforts by leaving your Greyhound alone for a short period of time, say 10 to 15 minutes. Don't make leaving the home a big deal; instead, low-key behavior, a special treat, and a non-chalant behavior are key. When the test time is up, return to your home, and when you greet your Greyhound, don't make a big deal of the return. This helps to reinforce the idea that going away and being alone is no big deal for the Greyhound. Have your Greyhound perform a simple trick or obedience exercise so that you have an excuse to praise her. Increase the duration of your absences, such as a half-hour, an hour, two hours, and so on.

Separation anxiety is a condition that should be cured, not sidestepped. In spite of your best efforts at the techniques presented here, a severe case of separation anxiety may need more extreme treatments, such as drug therapy or assistance from an animal behaviorist. Communication with GPA-Wisconsin contact or veterinarian can assist you in determining a proper course of action in these cases.

4. Greyhounds and Children

When your Greyhound arrives from the track and enters "civilian" life, he has never been around children before. He has no reason to dislike them, as he has had no experience with them. However, your Greyhound is undergoing a stressful adjustment period where absolutely everything in his life has changed. Your Greyhound needs time to adjust to his new life. Bear that in mind when bringing a new dog into a household with children. There are certain guidelines, however, that we ask that you follow so that the adjustment period for you, your Greyhound and your children goes as smoothly as possible. This adjustment period can last anywhere from 3 to 6 months depending on the individual Greyhound and the dedication and patience of the adoptive family.

Any animal has its limits if a child pesters or mistreats it. Dog bites are not breed specific! GPA-Wisconsin wants you to understand very clearly that **it is the responsibility of the parent(s) to make sure the children respect the dog and leave it in peace**. Any child old enough to have a dog is old enough to treat it with respect and kindness. Parents who feel their children are too young to be taught how to treat an animal properly should wait until the children are older before they bring a pet into the home. It is better to think that through now, rather than put a new dog through the heartbreak of bonding with you, then having to be surrendered, due to a child's inability to treat the dog properly.

A "must read" for families with children and dogs is *CHILDPROOFING YOUR DOG* by Brian Kilcommons. This small book is highly recommended by many Greyhound adoption groups nationwide. It is available for purchase from local bookstores, and from amazon.com and other online booksellers.

The following are some simple rules we very strongly recommend to ensure a happy relationship:

- **Let Sleeping Dogs Lie** - Do not jump on or even pet a sleeping Greyhound. Some Greyhounds sleep with their eyes open. When a sleeping dog is startled it may growl or come up with teeth bared before it is fully awake and realizes that the culprit is its best friend. If you must wake your sleeping Greyhound, call its name and have it walk to you, or at minimum, raise its head. The condition behind this rule is called Sleep Aggression. It is something that most newly retired Greyhounds exhibit, and it will go away with time. Your Greyhound has spent all his life sleeping in the secure confines of a crate. He has never been surprised in his sleep before. Add that to the general level of stress the new dog is experiencing, and you have something called a startle reaction, or sleep aggression. A dog having a startle reaction will leap suddenly to his feet from a sound sleep, barking, growling, and legs flying every which way. The dog is startled and scared. If someone (your child, for instance) is leaning over the dog when it happens, they could get scratched or bitten. Many families have mistaken startle reactions as evidence of meanness, and many well-meaning and confused dogs have been returned to our group and others because of this. A startle reaction **in no way** indicates that the Greyhound is dangerous or mean.
- **Privacy and Quiet** - All dogs are entitled to privacy and quiet when they eat and sleep. Children must be instructed to not bother the dog during its "quiet" times. This has to be consistently enforced.
- **Food** - Do not let your child take away the dog's food or interfere with its mealtime in any way. It is best to feed your Greyhound in its crate to avoid a problem.
- **Hanging On** - Do not hang on the dog's neck or climb on its back. Greyhounds can be injured or feel threatened.
- **Door Bolting** - Make sure you have a hold of your Greyhound by the collar before any door is opened to let anyone in or out of your house.
- **Open Doors and Gates** - Be extremely cautious about leaving doors and gates open (this goes for car doors also). Greyhounds move so quickly that they will be out the door and down the street in a blink of the eye. Teach your children and their friends about the importance of keeping doors and gates closed at all times.
- **Kindness** - A child old enough to have a dog is old enough to treat it with kindness.
- **Crate** - Do not let your children crawl into the Greyhound's crate. Privacy is important. Initially, we recommend that you utilize the crate when your children are actively playing. It is also a good

idea to use the crate when children have friends over to play. This way your new Greyhound has a chance to experience and get used to children while in the safety and security of his/her crate.

- **Supervision** - You will find that the crate is an invaluable tool to keep the dog(s) and children separated when you cannot be there to supervise their interaction. Just as you would not leave a toddler or infant alone unsupervised, children of any age and dogs should never be left alone unsupervised. Dogs should not be permitted on the furniture or to sleep with anyone on their bed. Dogs that live with children must be taken to obedience school by an adult, to learn basic obedience and to aid in the establishment of whom is in charge. Most basic obedience classes are held in the evening, one class a week for 6 to 8 weeks. You can call your local high school for adult school education information. They usually hold dog obedience classes. Many veterinarians or boarding kennels may also be able to recommend an obedience class. Again, **do not let your children crawl up to, run up to, jump on, kiss, hug a dog that is laying down or sleeping.** Greyhounds do not understand the meaning of a child or children rushing, crawling, running up to it or trying to kiss or hug it, when it is laying down (even if it is awake!). A dog may choose to get up and walk away, do nothing, growl or it may even snap or bite. Greyhounds sometimes sleep with their eyes open so it is very difficult to tell if one is asleep or awake. The above suggestions apply to all dog/people relationships regardless of age.
- **Furniture** - We strongly recommend that you NOT allow your Greyhound on the furniture if you have children. Allowing the Greyhound on the furniture allows him to be at face level with children, which may make him think that he is at the same level in the pack (your family) as the child. Also, being at face level with the child can be a recipe for disaster if the Greyhound has a startle reaction when a child approaches him on the couch while he is resting.

5. Cats and Other Dogs

GPA-Wisconsin has tried to test your Greyhound's interest in cats prior to adoption. However, Greyhounds are animals, not machines, and therefore not totally predictable. We ask that you follow these directions when introducing your new dog to your current pets. Whether you are introducing your Greyhound to cats or dogs, your Greyhound should be leashed and wearing his muzzle, just in case.

