

A Beginner's Guide to Companion Events

Obedience • Rally • Tracking • Agility



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®

Welcome to the world of AKC® Companion Events!

These events were developed so ANY dog and anyone of any age could show off their athletic abilities and demonstrate the bond that can develop between a well trained dog and its owner. Companion Events consists of four different events: obedience, rally, tracking, and agility. Obedience trials are one of the AKC's oldest traditions; it is truly a sport of finesse that demonstrates well-behaved dogs performing specified routines.

Tracking evolved originally from obedience, but it has grown and developed into its own event that demonstrates the dog's natural ability to recognize and follow a scent. Agility is a fast-paced obstacle course that relies on nearly flawless communication between handler and dog. AKC Rally® joined the Companion Event family in 2005 and was developed after rally-style auto racing. The dog/handler team must navigate a course made up of directional signs and each require a specific skill to be performed. Each course is unique and different; it is great for first-time competitors or anyone new to Companion Events.



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Tips for the First-Time Spectator

- However tempting, do not pet a dog without asking for permission first.
- Many trials have vendors and an information booth with helpful information for the general public.
- Bring a chair and arrive early. Trials often start very early in the morning.
- If you have not yet purchased your dog, speak to exhibitors about their breed to gain knowledge of the best dog for your family. The best time to approach them would be after they have competed, this way they will be able to give you their full attention.
- If you bring a baby stroller to a trial, be careful that you do not run over any dog's tails, and that your child does not grab or poke the dogs it can reach. Avoid having them near ring entrances or exits. Some crowded trials forbid baby strollers.



Am I Eligible?

To be eligible to compete in obedience, rally, tracking or agility trials, a dog must be:

- Registered with the AKC;
- Enrolled in the AKC Canine Partners program. A program for mixed-breed dogs and dogs ineligible for AKC registration;
- Enrolled in the PAL (Purebred Alternative Listing) program. A program for purebred dogs that cannot be fully registered with the AKC;
- Be a member of a Foundation Stock Service® (FSS) recorded breed.

How Do I Get Started in Companion Events?

The best way to start is to join a local dog-training club. A list of clubs is available at www.akc.org. Local clubs frequently offer training classes for all different types of competition. Even if competition is not your ultimate goal, the relationship that training forms between you and your dog will be very rewarding. Some local clubs also have “fun matches,” where you and your dog can test your skills in the ring. Training and handling your dog in any Companion Event is an exceptional and enjoyable experience. From your first attempted trial to earning your first AKC title, you and your dog will develop a bond. Training classes offer the best hands-on way to practice for the ring, and watching exhibitors at actual trials will gain you knowledge. These events bring many hours of fun for you and your dog. You will make lots of friends in the sport, and you and your dog will take pleasure in your new hobby for many years to come.

What is Obedience?

Obedience training may just be the best gift you can give yourself, your family, and your dog. It teaches your dog appropriate social behavior with both people and animals; helps correct annoying behaviors like jumping, digging, barking, and chewing; and keeps your dog entertained and happy. In obedience training, your dog will learn to walk on a leash without pulling, to come when called, retrieve, and jump on command. After your dog has mastered the skills in your training classes, consider taking your obedience training to a whole new level! Help your dog realize its full potential by entering obedience trials and earning competitive obedience titles. AKC obedience trials demonstrate the usefulness of the dog as a companion to man. Developed in the 1930's, it is one of the AKC's oldest events! Obedience trials showcase dogs that have been trained and conditioned to behave well in the home, in public places, and in the presence of other dogs. AKC trials allow exhibitors and their dogs to enjoy companionship and competition as they proudly earn AKC titles. You can find a list of clubs that offer training classes on the AKC website under Clubs & Delegates, then Training Classes.

