

AKC Trick Dog

# EVALUATOR GUIDE



## **About AKC Trick Dog**

Welcome to the AKC Trick Dog program. In AKC Trick Dog, dogs and their owners can have fun learning tricks together.

There are 4 levels of titles in AKC Trick Dog:

- AKC Novice Trick Dog (TKN)
- AKC Intermediate Trick Dog (TKI)
- AKC Advanced Trick Dog (TKA)
- AKC Trick Dog Performer (TKP)

AKC Approved CGC Evaluators may observe the tricks and sign as evaluators for the Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced Trick Dog titles.

**In a trick dog class (e.g., a 6-weeks course), evaluators may sign off on tricks as handlers learn them each week for Novice, Intermediate and Advanced.**

**For the Performer level, tricks may be done as either 1) 10 unrelated tricks done one after the other or 2) as a part of a routine with a theme/story (such as “Bruno plays sports”).**

For AKC Trick Dog Performer, a video/link must be provided to AKC for evaluation.

## **Do More With Your Dog!™ Trick Dog Titles**

AKC is proud to recognize Kyra Sundance’s *Do More With Your Dog* (DMWYD) titles. DMWYD title holder may submit a copy of a DMWYD certificate as proof of the equivalent AKC title, along with the AKC Trick Dog title application and fee to earn AKC Trick Dog titles.

<b>AKC TRICK TITLES</b>	<b>Equivalent DMWYD!™ TITLES</b>
AKC Novice Trick Dog (TKN)	Novice Trick Dog (NTD)
AKC Intermediate Trick Dog (TKI)	Intermediate Trick Dog (ITD)
AKC Advanced Trick Dog (TKA)	Advanced Trick Dog (ATD)
AKC Trick Dog Performer (TKP)	Expert Trick Dog (ETD) & Trick Dog Champion (TDCH)

## NOVICE LEVEL

### *Guidelines*

For the **Novice Trick Dog** title, the dog must:

- 1) perform 10 tricks, or
- 2) have the CGC on record at AKC and perform 5 tricks.

In the **Novice** Trick Dog test, handlers:

- **May** use food/toys as a lure (unless otherwise indicated for a specific trick).  
(Lures are used to guide the dog into position).
- **May** use lures, hand signals and/or verbal cues unless otherwise indicated for a specific trick.
- **May** use food as a reinforcer and **may also use** clickers to mark behaviors.  
(Reinforcers come after the behavior to tell the dog the behavior was done correctly).

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In the Novice level, the dog will do each trick 2 times (unless otherwise specified) for the evaluator.

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### **CGC Dogs and Trick Dog Titles**

**If a CGC certificate or title is on record at AKC,  
CGC + 5 Tricks = the AKC NOVICE TRICK DOG TITLE**

For the Novice Trick Dog title, if the dog has a Canine Good Citizen (CGC) certificate or title on record at AKC, the CGC will count as 5 tricks.

CGC dogs can earn the Novice Trick Dog title by performing 5 additional tricks for the CGC Evaluator.

## INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

### *Guidelines*

For the **Intermediate Trick Dog** title, the dog must:

- 1) perform 10 tricks from the Intermediate tricks list.

In the **Intermediate** Trick Dog test, handlers:

- **May NOT** use food/toys as a lure (except in tricks where this is specifically permitted - crawl on belly and weaves).  
(Lures are used to guide the dog into position).
- **May** use food as a reinforcer and **may also use** clickers to mark behaviors.  
(Reinforcers come after the behavior to tell the dog the behavior was done correctly).

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In the Intermediate level, the dog will do each trick 2 times for the evaluator unless otherwise specified.

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## ADVANCED LEVEL

### *Guidelines*

For the **Advanced Trick Dog** title, the dog must:

1) perform 5 tricks from the Advanced tricks list.

In the **Advanced** Trick Dog test, handlers:

- **May NOT** use food/toys as a lure.  
(Lures are used to guide the dog into position).
- **May** use food as a reinforcer and **may also use** clickers to mark behaviors.  
(Reinforcers come after the behavior to tell the dog the behavior was done correctly).

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In the Advanced level, the dog will do each trick 1 time for the evaluator.

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## PERFORMER LEVEL

### *Guidelines*

In the Performer level, there are no tricks specified.

#### **For the Performer Trick Dog title, the dog will:**

- 1) perform a total of 10 previously learned or new tricks from the Novice, Intermediate and Advanced titles.
- 2) The dog must do at least 2 Intermediate and 2 Advanced Tricks.