Introducing other Dogs

Introduce your Greyhound to the other dog(s) on neutral territory. With leashes on, have them meet on the sidewalk or down the block from your home. Let them greet each other and sniff each other over. Then take them for a walk together. When you arrive back home, walk them around your property (leashes still on). Then bring them into the house.

You can expect things to be a bit unsettled between your Greyhound and your other dog(s) for a few weeks. They are figuring out who will be the dominant dog. All dogs need to have a secure place in the pack order. When you introduce a new dog to a formerly single dog, or into an existing pack, they have to work out who will be alpha, or boss. There may be snarling and barking from time to time. Unless it gets serious, let them work it out. They will settle down once the pack order is clear to them. You have no control over who is the alpha dog and who is not. This is a "dog thing." Let them do it.

Introducing Cats

If this is your cat's first experience with a dog in the house, you might want to take it **very** slowly for the first day or two, or you could have an enraged cat. You may want to consider keeping the cat and the dog separated by a closed door for several days, so the cat can pick up the dog's scent without having to deal with her. The cat will have a little time to adjust that way. Some cats are extremely threatened by a dog in the house, and need time to get used to the idea. If your cat is used to living with dogs, you needn't be so concerned.

When you first introduce your cat to your Greyhound indoors, make sure the Greyhound is muzzled and leashed. Hold the leash in your hand. Leave the cat on the floor. Look for the following signs in the Greyhound: teeth clicking or snapping, or alert ears. This by itself could just indicate curiosity, as this is the first time your Greyhound has seen your particular cat. It is only a concern if it is accompanied by some of these other warning signs: fixed gaze or stare, (which cannot be broken even when you run your hand in front of the Greyhound's eyes), trembling, lurching, or drooling.

It is natural for your Greyhound to be curious about your cat. But intense curiosity combined with any of the above signs can indicate that your Greyhound is one of the few whose prey drive is so strong that he cannot live safely with small animals. If you suspect this to be true, call GPA-Wisconsin at once. You may need to exchange your Greyhound for another one.

In the vast majority of cases where GPA-Wisconsin has determined your Greyhound to be "cat-friendly", the Greyhound will get along just fine with the cat or small dogs. To be on the safe side, though, you should always keep the dog and other small animals separated when you are not at home or cannot supervise their interaction. Watch them carefully when they are interacting. If the Greyhound acts aggressive toward a small animal in any way, tell the dog "**NO!**" and separate them immediately.

Never let your Greyhound chase any of your small animals, even in play. Play behavior can turn into hunting behavior in a flash. No cat or small dog is fast enough to escape a determined Greyhound. Never let your cat outside with your Greyhound in a fenced yard. They may get along fine inside, but outside, all bets are off. If the cat bolts, the Greyhound might chase it, catch it, and injure it.

Feed your cats and dogs in separate areas. You can feed your Greyhound in her crate, or in a quiet area near the kitchen. Greyhounds often have an interest in scarfing cat food, so you might want to feed your cats

elsewhere. You can teach the Greyhound to leave the cat food alone, but she won't do it unless you teach her.

If you have any questions or are unsure if you are reading the warning signs correctly, please call your GPA-Wisconsin contact immediately. We will be happy to discuss this with you.

6. Feeding and Nutrition

Greyhounds are natural athletes. They should always be kept lean, as their bone structure is not designed to carry large amounts of extra weight. You should always be able to see the tips of the dog's backbone. If you run your hand along the dog's side, you should feel the ribs. The last one or two ribs should be visible. Your dog's underbelly should tuck up behind the rib cage and in front of the hip (this is known as having a distinct "waistline" or "tuck"). Another general rule of thumb is that your Greyhound's weight should not be more than 5 pounds over his racing weight. A Greyhound should never look like a Labrador! If your Greyhound gets "rotund", cut back on his food intake.

Recommended Foods and Schedule

GPA-Wisconsin recommends only premium-quality dry dog foods such as California Natural, Canidae, Eagle Pack Holistic Select, Dr. Foster & Smith Adult Maintenance Formula Chicken and Brown Rice or Nutro Ultra. Consult your GPAW Adoption Coordinator for current food recommendations. If you desire to mix in some canned food for taste, buy only premium brands. Above all, avoid foods with soy or corn, as they are not highly digestible, and can cause loose stools. Never get those "burger" types of dog food. You are buying fat, preservatives, and empty calories.

You will have to do a little adjusting to find the optimum amount of food to feed your Greyhound. Females normally should eat between 3-4 cups a day. The average male should eat between 4-5 cups a day. If your dog is always ravenous and seems thin, you can gradually increase the amount. If your dog leaves some in his bowl, or needs to be encouraged to finish eating, cut back.

Feed your dog twice a day, giving him half the food in the morning and half at night. It is better not to feed him just once a day. That can be too much food for his stomach and can cause bloat. Greyhounds usually prefer kibble moistened with some warm water.

Try to develop a feeding routine whereby you feed at about the same time each day. We strongly recommend against "free feeding" or always keeping the food bowl full. Greyhounds can be real "chow hounds," and free feeding is a sure way to make them fat.

We do not recommend feeding table scraps. However, most Greyhounds love vegetables. You can add a few cooked or raw vegetables (some love raw baby carrots!) for added interest and nutrition.

We also recommend against feeding your dog from the dinner table. You are teaching your dog bad manners and feeding him food he does not need. Don't do it. (see also Section 10, Training and Obedience for another reason not to feed at the dinner table.)

Greyhounds sometimes have a... ahem ... gas problem. If this situation occurs, try adding a few spoonfuls of yogurt to your dog's food. You can also try Breath-eze chewable breath mints. They contain enzymes that help with "digestive odors" as well as that other social problem, bad breath. Avoid table scraps. You can also check the fat content of your dog's food. A fatty diet can cause both flatulence and bad breath. You might try a brand of dog food with a lower percentage of fat. If none of the above methods work, a sure-fire solution is K-zyme, a granular dietary supplement for dogs. It is available from most mail order pet suppliers, such as KV Vet Supply.

Some Greyhound owners cook for their dogs (that's pampering them, not spoiling them!). You might try cooking up 5-6 cups of rice; a pound of chicken livers or drained ground beef, and adding 2-3 cups of cooked vegetables (canned or fresh). Mix it all together and add it to their dinner, about 3/4-cup. Decrease the kibble by that same amount.

