Kentucky Greyhound Placement

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www.KyGreyhounds.org

(website under construction)

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**INITIAL HOME VISIT NOTES**

**INTRODUCTORY POINTS**

* **GREYHOUNDS MUST NEVER BE OFF LEAD IN AN UNFENCED AREA!**
* Greyhounds must be inside dogs, they cannot regulate temperatures well due to:
	+ Light coat of fur
	+ Low body fat
	+ Thin skin
* Greyhounds cannot be left outside when temperatures are extreme
	+ High Heat
		- Heat Stroke (if suspect put cold, wet compresses in pits and groin areas and get to vet, call vet to let them know you are coming. Keep refreshing compresses while on way to vet. Do not cover even if hound shivers…dog is not cold! A blanket will keep the temperature high and not let them cool off – both bad when having heat stroke.)
		- Asphalt can burn pads of feet during walks – use boots or keep them on grass…do not allow Greyhound to stand still on asphalt on sunny days.
	+ Low temps
		- If the hound is shivering, it is cold.
		- Snow can pack into the pads of their feet. Clean out with your fingers. Consider booties, but do not let snow get into bootie.
* Consistency with commands will help with Greyhounds in their training. They will learn basic commands quickly. Unless you see your Greyhound sitting, in a natural sit, do not try to train your Greyhound to sit. Some do not have the appropriate skeleton and musculature to allow a sit. Laying flat or in the Sphinx position is more common than sitting.
* Greyhounds are eager to please.
* Greyhounds are very sensitive
	+ Never strike a Greyhound.
	+ Raised voice or spray bottle are very effective.
* Greyhounds love softness and comfort – do not let them on the furniture now if you will not want them on it later. Easier to train not to do something than it is to stop something you have allowed.
* Greyhound rule: it takes only a few times for an action (good or bad) to become a habit, even as few as 1 time, but often seems that 3 is the magic number.
* Greyhounds are sometimes called Velcro™ dogs as they usually want to be near you.
* Greyhounds are not a good choice for a family that travels often unless you intend for it travel with your family. Greyhounds enjoy the company of their family and do not like to be left behind.
* If you must kennel your Greyhound, be selective when picking your boarding facility. Do at least one test night, possibly waiting another week or so and do a couple of nights, before a trip to let them know you will come back for them.
* Greyhounds, if from a track environment, have never been left completely alone. Work on alone training even if you have other dogs. Always leave a TV or radio on for the greyhound when you are away until they become adjusted to their new life. It helps muffle outside noises, which may initially frighten a greyhound. Race kennels usually have a radio playing all the time.
* Some Greyhounds are noise adverse, firecrackers, thunder, may need to be dealt with.
* Some say if you need a jacket they need a jacket. Jackets are likely over used, but watch your Greyhound to see if they need one. Often, on a walk, you might consider starting them with a jacket and when they get warmed from the walk you carry it back home. Like for you, wind can increase the need for a jacket.
* Pajama’s – some adopters feel the need to put jammies on their Greyhounds at night. Just remember that if you use PJ’s then you will need to keep the Greyhound warmer when letting them out, if needed, during the night…removing the PJs, and putting on a heavier jacket may be needed.
* Loading and unloading dog into vehicle (or crate) – use the command load and unload. Female greyhounds are in the upper crates at the track kennels and can jump quite high, e.g. into the open window of a van. Once the Greyhound is used to getting in and out of a vehicle they should be able to do it without help. You can also have them, or you, put their front feet up, and encourage the rear to follow by placing your dominant arm as if the Greyhound is going to sit on your arm.
* Lifting your Greyhound – Lift and carry your Greyhound exuding confidence. In each example below your dominant arm is placed under the Greyhound’s rear, as if the Greyhound were going to sit on your arm, which they will appear to be doing when you lift. You can practice these techniques while sitting and by lifting the dog into your lap.
	+ Less dominant arm in front of the front legs, but under the throat – as if carrying a sheep, all legs together
	+ Less dominant arm in front of front leg closest to your body; then between the front legs. This will allow the Greyhound to help you when putting the Greyhound down. The “free” front leg will take on the weight of the Greyhound as you begin putting the Greyhound down. If your Greyhound struggles when you are carrying it, then example one, containing both front legs, is your better option.
* Greyhounds are long lived for their size. Average life expectancies are reported to be from 12 – 15 years. Happily some have lived longer and unfortunately some do not beat the average.
* Greyhounds recognize their own breed; they often do not care about other dog breeds.
* When Greyhounds are brought together to run, a muzzle is necessary for all Greyhounds and to be far all dogs. Greyhounds are very competitive and will nip at other Greyhounds to get ahead of them when running. Muzzles are not indicative of a bite risk for humans.
* Some Greyhounds come from the track and are considered “spooks”. This basically means that they are spooked by everything. Great care and patience is needed when accepting one of these Greyhounds into your home. They will learn to trust you and you can help them learn to accept the world. KyG will offer additional guidance if you accept a “spook” into your life.
* If your Greyhound is one of the few who are fearful of other Greyhounds or dogs, then placing a red bandana on your Greyhounds neck warns other owners.
* Greyhounds are handled by many people at the track, some are known to them and some are strangers. It is extremely rare that a Greyhound would present a bite risk to a person.
* Most Greyhounds are very friendly. If this describes your Greyhound and he suddenly appears nervous around a specific person, trust your Greyhound’s instincts and stay away from that person. Do not force the Greyhound to be petted by someone he considers suspicious. Although not considered to be a “watch dog” they can pick up unusual “vibes”.
* Greyhounds will make you more alert to your own environment. You will start watching for things like squirrels, rabbits, etc. ahead of when your Greyhound spots them. If your Greyhounds ears rise, he sees something. Although not considered a “watch dog” that does not mean that they will not alert you, but by often seeing something out of place and not by barking.
* Greyhounds are not known to be barkers, but may bark when excited and can alert you.
* Greyhounds will get excited when you have been gone and return home. They may want to jump on you. They can be taught up but not on, meaning they do not touch you with their paws when they jump up; or teach them not to jump at all.
* ***Cautiously*** teach the Greyhound that you are allowed to take food or a bone from it will help to establish you as dominant within the “pack” of your family. Greyhounds are pack animals and need to know who the leader is…and it needs to be the adults. Research methods to accomplish this.
* Return policy – per your Adoption Agreement, if for any reason and at any time adopter(s) is(are) unable or unwilling to keep the Greyhound, the Greyhound will be returned to KyG. Adopter(s) may recommend the Greyhound’s next home. KyG will still go through the placement process to ensure Right Hound, Right Home. Your recommendation could be denied. Each adult in the home needs to sign the Adoption Agreement so that you each have rights to the Greyhound.