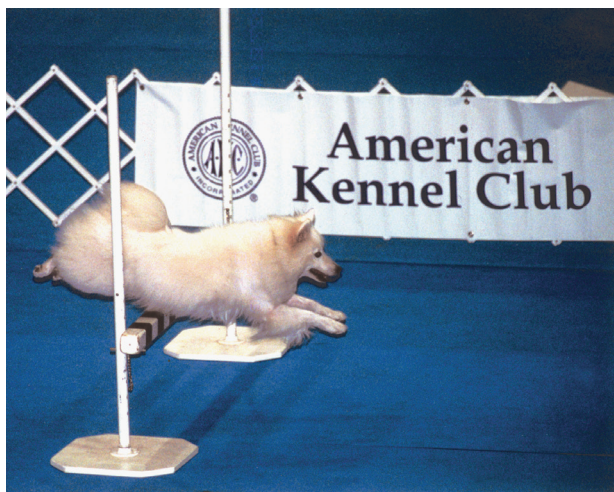
These clubs also hold the AKC events that you can enter once you and your dog are ready.

AKC Obedience Trials and How They Work

An obedience club wishing to hold an obedience trial must first meet all AKC requirements before applying for permission from the AKC. This ensures that the event will be held under AKC Rules and Regulations and that any scores your dog earns during competition are recorded on the dog's AKC awards record.

To enter an obedience trial, you must submit an official AKC entry form to the trial secretary or superintendent of the trial. Entry forms can be found on the AKC website or in the club's premium list; the premium list contains all relevant information regarding the trial, including date, location, classes offered, and judges – as well as the entry form, it is the official announcement of the club's event. There is also an online event calendar on the AKC website that contains this information.

After the entries have closed, a program showing the schedule for the judging of each class will be sent to the owner of each entered dog.



Levels of Obedience Competition

There are many levels of obedience competition that you can choose from, where the exercises increase in their level of difficulty. If you are just getting started, you may want to start with the Beginner Novice class. However, there are lots of classes to choose from, depending on your dog's skill level! You can find a complete list of all obedience classes in the AKC *Obedience Regulations*.

BEGINNER NOVICE – This class is a great way to start competing with your dog. All the exercises are performed on-leash, with the exception of the Recall. Exercises include:

- Heel on Leash and Figure Eight – shows whether the dog has learned to watch its handler while walking on-leash and will adjust its pace to the handler.
- Sit for Exam – the dog must sit in place while the handler holds the leash and steps out 6 feet. The judge will approach and touch the dog's head and the dog must not display any resentment.
- Sit Stay – the dog must remain sitting in place, with its leash attached, while the handler walks around the inside perimeter of the ring.
- Recall – demonstrates that the dog will remain in a place where they were left until called by the handler to come to them.

NOVICE – For the dog just getting started in obedience that can work on- and off-leash. Exercises include:

- Heel on Leash and Figure Eight – this exercise is performed the same as in the Beginner Novice class.
- Stand for Examination – for this off-leash exercise the dog must stay in a standing position as its handler walks about 6 feet away. The judge will then lightly touch the dog on the head, body and hindquarters. Like in the Sit for Exam, the dog must not display any resentment.
- Heel Free – dogs will heel off-leash doing the same routine as they did on-leash, except they will not perform the Figure Eight.
- Recall – Demonstrates that the dog will come to the handler on command.
- Sit Stay – Get Your Leash – this exercise is to demonstrate that the dog will remain in the sit position, while the handler goes to get the dog's leash.
- Group Exercise – Sit & Down Stay – this exercise will demonstrate the dog's ability to remain in the sit and down position, with other dogs in the ring and is performed on-leash.

OPEN – This level includes more complicated exercises; the dog must be able to perform a variety of tasks and follow commands either by voice or signal. Exercises include:

- Heel Free and Figure Eight – this exercise is performed the same as Novice, but the dog is off-leash.
- Command Discrimination (Stand, Down, Sit) – this exercise is all about the dog responding correctly to the handler's commands and/or signals. Handlers will be instructed by the judge to stand, down or sit their dog from varying distances. Handlers will be instructed by the judge to have their dog change positions three times. The second and third position change are with the handler 15 and 30 feet from the dog.

- Drop on Recall – the dog must promptly come to the handler when called from across the ring and on the handler's command or signal to drop and remain in a down position until on a command or signal from the handler to resume coming to the handler.
- Retrieve on Flat – demonstrates a dog's ability to retrieve an object from at least 20 feet promptly and return to the handler on command.
- Retrieve over High Jump – the dog must go out over a jump, in order to retrieve a dumbbell and then promptly return to the handler with the dumbbell going back over the jump.
- Broad Jump – this exercise shows that the dog will stay in the position it is left until directed to jump. The dog must clear the jump on a single command or signal and return to the handler once the jump is complete.
- Stay – Get Your Leash (Sit, Down) – the principal features of this exercise demonstrate the dog's ability to remain in the sitting or down position, whichever is required at the time.

