

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

*Facilitator Guide for Leaders and 4-H Members*



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# About the 4-H Dog Project Manual

The purpose of this manual is to serve as a Facilitator Guide and provide 4-H Leaders and members with a comprehensive, solid foundation when it comes to raising, caring for, training and participating in dog events and activities. In addition, materials are provided that will help 4-H Leaders who are guiding Dog Projects.

At the end of each chapter are Suggested Activities and Suggested Reflections. These may be adapted by 4-H Dog Leaders to best match the age and level of the 4-H members.





# Chapter 1 – Introduction

While 4-H was thought to have started between 1890 and 1900, the first 4-H club was formed in 1902 by A.B. Graham. It is astounding that Graham's early organizational ideas of having officers, projects, meetings and record-keeping requirements are still in place today (<https://4-h.org/about/history/>).

In 1906, Iowa school Superintendent O.H. Benson came across a group of children searching for four-leaf clovers. Benson thought the clover was the perfect symbol to represent 4-H's "four-square education," which is educational development, fellowship development, physical development and moral development. Today, we recognize 4-H as standing for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health, all of the components of what is required for effective learning (<https://4-hhistorypreservation.com/History/Clover>).

Since 4-H began, there have been projects that encompass all of 4-H's educational components on a seemingly unending variety of topics that range from various aspects of animals, music, sewing, and woodworking to relatively new topics such as computers and robotics. Across the nation, 4-H animal related projects have stood the test of time. In the early days of 4-H, the animal project emphasis was on farm animals, and in more recent years, there has been an increase in the number of projects related to domestic animals such as dogs and cats. Dog projects focus on topics such as health, care, and training and a 4-H member's involvement with dogs can last for years.

Currently, there are 4-H Dog Projects all over the United States. In the state of Florida, the 4-H Dog Project was formed in 2005 when 4-H Leaders from several Florida counties formed an alliance to increase communication between the various County 4-H Dog Projects and clubs in Florida. The leaders also wanted to provide new opportunities and events for 4-H Dog



*Today, we recognize 4-H as standing for Head, Heart, Hands and Health, all of the components of what is required for effective learning and addressing the developmental needs of the whole child.*



*A.B. Graham 1910 age 42  
Columbus, Ohio*

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

Project members on a state level. In addition to ongoing training classes for 4-H members and their dogs, each year, the Florida State Championship Youth Dog Show is held at the Florida State Fair.

The purpose of this manual is to serve as a Facilitator Guide and provide 4-H Leaders and members with a solid, comprehensive foundation when it comes to raising, caring for, training and showing dogs. In addition, materials are provided that will help 4-H Leaders who are guiding Dog Projects.

4-H members and Leaders everywhere are welcome to use this manual to learn and teach about dogs, those remarkable creatures that we call our best friends.

## What is the 4-H Dog Project?

A 4-H Dog Project helps 4-H members learn to become responsible dog owners. 4-H members typically own or lease their project dog (purebred or mixed breed) for the 4-H year. This dog will be eligible to be trained in 4-H classes, participate in 4-H dog shows and events, and will be the subject of their 4-H record book. 4-H members who do not have dogs are also welcome to participate in the Dog Project to gain knowledge and learn skills.

Note that all 4-H project work should be in compliance with the information found in the Events & Activities Handbook

on the official 4-H website under the Events tab. An example of the important information found under Events would be that the member must be enrolled for 30 days in a project before competing (<http://florida4h.ifas.ufl.edu>).

Volunteer 4-H Leaders provide training classes for 4-H members and their dogs. Both purebred and mixed breed dogs are welcome. The 4-H year is September 1 through August of each year. In Florida, 4-H youth are required to officially enroll in 4-H through 4HOnline. An annual membership fee will cover insurance for active members. Some events and project specific clubs may have additional activity fees associated with project work. It is also encouraged that at least one parent (or adult) sign up as a 4-H volunteer. Parents and Leaders in 4-H volunteer to work at 4-H Dog Project sponsored events such as shows, seminars and fundraising activities throughout the year. This is a great way to contribute to the success of the 4-H program and a way parents can 'give back' to the 4-H program for the training their children receive.

Participation in the 4-H Dog Project gives members the opportunity to train their dogs, as well as gain confidence by achieving their goals and learn about good sportsmanship. Dog Project members can also compete in the Dog Quiz Bowl, the



# Chapter 1 – Introduction

State Fair Champion Youth program and more!

4-H cares about the future of our members. 4-H Dog Project participants can apply for scholarships exclusively for ‘dog project members’ as well as general 4-H Scholarships. Scholarship funds can be used for the future education of the 4-H Dog Project participant.

## What Does this Mean for You?

### What You’ll Learn

4-H members who use this curriculum will develop essential dog project skills such as selecting a dog; investigating breeds; appreciating dogs’ places and roles in society; practicing grooming, showing and training; caring for dogs; and exploring dog-related careers and activities. Some of the training will not only prepare members and their dogs for 4-H competition, they will also be ready to earn some of the American Kennel Club’s nationally recognized awards and titles.

As with all 4-H projects and activities, this curriculum provides practice in the life skills of communication, responsibility, planning and organizing, decision making, leadership and more.

Because youth development programs help build tomorrow’s leaders, leadership is a strong theme in the progression of the project. 4-H members who will participate

in the Dog Project activities will eventually be able to organize events, investigate complicated issues, give presentations, make decisions and teach others because those are some of the skills of good leaders.

### Record Keeping

Both 4-H members and Leaders will keep records of activities so that progress can be measured and documented.

Examples of record keeping in the dog project might include specific project worksheets such as maintaining a list of all expenses and purchases related to raising a dog. Other records kept by the 4-H member might include listing learning experiences for the year, worksheets for individual lessons, maintaining a list of goals and dates goals were completed, steps for completing the goals, maintaining a record that is a summary of projects for the year, and completing a self-evaluation.

There are also records for 4-H Dog Project Leaders. Some of these might include notes from meetings, evaluation forms (e.g., did the member participate? were goals achieved?), notes on how well an activity worked, and the forms needed to nominate 4-H members for awards.

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

To access sample forms (in both writeable and printable formats) that you are welcome to use as a template for your own 4-H Dog Project, see: <http://florida4h.org/programs/dog.pdf>. At the Florida 4-H page, projects are listed by age/grade division and suggestions are provided for activities. A number of forms were developed by the Extension Polk County, Wisconsin. These forms might be helpful as they are or they can be modified.

Some of the forms include:

## For 4-H Members

- 4-H Member Project Plan Evaluation Story Form (MPE)
- 4-H Project Financial Record (FR)
- Project Evaluation Form
- MAEF Form (Member Achievement Evaluation Form)
- My 4-H Activity Story
- Polk County 4-H Record Book Guide
- 4-H Leadership Form
- Youth Leadership Form
- Member Evaluation (ME) Form

## For 4-H Leaders

- 4-H Leader Evaluation and Recommendation Form
- Community Pride & Care Report
- Polk County Leaders Federation Application for Reimbursement
- 4-H Leaders Federation Committee Member List
- Polk County Scholarship Brochure
- Polk County 4-H Scholarship Application Form
- Youth Event Health Form

Form: POLK COUNTY 4-H YOUTH LEADERSHIP RECORD

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_ CLUB: \_\_\_\_\_

Members can do various leadership roles in their club. There are many projects and activities and events that need leadership to make them happen.

(Fill out one leadership form for each individual project or activity)

Recent For \_\_\_\_\_ Project or Activity \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT LEADERSHIP SECTION**

Project leadership is defined as teaching or helping other members to learn, make, or do things in their project.

Number of members enrolled in the project \_\_\_\_\_

**ACTIVITY LEADERSHIP SECTION**

Activity leadership is defined as assuming leadership in the roles in planning, conducting, and evaluating a club activity. Teaching and helping others would be a leadership role in that activity.

Check one:

<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Beautification	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer Buying
<input type="checkbox"/> Crime	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Food Conservation/Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> Homebased	<input type="checkbox"/> Self Protection	<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership/Communication
<input type="checkbox"/> Intergenerational	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-H Permission	<input type="checkbox"/> Recycling
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Plans or goals made for the year: What is your leadership role?

What lesson about leadership \_\_\_\_\_

(Over)

Form: MY 4-H ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION STORY

FOR YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE ON JAN 1, THIS YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

YEARS IN 4-H (including this year) \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE OR SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD BY MY CLUB THIS YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER I ATTENDED: \_\_\_\_\_

Check Activities You Did or Participated In:

Communication Skills	Safety	Nature 4-H Work
Adapt Center	Community Service	4-H Citizenship
Book	Club Fair	4-H 4-H Completion
Building	Club Fair	4-H 4-H Completion
Music	Club Fair	4-H 4-H Completion
Nature 4-H Club Completion	4-H Project Table Exchange	4-H 4-H Completion
Nature 4-H Club Completion	4-H Project Table Exchange	4-H 4-H Completion
4-H Leadership	4-H Project Table Exchange	4-H 4-H Completion
4-H Leadership	4-H Project Table Exchange	4-H 4-H Completion
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4-H Leadership	4-H Project Table Exchange	4-H 4-H Completion
4-H Leadership	4-H Project Table Exchange	4-H 4-H Completion
4-H Leadership	4-H Project Table Exchange	4-H 4-H Completion

Check one: I served the This Year and Other Role:

My 4-H Activity Story

(Describe and tell about all of the things you checked or identified above. Use pictures and clippings to add to your story.)

(Add more pages as necessary to tell an about year 4-H activity participation story.)

My 4-H Activity Participation Story Revised 11/01/2013 4-H Activity Participation Story Page 1

Form: 4-H MEMBER PROJECT PLAN EVALUATION STORY FORM (MPE)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS A MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

This report is for my \_\_\_\_\_ project Club year \_\_\_\_\_

Use one of these forms for each project in which you enroll. With the help of your project leader and/or parents, fill what you want to do and learn. If you are re-evaluating, you should consider last year's evaluation in planning your new project. Complete the top part of this form at the beginning of the year. Complete the rest of it during and at the end of the project year.

**SOME THINGS I WOULD LIKE TO DO AND LEARN IN THIS PROJECT DURING THE YEAR**

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

Project Meetings	My ideas for project meetings are:
Number of project meetings held: _____	Number I attended: _____

**Project Tasks & Communications**

Title	When Done
_____	_____

**Other Project Activities & Events**

What	When
_____	_____

Project Evaluation Story (MPE) Revised 6/2010 by SJA. MPE Page 1

Form: 4-H Member Project Plan Evaluation Story Form (MPE)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS A MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

This report is for my \_\_\_\_\_ project Club year \_\_\_\_\_

Use one of these forms for each project in which you enroll. With the help of your project leader and/or parents, fill what you want to do and learn. If you are re-evaluating, you should consider last year's evaluation in planning your new project. Complete the top part of this form at the beginning of the year. Complete the rest of it during and at the end of the project year.

**SOME THINGS I WOULD LIKE TO DO AND LEARN In This Project during The Year**

**Project Summary**

Project Meetings	My ideas for project meetings are:
Number of project meetings held: _____	Number I attended: _____

**Project Tasks & Communications**

Title	When Done
_____	_____

**Other Project Activities & Events**

What	When
_____	_____

(Over)

The forms can be found at: [polk.extension.wisc.edu/4-h-youth-development/forms-and-applications/](http://polk.extension.wisc.edu/4-h-youth-development/forms-and-applications/).

## Summary

The 4-H Dog Project is about far more than dogs. With dogs as the topic, 4-H Dog Projects meet every requirement of 4-H's "four-square education," which is

# Chapter 1 – Introduction

educational development, fellowship development, physical development and moral development.

By caring for and training a project dog for at least one year, the 4-H Dog Project helps 4-H members learn to become responsible, knowledgeable dog owners. Throughout the dog project, 4-H members will keep record books that document their progress and performance in 4-H classes, and dog shows and events. **Your 4-H Leader will provide you with the correct forms for your 4-H group.**

Participation in 4-H will teach priority life skills including communication, higher order thinking, and the appreciation of differences. 4-H focuses on the engagement of youth, learning experiences that reflect learning by doing (i.e. an experiential learning model) and a holistic approach to positive youth development. Additionally, the inclusion of adult developmental relationships is a founding principle of 4-H programs.

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## Chapter 1 – Activities and Reflections

### Introduction



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Research activities in 4-H in your area that are related to dogs.
- 2) Talk to your 4-H leader and/or the 4-H office for ideas on how to plan your 4-H project year.
- 3) Set goals for your 4-H year (short and long term). Make sure your goals are SMART by researching how to write SMART goals

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) What does being involved in a 4-H Dog Project mean for you?
- 2) What steps will you need to take to be successful in your 4-H Dog Project?
- 3) What are your goals for this project?
- 4) Do you have what you need to be successful in your project and reach your

## Chapter 2 – *The Science of Dogs*

This chapter is all about the science of dogs. Science is an organized body of knowledge about a particular subject. Science can be divided into several areas. For dogs, two of these areas include 1) the history of how dogs became our best friends and 2) canine anatomy and physiology.

### How Dogs Became Our Best Friends

The fascinating story of how dogs became our best friends began centuries ago. Humans formed a strong bond with dogs who were able to help with hunting, herding, and barking to signal that danger was near. The details of how dogs evolved are complicated and scientists continue to debate different theories of canine evolution.

You might have heard that dogs came from wolves. Actually, the dog breeds we know today did not evolve from the



*Dogs did not come from wolves. Instead, the dog and the gray wolf had a common ancestor.*

modern gray wolf. Instead, dogs and gray wolves had a common ancestor thousands of years ago. This ancestor was a prehistoric wolf that became extinct about the same time as the mammoths, giant sloths and saber-tooth tigers (Skoglund et.al., 2015).

From this common ancestor, wolves evolved into wolves and an animal that was more dog-like evolved into dogs. An important discovery related to dogs and wolves having a common ancestor was the Taimyr wolf. On the Taimyr Peninsula in Siberia, a bone fragment was found that showed this ancient carnivore, called the Taimyr wolf, lived 27,000 to 40,000 years ago. When the scientists tested the bone, they found that this animal was a new species; it was not a dog or a wolf. This showed that dogs and wolves split into two unique species as far back as 40,000 years ago (Gorman, 2015; Skoglund et al., 2015).

Another possible example of the wolf-like dog ancestor was found in the Chauvet Cave in southern France. The walls of the dark cave are covered with paintings created 32,000 years ago. In the mud in the cave are footprints left 26,000 years ago by an 8-to-10 year old boy. He was carrying a torch to light the cave. And right beside his footprints, is the paw print of a large dog, possibly a faithful companion (Derr, 2011).

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

## Where Dogs Began

Dogs may have been domesticated independently in Eastern and Western Eurasia. Many scientists believe that dogs were first domesticated in China. The first domesticated dog was found in China at a Neolithic (7000-5800 BC) site called the Jiahu site in the Henan Province.

Cave drawings from 8,000 to 10,000 years ago in the Magura Cave in Bulgaria show hunting scenes where dogs were included and were an important part of daily life.



*Cave paintings from thousands of years ago show that dogs were an important part of daily life.*

As people began to wander to new places on the globe, they took their tamed dogs with them. East Eurasian dogs were probably transported to Europe as people moved west (Yong, 2016).

Ireland is an island to the west of Europe. Newgrange (County Meath, Ireland) is a prehistoric monument that is more than 5,000 years old. This is older than Stonehenge and the Egyptian

pyramids. At Newgrange, there is a large mound with a stone passageway and individual chambers on the inside. Scientists found a bone of a dog at Newgrange and this proved that when ancient people traveled to new areas, they brought their dogs with them (Freedman et al., 2014). This dog lived around the time of the first farmers in the area (Treacy, 2016).

## When Dogs Bonded With People

Most research by paleontologists (scientists who study fossils) suggests that dogs began to bond with people 11-16 thousand years ago (Freedman et al., 2014). So, first, dogs were created, then later, they became domesticated. Domestication is when an animal becomes tamed and is a pet or is used to help people do their work, such as a farm dog.

Scientists are also studying new evidence to determine if domestic dogs could go actually back as far as 30,000 years. Here are some of the findings so far.

- Dr. Mietke Germonpre is a scientist at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences. Along with other scientists, Dr. Germonpre identified a 31,000-year old skull as being from an early dog. The skull came from the Goyet cave in Belgium and it had teeth that were more like a dog than a wolf (Germonpre et al., 2009).

## Chapter 2 – The Science of Dogs

- Dr. Germonpre has also reported on a 30,000-year old skull from Predmosti in the Czech Republic. This dog or dog-like animal was buried with a bone in its mouth. Dr. Germonpre believes the animal was a dog that was buried with care (Germonpre et al., 2012).

When scientists find dogs that were buried thousands of years ago, the way that the dogs were buried shows how people felt about the dogs. In Skateholm, Sweden, there is a cemetery that goes back as far as 6000-400 BC. Some people are buried in the cemetery with their dogs, showing that dogs were valued and important (Fahlander, 2008).

So, for thousands of years, people have cared for their dogs. Scientists have shown in countries all over the world that whenever ancient people wandered on foot to discover new lands, they took their dogs with them.

### Dog Anatomy and Physiology

#### Anatomy

Anatomy is the part of science that looks at the structure of the body of humans, animals, and other living things.

#### Inside the Dog

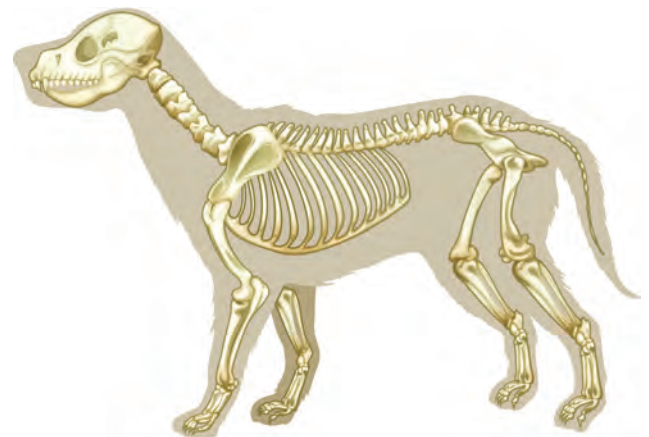
When we talk about the internal anatomy of the dog, we are talking about what is on the inside of the dog. This

would be the bones (skeleton), muscles, ligaments, tendons and organs.

#### Bones

The dog's skeleton is made up of an average of 319 bones. This is about 100 more bones than humans have. The purpose of the skeleton is to protect the organs. Muscles, tendons and ligaments attach to bones and make it possible for the dog to move.

Bones store calcium and minerals and these are needed to keep the dog healthy.



*The dog's skeleton is made up of 319 bones. Dogs with longer tails have more bones.*

Bones also have a part called the “bone marrow” and this is where blood is produced. Bones can regulate substances in the blood (such as the acid-base pH levels) to keep the dog healthy. The bones in the skeleton can also absorb toxins, which are poisonous substances and dispose of them through the blood.

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Depending on the breed or breed mix of the dog, most of the time, a puppy's bones will grow and develop until the puppy is about 1 to 2 years old. Bones grow quickly in the newborn puppy until it is about 6 months old. Then, growth may slow down. The bones of small and medium size dogs can be finished growing when the dog is about 1-year old. If the dog is a large or giant breed, such as a Great Dane or Mastiff, the bones can take up to 2 years to fully grow. This is why you should not do activities that require a young puppy to jump too high or run long distances.

## Skull

The skull or head of the dog can have different shapes depending on the breed or breed mix. Some breeds such as the Borzoi, Collie, Greyhound, and Saluki have a long muzzle and narrow skull. The term for this head shape is called "*dolichocephalic*."

"Dolicho" is related to the Greek word that means "long," and cephalic means "head."

Other breeds have a fairly long muzzle and a wider skull. Some of these breeds would be Golden Retrievers, English Springer Spaniels, and Border Collies. The term for a head shaped like this is "*mesocephalic*." This means the head is of middle sized proportions.

Dog skulls may also be a shape that is called "*brachycephalic*." In Greek "brachy"



*Skulls of a Fox Terrier, Doberman Pinscher and Saint Bernard*

means "short distance." These are dogs with a short muzzle such as Pugs, Pekingese, and Bulldogs. Brachycephalic breeds are more likely to snore and they can have breathing problems when they are overheated or over-exercised.

Even for dogs that will have long muzzles, puppies are born with short muzzles that gradually lengthen over time.

## Teeth

The dog's teeth are another important part of the anatomy. They are not on the inside of the dog like the skeleton, muscles and organs; just by looking, you can see the dog's teeth. The dog is a carnivore (a meat eater). Today's dogs are mostly fed dog food, but they still have the ability to tear,



## Chapter 2 – *The Science of Dogs*

grind and chew meat and bones.

When dogs are puppies, they have 28 teeth. These are called the deciduous teeth, and there are 14 on the upper jaw and 14 on the lower jaw. Puppies get these teeth when they are 3 to 6 weeks old. Then, when puppies are about 12 to 16 weeks (3 to 4 months) old, they will start to lose their baby teeth and their permanent or adult teeth appear. The average dog has 42 permanent teeth, compared to humans who have 32 teeth.

### **Feet**

With an average of 319 bones in a dog's skeleton, of those, each front foot has seven bones and each back foot has six bones. The carpus is the dog's wrist bone, and the bone below the carpus is called the metacarpus. A dog's toe is called a phalange and there are four toes on each foot. Some dogs also have what appears to be a toe that is higher on the foreleg. This is called a dewclaw and at one time long ago in the development of the dog, this may have functioned like a thumb. A few breeds, such as the Saint Bernard and Beauceron, have rear dewclaws. Dewclaws are sometimes removed so they can not be caught on something and cause an injury.

The pads are on the outside of the feet. The pads are tough, leather like skin that works to protect the dog's foot. When puppies are born, the pads are soft, but

they toughen up over time. There are sweat glands in pads of the feet. These sweat glands help keep the dog cool and they keep the pads from getting dry and cracking.

### **Physiology**

Physiology is the part of science that looks at the way in which body parts function, including physical and chemical processes.

### **Inside the Dog**

When we talk about the physiology of the dog, we can look at the:

- muscular system
- respiratory system
- cardiovascular system or circulation
- nervous system
- digestive system
- urinary system
- endocrine system
- reproductive system, and
- skin and hair.

### **The Muscular System**

Along with the tendons and ligaments that are attached to the dog's bones, muscles make it possible for the dog to move.

- A tendon is a cord or band of tissue that attaches a muscle to a bone. Tendons can become irritated with inflammation or swelling. This is called

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

tendonitis. One of the causes can be repeating a movement over and over, such as if you had a dog jumping too much.

- A ligament is a short band of tissue that connects bones. Ligaments can also hold joints together. For example, there are ligaments around the knee. If they are torn during an injury, they can take a long time to heal.



*The muscles make it possible for the dog to move.*

- As a main part of the muscular system, muscles are the bands of bundles of tissue that can contract to produce movement. There are three types of muscles. These are: 1) Skeletal muscles 2) Smooth muscles and 3) Cardiac muscles.
- Skeletal muscles are those that are attached to the skeleton (bones). These

muscles move the arms, legs, and other parts of the dog's body. Skeletal muscles are called voluntary muscles. This means that the human or animal controls their movement, such as when a dog uses his muscles to run or lay down.

- Smooth muscles are the muscles that control the movement of the organs in the body. These muscles form the support system for blood vessels and organs that are hollow such as the stomach, bladder and intestines. Smooth muscles are involuntary which means the person or animal does not control their movement.
- Cardiac muscles are related to the heart. They are involuntary, and their job is to pump blood through the body.

## The Respiratory System

The respiratory system is related to the dog's ability to breath. Breathing involves the nasal passages (inside the nose), the throat, larynx, trachea, bronchi and lungs. As the dog inhales or breathes in, fresh air moves through the nose or mouth, through the pharynx, larynx and trachea into the bronchi, which then supply the lungs with air. Breeds with shorter noses such as Pugs or Pekingese can become easily overheated.

Breathing basically involves the lungs replacing the carbon dioxide in the body

## Chapter 2 – *The Science of Dogs*

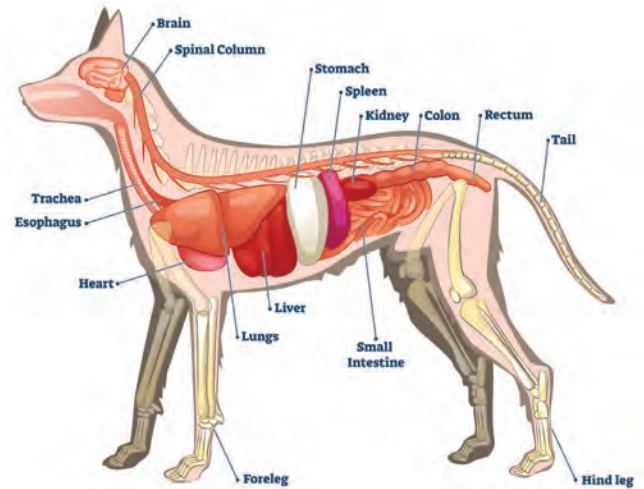
with oxygen. The dog's lungs also work to cool the body. You might have noticed when a dog is overheated it breathes harder and faster (pants). This panting is a way to exchange warm air inside the body for cooler air outside.

Do you know how to count your dog's respiration rate? Watch the chest as the dog breathes; the chest will move up and down as the dog takes breaths. The normal respiration rate of dogs when they are at rest is between 10 to 35 breaths per minutes. The average dog at rest will take 24 breaths per minute.

### **The Cardiovascular System**

When we talk about the cardiovascular system, we are usually talking about the heart, but the whole cardiovascular system is made up of the heart and the blood vessels (arteries, veins, capillaries) that carry blood to the rest of the body.

The dog's heart rate can let you know if the dog has a medical or health problem. The normal resting heart rate for adult dogs is 60-140 beats per minute. There is some variation for the size of the dog. Bigger dogs may have slower heart rates (60 to 100 beats per minute). Puppies have higher heart rates that are about 220 beats per minute.



### **The Nervous System**

The central nervous system of the dog is made up of the brain and spinal cord. These are the organs that control whether or not a dog can move. The brain is also related to the senses – the brain controls if the dog can see, hear, smell, and feel touch.

The dog's nervous system is also made up of the peripheral nervous system. The peripheral nervous system is all of the nerves that are found throughout the rest of the dog, such as the femoral nerve in the dog's thigh. A nerve is a bundle of (nerve) fibers that carry messages to or away from the spinal cord or brain.

### **The Digestive System**

The digestive system is the system that is related to being able to digest (or break down) food. It includes the mouth, esophagus, stomach, small intestine and large intestine. Other organs that are

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related to digestion include the pancreas, liver and gall bladder.

When a dog eats food, going through the digestive system is the way that the food passes through the dog and gets converted into nutrients. When the dog eats, the food starts in the mouth. It goes through the esophagus and into the stomach. In the stomach, the food is broken down (digested). The food leaves the stomach and goes to the small intestine. Here, the nutrients (the substances that provide healthy nourishment such as protein, vitamins and minerals) are absorbed. The rest of the undigested food and water move through the large intestine and exit the body as feces.

Every dog is different so the rate of digestion will vary from one dog to the next. On the average, if a dog eats a dry kibble type food, it will take 10-12 hours for this food to leave your dog. By paying attention to your dog's bowel habits and feeding times, you can get your dog on a regular schedule for "bathroom" breaks.

## **The Urinary System**

The urinary system is made up of the kidneys, bladder, ureters (small tubes) and urethra. Dogs drink water and then they urinate, so it may seem as simple as water goes in, water goes out, but the urinary system has an important job. The kidneys filter liquid waste products from the blood

and keep the salts and other substances in the blood balanced. The kidneys also produce a hormone that helps with the formation of red blood cells.

## **The Endocrine System**

Dogs and people have a number of organs that control hormones in the body. Hormones are chemicals that send signals to certain organs, tissues and cells. Hormones basically help one part of the body communicate with another. Some examples of hormones are those that help with food metabolism, maintain body temperature, and control thirst. When a dog is extremely afraid of something, the hormone related to stress has been released.

The endocrine system is made up of the organs that control the hormones in the body. The organs in the endocrine system are the pituitary glands, thyroid glands, parathyroid glands, pancreas, adrenal glands, ovaries and testes. A problem with any of these organs can cause a disease. For example, if the pancreas does not produce enough insulin, the dog will have diabetes. If the adrenal gland produces too much cortisol, the result can be that the dog will have Cushing's disease, a disease that can cause an increased appetite, increased drinking and urination, and muscle weakness among other symptoms.

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### **The Reproductive System**

The reproductive system in dogs is related to breeding and producing puppies from the two parents.