**BASIC SUPPLIES NEEDED**

* Find out what the Volunteer Caregivers fed the foster and use that to help with the transition to the food you prefer. First feeding use 100% what the foster was eating…over a week or so, gradually drop its percentage to feeding 100% of your preferred food.
* Martingale collar/lead – provided by KyG. The martingale set is the only design safe for a Greyhound. Greyhounds have a smaller head than neck when compared to other dogs. They can easily slip a standard collar.
* Dog Beds – one for each area of the house (i.e. bedroom, living room, office, etc.)
* Elevated feeder.
* Rubber grooming mitt, Furminator ™ (for short fur), etc.
* Dog toys –soft stuffy kind or those without stuffing, squeaky one – let your Greyhound decide.
* Jacket (fleece jacket is provided)
* Kentucky Greyhound tag – provided by KyG and must be worn at all times.
* ID tag with your information

**VETERINARIAN CARE**

* MUST have a sighthound knowledgeable vet. Kentucky Greyhound Placement uses Dr. Rexroad of Finchville Animal Hospital – she is knowledgeable, reasonable and convenient (about 15 min from Blankenbaker at US 60) (located off exit 32, I-64 east – from Louisville). You can easily continue the care of your hound there or choose another sighthound knowledgeable vet.
* KyG uses Advantage Multi for dogs – protects against Heartworm, Microfilaria, Fleas, Sarcoptic Mange, Roundworms, Hookworms and Whipworms. No protection for ticks.
	+ Heartworm preventative MUST be given all year even if winters are very cold.
	+ Many flea and tick products are not safe for sighthounds – never use a flea collar.
* A few things, but not all, to make sure your vet understands:
	+ Greyhounds have large hearts and large lungs – which makes them good athletes. It also extends their life expectancy for a large breed dog. The large heart gives the Greyhound a different heartbeat than most dogs and it is often misdiagnosed as a heart murmur or an enlarged heart.
	+ The most misdiagnosed disease in Greyhounds is Hypothyroidism (low-thyroid). Greyhounds have an extremely low natural thyroid level (below normal on the blood count). Be sure your vet is familiar with Greyhound specific thyroid levels (few really are) before considering supplements or treatment for Hypothyroidism. You can do harm to your dog if they are given the wrong treatment.
	+ A normal dose of anesthesia will kill your Greyhound, low body fat is the main reason. Be sure your vet knows about Greyhound anesthesia protocol before allowing them to use anesthesia on your hound. Most vets use the same anesthesia as used on humans and this is safe for Greyhounds, but be sure the dosage is for the Greyhound breed.
	+ Sutures usually do not require sedation.
	+ To learn more about differences go to: http://www.greyhoundgang.org/learn/health/blood-work/
* It is your responsibility, as the adopter, to provide the best veterinary care for your Greyhound. You are the voice for your hound. Trust your instincts. Be their champion.

**MEDICAL**

* When a Greyhound comes to the adopter it will have had the following:
	+ Physical
	+ Heartworm test
	+ Deworming protocol
	+ Spay/Neuter
	+ Dental
	+ Current on shots
	+ On heartworm preventative
	+ If a condition is discovered it will be treated – if still present at time of adoption, the adopter will be made aware of condition and it will be added to the contract, and initialed, if the adopter chooses to adopt before condition is alleviated. If the condition will persist or may require life-long treatment, that will also be added to the contract, for initialing by the adopter.
	+ A copy of all vet records from KyG and any that may have come with the Greyhound.
* Greyhounds can develop joint problems as they age – Glucosamine is a great supplement and is often used with Chondroitin.
* Greyhounds are not prone to hip dysplasia.
* Daily brushing of your Greyhounds teeth is highly recommended as is daily brushing for people. Weekly or every once in a while is not effective.
* An annual dental is highly recommended. Greyhounds do not make a lot of saliva which means their teeth do not get washed as much as other dogs’ mouths. It also means they do not drool like some other breeds. With daily brushing the annual dental will go quicker and less aggressively, which may mean less time under anesthesia and will be better overall for your Greyhound.
