

*An Owner's Manual for:*

---

---

10 ESSENTIAL SKILLS:  
CGC TEST ITEMS

---

---

*by the*  
AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB



### **WHAT IS IT?**

The Canine Good Citizen® program is a 10-step test that certifies dogs who have good manners at home and in their community. Over 600,000 dogs across the United States have become Canine Good Citizens, and 42 states have passed resolutions recognizing the program's merit and importance.



---

## RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERS PLEDGE

Before taking the Canine Good Citizen test, owners will sign the Responsible Dog Owners Pledge.

We believe that responsible dog ownership is a key part of the CGC concept and by signing the pledge, owners agree to take care of their dog's health needs, safety, exercise, training and quality of life. Owners also agree to show responsibility by doing things such as cleaning up after their dogs in public places and never letting dogs infringe on the rights of others.

After signing the Responsible Dog Owners Pledge, owners and their dogs are ready to take the CGC Test. The test is all done on leash.



David Woo ©AKC



---

## **TEST 1: ACCEPTING A FRIENDLY STRANGER**

This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to approach it and speak to the handler in a natural, everyday situation. The evaluator walks up to the dog and handler and greets the handler in a friendly manner, ignoring the dog. The evaluator and handler shake hands and exchange pleasantries. The dog must show no sign of resentment or shyness.



©AKC



**TEST 2:**  
**SITTING POLITELY FOR PETTING**

This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to touch it while it is out with its handler. With the dog sitting at the handler's side, to begin the exercise, the evaluator pets the dog on the head and body. The handler may talk to his or her dog throughout the exercise. The dog may stand in place as it is petted. The dog must not show shyness or resentment.



©AKC



---

### TEST 3: APPEARANCE AND GROOMING

This practical test demonstrates that the dog will welcome being groomed and examined and will permit someone, such as a veterinarian, groomer or friend of the owner, to do so. It also demonstrates the owner's care, concern and sense of responsibility. The evaluator inspects the dog to determine if it is clean and groomed. The dog must appear to be in healthy condition (i.e., proper weight, clean, healthy and alert). The handler should supply the comb or brush commonly used on the dog. The evaluator then softly combs or brushes the dog, and in a natural manner, lightly examines the ears and gently picks up each front foot. It is not necessary for the dog to hold a specific position during the examination, and the handler may talk to the dog, praise it and give encouragement throughout.



Mary Bloom ©AKC



---

## TEST 4: OUT FOR A WALK (WALKING ON A LOOSE LEAD)

This test demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog. The dog may be on either side of the handler. The dog's position should leave no doubt that the dog is attentive to the handler and is responding to the handler's movements and changes of direction. The dog need not be perfectly aligned with the handler and need not sit when the handler stops. The evaluator may use a pre-plotted course or may direct the handler/dog team by issuing instructions or commands. In either case, there should be a right turn, left turn, and an about turn with at least one stop in between and another at the end. The handler may talk to the dog along the way, praise the dog, or give commands in a normal tone of voice. The handler may sit the dog at the halts if desired.



Mary Bloom ©AKC



## TEST 5: WALKING THROUGH A CROWD

This test demonstrates that the dog can move about politely in pedestrian traffic and is under control in public places. The dog and handler walk around and pass close to several people (at least three). The dog may show some interest in the strangers but should continue to walk with the handler, without evidence of over-exuberance, shyness or resentment. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise the dog throughout the test. The dog should not jump on people in the crowd or strain on the leash.



©AKC



---

## TEST 6: SIT AND DOWN ON COMMAND AND STAYING IN PLACE

This test demonstrates that the dog has training, will respond to the handler's commands to sit and down and will remain in the place commanded by the handler (sit or down position, whichever the handler prefers). The dog must do sit AND down on command, then the owner chooses the position for leaving the dog in the stay. Prior to this test, the dog's leash is replaced with a line 20 feet long. The handler may take a reasonable amount of time and use more than one command to get the dog to sit and then down. The evaluator must determine if the dog has responded to the handler's commands. The handler may not force the dog into position but may touch the dog to offer gentle guidance. When instructed by the evaluator, the handler tells the dog to stay and walks forward the length of the line, turns and returns to the dog at a natural pace. The dog must remain in the place in which it was left (it may change position) until the evaluator instructs the handler to release the dog. The dog may be released from the front or the side.



©AKC



---

## TEST 7: COMING WHEN CALLED

This test demonstrates that the dog will come when called by the handler. The handler will walk 10 feet from the dog, turn to face the dog, and call the dog. The handler may use encouragement to get the dog to come. Handlers may choose to tell dogs to “stay” or “wait” or they may simply walk away, giving no instructions to the dog.



