

Congratulations on your new AKC registered purebred dog! As your young dog grows and matures, it is important to socialize her by going to new places, meeting new people and discovering new activities. AKC's Open Show competition is a great way to do just that! Below are some helpful tips to help you and your dog get off on the right paw as you have fun at an AKC Open Show.

## How do I enter an AKC Open Show?

In order to participate in the fun, you must enter your dog in the show. Most clubs allow for “day-of-show” entries, in which case you can enter your dog at the show site on the day of the show. Every Open Show has a “premium list” that has all the important information about the show, including an entry form and the entry deadline. You must fill out the entry form with the information about your dog and which class you want to enter, i.e. the 4-6 Month Puppy class, 6-9 Month Puppy Class, 9-12 Month Puppy Class or Open Class prior to the entry deadline.

Each show has a Superintendent or Show Secretary who processes all the show entry forms. Typically, a dog show's club member acts as the Show Secretary for Open Shows. Contact the Show Secretary listed to receive the show's premium list and entry form or find them online. To complete an entry form, you'll need your dog's AKC registration number, a credit card or check, your dog's AKC registration certificate so you can fill out your puppy's “official registered” name, her dam's (mother's) name, her sire's (father's) name as well as her birthdate, breeder's name and your contact information. You will also select which age division your dog will be competing in, the 4-6 Month Puppy class, 6-9 Month Puppy Class, 9-12 Month Puppy Class or Open Class for dogs older than one year. Once you submit your entry fee, you may receive a confirmation of the entry via email or mail. However, do not fret if you don't receive one-most clubs do not send out a confirmation for Open Shows.

## How do I prepare my dog for the show?

It's a good idea to have your dog ready for fun before you go to the show.

**Walking on a leash-** Your dog should be comfortable wearing a collar and walking on a leash by your left side. You may have been taught this as the “heel position” in your puppy kindergarten class. This is easy to practice at home before going to the show.

**Meet me-** Young dogs love people so be prepared for her to meet lots of new people at the show! You may want to get her ready to meet people by taking your puppy to a park or other public spaces to get her used to the activity.

**Looking her best-** Don't forget to groom your dog as part of the preparation. If she is really dirty, as some dogs can be very active outdoors, then maybe a bath a day or two before the show is in order. But, at the very least, make sure she is brushed and free of dirt, debris and any tangles in her hair. Also, if it's been a while since you trimmed her toenails, you may want to give them a quick trim too.



## One week before the show

**If you entered your dog before the day of the show-** While most clubs do not confirm entries for Open Shows, it is possible you may receive an email or phone call from one of the dog show's club members to give you additional information for the day of the show. This may include:



- Your armband number and a judging program telling you how many dogs are entered in your dog's age division.
- Whether or not your Open Show is divided by dogs' gender
- What ring number you will be in
- What time to be at that ring
- Directions and general information about the show

However, clubs are not required to send this information for Open Shows. If you do not receive this information before the show, make sure you get to the show site early to get settled before entering the ring, or contact the Show Secretary for more information on the show.

**If you plan on entering your dog on the day of the show-** First, make sure that the club is allowing "day of show" entries. Make sure you arrive early in the morning so that you can have your dog entered in the show before it starts. A club member should be able to help you with this or direct you for further assistance. At the show, you will find out how many dogs are entered in your class, if your class is divided by gender, what ring you will be in and at what time you will be judged.

This is a wonderful way to socialize your dog and have an enjoyable day together!

## What do I do on the day of the show?

**Get up early!** The morning of the show, feed your dog earlier than usual so your dog can do her business before you get on the road to the show.

**What to pack-** You'll want to bring water, a water bowl, and a brush for last minute grooming, and treats to give your dog after a job well done. Don't forget to pack the very important clean-up bags for potty breaks, your confirmation packet and a chair for yourself.

**On the road-** Remember traveling in a crate is the safest form of transportation for your dog. Plus, having the crate at the show will give your dog a place to rest before and after the fun.

**At the show grounds-** Make sure you arrive at least one or two hours before your scheduled ring time so that you can set up a spot to watch the show near your ring, take your dog for a walk to potty, and then observe the show to get an idea of what to expect in the ring.

**At the ring-** Before your scheduled ring time, ask the Ring Steward or club members to give you your armband number (show her the confirmation entry slip with the number). This number is placed around your left upper arm and secured with a rubber band available at ringside. Don't forget to dress in business casual attire with comfortable walking shoes so both you and your dog look your best.

## What will the judge ask me to do in the ring?

**Ringside-** Once your time has arrived, the Ring Steward will call all the dogs in the class according to armband number into the ring for judging.

**Stand in line-** At first, all the dogs will stand in line together for the judge to give them all a first look.

**All together-** Then the judge will ask all the dogs to trot around the ring in one big circle together. Following those in front of you, ask your dog to follow you around the ring in a slow jog until you reach the end of the line.

**Meet and greet-** You and your dog can relax for a moment now. The judge will ask each dog to come up to him for an individual “meet and greet.” At this point, the judge will greet your dog and ask you to open her mouth to look at her teeth. He will then place his hands around the dog’s body for further examination.

**Strutting your stuff-** The judge will ask you to individually trot your dog around in a “pattern” - maybe a triangle or a straight line- and then back to the end of the line.

**Get a ribbon-** After all the dogs have been looked at by the judge, you will go around the ring as a group one more time. At this point the judge picks his winners and hands out ribbons. Congratulations!

**All done-** After you’re done, it’s time to relax with your dog, give her some water and a treat for being such a good girl. Since you are already at the show, take the opportunity to walk her around the show grounds and see new sights and meet new people.

To learn more about all the AKC Events you and your dog can participate in visit [www.akc.org/dog\\_shows\\_trials/](http://www.akc.org/dog_shows_trials/)



**COME JOIN THE FUN!**

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