In dogs, sexual maturity, the time when dogs are old enough to produce puppies, is between 6 and 12 months for both males and females. This can happen as late as 2 years of age for some dogs, especially breeds that are larger. Although smaller breeds are physically capable of producing puppies at 6 months of age, it is not recommended that they be bred until they are 2 years old. Your veterinarian or a responsible, experienced breeder can tell you about all the things that should be considered before breeding a specific breed or individual dog.

In females, the first stage of the reproductive cycle is called proestrus. During this time, the ovaries mature, estrogen rises, and male dogs are attracted to the females. Proestrus lasts about 9 days. The next phase of the reproductive cycle for females is called estrus. Sometimes this is called being “in heat” or “in season.” During estrus, females are ready to be bred. Proestrus and estrus can last from 5 to 21 days, and during this time, females may have a clear to bloody discharge.

Gestation (the time the puppies are in the womb) in a dog is 63 days, so the time from successful breeding until puppies are born is just about 2 months.

Dogs who will not be bred can be spayed (females) or neutered (males). Spaying or neutering are sterilization procedures done by a veterinarian to make sure the dog can not procreate. When females are spayed, ovaries and the uterus are removed, and when males are neutered, the testicles are usually removed.

Sometimes, male dogs are neutered in order to reduce aggression and other behavior problems such as mounting, roaming and urine marking. While neutering can have a positive impact with regard to these issues, a few studies have shown that these behaviors still exist in some neutered males depending on the age the dog was neutered and the learning history.

### **Skin and Hair**

#### **Skin**

When we hear someone talking about a dog’s organs, we tend to think stomach, liver, heart and so on. But did you know that the largest organ of all is the skin? An organ is simply a group of tissues that perform a function. Covering the muscles, skeleton and internal organs, the function of the skin is to protect the body against germs and to regulate the body temperature. The skin is also related to sensation or the ability to feel heat, cold, pressure and pain.

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Dogs can have skin problems that are caused by allergies, fleas, licking or biting at the skin, or infections (such as mange or ringworm). There are also hereditary conditions that cause skin problems such as seborrheic dermatitis or canine follicular dysplasia which causes hair loss. Finally, systemic (inside the dog) diseases can cause skin problems. Some of these are Cushing's Syndrome and hypothyroidism.

## **Hair**

The dog's hair is to protect the dog from the heat and cold. Hair also protects the skin from getting cuts and scratches, such as when a dog is hunting in the brush and brambles. The hair protects the dog from getting sunburned, so breeds that are hairless need sunscreen and protection from the sun. The dog's hair can actually be used to communicate a message. When the hackles are up on the back (forming a ridge of hair), the dog can be signaling aggression, excitement, or fear.

Some dogs have double coats with an undercoat that is softer fur. Undercoats provide warmth and they are often waterproof. It is important that you provide regular grooming so that your dog's coat not only looks great, but is free of loose hair and dirt. A shiny coat not only looks beautiful, but it can be the sign of a healthy dog.



*A shiny coat can be the sign of a healthy dog.*

## **The Senses**

The senses are related to the anatomy and physiology of the dog. Through the senses, dogs perceive and get information about the world around them. The five senses are:

- Touch
- Hearing
- Sight
- Taste
- Smell

### **Touch**

The sense of touch is in place the moment a puppy is born. The puppy's

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body is covered with nerve endings that are touch-sensitive. When puppies are first born, the mother dog (the dam) licks and stimulates them to eliminate waste. Puppies in the litter seek touch from their littermates to stay warm.

Touching puppies from the time they are newborns by holding them and gently stroking them will help puppies develop social bonds with people.

The sense of touch is used to detect pain, temperature, pressure, and body movement or changes in position. As your puppy gets older, you will find that your touch can have a calming effect on your dog.

### Hearing

Puppies are born deaf but at about 10 to 14 days of age, their ear canals open and they can hear. Even though canine ear structures and human ear structures have many of the same parts, the dog's sense of hearing is far superior to that of a human.

Humans can detect sounds at 20 hertz up to 20 kilohertz. A hertz is a unit of measurement for sounds. Dogs on the other hand, can hear in the range of 40-60,000 hertz depending on their age and breed. The reason your dog might respond to a dog whistle that you can't even hear is that dog whistles produce sounds in the range of 16,000 to 22,000 hertz.

### Sight

Dogs can certainly smell and hear better than humans can, but in some ways, a human's sense of sight is better than that of a dog. Humans can see 180 degrees around them. This means we can see to the front and to our sides. Depending on where the eyes are positioned, a dog can see 250 degrees, which includes to the front, sides, and slightly behind the dog. Breeds such as Greyhounds and Salukis have 250 degree vision. This



*Depending on the source, there are some variations reported in the ranges related to a dog's hearing. For example, [doghealth.com](http://doghealth.com) says the range is 40-60,000 hertz, while other sources report the range at 67-45,000 Hz ([dogcare.com](http://dogcare.com)). Whatever measure you use, basically, the dog's ability to pick up sounds is about 4 times that of a human. What humans can hear at 20-ft. away, a dog can hear at 80-ft.*

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would be helpful for seeing the movement of prey.

Dogs can see better than humans at night, but humans can actually see better in bright light or daylight. When a human has perfect vision, the vision is measured at 20:20. This means that a human standing 20-ft. from an eye chart will be able to see what should normally be seen at that distance. If a person has 20:40 vision, it means that the person can see at 20-ft. what another person with normal vision can see at 40-ft. away.

For dogs, good vision is measured at about 20:80. Dogs can see fine for most activities you will do with them, but keep in mind that they can't focus as well as you can on things that are closer than 12 inches to their eyes.

## **Are Dogs Color Blind?**

The idea that dogs are color blind is a myth. While it was once thought that dogs only saw in black and white, we now know this is not true. Dogs can see color but, they don't see some of the color ranges as well as humans. For example, while humans see a color spectrum as red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet, dogs see dark blue, light blue, gray, light yellow, darker yellow (brownish), and dark gray (Nietz, Geist & Jacobs, 1989). When training a dog, keep this in mind if you want to teach the dog to discriminate

based on the color of an object.

Even though dogs don't see all of the colors that humans see, the good news about dogs and their vision is that their other senses are so strong that they can do extraordinary things.

## **Taste**

If you've ever had a dog who would eat just about anything (including disgusting things that make you cringe) you probably won't be surprised to know that dogs have only 1700 taste buds compared to humans who have 9000 taste buds (Case, 2005). This means that humans have more than five times the number of taste buds that dogs have.

Dogs can detect the same taste categories as humans including saltiness, sourness, bitterness and sweetness. However, because they have a history of being carnivores (meat eaters), there's a good chance your dog will prefer tasty meat to one of your salty treats.

## **Smell**

The sense of smell is one of the dog's strongest senses. Dogs have up to 300 million, that's right, 300 million, olfactory receptors in their noses as compared to people, who only have about 6 million olfactory receptors (Tyson, 2012).

An olfactory receptor is a receptor cell in the nasal cavity that is sensitive to odors.



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*The sense of smell is one of the dog's strongest senses.*

With the difference in the number of olfactory receptors, a dog's sense of smell has been estimated as anywhere from 10,000 to 100,000 times as strong as that of a human. James Walker, a Florida State University researcher who worked on a project involving dogs who were trained to sniff out cancer cells, said, "If you make the analogy to vision, what you and I can see at a third of a mile, a dog could see more than 3,000 miles away and still see as well." (Tyson, 2012).

One of the most frequently cited comments about the canine sense of smell is a statement made by Alexandra Horowitz, a dog cognition researcher, in her book, *Inside of a Dog*. She wrote, "While we might notice if our coffee has had a teaspoon of sugar added to it, a dog could detect a teaspoon of sugar in a million gallons of water, or two Olympic-sized pools worth." (Horowitz, 2010).

Dogs can tell from changes in our body chemistry if we are stressed or don't feel well. Dogs have been trained to sniff out drugs, cancer, bed bugs, sea turtles and more.

These hard-to-imagine extraordinary scent related abilities make it easy to understand why our dogs enjoy sniffing the ground so much when we take them on a walk. Think of the information they must be getting through their noses!

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### Activities and Reflections



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Get on all fours and imagine what it would be like to move around like a dog or complete everyday tasks.
- 2) Choose one of the dog's systems (e.g., muscular, digestive) to learn more about. Present the information to your club or group.
- 3) Use art supplies or playdoh to make a poster demonstrating how a dog's anatomy or physiology works (display at club meeting place, 4-H office, or fair).

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) When showing dogs, what is one activity that young dogs (less than 15 months) should not participate in?
- 2) How does knowing about dog anatomy and physiology help you understand your dog better?
- 3) Will you change anything you are doing with your dog as a result of learning this information? (Examples: feed, activities, etc.) If so, how will you make changes?
- 4) What activity can you do with your dog to engage the sense of smell?



## Chapter 3 – *The Basics of Care*

### Raising Your Puppy or New Adult Dog

Now that you know about the anatomy and physiology of the dog, it's time for you to learn how to raise and care for the canine member of your family. There will be some differences in what you need to do depending on whether you start with a new puppy, or whether you choose an adult dog. Whichever you choose, caring for your dog by providing good nutrition and veterinary care as well as training and exercise will be important. This chapter will tell you about the basics of care and everything you need to know when you first bring your puppy or dog home.

#### Raising A Puppy

Puppies are adorable. They draw us in with their soft fur, big eyes, and happiness to be alive. But let's face it – raising a puppy is incredibly hard work. But if you raise a puppy right, you will have one of the most wonderful experiences in your whole life.



*If you raise a puppy right, you will have one of the most wonderful experiences in your whole life.*

The basics of care for puppies involve providing:

- play time
- socialization to new people, animals and experiences
- providing adequate exercise
- housetraining (including crate training)
- maintaining good health and veterinary care
- good nutrition (feeding, clean water at all times)
- grooming (including bathing, brushing, nails and teeth) and,
- training.

#### Play Time

Puppies learn through play. They come into this world eager for new adventures and climbing up a step for the first time, running through the tall grass, and playing with a toy are all experiences that teach puppies about the world around them.

When you provide structured play sessions where you have a daily planned play time with your puppy, you will improve the puppy's intelligence and ability to solve problems. Daily puppy play time will build a strong bond between you and your puppy that will last a lifetime.

For your daily play sessions, you will need a selection of toys suitable for a puppy. Soft balls and small soft toys are

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good for play sessions. You can also add chewable toys to the mix, but these should always be used with your supervision. While it is good for teething puppies to gnaw on a toy, they should not be tearing off pieces and swallowing them. This could result in an intestinal blockage.



*Balls can be used to teach the basics of a retrieve.*

Balls can be used to teach your puppy the basics of a retrieve. In the beginning, you will only throw the ball a few feet away, and over time, you can add distance. You can use the small soft toys for a “Find it!” game where you sit on the floor and hide the toy behind your back. Dog owners who do “puppy play time” at the same time every day often report that 10 years later, when their dog is an adult, he will get a toy and bring it to initiate the daily puppy play time session.

## **Socialization to New People, Animals and Experiences**

Socialization means interacting with and responding in an appropriate way to other people, animals, and things. A well-socialized dog is not aggressive or shy around people or other animals. Dogs whose owners have worked hard at socializing them are not fearful when exposed to things such as horns, traffic noises, people in strange clothing, and moving objects.

Socialization involves exposing your puppy (or adult dog) to a wide variety of new things. Socialization should continue throughout a dog’s life, but it is especially important to socialize puppies in their first three months of life. This is called the “critical period of socialization” which means if the puppy does not receive the socialization and experiences needed during this time, there is a good chance the puppy will have problems relating to people and other animals later in life. (Burch, 2013). Puppies who are not well-



*4-H classes are great places to socialize your puppy to people and other dogs.*

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socialized can develop serious problems such as shyness, fearfulness, or aggression.

Ian Dunbar, a veterinarian and pioneer in the area of puppy training and development, said, “Prior to eight weeks of age, puppies need to be safely and gently exposed to as many different environments as possible and to interact with and be hugged, handled, handled and trained by at least 100 people, especially children, strangers and men and then, by at least another 100 people during the first month in their new homes” (Dunbar, 2015). If you are going to achieve this goal with your puppy, you will have to work hard to make sure you have your pup out and about in the community on a regular basis.

### **Providing Adequate Exercise**

Exercise, or activity, is a key part of keeping your dog healthy and fit. The amount of daily exercise your puppy or adult dog will need will be based on age, breed, health, temperament and any physical problems. Breeds that were bred to work all day will generally need more exercise. Some of these include herding breeds, sporting breeds, hound breeds, and working breeds.

In general, the amount of exercise a puppy needs is about twice a day for fifteen to thirty minutes. Toy breeds, such as Chihuahuas, can get a lot of exercise

running in the house. Puppies will have large spurts of energy, and then suddenly, they may fall asleep or need to rest. When dogs are old enough, good activities for exercise are walking, swimming, chasing a ball, or participating in a sport for which your dog was bred, such as herding or hunting.

Without enough exercise, a dog can become mentally or physically unhealthy. Here are some of the many good things that exercise can do for your puppy or adult dog:

- build strong muscles, joints, and bones and improve flexibility
- help with the digestion of food; exercise keeps everything moving so the puppy does not get constipated
- strengthen the heart and help the respiratory (breathing) system
- control your puppy’s weight
- help your puppy get the restful sleep that is needed for good health
- reduce or prevent behavior problems because when dogs are bored, they often get into trouble
- give more energy to a dog who is lethargic (not active)
- build a strong bond with you if you exercise with your dog through walks, playing with a ball and other fun active games.

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*Exercise is important for all dogs.*

## **Exercise: Don't Overdo It!**

Puppies should not have intense exercise such as jogging or jumping over jumps that are more than a few inches off the ground. Their joints are not yet ready for the strain that is caused by rigorous exercise. Some older dogs also can't tolerate a lot of exercise because of problems such as hip dysplasia, arthritis or other medical conditions. Some breeds are not suited for running long distances. If exercise makes your dog sore, lame, or very tired, stop immediately. Check with your veterinarian

before starting a regular exercise program for your dog.

## **Housetraining**

There are several methods that can be used to housetrain your new puppy. These include 1) crate training, 2) very frequent trips outdoors, and 3) paper training.

While there are pros and cons of each of these methods, all of them can be successful if you follow a few simple rules.

- Control what and when your puppy eats.
- Keep a consistent schedule. This pertains to trips outside, feeding and exercise.
- Provide regular exercise. Exercise helps with motility (keeping the bowels moving).
- Reward your puppy for "going" outside.

Finally, keep the developmental level of your puppy in mind. Puppies don't yet have good control of their bladder and bowels and need more frequent trips outdoors than mature dogs.

## **Crate Training**

A crate is a place that your puppy can go to for a quiet break. Crates or exercise pens can also be used to help you housetrain your puppy when you are away from home.

For a puppy, several hours in a crate can exceed their limit when it comes to bladder



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and bowel control. Start with controlling the diet and schedule. Then, make frequent trips following these activities:

- First thing in the morning
- After playing
- After spending time in a crate
- Upon waking up from a nap
- After chewing a toy or bone
- After eating
- After drinking
- Last thing at night



*Crates and exercise pens can be used to houstrain your puppy.*

### ***How Often Should a Puppy Go Out?***

*A general rule for how often you should take your puppy out for a “bathroom” break is as many hours as the puppy is months old plus one. This means a two-months old puppy should go out at least every three hours. If there are any accidents, shorten the time until you see success!*

A puppy who is under six months old should never be left in a crate for more than three to four hours at a time. Younger puppies should go out every one to two hours.

### **Paper Training Your Puppy**

What if you are at school all day and your parents are working? You could consider having someone such as a trusted neighbor or pet sitter come and take the puppy outside for a

mid-day break. Or, instead of a crate, you could consider paper training as an option. Give the puppy a larger area by using baby gates or fencing to block off a bathroom or kitchen while you are gone. Then, put papers (or pads for smaller dogs) in the corner of this area so that there is a potty area that is away from where the dog will nap or drink water. Paper training might take longer than crate training because dogs learn it is okay to relieve themselves indoors, but your puppy's welfare and comfort always come first. By rewarding your puppy for going to the bathroom outside, and taking your pup outside frequently when you are home, you will soon be able to stop using the papers.

Any time the crate or paper area is soiled, clean it well so it is free of any scent from urine or feces. If you think your puppy is stressed out when you are gone, you can consider leaving him with a safe, interactive toy.

When it comes to housetraining, whatever method you choose, never punish your dog for accidents. Continue to give lots of praise and treats for a "job well done" outside.

## Steps to Crate Training Your Puppy

1. Get the puppy comfortable with the crate. Leave the door open to start, and put comfortable bedding in the crate such as a

crate pad. You will have to closely observe in the beginning to make sure the puppy is not chewing and eating the crate pad.

2. Get the puppy used to being inside the crate. Put some treats near the open door of the crate. Next, put some treats just inside the open door. Then, throw a treat inside the crate so the puppy goes in. Verbally praise the puppy for being in the crate, "Good boy in your crate!" Start using a consistent verbal cue to tell the puppy to go in the crate such as, "Kennel up," or "Get in."

3. Once your puppy will go in the crate, feed the puppy's dinner in the crate with the door open.

4. After feeding the puppy in the crate with the door open, try it with the door closed. Gradually lengthen the time the puppy is in the crate.

5. Practice having the puppy in the crate for short times when you don't need to leave. Then, leave the room for a short time and return.

6. Next, you will leave the house for a short time and return. Give the puppy a consistent cue each time you leave such as, "I'll be right back," or "Take a nap." Use a cheerful voice.

7. When you return (or get up in the morning and come to the crate), calmly open the crate door and take the puppy outside.

## Chapter 3 – *The Basics of Care*

### Maintaining Good Health and Veterinary Care

#### Your Dog's Veterinarian

The veterinarian will be one of the most important people in your dog's life. Even if you have a very healthy puppy or adult dog, the veterinarian is the professional who can tell you if you are on the right track about diet, exercise and overall care. The veterinarian will get to know puppies as soon as they need their first vaccines and veterinary checks. In many cases, your puppy's veterinarian will be there all the way from puppyhood to when your dog is



*The veterinarian will be one of the most important people in your dog's life.*

a senior. Veterinarians handle preventative care such as vaccines and medications to prevent illnesses and they also handle illnesses and emergency care.

One of the most important jobs of the veterinarian is managing a wellness program for your dog. This means doing all the things that will keep your dog healthy. Some of these include:

- Regularly scheduled puppy visits for vaccines, boosters, etc. including rabies vaccines
- Annual visits for older dogs (or more frequent if your veterinarian feels additional visits are needed)
- The prevention of parasites such as heartworms, fleas and ticks
- Preventative dental care (cleanings, etc.)
- Overall care and helping dog owners learn how to best care for their dogs (clip nails, clean ears, anal sacs)
- Screening for infectious diseases
- Nutritional advice (the best healthy diet for your dog)
- Advice regarding whether or not your dog should be bred if you are considering this

Finally, it is hard to think about, but when your dog is old or has an untreatable illness, your veterinarian will be there to help you if you have to make the difficult decision to say good-bye.

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## Nutrition

Feeding a high quality diet will result in a healthy dog who has all the energy needed to run, play, participate in training and have an active life. Good nutrition comes from feeding a balanced diet that has the right amounts of protein, fat, fiber and essential minerals.

Your veterinarian, breeder, or a knowledgeable, experienced dog person can help you decide on the best food for your dog. To decide on a food, you will want to consider factors such as your dog's stage of life (e.g., puppy, adult or senior), as well as any health or weight related problems. You should also think about your dog's activity level when choosing a food. For example, an older pet dog does not need the same high performance food that a two-year old Husky who participates in dog sled races would need. And don't forget, access to clean water at all times is an important part of your dog's diet. We will provide more detailed information about nutrition in a chapter that follows.

## Grooming

A well-groomed dog is a beauty to behold! A shiny coat, well-trimmed nails, and clean ears and teeth, say to everyone, "My owner cares about me." Your dog's skin and coat will benefit from shampooing as often as is needed for your

breed as well as regular brushing to remove dead hair and mats from the coat. Brushing also stimulates the oils that make the coat shiny. For some breeds, regular trimming is needed and an experienced groomer can teach you how to trim your dog's coat.

Nail care including trimming, filing or grinding the nails to the appropriate length is important because long nails can get caught on something and be broken or torn. This causes the dog a lot of pain. Long nails can also affect the feet and how the dog walks.

Ears should be cleaned as a part of regular grooming because dirt and debris in the ear can cause infection. Inspecting your dog's ears when you brush your dog each day, will help you find ear mites



*When grooming your dog, don't forget the ears, nails, and teeth.*

## Chapter 3 – *The Basics of Care*

before they get bad so you can have them treated by your veterinarian.

If there is one part of grooming that is often overlooked, it is the dog's teeth. Maybe it is because dogs often have their mouths closed so you can't see their teeth, or maybe it is because the rest of the body is so much bigger that it is more noticeable. Even though the teeth may not seem like a major part of the dog, when it comes to grooming, the teeth are important. Brushing your dog's teeth clears away the plaque that can lead to gum disease and decayed teeth. By starting when the dog is a puppy, you can easily train a dog to tolerate the brushing needed for shiny white teeth.

Grooming is one of the steps in AKC® the Canine Good Citizen test, and specifics on how to teach your puppy to tolerate grooming procedures are in the Canine Good Citizen chapter that follows.

### **Training Your Puppy: The AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy® Program**

Think for a minute about all of the things you would like to see in your puppy. Most people would want a puppy who was well-behaved, housetrained, healthy, friendly, well-groomed, and liked to play. They would want their puppy to walk nicely on a leash and politely meet people along the way. The ideal puppy would be well-socialized and not afraid of people or

other animals. And, one of the most attractive things about any dog is a responsible owner.

All of these attributes are addressed in a positive behavioral puppy training program called AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy. The STAR stands for Socialization, Training, Activity and a Responsible owner, all of the things every puppy needs to get started on the right paw in life. In AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy, you and your pup will attend at class. At the end of the class that lasts several weeks, every puppy can get a



*In AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy classes, you can get your puppy started on the right paw in life.*

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certificate, ribbon and attractive gold STAR medal.

There are 20 items that your AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy trainer, who can be your 4-H dog leader, will check off in order for you and your puppy to pass the STAR test. These are:

## AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy Test

### Owner Behaviors:

1. Maintains puppy's health (vaccines, exams, appears healthy).
2. Owner receives Responsible Dog Owner's Pledge.
3. Owner describes adequate daily play and exercise plan.
4. Owner and puppy attend STAR.
5. Owner brings bags to classes for cleaning up after puppy.
6. Owner has obtained some form of ID for puppy-collar tag, etc.

### Puppy Behaviors:

7. Free of aggression toward people during at least 6 weeks of class
8. Free of aggression toward other puppies in class.
9. Tolerates collar or body harness of owner's choice.
10. Owner can hug or hold puppy (depending on size).
11. Puppy allows owner to take away a treat or toy.

## Pre-Canine Good Citizen® Test

### Behaviors:

12. Allows (in any position) petting by a person other than the owner.
13. Grooming-Allows owner handling and brief exam (ears, feet).
14. Walks on a Leash-Follows owner on lead in a straight line (15 steps).
15. Walks by other people - Walks on leash past other people 5-ft away.
16. Sits on cue - Owner may use a food lure.
17. Down on cue - Owner may use a food lure.
18. Comes to owner from 5-ft when name is called.
19. Reaction to Distractions-distractions are presented 15-ft away.
20. Stay on leash with another person (owner walks 10 steps and returns).

By teaching your puppy all of these skills in your 4-H puppy training class, it's guaranteed that you and your dog will be super STARS!

## Financials

The joy that a dog will bring you is priceless, however, there are some costs associated with raising a dog and a responsible dog owner will be aware of those costs. One estimated cost of raising a dog per year was \$511, while a study done by two University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine students has

## Chapter 3 – The Basics of Care

estimated the average cost per year at \$3085 (American Kennel Club, 2015).

If you get a puppy, there will be some additional veterinary costs in the first year because of the vaccines that are needed, and senior dogs may need more frequent trips to the veterinarian.

Here are the categories of costs that you need to calculate for raising your puppy or adult dog.

### 1. Purchase price.

How much does the puppy cost to purchase or adopt? If you are interested in showing a purebred dog in 4-H activities, breeders will sometimes place a dog with a junior handler who will show the dog.

### 2. Food.

Food will be an ongoing expense and in order to maintain your dog's health, you should select a high quality dog food. You will also purchase treats that can be used in training and to reward your dog. Chew bones such as bully sticks are good for teething puppies and older dogs enjoy these as well. Choose a variety that is safe and supervise your dog while chewing.

### 3. Veterinary care.

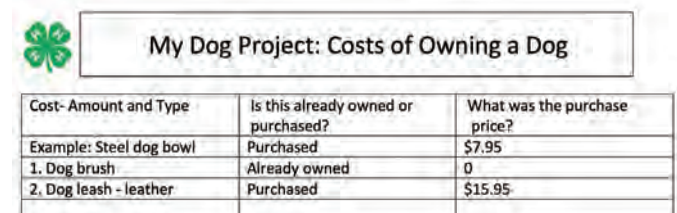
Vaccines, deworming, vet checks, medications such as heartworm preventative, parasite (fleas, ticks) control,

vitamins, dental care. Will your dog be spayed or neutered?

### 4. Supplies.

To prepare for your new dog, you will purchase some supplies. Some of these are not ongoing costs such as a crate, food bowls, and others such as beds, collars or shampoo may have to be replaced as the puppy grows.

Supplies include items such as dog bed, bowls for food and water, collars, leash,



Cost- Amount and Type	Is this already owned or purchased?	What was the purchase price?
Example: Steel dog bowl	Purchased	\$7.95
1. Dog brush	Already owned	0
2. Dog leash - leather	Purchased	\$15.95

Your 4-H Leader will provide you with the forms for your dog project. This graphic shows some of the supplies needed.

grooming tools. Do you need a grooming table? There are specialty products for grooming such as eye stain and ear cleaner (liquid) solutions, and toothbrushes and toothpaste for dogs. Every now and then, accidents happen, so another part of raising a dog is being ready with carpet cleaner and other cleaning supplies. Toys are essential to keep your dog's mind active. Pet supply stores have a wide variety of toys from which you can choose.

### 5. Safety equipment.

Do you need a fence to keep your dog safe? Baby gates or exercise pens can be

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used to keep the puppy in certain areas of the house. How about in the car? Will you be using a car restraint or using a crate for the car?

## 6. Training

Training costs will include the cost of lessons, show entry fees, training equipment such as agility obstacles, and travel to shows if they are not local.

### Summary

This chapter has talked about the basics of care that include providing your puppy with play time, socialization, exercise, housetraining, maintaining good health and nutrition, and grooming. Many of these important basics can be learned in AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy classes.

## References

American Kennel Club (2015). *How much does it cost to raise a dog?* May 19, 2015. [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)

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Dunbar, I. (2015). *Why don't we adequately socialize young puppies with people?* Dog Star Daily, March 18, 2015. (<http://www.dogstardaily.com/blogs/dr-ian-dunbar/why-don't-we-adequately-socialize-young-puppies-people>)



### Activities and Reflections



#### **Suggested Activities**

- 1)** Find information about a local Canine Good Citizen program and create a brochure about it. Consider sharing it with those offering the course.
- 2)** Make a commercial targeting someone who is getting a new puppy.
- 3)** Make a list of supplies you need to properly care for your dog. Add any specialty supplies you may need/want to help with your training or show goals.

#### **Suggested Reflections**

- 1)** What are the basic needs of your dog?
- 2)** What type of training do you plan to do with your dog? What are some benefits to training?
- 3)** What are some socialization activities you can do with a puppy to prepare them for all experiences?
- 4)** What training goals do you have? How will you meet those goals?



## Chapter 4 – Nutrition and Health

One of the most important parts of being a responsible dog owner is keeping your dog healthy. This chapter addresses issues related to nutrition and your dog's feeding plan.

### Nutrition

Have you heard that saying, “You are what you eat”? This pertains to dogs as well. A dog who is fed a poor diet with inadequate nutrients will not be as healthy as a dog who is fed an ideal diet. Providing your dog with good nutrition along with exercise and addressing health problems quickly is a formula for ensuring that your dog has a long healthy life.



*Providing good nutrition helps ensure your dog has a long healthy life.*

### What is nutrition?

*Nutrition* is simply the process of providing or getting the food necessary for growth and good health. When we talk about nutrition, we often use the word *nutrients*. Nutrients are the components of food that an organism (such as a dog, person or plant) uses to survive and grow. The main categories of nutrients are:

- **Protein**

Protein supplies the amino acids that are needed for the body to build healthy tissues. Amino acids are called the building blocks of protein.

- **Fat**

Fats supply energy and transport nutrients in the body. A certain amount of fat is needed in order for the body to function normally. Dogs who are very active working dogs (such as sled dogs) are usually fed a food with a higher fat content because they use so much energy working.