Supplements

There are several nutritional additives you might want to add to your Greyhound's meals. Prozyme helps the coat grow in quickly and aids in digestion. Lipiderm is an Omega-3 fatty acid supplement, which cuts down on dry, flaky skin and dull, shedding coats. Derm-Caps is an equivalent product. Any of these will condition your dog's coat. Adding a 400 IU capsule of Vitamin E to your dog's daily rations will help her immune system to fight off disease-causing bacteria. Older Greyhounds can benefit from a glucosamine supplement to help ease the effects of arthritis.

Make sure your dog has fresh water available at all times. Do not let your pet drink excessively after eating. Drinking too much water too quickly can cause bloat. Also, what goes in must come out...

Avoid strenuous exercise, such as hard running, for about 1 hour before and 2 hours after a meal. Hard exercise can cause bloat. If your dog gets bloat, you have about 30 minutes to get the dog to the veterinarian. (see Section 8, Health, for a discussion of bloat).

A few final comments about eating: If your dog really inhales his food, and appears to have mild chokes or coughs it up, consider the use a Jello mold or bundt pan for its dish. The center hole forces the dog to eat more slowly. If your dog shows signs of neck strain or inhales too much air when eating, elevate the food dish or buy a special elevated dish.

7. Grooming and Bathing

Greyhounds are very used to being handled at the track. This makes it easy for you to groom your Greyhound. GPA-Wisconsin recommends that you do basic grooming every week.

Weekly Grooming Routine

- **Ears** - Your Greyhound's ears should be checked every week for waxy or foul-smelling buildup. When this occurs, you should use cotton balls and a mild ear cleaning solution such as Oti-Cleans or a product recommended by your veterinarian. Your veterinarian can also show you the proper way to clean your Greyhound's ears. Be aware that too frequent a cleaning (unnecessary cleaning) can actually dry out the skin of the ears and cause problems.
- **Nails** - Your Greyhound will need to have its nails cut every week. This may vary with the amount of exercise your Greyhound is getting and how much natural wear their nails get. Your Greyhound's nails should be kept trimmed short enough so that they don't touch the floor when the dog is standing on a hard surface. Your veterinarian or GPA-Wisconsin contact can show you how to properly cut your Greyhound's nails. Nails can be trimmed using a manual heavy-duty clipper, while some people prefer a battery operated, cordless grinder, such as a Dremel tool. Please note that some Greyhounds may initially dislike having their feet worked on. Given that you're working intently on the dog, and it may be less than thrilled about the nail trimming, you may experience more confidence if you trim your Greyhound's nails while he's muzzled.
- **Brushing** - You should also brush your Greyhound once a week or more frequently if you desire. Use a shedding blade, hounds glove or a rubber currycomb. You can also use a flea comb. These items really help to pull out the dead undercoat and reduce any shedding. We highly recommend a product called a "Zoom Groom", which can be found at any quality pet store.
- **Teeth** - Greyhounds usually do not mind having their teeth brushed and we do recommend that you do this every week. There are dog-dental care kits. They contain a dog toothbrush and non-foaming dog toothpaste. Do not use human toothpaste as it is quite upsetting to the Greyhound's digestive tract and it foams too much.

Bathing

Greyhounds by nature are very clean dogs, but they nevertheless are still dogs. Bathing is generally recommended every eight to sixteen weeks, with a longer duration between baths in winter. This schedule may be altered depending upon how dirty your Greyhound gets. In general, Greyhounds tolerate bathing better than other breeds of dogs. We recommend a high-quality dog shampoo, such as Bio-Groom. Human shampoo is not recommended, as it has a different pH balance that causes irritation and dry skin on dogs.

Bathing can be done inside in your shower/tub enclosure, in a large laundry sink, or outside. The key thing to remember is that your Greyhound cannot tolerate too cold or too hot a water temperature. Even on the hottest summer day, a Greyhound can easily become too chilled by the cold water of a garden hose. Lukewarm water is ideal.

Begin by placing your Greyhound in the bathing area. You may wish to use a simple collar, tying to the faucet if your Greyhound is less than enthused about the bath. Give her a gentle rinsing, starting at the paws, and working upward to get her used to the water. Finish the first rinse with the head, paying careful attention to fold the ear flaps over the ear openings so that water does not drain into the ear canal. Placing cotton balls into the ear before folding the flap over also helps avoid getting water into the ear. Squeeze a stream of shampoo on the Greyhound, starting at her neck and working down towards her rump. Massage the shampoo into her coat. Most dog shampoos do not lather or foam to a great degree, so do not be tempted to over-use the shampoo. Shampoo can be added by hand to the legs, head, "undercarriage", and tail. Follow this washing by a thorough rinsing, starting at her head and working downward. Be sure to get all of the shampoo rinsed off; residual shampoo can cause dry skin and irritation. While some Greyhounds practically purr with delight about getting bathed, others will be more passive resistant. Several have been

known to become so relaxed that they lean on you and may even fall over, so please make sure you have a firm grip on your Greyhound during bathing. Complete the bath with a thorough towel drying.

8. Veterinary Actions and Health Care

GPA-Wisconsin has provided the initial veterinary care for your Greyhound. She has been spayed or he has been neutered as a condition of adoption. Your dog has had his initial inoculations for rabies, distemper, parvovirus and leptospirosis. If your dog's health records were not included as part of the "packet" GPA-Wisconsin provided you at the time of adoption, these will be sent to you within a week or ten days after you have taken him home. He has also been given the first monthly preventative for heartworm and been de-wormed.

Initial Vet Visit Following Adoption

You should arrange to take your new dog to your vet within two weeks or so of bringing him home. (If you need a recommendation for a vet near you who is experienced with Greyhounds, GPA-Wisconsin can recommend one to you.) There are three purposes for this visit. The first is to purchase an initial supply of heartworm preventative, such as Heartgard Plus. Your dog was given the first month's dose prior to adoption, and GPA-Wisconsin includes medication for the next two to three months as part of the adoption packet. You should keep your dog on heartworm preventative year round, or test annually for heartworm.

The second reason is for your vet to check the incision made as part of your Greyhound's spay or neuter surgery. If the stitches are the non-absorbable type, your vet will need to remove them. GPA-Wisconsin will notify you of this at the time of adoption. Suture removal usually is needed approximately 14 days after surgery.