©AKC



## TEST 8: REACTION TO ANOTHER DOG

This test demonstrates that the dog can behave politely around other dogs. Two handlers and their dogs approach each other from a distance of about 20 feet, stop, shake hands and exchange pleasantries, and continue on for about 10 feet. The dogs should show no more than casual interest in each other. Neither dog should go to the other dog or its handler.



©AKC





## TEST 9: REACTION TO DISTRACTION

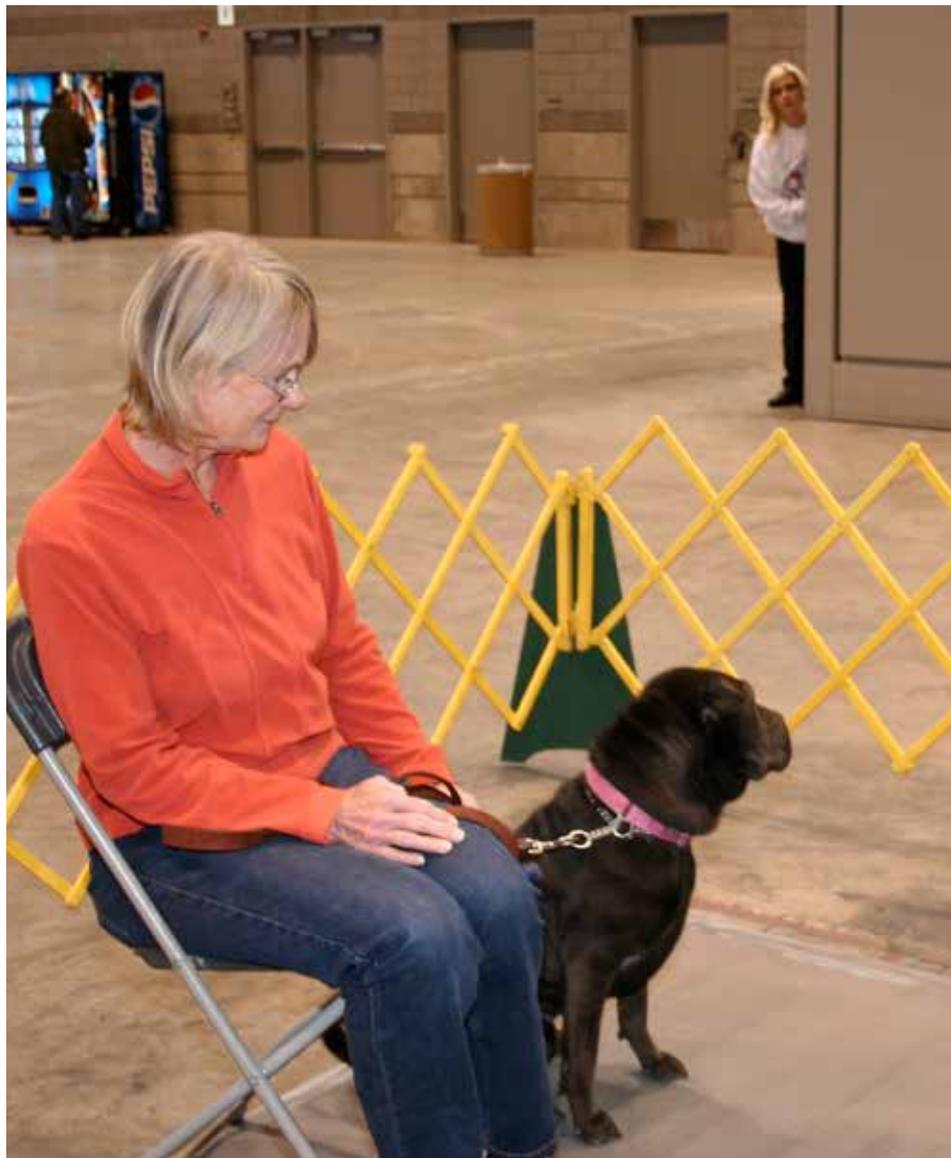
This test demonstrates that the dog is confident at all times when faced with common distracting situations. The evaluator will select and present two distractions. Examples of distractions include dropping a chair, rolling a crate dolly past the dog, having a jogger run in front of the dog, or dropping a crutch or cane. The dog may express natural interest and curiosity and/or may appear slightly startled but should not panic, try to run away, show aggressiveness, or bark. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise it throughout the exercise.

