

# Owning a pet Greyhound

**Greyhounds are sight hounds, which is a hound which hunts prey using vision and speed as opposed to tracking prey from scent. Salukis, Borzois and Afghan Hounds are also sight hounds.**

Unlike other sight hounds, greyhounds have been bred almost exclusively for racing for centuries with only a few having been bred specifically as companion or show dogs. Greyhounds are amongst the most physically sound breeds in the world and are generally placid towards humans and other dogs of a similar size to themselves.

Racing greyhounds have been bred and trained to chase a lure. The lure, which is usually a replica of a rabbit is attached to a mechanical device which carries it at high speed down a greyhound race track, inciting the dogs to chase. Unless retrained, Greyhounds can have a tendency to chase anything that moves, in particular anything smaller than themselves such as smaller dogs or cats. This places added responsibilities on the owners of either racing or retired greyhounds with specific responsibilities under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*.

The Act states:

## **45C—Specific duties relating to greyhounds**

- (1) A person who owns or is responsible for the control of a greyhound is guilty of an offence if, while not effectively confined to premises of which the person is the occupier, the greyhound—
- does not have a muzzle securely fixed on its mouth so as to prevent it from biting any person or animal; or
  - is not under the effective control of a person by means of physical restraint.

Maximum penalty: \$250.

Expiation fee: \$80.



When in public greyhounds must be restrained by a lead not exceeding two metres in length and must be muzzled. Greyhound Racing SA prohibits its members from walking more than two racing greyhounds, on lead, at the same time. This is recommended when exercising pet greyhounds but is not a legal requirement.

The Dog and Cat Management Board can accredit companion and retired racing greyhounds which have been retrained and desensitized from the prey-chase response. Dogs which have successfully completed assessment following retraining, can be exempted from wearing a muzzle when in public. Owners of greyhounds that have been accredited by the Dog and Cat Management Board must carry an authorization card issued by the Board if they are taking their dogs out in public without a muzzle. Further information on the accreditation of greyhounds is available from the Board.

Greyhounds, whether retired racing dogs or bred as companions, can make excellent pets. They are highly social dogs and are most content interacting with their owners. They have a short coat, very little body fat and are more likely to feel the cold than some other breeds. They prefer to sleep indoors with the family in cooler months. If kept outside, they require warmth and shelter from the elements together with appropriate warm bedding.

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Greyhounds can suffer boredom and loneliness if kept in isolation, however they generally do not bark. With retraining and being of an appropriate temperament, greyhounds can become good friends with cats and other small animals. Contrary to popular belief they do not require a huge amount of exercise and are happy with a short daily walk. Greyhounds must be maintained under effective control at all times. You must never let your greyhound off the lead in public and should take care in doing so on private land unless you have established whether the dog will listen to you over and above a prey/chase response.

The Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) works with Greyhound Racing SA to re-home suitable ex-racing dogs. If you feel that a greyhound may suit your circumstances, please contact either of these organisations for further information regarding adding a greyhound to your family. Please note that any reduced registration fees offered by your council for racing greyhounds do not apply to greyhounds being kept as pets.

## Owning a Racing Greyhound

Greyhound Racing SA has strict rules about the care and management of greyhounds. Any person considering purchasing or training a racing greyhound should contact Greyhound Racing SA for information and advice.

Some local council areas have lower registration fees for racing greyhounds however this reduced registration fee does not apply to greyhounds maintained as pets.

Section 35 of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* provides that business dog registrations are applicable to greyhounds, if the dogs are being held for training or breeding purposes. For further information on the comparative benefits of 'individual' and 'business' dog registrations please refer to the 'dog registration information sheet' on the GoodDogSA website located at **[www.GoodDogSA.com](http://www.GoodDogSA.com)**

The *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* permits councils to develop by-laws, limiting the number of dogs held on a property, regardless of breed. Most council areas permit two dogs in a standard house block or one dog in a strata title type unit. The Local Government Act and the Development Act also contain provisions relating to land use and animals. Any person intending to establish a greyhound kennel, should contact their local council as part of their planning process. To identify your local council visit **[www.GoodDogSA.com](http://www.GoodDogSA.com)**