

## Important Needs of the Greyhound Going Home

The following information is the most important you will read in our entire package. The focus will be making the transition the most comfortable and least stressful on you and your new Greyhound.

### **Where has your greyhound been? Let's first describe the environment and daily routine your greyhound has experience for the past few years.**

1. Most of his/her time has been spent in a kennel measuring 3' x 3' to 4' x 4'. Three to four times a day, your greyhound was "turned out" of the kennel for only small amounts of exercise and to relieve themselves. The important message here is that this routine provided them with a strong sense of security.

2. The greyhound's routine has been very rigid, so they expect the same routine to happen at the same time everyday.

3. Since the greyhound's space, up until adoption, has been so small, going into a home becomes the largest adjustment your new greyhound will have to make. The extra space of a home makes the adjustment period more difficult. It is important that a crate be used to help provide your greyhound with a reassuring transition into your home.

### **What you can do to make the transition successful. The adoption process and successful transition is 95% your responsibility and 5% the greyhound.**

#### **Crating**

1. Having the greyhound crate in a family area for the first few days will be an important first step. Give him/her a familiar space and routine (the same which has been provided all of his/her life up until this point), the result is quite simple—less stress. Not crating your greyhound will be the single biggest mistake you will make. The smaller the space you initially provide, the less stress the greyhound will endure. You are not doing your new family member a favor by letting him/her roam free in the house.

2. As the first few days progress the greyhound starts to understand the new family and home, all the while doing so from the security of the crate. They begin to associate the crate as their special room and begin to establish confidence in their new surroundings.

3. After years of talking to new greyhound owners about problems they have had, not crating has become the most significant contributor to stress related problems (i.e., accidents

in the house, chewing, etc.). The problems begin to arise as a result of too much time out of the crate too soon.

4. The value of the crate time during the first few days, and while the family is at home and going through their daily routines, sets a comfortable mind set for the new greyhound in preparation for the first time the family has to leave their greyhound alone. Remember, the greyhound has been around many people and many, many other greyhounds all of its life, he/she will have to adjust being without other dogs.

**The answer to relieving stress is a repeated routine of crating in the presence of the new owners. The crate lets the greyhound know that the previous kennel life he/she is accustomed is not completely taken away.**

5. Spending the first few nights in their crate (you will have to move into your bedroom), also provides the greyhound with the similar night experience they have had in the kennel. When he/she wakes up in the middle of the night they should settle right back down, because they are in a familiar setting, the crate. If you were to let your greyhound "roam" around the first few nights, your greyhound would become stressed with the unfamiliar surroundings and space.

6. What do you do with your new greyhound when he/she is not in the crate? First, make it a general rule for the first two weeks—if you are in a room, so should your greyhound. Also, the practicing of keeping your greyhound on a lead so he/she can be close to you, serves as an excellent way to further reduce the amount of transition stress. Rest assured, you will not have to walk around the house with your greyhound attached to you forever, so after the first 48 hours has passed, he/she will begin to feel more relaxed and safe, and your crate and lead time can begin to be reduced.

7. A final note on crating, you are providing your new greyhound with a similar routine to the one that they have had all of their lives. That routine serves as the correlation toward the reduction of stress they will endure once home with you. Remember, change should occur slowly and with great patience. Try and view the transition through the eyes of your greyhound and think about how much you may dislike disrupting your routine, or what stress you would feel when change occurs.

**Greyhounds are sensitive creatures and deserve our love and attention in this dramatic change in their life style.**

**Coming into their new home. Some things you should do when your new greyhound comes home.**

1. It is important to show your new greyhound his/her yard as soon as you get home. On a lead walk him/her around your yard and let them relieve themselves. Next, you will want to do the same in your home. Walk him/her, through every room of your house, on a lead of course.

2. Since he/she is used to going into a crate, after your walk through, place him/her into the crate and shut the door. Do not let them fool you, and remember you are bigger than they are, so if they resist, gently but firmly assist them into the crate. If you have trouble, hold the collar, and scoop up their rear end, gravity will take care of the rest.

**As a general rule of thumb, the greyhound is used to going directly outside after being let out of the crate, so it will be important for you to follow the same rule--out of the crate, then directly outside. If not, accidents will sure to follow.**

3. It will be an important bonding exercise for you to spend some leisure time with your new greyhound during the first few days. This time should be spent while your greyhound is on a lead to restrict the amount of space he/she will have to get used to. During this time, talk and touch your greyhound frequently—this will reassure him/her that everything is going to be okay, and that the new environment is a safe one.

4. **IMPORTANT!!!!!!**-- when small children are also a part of your family, the crate becomes a much more important tool for a successful transition. Children will be children, which means they will be busy, loud and somewhat "scary" to a new greyhound. Greyhounds have not been, generally speaking, exposed to small children. If the crate serves as a safe place for him/her, then they can view the activities of children, from a distance, and will not feel threatened by their activity. Remember, greyhounds are den animals, and feel a strong sense of security when in small spaces. Your greyhound associates its crate to a den.

Therefore, it is particularly important children should also be taught to respect the space of your new family member. When down (sleeping or just relaxing) a child or an adult, should never, never approach a greyhound. You do not like to be startled in the middle of the night either!!!

Signs of stress. As a new owner, your job is reducing the amount of stress your greyhound will endure. The less stress, the better the transition.

1. Always remember signs of stress may only be due to knowing they have left their kennel home and all their friends. This will change as they become more comfortable with you and begin to trust their new surroundings. The more loving and patient you can be, the more quickly they will adjust.

2. Some signs of stress and other things you need to be aware of:

- Standing in the car on your ride home—the more you ride, the better stress should

become.

- Panting—panting due to stress is normal. Excessive panting should be watched.
- Lack of appetite—although this is normal for the first couple of meals, your greyhound's appetite should return within the first few days.

Your mealtime may excite him/her; they have never smelled a home cooked meal before. Greyhounds are also "food hounds." If you do not want your greyhound in the kitchen while you eat, this would be a good time to crate him/her. A firm and gentle no will go a long way as well.

Trashcans will be extremely exciting to your new greyhound. Put the trash where it is not accessible.

Whining in their new crate—this too is fairly normal. Your new greyhound is just getting used to not having other greyhounds with them. However, do not reinforce this type of behavior. Do not remove your greyhound from the crate if he/she is whining, only do so when they stop.

Being very curious about items in the house such as toys, pillows, etc.—we do not recommend giving your new greyhound a toy the first day, however, if they get a toy, do not try to remove them unless they could potentially harm him/her. Remember, their human contact up until this point has been very limited. Even though you will be very excited about your new addition, do not try and overwhelm him/her with too much attention. Adjust your exposure gradually.