The third reason to take your Greyhound to a veterinarian within two weeks is for a well-animal visit. The doctor can establish a profile of your dog when she is healthy. You should bring along the veterinary records you received from GPA-Wisconsin, as well as a fresh (that day) stool sample to check for parasites.

You and your vet may notice that your Greyhound has some telltale marks of racing life. Your dog may have scars. This is common, as Greyhounds have thin skin and may have slammed into another Greyhound during a race. In time, most scars get covered with fur although if a scar is wide enough, the scar tissue may not contain enough hair follicles for the fur re-growth to completely cover the affected area. Your dog may also have tattered ears, or may be missing a piece. This is not uncommon for dogs living in close quarters, as they do at the track. Close living conditions can cause them to squabble, and an ear can get bitten. **It is not an indicator your dog is aggressive.**

Your dog may also have bald thighs or belly. This is not a skin problem. Possibly due to their diet at the track and being kept in a crate all the time, the hair is rubbed away. With a high-quality diet the hair should regrow within 8-12 weeks. A food supplement such as Prozyme or Lipiderm will speed up hair growth. If the hair has not grown in within 3 months there may be a thyroid problem, which is discernible with a blood test. It is also possible to have bald thighs and be perfectly healthy, just as some men are bald.

Thyroid Testing

Greyhounds do have a relative common condition called thyroid deficiency. This manifests itself most visibly as bald thighs and/or belly. Additionally, your Greyhound may appear listless or lethargic, or overly anxious or "clingy". If left untreated, thyroid deficiency does pose health problems over time, but this condition is easily manageable with low-cost medication. Bald thighs or lethargy by themselves are not a definitive diagnosis of thyroid deficiency however. This must be done with a specific type of blood test. Because healthy Greyhounds have somewhat different thyroid levels than other breeds of healthy dogs, it's important that your vet is familiar with the specific type of thyroid blood test for Greyhounds, known as a **complete thyroid panel**, or **Free T3, T4, and TSH thyroid panel**. Your vet will need to draw a small amount of blood for this test, and ship the sample to a lab for evaluation. GPA-Wisconsin strongly recommends your vet utilize the Michigan State University Veterinary School for thyroid analysis and interpretation, as they have extensive experience with Greyhound thyroid. If your Greyhound is found thyroid deficient, the condition is easily remedied with addition of medication added to your Greyhound's

food. Your vet may advise re-testing the thyroid level in 4 to 6 months or longer to verify appropriate medication treatment levels.

Heat and Cold Concerns

Your Greyhound has very little body fat, short fur, and thin skin. This makes them susceptible to overheating in summer and chilling in winter. This makes them strictly indoor housedogs. Under no circumstances can you keep a Greyhound in an outdoor kennel with a doghouse.

“The weather today was absolutely perfect! The sun was shining, temperatures were in the low 80’s and humidity was low”. Do not let today’s beautiful weather fool you, these beautiful days can mean the ‘dog days of summer’ for your Greyhound. Some dogs are more sensitive to the sun. Black Greyhounds will feel the heat more than those with lighter colored coats. Greyhounds can also get sunburned. They have very short, thin coats, and as we all know, some of them have bald butts! Many Greyhounds enjoy cooling off by walking or lying in a shallow pool of water. One of our Greyhounds loves her hard plastic kiddie pool. She takes a walk through it every time she goes out into the yard.

When the temperature and humidity are high, we hear warnings on the radio to minimize the time we stay outdoors, keep cool, and check on elderly or sickly neighbors, friends and relatives. These warnings should also alert us to take special precautions with our Greyhounds. If it’s too hot for you to be outside for long periods of time, it’s definitely too hot for them. Take short walks in the early morning or late evening. If you have to walk your dog during the day, stick to short potty walks. What about other days when there are no heat warnings? You should still be aware of the temperature and humidity, and be alert to any signs of heat distress in your dog. If you live in a house without air-conditioning, and have the windows open with fans running, and your dog is lying around panting, it’s too hot to go outside for more than a very short walk.

Be aware of the early signs of heat stroke and take quick action. The first signs are excessive panting, weakness, inability to stand, dilated pupils and a blank expression. **Immediately** get the dog into a cool area, soak towels in cold water, and wrap these around the dog. If possible put about six inches of cold water in the bathtub, stand the dog in the cold water and pour cold water over its entire body. If, after approximately 5-10 minutes, you don’t see a change for the better, **get the dog to the veterinarian immediately**. Greyhounds can progress from mild heat stroke to severe quickly. If you see blood spots on the gums and what looks like bruising on the inside of the thighs, get to the veterinarian’s immediately! Do not continue and try to treat the dog. Grab a wet towel to wrap the dog in if it’s available and get moving! We stress these action plans not be alarmist, and we want you and your Greyhound to have an enjoyable and safe summer. Just be aware of changes you see in your dog. If the heat seems to be bothering him/her, (for example, heavy panting) get them out of the heat and cool them down. Restrict their outdoor activities. If you find yourself in a situation where you think your dog is in danger of heat stroke, take immediate action! Heat stroke can quickly cause brain damage and even death. If, while you’re reading this, you do not know the name, location and phone number of the nearest veterinary emergency facility, now is a good time to gather this information and keep it by your phone. In our experience, emergencies never occur during our veterinarian’s regular office hours.

Winter cold presents its own set of challenges to your Greyhound. Again, due to her short fur, low body fat and thin skin, protection against cold is a major concern. Our general recommendation is that anytime you need a jacket, your Greyhound will need cold weather protection also. Now, this does not imply that you must “suit up” your Greyhound for short turnouts and potty breaks. Indeed, we’ve found that most Greyhounds seem very focused and determined to get outside, do their business, and quickly return to the warmth of the house. If the temperature is bitterly cold however, or if your Greyhound will be outside for an extended period of time, we strongly recommend use of a dog coat. GPA-Wisconsin maintains a list of several vendors that supply raincoats, coats, and “tummy warmers” (lighter weight coats that take off the chill in a chilly house or outside sojourn) that are specifically designed for Greyhound physiology. If you plan to take your Greyhound out for an extended walk on those bright, sunny, relatively-warm winter days, do be careful about your Greyhound’s paws and pads. Road salt can be very caustic and irritating to your Greyhound’s tender skin. We recommend thoroughly cleaning the paws after such a walk, or investing in

dog booties. If you do decide to go the bootie route, we recommend a higher boot with velcro-style fasteners, as they have less of a tendency to loosen or fill with snow and salt.