- **Fiber**

Fiber is the part of a plant that cannot be digested. Examples of fiber are the bran in grains, the skin of vegetables, and the pulp of fruit. Fiber helps food pass through the body.

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- **Carbohydrates**

Carbohydrates provide a source of energy. In dog food, common carbohydrates are corn, rice, wheat, oats, and barley. When cooked and prepared for dog food, these carbohydrates are easy to digest. But, there is a possible down side to carbohydrates. Because they are less expensive than meat (protein), they are often used as filler in lower quality dog foods. Too many carbohydrates can cause weight gain.

- **Vitamins**

Vitamins are important for regulating metabolism. Metabolism is the process by which food is converted into energy. Vitamins play a key role in helping an animal grow. While there are 13 vitamins including eight B vitamins, these are the most common vitamins:

- Vitamin A helps with immune system (prevents illness) and good vision
- B1 (thiamine) – helps form red blood cells, needed by brain and nervous system
- B2 (riboflavin) – helps with cells
- B3 (niacin) – prevents tiredness, malnutrition
- B5 (pantothenic acid) – helps metabolize proteins, fats, and carbohydrates
- B12 – (brain, nervous system, red blood cells)

- D – prevents muscle weakness, builds strong bones
- E – an antioxidant that helps prevent disease
- K – helps blood clot, prevents calcium in arteries

- **Minerals**

Do you know where minerals come from? They originate in the soil rather than in plants or animals. Plants that we eat get minerals through the soil, and animals get minerals through plants and animals they have eaten.

Minerals make up an animal's muscles, bones, and tissues. There are minerals that are called major minerals and these are calcium, chloride, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, and sulfur. Along with vitamins, all of these minerals help the body function. They build strong bones and teeth, along with healthy skin and hair. Minerals also help muscles and nerve function, and they turn food into energy.

There are also some minor minerals, called *trace minerals* and these are iron, zinc, manganese, copper, fluoride, molybdenum, iodine, boron, chromium, and selenium.

## Chapter 4 – Nutrition and Health

Vitamins and minerals are found in food and a high quality dog food will have the right balance of these to keep your dog healthy. If a dog has a vitamin deficiency, the veterinarian might also prescribe vitamins that are usually taken as pills.

- **Water**

Water is one of the most important parts of your dog's daily diet. As a matter of fact, it is often referred to as the most important nutrient. To stay healthy, your dog should have access to clean, fresh water at all times. Water helps regulate the body temperature and prevents dehydration. Keeping your dog hydrated is important especially when it is hot outside, when you are training your dog, or when the dog is working. Water also carries nutrients to the cells in the body, and it can help clean out any toxic substances in the blood.



*Water is one of the most important parts of your dog's daily diet.*

### Feeding Your Dog

So now that you know the basics of nutrition, what should you feed your dog? The general idea is that you should feed your dog a high-quality food with the proper balance of all the nutrients listed above. Your dog's breeder, veterinarian, or a knowledgeable dog person such as your 4-H Dog Leader can provide some good



*Dog food comes in three forms which are canned food, semi-moist, and dry food (which is sometimes called "kibble").*

suggestions about brands.

### Types of Food

Dog food comes in three forms which are canned food, semi-moist, and dry food (which is sometimes called "kibble"). Within these forms, there are versions for puppies, adults, overweight dogs, senior dogs, and so on.

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**Canned food.** Canned foods, which are up to 75% water, usually have a lot of fat and protein (in the form of meat).

- Advantages are that they smell good to dogs and a dog who is a picky eater will often be willing to eat canned food. Canned foods can be put on top of dry food and mixed with some water to make the dry food more desirable to the dog.
- Disadvantages of canned dog food is that canned food alone does not always provide all the nutrients a dog needs. Canned foods can be expensive, and because they have no crunchiness, they do not clean a dog's teeth like a dry food.

**Semi-moist food.** Semi-moist foods are often made to look like hamburger, but unlike hamburger, they come in packages or plastic tubes and do not need to be refrigerated. They are up to 35% water, which makes them not as wet as canned foods, but still somewhat moist.

- Advantages of semi-moist foods are that as with canned foods, dogs are usually eager to eat semi-moist foods, and the packaging is handy for owners.
- Disadvantages of semi-moist foods are that they do not clean tartar from the dog's teeth and they are more expensive than dry food. Some semi-moist foods have a lot of sugar, and this can result in tooth decay or the dog being overweight.

**Dry food.** Dry food is not entirely dry; it is made up of about 10% moisture. Even though this may not be the most exciting food for a dog, it is oftentimes the healthiest choice.

- Advantages of dry foods are that they are generally less expensive than other types of food. Crunchy, hard, dry food cleans the tartar from the dog's teeth. Dry foods can



*Choose a high quality dog food that includes the nutrients for your dog's age (such as puppy, adult or senior) and activity level.*

## Chapter 4 – Nutrition and Health

be enhanced by adding a spoon or two of moist food or a few bites of an acceptable human food such as chicken.

- Disadvantages of dry foods are that some dogs don't prefer them and seem to not be good eaters when dry food is the only option. Some of the lower quality dry foods may have more fiber and non-meat products (such as corn) resulting in loose stools. A diet too high in fiber and too low in protein is not the healthiest diet for the dog.

**New Trends in Feeding.** While most dog owners will feed their dogs one of the three types of food listed above, there are some new trends in feeding that you may have heard about.

- **Raw food diets.** In 1993, an Australian veterinarian, Ian Billinghurst, proposed a diet for dogs that consisted of raw meat, bones, fruit and vegetables. He called this diet the BARF diet, meaning Bones and Raw Food (Lee, 2017). Supporters of raw food diets say that as a result of being fed this way, their dogs have healthier skin, more energy, cleaner teeth, shiny coats, and they have smaller stools. People who do not support feeding a raw food diet are concerned that there may be health problems for the humans handling raw

meat if there is bacteria present; they are concerned that food such as a raw chicken thigh with a bone has the potential to choke the dog, and if the diet is not properly balanced, the dog may not be healthy. There is a lot of controversy about raw food diets, so you should talk to your veterinarian about the best way to feed your dog.

- **Frozen foods.** Frozen and freeze dried foods can be purchased for dogs at some pet supply stores. These foods are usually a mixture of raw meat with grains, vegetables and vitamins, so they provide some of the components of a raw food diet, but you do not have to prepare the food yourself.
- **Home delivery.** Some pet food companies are offering freshly prepared dog food that is delivered to your home. With home delivery, you get fresh food that has not been on store shelves, but the cost may be more.

### Treats, Table Scraps and Chew Toys

There are some things to keep in mind when it comes to treats, table scraps and chew toys.

- **Treats.** When we are training dogs, we want the training to be a positive experience. So, in the beginning of learning a new skill, we often reward the dog with food. You'll want to make

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sure that your dog is not getting so many treats that he gains weight. You can use small bits of food for training, and then, if necessary, subtract this from what your dog is fed at dinner. There are commercial treats made especially to be used as rewards in training. These treats are small, moist pieces of food that your dog can easily chew so you can move on to teaching the next skill. Some trainers use small pieces of meat or cheese as a reward. Whatever you choose, treats should be healthy and your dog should receive a regular meal of a high quality dog food.

- **Table Scraps.** Whatever you do, don't let your dog become a meal time beggar who would rather eat your food

than her dog food. This is a bad habit and can quickly become a behavior problem. In addition, too many table scraps can result in a nutrition problem for your dog. Dogs should not be fed junk food such as potato chips or candy. Every now and then, it won't hurt to give your dog a taste of Thanksgiving turkey or a piece of steak. One way to handle this is to eat your own meal and save a bite or two of something healthy for your dog. Then, when you have finished eating, you can put a piece of chicken in your dog's dish as a reward for waiting nicely.

- **Chew Toys.** Chew toys are not a part of a dog's healthy diet like other dog food. Chew toys are used for teething for puppies and for older dogs, they can help with boredom. Some dogs will have a nice "chew" and then go to sleep. Make sure that your dog's chew toys have been approved by a veterinarian. Some chew toys are intended to be gnawed but not swallowed. For example, leather rawhides cannot be digested and may cause intestinal blockage.



*When food rewards are used in training, choose healthy treats.*

## **Foods to Avoid**

There are several foods that can cause serious illness or death if a dog eats them. Other foods can cause digestive problems and they should also be avoided. The



## Chapter 4 – Nutrition and Health

### Do Not Feed these Foods to Your Dog

following chart lists 10 food items that you should never give to your dog.

**Alcohol** – Alcohol can cause damage to the dog's liver, kidneys and nervous system. It can cause coma or death.

**Apple cores (seeds)** – Can cause cyanide poisoning leading to shock and coma.

**Bones (cooked)** – Small bones can splinter and get lodged in the throat or intestinal tract.

**Caffeine (coffee)** – Caffeine is a stimulant that is unsafe for dogs. It can cause heart palpitations and even death.

**Chewing gum, candy, toothpaste for humans** – Contains xylitol, an artificial sweetener that can damage the liver.

**Chocolate** – Chocolate contains theobromine which can be deadly to dogs. The most dangerous form of chocolate is cocoa powder, followed by semisweet, dark, and finally milk chocolate.

**Grapes (and raisins)** – Grapes/raisins can cause vomiting, diarrhea, and life-threatening kidney failure.

**Macadamia nuts** – Can cause

weakness, vomiting, tremors and hypothermia.

**Onions, garlic, chives** – Can cause damage to red blood cells. Raw onions are toxic to dogs.

**Yeast dough (uncooked)** – Raw dough ferments and expands in the stomach and can rupture the intestines or stomach.

In addition to the potentially deadly foods above, there are other foods that people eat that can cause problems for dogs such as diarrhea, vomiting, heart problems, gas, diabetes, pancreatitis, panting, fever, seizures, and nervous system and muscle problems. Some of these foods are:

- **Avocados**
- **Baby food** (if it includes onion powder)
- **Cat food** (with too much protein and fat)
- **Corn on the cob** (intestinal blockage)
- **Fat from meat** (can cause pancreatitis)
- **Fish** (raw, that has parasites)
- **Human vitamins with iron** (iron can be toxic for liver and kidneys)

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- **Milk and dairy products** (diarrhea, stomach distress)
- **Peaches, plums, pears** (the seeds are dangerous)
- **Salt** (can cause dehydration)
- **Sugar** (too much causes diabetes, obesity, problems with teeth)

Keeping a close eye on your dog and providing food that is intended for dogs will ensure that your dog remains healthy and free from medical risks caused by foods that canines should not be eating.

## How Often Should You Feed Your Dog?

Now that you know what to feed your dog and what not to feed, let's look at some additional specifics related to a feeding plan. There are some general guidelines pertaining to how often a puppy or adult dog should be fed. The best thing you can do is check with your breeder, veterinarian, or a knowledgeable dog person, plus look at the recommendations on the food bag to determine the amount to feed your dog.

Remember that a feeding schedule will be different for puppies, adult dogs, and seniors, and depending on your dog's activity level, the feeding plan may change.

Because of the fast metabolism of young puppies, they can eat up to four times a day! Dog food packaging has instructions for feeding puppies based on their age and

body weight. While there are variations in veterinary and breeder recommendations, a sample feeding schedule for puppies might look like this:

## Age of Puppy and Number of Times to Feed Daily

- 8 to 12 weeks old – *3 to 4 times per day*
- 3 to 6 months old – *3 times per day*
- 6 months old – *2 times per day (Some breeds stay at 3 x day to 11 months; some*



*Because of the fast metabolism of young puppies, they can eat up to four times a day!*

*experts suggest switching to 2 feedings per day when the puppy is 4 months old).*

By the time your dog is an adult (one year or older), the feeding schedule might change to 2 times per day. Many dogs will receive a meal at dinnertime, and a biscuit or smaller amount of food in the morning.

A dog who is on a proper diet will have a well-formed stool. There won't be loose stools, diarrhea or an upset stomach. The coat will be shiny and the dog will have an

## Chapter 4 – Nutrition and Health

overall appearance that is the picture of good health.

### How Much Should You Feed Your Dog?

Whether your dog is a puppy or adult, the amount that you feed will be listed on the dog food bag that you are using. Then, with input from your veterinarian, if your dog is overweight or too thin, the food amount can be adjusted.

In 2002, researchers at Nestle Purina PetCare announced the results of an important study. First published in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, the study showed that a dog's median life span can be extended by 15% by restricting diet to maintain an ideal body condition (Purina Petcare, 2002. See page 53 for chart).

### Dog food labels

Earlier in this chapter, we suggested seeking the assistance of a knowledgeable person such as a veterinarian, breeder, or your 4-H Dog Leader if you need help selecting a dog food. If you are ready to learn more about canine nutrition, you can learn to read the labels on dog food.

Look at the back of a dog food bag. Federal regulations have established standards for animal food so that the packaging must:

1. Identify the food by brand and product name (with ingredients such as “Chicken flavor”).



*When deciding on a dog food, look on the back of the package to see the guaranteed analysis, the ingredients, and the feeding directions.*

2. Name of the species for which the food is intended (“Dog Food”).
3. Quantity statement (weight or volume of the food).
4. Guaranteed analysis (this is important; this is the list of percentages of each nutrient in the food).
5. Ingredient statement – ingredients must be listed in order by weight.
6. Nutritional adequacy statement – this says the food is for a particular life stage, such as puppies.
7. Feeding directions – this must tell you how much to feed per weight of dog.
8. Name and address of manufacturer or distributor – company location and contact information.

The main things that you'll want to look at are the guaranteed analysis, the

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ingredients, and the feeding directions.

There are several organizations that are involved with regulations and recommendations for pet foods.

- AAFCO (Association of Feed Control Officials) is an association of local, state and federal agencies charged by law to regulate the sale and distribution of animal feeds. AAFCO has worked to implement regulations for the manufacturing, labeling, distribution and sale of animal feeds.
- PFI (Pet Food Institute) is a national trade association. In 1992, PFI established some new nutrition requirements for dog food, and these requirements were called the Nutrition Assurance Program (NAP).
- The National Research Council (NRC) does not regulate dog food manufacturing, but it compiles research done on animal nutrition by other organizations.
- The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) is responsible for protecting the public by making sure that products (such as foods and

medicines) are safe.

The main thing to know about these organizations is that they ensure the food you feed your dog has been tested, and the manufacturers must provide you with detailed information about commercial foods for dogs.

## Summary

Good nutrition is a key to keeping your dog healthy. Selecting a food with the proper balance of protein, fat, fiber, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals is the first step to good nutrition. It's not just food that is important – water is one of the most important parts of your dog's daily diet. Dogs should have access to clean, fresh water at all times. To know how to best feed your dog, seek the advice of your veterinarian, breeder, your 4-H Leader, or a person with dog related knowledge and expertise.

# Chapter 4 – Nutrition and Health

## Nestlé PURINA BODY CONDITION SYSTEM

TOO THIN

**1** Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.



1

**2** Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible. No palpable fat. Some evidence of other bony prominence. Minimal loss of muscle mass.

**3** Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.



3

IDEAL

**4** Ribs easily palpable, with minimal fat covering. Waist easily noted, viewed from above. Abdominal tuck evident.

**5** Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side.



5

**6** Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist is discernible viewed from above but is not prominent. Abdominal tuck apparent.

TOO HEAVY

**7** Ribs palpable with difficulty; heavy fat cover. Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent or barely visible. Abdominal tuck may be present.



7

**8** Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover, or palpable only with significant pressure. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent. No abdominal tuck. Obvious abdominal distention may be present.

**9** Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.



9

The **BODY CONDITION SYSTEM** was developed at the Nestlé Purina Pet Care Center and has been validated as documented in the following publications:

Mawby D, Bartges JW, Moyers T, et. al. *Comparison of body fat estimates by dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry and deuterium oxide dilution in client owned dogs.* *Compendium* 2001; 23 (9A): 70

Lafamme DP. *Development and Validation of a Body Condition Score System for Dogs.* *Canine Practice* July/August 1997; 22:10-15

Kealy, et. al. *Effects of Diet Restriction on Life Span and Age-Related Changes in Dogs.* *JAVMA* 2002; 220:1315-1320

Call 1-800-222-VETS (8387), weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CT

Nestlé PURINA

This chart is a well-recognized standard for determining if dogs are at a proper weight and condition. You can see from this chart that dogs in good condition have an obvious waistline and they are neither too fat or too thin (reprinted with permission).

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Purina Petcare (2002). *First-ever study proves diet restriction can add nearly two more years of healthy life for canines*. Press release, May 6, 2002. Retrieved on January 23, 2021 from <http://newscenter.purina.com/LifeSpanStudy>

### Activities and Reflections



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Go to a store that carries different brands/types of dog foods then compare and contrast the foods.
- 2) Find out the age, size, breed, and any additional information needed of a club member or family member's dog. Determine how much and how often that dog should be fed.
- 3) Look at the label on your dog's feed bag. Find an ingredient you do not recognize and research it.

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) When training your dog what size treat should you use and why?
- 2) Why is it so important to know what your dog's nutritional needs are?
- 3) Will you make any feeding changes after learning about your dog's nutritional needs? If yes, what will those changes be?
- 4) What is the most important thing you learned about nutrition and why do you feel this is important?





## Chapter 5 – Keeping Your Dog Healthy

In earlier chapters, we talked about the basic steps to keeping your dog healthy. These included keeping your dog a proper weight and fit by feeding a good diet; regular grooming to keep ears, skin, teeth and feet free of problems; and providing daily exercise.

There are some other things you should do in order to maintain your dog's health. The first is having a veterinarian who will work with you to keep your dog well and healthy.



*Your dog's veterinarian will work with you to keep your dog healthy.*

### Choosing a Veterinarian

As soon as you add a new dog to your family, one of the very first steps you should take is to establish a working relationship with a veterinarian. If you have other animals or have had them in the past, you may already have a veterinarian. But, if you need to begin a search to find a veterinarian, here are some things you can do:

**1. Talk to other dog people you know and trust.** The AKC's Veterinary Network is a resource that can be used to help you find a veterinarian ([webapps.akc.org/vetnet/#/](http://webapps.akc.org/vetnet/#/)). An experienced person in a dog club, your dog's breeder, or your dog training instructor may also have some recommendations.

**2. Set up an appointment to meet the veterinarian and see the clinic.** This meeting isn't about your dog—this is a “meet and greet” for you to ask questions and determine if this is the animal hospital that you would like to care for your dog. Take a checklist with you that includes the questions that follow.

- Are the animal hospital and veterinarian AVMA accredited? There will be certificates on the wall showing that the clinic has met the standards of care.
- Is there a wellness program?
- What regular care will your dog receive?
- Does this clinic do spay/neuter?
- Emergency care – does the clinic handle after-hours emergencies or have a plan? Hours and fees: When is the clinic open? Prices for services? Even though you might ask about the cost of

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services, choosing the best veterinarian possible is more important than saving a few dollars.

- Does the clinic have any special services such as dog training, grooming, etc.?
- Has the veterinarian worked with your breed or similar breeds before?
- Does the clinic accept pet insurance?

## Puppy Vaccination Schedule

The first thing to know is that there is not just one puppy vaccination schedule for all dogs. Factors such as which part of the country you live in, and your dog's individual risk factors will come into play. Some dogs do not need every vaccine. This

decision is between you and your veterinarian. Always discuss puppy vaccinations at your regularly scheduled appointments. That said, here is a generally accepted guideline of the puppy vaccination schedule for the first year.



*The veterinarian will advise you on the best vaccination schedule for your puppy.*

## Sample Vaccination Plan

Puppy's Age	Recommended Vaccinations	Optional Vaccinations
6 – 8 weeks	Distemper, Parvovirus	Bordetella
10 – 12 weeks	DHPP (vaccines for distemper, adenovirus [hepatitis], parainfluenza, and parvovirus)	Leptospirosis, Bordetella, Lyme disease per lifestyle as recommended by veterinarian. Consider Influenza.
16 - 18 weeks	DHPP, Rabies	Lyme disease, Leptospirosis, Bordetella per lifestyle as recommended by veterinarian. Consider Influenza booster.
12 – 16 months	Rabies, DHPP	
Every 1 – 2 years	DHPP or titers as discussed with individual veterinarian	Coronavirus, Leptospirosis, Bordetella, Lyme disease, Influenza per lifestyle as recommended by veterinarian
Every 1 – 3 years	Rabies (as required by law)	none

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The DHPP vaccine is a combination vaccine for Distemper, Hepatitis, Parainfluenza, and Parvovirus. Some veterinarians will recommend a DHLPP combination vaccine to include protection for Leptospirosis. Depending on your dog's lifestyle, vaccination needs and medical history, your veterinarian will provide guidance with regard to choosing the appropriate vaccines for your dog.

### Signs of Stress

Dogs that are exposed to new situations or are involved in training and learning new skills can show signs of stress.

*Stress or anxiety is seen when physical, mental or emotional factors cause mental or bodily tension.*

Examples of a dog showing stress include a new dog who panics when left alone for the first time, a puppy who trembles in a loud, active group puppy class, or an older dog who drools and sheds a lot of fur when taken to the veterinarian.

Stress is usually temporary and should not be confused with an illness or injury. For signs of stress (such as diarrhea or panting) that can also signal an illness, you should closely observe your dog to determine if the dog gets better once removed from the stressful situation. Stress can often be treated with sound behavioral procedures.



*Any time your dog appears to be sick or behaves in a way that is out of the ordinary, take your dog to the veterinarian.*



### Common Signs of Stress

- Activity – increased or decreased
- Diarrhea
- Eye contact – avoiding
- Licking lips
- Pacing
- Panting
- Paws – sweaty
- Shaking (as though were shaking off water)
- Shedding
- Trembling
- Turning away
- Urination
- Yawning

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## When to See a Veterinarian: Signs of Illness

Anytime your dog appears to have a health problem or is behaving in a way that is out of the ordinary, a call to the veterinarian is warranted. When you see the following symptoms, the dog needs medical attention:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Temperature that is not normal
- Coughing
- Gagging, making a clearing throat sound
- Breathing problems
- Discharge from eyes, nose, mouth
- Prolonged loss of appetite
- Prolonged increased thirst
- Pain
- Shivering
- Straining to urinate, urine looks abnormal
- Prolonged vomiting
- Prolonged change in activity level (very restless, or won't move)
- Problems with walking or moving
- Unexplained weight loss or weight gain
- Yawning or sneezing (in an unfamiliar situation)

## Common Health Problems

Veterinarians treat dogs for hundreds of illnesses and conditions. The following common health problems are some of the most likely to occur.

**Allergies** – Just as with people, dogs can be allergic to things in their environment. Allergies could be caused by something the dog eats, something that touches the skin, something that the dog inhales, a parasite such as fleas, or something in the home such as certain types of houseplants.



*Dogs can be allergic to things in the environment.*

Some of illnesses can mimic signs of allergies so that it why it is important to have a dog checked by a veterinarian rather than assume it has an allergy.

Signs that a dog may have an allergy include red, irritated or itchy skin, sneezing, coughing, irritated eyes, or diarrhea (which is usually related to a food

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allergy). When allergies involve the skin, the result can be yeast or bacterial infections (e.g., hair loss, irritated skin).

There are allergies that are related to dogs being outside. Dogs can be allergic to trees, grass, weeds (pollen), and mold, and some dogs will have an allergic reaction to flea bites. At home, when the dog is indoors, there are a number of things that could set off an allergic reaction. Some of these include certain foods, dust, cigarette smoke, cleaning products, and dog shampoo.

Veterinarians can find the cause of allergies and treat symptoms with medications. They can also assist with adjusting the diet when food is a problem, and alert you to substances in the dog's environment that cause allergies.

**Arthritis** – Most often, arthritis will usually be seen in older dogs. Arthritis often occurs due to loss of cartilage causing abnormal rubbing of bone against bone. Arthritis can also develop following a fracture in the bone, or repeated stress on a joint, such as in the case of a working dog or canine athlete.

Symptoms of arthritis can be the dog appears to be in pain, has a hard time getting up when it is laying down, has stiffness and is lame, has a slow gait, licks joints, and it doesn't want to do activities that require a lot of movement (such as

chasing a ball). Over time, from lack of use, the muscles may atrophy, which means they become smaller.

The dog's veterinarian can help with



*Soft bedding can make arthritic dogs more comfortable.*

pain management related to arthritis. At home, soft bedding can make arthritic dogs more comfortable. Older dogs with arthritis should be protected from younger, more rambunctious dogs.

**Diarrhea** – Diarrhea can have a number of causes. You know a dog has diarrhea when you see watery, loose stools. Diarrhea can be caused by stress or it can occur if a dog eats something other than its regular diet. Diarrhea that does not stop after a short time can be a sign of a more serious illness such as intestinal parasites or the parvovirus. Ongoing diarrhea or diarrhea with blood should always be checked by a veterinarian who will be able to diagnose the problem and prescribe any medication that is needed. Dehydration, the loss of the

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body's water, may occur when the dog has a lot of diarrhea. Clean water should be available to a dog with diarrhea so it doesn't get dehydrated. Bring a fresh stool sample to the veterinarian so a fecal exam can be performed to assist in the diagnosing of the cause of the diarrhea.

**Ears** – One of the most common canine ear problems is an ear infection. Ear infections in dogs can be caused by mites, yeast, and bacteria. A dog with an ear infection is likely to shake its head, or walk with the head tilted. The dog might scratch the ear frequently. The outside of the ear canal can appear red and inflamed. There may be a discharge (brown, bloody, or yellow) or a musty smell coming from the ear if the dog has an ear infection. A hot spot on the ear can also indicate that the dog has ear problems.

**Eyes** – Occasionally, a dog may have a small bit of clear discharge (liquid) coming from their eyes. This could be caused from an allergy. Some breeds are prone to having “weepy” eyes. Usually, a small bit of a clear discharge is not a problem. However, any time a dog has a discharge that looks like yellow or green pus coming from the eyes, it should be checked by a veterinarian. This could be a sign of an eye injury or infection. Extremely red eyes could be a signal that the dog has foreign matter irritating the eye, or it could be

conjunctivitis.

There are some signs that indicate a dog could be having eye problems. These include: squinting, blinking excessively, pawing at an eye, having crust around the eyes, and red or irritated eyes. Any of these signs should be cause to have the dog examined by a veterinarian.



*If there are signs of an eye problem, it is important to take your dog to the veterinarian.*

**Kennel Cough** – Kennel Cough (more recently called “canine cough”).

Kennel cough is a term used to describe a general tracheobronchitis in dogs. It was named “kennel cough” because it is highly contagious from dog to dog and when one dog had it in the kennel, all the dogs would come down with it.

The classic symptom of kennel cough is a dry, honking type cough that sounds a bit like a goose honk. Some dogs may develop other symptoms of illness such as sneezing,

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eye or nose discharge. Most dogs with kennel cough remain alert and have good appetites.

Dogs contract kennel cough when they inhale bacteria or virus particles into their respiratory tract. This tract is normally lined with a coating of mucus that traps infectious particles, but there are a number of factors that can weaken this protection and make dogs prone to kennel cough infection, which results in inflammation of the larynx (voice box) and trachea (windpipe). These factors include crowded, poorly ventilated conditions, such as in kennels, shelters, grooming shops or day care facilities, cold temperatures, poor air quality, and stress.

Kennel cough can have multiple causes. One of the most common culprits is a bacterium called *Bordetella*. (Kennel cough is often called Bordetella.)

Most dogs that become infected with Bordetella may be infected with a virus at the same time. These viruses, which are known to make dogs more susceptible to contracting Bordetella infection, include canine adenovirus, canine herpes virus, canine distemper virus, parainfluenza virus and canine reovirus.

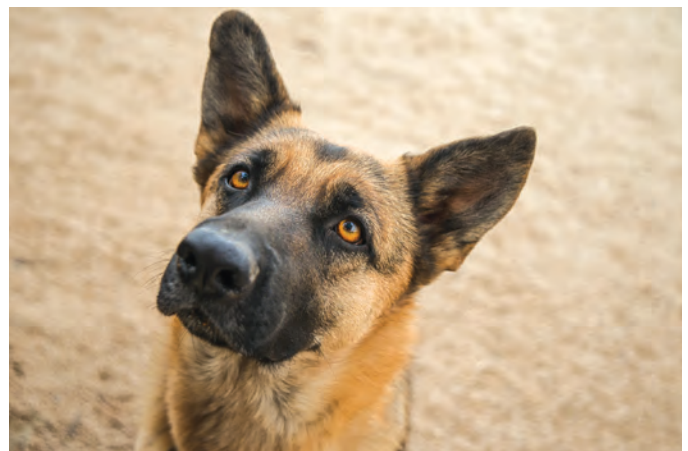
Kennel cough is very contagious and infected dogs should be isolated from uninfected dogs. Though most cases of kennel cough usually resolve on their own,

you should always consult with your veterinarian. Some medications can reduce signs and there is sometimes a danger of the condition worsening to a lower airway causing pneumonia.