UTILITY – This is the next level of obedience competition. Exercises include:

- Signal Exercise – shows the dog's ability to understand and correctly respond to the handler's signal to stand, stay, down, sit and come. No voice commands are given; only hand signals are allowed.
- Scent Discrimination – this exercise is done twice. Showing the dog's ability to find the handler's scent among a pile of articles and promptly return the correct article to the handler.
- Directed Retrieve – the features of this exercise prove the dog's ability to follow a directional signal from the handler to retrieve a glove and promptly return it to the handler.
- Moving Stand and Examination – for this exercise the dog must heel, stand and stay as the handler moves away. The dog must stay and accept an examination by the judge and return to the handler on command.
- Directed Jumping – the dog must go away from the handler, turn and sit. Then, the dog must clear whichever jump its handler indicates and promptly return to the handler.

Qualifying Performance

A qualifying performance indicates that the dog has performed all the required exercises in the class entered according to AKC *Obedience Regulations* and justifies the awarding of a qualifying score. A qualifying score is earned when more than 50 percent of the points are awarded for each exercise, with a total of at least 170 points. A perfect score in any class is 200. All dogs that have received a qualifying score in their class receive a dark green ribbon to indicate that they have earned a "leg," or qualifying score toward their title. In order to earn a title for the class you must receive three qualifying scores at three licensed or member obedience trials having been certified by two different judges.

What is Rally?

AKC Rally® is all about teamwork and provides an excellent introduction to AKC Companion Events for new dogs and handlers. The dog and handler move through a course with signs displaying different skills to perform together at their own brisk pace. There are 10-20 signs per course, depending on the class level, and the courses are designed by the Rally judge. The signs display various types of turns and skills, such as sit, down, stay, etc. Rally was designed with the traditional pet owner in mind, but it can still be very challenging for those who enjoy higher levels of competition for them to strengthen their skills. Unlimited communication from the handler to the dog is to be encouraged and perfect heel position is not required, but there should be a clear sense of teamwork and enthusiasm both during and between the numbered signs as they go through the course together. While touching isn't allowed, you can use verbal commands, clap your hands, pat your legs and use hand signals to praise and encourage your dog.

Scoring in Rally is less rigorous than in other competitions like traditional obedience. You begin with a perfect score of 100, with points deducted along the way. If you retain a score of at least 70 points, you will qualify toward earning a title. As you qualify the required number of times, you will move on to the next level.



Rally Signs

The signs may be any color and they include descriptions as well as directional arrows. Signs are numbered to make it easy to find the next station when navigating the course. Signs should be placed to the right of the handler's path unless otherwise stated in the Regulations. The signs are large enough to be easily recognized when going through a course. Performance of the signs must be near the designated sign.

The rally signs will display skills for the dog to perform, such as: sit, down, heeling fast or slow, right and left turns, 360 degree circles in either direction, and coming when called in the lower level classes – to jumping, ignoring distractions and moving into the down position while heeling at the upper levels.

Rally is fun and energizing to perform with your dog and a joy to watch as a spectator.

Levels of Rally Competition

There are five levels of competition in AKC Rally®:

NOVICE – This is the first level for those just getting started in competition.

- All exercises are performed with the dog-on leash.
- There is a requirement of 10 to 15 signs to complete, with a maximum of five stationary exercises.
- The exercises performed vary from turning 360 degrees to changing paces during the course.
- Handlers may clap their hands, talk to the dog, and pat their legs through the course.

INTERMEDIATE – This is an optional class to enter as an introduction to the Advanced class signs, with the exception that all of the exercises are performed on-leash and there are no jumps at this class level.

- All exercises are performed with the dog on-leash
- There is a requirement of 12 to 17 signs to complete, with a maximum of seven stationary signs.
- Handler may clap their hands, talk to the dog and, pat their legs throughout the course.