Diarrhea

Any dog can get “the runs.” Some of the most common causes of diarrhea are fatty table scraps, cat food, grass, and garbage picking. All of these are controllable and you should take care to avoid them in the future. Diarrhea is also sometimes caused by an intolerance of some ingredients in dog food. For example, some dogs cannot tolerate chicken by-products, so they do better on a lamb and rice dog food. Also, there are a few Greyhounds out there who suffer from chronic colitis. You will need to work with your vet if you think this is the case with your dog. Diarrhea can also be caused by stress, and by a sudden change in diet. Wait 2 or 3 days before starting treatment to see if the dog's metabolism corrects the problem on its own.

Following are two simple schedules that GPA-Wisconsin recommends combating diarrhea:

- Add 1 to 2 heaping tablespoons of plain yogurt to the dog's food once a day for 3 days.
- Instead of, or in addition to yogurt, add 2 to 3 heaping tablespoons of canned pumpkin (not sweetened pie filling) to the food at each feeding for 3 days.

If these dietary changes do not lead to improvement within a few days, proceed to the following plan:

- Withhold food for 24 hours.
- Give your dog either one dose of Kaopectate or Pepto Bismol at the child dosage. **We do not recommend Immodium, as it works by stopping the movement through the gut.** Unfortunately, Greyhounds sometimes have really bad bugs in their gut, such as E. coli or salmonella and if you stop the movement, the bad bugs will overgrow and cause really bad problems. Pepto Bismol or Kaopectate are OK, as they work by absorbing the excess liquid and won't allow the bad bugs to overgrow.
- Prepare a mixture of boiled and shred boneless chicken or drain the fat from cooked hamburger, plus cooked, plain white rice. After everything has cooled make a mixture of 1-cup rice to ½ cup meat for each feeding (twice a day). The mixture should be served at room temperature. The amount of food can be increased if the diarrhea stops.
- Once the dog has had three consecutive days of firm stool you can begin to re-introduce the regular food into the mixture. **The re-introduction of regular dog food should be gradual over a day or two.**

If the diarrhea does not slow down or stop after three days or if you see blood in the stool at any time, contact your vet immediately! Have your vet check for Giardia, which is caused by a parasite and must be treated medically. If the diarrhea comes back after the dog has resumed eating its regular dog food, consider switching brands of dog food to one that has a different meat base.

Be aware of the danger of gastric torsion, commonly known as bloat. All large chest cavity dogs are susceptible to bloat. Bloat is a rapid build-up of gas in the stomach/chest area. The stomach twists and significantly reduces the dog's air intake and blood supply to the GI tract, causing rapid shutdown of the internal organs. If this occurs, your Greyhound will lie down, gasp for air, or appear “bloating” in the abdominal area. Or, he may also pace continuously. **THIS IS A LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY!** If your dog gets bloat, you have about 30 minutes to get him to the vet for surgery. Bloat can be avoided by not allowing strenuous exercise before and after eating, eating two moderate meals a day (not one huge meal), and not allowing your dog to gulp excessive amounts of water. Again, if while you're reading this, you do not know the name, location and phone number of the nearest veterinary emergency facility, now is a good time to gather this information and keep it by your phone. In our experience, emergencies never occur during our veterinarian's regular office hours.

Boo-Boos

We've mentioned several times in this section that Greyhounds have thin skin. Because of this, a regular frolic in the backyard can produce a nasty looking cut or scrape. Indeed, it's for this reason GPA-Wisconsin strongly recommends the use of muzzles when more than one Greyhound is loose outside, such

as in a playgroup. While obviously enjoying their romp, their thin skin can be easily injured with play that wouldn't affect other dogs. Skin cuts or scrapes are usually worse looking than they actually are. Clean the wound with soap and water, dry, and apply a thin coat of antibiotic ointment, such as Neosporin. Because your Greyhound will want to lick the injury, help prevent this by covering the cut or scrape with gauze and Vet-wrap. If your Greyhound still feels compelled to chew or lick the injury site, we recommend spraying the area (vet wrap and all) with Bactine, as it tastes foul, yet is antiseptic. After a couple days, the gauze and dressing can be removed, and the wound exposed to air for further drying, scabbing-over and healing. Deeper wounds, such as puncture wounds resulting from a bite or deeper cut, should be treated by your vet, as stitches may be required to promote faster healing and reduce infection.

Flea and Tick Treatments

Greyhounds are especially sensitive to toxic chemicals because of their low body fat and fast metabolism. Some flea and tick products contain certain substances you must watch out for. What is fine for another breed is not fine for a Greyhound. **GPA-Wisconsin does not recommend the use of any flea/tick collar currently on the market. We only recommend the use of topical flea/tick treatments.** Advantage and Frontline are topical treatments sold only by veterinarians. They come in small tubes and are applied to the base of the dog's neck once a month. Frontline works against fleas and ticks. Advantage works against fleas. **Flea collars contain chemicals, which go directly into the Greyhound's bloodstream. They can cause severe illness or possibly death.**

The only flea and tick shampoos that are safe for Greyhounds are those with **PYRETHRINS** as the main ingredient. Pyrethrins are natural organic compounds derived from chrysanthemums. **DO NOT USE any flea/tick product containing organophosphates**, such as Chlorpyrifos, Dursban, or Defend, or any flea/tick product containing carbamates such as Carbaryl or Sevin. Never flea-dip your Greyhound. The chemicals in dips are too strong, even when they are pyrethrin-based.

Tick-Borne Diseases

While tick-borne diseases are not prevalent in all parts of the country, they do warrant discussion, as your Greyhound may have travelled to tick-infested areas of the country as part of his racing career. Tick-borne diseases can have a long dormant or incubation period, which makes them difficult to always obtain an accurate diagnosis. Examination for tick-borne disease is warranted if your Greyhound experiences any of the following symptoms:

- High fever
- Depression or lethargy
- Anorexia
- Anemia
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Loss of appetite or loss of body weight
- Vomiting
- Nose bleeds, skin hemorrhage or any other unusual bleeding
- Swollen legs or lymph nodes
- Nervous system disorders, such as stiff gait, head tilt, seizures or twitching
- Pale gums and/or inner eye membranes
- Arthritis

There are four tick born diseases that can be the cause of these symptoms:

- Lyme disease
- Ehrlichiosis
- Babesiosis
- Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

The only way to confirm if your Greyhound may have a tick borne disease is through an **IFA blood test**. We recommend that your veterinarian draw at least 3 cc of blood in a syringe, place in a separate tube, spin it down and keep it refrigerated until mailing. Then mail it for a full tick panel testing to:

Dr. Cynthia J. Holland
ProtaTek Reference Laboratory
574 East Alamo Street, Suite 90
Chandler, AZ 85225
602-545-8499 fax 602-545-8409

Tick-borne diseases are treatable. Your veterinarian will prescribe a treatment plan. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch with your GPA-Wisconsin contact.