**For the Performer level, tricks may be done as either 1) 10 unrelated tricks done one after the other or 2) as a part of a routine with a theme/story.**

An example of a **theme** is “Bruno plays sports”. An example of a tricks routine with a **story** is, “This is Princess. Princess loves to go to school. When she goes to school she 1) takes a nap, 2) gets a book, 3) goes outside and plays ball,” etc.

A helper may be used to read/narrate the story as a way of prompting the tricks for the handler, or the handler may tell the story as the routine proceeds.

**A theme or story is not required**, however, these can be very entertaining and useful for dogs who are working in schools and therapy settings.

In the **Performer** Trick Dog test, handlers:

- 1) **May not** use food/toys as a lure.  
(Lures are used to guide the dog into position).
- 2) **May** use food as a reinforcer and **may also use** clickers to mark behaviors.  
(Reinforcers come after the behavior to tell the dog the behavior was done correctly).

## NOVICE LEVEL

### *Trick Descriptions*

#### 1. Balance Beam

The dog will walk on a low balance beam or board a few inches off the floor. The dog will perform this trick at least 2 times in a row.

- The board should be approximately 6-ft. long
- The board should be stable.
- Handler may be beside the dog for safety.

#### 2. Bark on Cue

When the handler says, “Bark!” or “Speak!” (or another chosen verbal cue), the dog will bark. The dog will perform this trick at least 2 times in a row.

- The handler may also choose to use a hand signal for “speak.” The hand signal may be given alone or along with a verbal cue.

#### 3. Crawl

The dog will respond to the handler’s cue to crawl by getting in the down position and crawling on his/her belly at least 5-ft. The dog will do this trick at least 2 times.

- In the Novice level, the handler may instruct the dog to “down” in preparation for the crawl.
- The handler may use a lure.

#### 4. Fetch it & Give

The handler will throw an object such as a favorite toy or ball for the dog to retrieve. The dog will fetch the object, bring it to the handler, and will release it. (2 times)

- The dog will fetch the object from at least 10-feet.

#### 5. Find it

A treat will be hidden under one cup and the dog will be told to “find it.” The dog will touch the cup with its nose or will turn the cup over [at the Intermediate level, this trick will be done with 3 cups]. (2 times)

#### 6. Get your \_\_\_\_.

When told by the handler, “Get your\_\_” [may be a brush, toy, name of specific toy, etc.], the dog will get the object from at least 5-ft. away and will bring it to the handler. (2 times)

### **7. Get in (the box)**

When the handler tells the dog, "Get in," the dog will jump or step into a box. (2 times)

- The box will be big enough to hold the dog
- The sides of the box may be trimmed so the box is only several inches high.
- A box lid may also be used if the lid is several inches tall.
- All 4 paws will be in the box.

### **8. Get on (low platform or step, etc. with 4 paws)**

When the handler tells the dog, "Get on," "Hup," or whatever the preferred term is, the dog will jump or step onto a low platform. This can be a wide step for the dog to stand on with all 4 paws, an agility pause table, or a trick dog pedestal. (Will do 2 times)

- Remember that whenever the dog is jumping onto something, the object should be stable.

### **9. Hand signals (Choose one: sit, down or come)**

The dog will respond to one of the hand signals for sit, down or come. Dog will do this trick (respond to selected hand signal) 2 times. If a hand signal has not already been taught, we suggest using the hand signals for AKC obedience if the handler is interested in obedience training. This trick tests the dog's ability to respond to a hand signal; lures and verbal cues may not be used for this trick.

### **10. High five**

In the High five trick, when cued by the handler, the dog raises one arm into the "high five" (chest height) position. This trick can also be called "wave hello," or "wave goodbye." At the Novice level, the dog may simply raise the arm and does not have to wave or paw at the air. (2 times)

### **11. Hold (at least 3-seconds)**

For the Novice Trick Dog "hold", the dog will hold an object given to it by the handler (who says, "Hold"). (Object will be given to dog to hold 2 times)

- the object may be a favorite toy or ball. For an obedience dog, the handler may wish to have the dog demonstrate holding a dumbbell.
- Objects at the Novice level are held at least 3-seconds
- Other objects could be a basket (handle), a stuffed animal that could be worked into a trick dog routine ("take the cat outside"), a letter, etc.

### **12. Jump (through a low hoop or over a low bar)**

When instructed to, "Jump!" by the handler, the dog will jump over a low bar (a few inches from the floor) or the dog will jump through a low hula hoop. (2 times)

- In Novice, a lure may be used to get the dog through the hoop or over the jump.



