

Is a Greyhound the right dog for me?

Even though they are adult dogs, ex-racing greyhounds have not had the same experiences as pet dogs; they are not puppies, but they are not trained 'ready-to-go' family pets.

Please take a moment to read through our most frequently asked questions and breed information page to make sure that adopting a Greyhound is the right choice for you.

Can Greyhounds live with cats?

Greyhounds belong to the sighthound group of dogs who were historically bred as hunting companions; the genetic predisposition to be good at and enjoy chasing and catching prey animals does not put greyhounds near the top of the "ideal dogs to live with cats" list.

The best time to introduce any dog to a cat, but especially sighthounds, is when the puppy is under 3 months in their critical developmental period. Almost all ex-racing greyhound have not met cats during puppyhood which poses challenges trying to integrate them into a pet home with cats in their retirement. For most greyhounds this is not possible to do so safely.

However, many Greyhounds can and do live safely with cats. These "cat trainable" greyhounds who are assessed by our rehoming staff as suitable to live in a home with cats are outliers and in hot demand so please expect a bit of a wait while we find you the right match.

It is a huge advantage if your cat is familiar living with dogs and is not scared.

Please note your Greyhound has been assessed as "cat trainable" - not cat trained! You will need to work on safely and gradually integrating your hound your cat. GAP will provide you with the resources and ongoing support every step of the way. You can find out more here:

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/3-greyhounds-and-small-animals>

Will my Greyhound be toilet trained?

Not at the beginning, toilet training your greyhound is typically straightforward but do expect some accidents while they are settling in and learning. Most Greyhounds have come from a kennel environment, and although they likely know how to be clean in their kennel area, they need to learn to be clean in a house. You can find out what is involved in toilet training here:

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/5-toilet-training>

Will my Greyhound be good with my kids?

The chances are your Greyhound has not spent much time around children. Greyhounds are used to having their own personal kennel space during their racing career, they don't cope with having their space invaded suddenly and can find loud and busy children very frightening.

To keep everyone safe it is important that all interactions between dogs and children are supervised and that your greyhound has their own space away from children.



Greyhounds and children can develop wonderful bonds, but please be aware this takes time. You can read more here: <https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/2-greyhounds-and-children>.

Will my Greyhound be friendly towards other dogs?

Greyhounds spend their life in the company of other greyhounds and have met few, if any, other breeds of dogs prior to retiring. We assess each greyhound with other breeds of dog before they are rehomed, but you will still need to take time to gradually desensitize your greyhound to other canines, especially smaller, fluffier ones.

Like people, dogs are individuals, and while some dogs are 'disco dogs' and want to party with most dogs they meet, others are 'library dogs' and would rather hang out with a few close friends or stick to their family. Due to their breed type and their background, most greyhounds are 'library dogs' and will not enjoy crowded dog parks or meet ups with unfamiliar canines.

If you have an existing small dog, or there is a small dog your greyhound will frequently be spending time with please let us know in your adoption questionnaire. You can read more about how to safely introduce your greyhound to other dogs here: <https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/4-greyhounds-and-other-dogs>

Do Greyhounds wear muzzles because they are aggressive?

Muzzles are used as a safety precaution primarily during the settling in period. We recommend using them if you are integrating your hound into a home with existing pets, when going out for walks they provide a clear signal to people that your hound is in training and to give you space, and they keep everyone safe when your greyhound is interacting with unfamiliar dogs.

We recommend greyhounds always wear a muzzle when they are running off lead in a group as they tend to nip playfully at each other; sharp teeth plus thin skin can result in unwanted injuries.

All our greyhounds go home with a plastic basket muzzle and you will learn more about how to fit this during your adoption.

How much exercise will my Greyhound need?

This depends on the individual dog your lifestyle. While Greyhounds enjoy getting out for walks after they have settled into pet life, many find it overwhelming while they are adapting to the huge changes from living in a kennel environment. Find out how to help your new greyhound on walks here: <https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/7-freezing-walks>

It will take time for your greyhound to build up physical fitness too, so it is best to start with shorter walks and gradually build on these. While generally a low energy breed with the reputation of a professional couch potato, most greyhounds still enjoy going out on active walks, some even run

with their owners too, and there are plenty of enrichment activities to exercise your hound without leaving the house.



Please let us know your activity level preferences when you speak to the rehoming team. We have regular meet ups with the GAP community so check out our events page to find a walk in your area: <https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/events>

Will I be able to let my Greyhound off leash?

Until you train a recall your greyhound will not come back when you call them. Greyhounds are sighthounds, they are genetically predisposed to be skilled at and enjoy chasing after objects they see at a distance; they are incredibly fast and can be out of sight (and earshot) very quickly.

We recommend training a whistle recall, using a harness and a 5-10m longline when practicing outside the house. For safety it is crucial that your greyhound is only let off lead in public after you have trained a reliable recall and you have assessed their interactions with other dogs, animals, and people.

We recommend your greyhound wears a plastic basket muzzle when running off lead in a group of dogs, especially other greyhounds, as they tend to nip playfully at each other; sharp teeth plus thin skin can result in unwanted injuries.

You can read more about teaching your greyhound to come when called here:

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

Will my Greyhound be ok left alone while I am at work?

Having never been bred to work long, demanding days, and their love of comfy beds many Greyhounds are content to be left alone during working hours - once they have settled into life as a pet. Please be aware that, as with any new dog, it will take time for your Greyhound to adjust to their new routine, to build an attachment bond with their new family, and to be okay being left alone.

For many greyhounds, their first night in a home is the first time in their life that they haven't had other dogs nearby for company. It is recommended that you have a flexible working schedule during the settling in period to keep it as stress free as possible for everyone.

Find out more information to set your hound up for success here:

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/6-learning-be-left-alone>

Retired racing Greyhounds make wonderful pets, but just like any animal they will require time, patience and care while they settle into their new phase of life.

If you have any other questions or wish to discuss greyhound adoption further, please don't hesitate to contact a member of our passionate and knowledgeable rehoming team. Their contact details can be found here:

<https://greyhoundsaspets.org.nz/contact-us/meet-the-team>