Poisons and Toxins

Greyhounds are especially sensitive to toxic chemicals because of their low body fat and fast metabolism. There are certain substances you must watch out for.

Be careful if you have your house exterminated. Be sure you ask the exterminator what chemicals he is applying inside your home. Many exterminators use pyrethrin-based chemicals, which are safe, but you will need to ask, and tell him you have a chemically sensitive animal.

Lawn chemicals can be fatal to Greyhounds. Do not allow your dog to walk on any chemically treated areas. Lawn services such as Chemlawn, Lawn Doctor, etc. are required to mark treated areas with yellow flags. If you use lawn chemicals, please make us aware of this. Some lawn chemicals have been linked to canine cancer.

Chocolate is a deadly poison to dogs, believe it or not. It contains theobromine, which cannot be metabolized by the dog's liver. A 5-oz. bar of baking chocolate can kill a dog. Never give your pet chocolate in any form or quantity. If your dog ingests chocolate in any amount, call your veterinarian or the National Animal Poison Control Center immediately (see below).

Never administer human medications to any animal without the explicit advice of a veterinarian. Be sure to ask how much and how often to give a human medication if your vet gives you permission. Did you know that Tylenol is highly poisonous to dogs and cats? Did you know that any ibuprofen product, such as Advil or Motrin, will cause acute renal failure in dogs? The only over-the-counter analgesic that is considered generally safe for dogs is buffered, or enteric-coated aspirin. If your pet ingests any human medication without the suggestion of a vet, treat the pet as a poisoning victim and contact your vet or the National Animal Poison Control Center immediately!

Exposure to oil-based paints can cause a variety of reactions in your dog. If you are painting your home it is best to arrange to safely have your pet elsewhere. If this is impossible, the dog should be put in a safe and well-ventilated area of the house away from the fumes.

Most house plants and many common outdoor plants are also toxic to dogs. There are more than 70 different common house and garden plants that will poison your pet. Your vet can supply you with a complete list. Remember that Greyhounds have the ability to reach long distances when placing poisonous houseplants in your home.

Many harsh detergents and chemicals are used in house cleaning and home remodeling. You need to scan all areas of your home, the way you would if you were baby proofing for a toddler. The continuous types of toilet chemicals like Ty-D-Bowl are poisonous. Make sure you keep the toilet lid down. Watch for chemicals under bathroom vanities. Look out for liquid soaps, shampoos, perfumes, laundry detergents, laxatives, medicines, you name it.

Chemicals in the garage are also extremely dangerous. Antifreeze is a deadly poison to animals. As little as one teaspoon of antifreeze will kill your dog. Many dogs and cats die each year because they are attracted to the sweet taste of antifreeze. Don't let your Greyhound lick those wet spots on your garage floor.

If your dog ingests anything you think may be poisonous, call the National Animal Poison Control Center immediately. **THE NUMBERS FOR THE NATIONAL ANIMAL POISON CONTROL CENTER ARE (900) 680-0000 OR (800) 548-2423.** Copy these numbers and place them by your telephone. The National Animal Poison Control Center is operated by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). Veterinarians staff it with special training in toxicology. It is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The calls are not free, but the price is small compared to your pet's life. The 900 number is \$2.95 per minute and is charged directly to your phone bill. The 800 number is a \$30 credit card charge per case. With the 800 number you are given a case number. This allows you to call back as many times as necessary at no extra charge. The vet on call will also be able to communicate with your vet, at no extra charge.

As much as you might love to spray your Greyhound with insect repellent when she is being eaten alive by those nasty mosquitoes, don't do it! All commercially available insect repellents contain a chemical called DEET, which is highly toxic to dogs. Natural products formulated for dogs is a safe alternative to insect repellent. Avon's Skin So Soft, which is diluted with water and made into a spray is also an alternative and works for people too.

Anesthesia Protocols

Please be aware that Greyhounds and other sighthounds are unusually sensitive to general anesthesia. Special precautions **MUST** be taken with a Greyhound undergoing anesthesia. Greyhound-safe anesthetics are Telazol or Isoflurane. Barbituates should never be used on Greyhounds. Before consenting to any surgery, speak to your vet about his/her experience in operating on Greyhounds. GPA-Wisconsin recommends specific anesthesia protocols for use with Greyhounds; a copy of these recommended practices is included with your adoption packet in loose form, so that it can be easily carried with you to your vet's office.

A Greyhound First-Aid Kit

GPA-Wisconsin recommends an easily assembled Greyhound first-aid kit of the following components:

- Hydrogen peroxide for cleaning wounds
- Antibiotic ointment, such as Neosporin
- Vet-wrap, for wrapping cuts or scrapes
- Gauze
- Kaopectate or Pepto-Bismol, for diarrhea
- Benadril, for bee and wasp stings
- Rectal thermometer
- K-Y Jelly
- Animal styptic powder for when nails are cut too short and bleed
- Fishing/tackle box or Rubbermaid-type container for easy storage

9. The Great Outdoors

Greyhounds, because they are sighthounds, can see far away, up to a half-mile or more. The sight of a small animal (rabbit, squirrel, chipmunk, etc.), paper bag, or leaves blowing in the wind, can send your Greyhound into a full run at 45 miles per hour. In a few minutes they can be a few miles away and not realize they are even gone.

Also unexpected noises, such as firecrackers, motorcycles, loud cars or trucks can also startle and panic the unleashed Greyhound. It may take off and become lost and/or get killed by a car.

The absolute rule is "Greyhounds should always be on a leash or in a completely fenced area when outdoors".