**13. Kennel up (go in crate, stay until released)**

When told, "Kennel up," "Crate," or "Get in your crate," etc., from 3 to 5 ft. away, the dog will go into the crate and will stay there (quietly and with no resistance) with the door closed for at least 10-seconds. (2 times)

- The handler will open the door after 10-seconds and will release the dog.

**14. Kiss**

The handler will turn his/her cheek to the dog, say "Kiss," or "Give kisses," etc. The dog will kiss the handler's cheek. (2 times)

**15. Paws up (2 front paws on low footstool or step)**

When told, "Paws up," by the handler, the dog will step up and place his/her two front feet onto a step, stepstool, upside down wooden box or other raised surface. (2 times)

- Stools, pedestals, and other surfaces should be stable so that they don't slide when the dog steps up.
- A practical example of this skill is in therapy settings when the dog needs to raise its head so a patient in a bed can reach it for petting

**16. Push-ups (sit, down; sit, down; sit, down)**

Push-ups are a good exercise for puppies who are learning tricks.

- In Novice, a lure may be used to guide the dog into a sit. From sit, the dog is instructed to "down," then sit again, then down.
- There should be 2 repetitions of sit and down.

**17. Shake hands**

When the handler says, "Shake," "Paw," or "Shake hands," the dog will raise her/his paw chest high so the handler can 'shake hands.' (2 times)

- Remember that you can reward the dog with food in Novice.

**18. Spin in circle**

When told, "Spin" or "Circle," the dog will spin in a full circle.

- The dog may circle to the right or left. More advanced trick dogs can learn to respond to "circle right" and "circle left."
- The handler may use a lure in Novice to get the dog to spin.
- The dog should spin at least 2 times in a circle (does the trick twice).

**19. Touch it (hand or target stick)**

The touch is the foundation for a lot of trick training. When told, “touch,” the dog will touch the handler’s hand or target stick. (2 times)

- Say, “touch” and present the object to be touched to the right of the dog’s head, then to the left, then in front of the dog (so the dog will demonstrate it can do this in 3 positions).
- For this exercise, we encourage handlers to learn to use a clicker if they haven’t already. In training, click and reward each time-- the instant the dog does the behavior correctly. First click, then treat.
- By the time handlers get to the Trick Dog test, they may or may not have faded some of the clicks.

**20. Tunnel (agility or child’s tunnel)**

In this Novice trick, the dog will go through a tunnel (2 times).

- The handler may guide the dog into the tunnel at the entrance.

**21. Other: Handlers Choice**

For the Novice title, the handler may choose to do up to 2 Handler’s Choice tricks. This is to accommodate handlers who have taught tricks not on this list. If the trick is more difficult than a Novice trick, the handler may wish to save this trick for a more advanced title. Tricks may not be repeated from one title to the next. This trick should be demonstrated 2 times.

**22. Other: Handlers Choice**

See #21.

## INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

### *Trick Descriptions*

#### **1. Balance treat on nose or head (e.g., dog biscuit)**

The dog will balance a treat (such as a dog biscuit) on his/her nose or head for at least 5-seconds. Dog will do this trick 2 times.

- The handler may give a verbal cue such as, “Stay,” while the dog is balancing the treat.

#### **2. Carry (a basket)**

The dog will hold and carry an object (such as a basket) (2 times).

- The dog should walk at least 15-ft. carrying the object.
- The handler may walk beside or ahead of the dog.

#### **3. Catch (soft toy, soft ball)**

The handler will toss an object (such as a soft toy, soft ball) to the dog and the dog will catch it. Dog will catch the object 2 times.

- The handler may give a verbal cue such as, “catch.”

#### **4. Crawl (dog on belly, crawls at least 5-ft.; may use food or toy lure)**

From the down position, the dog will crawl on its belly at least 5-ft. (2 times)

- The handler may use a lure for this trick (in Novice and Intermediate).
- If this Trick was submitted for the Novice title, may not repeat for Intermediate.

#### **5. Fetch it (20 ft.)**

The handler will throw an object (such as a ball, dumbbell, toy) and the dog will fetch it from 20-ft. (2 times)

- The handler will give the dog a verbal cue such as, “fetch it.”
- The dog will fetch the object and return it within 2-ft. from the handler so the handler can take the object.

#### **6. Game (dog manipulates interactive canine game to get a treat)**

The dog will manipulate a canine game or puzzle to get a treat. (2 times)

#### **7. Go find (handler hides, dog goes and finds)**

The handler will hide. The dog will come and find the handler. (2 times)

- A helper will say, “Go find\_\_\_,” and the dog will find the handler.
- The handler may hide behind a screen, around a corner, behind furniture, etc.