This title is not required to move from Novice to the Advanced class, but is optional to enter if the dog is not ready to work off-leash.

ADVANCED – This class level includes more difficult exercises throughout the course and requires a dog to jump once.

- All exercises are performed with the dog off-leash.
- There is a requirement of 12 to 17 signs to complete, with a maximum of seven stationary exercises.
- Handler may clap their hands, talk to the dog, and pat their legs throughout the course.

EXCELLENT – This is the next class level and is very challenging, but fun for the handler and dog.

- All exercises are performed with the dog off-leash.
- There is a requirement of 15 to 20 signs to complete, with a maximum of seven stationary exercises.
- There are two required jumps in this class.
- Handlers are only allowed to encourage their dogs verbally, physical encouragement, such as patting their legs, is not allowed at this level.

MASTER – This is the fifth and highest level of AKC Rally®.

- All exercises are performed with the dog off-leash.
- There is a minimum of 15 to 20 signs to complete, with a maximum of seven stationary signs.
- One jump is required in the class.
- Handlers are only allowed to encourage their dogs verbally in this class too.

Qualifying Performance

A qualifying performance indicates that the dog has performed the required skills according to the *AKC Rally® Regulations*. Each performance is timed, but times are only utilized as a tie breaker if two dogs earn the same score. All dogs and handlers begin with a perfect 100. A dog and handler team is awarded a qualifying score if it retains at least 70 points after the course has been completed.





What is Tracking?

Dogs have a very keen sense of smell – 100,000 times stronger than humans! Dogs with the help of their noses are often used to find lost people and animals, drugs, avalanche and disaster victims, and even to detect cancer! AKC Tracking is a canine sport that demonstrates a dog's natural ability to recognize and follow a scent and is the foundation of canine search and rescue work. Unlike obedience, rally, and agility trials, where dogs respond to the handler's commands, in tracking the dog is completely in charge, for only he knows how to use his nose to find and follow the track. AKC Tracking is a pass or fail sport; the dogs either lead their handler to the end of the track or not. For many, the greatest pleasure of tracking is the hours spent outside training and interacting with their dogs. The tracking community is known for its camaraderie and they all share in the excitement of a "pass" or the disappointment of a "fail."

How Do I Get Started in Tracking?

Getting started in tracking is easy and you won't find a more willing participant than your dog! A puppy instinctively uses his nose – training your dog to track simply hones his natural ability. And since all dogs have a natural ability to follow a scent, any breed is capable of learning to track. Your first step is finding a tracking class or an instructor who is experienced in the sport. Some AKC clubs offer tracking classes – some are specifically "Tracking Only" clubs. To find a club in your area, go to the AKC website and select the, "Club & Delegates" tab and select "Search All AKC Clubs." You may also search for "Tracking Clubs" only or "Training Clubs." Tracking requires very little equipment. You will need a harness, a 20-to-40 foot leash, a few flags to mark your track, and an open grassy area free of obstacles such as roads, ditches or woods. Before you enter a Tracking Dog Test (TD), you must have the dog certified by an AKC Tracking judge. The judge will provide you with a certification form, which must accompany the entry form you send to the club. Once you and your dog are ready, find a tracking event in your area by going to the AKC Events Calendar on the AKC website. There is a great demand for tracking tests and the number of dogs that can be judged in one day is very limited. As a result, there are more entries than test spaces available.

How a Tracking Test Works

For the club, the two judges and the tracklayers, a tracking test is a two-day commitment; regardless of weather. Tracking tests are usually held on Sunday, but the judges and tracklayers spend most of Saturday plotting a track for each dog to follow. To plot the track, the judges will look at the property where the test will be held and plan how to lay the track so it will meet the test requirements and then draw the charts for each track. On plotting day, they mark the turns of the track with flags staked in the ground. On the judge's chart, landmarks are noted that will allow them to locate the track visually when the flags are removed by the tracklayers as they walk the track the morning of the test.

On the morning of the test, the exhibitors gather for a “draw,” which determines the order the dogs will run in the test. After the tracklayer has walked the plotted track, the tracks must “age” for a period of time, meaning they have to just sit without being disturbed for a period of time before the dog can “take their test”. After the track has aged the required length of time, the exhibitor will put the harness on the dog, attach a 20-to 40-foot leash and begin the track. If the dog is off the track and the judges determine the dog cannot return, one judge will blow a whistle signaling the dog has failed. There is no time limit, as long as the dog is working. If the dog follows the track and finds the article(s) placed on the track, he earns the tracking title for the level at which he is testing.

