



GREYHOUND RESCUE
West of England

Fact sheet 9 - Homing a dog with other dogs

Your sight-hound (greyhound or lurcher) will have spent much of its time in kennels with other sight-hounds. Greyhounds may have spent all of their life with only other greyhounds, so it is possible that your greyhound will find other types of dogs completely new and different, and even something to be scared of. Sometimes dogs who are scared of other dogs will growl or bark at them – never tell your dog off for this as he will become more worried.

This leaflet will help you if you already have another dog and are homing a new dog, or if your new dog is worried about meeting other dogs.

1. Initially always have a muzzle on your dog when meeting other dogs, until he is used to meeting them calmly.
2. Never “introduce” your dog to other dogs. If you stand back and let your dog investigate the other dog you are putting him in the front line. It’s like saying “There you are, there’s another dog. What are you going to do about it? It’s your problem”. Instead, put yourself between your dog and the other dog and keep walking purposefully ahead. This way you are being a role model. Your body language is saying “I am not bothered about this other dog so you needn’t be.” If your dog and the other dog are comfortable saying hello, allow them to do this with loose leads, as pulling leads tight can prevent them from communicating effectively. Don’t pull your dog away sharply, as this can upset both dogs, but call them away once they have said hello to carry on moving forward.
3. If another dog is coming to your home, make sure the dog’s first meet on neutral territory, such as a local field or park. Again do not “introduce” your dogs. However, they may wish to sniff and greet socially, allow them to do this if so. They may circle each other and sniff, which is a great sign. You should then begin walking on so that the dogs keep moving and don’t get ‘stuck’. If the dogs are not so keen to meet or are a little worried, simply put yourself between the dogs and go straight into walking together. Make the walk purposeful; give your dog something else to focus on (i.e. the walk). If it is possible to let the dogs off the lead somewhere safe, then away from the house is the best place to do this at first. Do not play with toys on the first play sessions. When you get back to the house go straight into the garden and if all is going well, let the dogs off the lead in the garden but keep muzzles on. They may chase each other wildly so make sure there is nothing lying around that they can hurt themselves on. There may be a few grumbles initially, but if this is minimal and there is no contact between the dogs, don’t worry, it’s normal. If one dog begins to look worried or there are more than one or two grumbles, it may be time to go for another walk or to have a walk on-lead around the garden together to calm things down. Do not allow dogs to ‘sort themselves out’ but help them to develop a great relationship by making what they know of each other fun.

GRWE Homing a Dog with Other Dogs – last updated September 2014 by Carol Baby

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4. When a new dog comes into the house, the dog that already lives there might find this stressful. Give them plenty of space. Do not give out treats – as that is often when arguments start. Do not take muzzles off until you are happy that they have settled together. Keep toys and chews locked away at first, and gradually introduce low-value toys a few at a time once you are sure your dogs are friends.
5. If at first your dog is stressy and seems aggressive when he sees other dogs out on walks, and walking purposefully past is really difficult to do, turn and walk away until the other dog has gone. This will help your dog to realise that you are not going to put him in the front line but that you are going to help him deal with the problem. Reward your dog for any calm behavior when seeing another dog.
6. Don't expect two dogs to live together happily immediately. If you are going out or leaving them for the night it is best to leave them in separate rooms until you are sure they are okay together.
7. Don't expect dogs to be able to share treats or toys until they know each other well. Just like children, two dogs and one toy can cause arguments!

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