**8. Go to your place (to bed/mat, crate from 10 ft.)**

The dog will go to his/her place when given a verbal cue such as “Place” or “Go to your place.” (2 times)

- The place may be the dog’s bed, mat or a crate.
- The dog will go to his/her place from 10-ft. away.

**9. Hand signals (sit, down, come, stand- total of 3 in any order)**

The dog will respond correctly to at least 3 hand signals (no verbal cues) selected by the handler. (2 times for each sequence of 3. Example: sit, down, come. Then repeat: sit, down, come).

- Hand signals may include sit, down, come, and stand.

**10. Jump through - handler’s circled arms**

This trick is for small or medium-sized dogs. The handler will hold her/his arms in a circle (to the handler’s side) and will give a cue such as, “Through” or “Hup” to signal the dog to jump through the handler’s arms. (2 times)

- The handler may bend over, or do this trick from a kneeling position.

**11. Leg weave (weave around handler’s legs)**

In this Intermediate trick, the dog will weave around the handler’s legs.

- The dog will go around each leg at least 2 times.

**12. Paws up (on handler’s arm)**

In this trick, the dog will jump up and place the front paws/arms on the handler’s arm (2 times)

- With larger dogs, handlers will stand and the dog will stand on its hind legs.
- For smaller dogs, the handler can bend over or kneel.

**13. Pulls a toy/bag on a string or rope**

The dog will respond to a cue such as, “Pull” or “Pull it.” (2 times)

- The dog will pull the toy at least 5-ft.

**14. Push button on sound toy, toy piano, to turn on audiotape, etc.**

The dog will push a button at least 2 times on a toy that makes a sound, or a toy piano, etc.

**15. Rollover**

For this Intermediate level trick, the dog will respond to the handler’s cue, “Rollover.” (will do 2 times)

- The handler may tell the dog to “down” as the first step.

**16. Shell game (find treat under 1 of 3 cups)**

In the Novice version of this trick, the dog found a treat under 1 cup. For this Intermediate level trick, the dog will find a treat hidden under 1 of 3 cups. The dog will indicate the correct cup by touching it with its nose, or pushing it over. ( 2 times)

- For a performance, the handler can tell the audience the dog will guess which cup hides the treat, but, this is simply a scent exercise.

**17. Sit pretty (sit up or sit with head tilted)**

There are two ways to do the sit pretty: 1) the dog will sit up with its paws off the floor or 2) the dog will sit and simply tilt its head to the side. (2 times)

- Large dogs may have a difficult time sitting up and balancing so they can “sit pretty” by tilting their heads and holding the head tilt for at least 3-seconds.
- Small and medium-size dogs can sit up with their paws off the floor for “sit pretty.”

**18. Wave good-bye**

In the Novice trick called High-five, the dog raises his/her paw at least chest high. In this Intermediate good-bye, the dog raises the paw and paws at the air, as in waving good-bye.

- The dog should “wave” at least 2 waves.

**19. Weave poles (6 weave poles) May used food or a lure for this trick.**

In this Intermediate trick, the dog will correctly go through 6 weave poles. (2 times) While the Intermediate Trick Dog level does not permit food used as lures, there are a few exceptions and this is one of them. In Intermediate weave poles, a lure may be used.

**20. Wobble Board (or rocker board)**

The dog will step onto the rocker board or wobble board and will balance for at least 10-seconds (2 times).

- Wobble boards get the dog used to a moving surface and build balance and coordination.

**21. Other: Handlers Choice**

For the Intermediate title, the handler may choose to do up to 2 Handler’s Choice tricks. This is to accommodate handlers who have taught tricks not on this list. If the trick is more difficult than an Intermediate trick, the handler may wish to save this trick for a more advanced title. Tricks may not be repeated from one title to the next – if the trick has been done in Novice, it may not be repeated in Intermediate or Advanced.

**22. Other: Handlers Choice**

See #21.

## ADVANCED LEVEL

### *Trick Descriptions*

#### **1. Back up**

When given the cue (verbal, hand signal, or both) to “back up” the dog will walk backwards at least 10-ft. (1 time)

- The handler may give multiple cues (e.g., tell the dog more than once).

#### **2. Balance treat on nose, flip to eat**

The handler will place a treat on the dog’s nose (muzzle). A cue may be given such as “stay” or “hold it.” (1 time)

- The dog will hold the treat for at least 5-seconds, then the handler will say something to indicate the dog can flip and eat the treat (e.g., “Get it!”)