* Greyhounds, as a breed, are relatively healthy. No disease is prone to Greyhounds.
	+ Some Greyhounds seem predisposed to cancer. Osteosarcoma (bone cancer) is the most prevalent.
	+ Pannus has an increased incidence in certain breeds (German Shepherd, Greyhound, Labrador Retriever and Border Collie) which suggests a predisposition, the actual cause is unknown. Pannus is a progressive inflammatory autoimmune disease of the cornea. The good news is that under the care of a canine ophthalmologist that the vast majority of cases can be managed with topical medications (often eye drops) that halts the diseases progression.
	+ Bloat (gastric dilatation volvulus (GDV)) aka twisted stomach – deep-chested breeds are at risk. GDV is a life-threatening condition and needs emergency veterinary attention. Reduce risk by – limiting food and water *prior to* AND *after* exercise (some say none); elevated food/water bowls (some say this increases risk - but most greyhound groups recommend elevated feeders); eliminate overfeeding; feed at least twice a day; prevent too much water in a small period of time near exercise; there are other causes too.
* Nail trimming – Nails need to be trimmed on a weekly basis (depending on your hound) to prevent nail and toe injuries, which may occur when your Greyhound runs. Any toe or nail can be injured, including the dew claw. Check their feet if you notice limping. The Greyhound making tight turns may cause the dew claw to be injured. The dew claw is located on the Greyhound’s front “wrist”. Some breeders have the dew claw removed near birth, removal after that young age is dangerous and painful. A sighthound knowledgeable vet knows how quickly an infected toe can turn into a life or limb emergency. Do not take an infected toe lightly.
* Most Greyhound blood is DEA 1.1 negative. If your Greyhound is DEA 1.1 negative it means they are a universal blood donors. Some “rescued” Greyhounds live out their life as the blood donor dog at a vet’s office. In addition to the Greyhounds blood type, their mild manner makes them an easy choice to be a blood donor. Do your research before deciding if this is a choice you want to make. KyG does not advocate your Greyhound being a commercial blood donor dog.
* You will be responsible for maintaining vaccinations, etc., required from your jurisdiction after adoption.
* The 3 year option on the vaccines is preferred. If the shots were given to your Greyhound prior to arrival at KyG it had the 1 year shots, if KyG had it done, we did 3 year. You will receive the vet records to know.
* Some areas allow titration to be done instead of giving a vaccine when the Greyhound has enough vaccine in its blood.
* Giving your Greyhound a tablet or capsule. The antibiotic cephalexin has a very strong odor. If your Greyhound refuses all the tricks to get him to take it, then see if the vet can offer an alternative. If you cannot get the pill in the Greyhound it is not helping him anyway.
	+ Make sure the pill has really gone down the throat, especially if you have children or dogs that could be harmed if they found the pill lying about.
	+ Sometimes the Greyhound will just take the pill, especially if flavored for dogs. Unfortunately if this does not work it will be more difficult to get him to take it in the future since he has tasted it now.
	+ Totally surround pill, no gaps, in one of the following:
		- Peanut butter – do not use if pill is large. Note: Greyhounds have amazing tongues and the pill can come back out all nice and clean with all the peanut butter licked off.
		- Cream cheese – stickier than peanut butter.
		- Bread.
		- Marshmallows – especially if they have aged some and are sticky.
		- Meat: hot dogs, summer sausage, etc.
		- Commercial products are also available like pill pockets.
	+ A technique that has worked with success:
		- Prepare at least 3 small bites, with one having the pill in it.
		- Get the Greyhound excited that it is about to have a treat
		- Give the first bite (does not have the pill) and allow the Greyhound to see that there is more to come.
		- Give the second bite (this one has the pill) and
		- Immediately put the third bite at their mouth to encourage the 2nd (pill laced) one to go down faster. If the Greyhound drops their head, then really point out the 3rd treat to encourage the head to rise.

