



Greyhound Rescue West of England

When You Go Out

Some dogs do not cope well with being left at home alone. If you come back to a pile of poo, or irate neighbours who have been deafened by a crying dog, or chewed up furniture, please, please do not chastise the dog. He did it because he couldn't cope, and he will be even more stressed the next time you leave him, then the results will be worse.

1. You can deal with this by treating the symptoms.

i.e. put him in a damage limitation zone. Like an Indoor kennel or a utility room when you go out. Give him toys - or better still toys like kongs stuffed with treats. Leave the radio on.

2. Or you can be really clever and solve the underlying problem. Is he suffering from anxiety at being left alone, or is he bored?

If it is anxiety, treat the symptoms as above and make sure you make no fuss on leaving him. Just pick your keys and go. Say nothing. When you come back in, do the same. Ignore him completely till he relaxes (yawns, stretches, blinks or lies down) then reward him by making a fuss of him. This way you are informing him that you are the leader in this home and you do not need his protection. You are strong enough to come and go as you please.

If it is boredom that is causing the problem, take him for a long walk and make sure he has had plenty of games. Greyhounds are bred to hunt, chase, catch and kill.

Games

Some dogs take a while to understand the games but they will increase in fun and excitement once they have got the hang of it. Some favourites are;

- 🕒 **Hide and seek.** Get someone to hold him while you hide, then keep calling him invitingly till he finds you. Repeat.
- 🕒 **Hunt the treat.** Hide treats around the garden and encourage him to rush round finding them.
- 🕒 **Fetch a toy.** You will need to work on teaching this (read Jean Donaldson's book Culture Clash.) eventually he will get it.

3. Or you can be totally clever by avoiding this becoming a problem from the start!

From day one, build up separation in small steps. Pop out of the room and shut the door. Wait silently till he stops fussing for a few seconds then go straight back in and reward him. Next time make it a bit longer and so on, till he understands that you will be coming back as long as he waits quietly. Now build up into leaving the house for a few minutes and gradually lengthen the time you are away. Never come back in if he is making a fuss. Always wait till it is quiet, then give immediate praise. If there is a poo, or damage do not make a fuss. If you are calm, he will learn from you.

For more help and advice please visit www.grwe.com or call our 24 hour help line on **07000 785092**



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4. Or you can be a total genius by doing all of these things !

Whatever you think, remember dogs do not know when they have done wrong, they just act as if they do because they sense you are angry. Dogs do not understand that chewing something is wrong, they are just comfort eating. Dogs do not sulk; they just sense your mood. If dogs were that clever they would be running the world.

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