

Creating Confident Canines and Happy Hounds

By Susan McKean, *Happy Hounds Dog Training and Behaviour*



Stevie Greyhound has fun practising scentwork at home

Building trust and developing a lasting bond with your greyhound, takes time and patience. By putting the right foundations in place, you can help ensure that your greyhound becomes happy and secure in their new home, and that they develop the confidence to deal with life as a family pet.

Teaching your hound to recognise their name, and introducing them to scentwork are two great places to start.

Know your name

When they leave racing kennels, most greyhounds don't know or respond to their pet name; it hasn't been an important part of their life. However, teaching your greyhound to recognise and respond to their name is easy and fun, all you need is time, some tasty food rewards (little bits of chopped, cooked chicken, sausage, ham, or cheese).

- Choose a moment when your greyhound isn't looking at you
- Say their name in a pleasant tone
- The moment your hound turns their head towards you, praise and reward them with a piece of food
- Repeat another 3 times and then take a break
- Keep practising in short bursts during the day (several short sessions are always better than one long training session)

Dogs learn by association and consequence, and by the continued pairing of the sound of their name, with the arrival of food, your greyhound will soon learn that when they hear their name, it means to pay attention to you.

From super shy to super sniffer

Scentwork is a great way to increase your greyhound's confidence. It's estimated that a dog's sense of smell is between 10,000 and 100,000 times better than ours! By playing the 'find it' game you can help your hound gain confidence and tap into this amazing sense.

Playing 'find it':

To play find it, you will need plenty of cheese that has been cut into little squares.

- Give your greyhound a piece of the cheese
- Next, get ready to throw a small piece on the ground – near where you're standing
- As you throw the cheese, say 'find it!' and let your hound eat it
- Once your hound has eaten the cheese and looks back up at you, throw the next piece of cheese, saying 'find it!' as you do so
- Repeat 5-6 times maximum, and keep initial training sessions short

Once your greyhound is happy with the 'find it' game, you can start to vary it by throwing the cheese around corners, or hiding it in places where your hound will need to sniff it out.



Watch me is a useful cue to know.

Find out more

If you want to help your hound become a super-sniffer, Talking Dogs Scentwork® is the UK's most popular scentwork organisation. It is fun, friendly and accessible, and has a number of accredited trainers providing workshops across the country. www.talkingdogsscentwork.co.uk

For help with training contact your local RGT branch, RGT head office, or a professional, qualified dog trainer such as members of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers, UK

www.apdt.co.uk

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