Fences and Leashes

If you are fencing your yard for your Greyhound, the fence should be a minimum of 4 feet high. Greyhounds are not jumpers, but the exception may require a taller fence. **Never** leave your Greyhound (or any dog) unattended in a fenced yard unless you are home to keep an eye on them, as many pets are stolen, mistreated and ransomed for reward. **Greyhounds are housedogs** and should never be left out in hot or cold temperatures. Their short coat, lack of body fat and thin skin can cause them to overheat in summer and become chilled in winter. We advise that you make or buy a heavy lined coat to use when the temperature drops below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. **Never** put a Greyhound on an overhead run or tie them out to a stake or a tree as they can take off running at 45 MPH from a dead stop. A broken neck, leg or possibly death can result.

When you walk your Greyhound use the nylon safety collar and 6 foot leash you have gotten or purchased from GPA-Wisconsin. You should always use the nylon safety collar that we provide with the adoption of your dog. No other design can assure you positive control. If your dog's collar is worn or frayed, contact us for a replacement, as pet stores do not usually have this design.

Periodically your safety collar should be checked for proper adjustment: proper adjustment of the collar means that when you tension the collar, with the leash clipped to the middle ring, the 2 rings that the tension loop slides through should come no closer than 1 ½ inches apart. If these rings touch, your dog could back out of the collar. When the collar is slack, there only needs to be enough looseness to slip the collar off the dog's head without causing undue discomfort or pain. If you can slip two fingers under the collar next to the dog's neck, this is adequate.

Before you allow anyone to walk your dog, ensure they know about the proper ring to clip to. Clip to the wrong one and the whole thing is useless. Be sure that they are physically able to handle the dog.

There are three tags every Greyhound should always wear:

- GPA-Wisconsin I.D. tag- has a serial # and rescue line phone number
- Your personal ID tag with dog's name, your name, address & phone number
- Your local municipality's dog license tag

Outdoor Rules versus Indoor Rules

Please be aware that your Greyhound may view what's acceptable behavior very differently when outdoors. Greyhounds and cats that peacefully coexisted and were fast friends may suddenly take on the roles of hunter and prey. Additionally, if you have more than one dog, those dogs that are very content and peaceful may become more excitable and assertive when outdoors. It's wise and prudent to make sure your Greyhound and other dogs know their limits when playing outdoors. A harmless romp may take an uglier turn if pack behavior rises to the surface. **GPA-Wisconsin recommends your Greyhound (and any other dogs) be muzzled when outdoors for an extended period of time.** This is not because the dogs are

vicious; but again, the rules are simply different outside. We know of some adopters who take a “Super-Soaker”-type squirt gun out with them when they turn their dogs out. If things begin to look ominous, a quick squirt usually restores obedience very quickly, and with no lasting consequences, other than perhaps a Greyhound’s temporary wounded sense of pride!

Playgroups

GPA-Wisconsin coordinates several informal Greyhound playgroup events. These involve taking adopted Greyhounds to a fenced-in area, letting them off-lead, and letting them enjoy their natural ability to run and play. **GPA-Wisconsin recommends your Greyhound (and any other dogs) be muzzled when outdoors for an extended period of time. This rule is strictly enforced when attending any GPA-Wisconsin-sponsored playgroup event.** Additionally, bottled water and water dishes are a requirement to help keep your dog cool and hydrated.

Playgroups are great fun for your Greyhound and a way to meet other adopters and GPA-Wisconsin volunteers who share the love of this magnificent canine athlete. Your GPA-Wisconsin contact can provide you with information about playgroups in your area.

10. Training and Obedience

Greyhounds are special, wonderful, dogs, but the operative word here is DOGS. They need and understand pack structure, just like any other dog. Do you understand the importance of pack structure? This is another area in which adoptive families have misunderstood canine behavior, resulting in failed adoptions. Please make sure this doesn't happen to you.

Greyhounds may not look much like wolves, but like all other dog breeds, they are genetically programmed to form packs according to the same rules that wolves follow. As in wolf packs, a dog's social unit must have an alpha, or leader. When the dog's social unit is a human family, the leader absolutely **MUST** be a person, namely you. Being alpha involves more than sheer power. It is a position of responsibility: the dog looks to you for food, protection, companionship, and most importantly, rules. When you are in control, your Greyhound respects you and feels secure in knowing what her boundaries are. Please note that being in control is not the same as being mean. You must enforce the rules with kindness and firmness, not cruelty!

All human family members must be of higher rank in the pack than the dogs. Why is this important? Dogs, like wolves, will challenge the rank order in the pack if they perceive any weakness in those members of higher rank. Challenging pack order translates as extremely undesirable behavior incompatible with family life: growling, snarling, biting, threatening to attack the owners, or refusal to obey commands. Challenges to your authority as alpha usually begin with something small, such as growling when you come too close to the dog's food bowl while he's eating. The owner must **ALWAYS** win these challenges. If the dog gets away with it, it's a green light for the next step in a dominance challenge. Pretty soon, you will have an out-of-control dog on your hands.

You don't want your dog to display these behaviors toward you or your children. The best way to prevent these behaviors is to assert your rightful place as alpha. Between themselves, two or more dogs will decide who is the alpha canine. That is their issue to work out, not yours. Your issue is to be certain that you are alpha over all of them.

Sometimes adopters are reluctant to discipline their new Greyhound because they believe that he was likely abused in his racing kennel, or lived a hard life and should now be allowed "the good life" with few restrictions. In our experience, the incidence of actual abuse of racing Greyhounds is very rare today. While racing Greyhounds are not kept as pampered pets the way all of us keep our Greyhounds, they are cared for as working dogs with clear rules about what they can and cannot do. Their daily routine and the rules they live by are sources of certainty and security for them. Continuing – and enforcing - that structure of "rules to live by" for them is an act of kindness by you, not meanness or cruelty.

Now is the time to lay down the ground rules for your Greyhound. If you don't want the dog on your furniture, establish that rule at the very beginning. If you want your Greyhound to stay out of certain rooms, teach that to him right away. Make sure you are gentle and firm about enforcing household rules, but enforce them you must, or your Greyhound will think he is alpha over you. That is a recipe for disaster.

Training Tips and Techniques

The most effective way to train your Greyhound is to join a basic obedience class. These are inexpensive and fun. Use your Greyhound's humane choke collar that came with her. There are retired racing Greyhounds who have won obedience titles. Just remember that training must be done with a light, encouraging hand, and leash rules always apply, even with a highly trained dog.