Tracking Titles

A dog can earn five AKC Tracking titles, each level has an increased degree of difficulty. The Tracking Dog (TD) or the Tracking Dog Urban (TDU) title must be earned before competing for a Tracking Dog Excellent (TDX) or Variable Surface Tracker (VST) title. A Champion Tracker (CT) title is awarded only to those dogs that have earned titles at all three tracking levels – TD or TDU, TDX and VST. If a dog is awarded the CT title, he is among the elite of those active in tracking. To earn a tracking title, a dog needs to pass the test in which he is exhibiting only once, which is judged by two judges.

Tracking Dog (TD)

The TD track is from 440-to-500 yards long with 3-to-5 turns (or change in direction), and after aged from a half-hour to two hours. A dog must clearly indicate a glove or wallet placed at the end of the track. Tracks are plotted in an open field with uniform cover. There are no obstacles. The start of the track will be marked with a flag. A second flag is placed 30 yards from the start flag to indicate the direction of the first leg of the track. There are no other flags in the field.

Tracking Dog Urban (TDU)

The TDU track is 400-to-500 yards long, with 3-to-5 turns, and aged from a half-hour to two hours. Tracks are plotted in an urban environment on paved sidewalks, lightly traveled roads, baseball diamonds, parking lots and other non-vegetated surfaces. The track will have a minimum of two (2) different surfaces, vegetated and non-vegetated. The start is marked with a flag with a second flag set 30 yards from the first to indicate the direction of the first leg of the track. There are three dissimilar articles for each track, one at the start, one about midway on the track and one at the end.

Tracking Dog Excellent (TDX)

The TDX track is 800-to-1000 yards long with 5-to-7 turns, and aged from 3-to-5 hours. The track also has two sets of cross (diversionary) tracks and has at least two obstacles for the dog to negotiate. The start is marked with a single flag and the dog must determine the direction of the first leg. There are four dissimilar articles for each track, one at the start and three more on the track.

Variable Surface Tracking (VST)

A VST track is from 600-to-800 yards long, with 4-to-8 turns, and aged from 3-to-5 hours. The articles must be one each of leather, cloth, plastic and metal. The VST track must also contain three different surfaces with one turn on a non-vegetated surface such as concrete. This test demonstrates the utility of the tracking dog to work in an urban environment.

What is Agility?

Running a dog in an agility trial is the ultimate game for you and your dog and is one of the most exciting canine sports for spectators. In an agility trial, a dog demonstrates its agile nature and versatility by following cues from the handler through a timed obstacle course of jumps, tunnels, weave poles and other objects. It's an activity that strengthens the bond between dog and handler and provides fun and exercise for both, which explains why it's such an enjoyable sport to compete in and watch!

Types of Classes

There are several types of classes offered at an agility trial: Standard, Jumpers with Weaves, Fifteen And Send Time (FAST), Time 2 Beat (T2B), Preferred and Premier. The Standard class has contact obstacles, which have yellow "contact zones" at each end. Contact obstacles include A-frame, dog walk and seesaw. The dog must place a least one paw in the contact zone in order not to receive a fault. This encourages safety in training and in running the course. The Standard class also has a variety of jumps; weave poles, pause table, tunnels and a closed tunnel. The Jumpers with Weaves class does not have contact obstacles or a pause table to slow the team's forward momentum. This is a very fast course requiring instant decisions by the handler and close attention from the dog. The FAST class is an additional test of strategy, skill, accuracy, speed, timing and distance handling, to demonstrate a dog's athletic ability and willingness to work with its handler in a fast-paced atmosphere over a variety of agility obstacles. As indicated by the title, the Fifteen and Send Time class uses fifteen (15) point-valued obstacles and/or obstacle combinations. The course will include a 'Send Bonus' or distance element that will award a bonus of twenty (20) points if completed successfully. The optional Time 2 Beat (T2B) agility titling class is meant to challenge the handler/dog to set a clean efficient line with an emphasis on speed and accuracy. The dog that sets the quickest time in each jump height will set the time to beat for that jump height. The Premier class is designed to test a dog and handler's skill with challenges

that require increased speed and handling in the Standard and Jumpers with Weaves classes.