#### **3. Barrel**

The dog will either 1) roll a barrel with 2 front paws or 2) will stand with all 4 paws on the barrel and will roll it at least 5-ft. (1 time).

#### **4. Bow**

The dog will bow as in “take a bow.” This looks like a play bow, with the rear end up, front paws out, and head down (1 time).

#### **5. Circle right, circle left**

In this Advanced trick, the dog responds to cues such as “Circle right” or “Circle left.” (1 time in each direction). Handler may use verbal cues and hand signals (either or both).

- Lures may **not** be used for this Advanced trick.

#### **6. Cover your eyes (paw over eyes)**

The dog will begin in the down position and will respond correctly to a cue such as “Cover your eyes,” “Hide your eyes,” or “Don’t look.” (1 time)

#### **7. Cover up with blanket**

The handler will give the dog a verbal prompt such as “Cover up,” or “Time to go to sleep.” The dog will cover itself with the blanket (1 time)

#### **8. Go hide**

The handler will signal the dog to “go hide.” The dog may be directed to get under a table, behind a screen, etc. (1 time)

**9. Head down**

Beginning in the down position, the dog will put his/her head down so the chin is on the floor. (1 time)

**10. Hide your head**

The dog will hide her/his head by putting the head only under a blanket, pillow, etc. (1 time)

**11. Jump into handler's arms**

Starting with the dog several feet away, when given a verbal cue such as, "Up!" or "Hup!", the dog will come and jump into the handler's arms. (1 time)

**12. Jump over the handler's back**

With the handler kneeling on all 4s or on one knee with the upper body bent forward (crouching down), the dog will jump over the handler's back. (1 time)

**13. Light (turn on)**

The dog will turn on a pressure sensitive button or light in response to a verbal cue from the handler such as, "Lights on." (1 time)

**14. Open**

The dog will open the door of a mailbox, refrigerator, etc. and will get an object such as a bag, small box, can, etc. (1 time)

- The mailbox or refrigerator may be a toy version.
- A handle may be added to the door so that the dog has something to pull.

**15. Play dead**

In response to the handler's cue, the dog will fall to the floor and play dead. (1 time)

- Other options are "He fainted!" or "Bang, bang."

**16. Scent articles**

The dog will find a scent article (with the handler's scent) and will return the article to the handler. This trick is basically the scent discrimination exercise in obedience. (1 time)

- In a performance, the handler can say, "My dog (name) can read—go and find the dumbbell that says "6" on it."

**17. Sit or down at a distance**

From 15-ft. away, the dog will respond to a verbal cue or hand signal to sit or down. (1 time). In this trick, the handler will choose either a voice command or hand signal (not both) to cue the dog to sit or down (handler chooses sit or down).

**18. Tissue out of box**

The dog will take a tissue from a box and will bring it to the handler. (1 time)

- The handler will tell the dog to get the tissue.

**19. Toys**

The dog will pick up a toy, take it to a toy box and will drop it in the box. (1 time)

**20. Weave poles (6 poles)**

In the Intermediate version of this trick, handlers were permitted to use a food lure. In the Advanced Trick Dog level, the dog must go through 6 weave poles correctly with no lures. (1 time)

**21. Other: Handlers Choice**

For the Advanced title, the handler may choose to do up to 2 Handler's Choice tricks. This is to accommodate handlers who have taught tricks not on this list. Tricks may not be repeated from one title to the next – if the trick has been done in Novice or Intermediate, it may not be repeated in the Advanced level.

**22. Other: Handlers Choice**

See #21.



## PERFORMER LEVEL

### *Trick Descriptions*

In the Performer level, there are no tricks specified. The handler/dog will perform a total of 10 previously learned or new tricks from the Novice, Intermediate and Advanced titles.

To earn the AKC Trick Dog Performer title, the dog must demonstrate 10 tricks. Of these, there must be at least 2 Intermediate and 2 Advanced Tricks.

**For the Performer level, tricks may be done as either 1) 10 unrelated tricks done one after the other or 2) as a part of a routine with a theme/story.**

An example of a **theme** is “Bruno plays sports”. An example of a tricks routine with a **story** is, “This is Princess. Princess loves to go to school. When she goes to school she 1) takes a nap, 2) gets a book, 3) goes outside and plays ball,” etc.

A helper may be used to read/narrate the story as a way of prompting the tricks for the handler, or the handler may tell the story as the routine proceeds.

**A theme or story is not required**, however, these can be very entertaining and useful for dogs who are working in schools and therapy settings.