Proper vaccination for Bordetella and Parainfluenza should protect your dog from these pathogens, and most boarding and grooming facilities require dogs to be up to date on these vaccines.

**Nose** – It is a myth that if a dog's nose is cold and wet, he is healthy and feeling well and if his nose is dry, he is sick. A dog who has a cold, wet nose can also be sick.

A discharge (yellow or green) or blood coming from the dog's nose usually indicates an illness, and a dry or crusty nose can also be the sign of a health problem. If you notice that the dog's nostrils are flaring and he has difficulty breathing, this could be the sign of a respiratory (breathing) problem.



*It is a myth that if a dog's nose is wet, he is healthy and if the nose is dry, he is sick.*

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Respiratory problems and any discharge from the nose that is not clear are reasons to have the dog checked by a veterinarian right away.



*Dogs get heartworms from mosquitoes.*

**Parasites** – Parasites are organisms that live on or in a host and get their food from or at the expense of the host (Center for Disease Control, 2017). The host provides food for the parasite. Animals, cells, plants and people can be hosts for parasites. When a dog has parasites, they can be internal (meaning they are inside the dog) or external (outside the dog).

## **Internal Parasites**

For dogs, common internal parasites are heartworms, tapeworms, hookworms, roundworms, and whip worms. Worms can make a dog uncomfortable, cause anemia, prevent the dog from thriving, and left untreated, some types of worm infestations can result in death. Worms are tested for at a routine veterinary check.

Signs that a dog has parasites include: diarrhea, scooting on their (itchy) bottom,

and vomiting. Some parasites can also lodge in the lungs causing respiratory issues such as pneumonia.

**Heartworms.** Dogs get heartworms from mosquitoes. An infected mosquito bites the dog and releases larvae into the dog's bloodstream. The larvae grow into adult heartworms that get into the dog's blood vessels, lungs and heart and reproduce. These fully grown heartworms look like a mass of spaghetti in the dog's heart and they can be deadly.

Signs that a dog might have heartworms are a cough that does not go away, shortness of breath, possible weight loss, distended abdomen, and getting tired easily. Heartworms are detected by a blood test performed by your veterinarian, unlike tests for other parasites which are usually detected by a fecal sample.

The best way to deal with heartworms is prevention, and to make sure the dog does not get them by following the heartworm prevention plan recommended by your dog's veterinarian.

**Tapeworms.** Dogs usually get tapeworms by swallowing a flea that is infected. They can also get tapeworms from eating small rodents such as



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*Dogs can get tapeworms by swallowing a flea that is infected.*

squirrels, rabbits or mice that are infected. Adult tapeworms can be six inches long or more. Pieces detach from the adult tapeworm and can be seen in the dog's feces, appearing like white seeds or grains of rice.

Dogs that have tapeworms might scoot across the floor on their rear ends as a way of handling discomfort or itchiness. To prevent tapeworms, a good flea control program is needed.

**Hookworms.** Dogs can become infected with hookworms through their skin or by swallowing larvae after drinking contaminated water, licking their feet, or sniffing feces or dirt that is contaminated. Puppies can be born with hookworms. They can get it in utero (before birth) and after they are born through their mother's milk if she has hookworms.

Hookworms are similar to tapeworms. With mouths that have parts that are like hooks, these worms attach themselves to the lining of the dog's

intestines where they ingest the dog's blood. Hookworms can cause bloody diarrhea, constipation, weight loss, and anemia, which results in weakness and pale gums. Puppies should be treated by veterinarians who treat them over a period of several weeks to kill adult worms. To prevent hookworms from spreading, it is important to de-worm puppies and nursing females and dispose properly of all dog feces.

**Roundworms.** Roundworms (also called ascarids) are extremely common in dogs. In the dog's intestinal track, adult roundworms live on food that is partially digested. As with hookworms, puppies can be born with roundworms or they can get it through their mother's milk. They can also get roundworms from ingesting the roundworm eggs in soil and infected animals.

Signs that a dog has roundworms can include coughing, a large belly, malnourished, diarrhea or vomiting. Roundworms can sometimes be seen when they are in the stool or in vomit. Roundworms also look like large, whitish piles of spaghetti.

**Whipworms.** Whipworms are another worm that is common in dogs. They get their name because they are shaped like a whip that is thin at one end and wider



*Roundworms look like pieces of spaghetti.*

at the other to resemble the handle of a whip. Dogs get whipworms from ingesting food or water that has been contaminated with whipworm eggs. Whipworms burrow into the dog's intestines and feed on blood.

Signs that a dog can have whipworms are diarrhea that can be bloody or filled with mucus, weight loss, and anemia. A veterinarian can find whipworm eggs in a stool sample, and can provide both treatment and a preventative treatment.

### Other internal parasites

**Giardia** - In addition to the “worms,” there are other internal parasites such as giardia. Giardia is an infection in the intestines caused by a protozoan. Dogs get giardia from ingesting the infected offspring of the protozoan (that are called cysts). These cysts are found in another animal's feces and they are often found in standing water.

Giardia causes diarrhea or soft stools

with or without mucus, vomiting, weight loss and a lack of energy.

Humans with giardia report severe intestinal cramping. Veterinarians can treat giardia and will recommend disinfecting all dog bowls, toys, and bedding.

### External Parasites

The most common external parasites are fleas, ticks, lice and mites. Grooming can help keep your dog parasite free and your dog's veterinarian can help you with a prevention program for these annoying pests.

**Fleas** – Fleas...it is hard to believe that something so small can become a disaster so quickly. In only 21 days, a single flea can produce 1000 or more fleas. Flea bites cause the dog (and people) to itch. If your dog is covered with fleas, chances are, you've got a problem in your house also. Check the baseboards, carpet, and bedding for fleas.

Signs that a dog might have fleas include itching, scratching and biting at the skin. The dog may have hair loss, or “hot spots.” Hot spots (which are also called “acute moist dermatitis”) are inflamed red areas that are basically a bacterial skin infection. Fleas can cause allergic dermatitis that causes the skin to have a bumpy texture. Remember that

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*If you have a flea problem in your home, vacuum frequently and empty the vacuum cleaner every time you vacuum.*

fleas can carry tape worms, so a dog that is infested with fleas may have tape worms as well. A sign that a dog has fleas is “flea dirt.” If you use a very fine comb or flea comb and check the skin on the back near the tail, you might see the black droppings that are actually dried blood.

If you have a flea problem in your home, be sure to vacuum frequently and empty the vacuum cleaner each time. Wash the dog’s bedding and keep the

lawn mowed.

To prevent a flea problem from developing, have a flea prevention plan. Flea prevention can include topical flea prevention products that can be applied monthly, oral (by mouth) products, flea collars, and combination flea and tick or flea and heartworm prevention. There are also safe natural borate products (such as Fleabusters®) that can be used to kill flea larvae by dehydrating them. Your dog’s veterinarian can help you choose the best flea prevention method for your dog.

**Ticks** – If you spend time with your dog outside, you might have seen a tick on your dog. Ticks attach themselves to the dog and feed on the dog’s blood. These unattractive, bloodsucking “bugs” are *arthropods* and they are related to other insects and spiders.

Whether or not you have a problem with ticks will depend on where you live and the time of year. In the southern United States, for example, ticks are



*Ticks can carry diseases that cause serious illnesses in animals and people.*

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more active in the fall, and they are more likely to be found in wooded areas or where the grass is high.

Ticks can carry diseases that can cause serious illness in animals and people. One of the most well-known tick related illnesses is Lyme disease. Lyme disease can cause arthritis and swelling of the joints. If it is untreated, Lyme disease can result in neurological problems, headaches, problems moving, joint pains, and memory problems. Another tick-borne disease is Rocky Mountain spotted fever. In the early stages, this disease can cause fever, headache, vomiting, and lameness (or muscle pain). Even though the name refers to the Rocky Mountains, the disease occurs throughout the United States, Canada and Central and South America.

Ticks attach themselves to your dog (or people) by putting their mouth into the dog's skin. If you try to pull a tick off by pulling on its body, most of the time, you will pull the body off and the head and mouthparts will remain attached to your dog. One of the most effective tools for removing a tick is called the Tick Twister. This inexpensive device will remove the whole tick without fail.

If you have ticks in the area where you live, the best, most effective tick

management is to check your dog carefully for ticks every day. Check the whole body including the dog's ears, inside the legs, along the back, and between the toes. Prompt removal of ticks can help prevent tick borne disease from developing. Your veterinarian can help you with a tick prevention plan.

**Lice** – Lice are insects that do not fly. They live on your dog's skin and feed on the dog's blood or skin. Signs that a dog might have lice include a dry coat, loss of hair, and excessive scratching and itchiness. When dogs are severely infested with lice, they can develop anemia from the loss of blood. Your



*Frequently shaking the head or scratching the ear can be one sign of mites.*

veterinarian can diagnose lice by finding their eggs (which are called nits) in your dog's fur. The nits will look like small white dots attached to hairs. If your dog has lice, your veterinarian can prescribe a shampoo that will kill them. All of the

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bedding, crates, rugs and furniture that the dog uses will have to be disinfected to get rid of the lice. People can also get lice but they cannot get the type of lice that dogs get, and dogs cannot get lice from people.

**Mites** – Mites are a type of external parasite that is contagious. Unlike ticks and fleas, mites are so small that they can only be seen under a microscope. Mites live on and in the skin, hair and pores of the dog (and other animals).

Dogs can be infested with four main types of mites. These are:

1. Cheyletiella yasguri (mites that live on the surface of the skin).
2. Sarcoptes scabiei (mites that burrow in the skin – causes intense itchiness).
3. Demodex canis (demodex mites – causes severe hair loss and thick, crusty skin.)
4. Otodectes cyanosis (ear mites- causes intense itchiness).

Signs that a dog may have mites are inflamed and irritated skin, and in later stages, skin that is thick and crusty. When mites cause itchiness, the dog will scratch and chew the area, sometimes so intensely that it bleeds. If mites are on the head or in the ears, dogs will shake their heads and rub their heads on the floor or ground.

Demodectic mange is an inflammatory disease that is caused by an overpopulation of the demodex canis



*Keep a first aid kit for your dog so that you can handle medical emergencies until you get to the veterinarian.*

mites. Demodectic mange can cause bacterial infections and it can be fatal. Generalized demodectic mange is often a sign of immune compromise.

*Note: Sarcoptic mange is contagious from dog to dog and dogs to people. Demodectic mange is not contagious to people. There are medications that a veterinarian can prescribe to treat mites. As with lice, if a dog has mites, all bedding, furniture, rugs and other equipment that the dog uses should be disinfected.*

### First Aid for Dogs

First aid training for dog owners is best provided in person, by a qualified professional (such as a veterinary technician or veterinarian) who can observe to make sure you do procedures

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correctly. If your dog needs first aid and you aren't sure what to do, seek assistance and contact your veterinarian for instructions. There should always be an adult present when you do first aid procedures with your dog. Some basic first aid information follows.

*First Aid* is a way to manage a medical emergency. The first few minutes are important when you are dealing with an accident or emergency medical issue with your dog. You should stay calm, get help if needed, and remember that first aid is not a replacement for veterinary care. In many cases, first aid is what you do until you can get your dog to a veterinarian.

## The Vital Signs

When your dog has a medical emergency, you should check the vital signs. The vital signs provide a measure of how the body is functioning. The main vital signs are temperature, respiration rate, pulse rate and blood pressure.

## Checking the Dog's Color

To determine if your dog needs medical attention, the first step is to check the dog's color. This will include checking the color of the tongue, gums and inner eyelids. In a healthy dog, these tissues should all be a healthy pink color. This means the blood is flowing to these areas. The following colors are not normal and could mean your dog



*If the color of your dog's gums is not a healthy color, you should take your dog to the veterinarian.*

has a medical problem and should be seen by a veterinarian: blue, yellow, gray, bright red, or white.

If the heart is beating normally, when the blood flow is blocked and then released, the blood should return to capillaries quickly. To check the *capillary refill time*, gently press the upper gum for 2 seconds. When you do this, you block the blood and the area will look white. Then, when you release your finger, the pink color should return quickly. If gums are white or stay white when you press on them, the dog could be in shock. For dogs that have dark gums, look at the lower inside of the eyelid for color.

## Assessing the Dog's Breathing

Unless your dog has been exercising, the dog's breathing should be steady, calm, and even. Normal respiration for a dog is 10 to 20 breaths per minute. Respiration is basically when the dog breathes in and out,

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and you can count respirations by counting each time the chest goes up and down. A dog's respiration may be higher or lower as a function of exercise or if the dog is injured or in pain.

### The Dog's Pulse

Checking the pulse is a way you can check the heartbeat. If the pulse is too rapid, it means the dog's heart is beating faster than normal. The pulse is what you feel when the blood pushes on the walls of the arteries when the heart beats. To check your dog's pulse, feel the femoral artery. This is inside the upper thigh where the leg joins the body.

*The normal pulse rate for a resting dog is 60 to 140 beats per minute. The normal pulse rate of puppies is faster, at 120 to 160 beats per minute.*

### Taking the Dog's Temperature

If your dog is acting like it might be sick (e.g., not moving, won't eat), take the temperature using a rectal thermometer. To take the temperature, you need a rectal thermometer, clean cloth/tissues, lubricating jelly, and rubbing alcohol for cleaning the thermometer afterwards. You should also have some gloves in your first aid kit. Here are the steps for taking a dog's temperature:

- Have a helper gently restrain the dog.
- Talk to the dog in a soft, calm voice.

- Lift the tail, insert the thermometer into the rectum—do not force it.
- DO NOT let go of the thermometer.
- When it beeps, look at the temperature.
- Clean the thermometer with the cloth/tissue and rubbing alcohol.

Remember that a normal temperature for a dog is 100 to 102.5 and temperatures can vary with eating, excitement and exercise. It is important to remember that a dog's normal temperature is higher than that of humans, otherwise you might think a dog with a normal temperature has a fever.

### What to Do If Your Dog Isn't Breathing

If your dog has had an illness or injury and is not breathing, the dog needs to be taken to a veterinarian. However, because it will take a while to get to the veterinary clinic, you need to do something about the breathing immediately.

**Airway.** The first thing to do is clear the dog's airway. The airway is the way that air gets to a dog's lungs, which is by the inside of the mouth and the back of the throat.

- If the dog is unconscious and not responding, gently tilt the head back.
- Remove any debris or foreign objects from the mouth.
- Gently move the tongue to the forward to open the airway.

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**Breathing.** If the dog is still not breathing, you will need to do rescue breathing. If you have not been trained on how to do this, contact your veterinarian who can talk you through the procedure on the phone. These are the steps of rescue breathing for dogs that are unconscious.



*CPR should only be performed on a dog by someone who has had training.*

- Follow the steps above for clearing the airway.
- Enclose the dog's nose and mouth in your hands.
- Hold the mouth closed.
- Place your mouth over the dog's nose to make an airtight seal.
- Breathe into the nose 4 to 5 times (these will be rapid breaths). This will push air into the lungs.
- **DO NOT BREATHE TOO FORCEFULLY**, especially for small dogs.
- For small dogs, you may have to put your mouth over the dog's nose and mouth.
- Watch for the chest to expand and repeat every 3 to 5 seconds until the dog is breathing. Do this for a maximum of 20 minutes.
- Get the dog to a veterinarian.

## **CPR Guidelines for Dogs**

### **For Dogs Under 30 pounds**

*– Dog is on right side. You can put one hand on chest and one hand under dog.*

- *For 2 rescuers: 1 breath per 3 compressions.*
- *For 1 rescuer: 1 breath per 5 compressions.*

### **For Medium to Large Dogs**

*– Dog is on right side.*

- *For 2 rescuers: 1 breath per 3 compressions.*
- *For 1 rescuer: 1 breath per 5 compressions.*

### **For Breeds Over 90 pounds**

*– Dog is on right side.*

- *For 2 rescuers: 1 breath per 6 compressions.*
- *For 1 rescuer: 1 breath per 10 compressions.*

*Continue CPR until you get to a veterinarian or for a maximum of 20 minutes.*



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**Circulation.** If you think the dog's heart has stopped beating, check by putting the dog on its right side. Then place your left hand by the dog's left elbow on the dog's lower chest. If there is no heartbeat, follow the steps above for rescue breathing until you get to a veterinarian. Depending on how long your dog's heart has been stopped, CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) can be effective. CPR should only be performed if the dog is not breathing or does not have a heartbeat or pulse. If this is the case, the sooner it is started, the greater chance the dog will have to recover. CPR can cause damage if not done properly.

To do CPR on a dog, you or someone present should have had training on the procedure, or call your veterinarian and get guidance on the phone. The steps of doing CPR with a dog follow.

- Kneel down with the dog on its right side. The chest should face toward you. If you have a helper, put the dog on its right side, with its back toward you.
- Place the palm of one of your hands over the other hand on the left side of the dog's chest just below the elbow.
- Extend your arms so they are not bent, and lock your elbows.
- Compress the chest with steady downward pressure and release.

### Choking

Choking can also interfere with your dog's ability to breathe. Choking happens when something such as a piece of food, bone, a "chewy" toy, or an object gets lodged in the throat or trachea (the windpipe). This blocks the airflow to the lungs. When a dog is choking, the first thing to do is remove the foreign object from the throat. Be very careful so that you do not push the object further back into the throat.

When humans are choking, it is sometimes recommended that someone do the Heimlich maneuver, which is now more often called "abdominal thrusts." The *Heimlich maneuver*, a technique to stop someone from choking, was first described by Dr. Henry Heimlich in 1974. This technique using abdominal thrusts is also used to when dogs are choking. You should be trained on this procedure before using it. The steps for handling a dog that is choking follow.

#### When You Can Lift the Dog who is Choking

- Remove the object from the throat if possible.
- If you can't get to the object and you can lift the dog, put the dog in front of you. With the dog's back against your chest, lift the dog.
- Wrap your arms around the dog under the ribs.

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- Make a fist with one hand and put the other hand over your fist.
- Do 5 rapid abdominal thrusts. With each one, lift inward and upward.
- Check the mouth to see if the object is dislodged.

## When You Cannot Lift the Dog who is Choking

- When the dog is too heavy to lift, start with the dog on its side.
- Put the head neck in a natural position, not up and not down.
- Place your palms below the dog's rib cage.
- Do 5 quick compressions that are inward and upward.
- If the object is still stuck, lift the dog so the hips are up and the head is down. Did the object get loose?
- If the object is still stuck in the dog's throat, using a flat hand, hit the dog between the shoulder blades using the palm of your hand (5 times). These should be quick, sharp hits that are intended to dislodge the object the dog is choking on. These hits are sometimes called "back blows."
- If the dog is unconscious, after the item is dislodged, follow the steps listed under Breathing and CPR above.

## Other First Aid Procedures

Information earlier in this chapter

described how to assess the vital signs and handle a dog that is not breathing. There are a number of other first aid procedures that dog owners should know about. In alphabetical order, these are related to the injuries that you would be most likely to see.

## Broken Bones (Fractures)

Broken bones are called fractures. A bone may be completely broken or partially broken. Fractures are serious



*Broken bones are called fractures. Fractures are serious injuries that need to be treated by your dog's veterinarian.*

injuries and the only first aid you will be doing will be to keep the dog comfortable and stabilized until you can get it to a veterinarian.

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Symptoms of a fracture can include pain, swelling, lameness, or in an open break, a bone that protrudes through the skin. The veterinarian will x-ray the dog to determine the severity of the break. Now that nearly everyone has a phone with a camera, you can call the veterinarian for instructions and you can also email a photo of the injury.

If the dog has been hit by a car or fallen a long distance, you may suspect that it has a broken back, neck or ribs. For a dog that has been hit by a car, carefully move it out of the road. If you don't have a flat board you can slide the dog onto, use a blanket or coat. Call the veterinarian or emergency veterinary hospital. If a dog with neck or back injuries is moved improperly, the result could be permanent paralysis.

### Burns

Burns can range from very simple burns such as a light sunburn to more serious burns that result in blisters and loss of hair and skin. You should always look for the cause of the burn so that the problem does not happen again. Treatment is determined by the severity of a burn. The following scale shows the types of burns by severity.

- First degree – Hair singed; red or discolored skin
- Second degree – Hair burned off; skin is blistered
- Third degree – Most severe. Hair falls out, skin is white and charred. Nerve ends are affected so the dog may not feel pain and goes into shock.

To treat a dog with a burn, follow these steps:

- Restrain the dog with a muzzle for safety.
- Do not use butter or petroleum jelly (such as Vaseline®) on burns. This will actually put a coating on the skin that holds the heat in and makes the burn worse. This goes for human burns also.

### *How to Stop Bleeding*

- *Apply pressure for a full 10 minutes to the wound using a clean cloth or gauze pad.*
- *If heavy bleeding soaks the pad, do not remove it. Just add more layers. Removing a pad that is soaked when the dog is bleeding can interfere with the clotting that stops bleeding.*
- *Continue to apply direct pressure with your hand.*
- *Once the bleeding is under control, wrap a bandage or medical tape around the pads to keep them in place.*
- *Take the dog to a veterinarian to determine if sutures (“stitches”) are needed.*

*Minor wounds such as small cuts, tears and abrasions (scrapes) can be gently cleaned with mild soap and water. Use an antibiotic ointment to prevent infection.*

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- Do not break blisters. Blisters have a purpose; they cover a wound. If you break a blister, you are opening the wound to infection.
- Apply a cool wet cloth. This will take away the heat and slow down the burning of the tissue.
- Apply a loose bandage to keep the wound clean and protected.
- Don't let the dog lick the wound.

Remember that the larger the burn area, the more serious the injury. Burns can be life threatening so you should carefully observe for the signs of shock and take your dog to the veterinarian.



*Cuts on the pad of the foot can bleed a lot because the pad has many blood vessels.*

## Cuts, Tears, Abrasions

While many dogs will get a minor cut or scrape from time to time, any time there is heavy bleeding from a wound, the dog could have a life or death emergency that needs immediate treatment.



### *Signs of an Eye Problem*

- *Frequent tearing*
- *Squinting*
- *Swollen eyelid*
- *Closed eye*
- *Frequent rubbing*
- *Excess tearing*
- *Cornea looks gray*
- *Red eye*
- *Protruding eye*
- *Blood in eye*
- *Dilated pupils*

## Chapter 5 – Keeping Your Dog Healthy

**Pad/foot injuries.** – When a cut or tear is on the pad of a dog’s foot, follow the steps above for stopping bleeding or addressing minor wounds. Cuts on the pad of the foot can bleed a lot because the pad has many blood vessels. If the bleeding doesn’t stop within a few minutes of applying pressure, take the dog to the veterinarian to determine if sutures are needed. If nails are broken or torn out, see a veterinarian.

### Ear Injuries

There are several signs that your dog may have an ear injury or something wrong with the ear (such as an infection). These signs are:

- Shaking the head
- Odor coming from the ear
- Scratching ear
- Holding head/ear in abnormal position
- Tilting head from side to side
- Discharge coming from the ear (black, brown, bloody)
- Balance problems (with severe infections)

To check on a possible ear injury, never put a cotton swab (such as a Q-tip®) or other object in the ear. You could accidentally push the object or infection further into the dog’s ear. Take the dog to the veterinarian for possible ear injuries, parasites, or infections.



### Symptoms of Heat Stroke

- *Listless*
- *Diarrhea or vomiting*
- *Temperature of 104 degrees or higher*
- *Staggers*
- *Excess panting, drooling*
- *Rapid breathing and pulse*
- *Increased heart rate*
- *Shock due to heat exhaustion*

## Electric Shock

Dogs, and especially puppies because they are so good at chewing and checking out new things, can get shocked from chewing on electric cords.

Symptoms of electric shock include:

- Burns around mouth and tongue.
- Grayish appearance of mouth and tongue tissue.
- There can be fluid buildup in the lungs and respiratory distress.
- The dog may be unconscious.

If your dog appears to have been shocked, an adult should make sure there is no live electric cord or power. A dry wooden pole should be used to move any wires. A metal pole should not be used, otherwise, the person may also receive an electric shock.

To handle a dog who appears to have been shocked, check the breathing as the first step and perform CPR if necessary. Check the gums. If the gums are blue or pale, the dog may be in physical shock or may be having trouble breathing. Put a clean



*Red eyes, excess tears, squinting, and rubbing the eye are just a few signs your dog has an eye problem and should be taken to the veterinarian.*

## How to Handle Heatstroke

*If your dog has the symptoms of heatstroke, begin by taking the dog's temperature. If it is 104 degrees or above, follow the directions for heatstroke.*

- *Move immediately to a cool place (air-conditioned if possible).*
- *Immerse in tepid (slightly cool) water – NOT ice water.*
- *Try to mist water on the dog and use a fan to cool the dog if one is available.*
- *Apply a cold compress to the dog's head.*
- *Slowly bring the temperature down to prevent collapse and brain damage.*
- *Stop cooling when temperature is 103 degrees.*
- *Cover with a towel and pour water over the dog to keep it cool.*
- **Always Take Your Dog To The Veterinarian Immediately As Some Life-Threatening Events Can Occur Afterwards.**

## Chapter 5 – Keeping Your Dog Healthy

gauze over the burn, and TAKE THE DOG TO THE VETERINARIAN even if the dog appears to be fine after being shocked.

### Eye Injuries

If you suspect that your dog has an eye injury, using a soft voice, speak calmly to your dog as you check the eye. If the dog is in pain, it may try to snap or bite, and if this happens, use a muzzle for safety.

If you think there is dirt or a foreign object in the eye, pull the eyelid down, flush the eye with an eye wash or even a cotton ball soaked in lukewarm water. If signs persist, take your dog to the veterinarian.



*In warm climates and when your dog is engaging in outdoor sports, make sure your dog doesn't get overheated.*

### Heatstroke

Heatstroke is the most serious heat related condition and it is a medical emergency. Heatstroke occurs when the body overheats, usually from being in the heat, or physical exertion



### Items That Can Poison Dogs

- *Anti-freeze which can be fatal (If not pet friendly, can actually attract dogs to it)*
- *Aspirin, ibuprofen, acetaminophen, many other over the counter prescription and non-prescription drugs*
- *Insecticides, pesticides*
- *Chocolate, grapes, raisins, garlic and onions*
- *Many plants (azaleas, lilies, tulips, Sago Palm and many more)*
- *Automotive products*
- *Industrial cleaners*

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(such as exercise) in the heat. If heatstroke is not treated quickly, the dog can have damage to the brain, kidneys, muscles and heart.

## Don't Leave Your Dog in the Car!

It is important to know that it does not need to be extremely hot for a dog to have heatstroke. Cars and trucks can heat up to more than 100 degrees in a matter of minutes, and outdoor dog houses are hotter on the inside unless they are in heavy shade all day. When the temperature is not cool outside, it is better to leave your dog at home rather than in the car.



*Never leave your dog in a hot car. The temperature in a car can climb to more than 100 degrees in minutes.*

## Hypothermia and Frostbite

Hypothermia and frostbite will be more likely to be seen in colder climates. However, even in the southern United States, dogs can be exposed to cold

temperatures or cold water (such as lakes) in the winter months.

*Hypothermia* is when the dog loses body heat and the temperature drops. It can be life-threatening if the dog's temperature is below 98 degrees. Hypothermia can be caused by being exposed to the cold, having wet skin and fur, being in cold water, and shock.

Symptoms of hypothermia are the body temperature drops below 95 degrees, the dog may shiver and when you check the color, gums are pale. The dog may appear sleepy and stumble and might not respond to commands.

**Treating hypothermia.** If the dog is shivering and cold, bring it indoors and wrap it in a blanket. Consider placing towels or blankets in a warm dryer. Check the temperature. Use a hair dryer to dry the dog if it is wet. A hot water bottle can be wrapped in a towel and placed against the dog's skin until the dog's temperature is 100 degrees F.

**Frostbite.** Frostbite occurs when ice crystals form in living tissue. Frostbite is most likely to be seen on the dog's extremities including the paws, ears, and the tip of the tail. When the dog has been outside (usually in the ice or snow), and begins to lick his or her paws, or if areas of the skin are pale, check for frostbite.



## Chapter 5 – Keeping Your Dog Healthy

Provide the dog with rest and wrap problem areas with a towel. You can put the frostbitten foot in 90 degrees (slightly warm) water. Do not use hot water or hot packs; this can cause injury to the tissues. If frostbite is suspected, contact a veterinarian.

**Poisoning.** There are a number of substances in our homes, farms, garages and yards that are poisonous to dogs. Poisons are harmful substances that can be deadly. When a dog is poisoned, the effects can show up immediately or it may take several hours or even days.