Greyhounds can be taught to sit, but they generally prefer not to sit. They are more likely to crouch, like a lion (we fondly call this position "the Sphinx"), or flop over on their sides. Their long backs and well-developed muscles make sitting awkward for them.

Greyhounds can be taught to come when called. **But don't ever be fooled into thinking they will come every time you call them. A Greyhound in pursuit of prey will not respond to verbal commands.** However, teaching your dog to recall on command could save his life if he ever got loose.

Greyhounds are extremely sensitive animals. They respond very well to praise. This should always be verbal, accompanied with patting and/or a treat. The verbal praise should be in a high-pitched, happy voice. Also, dogs can read facial expressions, so smile when your dog does well, and frown when he could have done better. It is perfectly possible to establish your position as alpha by utilizing praise!

Reprimands should always be done in a low-pitched voice. The reprimand should be short: "NO!" This is sufficient to train any Greyhound. Hitting a Greyhound is both unnecessary and counter-productive. Hitting frightens them, teaches them nothing, and causes them to become timid or aggressive.

Socializing with Other Dogs

If your Greyhound is fresh from the track, chances are she has spent her entire life only in the company of other Greyhounds. The look on a Greyhound's face is priceless when they first encounter another dog—they can almost be thinking, "what is THAT?" In general, Greyhounds interact very well with other dogs, although assertive, alpha Greyhounds may exhibit posturing behavior with other more dominant dogs. Also, dogs that exhibit a higher prey drive (unsafe with cats, for example) may react to small dogs as prey. The key here is to be observant and cautious when introducing your Greyhound to any other dog.

Mischief

We like to think of our Greyhounds as the most perfect, angelic canine creatures on Earth, but they don't always live up to that unrealistic expectation. Greyhounds can reach high places, such as your kitchen counters, with very little effort. When Greyhounds stand up on their hind legs, they are eye-to-eye with an adult. Imagine the possibilities for mischief! It's like having a 5-ft. tall toddler in the house! Be sure to place breakables or potentially harmful items out of reach of your dog (remembering that their reach is significant). Never leave breakable items, food, or potentially dangerous items on low tables or counters when your Greyhound is unattended.

This is another reason never to feed your Greyhound at the dinner table. That long nose can slide right across the top of the table. If your dog thinks he might be fed at the table, it is not a big step for him to begin stealing food.

When your Greyhound decides to investigate your counter tops or dinner table, that is a good time to use the "No-word." You can train him to give up this investigative behavior. After all, everything in a house is new to them, and they're curious! They have no idea what is OK for them to touch and what is not. You have to teach them.

Some Greyhounds are also known to be interior decorators. They will move pillows, stuffed animals, and other interesting objects from one place to another. They may even take your books off the shelves. Greyhounds also like to rearrange their own beds (we call this "nesting").

We have outlined quite a few guidelines about training, housebreaking, and integrating your new pet into the family. We have given you a lot of "never do this, don't do that, always do this instead." You need to use your common sense when deciding how to implement these guidelines. Very few rules apply universally to every situation. It is the adopter's responsibility to consciously decide which rules work in their situation and which ones don't. There are only a few rules that are absolute in every single case:

People should be alpha over the dog. The dog should never be alpha over the people.

- Greyhounds should always be treated gently, with kindness and respect.
- Leash rules always apply (this includes the other rules about the outdoors).

If you are having problems with your new Greyhound and aren't following these guidelines, you need to go back to square one and carefully examine your mistakes. Most canine misbehavior is the result of human error or misunderstanding. As Barbara Woodhouse, the famous British dog trainer once said, "There is no such thing as a difficult dog, only an inexperienced owner."

11. Estate Planning

Those of us who are pet owners will often go to great lengths to comfort and care for our furry family members during our lifetime. Most of us are also very much aware of the importance of estate planning for our loved ones after we die. Unfortunately, we forget that pets are loved ones, too, and often provisions are not made for their care after our death.

In the eyes of the law, in most states, animals are considered personal property. They are treated the same under the law as an article of jewelry or furniture. If no will exists, the animal goes to the heir of the estate. If no heir exists or if the heir does not want the animal, it will go to a humane group, the animal shelter, or be euthanized. Please make your heirs aware of GPA-Wisconsin's adoption contract provision: ALL GPA-WISCONSIN-PLACED GREYHOUNDS MUST RETURN TO GPA-WISCONSIN FOR PLACEMENT. Please specify that your Greyhound must not be sent to the animal shelter or be euthanized.

Financial provisions should be made for your pet in your will, as well as for your two-legged loved ones. Options available are:

- Direct money to care for the pet for life
- Conditional money based upon care for the pet
- A non-charitable trust
- A conditional trust

The financial option you select can be controlled by your executor, an identified individual, or GPA-Wisconsin. Your personal situation determines which choice is best. We recommend that you consult your attorney or estate planner.

CRATES

For your greyhound's safety and for your peace of mind, we highly recommend that you crate your greyhound when no one is home until you are sure your greyhound is housetrained and can be trusted home alone without getting into mischief. Your ex-racing greyhound is used to being crated while at the track and many find the crate a safe haven as they adjust to their new home environment.

The wire style crate is recommended as it more closely resembles the racing kennels greyhounds are familiar with. The crate should be large enough to permit your greyhound to lay extended on his side and to sit up without hitting his head at the top. Your greyhound should be able to turn completely around inside the crate.

You should purchase your crate and have it set-up with soft bedding prior to bringing your greyhound home. There are two styles of wire crates – drop pin and fold down. The drop pin models are sometimes less expensive but can be a little more difficult to set-up and take down. The fold down style tends to be more convenient and can easily be set-up or folded away for storage.

The following size crates are recommended:

Most male greyhounds and large females

48" L x 30" W x 35" H

(Midwest Better Buy dog crate Model 1248)

Most female greyhounds and small males

42" L x 28" W x 32" H

(Midwest Better Buy dog crate Model 1242)

You can purchase a crate from you local pet store or through a mail order catalog. Make sure to include the cost of shipping when comparing prices. Below is a listing of suppliers:

Midwest	www.midwesthomes4pets.com	1-800-428-8560
Doctors Foster & Smith	www.DrsFosterSmith.com	1-800-826-7206
J-B Wholesale Pet Supplies	www.jbpet.com	1-800-526-0388
KV Vet Supply	www.kvvet.com	1-800-423-8211
PetEdge	www.PetEdge.com	1-800-738-3343

Please contact your adoption representative if you have any questions.