Levels of Agility Competition

There are three different levels of competition in agility:

NOVICE – for the dog that is just starting in agility. There are 14 to 16 obstacles on this course. The focus of the Novice class is on performing the obstacles with minimal handling technique.

OPEN – for the dog that has completed the Novice level. There are 16 to 18 obstacles on this course. The focus of the open class is on more difficult obstacle course performance with more handling skill required.

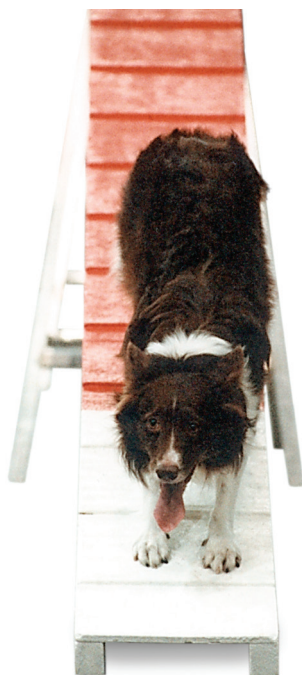
EXCELLENT / MASTER – for the dog that has completed the Open level. There are 18 to 20 obstacles on this course. The focus of the Excellent class is to provide the opportunity for dogs and handlers to demonstrate their superior skills in moving quickly and efficiently with close communication and teamwork through challenging agility courses. The Master level is the class where dog/handler teams can earn the title, Master Agility Champion (MACH)/Preferred Agility Champion (PACH), from the Regular or Preferred Classes.

How Agility is Scored

Agility is a time and fault sport where the qualifying requirements are more challenging as the competition class levels get higher. There are two types of faults: time and penalty. Time faults are given for every second a dog goes over the Standard Course Time as set by the length of the course.

Below are examples of Penalty Faults that a judge may assess a handler and dog:

- Taking an obstacle out of sequence
- Missing a contact zone
- Displacing a bar or panel on a jump
- Jumping off the pause table before the judge is through counting
- Running around or refusing the next obstacle
- Exceeding the amount of time set by the judge for running the course
- Touching either the dog or any obstacle by the handler while running the course
- Outside assistance may be penalized
- Handler failure to control the dog may be penalized



Agility Jump Heights

The classes are divided by jump heights in order to make the competition equal between the different sizes of dogs.

REGULAR CLASSES

8" Class – dogs up to 11" at the shoulder

12" Class – dogs over 11" and up to 14" at the shoulder

16" Class – dogs over 14" and up to 18" at the shoulder

20" Class – dogs over 18" and up to 22" at the shoulder

24" Class – dogs over 22" at the shoulder

24C" Class – dogs may be entered at this height at their owner's discretion as long as the dog is 22" or under.

A dog may jump in a jump height class higher than his/her shoulder measurement, but never lower.

PREFERRED CLASSES

This class affords an opportunity for a greater variety of dogs, and their handlers, to participate in the sport of agility. Handlers have the option to enter the Preferred classes with modified standards of lower jump heights and five additional seconds on the course. They must compete at the required jump height.

4" Class – dogs up to 11" and under at the shoulder

8" Class – dogs 14" and under at the shoulder

12" Class – dogs 18" and under at the shoulder

16" Class – dogs 22" and under at the shoulder

20" Class – dogs over 22" at the shoulder

Qualifying Performance

A perfect score in any class at any level is 100. The minimum score to qualify is 85 in all classes except in the Master class where the minimum score is 100. The minimum time allowed to run the course and the number of obstacles to complete successfully, increase as the level of difficulty increases.

Helpful Information

Tips for the First-Time Exhibitor

- Make sure your dog has an AKC number.
- Be sure your dog is current on all inoculations.
- Learn from an experienced trainer in order to compete competently and safely.
- Join a local training club.
- Become familiar with the AKC regulations for the sport you are interested in. These are available on the AKC website.
- Attend trials and become familiar with the ring procedures.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions of the experienced exhibitors.
- Attend training classes with your dog.
- Visit the AKC website at www.akc.org to find a club in your area.