The symptoms of poisoning include:

- Seizures
- Collapsing
- Severe vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Bloody diarrhea
- Drools, foams at mouth
- Swollen red eyes
- Dog trembles, shakes
- Swollen tongue
- Burned lips
- Bleeding from mouth or anus
- Bruising
- Dilated pupils
- Shock
- Increased thirst or urination

If you think that your dog may have been poisoned, you should call your veterinarian or the Pet Poison Hotline

immediately for advice. Identify the poison and have the container ready to take to the emergency veterinary clinic. If you don't know the source of the poison, do not induce vomiting. The poison might be a corrosive poison, meaning that it can destroy and burn tissues. Causing a dog to vomit who has swallowed a corrosive poison can cause serious damage.

Contact the ASPCA National Animal Poison Control Center at 800-548-2423. The Poison Control Center may tell you to induce vomiting. To do this:

- Use 3% Hydrogen Peroxide.
- Give 1 teaspoon per 10 lbs. of body weight (up to 9 tsp).
- Hold the dog's mouth closed.
- Pull back the bottom lip to one side to make a pouch.
- Tip the dog's head up slightly so dog can swallow.
- Pour in solution.
- CHECK THE DOG'S BREATHING AND CONTACT THE VETERINARIAN.

### Shock

Shock occurs when the blood pressure is too low and there is not enough blood flowing through the body. A dog who is in shock needs emergency medical treatment because the dog could die if the blood pressure is not brought up to normal.

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Shock can be caused by heart disease, serious illness, trauma, severe infection and respiratory infection. An injury that causes a loss of blood can also cause a dog to go into shock. Signs of shock may include bluish or gray gums, slow capillary refill time, labored breathing, unresponsiveness, cool extremities, and a lower body temperature.

When a dog is in shock, the follow the steps below.

- Check the vital signs including the pulse and respiration. Watch the dog to see if there is excessive panting.
- Check the breathing and restore breathing to normal.
- Stop any blood loss, control bleeding.
- Keep the dog warm (use a blanket) and quiet.
- If there is no head, back or neck injury, you can raise the hind section of the dog to increase blood flow to the head and raise the blood pressure.
- TAKE THE DOG TO THE VETERINARIAN IMMEDIATELY.

## Vomiting

Dogs might vomit if they are car sick (motion sickness), have eaten too much food, had a recent diet change, or if they have eaten something that just doesn't agree with them. Vomiting can also indicate that something more serious is

wrong such as the dog may have ingested something that is spoiled or poison, or may have an illness that may be serious. Some of the many illnesses that cause vomiting include bloat, intestinal parasites, liver or kidney disease, gastroenteritis and bowel disease, pancreatitis, bacterial infections such as salmonella, viral infections such as parvovirus and distemper, and tumors. An obstruction caused by eating a toy, the stuffing from a pillow, or another foreign object, could also cause vomiting

If your dog only vomits once and then appears to be feeling well, observe the dog to make sure vomiting does not continue. Sometimes, such as when dogs eat grass, they will vomit and then appear well just as soon as they clear out their stomachs.

Any time the following conditions are seen with the vomiting, the dog should be taken to a veterinarian.

- The dog also has diarrhea, especially if the diarrhea is bloody
- The dog appears to be in pain, lethargic or not wanting to eat
- The dog is not moving.
- Gums are pale.
- The dog has a temperature.
- The dog's abdomen is swollen (possible bloat).

If the dog has been vomiting, after checking with your veterinarian, you should fast your dog for about 4-6 hours

## Chapter 5 – *Keeping Your Dog Healthy*

and slowly start the dog dog on a bland diet for a day. An example of a bland diet would be cooked chicken (no skin) and white rice. Continue to provide clean, fresh water to prevent dehydration.

### Summary

In this chapter, we talked about how to keep your dog healthy, signs of stress, symptoms of illness, common health problems, and first aid for dogs. We always hope that our dogs stay healthy and fit and that they don't have illnesses or injuries. But sometimes, dogs get sick or accidents happen, and when they do, it is important to know about health issues and first aid for dogs. When in doubt, always consult with your veterinarian!

### References

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## Chapter 5 – Activities and Reflections

### Keeping Your Dog Healthy



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Ask to interview your veterinarian. Based on the information in this section, make a list of questions you will ask ahead of time. Remember to be respectful and represent yourself well during your visit.
- 2) On a sheet of paper make two columns. Title one “normal” and one “signs of stress.” Without looking, see who can come up with the most symptoms for each column.
- 3) Put together a dog first aid kit after researching what should be included in the kit.
- 4) Keep a log of your dog’s behavior and identify anything that is not “normal.”

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) What health plan do you have for your dog?
- 2) Who should you contact if you are faced with a medical situation you do not know how to handle?
- 3) What are some ways to reduce the risk of a dog medical emergency?
- 4) What would you include in a dog first aid kit?

## Chapter 6 – Finding the Right Breed for You

When you and your family decide that the time is right for you to get a dog, there are many things to think about. You should do your homework and learn what it means to be a responsible owner, what it will take to own and care for a dog, and how to best choose the right dog for your family.

This chapter on finding the right breed for you will address all of these topics and will teach you about the nearly 200 breeds registered with the American Kennel Club. Rather than a purebred dog, you might decide that a mixed breed is the dog you want, and we will tell you about the activities you can do with a mixed breed.

One of the very first steps is for your whole family to decide where, when and how soon you should add a dog to the family. Here are some questions to be considered.

### Deciding if the Time is Right to Get a Dog

1. Do you have the time now to give a dog a high quality life?

- If you are the person who will be responsible for the dog, do you have time every day for walks, play time, feeding, grooming and exercise?
- Will you be consistent about training your dog? (e.g., attending classes and/or training at home).

2. Do you have the financial resources to buy and maintain a dog?

- What is the cost of the puppy you want if you are going to purchase it from a responsible breeder? (Know that breeders will sometimes place a dog with a 4-H member who agrees to show the dog).



*4-H training classes help give dogs a high quality life.*

- What is the cost of the dog if you decide to pay adoption fees to a shelter or rescue organization?
- Using the 4-H forms, work out the financials on owning a dog.
- Cost of food.

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- Cost of veterinarian visits, including puppy vaccines.
- Equipment costs such as a crate, leashes, collars, dishes, grooming tools, a dog bed, toys, and a fence if one is needed to keep your dog safe.



*Fences provide a good space for exercise and they keep your dog safe.*

- Cost of training classes and entering and attending shows.
3. Is your house and yard ready for a dog?
    - Do you have a yard for exercising your dog? Does it have a fence?
    - If you live in a city and you don't have a yard, is there a place such as a dog park where you can exercise your dog?
    - If you live in a condominium, apartment or trailer park, are pets allowed?
    - Is your living space the right size for the breed you choose? For example, a large active breed might not be suitable for a studio apartment.
  4. Will the dog you choose be right for other people and pets in your family?
    - Are there people who are elderly, babies or young children? If so, an active breed will need to be supervised. If you are getting a puppy that is a breed such as a toy breed, this puppy may not be a good match for a child in the home who is not gentle and who does not follow instructions. (Dogs and very young children should always be supervised when together).
    - Does anyone in your family have allergies? If they do, you may want to consider a breed that does well with people who are allergic to pet fur. A few of these breeds are the Bichon Frise, Chinese Crested, and Poodle.
    - If you are a younger 4-H member or a 4-H member who does not yet drive a car, do you have the support of an adult in your home who can help you get your dog to activities such as veterinary visits and training classes? An adult can help with emergencies and explaining information to you such as the directions on a dog food bag.
    - Will the dog you choose be a good match for pets already in your home? If you had an older dog that does not get along with other dogs, this might not be the time to bring in a new dog. If you have cats, you should learn about how to systematically introduce a new dog to a cat.

## Chapter 6 – Finding the Right Breed for You

5. Are you and your family ready to make a long-term commitment to your new dog?

If you get a puppy, depending on the breed, the dog could be with your family for 15 years or longer. Owning a dog is a big responsibility but the reward will be that if you raise him or her right, this will be a dog you will love forever.

### Characteristics of the Right Dog for You

You and your family have talked about the questions above and the decision has been made to get a dog. Next, you need to think about the general characteristics of the dog you want to add to your family.

- Age of dog. Do you want a puppy or adult dog?
  - Puppies will require a lot of time with houstraining, teaching them not to chew objects, and providing training for basic good manners. Puppies need a number of early visits to the veterinarian for vaccines. Puppies are active and until they are houstrained, you will be getting up early and taking them outside at bedtime to prevent accidents in the house. The good thing about puppies is when they bond with you and trust you, owning a puppy brings tremendous joy.
  - An adult dog may come to you with some skills. The dog might already

be houstrained. Depending on where you got your dog, it might or might not yet have good manners and it could have some behavioral issues. But the good news is that depending on the breed or mix, adult dogs are ready for training or showing in all types of activities, and many are ready for someone like you to love them.



*There are many characteristics to consider when you decide to get a dog.*

- Size of dog. Do you have a preference for a big, small or medium sized dog?
  - If you are an athletic person who wants to take a dog on long runs with you, a toy breed might not be the best choice as an exercise partner. Likewise, if your family lives in the city in a high-rise apartment with no outdoor areas, one of the very large breeds such as a Great Dane or Mastiff is probably not the best choice considering your living space.

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- Coat type. Do you want a smooth-coated dog or do you like more fur?
  - Some breeds tend to shed, and if your home is carpeted, a lot of shedding can mean a lot of vacuuming. If you love breeds such as German Shepherd Dogs or Siberian Huskies and are determined to own one, regular brushing and vacuuming are critical for dealing with shedding. But don't think that longer-coated dogs are the only dogs that shed; plenty of dogs with smooth coats can leave short hairs on fabric, furniture and carpet. As with longer-coated breeds, regular brushing is important.
  - If one of the things you like to do with your dog is sit on the couch and pet the dog to relax, you might be looking for a dog that has a soft furry coat or ears.
  - There are breeds that look their best when they are properly groomed and grooming them requires some skill. You can learn the basics of grooming in 4-H, and beyond that, an AKC all-breed club will have breed experts who can teach you to groom a particular breed.
- Activity level. Do you want an active dog or a couch potato?
  - When you learn about specific breeds later in this chapter, you will see that there are some breeds that were created to be very active. For example, Border Collies and other herding breeds can run all day herding sheep. This is not the dog for someone who wants a calm, companion dog who is happy to be in the house most of the time.
  - When it comes to activity, it is also important to know that within any given litter of puppies, some pups are more active, and others might be more quiet and calm. A responsible breeder can help you choose a puppy based on your lifestyle.
- Noisy or quiet. Do you need a dog who is quiet, or can you tolerate some barking?
  - One of the most common dog-related problems reported in apartments and condominiums is dogs who bark when their owners are gone. Some breeds have a tendency to sound the alarm when someone is at the door or when there is an animal such as a squirrel in the yard. When choosing the breed for your family, be sure to consider the noise level of the breed.



## Chapter 6 – Finding the Right Breed for You

- Plans for Your Dog. Do you have anything in mind that you want to do with your dog?
  - If you plan on showing your dog in 4-H showmanship or conformation, both purebreds and mixed breeds can participate. If you decide you would like to compete in AKC conformation, you may want to start with a purebred show quality dog.
  - Is there a particular sport that interests you? For hunting, you would want to choose a sporting breed, and if your primary interest was lure coursing, you might choose a breed that is a sight hound.
  - Remember that no matter what breed you choose, purebred or mixed breed, large or small, all dogs can benefit from training and learning good manners. A good place to start is with AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy for puppies, and Canine Good Citizen training for adult dogs. These programs will be discussed in a later chapter.

### Dogs Classified by Group

As of 2020, the American Kennel Club recognized nearly 200 different breeds of dogs. All of these breeds fall into one of

seven Groups. For the most part, within the Groups, the dogs share a common bond such as their original purpose or their size.

#### The seven groups are:

1. Sporting
2. Hound
3. Working
4. Terrier
5. Toy
6. Non-Sporting
7. Herding

Also related to breeds is the AKC Foundation Stock Service® (FSS®) and the Miscellaneous Class. When a breed is to be considered as an AKC breed, dogs are enrolled in FSS until the AKC accepts the breed for regular status. At that point, the breed moves into one of the groups above.

Since new breeds are regularly added, check current breed lists at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org).



*The Labrador Retriever is a sporting breed that also makes an excellent family pet.*

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## Sporting Group

The sporting breeds, known for their work in hunting and other field activities, include pointers, retrievers, setters and spaniels. Two of the most popular sporting breeds are the Labrador Retriever and Golden Retriever. Sporting breeds can spend an entire day hunting, so unless the dog is a young puppy or senior dog, these are high energy dogs that need regular exercise that goes beyond a quiet short walk on a leash.

Sporting dogs are likeable and they make good companions and family dogs. In general, the sporting breeds have a willingness to please. Sporting breeds can be sensitive so early socialization and training is important.

## Hound Group

Like the sporting breeds, most of the hound breeds were created for the purpose of hunting. Hounds are usually categorized as either sight hounds or scent hounds. Sight hounds, such as Afghans or Salukis, see their prey at a distance and chase after it. Scent hounds use their noses or sense of smell when hunting. An example of a scent hound would be a Basset Hound who puts his nose on the ground and follows the scent of a rabbit.

Some of the hounds are known for making a baying noise, so if it is a no-noise breed you are looking for, make sure you check on whether or not the hounds in which you are interested have a tendency to be vocal. Hounds do not have the reputation for being the most trainable dogs. However, they are very smart and they can be problem solvers. The trick to training a hound is using sound behavioral principles and being consistent. Hounds have been successful in many training events such as obedience, rally, agility, tracking, lure coursing, therapy dog work and tricks training.

## Sporting Group

- *American Water Spaniel*
- *Barbet*
- *Boykin Spaniel*
- *Brittany*
- *Chesapeake Bay Retriever*
- *Clumber Spaniel*
- *Cocker Spaniel*
- *Curly-Coated Retriever*
- *English Cocker Spaniel*
- *English Setter*
- *English Springer Spaniel*
- *Field Spaniel*
- *Flat-Coated Retriever*
- *German Shorthaired Pointer*
- *German Wirehaired Pointer*
- *Golden Retriever*
- *Gordon Setter*
- *Irish Red and White Setter*
- *Irish Setter*
- *Irish Water Spaniel*
- *Labrador Retriever*
- *Lagotto Romagnolo*
- *Nederlandse Kooikerhondje*
- *Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever*
- *Pointer*
- *Spinone Italiano*
- *Sussex Spaniel*
- *Vizsla*
- *Weimaraner*
- *Welsh Springer Spaniel*
- *Wirehaired Pointing Griffon*
- *Wirehaired Vizsla*

## Chapter 6 – Finding the Right Breed for You



Hound breeds such as this Dachshund were created for hunting, but they are successful in events such as obedience, rally, therapy work, and trick dog.

### Working Group

The breeds in the Working Group were bred to do a variety of jobs such as pulling sleds, doing water rescues, and guarding property and livestock. These dogs are known for their intelligence and ability to learn. Many of the working breeds are larger dogs, so it is important that you have a suitable living space for them and a fenced yard.

### Hound Group

- Afghan Hound
- American English Coonhound
- American Foxhound
- Azawakh
- Basenji
- Basset Hound
- Beagle
- Black and Tan Coonhound
- Bloodhound
- Bluetick Coonhound
- Borzoi
- Cirneco Dell'Etna
- Dachshund
- English Foxhound
- Grand Basset Griffon Vendeen
- Greyhound
- Harrier
- Ibizan Hound
- Irish Wolfhound
- Norwegian Elkhound
- Otterhound
- Petit Basset Griffon Vendeen
- Pharaoh Hound
- Plott
- Portuguese Podengo Pequeno
- Redbone Coonhound
- Rhodesian Ridgeback
- Saluki
- Scottish Deerhound
- Sloughi
- Treeing Walker Coonhound
- Whippet

# 4-H Dog Project Manual



*Working breeds were bred to do a variety of jobs such as pulling sleds, doing water rescues, and guarding property and livestock.*

Working breeds are versatile and in addition to doing the jobs for which they were originally bred, they are good companions for activities such as hiking, backpacking, and going on walks. Working breeds have excelled at training activities including obedience, agility, rally, therapy dog work and tricks training. Because working breeds were bred to work with people, they don't do well if left alone, and because of their size and strength (and sometimes hair), they may not be the breeds for everyone. After working or training, working breeds want to be in the house with their human families. Working breeds need socialization, training, and an active life to prevent them from getting bored.

## Terrier Group

The terrier breeds are thought of as energetic, feisty dogs. Their size ranges from smaller breeds such as the Norfolk Terrier, Norwich Terrier, or Cairn Terrier to the larger terriers such as the Airedale Terrier or the American Staffordshire

## Working Group

- Akita
- Alaskan Malamute
- Anatolian Shepherd Dog
- Bernese Mountain Dog
- Black Russian Terrier
- Boerboel
- Boxer
- Bullmastiff
- Cane Corso
- Chinook
- Doberman Pinscher
- Dogo Argentino
- Dogue de Bordeaux
- German Pinscher
- Giant Schnauzer
- Great Dane
- Great Pyrenees
- Greater Swiss Mountain Dog
- Komondor
- Kuvasz
- Leonberger
- Mastiff
- Neapolitan Mastiff
- Newfoundland
- Portuguese Water Dog
- Rottweiler
- Saint Bernard
- Samoyed
- Siberian Husky
- Standard Schnauzer
- Tibetan Mastiff

## Chapter 6 – Finding the Right Breed for You

Terrier. The terrier breeds were originated to hunt vermin such as the rats and mice often found in a farmer's barn.

Earthdog is an activity for the smaller terriers that lets them “go to ground” to measure their ability in an underground hunting situation. In earthdog tests, dogs go into simulated tunnels and “dens” to work quarry such as rats (that are protected in safe cages). Another fun activity for terriers is called Barn Hunt where dogs and handlers work as a team to locate rats (safe in aerated tubes) hidden in a maze of straw or hay bales.



*Terriers are energetic dogs. The Terrier breeds were created to hunt vermin such as rats and mice.*

Terriers are a lot of fun, but can have a mind of their own and they require training. Some of the terrier breeds bark at people or other animals outside or that approach the house. If you are looking for a quiet dog, be sure to check out whether or not the dog you are considering is a barker.

Many of the terrier breeds have a wiry coat that needs special grooming (called “stripping”) if you want your dog to have the standard appearance of its breed.

### **Terrier Group**

- *Airedale Terrier*
- *American Hairless Terrier*
- *American Staffordshire Terrier*
- *Australian Terrier*
- *Bedlington Terrier*
- *Border Terrier*
- *Bull Terrier*
- *Cairn Terrier*
- *Cesky Terrier*
- *Dandie Dinmont Terrier*
- *Glen of Imaal Terrier*
- *Irish Terrier*
- *Kerry Blue Terrier*
- *Lakeland Terrier*
- *Manchester Terrier*
- *Miniature Bull Terrier*
- *Miniature Schnauzer*
- *Norfolk Terrier*
- *Norwich Terrier*
- *Parson Russell Terrier*
- *Rat Terrier*
- *Russell Terrier*
- *Scottish Terrier*
- *Sealyham Terrier*
- *Skye Terrier*
- *Smooth Fox Terrier*
- *Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier*
- *Staffordshire Bull Terrier*
- *Welsh Terrier*
- *West Highland White Terrier*
- *Wire Fox Terrier*

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

## Toy Group

The main function of the Toy breeds is to serve as companions for their owners. Examples of Toy breeds that come complete with rich, interesting histories, are the Shih Tzu, a prized palace pet with a with a noble Chinese ancestry, and the Maltese, a breed that goes back to the time of the Apostle Paul.

Toy breeds do well living in smaller spaces and even though (unfortunately) small dogs can be seen being carried around in purses, these dogs do a great job in training activities just like the bigger dogs.



*The main function of the Toy breeds has been to serve as companions for their owners.*

With proper training and socialization, there is certainly no reason for toy breeds to be nervous little dogs who shake and shiver. However, because the toy breeds are small, it is important to make sure that bigger dogs or active children in the household will not hurt them. Toy breeds are small dogs with big hearts (and quick minds) and they can compete in

## Toy Group

- *Affenpinscher*
- *Brussels Griffon*
- *Cavalier King Charles Spaniel*
- *Chihuahua*
- *Chinese Crested*
- *English Toy Spaniel*
- *Havanese*
- *Italian Greyhound*
- *Japanese Chin*
- *Maltese*
- *Manchester Terrier*
- *Miniature Pinscher*
- *Papillon*
- *Pekingese*
- *Pomeranian*
- *Poodle*
- *Pug*
- *Shih Tzu*
- *Silky Terrier*
- *Toy Fox Terrier*
- *Yorkshire Terrier*

## Chapter 6 – Finding the Right Breed for You

events such as agility, rally, and obedience. They also do well as therapy dogs and trick dogs.

### Non-Sporting Group

The Non-Sporting Group is made up of a diverse group of dogs. They have different backgrounds, appearances, temperaments and functions. Non-Sporting dogs are as small as the Schipperke and as big and fluffy as the Chow Chow. Some of the original functions of the breeds in this interesting group include guarding, hunting and scent work, working as circus dogs, and serving as companions.

Some of the breeds in the Non-Sporting group (such as the Bulldog, Dalmatian and Poodle) are very well recognized. Others are less well-known. Reading about breeds that are less familiar to you is fun and the Non-Sporting place is a good place to start!

- The Coton de Tulear (pronounced “coTawn day two-LEE are”) is known as the “Royal Dog of Madagascar.” Hundreds of years ago, these dogs are believed to have accompanied ladies on long sea voyages.
- The Norwegian Lundehund had the job of hunting Puffins, the colorful seabirds that breed on coastal cliffs.
- The Xoloitzcuintli (pronounced “show-low-its-queen-tee” also called the “show-low” for short) is the hairless dog of Mexico. It was believed that this breed had healing properties and if you had aches and pains, the dog’s warm skin could make you feel better.

### Herding Group

The key feature of the herding breeds is that they have the remarkable ability to control the movement of other animals. When they are doing the job for which the breeds were originally created, herding breeds are often seen helping farmers

### Non-Sporting Group

- *American Eskimo Dog*
- *Bichon Frise*
- *Boston Terrier*
- *Bulldog*
- *Chinese Shar-Pei*
- *Chow Chow*
- *Coton de Tulear*
- *Dalmatian*
- *Finnish Spitz*
- *French Bulldog*
- *Keeshond*
- *Lhasa Apso*
- *Lowchen*
- *Norwegian Lundehund*
- *Poodle*
- *Schipperke*
- *Shiba Inu*
- *Tibetan Spaniel*
- *Tibetan Terrier*
- *Xoloitzcuintli*

# 4-H Dog Project Manual



*The Non-Sporting group is made up of a diverse group of dogs. (© American Kennel Club).*

and ranchers move sheep, cows, and ducks. With herding training, these amazing dogs can move sheep long distances such as from one part of a hillside or field to another, they can put animals in a pen, or control a group of farm animals so they don't move.

When herding dogs are kept as pets, sometimes the herding instinct comes out and the dogs will often attempt to move

## ***Herding Group***

- *Australian Cattle Dog*
- *Australian Shepherd*
- *Bearded Collie*
- *Beauceron*
- *Belgian Laekenois*
- *Belgain Malinois*
- *Belgain Sheepdog*
- *Belgian Tervuren*
- *Bergamasco Sheepdog*
- *Berger Picard*
- *Border Collie*
- *Bouvier des Flandres*
- *Briard*
- *Canaan Dog*
- *Cardigan Welsh Corgi*
- *Collie*
- *Entlebucher Mountain Dog*
- *Finnish Lapphund*
- *German Shepherd Dog*
- *Icelandic Sheepdog*
- *Miniature American Shepherd*
- *Norwegian Buhund*
- *Old English Sheepdog*
- *Pembroke Welsh Corgi*
- *Polish Lowland Sheepdog*
- *Puli*
- *Pumi*
- *Pyrenean Shepherd*
- *Shetland Sheepdog*
- *Spanish Water Dog*
- *Swedish Vallhund*



## Chapter 6 – Finding the Right Breed for You

people, especially children, in one direction or another. Herding dogs can range from the short Corgi to taller breeds such as a German Shepherd Dog. Herding dogs excel at training activities such as obedience, rally, agility, herding and tricks. These breeds can be sensitive and early socialization (that includes motion and noises) is important for puppies.

Because herding breeds were bred to chase, they can be prone to chasing bicycles or cars. For this reason, training is



*Herding breeds have the ability to control the movement of other animals.*

important, as is keeping dogs on leashes and providing adequate fencing to keep them safe. Herding breeds are highly intelligent and they make excellent companions.

### Purebred Dogs

Purebred dogs, such as all of the American Kennel Club breeds listed above, are dogs whose breeds have been on record

in the AKC's stud book for a number of generations. Every AKC breed has its own parent club for the individual breed such as the Golden Retriever Club of America, the Siberian Husky Club of America, Inc., and the Tibetan Spaniel Club of America. The parent club is responsible for written standards that describe each breed's temperament and physical characteristics.

A major advantage of a purebred dog is consistency. Even though there are individual differences from one dog to the next, if you had an English Cocker Spaniel who you thought was the perfect dog for you and it was time to get another dog, getting another English Cocker Spaniel would mean you could count on a similar personality, look and behavior.

If you have become hooked on dogs in your 4-H dog activities, you might decide that you would like to excel in AKC conformation showing. With a responsible breeder as a mentor, a purebred dog could be exactly what you need to help you accomplish your goals.

### Mixed Breed Dogs

Also known as "All-American Dogs" mixed breed dogs make wonderful pets when they are screened properly and provided with training. When they are registered as AKC Canine Partners, mixed breed dogs can compete and earn titles in AKC events such as obedience, agility, rally

# 4-H Dog Project Manual



4-H dog activities might inspire you to get involved in conformation showing. (© American Kennel Club).

and trick dog. You can also participate in 4-H showmanship and conformation with a mixed breed dog.

Mixed breed dogs come in all shapes and sizes. Especially when they come from a rescue organization or a shelter, the parentage is often unknown, so they might be described with terms such as a “spaniel-type” or a “hound-type” dog. Shelters often take their best guess and write on a mixed breed dog’s kennel card a description such as, “Lab-Husky mix,” but this is not always correct. If the dog was from two mixed breed parents who both had mixed breed parents, you could be looking at eight or more breeds in one dog.

Rescue groups and your local shelter can help you find a dog that is a good match for you. If you are on the search for a purebred dog, a responsible breeder can help you.

*To read about specific breeds, go to [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) and look under “Breeds.”*

## Summary

This chapter outlined the questions you should think about when deciding if you are ready for a dog. Breed (or mix), activity level, cost, and your home and yard are all important considerations.

## References

American Kennel Club. [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) (Search by breed).

American Kennel Club (2017). *The New Complete Dog Book*, 22nd Edition. Companionhouse Books.

### Activities and Reflections



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Do an inventory of your activity level, house, yard, house size, percent of time available for dog, and your desired characteristics in a dog. Research breeds that would be a best fit for you and narrow your list down to 5 breeds or less.
- 2) Visit an animal shelter (volunteer to help if you are able). Determine the characteristics of the dogs you see.
- 3) Use your imagination to make up a new breed of dog. What would it look like, act like, etc.? What group do you think it would fit into? Use playdoh to make a model of your dog.

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) What questions would you ask a breeder or shelter before you decided to purchase or adopt a dog?
- 2) What dog breed is most intriguing to you?
- 3) If your friend said they wanted to get a dog, what questions would you ask to help them decide?



## Chapter 7 – Showmanship and Conformation

**Y**ou got the dog you wanted. You learned all about how to raise and care for your dog. Now you've decided that you want to enter the exciting world of dog shows. Showing your dog is fun and there are many other benefits to participating in showmanship and conformation. Through conformation shows and showmanship classes, you will meet knowledgeable, experienced handlers who can teach you a lot about dogs and showing. You'll learn how to best groom and present your dog. You may even find that showing in 4-H launches a rewarding career as a professional handler, dog show judge, or veterinarian. And perhaps best of all, dog shows teach good sportsmanship that can help you be successful in all of life's endeavors.



**Showmanship** is the activity that will teach you how to show a dog. In 4-H Showmanship or AKC Junior Showmanship, you can learn how to handle a dog in the show ring, learn about good sportsmanship, and learn about dogs and dog shows.



*In 4-H Showmanship or AKC Junior Showmanship, you can learn to handle a dog in the show ring.*



**Conformation** is the name for “dog shows.” The word “conformation” generally means the shape or structure of something. Conformation judges evaluate the dogs according to the written standard for each breed.

### **SHOWMANSHIP: Learning to Show Your Dog**

#### **4-H Showmanship**

The purpose of showmanship is to demonstrate your skills as a dog show handler. In showmanship, the goal is to work with your dog as a team to bring out the dog's best qualities in a show. In 4-H Showmanship, your skills, attitude, and presentation are being evaluated, whereas, in conformation, the dog is being evaluated.