**SAFETY**

* **GREYHOUNDS CAN NEVER BE OFF LEAD IN AN UNFENCED AREA!**
* Greyhounds can get to full speed (40-ish mph) in a few strides and if that happens while a Greyhound is on a retractable lead or tie out, it could spell disaster.
	+ **NEVER** use a retractable lead on a Greyhound.
	+ **NEVER** tie out a Greyhound with chain or rope.
* A martingale collar is a must for walking your Greyhound as the Greyhound’s neck is larger than their head. We will demonstrate the martingale’s use and functionality and how to hold the lead.
* You must have a separate collar on your Greyhound which has the Greyhound’s tags, your contact info and KyG ID tag. This ID collar must always be on your hound. Especially immediately after (the occasional) bathing. You would be surprised that this brief moment is when your Greyhound escapes and there is no tag collar on it.
* Keep locks or bungee cords on your gates. They have very pointy noses and with enough interest on the other side of the gate, your Greyhound will and can nose it open.
* LOST DOG – If your Greyhound becomes loose call the emergency number (502) 536-7594 (7KyG) as quickly as possible. Also call the other numbers in your packet and leave messages if no answer. Tell us the time, location and leave your cell phone number so we can contact you. Always make sure your contact information is current with KyG for emergencies like this one.
	+ If it takes longer than 10 or 15 minutes and you have not located your Greyhound ***CALL US***.
	+ **NO MATTER THE TIME**, ***CALL US***. It is important that we be on our way as soon as possible.
	+ We will take the responsibility to call others on our list, other groups in the area and animal control to help in the search and to get you out and looking as soon as possible.
	+ After those few calls YOU go back out and keep looking. You are the first line in the search, even a quick response will take time to get to your location. You are THERE…keep looking, call their name, do not chase a Greyhound it will only run, it will be scared and may not connect that you are the parent, keep coaxing, do not yell, keep your voice calm (even though your insides are not!).
	+ **DO NOT FORGET, CALL us WHEN you FIND your GREYHOUND.** We will call off the search and rejoice with you.
* Trash cans need to be kept out of reach of your Greyhound at all times. Garbage can be tempting and will likely make your Greyhound sick.
* Consider baby gates to use to keep your Greyhound from escaping through the doors. Front doors are a major escape route. Prevention is the key. You might consider only letting your Greyhound in and out the door which has a fence barrier. This can be inconvenient, but worth it if your Greyhound were to try to bolt through the door.