Information about AKC Trials

The AKC offers a wide variety of resources to assist anyone interested in Companion Events, whether you are new to the sport or want to know how to offer a trial. Contact AKC Customer Service at 919-233-9767 or Orderdesk@akc.org to inquire about the following resources:

Obedience Regulations, Obedience Judges Guidelines, The Steward in Obedience

A comprehensive book giving the regulations and guidelines for AKC Obedience trials and explains how titles are earned and the levels of competition.

AKC® Rally Regulations, Rally Judges Guidelines, The Steward in Rally

A comprehensive booklet giving the regulations and guidelines for AKC Rally® trials – which titles are earned, and the performance descriptions for the rally signs.

Tracking Regulations

A comprehensive booklet detailing regulations and guidelines for AKC Tracking Tests at which titles are earned.

Regulations for Agility Trials, Agility Course Test, and Agility Judges Guidelines

Two important books for any agility exhibitor to have. These regulations and guidelines for AKC Agility trials explain how titles are earned, courses designed and levels of competition.

The AKC Website

The AKC website, www.akc.org, contains a wealth of information about the world of dogs, including information on breeds, AKC registration, canine legislation, training clubs, public education and canine health issues. View a complete listing of AKC-sanctioned shows, trials and tests by accessing the AKC website and then clicking on Sports & Events, then Event Search. You can select a date range, competition type, and distance from a specific city and state. The Events Calendar is compiled by date and includes the club name, location of the trial, contact information and much more. Entry forms for trials may be downloaded from the AKC website, <http://www.akc.org/downloadable-forms/>.

Glossary

Agility Handling Terms – “Front cross,” “cross behind,” and “blind cross,” refer to the handler’s position to the dog that is running the course.

Article (Tracking) – These are the items the dog must find. In a TD test one article is used, either a glove or wallet. For the TDX test, there are four different personal articles, one at the start to provide the dog with the scent he should follow and three others along the track. For VST test, articles consist of four dissimilar, common, everyday items, which can be easily carried by the tracklayer and safely picked up by the dog. Articles are leather, plastic (rigid or semi-rigid), metal and cloth.

Brisk, briskly – Keenly alive, alert, energetic.

Course Design (Rally) – A set of signs with a skill listed on them is arranged by the judge to flow from start to finish. The dog and handler team will move from sign to sign performing the skills listed for competition. Each class will have a different course design.

Crowding – A dog so close to the handler as to interfere with the handler’s freedom of motion.

Faults (Agility) – Penalties assessed by the judge when a dog or handler does not perform the obstacle correctly.

Gently – With kindness, without harshness or roughness.

Indication – A change in the dog’s behavior when he experiences loss or discovery of the track or article.

Leg – A term that is used frequently for a qualifying score. Unlike obedience, rally and agility where a leg refers to a qualifying score, in tracking, a leg refers to the straight portion of the track between two turns.

Natural – Not artificial; free of affectation; what is customarily expected in the home or public places.

Refusals/Runouts – Type of fault given in agility when the dog refuses to take the obstacle as they approach it or they run past the obstacle instead of performing it.

Scent or Track Scent – The substance the dog actually smells that allows him to follow a track. It is made up of the odor of crushed vegetation, overturned earth and the odor left by a person.

Standard Course Time – Judge measures the agility course with a surveyor’s wheel and determines the amount of time that will be allotted for a dog to perform the particular course set up for the class.

Track – The actual path the tracklayer walked that the Tracking dog must follow.

Walk-through (Obedience, Rally, Agility) – Handlers are permitted to walk the course in rally and agility, or the heeling pattern in obedience, without a dog, prior to the start of the class to plan their strategy. The walk through gives handlers an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the course or heeling patterns before performing it with their dog.

Wrong Course – Type of fault given when the dog does not take the next agility obstacle in correct sequence.

MISSION STATEMENT

The American Kennel Club® is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its Registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Founded in 1884, the AKC and its affiliated organizations advocate for the purebred dog as a family companion, advance canine health and well-being, work to protect the rights of all dog owners and promote responsible dog ownership.

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