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

The showmanship judge will evaluate the whole picture as you handle your dog. The checklists used by judges can vary from state to state, but in general, the judge will be looking at:



*In Showmanship, both dogs and handlers should be well-groomed. (© American Kennel Club).*

- Your appearance and attitude including your posture and dress. The dog isn't the only one who needs to be well-groomed – you must be well-groomed also!
- The dog's care and grooming including the coat, ears, eyes, teeth and nails.
- Your skills gaiking the dog. This involves moving at different speeds, maintaining the dog's attention, and keeping it under control.
- Your courtesy toward other handlers will be considered; no one wants to have someone forcing them out of the way in the ring or running too fast behind them.
- Handlers in showmanship will be evaluated on gaiking patterns that may include the "Around" (circle the ring), "Down and back", a Triangle, and less frequently, the L or T patterns. The judge will evaluate whether or not the dog is under control, how well you make stops and turns, and your ability to position the dog when you stop.  
The age range for 4-H members participating in Showmanship varies across states. For example, In Florida, 4-H Dog Project members who are from 8 to 18 years of age can show in conformation. Florida showmanship classes are divided into:
  - Basic – for handlers in their first year of showing
  - Novice – for experienced handlers with beginning dogs or beginning handlers with experienced dogs; may not have shown in AKC shows
  - Advanced – for handlers who have shown in AKC Showmanship three or more times and/or who have won first place in Novice at a 4-H dog show, and
  - Excellent – for handlers who have placed first in competition in Junior Showmanship at 3 or more non-4H shows, or first place at two 4-H Advanced Showmanship state level dog shows.

# Chapter 7 – Showmanship and Conformation



In Florida, Dog Project members who are from 8 to 18 years of age can show in conformation. (© American Kennel Club).

An example of the division of showmanship classes in other states is:

- Novice (some 4-H Showmanship classes are categorized by Junior (3rd, 4th, or 5th grade by January 1)
- Intermediate (6th, 7th, or 8th grade by January 1)
- Senior (9th grade or above by January 1), and if an exhibitor wins a Showmanship class at the state fair, he or she is only eligible to compete in the next highest class.

## AKC Junior Showmanship

### Find a Dog to show

If you have decided that the American Kennel Club's (AKC) Junior Showmanship and conformation competition is the road you'd like to take on your dog world journey, your first step is to get a dog you can show. You can begin by raising a puppy who is destined for the show ring. This is an extremely rewarding process, but it also takes a while to get a puppy trained and show ready.

One option is to contact breeders who are involved in showing their dogs and ask if there is an adult dog suitable for showing who could benefit from your love and care. A dog entrusted to you by a breeder could have the important role of

### *Differences Between 4-H Showmanship and AKC Junior Showmanship*

*In 4-H Showmanship, handlers may show purebred and mixed breed dogs. Dogs may be spayed or neutered. All dogs should be clean and well-groomed (e.g., brushed, nails trimmed), but they are not required to be in the standard show clip for the breed.*

*In AKC Junior Showmanship for conformation, dogs are presented with the recommended grooming for a particular breed. The rules pertaining to conformation apply to Junior handlers. In AKC Junior Showmanship classes held at AKC dog shows, any breed eligible to compete at the event are eligible including a dog with a PAL number or a spayed or neutered dog. Because there are changes from time to time, when you are ready to show, be sure to review the most current information on "Eligibility" in the Junior Showmanship Guidelines at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org).*

# 4-H Dog Project Manual



*A dog entrusted to you by a breeder could be your very first show dog. (© American Kennel Club).*

becoming your very first show dog. There are breeders who would be honored to serve as a mentor for you. Some of these breeders will have a dog who is already trained for the show ring and needs a show home. The AKC Breeder of Merit program is a good place to start if you are in search of a dog ([akc.org/breeder-programs/](http://akc.org/breeder-programs/)). While you are learning, you could practice with a dog who is already trained so that you can focus on developing your handling skills rather than trying to learn to handle and train the dog at the same time.

Another good option for finding a dog to show is to contact or join your local AKC All Breed Kennel Club to get to know breeders and exhibitors who can assist and mentor you. There are also AKC clubs for specific breeds.

For showing in AKC Junior Showmanship, the dog must be eligible according to the rules that are current at

the time to compete in AKC dog shows (or obedience trials). The dog must be owned by the Junior, a member or the Junior's family, or a member of his household.

Dogs must be:

- registered with the American Kennel Club. (This means the dog will have an AKC or PAL number).
- 6 months of age or older
- a breed for which classes are offered at a show
- entered in Junior Showmanship and may have disqualifying faults or may be spayed or neutered.

## **I Have a Dog, Now How Do I Get Started?**

The best way to learn about what is involved in handling and showing a dog at an AKC show is to go to some shows without a dog. Watch the Junior Showmanship classes and talk to the participants. Juniors are very friendly and will be eager to share their knowledge and experience with you.

You should also watch the breed competitions for the breeds in which you are interested. Watch carefully to learn how handlers show the dogs.

Another way you can learn about showing is to join a local AKC club. Look for a club that offers handling classes where you can learn all of the basics before taking a dog to a show. Club members can show you how to groom your breed, where to set



## Chapter 7 – Showmanship and Conformation

up your space at your first show, and they can guide you through the process to enter a show.

### AKC Junior Showmanship Classes

The purpose of AKC Junior Showmanship classes is to teach you to handle a dog in the ring. In AKC Junior Showmanship, handlers from 9 to 18 years



*One of the best ways to learn about showing is to watch the breed competitions. (© American Kennel Club).*

old may participate. The classes are:

- Novice - for handlers who (when entries close) have not won 3 first place awards in a Novice class at a licensed or member show, and
- Open – for handlers having 3 or more first-place wins with competition.

The Novice class provides beginners with a chance to get experience and

develop confidence before competing with more seasoned handlers. The Open class is for Junior Handlers with more experience.

The Novice and Open classes may be further divided into:

- Junior – at least 9 years old but under 12 years old on the day of the show
- Intermediate – at least 12 years old but under 15 years old on the day of the show
- Senior – at least 15 years old but under 18 years old on the day of the show.

### Getting an AKC Junior Showmanship Number

In order to participate in AKC Junior Showmanship, a Juniors number is needed. The application can be found at <http://www.akc.org/events/junior-showmanship/>

### Conformation

The purpose of conformation shows whether they be 4-H, AKC or any other venue, is for judges to evaluate the dogs and give placements based on how close each dog matches the judge's view of the perfect dog that is described in the breed's official standard. The breed standard not only describe the physical characteristics of the dog such as coat, and head shape, the standard also describes the ideal temperament of the breed, and how it should move.

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

In AKC conformation, dogs compete to earn the distinction of “Champion.” They must acquire 15 points, including 2 majors won under different judges and at least one point under a third (and different judge). A major is determined by having a certain number of dogs required in the competition for a dog to earn a 3-point or 5-point “major.” You could think of this as a major win, as opposed to when there is a small entry of only a few dogs so the winner would get one point towards the 15 required for the Championship. A dog



*The purpose of conformation shows is for judges to evaluate the dogs based on how close each dog matches the judge's view of the perfect dog that is described in the breed's official standard. (© American Kennel Club).*

show mentor can show you how to get the schedule of points for your breed.

As you and your dog work toward a championship, your job as a handler will



*(© American Kennel Club).*

be to always present yourself in the best way possible and to showcase your dog's best qualities. Learning all of the aspects of conformation handling from how you should dress to how you should move your dog will help you achieve that goal.

The ultimate AKC dog show win is “Best in Show.” This means that your dog has won Best of Breed, moved on to the Group competition, won the Group, and then won the Best in Show competition. The Best of Show dog is the top dog of the day.

# Chapter 7 – Showmanship and Conformation

## Getting Ready to Show in Conformation

### Assessing Your Dog

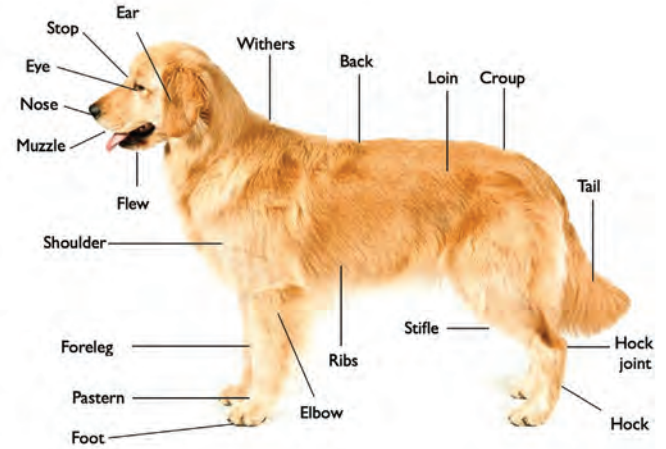
Before you enter your first show, ideally, you will have practiced with your dog, taken some lessons, and had a breed expert evaluate your dog and tell you how to best present your breed in general and your individual dog. Some breeds are moved at a faster pace while with other breeds, the handler may be walking rather than running. If you understand your own dog's strengths in terms of conformation, you can show these off to the judge. For example, if your dog has a great head, you will want to position the dog when you stop in front of the judge so the judge can see the head and expression. With some dogs that have beautiful movement, you may want to move the dog a little slower to better show the movement; with other dogs, it may be best to move them faster to show how the dog moves.

The following illustration shows the anatomy of the dog. It is important for handlers to know these body parts.

### In the Ring

#### Your Appearance

When you show your dog, you should always be clean and neat. Choose clothes that are comfortable so you can move easily. However, you want to be taken



*It is important for conformation handlers to be able to identify a dog's body parts.*

seriously, so even though your clothes may be comfortable, your outfit should look professional.

Girls should wear a dress or skirt that is below the knee. You might not normally wear your dresses this long, but the length is important because you will be standing, running, and kneeling. Dress slacks and culottes are also fine. If your hair is long, you may want to pull it back so it does not get in your eyes or cover your face when you bend down to stack your dog. Avoid wearing any jewelry that moves around or dangles and can distract the dog. For conformation, where you will need to move with your dog, your shoes should have low heels and rubber bottoms. Rubber bottoms won't make noise when you are moving and they will prevent slipping.

# 4-H Dog Project Manual



*When you show your dog, wear clothes that are both comfortable and professional. (© American Kennel Club).*

Boys should wear a suit or sports coat and slacks. Take a look at how professional handlers dress. Most will have on a shirt and tie. If you wear a tie, consider using a tie tack so the tie is not hanging down when you bend to stack your dog. Boys should also wear shoes with rubber bottoms.

You will receive an arm band with a number and it must be worn on your left arm in the ring so that you and your dog can be identified.

If you have a breed that tends to shed so that you get dog hairs on your clothes, carry a fur or lint brush or roller to keep your clothes free of dog hair.

## **Your Attitude and Behavior in the Ring**

While you want to look confident and professional, smiling and showing that you enjoy what you are doing is a good thing. Your dog will be more relaxed and will

show better if you are calm and happy.

Before you show for the first time, if you have taken a showmanship class or seminar, you will have learned about your body posture in the ring. Don't crowd your dog; stay about an arm's length away so the judge can see the dog. Especially if you have a shorter dog, practice lowering yourself to the dog's level. So that you don't wobble, keep your back straight and use your legs to raise and lower yourself. Sometimes, with larger breeds, you may need to bend at the waist, but this can be an awkward position.

One of the most important things you can do in the ring is to alternate looking at your dog and the judge. It is essential that you follow the directions that the judge gives.

Keep the dog in a position so that the judge can always see it, and when the judge does look, you should have the dog in position and looking good. Be ready when it is your turn to move up or follow the judge's instructions.

You should be a good sport at all times. This means that you don't distract or interfere with other handlers and dogs by crowding them, distracting them with noises and big movements, or trying to talk to them when they are focused on their dogs. When the competition is over, if you did not win, approach the winner to say,

## Chapter 7 – Showmanship and Conformation

“Congratulations!” When your dog wins, hopefully others will be happy and will congratulate you.



*When showing in conformation, always keep one eye on your dog and one eye on the judge. (© American Kennel Club).*

### Grooming for the Ring

We talked about grooming in detail in another chapter. For the show ring, remember that Junior Handlers are responsible for grooming their own dogs, and this will be a part of the judge’s overall evaluation. Your dog should be groomed as close to perfection as you can get. You may have had a number of grooming lessons from an expert in your breed before showing. The dog should be bathed, clean, and trimmed appropriately. The teeth and ears should be cleaned and the nails trimmed.

### Stacking Your Dog

Stacking the dog means positioning the dog so the feet and head are in the best

possible position to show the dog’s attributes. There are two ways to stack a dog. One is “hand stacking” where you physically touch and move the dog so each foot is in the best position. The second method is “free stacking” where after training, the dog will basically put himself in the stacked position.

When hand stacking the dog, you will set the front feet where you want them. The legs will be aligned with each other. One foot is not more forward than the other. The toes will face forward. After the front of the dog is set, you will position the back legs. Free stacking is a more advanced skill for a handler to teach and it requires a well-trained dog.



*Your dog should be groomed as close to perfection as you can get. (© American Kennel Club).*

Stacking can be a bit tricky for the beginning handler. When you are learning to stack a dog, sometimes it seems that you do exactly what you were told, follow the

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

directions and position the dog's front foot in the right place. Then you start moving the second foot and the dog moves the first foot out of place!

The best way for you to learn to stack a dog is with in-person instruction where you are taught by someone who knows how to do this. You can learn this in a 4-H or AKC handling class or a club member or handler can teach you.

Learning to stack a dog takes patience and practice. You may try working in front



*The best way for you to learn to stack a dog is with in-person instruction where you are taught by someone who knows how to do this. You can also watch instructional videos. (© American Kennel Club).*

of a mirror so you can see the image of you and your dog.

This is the day and age of the internet and another way to learn stacking tips is to take advantage of the many instructional videos on YouTube. Go to [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and type “how to stack a show dog” in the

search box. You'll find videos from other juniors and expert professional handlers.

## Moving the Dog

### The Lead

By the time you enter the ring, you will have chosen the best lead for your dog. Your 4-H Dog Project leader, breeder, or show mentor can advise you about leads. There are several types of show leads that include slip leads (one piece), Martingales, one-piece leads with slides, and thin collars and attachable leads. Leads and collars can be made of nylon or braided leather. Some collars are made of fine chain. Show leads and/or collars are generally more narrow than collars and leads for other activities such as obedience.

### Holding the Lead

Most dog show leads (leashes) are going to be 6-ft. long. The good part of this is that 6-ft. provides plenty of leash so that the dog can move well and you can keep your distance. The problem with a 6-ft. lead comes when you need to be close to the dog and all of the leash is not needed. When the dog is not moving out on the lead, whatever you do, don't let extra leash drag or be seen. Gather the extra leash by making loops in your hand to maintain a neat appearance.

## Chapter 7 – Showmanship and Conformation

### The Courtesy Turn

You know how to hold your lead and stack your well-groomed dog. Now it's time to start moving the dog. When the judge gives you the directions to start an individual gaiting pattern (on your own), you can make a tight clockwise circle with your dog. Some people say that this "courtesy turn" is a way to honor the judge. It is also a way for you to get yourself and your dog together – this quick turn helps you get the dog ready to move in the desired direction.

### Gaiting Patterns

The word "gait" basically means the way in which an animal moves. Judges will look for movement that is suitable for the job for which the breed was created. For example, Siberian Huskies are sled dogs. Their gait needs to be efficient and the dog needs to be able to cover ground with no effort. If a working sled dog had a short, choppy gait like a prancing horse, it would get exhausted in a very short period of time. Clearly, this would not be a good way to move for a sled dog who needs to go a long distance.

To assess the dog's movement, dog show judges will have each exhibitor demonstrate gaiting patterns with their dogs. The patterns that a judge might request are Around, Down and Back, Triangle, and the less frequently used "L" and "T."

### Around

Judges may indicate they want you to do the "Around" gaiting pattern by saying something such as, "Take them around," or, "Once around the ring please." The judge can have the whole group move or divide the group if the class is large. There are also times when dogs are sent individually around the ring.



*The word "gait" basically means the way in which an animal moves. Judges will look for movement that is suitable for the job for which the breed was created. (© American Kennel Club).*

Handlers and dogs will move in a counterclockwise circle around the ring. You have to keep the pace correct to handle your dog at its best. Watch the dog in front of you so you don't crowd it, and keep an eye on the judge who will give the group directions.

The "Around" pattern allows the judge to have a look at all of the dogs if they are moved as a group, and dogs can be seen from the side. This allows the judge to evaluate movement including what is

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

called reach and drive, the topline, and the way in which the dog carries its head.

- Reach and drive – The forward movement of a dog’s legs is called “reach.”

“Drive” is the motion of the hind legs.

- Topline – If you look at a side view of the dog, the topline is the imaginary line that goes from the dog’s shoulders to the base of the tail. Toplines can be straight, arched, or sloped. What does the breed standard say about your breed’s ideal topline?

## Down and Back

The “Down and Back” pattern is sometimes called “Up and Back” or “Out and Back”. In the Down and Back, the judge will be observing to see that you can move the dog in a straight line. Handlers should find a point to look at, move straight towards it, then return to the judge. Basically, in this pattern, you and your dog move in a line directly away from the judge. At the end of the ring or designated distance, you will do an about turn and come directly back to the judge.

The Down and Back requires you and your dog to move in a straight line, gives the judge a chance to see your dog move both as it is going and coming. As the dog moves away, the judge will be watching for how the front and back feet move together, whether or not the pasterns are straight,

and how the hindquarters of the dog are moving.

When you and your dog are returning to the judge, the judge will watch the dog’s front to see if the elbows are in the proper place (not out), and if the dog moves correctly when looked at from the front (such as not sidewinding).

When you are showing indoors where there are mats in the ring, the dog should always be on the mat.

## Triangle

Sometimes, a judge will have dogs do a Triangle gaiting pattern rather than a Down and Back. Here is how the Triangle works:

- You and your dog will start by moving away from the judge in a straight line.
- When you get to the end of the ring or the place designated by the judge, you will make a left turn and move along the back edge of the ring (now you’ve made the first two legs of the triangle).
- Next, turn and come across the diagonal to return to the judge.

The Triangle gives the judge the chance to see all aspects of the dog’s movement. When the dog moves away from the judge, the judge can see the back of the dog. As the dog makes the second leg of the triangle, the judge can see the side movement, and when the dog returns to



## Chapter 7 – *Showmanship and Conformation*

the judge in the 3rd leg of the triangle, the judge can assess the dog from the front.

### **“L” and “T” Patterns**

The L and T patterns are not commonly used in AKC dog shows. There may occasionally be an L pattern in a large group ring, and the T is not seen in conformation. However, sometimes these more complex patterns may be used in 4-H or AKC Junior Showmanship as a way for the judge to evaluate your skills. Your 4-H Dog Project Leader might want you to learn the L and T patterns just in case they are needed.

### **Baiting**

Baiting is when food is used in the ring to get the dog’s attention. Using bait in Showmanship classes is at the discretion of the judge, so you will want to check with your 4-H Dog Project leader or handling class instructor about whether or not you should be using bait.

### **The Judge’s Exam of Individual Dogs**

After the dogs have all gone around the ring, the judge will go down the line and examine each dog individually. When this is happening, your dog should be stacked. Remember to keep at least 3-ft. of space between your dog and the one in front and behind it so the judge has space to move between the dogs.

When the judge approaches to examine your dog, control the dog’s head to ensure the dog is steady. Judges feel the dog’s muscles and bones to evaluate structure and feel the fur to evaluate cleanliness and coat texture. They will check to determine that both testicles are present on male dogs.

In some shows, the judges open the dog’s mouth to show the bite. The teeth should meet correctly according to the breed standard. However, it is more common for a judge to ask you to show the dog’s bite. This helps with safety and prevents the spread of germs and possible illnesses (e.g., canine influenza) from one dog to the next. To show the judge the dog’s bite:

- Put the lead in your right hand.
- Use the right hand to hold the lower jaw with your hand under the jaw.
- Put your left hand over the dog’s muzzle, turn the nose toward the judge (to make it easier for the judge to see the bite) and carefully pull the lips away from the front teeth. Be careful not to cover the dog’s nose with your hand.
- For breeds where the judge needs to check more than the front teeth, the judge will tell you to show the teeth on the sides of the dog’s mouth.

Have plenty of practice sessions at home

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to get your dog accustomed to being examined and having its mouth handled for showing the bite.

## Using a Table for the Exam

There are a number of AKC breeds that are examined on a table because of their size. With smaller, shorter dogs, using a table makes the exam much easier for the



*When the judge approaches to examine your dog, control the dog's head to ensure the dog is steady. (© American Kennel Club).*

judge and handler and it prevents having two people leaning over a small dog. Younger 4-H members may have a difficult time lifting certain breeds onto a table and if this is the case, this should be brought to the judge's attention before the class begins.

Bulldogs and Bassets are breeds that are required to be examined on a ramp. The list of breeds requiring a ramp may change, so check [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) when you are ready to show.

## When you Win . . . and Don't Win

If you have worked very hard to show your dog and you win the class, it is hard not to be excited. You should certainly be proud of what you have accomplished, but remember the feelings of the other exhibitors and be a gracious, humble winner.

It is easy to be courteous and kind when you win. But what about the days when you and your dog don't win? Take



*There are a number of AKC breeds that are examined on a table because of their size. (© American Kennel Club).*

## Chapter 7 – *Showmanship and Conformation*

advantage of this opportunity to also be a gracious, good sport when you don't win. Be sure to approach the winner, smile, and say, "Congratulations," *and mean it*. You will appreciate this kind, thoughtful gesture when others do this for you when you win.



*Showmanship is a place where you can make lifelong human friends and build a bond with your dog that will last forever. (© American Kennel Club).*

### Summary

Showing your dog can teach you a lot about dogs, but more importantly, Showmanship is an activity that will teach you important life skills such as self-esteem, working hard to become competent at something, and how to win and lose with grace.

In Showmanship, you will learn that every dog is different and how you handle the dog can show off the dog's strengths. Treating your dog with kindness as you train it for showmanship and conformation will result in a dog who is confident and happy to work.

Showmanship is about far more than learning to show dogs. Showmanship is also a place where you can make lifelong human friends and build a bond with your dog that will last forever.

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### Activities and Reflections



#### **Suggested Activities**

- 1)** Go to a dog show. Ask a few people how things work and why they enjoy dog shows or showing dogs. (Keep in mind that people are busy putting on the show or showing their dogs; be sure to ask if this is a good time to talk to them).
- 2)** Put on a mock dog show with your club or at home.
- 3)** Demonstrate how to groom or stack your dog to someone who doesn't know how to do this.
- 4)** If showing interests you, make a list of what you need to learn or do before you can start showing.

#### **Suggested Reflections**

- 1)** What is the difference between showmanship and conformation?
- 2)** How could you get involved in showing if you wanted to do this with your dog?
- 3)** What are some benefits to showing your dog?
- 4)** What are some questions you think a judge would ask during showmanship?
- 5)** What are some actions of a gracious competitor versus a poor sport?



## Chapter 8 – Canine Good Citizen®

### Getting Started In Training

**C**ongratulations on your decision to train your dog! No matter what activity you choose, there are many benefits to training. Training will teach your dog basic commands and useful skills. Basic commands such as sit, down, come, and stay are not only fun to teach, but they are also useful skills that can be used every day. When your dog knows “sit,” it means you can have her sit politely as she greets someone in the community. When your dog knows “down,” you can put him in a down stay while you eat dinner or open the front door to receive a package.

Training gives your dog something to think about – it exercises both the dog’s body and mind. Dogs with training are less likely to get into trouble. If they do have some behavior problems, you can use basic commands to get the dog under control. For example, if a dog excitedly jumps on people, an alternative behavior such as, “Sit,” gives you a way to manage jumping.



#### *How to Become an AKC CGC Evaluator:*

*4-H Dog Project Leaders are welcome to apply and become AKC CGC Evaluators.*

*The CGC test can be administered at 4-H dog training classes and events.*

*For an application and more information contact: [cgc@akc.org](mailto:cgc@akc.org)*



*Under the guidance of 4-H Leaders Bob and Kay Pierce, these 4-H dog project members had the opportunity to meet new friends and accomplish goals.*

Training that goes beyond the basics leads way to other fun activities such as therapy dog work, or participating in events such as obedience, rally and agility. Dogs with training and

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

good manners are well-respected in our communities. And dog training doesn't just help your dog – it can help you as well. In 4-H dog training, you can meet new friends, develop new skills, and accomplish goals.

## Tools For Training

It's time to start training! You will need a few training tools to get started. These include a collar and a leash. First, let's talk about leashes.

### Leashes

The leash (which is also called a lead) will be attached to your dog's collar. Leashes help keep your dog safe by preventing the dog from running away, getting into traffic, or approaching another dog who is not well-trained.

Training leashes can be made of leather, webbing, or nylon and most training leashes are six feet long. For small breeds such as the Toy breeds, a lighter six-foot leash is often used. Whenever dogs are at events such as obedience competition or the State Fair competition, they must be on leash in beginning classes. The competition rules will tell you which classes are done completely on leash. In more advanced classes or agility where there are off-lead exercises, the dog must be on a leash any time you are taking it in and out of the ring.



*Training leashes can be made of leather, webbing, or nylon and most training leashes are six feet long.*

### Other types of Leashes

You might have seen chain leashes in the pet store. Chain leashes are not recommended for training. Another type of leash that is not used in training is a retractable leash. This leash has a plastic case and handle. By pushing a button, the dog's handler can have the leash retract into the case, similar to a fishing reel. The cord or "leash" on retractable leashes can be up to 26-feet long. This leash should not be used in training, or in places where the dog gets close to other people and dogs. For example, you would never use a retractable leash when walking down a sidewalk because there is a chance that the leash might get tangled around another person or dog. A retractable leash might be useful if you had a large open space such as a farm and you wanted to take your dog for a walk and give him the freedom to move



## Chapter 8 – Canine Good Citizen

away from you and sniff while still being leashed.

### Collars

Now it's time to talk about collars. The most common type of training collar used in 4-H dog training is the buckle collar. A buckle collar is a strip of nylon or other material that is fastened with a metal buckle or a plastic clip. When trainers are concerned that a dog may pull its head out of a collar, they will sometimes use a slip collar. An alternative to a slip collar is the Martingale collar.



*The most common type of training collar used in 4-H dog training is the buckle collar. A buckle collar is a strip of nylon or other material that is fastened with a metal buckle or a plastic clip.*

Head collars are collars that look very much like the halter you would put on a horse. They are also sometimes called “head halters.” There are several types of head collars. Most have a loop that goes around the dog’s muzzle. The idea is if you can control the dog’s head, you control the rest of the body. Head collars are good for some dogs who are just beginning training, but they are not permitted in competition.

You might also see some trainers using slip collars. Slip collars are made of chain or nylon and there is a metal ring at each end. The collar is slipped through one of the rings to form a loop. The other ring is used for attaching the leash. A benefit of slip collars is that a dog cannot back out of them and get loose. A disadvantage of slip collars is that if they get caught on something, your dog could strangle, and when not used properly, they can choke the dog. An alternative to the slip collar is the Martingale that prevents your dog from pulling out of the collar and it does not have the choking effect.

Whatever type of collar you use to train your dog, it is critical that the collar is the proper size. Your 4-H Dog Project Leader will help you select the collar that is best for your dog and will help you make sure it is well-fitted.

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

## Canine Good Citizen

The American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen Program provides a great beginning for training your dog. Canine Good Citizen (CGC) teaches all of the basic commands that every dog should know to be a wonderful family dog and companion. CGC also prepares dogs for competition and training events.

The Canine Good Citizen Program started in 1989, and since then, more than 1 million dogs have gone through the program. CGC was started to recognize a dog's good manners at home and in the community and to teach dog owners to be responsible.

At the heart of the CGC program is the 10-step CGC test. All



*The CGC Program was started to recognize a dog's good manners at home and in the community and to teach dog owners to be responsible.*

dogs who pass the test, including purebreds and mixed breeds, can earn a CGC certificate and official title from AKC. And the best part? You can do this in your own town and your 4-H Dog Project Leader (if he or she has been approved as an AKC CGC Evaluator) can provide the training and testing at 4-H meetings and events. If you should decide that you aren't interested in a title or certificate, CGC training is still for you and your dog because CGC is a curriculum that teaches all of the basics



### *Here are the Ten Steps on the Canine Good Citizen Test:*

- 1. Accepts a friendly stranger*
- 2. Sits politely for petting*
- 3. Appearance and grooming*
- 4. Out for a walk (on a loose leash)*
- 5. Walking through a crowd*
- 6. Sit and Down on cue and Stay in Place*
- 7. Coming when called*
- 8. Reaction to another dog*
- 9. Reaction to distractions*
- 10. Supervised separation*

## Chapter 8 – *Canine Good Citizen*

including sit, down, come, stay and how to behave in the presence of people and other dogs.