**DIET**

* Premium dog food is a must – see Basic Supplies Needed for transition of food brands.
	+ Average dog 4 cups total - Feed greyhound twice a day to help eliminate risk of bloat.
	+ Although your hound is not always high energy, a high protein dog food is highly recommended.
	+ Amount of food may also need to be adjusted due to activity or inactivity.
* Love fruits and vegetables (if canned use the lower salt variety). That being said here is a partial list of those that are bad for your greyhound: grapes, raisins, onion, apple seeds, and corn cobs. Additional research on your part will help keep your hound safe.
* Love bread and marshmallows.
* No table food – their body structure is not designed to carry extra weight.
* Love peanut butter, but like small children can cause a choking hazard if too big a bite.
* Elevated feeders are recommended.
* Chocolate is toxic to dogs.

**GROOMING**

* Minimal shedders, but they do shed.
* It helps to “brush” them a couple of times a week with a grooming mitt.
* DO NOT OVER BATHE – protective oils in their fur will be eliminated with frequent bathing. Bathing 1 or 2 times a year, or less, is quite sufficient.
* Fainting – be aware that when bathing, the Greyhound may start to faint. Be prepared to steady the Greyhound and remove it from the bath, begin warming it up. The Greyhound’s normal temperature is around 102°F, humans are around 98.6°F so the bath water should be slightly uncomfortable to you to help prevent the fainting reaction. KyG does not recommend using an outside garden hose for bathing your hound.
* Greyhounds have little dog odor, that may present if they have been running or get damp, but quickly decreases.
* Recommend to have the protocol for being skunked on hand – including ingredients and rubber gloves.

**EXERCISE**

* Greyhounds need no more exercise than other dogs.
* Discuss running with small dogs, cats or other animals (rabbits, squirrels, birds, etc.).
* Outdoor cats are never safe.
* Greyhounds are sprinters and burn out quickly. Playing hard generally only lasts 10 to 15 minutes and they are done. They often enjoy long meandering walks where there are plenty of sniffs.
* If desire is to walk long distances with your Greyhound, their endurance must be built. 2 miles per session is a doable goal. Pay attention to your Greyhound to see when you can extend the distance.
* The average Greyhound will sleep 75% - 80% of the time.
* Fenced yard is best, but not necessary. If you do not have a fenced yard, then you must understand the huge commitment you are making.
	+ Dogs must be walked a minimum of 4 – 5 times a day – regardless of weather and family needs.
	+ For both exercise and for potty breaks
	+ Access to a large fenced area where you can take your hound 2 to 3 times a week is beneficial to the hound.
	+ Dangers of dog parks – watch for small dogs (could trigger their prey drive) also Greyhounds are very competitive and may nip other dogs when running (this is why they are muzzled at the track and at times when they run with other greys for fun).

**CHILDREN**

* Greyhounds view kids as siblings and will treat them as such. Greyhounds are raised in an adult environment and are respectful of adults.
* Children must be respectful any dog – never touch them when they are sleeping or when they are eating. Children should never try to take a bone or toy from a dog. Always get an adult.
* Dogs can appear to sleep with their eyes open. In reality this is the dog’s third eyelid. Do not assume the dog is awake if their eyes appear open. Always call a dog’s name or clap your hands to ensure that the dog is awake before touching a laying dog. Greyhounds are not used to sharing space and can react when startled. The dog’s own bedding should be a safe spot for the greyhounds to go when it wants to be around, but not bothered.
* Most adoptable Greyhounds are full grown. They will more likely bond with the adults in the household than the children. Offer bedding in all rooms in which you would like them to sleep, though they will probably choose the room with the adults.