©AKC



## TEST 10: SUPERVISED SEPARATION

This test demonstrates that a dog can be left with a trusted person, if necessary, and will maintain training and good manners. Evaluators are encouraged to say something like, “Would you like me to watch your dog?” and then take hold of the dog’s leash. The owner will go out of sight for three minutes. The dog does not have to stay in position but should not continually bark, whine, or pace unnecessarily, or show anything stronger than mild agitation or nervousness. Evaluators may talk to the dog but should not engage in excessive talking, petting, or management attempts (e.g, “there, there, it’s alright”).



©AKC





## THANK YOU FOR READING

We hope this information was helpful, and may even inspire you to give CGC a try. Find an evaluator in your area here: [https://www.apps.akc.org/apps/events/cgc/cgc\\_bystate.cfm](https://www.apps.akc.org/apps/events/cgc/cgc_bystate.cfm)

Mary Bloom ©AKC





THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

### WHO AND WHAT WE ARE:

*The AKC is a not-for-profit organization and the largest purebred dog registry in the world. We are the sports-governing body for over 22,000 dog events a year, including conformation (dog shows) and exciting sports like agility, obedience, rally, tracking, lure coursing, earthdog, herding trials, among others.*



THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

*But the AKC is so much more! Here are just some of the ways we support and enrich the lives of dogs—purebreds and mixed-breeds alike—and their families. We:*

- Created the [AKC Humane Fund](#), which supports breed rescue activities, assists shelters that permit domestic-abuse victims to bring their pets, and educates dog lovers about responsible dog ownership.
- Offer the [Canine Good Citizen®](#) program: A 10-step test that certifies dogs who have good manners at home and in their community. Over 725,000 dogs across the United States have become Canine Good Citizens, and 42 states have passed resolutions recognizing the program's merit and importance.
- Founded [AKC Reunite](#), which has brought more than 400,000 lost pets back together with their owners.
- Created the [AKC Canine Health Foundation](#), which funds research projects and clinical studies. Since 1995 the AKC has donated over \$24 million to the CHF. (The AKC is the only registry that incorporates health-screening results into its permanent dog records.)
- Conduct thousands of kennel inspections annually to monitor care and conditions at kennels across the country and ensure the integrity of the AKC registry.
- Offer the largest, most comprehensive set of DNA programs for parentage verification and genetic identity to ensure reliable registration records.
- Support one of the world's largest collections of dog-related fine art and artifacts at the [AKC Museum of the Dog](#), and we have the world's largest [dog library](#) at AKC headquarters in New York, both of which are open to the public.



THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

### THANK YOU FOR READING!

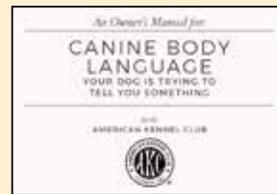
*We hope this information was valuable to you in helping your puppy live a long, healthy, happy life. Below, find additional books in our Owner's Manual series designed to strengthen the bond between you and your furry family member.*



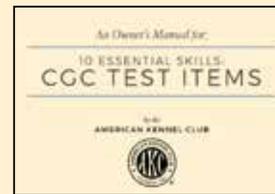
5 TRICKS TO SHOW OFF



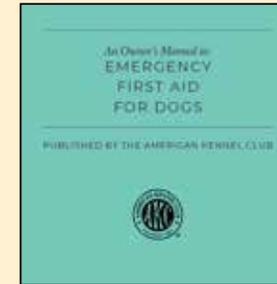
AGILITY FOR BEGINNERS



CANINE BODY LANGUAGE



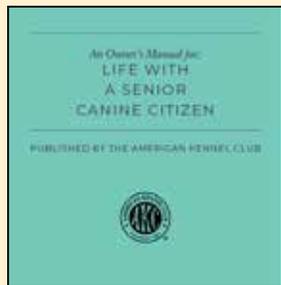
CANINE GOOD CITIZEN



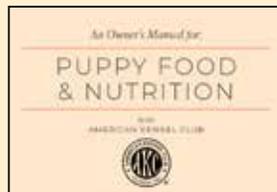
FIRST AID FOR DOGS



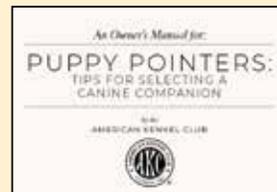
HOW TO CRATE TRAIN YOUR DOG



LIFE WITH A SENIOR DOG



PUPPY NUTRITION



SELECTING A PUPPY



5 BASIC COMMANDS



RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNER TIPS



WHY DOES MY DOG DO THAT?



WHAT'S HE THINKING?



PUPPY SOCIALIZATION