In the hands of a good instructor, you and your dog can get ready for the CGC test in six to eight weeks if you go to a class

once a week and practice 15 minutes each day. The CGC test is administered with the dog on a leash and dogs of all ages, as long as they know the skills, can participate. Let's take a look at teaching each of the CGC skills.



### **Accepts 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 test begins with the dog seated at the handler's side.

The evaluator and handler exchange pleasantries (e.g., “Hello, it’s good to see you again”). In this test, the evaluator does not interact with the dog.

- The dog must show no sign of resentment, aggression or shyness.
- The dog may not jump on or rush to the evaluator to initiate contact.
- The dog may not lunge forward to greet the evaluator.
- The dog should be under control throughout the exercise.

If the handler must use excessive corrections (e.g., trying to hold the dog to prevent jumping) to control the dog, the dog should not pass the exercise.

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You might have been in the community when you met someone with a dog who jumped on you to say hello. If you love dogs, you might enjoy a wet, slurpy kiss and having your face washed by a friendly dog. But, sometimes this is not a good thing. Some people are afraid of dogs and others might not want muddy paws on their clothes.

When you are walking your dog, you should be a responsible dog owner. This means you never let your dog infringe on the rights of another person, so you should always ask if someone would like to meet your dog.

Shy dogs may try to hide behind their owners and they may pull away if a person tries to pet them. Meeting a friendly stranger is a skill that every dog needs. The way dogs learn to interact with people is through **socialization**. Socialization means you will expose your dog to new people, places and things so it is well-behaved and not afraid.

## Teaching Dogs to Accept a “Friendly Stranger”

The “friendly stranger” in the CGC test simulates a person you might meet when you and your dog are out for a walk. In your 4-H dog training classes, a visiting parent or class helper could be the friendly stranger when you are practicing.



*In the “friendly stranger” and “distraction dog” exercises of the CGC test, there used to be a handshake. When COVID-19 appeared in 2020, the handshake was eliminated from the CGC test. Now handlers do a pretend handshake with no touching. (© American Kennel Club).*

## Places to Go and People to Meet

Some dogs are calm when meeting new people and without any training at all, they can pass the CGC Test item, “Accepts a Friendly Stranger.” If you are lucky enough to have a dog who has great manners when meeting new people, you can focus on teaching other new skills.

When dogs have a problem with accepting a friendly stranger, it usually involves one of two situations: the dog is extremely excited or the dog is very shy. Both of these problems can be addressed with training and regular practice with meeting new people. Before starting CGC training, you can check to see if your dog needs training on accepting a stranger.

## Chapter 8 – *Canine Good Citizen*

### **The Extremely Excited Dog**

In the CGC Test, you're going to teach your dog to sit (see Item #2) while the friendly stranger approaches. If your dog jumps for joy every time he meets a new person, you should work to get your dog accustomed to meeting new people. In 4-H classes, you can ask other members if they will approach and meet your dog. You can also take your dog on outings when you are at home. With your dog on a leash at a park or busy sidewalk, you'll have plenty of chances to let him meet new people and let friendly strangers approach.



*Well-mannered dogs should not try to jump on people, nor should they be overly shy.*

### **The Shy Dog**

When it comes to accepting a friendly stranger, shy dogs may need some training and experience in order to pass this CGC test item. With shy dogs, think “baby steps.” In the beginning, you might have a person stand 10 feet away from your dog. Then, the person would move to 5 feet away, 3 feet, and eventually, come up and talk to you. This is called “systematic desensitization.”

### **Exercises for Accepting a Friendly Stranger: Places to Go and People to Meet**

- ❑ 1. At your 4-H dog training class, have your dog sit at your left side as a person walks by who is about 15-feet away. Can your dog do this without becoming overly excited?
- ❑ 2. If your dog will sit at your side while someone passes 15-feet away, have the dog sit at your side while someone passes who is 10-feet away. If your dog can't do this at 10-feet, go back to 15-feet. You can also practice sitting by giving your dog the reminder, “Sit...sit, good girl,” and reward with food if you are using food rewards.
- ❑ 3. When your dog will sit at your side as a person passes at 10-feet away, you're ready to repeat these steps by having your dog sit at your side as someone walks by who is 5-feet away.

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- ❑ 4. When your dog will sit and watch as a person who is 5-feet away passes by, do the exercise again. This time, speak to the person, saying something such as, “Good to see you” or, “Isn’t this a fun class?” Watch how your dog responds. If she behaves acceptably when you speak to someone who is 5-feet away, you’re ready for the next step.



*4-H dog training classes are a good place to practice your dog’s sit in preparation for meeting a friendly stranger in the CGC test.*

- ❑ 5. Now it is time for you to have a helper walk up to you and your dog. With your dog at your left side, have your dog sit. The helper should stand about 15-feet away and approach when you are ready. The helper should say something like, “Hi, how are you?” You and the helper can do a pretend handshake. In this exercise, the helper does not speak to or touch the dog. If your dog tries to jump on the person or lunges forward in a friendly way, you should tell the dog to sit and reward the sitting behavior. You might have to practice this for several days.
- ❑ 6. Continue to practice this exercise in your dog training class and at home. Use different helpers to act as the friendly stranger.
- ❑ 7. When you first start teaching this exercise to your dog, the friendly stranger can approach in a calm, quiet way. But as your dog gets better at accepting a stranger, you can practice with all kinds of people—boys, girls, men, women, people who are quiet, and some who speak a little louder. This is because your dog will meet all kinds of people in the community. A dog who is going to be a therapy dog will meet people in therapy settings who speak loudly or move quickly.
- ❑ 8. When your dog is steady when a friendly stranger approaches and says a few words to you, extend the length of time the friendly stranger talks to you.
- ❑ 9. In addition to exposing your dog to new people, in class and when you are at home, expose your dog to different surfaces such as grass, concrete, and tile floors.
- ❑ 10. As you teach your dog to accept a friendly stranger, ask the stranger to give your dog a treat. This will teach your dog that good things come from interacting nicely with other people.

## Chapter 8 – Canine Good Citizen

Once your dog has mastered “Accepts a Friendly Stranger,” you’re on your way to earning the Canine Good Citizen certificate and title. Dogs who “Accept a Friendly Stranger” are well-behaved around people.



### Sits 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 (either side is permissible) to begin the exercise, the evaluator pets the dog on the head and body only.

The handler may talk to his or her dog throughout the exercise.

- The dog may stand in place once petting begins.
- The dog must not show shyness or resentment.

This is an important skill for all of the dogs who live in our families and neighborhoods.

When a dog jumps on you unexpectedly, you might not feel safe around that dog. Dogs who sit politely for petting make the people who meet them feel comfortable. These are dogs who are a pleasure to own. In this exercise, your dog will sit at your side while an unfamiliar person walks up, speaks to you, reaches

out, and pets your dog. Sitting Politely for Petting has three parts. These are: 1) sitting on cue, 2) tolerating petting, and 3) sitting while being petted by someone other than the owner.

### Teaching Your Dog to Sit on Cue

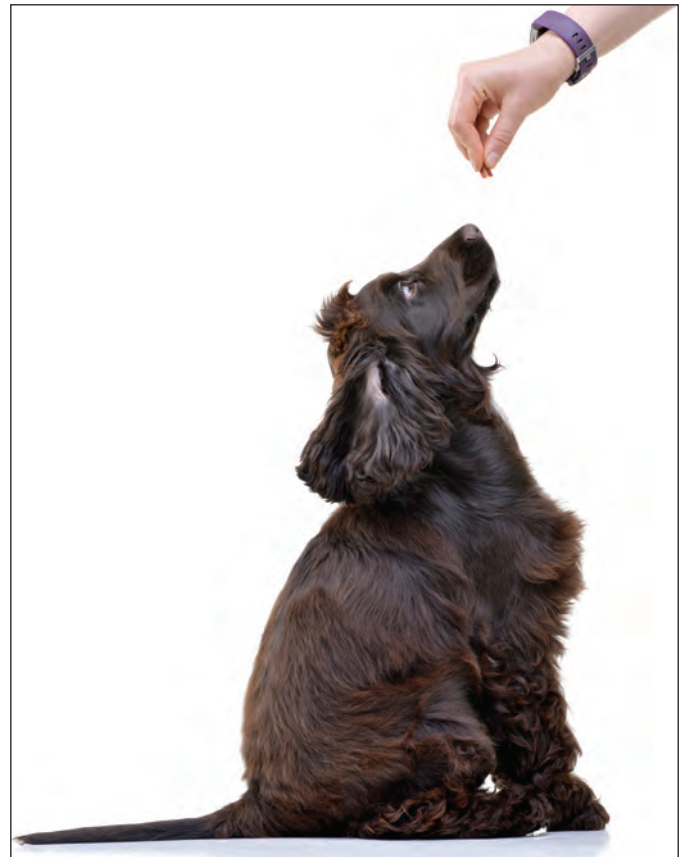
To teach your dog to sit on cue, one training method is to use food to guide the dog into position. When food is used to guide the dog into a position, trainers call this *using food as a lure*. Using food to guide the dog means the food is moved around by the trainer and the dog moves into position in order to get to the food. This is different than using food as a *reinforcer* or *reward* for something the dog did correctly.

### Exercises for Teaching Your Dog to Sit on Cue

- ❑ 1. Get ready to teach sit. Your dog is on a leash. Put some treats in a treat bag or put a few pieces of food in your pocket. You can also use a toy if your dog does not respond to food in training.
- ❑ 2. Stand in front of your dog. Your dog will be standing. Your toes will be about one foot away from the dog’s front paws. Hold a tiny piece of food in your hand as you stand in front of the dog. Let the dog see the food.

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- ❑ 3. Move the food so you are holding it slightly higher than the dog's head and in front of the dog's eyes (about 6 inches away).
- ❑ 4. As you hold the food, move your hand toward the back of the dog's head. This will cause the dog to look up so he can visually follow the food. Looking up and tipping his head back will result in the dog rocking back into a sit without you touching him.
  - When you hold the food above the dog's head, hold it two to four inches above the dog's head.
  - If you hold the food too high, your dog might start jumping for the food.
  - If the food is held too low, your dog can reach out and take the food without sitting.
- ❑ 5. Tell your dog, "Sit," in a calm, firm, non-shrieking, normal voice. Don't say, "Sit?" like you are asking a question. If you sound like you are saying "Sit?" as a question, you send a message to your dog that you are not sure of yourself.
- ❑ 6. Say, "Sit," just as you move the food back over your dog's head, her back legs starts to bend, and as she is moving into the sit position.
- ❑ 7. As soon as your dog is in a sit position (rear end on the floor) say, "Good



*You can use food as a lure to teach your dog to sit.*

- Girl!" (or "Good Boy!" or whatever praise you choose to use). At the exact same time you are saying, "Good Girl!" give your dog the food as a reward. As soon as she sits, praise your dog and give the food reward.
- ❑ 8. In the beginning of teaching your dog the sit, after she sits only a second or two, you can praise, give the food reward, and say, "OKAY!" (or whatever command you will use to release the dog). Take a step or two away to let the dog stand up.
  - ❑ 9. Soon, when you say, "Sit," your dog will quickly sit without needing to be

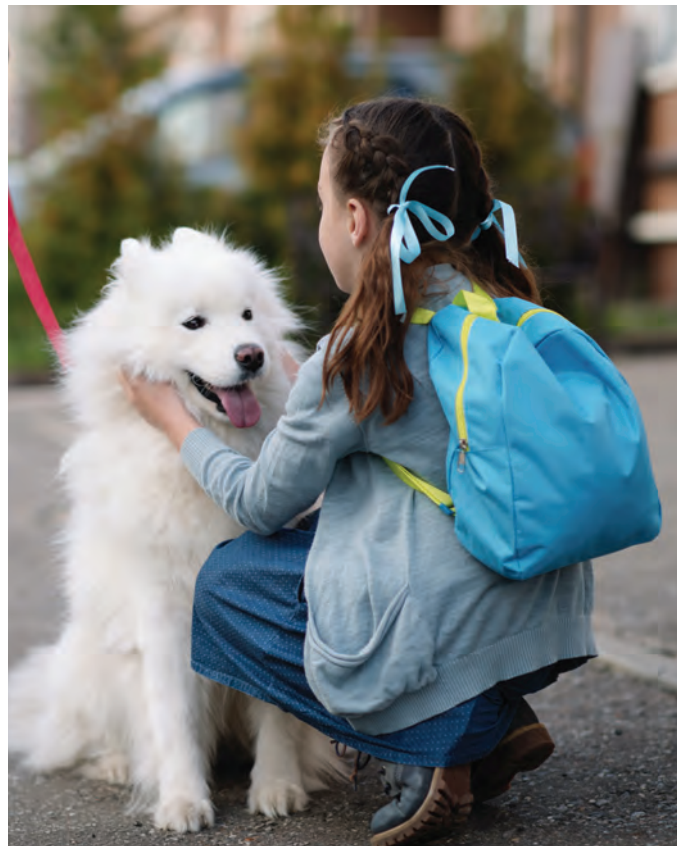


## Chapter 8 – *Canine Good Citizen*

lured into the sit. When this happens, give the dog the food and praise.

- ❑ 10. So, in the final step of teaching Sit on cue with you in front of the dog, hold the food in your hand at your side, say, “Sit,” and the dog will sit without being guided by the food. Then reward and praise. Eventually, your dog should sit no matter what position you are in when you say, “Sit.”

Sit is one of the most useful skills you can teach your dog. Sit is a skill that can be used in everyday life and for dog events. People appreciate well-mannered dogs that sit to greet them. You can also use sit to manage your dog’s behavior. If your dog has a habit of jumping on people, you can teach sit as a better way to meet someone. Finally, if you decide to compete and earn titles, your dog will need to sit as a part of obedience, rally, and agility.



*People appreciate well-mannered dogs that sit to greet them.*

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

## STEP 3

### Appearance and Grooming

This practical test demonstrates that the dog will welcome being groomed and examined and will permit a stranger such as a veterinarian, groomer, or friend of the owner to do so. This test also demonstrates the owner's care, concern, and responsibility.

The evaluator inspects the dog to determine if it is cleaned 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 softly combs or brushes the dog and, in a natural manner, lightly examines the ears and gently pick 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.
- The evaluator may give the handler specific instructions for handling the dog in a manner that ensures safety. For example, when the feet are to be handled, the evaluator may request that the handler lift each leg. Another technique the evaluator may use is to hold the dog's head away with one hand and use the other hand to lift the foot.
- The evaluator may request that the handler steady the dog's head for checking the ears.
- While the handler may be asked to steady the dog's head, lift a leg, etc., any dog requiring restraining so it can be examined should not pass the test. The key question for this test is, "Could a veterinarian or groomer easily examine the dog?"
- Some dogs will wiggle or squirm when they are excited. Some squirming is acceptable, however, this should not be so excessive that the dog cannot be brushed.
- The dog should not struggle (pull away with intensity) to avoid brushing.

There is nothing as beautiful as a well-groomed dog who has a healthy, shiny coat. As a responsible dog owner,

you will want to make sure that your dog is always, clean, groomed, and well cared for.

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Item #3 on the Canine Good Citizen test is *Appearance and Grooming*. The Appearance and Grooming test item addresses whether or not your dog is underweight or overweight, and if the dog has any skin problems or parasites. This test item also tests your dog's ability to tolerate grooming.

### Grooming Equipment

To groom your dog, you will need several grooming tools. For the coat, depending on your dog's coat type, you might need the following equipment: Bathing equipment, brushes, combs, stripping tools, hair dryer, grooming table, electric clippers, and scissors. But your dog's coat isn't all that needs regular care. For grooming, you will also need to care for your dog's nails, ears and teeth.



*Choose the grooming tools that are best suited for your dog's coat type.*

Depending on your age and ability, you might need help grooming your dog. For example, if you have a dog that only requires brushing, you may be able to do the grooming yourself. If you have a dog with a coat that requires more skill to groom, you might need to get the assistance of an experienced groomer. Let's take a look at grooming tools.

### Brushes

**Bristle Brush.** There are all styles and sizes of brushes. A commonly used brush is the bristle brush. This is an all-purpose brush that can be used on short, medium and long coated breeds. The bristles can be made of a natural material or nylon, or a combination of these. The softest type of brush is a natural bristle brush. These are usually made from boar bristles.

**Pin Brush.** Pin brushes are used to brush long-haired breeds such as Shih Tzus and Yorkshire Terriers. Pin brushes come in different sizes so they can be used with breeds as big as Afghans and as small as Yorkies. There is another version of the pin brush and that is an oval rubber pad that covers the palm of your hand. These are used to groom the face and legs of hard-coated breeds such as terriers.

**Slicker Brush.** The slicker brush is a brush that has bent wire teeth. The "slicker" is used to remove mats and dead hair. Slicker brushes come in different sizes

and they tend to remove large amounts of hair from the dog.

## **Rubber Brush**

A rubber brush can be either an actual brush with a handle or a mitt that fits over your hand. Rubber brushes have short flexible rubber bristles and they are used when you need to remove dead hair or bring out the shine in the dog's coat without scratching the skin.

## **Combs**

Combs come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. No matter what the size or shape, combs are usually used on a soft or silky coat, or when the dog doesn't have much coat. Most combs are made of stainless steel or chrome plated brass.

## **Stripping Tools**

Stripping a dog's coat is a more advanced technique and this should be done by trained and experienced people such as professional groomers and breed experts. Stripping tools are used to remove the dead hair of breeds such as terriers and other harsh coated breeds. This type of grooming is most often done on dogs who will be shown in conformation. For pet dogs, trimming the hair with scissors may be a good alternative. However, trimming with scissors can soften the coat and in some breeds, this is not the preferred texture.

## **Hair Dryer**

Using a hair dryer to dry your dog's coat after a bath will result in a coat that looks more polished and finished, especially if the dog is a long coated breed. If you will be working on showing your dog in conformation and are ready to get into the big time, there are many types of dryers on the market that cost from under a hundred dollars to a few thousand dollars. For most dogs, a towel and a portable hand-held dryer will do just fine.

## **Scissors and Electric Clippers**

Scissors and electric clippers are used to shape and sculpt your dog's coat. The type of scissors and clippers you use depends on your dog's coat type and how you want the coat to look after grooming. Experienced groomers or dog professionals (such as a breeder or your 4-H project leader) will tell you if you are ready to use scissors and clippers. With just a very small mistake, you can injure your dog, so in the beginning this equipment should only be used when you have supervision.

## **Nail Trimmers**

It is surprising that many experienced dog trainers have trouble clipping their dog's nails. Dogs who have been accidentally hurt during nail clipping often develop a strong reaction to having their nails clipped. The tip of the dog's nail is

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hard and it doesn't hurt to trim it because this part of the nail is dead. The flesh under the hard part of the nail is called the "quick." The quick is full of blood vessels and nerves, and accidentally cutting it results in pain and bleeding that may be difficult to stop. For this reason, as with some other grooming tasks, you should only clip your dog's nails after you have received hands-on training and supervision and a dog professional (such as a groomer, breeder, or your 4-H Dog Project Leader) has indicated you are ready to do this.

Nail clippers come in several varieties.



*During the CGC test, the Evaluator will briefly handle your dog's paws. Handling the paws prepares your dog for nail care.*

The most well-known types are scissor style clippers and guillotine clippers. There are also new safety clippers that actually have a lighted sensor telling you when you are getting too close to the quick.

A grinder is another tool for shortening your dog's nails. The grinder is a handheld tool on which you place a grinding bit that is covered with sandpaper-like surface. One brand name of a grinder is the Dremel.

### **Grooming Table**

If you have a dog with a coat that will need a lot of grooming, you can consider using a grooming table. A grooming table is helpful when you are grooming small dogs because with the table, you won't have to bend to reach the dog. Grooming tables are sturdy and they have non-slip rubber mats on the tops. If you use a grooming table, you should never leave your dog unattended.

## **Getting Started with Grooming**

### **Bathing Your Dog**

Bathing your dog is the first step in grooming and getting your dog ready for a show because the coat should always be clean.

Bathing equipment will be a leash and collar, (if your dog does not have a reliable "stay,") a no-slip surface, warm water, a

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shampoo that will not irritate your dog's eyes, towels, and a hair dryer. You can also have treats handy for rewarding your dog, especially when you are teaching the dog to tolerate bathing. Small dogs can be bathed in a sink and larger dogs can be bathed in the bathtub, or when the temperature is suitable, they can be bathed outside.

## Time for a Bath



*Bathing cleans your dog's skin and coat, removes loose hair and any odors, and makes the coat shine!*

Here are the steps to bathing your dog:

- 1. The first step is to gather all of your supplies. You don't want to run and look for the dog's shampoo when your dog is already wet and in the tub.
- 2. Next, if you have a long-coated dog, make sure there are no mats in the coat. Always give the dog a thorough brushing before starting the bath.
- 3. Using warm water, thoroughly wet the dog.
- 4. Which end first? Some people will tell you to start with the head and work toward the back of the dog when shampooing. Others say to start at the back and work toward the head. Your dog will get clean no matter where you start. If you live in a place where there are fleas, start at the head because if you start at the back, the fleas will run to hide in the dog's ears. If your dog is afraid of getting his head and face wet, you can start at the rear and work forward. This way, everything is clean, then you quickly wash the head and the bath is complete.
- 5. After wetting the dog, apply the shampoo and massage it into a soapy lather. Work the shampoo into the coat and be careful that you don't get shampoo in the dog's eyes or ears. A cotton ball in each ear will keep the water out.
- 6. Rinse out all of the soap when your dog is clean. Rinse until there is no more soap in the water. If you're going to use a conditioner, apply it now.
- 7. Use the towels to dry the dog.
- 8. A hair dryer can be used to blow-dry the coat if the towel was not enough. Do not let the hair dryer get too hot or too

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close to the dog to prevent accidentally burning your dog. Never put the dog in a crate under a dryer and leave the area.

### **Cleaning the Ears**

In the Canine Good Citizen test, the evaluator will lightly examine the dog's ears. Caring for the ears as a part of your regular grooming routine will prevent your dog from getting ear infections or parasites in the ears. Here are some simple steps for keeping your dog's ears clean, dry, and free of infections or mites.

- ❑ 1. When you are petting and playing with your dog, work on touching and handling your dog's ears. Hold one ear at a time in your hand. Look at and check the outside of the ear for bumps, scratches or other problems.
- ❑ 2. Next, check inside the ear. Use a clean cloth, cotton ball, or cotton swab to clean the ear. You can buy an ear wash at a pet supply store or from your veterinarian. Put the ear wash or a little water on a swab and clean the ear to remove the dirt or wax.
- ❑ 3. Do not put a swab or any other object very far into the ear. If you have any questions about ear cleaning, ask a dog professional or your 4-H Dog Project Leader.
- ❑ 4. If you smell any odor coming from your dog's ears, or your dog is shaking her head, this could be mites or an

infection. Have a veterinarian check the ears as soon as possible.

- ❑ 5. If your dog has a lot of hair growing inside the ear, ask someone to show you how to remove this.

### **Brushing and Combing Your Dog**

We've talked about all of the equipment choices for brushing. Start with one section at a time and brush your dog. If your dog has a coat that gets tangled, don't simply brush over the top of the coat. Doing this will cover up tangles underneath. For a tangled or matted coat, take a few inches at a time, hold up the hair, and carefully brush each section. This is called "layer brushing."

Using the right equipment will help make grooming an activity that your dog will enjoy.

### **Handling the Feet**

When you are petting and playing with your pup, you should be able to handle the dog's feet. If your dog is at all jumpy or resists when you try to handle the feet, start by touching each foot. Do this until you can handle each foot for several seconds, look between the toes, and touch each nail. Once your dog will let you handle the feet, ask a helper to touch your dog's feet. When you handle your dog's feet regularly, you can check for sores or thorns between the pads of the foot. Handling the feet will get

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your dog ready for nail care, and will prepare your dog for Item #3 on the CGC test.

## Nail Care

Nails that are a light color are called “unpigmented nails.” You can almost see through an unpigmented nail. If you look closely, you’ll see a small pink triangle that goes from the base of the nail to the tip. This is the “quick” that we talked about earlier and it has the blood supply and nerves. If you have had hands-on training and supervision and a dog professional has said you are ready to trim your dog’s nails, start by only trimming the very tip of the nail to make sure you bypass the pink area.

Black nails on a dog are called “pigmented nails.” This means the nail will have pigment (which means “color”) that keeps you from seeing the pink part underneath. You have to be especially careful when trimming black nails. As suggested with unpigmented nails, have training first, a dog professional to say you are ready, and trim only the part of the nail that hooks downward.

## Don’t Forget the Teeth!

One part of grooming that should not be forgotten is keeping the teeth clean. This will ensure that your dog does not get gum disease. Brush your dog’s teeth at least once



*Keeping your dog’s teeth clean will prevent gum disease.*

or twice a week. If you are lucky enough to be raising your dog from a puppy, you can get your dog used to having her mouth handled early on.

Pet supply stores sell toothbrushes and toothpaste. You can also use a folded gauze square. Always use a toothpaste designed for dogs because human toothpaste can upset a dog’s stomach. Clean the outside of the teeth. It is not necessary to brush the inside surfaces.

Appearance and grooming (CGC Test Item #3) will be important throughout your dog’s life. Regular grooming will keep your dog’s skin, coat, ears, eyes, feet and nails healthy. Passing the Appearance and Grooming exercise in the CGC test shows that a dog is not only well-behaved, but well-cared for as well.





### **Out for a Walk**

This test demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog. The dog may be on either side. (As you get more advanced, the left side position is required in most competition activities).

The evaluator may use a preplanned course or may direct the handler by calling out instructions (e.g., “right turn”). There must be a left turn, right turn, and an about turn, with at least one stop in between and one at the end.

The handler may talk to the dog throughout the “walk” to encourage it and may give praise. The handler may give the dog a command to sit at the stop, if desired.

- 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 does not have to be perfectly aligned with the handler and is not required to sit when the handler stops.
- The dog should not be constantly straining at the leash so that the leash is pulled tight. The Evaluator may instruct the handler to loosen (put more slack in) the leash. An occasional tight leash may be permitted.
- Excessive sniffing of the floor or ground, such that the dog will not walk along with the owner should result in the dog not passing the test.
- If the dog is totally inattentive to the handler (e.g., does not change directions), it should not be passed.

As soon as most people get a dog, one of the very first things they want to do is take the dog for a walk. It is not fun to walk a dog who pulls on the leash and drags you down the street because he or she has not been trained.

Item #4 of the AKC’s Canine Good

Citizen Test is “Out for a Walk.” Walks introduce your dog to the world, give her a chance to meet new people, and provide a way for both of you to get exercise. To get the most enjoyment out of a walk, your dog should walk nicely on a loose leash.

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*To get the most enjoyment out of a walk, your dog should walk nicely on a loose leash.*

## What is a Loose Leash?

A loose leash is one that is not pulled tight. You can see a gentle “j” shape where the leash hangs down from the collar. Your arm is relaxed and is not stretched forward as it would be if the dog was pulling.

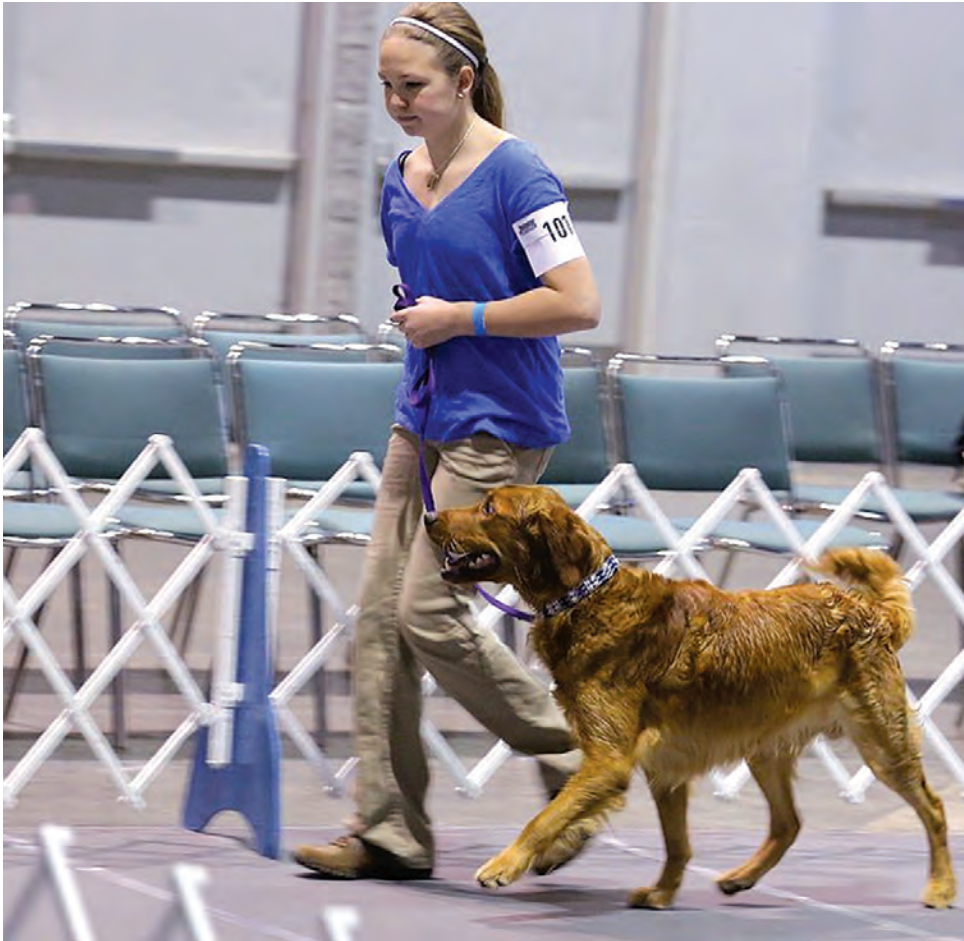
## Teaching Your Dog to Walk on a Loose Leash

One way to teach your dog to walk on a loose leash is to use a small bit of food or a toy to guide the dog. This is called using food or a toy as a *lure*.