**CHEMICAL SENSITIVITY**

* Due to low body fat and thin skin Greyhounds (and a few other breeds) are more chemically sensitive than most dogs
	+ Be aware of chemically treated lawns (your and when on walks) – i.e. Chem Lawn (usually has flags in yard after application) – do not let them walk on the grass if you do not KNOW that it is safe.
	+ Also use caution with chemical used indoors.

**VOLUNTEER CAREGIVER (FOSTER) PROGRAM**

* KyG relies on Volunteer Caregivers to foster Greyhounds waiting for their forever home.
	+ Select commercial kennels could be used in an emergency situation when a volunteer caregiver home is unavailable.
	+ Please consider being a Volunteer Caregiver
		- For emergencies (usually short term)
			* Bounces (adoption returns)
			* After medicals (i.e. spay/neuter)
		- Until a Greyhound finds their forever home…*just like someone cared for your Greyhound*.
* Volunteer Caregivers work on basic house manners, command and house breaking (coming from the track environment with regimented potty breaks – house breaking is relatively easy).
* Volunteer Caregivers evaluate personality, small animal and kid interaction, notice if fearful of storms, etc.
* Not all Volunteer Caregiver homes utilize crates. If you plan to crate your Greyhound, please let us know.
* Volunteer Caregivers do not encourage, the foster Greyhound to get on furniture or on the bed (see love soft and comfortable above). If the foster parent has other greyhounds they will most likely learn by watching and will see the other Greyhounds and may eventually follow in their paw steps.
* Ask for a copy of the Volunteer Caregiver Guidelines for more information.

**PLACEMENT**

* You will be required to sign a contract at time of adoption.
* The adoption fee will be collected at contract signing, less deposit if any. Current adoption fee is $275.
* We hope to place the Greyhound when most of the family will be home for at least 2 days to help the Greyhound acclimate to your home and family. Brief periods of away training is recommended.
* If you have a vacation or trip planned, you may delay accepting the Greyhound until your return. If you complete the adoption contract, including adoption fee, we will hold the Greyhound for you.
* Once you have been approved as an adopter, your email will be added to our email list. KyG has activities for humans and hounds, we hope you will join us. We all are a greyt source for information and socializing humans and hounds.
* We strongly encourage you to call us if you having any adjustment problems with your Greyhound. Do not wait until the problem escalates.

**ABOUT US:** **Kentucky Greyhound Placement is a community of Greyhound caring individuals choosing to make a difference in the lives of retired racing Greyhounds.**

* Greyt Grub Gathering is a monthly opportunity to meet other Greyhound owners while enjoying good food often at a locally owned establishment. When possible and weather permitting, we will choose a dining establishment where we can bring our Greyhounds onto their patio.
* Our annual Greyt Greyhound Gathering is currently held in July, although benefiting Greyhounds all sighthounds are welcome.
* Please join KyG by either volunteering at or attending events we sponsor or support.
* Help us raise money by donating time and money when you are able.
* KyG is a 501(c)3 as a DBA for Pet Action League, Inc.
* Spread the word of how wonderful Greyhounds are. Please point them to KyG for information.
* Volunteer Caregivers, volunteers, caring individuals, donors and adopters makeup the Greyhound community. It is a greyt place to be. We are who it takes to continue to find Greyhounds loving, responsible and appropriate forever homes, while educating the public of that need. Help us to continue that work. We can find a spot to put your talents to good use!
* Having any Greyhound or a Greyhound adopted through KyG, is not required to participate in any of the KyG activities or volunteer opportunities.
* Find us on
	+ Facebook: at KyGreyhounds Friends and at KyGreyhounds
	+ Website (under construction) www.KyGreyhounds.org
	+ Twitter: greyhounds4you
	+ Instagram
* If you know of others that may like to be a part of our community, please pass our contact information to them.

$50 – Deposit – reduces adoption fee by deposit amount, if collected.

Potential adopter has been explained and given a copy of the Initial Home Visit Notes and acknowledges deposit of $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was collected:

Adopter signs \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

KyG Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

End Initial Home Visit Notes