1. Get some food treats or a toy that your dog likes.

- 2. Start with your dog at your side.
- 3. Hold the food or toy in your hand (at the center of your waist).
- 4. Walk forward and say, “Walk,” “Let’s go,” or whatever you want the cue to be.
- 5. When the dog starts to walk along, you can praise her (“Good girl!”)
- 6. Every now and then, give the dog the treat or toy as a reward for walking nicely on the leash. In the beginning, you will do this more often and will eventually fade out the food or toy. Eventually, your praise, along with the fun that comes with going for a walk will be the reward for walking on a leash.
- 7. Start with walking short distances in a straight line. During your training, begin with 10 to 15 steps, Then, gradually lengthen the distance.
- 8. Finally, when your dog walks well on leash in a straight line, add new patterns such as:
  - walking in a circle (both clockwise and counterclockwise)
  - weaving in and out of objects
  - making quick turns to the left and right, and stop. Eventually, you should teach your dog to sit when you stop.

## Chapter 8 – Canine Good Citizen



*As your dog gets more reliable walking on a loose lead, it's time to teach the heel position. (© American Kennel Club).*

### **After CGC: The Heel Position**

*As your dog gets more reliable walking on a loose lead, it's time to teach the heel position. The heel position (AKC Obedience Regulations) applies whether the dog is sitting, standing, lying down, or moving at heel. The dog is at the handler's left side straight in line with the direction the handler is facing. The area from the dog's head to shoulder is to be in line with the handler's left hip. The dog should be close to, but not crowding, its handler so that the handler has freedom of motion at all times (AKC Obedience Regulations, 2016, Section 18, page 31).*

### **What Should You Do If Your Dog Pulls on the Leash?**

If your dog pulls on leash and you run along behind him letting him go where he wants to go, he has learned that pulling is acceptable. Here are some steps to follow if your dog pulls on leash:

1. When he starts to pull, stop.
2. Stand still, plant your feet if necessary so the dog can't pull you. Don't move.
3. Wait. Your dog will eventually stop pulling.
4. When he stops pulling, you can praise him and move forward. What if he starts pulling again?
5. Repeat the procedure and don't go anywhere as long as the dog is pulling.

## **STEP 5** 5. Walking through a Crowd

This test demonstrates the dog is under control around people in public places. The dog and handler walk around and pass close to at least 3 people. Some of the members of this “crowd” will be moving. This test helps you practice being on a busy sidewalk or in a crowd (such as at a dog show) with your dog.

- Your dog may show some interest in the strangers but should continue to walk with you, without being overly active, shy, or afraid.
- The dog may show mild interest in people in the crowd. The dog may sniff a person in the crowd very briefly, but must move on quickly.
- Your dog may not jump on people in the crowd or attempt to go to them.
- The dog should not be pulling on the leash.
- The dog should not be trying to hide behind the handler.

When you take your dog into the community, there will be times when you need to walk down a sidewalk with other people, onto an elevator with other people and your dog, and around activities such as dog shows, or a community fair. It is important that your dog can walk through a crowd and remain under control.



*In the CGC test, walking through a crowd demonstrates the dog is under control around people when in public places.*

### **To Teach Walking through a Crowd:**

- ❑ 1. Start by having your dog walk on a leash by one person who is 10 feet away. When the dog can do this with no problems, you will begin moving closer to the person.
- ❑ 2. Next, have your dog walk by a person who is 5 feet away. Do not let your dog pull to go to the person. If necessary, give your dog a reminder such as, “Watch me,” or “Heel.” Then praise the dog for walking along with you.
- ❑ 3. When your dog has success with people 10 feet and 5 feet away, have the dog walk by a person who is very close, such as 1 ft. away. You can start by walking past the person, and in a more advanced exercise, as the person stands

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still, circle around the person with your dog on the outside (so you are next to the person). Then, when the dog can do that with no problems, repeat the circle with the dog on the inside, or next to the person.

- ❑ 4. After you have practiced with a one-person crowd, add a second person. Start by having your dog walk by 2 people who are 5 ft. away, then 3 ft., etc.
- ❑ 5. It's time for the "crowd" to get bigger. Add the third person to your crowd. At this point, the three people in your crowd are being fairly still.
- ❑ 6. Next, the "crowd" will start moving. The can move toward your dog and pass

by as they would if they were walking on a busy sidewalk.

After your dog can walk through a crowd with three people, start practicing by adding clothes or costumes such as hats, big coats, and having someone carry a shoulder bag or large shopping bag. Make sure your dog has been exposed to girls, boys, men, women, smaller children and seniors who may be in a wheelchair or use a walker. If you decide that you will go on to do therapy work with your dog, this training will ensure you'll be ahead of the game.



### Sit and Down On Cue/Staying in Place

This test demonstrates that the dog has training and will respond to the handler's cues to sit and down, and will remain in place when directed to by the handler. The dog needs to 1) sit on cue, 2) down on cue and 3) then stay in a sit or down.

For the Stay in Place, the handler may choose to leave the dog in a sit or down position.

For this test, the dog's leash is removed and replaced with a 20-ft. line. The handler may take a reasonable amount of time and use more than one cue to get the dog to sit and then down. The handler may not use excessive force to get the dog into either position, but may touch the dog to offer gentle guidance.

*continued on next page*

## STEP 6

### Sit and Down On Cue/Staying in Place *continued*

When instructed by the Evaluator, the handler tells the dog to stay and walks to then end of the 20-ft. line, turns and returns immediately to the dog at a normal pace. The Evaluator will tell the handler to release the dog.

- The 20-ft. line is used for safety. If the test is indoors in a secure area, the Evaluator may choose to have the dog work off-lead. Especially if the test is outdoors, safety is critical.
- There are no breed exceptions for sitting.
- Pulling a dog's front legs out so it drops into a down should not be passed.
- The dog is left for the stay in a sit or down. If the dog simply stands as the handler returns, it may pass. If the dog walks forward to the handler, it should not be passed.
- Dogs who do not sit or down after a reasonable number of attempts need more training and should not be passed.

Sit, down and stay are foundation behaviors for most areas of dog training including therapy work, obedience, agility, rally and tricks. You can also use these behaviors to manage your dog at home. For example, if your dog had a tendency to beg at the table, while the family eats dinner, the dog can be in a down stay. Then, when you're finished, you can release the dog and give him a tasty treat to reward him for waiting.



*Sit, down and stay are foundation behaviors for most areas of dog training.*

## Chapter 8 – *Canine Good Citizen*

### Teaching Your Dog to Sit and Down on Cue

In CGC test Item #2, we talked about how to teach your dog to sit. Let's have a look at how to teach the down exercise. Never teach down by pushing down on the dog's hips. Using force is traumatic for the dog and you can cause physical damage.

Use the word, "Down" only when you want your dog to lie down. If your dog jumps on someone or gets on furniture he should not be on, don't say, "Down." Use a word like, "off," for these purposes. "Down" will be restricted to when you want the dog to lie down.

### Teaching Down

- ❑ 1. Get Ready. Get your treat bag or put a few pieces of a preferred food in your pocket.
- ❑ 2. Begin with your dog in a sit at your left side. Hold a treat in front of the dog's nose. The treat should be close to your dog's nose (about 1-2 inches away).
- ❑ 3. Say, "Down," as you move the treat in a straight line down to the floor. You will have moved the food to right in front of the dog's front feet. Keep your palm down and your hand closed.
  - \* Depending on the speed of your dog you may need to move your hand a little faster or slower. With a dog who moves slowly, moving your hand slower may help your dog pay attention and respond to moving with your hand.
- ❑ 4. For small dogs, you may want to teach the down with the dog on a table so you don't have to bend over. Whenever you use a table for teaching a skill, make sure it has a no-slip surface.
- ❑ 5. In teaching the "Down," remember that you are going to make an "L" shape with your hand and the food. As soon as you say, "Down" and lower the food, most dogs will drop into the down position to follow your hand that has the food inside. If your dog goes only part of the way down, move the food out away from the dog on the floor. This will get the dog into the down position.
- ❑ 6. The second your dog is in the "Down" position, praise her ("Good down!"), and at the exact same time, give her the food reward. Always praise and give the food immediately and at the same time as soon as the dog is in the down position.
- ❑ 7. After a few successful "downs", end the training session and have fun playing with the dog.
- ❑ 8. Fading the food. As your dog gets more proficient with Down on cue, eliminate the food lure. Eventually, your dog will respond to, "Down," from the word alone without food or a hand signal.

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- ❑ 9. Down from the side, front, and at a distance. As your dog learns the Down exercise, practice moving around and giving the cue from the side of the dog, from the front, and from a distance.

## Stay in Place

Along with a reliable sit and down, Stay in Place is one of the most important skills you can teach your dog. Stay in Place can be used when you want your dog to rest or when you need to the dog stay in position for grooming or a veterinary check. You can use the Stay when someone comes to visit and you want the dog on her bed, or when you want to make sure the dog doesn't run out when you open the front door. Your dog can be left in the sit, down, or stand position for the stay.

## Teaching Sit-Stay



*In the CGC test, dogs must demonstrate that they will stay in place.*

For teaching the stay, remember that safety always comes first. If you are outside without a secure fence, keep your dog on a leash. If you are inside or in a fenced yard, you can teach stay without the leash. Of course, whether you are inside or outside, if you have a dog who wants to bolt and take off, a leash is a valuable training tool.

- ❑ 1. Get your training treats.
- ❑ 2. Have your dog sit at your left side. Move your left hand so your palm is facing the dog's face and say, "Stay." Your hand will be about 6 inches from the dog's nose as you say, "Stay." Some instructors will teach you to use your left hand for the hand signal while others prefer the right hand for the stay. Using your left hand prevents you from having to reach across your body, and you can hold the leash in your right hand.
- ❑ 3. In this step, as the dog sits at your side, give the hand signal as you say, "Stay." Now pivot to the place right in front of the dog. To pivot, lift your right foot, and swing it around so it is in front of the dog. Next, bring the left foot next to the right foot. Say, "Good Stay."
- ❑ 4. Pivot back to the position beside the dog. This involves reversing the procedure.
- ❑ 5. Next, you are going to repeat the pivot



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front. When you are in front of the dog, step back one step (so you are about 18 inches away from the dog). Stay in this position for about 5 seconds. Reinforce the dog for staying with praise and a treat.

- ❑ 6. Repeat this process and each time move back a little more. So you start by pivoting right in front of the dog, then 1 step back, then 2 big steps, 4 steps, and so on. Return to the dog each time. Do not call the dog to come to you after you told him to stay. If you tell a dog to stay, and then call him to come each time, this will result in a dog who predicts that the next behavior you'll ask for after stay is a recall (where the dog comes to you). The dog will break the stay to come to you.
- ❑ 7. As you begin to step back further and further (2 steps, 4 steps, 6 steps), before long, your leash won't be long enough.

Until your dog has a reliable stay, use a 15 or 20-ft. long line to ensure your dog does not run away.

### **Teaching Down-Stay**

The down-stay is taught the same way as the sit stay. When you give the “stay” hand signal to a dog who is in a down, you will have to bend over a little bit for large and medium sized dogs. For tiny dogs, because they are close to the ground when in a down, you will have to bend over a lot to give your dog the “stay” hand signal. With your dog in a down, to teach down-stay, repeat all of the same the steps you did in the sit-stay exercise including the pivots.

In your CGC classes with your instructor or 4-H Dog Project leader, you can work on stays in a group.



## Coming When Called

This test demonstrates that the dog will come when called by the handler. With the dog still on the 20-ft. line from test item #6, the handler walks 10-feet from the dog, turns to face it, and calls the dog. The handler may use body language and encouragement.

Handlers may tell the dog to “stay” or “wait” (or another similar command) or they may simply walk away. The dog may be left in the sit, down or standing position. If a dog attempts to follow the handler, the Evaluator may distract the dog (e.g., petting) until the handler is 10-ft. away. This exercise does not test “stay.” It tests whether or not the dog will come when called. The test is complete when the dog comes to the handler and the handler attaches the dog’s own leash to the collar.

- Dogs who attempt to follow the handler should not be failed. The Evaluator should distract the dog. The test begins when the handler calls the dog.
- The handler can bend down to call the dog, pat his or her legs, and make encouraging sounds.
- Handlers may call the dog more than once (two to three attempts) but if the handler has to tell the dog many, repeated times, the dog should not be passed.
- A dog should not be passed if a handler uses the long line to reel in the dog. Dogs should come on their own when called. The Evaluator who sees a handler using the line to pull in the dog may stop the exercise and give instructions to the handler.

Without a doubt, the Coming when Called item on the CGC test is one of the most important skills you will teach your dog. Every day, you may need your dog to come to you to get his leash on to go for a walk, to get brushed or to come into the kitchen to eat. Coming when called can be

used to remove your dog from a dangerous situation or to stop your dog before something bad happens.

Especially when working with puppies, Coming when Called is often taught by kneeling down and calling the puppy in a happy voice as you clap your hands or pat

## Chapter 8 – Canine Good Citizen



*This CGC test item demonstrates that the dog will come when called. Coming when called is one of the most important skills to teach your dog. (© American Kennel Club).*

your legs. This is a good way to teach a puppy that good things happen when she comes to you.

You can also start teaching Coming when Called when you are on walks with your dog. As you walk along, every now and then, call your dog as you back up quickly and say, “Bruno, come!” When the dog comes to you, praise and/or give him a treat.

### Teaching Coming When Called

This is a way to teach Coming when Called from the sit-stay.

- ❑ 1. Put your dog in a sit-stay at your left side. Have your dog on a leash for this exercise.
- ❑ 2. Say “Stay” (or “Wait”, or whatever cue you use for “Stay”).
- ❑ 3. Just as you did when you taught your

dog the Stay, pivot so you are standing in front of the dog.

- ❑ 4. Step back one step. In a steady voice (that does not sound like you are asking a question), say “Come.” If the dog does not move, give a very gentle tug on the leash. When the dog comes, praise and give a treat. If your dog walks very slowly when you call her to come, run backwards a few steps as you enthusiastically call her (“Come!!!”). Usually, when we move faster and away from a dog, the dog will begin to trot to get to you.
- ❑ 5. Repeat and put the dog in a sit-stay again.
- ❑ 6. This time, go to the end of your 6-ft. leash. Call your dog. Be sure to praise her when she comes to you.

Mix it up by having your dog stay and returning to the dog, and then doing a stay and calling your dog. Don’t be predictable. If every time you leave your dog in a stay, you go out some distance and then call her to come, she will learn that she is always going to come to you after being told to stay. Even when you are training your dog to come when called, sometimes, you should tell the dog to stay and return to the dog without calling her to come.

Whatever you do, never call your dog to come and then punish or reprimand her. This will quickly teach a dog, “when he

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calls me and I come, bad things happen.”

Remember if you choose to use food in teaching the recall, the final goal is you want your dog to come to you when you

call her. After she has learned to come when called, start fading the food (so the dog will get plenty of praise, but it will only get food every now and then).

## STEP 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 15-ft., stop, do a pretend handshake, exchange pleasantries, and continue on.

- The dog should show no more than a casual interest in the distraction dog. If the dog attempts to go to or jump on the distraction dog, it should not pass the test.
- The dog may move slightly toward the other dog/handler, then stop. The dog must stay back from the other handler/dog.
- The dog can stretch its neck and sniff without moving forward to the other handler/dog.
- When the handlers stop for the pretend handshake, the dog does not have to sit. It can remain standing beside the handler. If the dog remains standing, it should not cross over in front of the handler to go to the other dog.
- The conversation between handlers can be brief, “Hi, good to see you again.”
- As the handler leaves, if the dog turns around and begins pulling as if to follow the other dog/handler, the dog should not pass the test.
- If the distraction dog causes a disruption, the dog can be tested again with a more appropriate distraction dog. The distraction dog should have been observed before the test to ensure that it is reliable.

Reaction to Another Dog is another important skill for all dogs. Any time you are in the community, at a park, doing therapy work, or at a dog show or class, there is a good chance your dog will be in

the presence of other dogs. No one wants to be near a dog who is lunging, growling or snarling. Reaction to Another Dog is the CGC exercise relating to dogs being well-mannered around other dogs.

## Chapter 8 – Canine Good Citizen



*Because these dogs learned to react appropriately when around other dogs, they were able to represent 4-H in a community parade (Putnam County, FL 4-H).*

### Teaching Reaction to Another Dog

- ❑ 1. Before you teach your dog to react appropriately to another dog, you will teach CGC Test Item #4, Walking on a Loose Leash without another dog present.
- ❑ 2. Walk behind another dog. Next, with your dog on a leash, walk behind another dog about 20 ft. Both dogs are facing forward. If your dog can do this, walk behind the dog about 10 ft. away. Walking behind another dog is a good desensitization exercise for dogs who are afraid or nervous about other dogs. If your dog attempts to drag you to the other dog while you are walking behind it, do not let the dog drag you. This is where you can use the exercise where you turn and go in the opposite direction as soon as your dog begins to pull.
- ❑ 3. Parallel walking. For this exercise, begin with your dog on a leash. You are going to walk parallel to another dog on a leash. Parallel means the dogs are walking side by side. Start with the other dog 20 ft. away, then 10 ft., then 5 ft. Can your dog do each of these steps? If he has a problem such as barking or lunging, go back to the previous step where he was successful and slowly shorten the distance to the other dog. Walking parallel to another dog is less scary or threatening to a dog than walking toward another dog.
- ❑ 4. Walk Toward Another Dog. In the CGC test, in Test Item #8, your dog will have to approach another dog. Now it's time to have your dog walk toward another dog. The other dog will be on a leash and will approach with its handler. You and the other handler with his or her dog will start about 20 ft. away from each other. In the first phase of this training exercise, the handlers will simply walk by each other not stopping or saying anything. If your dog can do this with pulling toward the other dog or barking, start closing the distance so you and the other handler get close enough to do the pretend handshake.

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In the CGC test, dogs remain on the outside of the handlers (each on the handler's left side). They never go nose to nose in the CGC test. Even though young people don't usually shake hands with their friends when they see them, the reason for the pretend handshake in CGC is that it is

an easy way to put the handlers about 4-ft. apart. Otherwise, sometimes they are 10-ft. apart which is too far to evaluate the dog's reactions. Or, they may get closer than the dogs need to be. The pretend handshake is used to standardize the distance between the handlers.

## **STEP 9** Reaction to Distractions

This test demonstrates that the dog is confident at all times when faced with common distracting situations.

The evaluator will select two distractors such as the following: (It is best to choose one sound and one visual distraction).

- A person using crutches, a wheelchair, or walker (5 ft. away)
- Dropping a chair, metal pan, etc. no closer than 5-ft. from the dog
- A jogger running in front of the dog
- A person pushing a cart or crate dolly no closer than 5-ft. away

Distractions such as gunshot or the rapid opening of an umbrella are temperament test items. The CGC test should not be confused with a temperament test. In the CGC test, distractions should be items that are commonly seen in the community.

- The dog may show casual interest and may appear slightly startled. The dog may jump slightly but should not panic and pull at the leash to get away.
- The dog may attempt to walk forward slightly to investigate the distraction.
- Dogs who become so frightened that they urinate or defecate should not pass.
- Dogs who lunge or growl at the distraction should not pass.
- One or two barks is acceptable. Dogs who continue to bark should not pass.
- Handlers may talk to dogs and give praise throughout the test. Dogs may be given instructions by the handler ("Sit...good boy...watch me.")
- The distraction cannot simply be noise in the background (such as cars). If more than one dog is tested, the distractions should be the same for all dogs.

## Chapter 8 – *Canine Good Citizen*

Distractions are the sights, sounds, people, animals and things that surround us in the world. Sometimes when dogs or people get distracted, they have a hard time concentrating on what they are supposed to be doing. In the CGC test, the purpose of the reaction to distractions exercise is that dogs should be able to react in a calm way in the presence of distractions. As a part of socializing your puppy or dog, exposure to distractions is a good idea.



*Well-trained dogs will work in the presence of distractions.*

If you have a dog who is jumpy around certain kinds of distractions, there are ways that you can desensitize your dog to be steady in the presence of distractions.

### **Teaching your Dog to React Appropriately to Distractions**

- ❑ 1. Let's assume your dog has a problem being around wheelchairs when they move and your goal is to eventually have your dog become a therapy dog. Start with the distraction (the wheelchair) being still. Walk the dog around the chair. Chances are, there won't be a problem. The problem is the motion.
- ❑ 2. Start with the dog far away from the object and gradually get closer. In scientific terms, this is called "*desensitization*" where you very gradually make the task harder. With the wheelchair, you could start with a helper who sits in the chair and moves it very slowly to begin. Then, the helper would gradually increase the speed of the moving chair.

While you are working on desensitizing your dog to a distraction, give your dog plenty of praise and rewards for paying attention to you.

## STEP 10

### Supervised Separation

This test demonstrates that the dog can be left in the presence of a trusted person and will maintain its training and good manners. Evaluators are encouraged to say something like, “Would you like for me to watch your dog?” An evaluator will hold the leash of the dog while the owner goes out of sight for 3 minutes. Evaluators may talk to and pet the dog but should refrain from giving it excessive attention.

- The dog does not have to stay in position.
- If the dog continually barks or whines, it should not pass.
- The dog should not pace unnecessarily and should not show signs of agitation. A dog that simply walks back and forth watching for the handler is passed. There should be no signs of extreme stress such as panting, breathing hard, etc.
- If a dog begins to look very upset or distressed, the test should be terminated. CGC is an activity that should be fun. If a dog is distressed, the test should end and the dog should receive more training.
- If a dog pulls on its leash (trying to get away) it should not be passed.
- Any dog that urinates or defecates during the test should not be passed. The exception is that in this test item (#10) when the test is held outdoors, or between exercises at an outdoor test (e.g., the dog urinates on a bush while being walked to the next test station). Dogs should not relieve themselves when they are working with the handler in the test exercises.

There are times when you will need to put your dog in the hands of a trusted person such as a groomer, veterinarian, or a friend who holds the leash and watches your dog while you step away for a few minutes.

*The Supervised Separation test item demonstrates that your dog can be left with a trusted person and will maintain its good manners.*





## Chapter 8 – *Canine Good Citizen*

If your dog has a problem with being separated from you, there are some things that you can do to work on this.

### Teaching Supervised Separation

- ❑ 1. Have a friend or instructor agree to be your helper. Stand beside your helper. Hold your dog's leash. Talk to the helper and watch to see that your dog is relaxed.
- ❑ 2. Next, stand close to your helper. Don't leave the dog, but let the helper hold the leash.
- ❑ 3. Now, stand beside your helper, the helper holds the leash, you step back one step then quickly return to your dog. The helper should praise the dog and give a food reward if the dog will accept it. Only give the dog attention and the reward if it is calm.
- ❑ 4. Repeat Step 3, but this time, step back two steps. Return to the previous step (where the task is easier) any time the dog fails by whining, pacing, panting, or appearing stressed.
- ❑ 5. Continue this process adding one step at a time. The biggest mistake people make when a dog panics when left with another person is trying to make progress too fast. For example, they give the leash to a helper and try on the first attempt to leave the dog and walk out of the room.
- ❑ 6. Once you can get across the room, step outside the door (for only 1 second) and then return. This teaches a dog who may be anxious that when you leave, you always come back. Starting with only 1 second, add a few seconds at a time until you can be gone for the 3 minutes required in the CGC test.
- ❑ 7. Dogs benefit from consistency and routines. If every time you leave the dog you say the same thing such as, "I'll be right back," or, "Wait here," the dog will learn when you say this, it means you are coming back.
- ❑ 8. When you return, if your dog acts like he has not seen you in 100 years, (jumping, spinning), be very calm. Do not reward this behavior. Wait until your dog is calm and then praise and reward him.

### What Comes After CGC?

You may have started training with AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy, the puppy level of Canine Good Citizen. And if you have earned your CGC award, there are two more advanced, fun levels of the Canine Good Citizen program. These are AKC Community Canine™ and AKC Urban CGC™.

### AKC Community Canine

AKC Community Canine looks similar to CGC with the skills being tested outside

## Canine Good Citizen Owner's Commitment to Responsible Dog Ownership

I understand that to truly be a Canine Good Citizen, my dog needs a responsible owner. I agree to maintain my dog's *health, safety, and quality of life*. By participating in the Canine Good Citizen test, I agree:

**I will be responsible for my dog's health needs.** These include:

- routine veterinary care including check-ups and vaccines
- adequate nutrition through proper diet, clean water at all times
- daily exercise and regular bathing and grooming

**I will be responsible for my dog's safety.**

- I will properly control my dog by providing fencing where appropriate, not letting my dog run loose, and using a leash in public.
- I will ensure that my dog has some form of identification (which may include collar tags, tattoos, or preferably, a microchip ID).
- I will provide adequate supervision when my dog and children are together.

**I will not allow my dog to infringe on the rights of others.**

- I will not allow my dog to run loose in the neighborhood.
- I will not allow my dog to be a nuisance to others by barking while in the yard, in a hotel room, etc.
- I will pick up and properly dispose of my dog's waste in all public areas such as on the grounds of hotels, on sidewalks, parks, etc.
- I will pick up and properly dispose of my dog's waste in wilderness areas, on hiking trails, campgrounds, and in off-leash parks.

**I will be responsible for my dog's quality of life.**

- I understand that basic training is beneficial to all dogs.
- I will give my dog attention and playtime.
- I understand that owning a dog is a commitment in time and caring.

Owner's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 8 – Canine Good Citizen

of a training class. For example, rather than the dog being tested in a ring, in AKC Community Canine, the “walks through a crowd” test item will involve the dog walking through a real crowd at a dog show, on a busy sidewalk, or in a therapy dog setting. AKC Community Canine could be done where your 4-H classes are held, but instead of test items being administered in your training class, you and your dog would demonstrate skills in the lobby, another area of the park where you train, and so on. For the test items and more information, see: <https://www.akc.org/products-services/training-programs/canine-good-citizen/akc-community-canine/about/>

### AKC Urban CGC

AKC Urban CGC tests are given in a place where there are cars, streets to be crossed, noises, and distractions. Your 4-H leader will supervise the test and make sure that you and your dog are safe. Dogs must demonstrate CGC skills and beyond in a setting that includes traffic, crowds, noises, smells and other distractions that are present in a city or town. For the test items and more information, see: <https://www.akc.org/products-services/training-programs/canine-good-citizen/akc-urban-canine-good-citizen/>

### Summary

Recognized as the gold standard for dog behavior, Canine Good Citizen is a two part program that teaches good manners to dogs and responsible dog ownership to their owners. The training that you will receive in CGC classes will help you learn to manage your dog and prepare you for other dog activities such as obedience, therapy work, or agility. In Canine Good Citizen classes taught by your 4-H leader, you can meet new friends, develop new skills, and accomplish goals.

### Reference

American Kennel Club (2021). *Canine Good Citizen: Ten Essential Skills Every Well-Mannered Dog Should Know*. Companion House Books.

## Chapter 8 – Activities and Reflections

### Canine Good Citizen



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Find a local Canine Good Citizen trainer or even someone who has gone through the training. Interview them about what it takes to complete Canine Good Citizen.
- 2) Consider completing the Canine Good Citizen Training and taking the test.
- 3) Think of a dog you have seen that you thought was very well behaved. Write down the characteristics that dog had and research what you can do to teach good manners to your dog.

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) Why would it be important for your dog to be a good citizen?
- 2) What could happen if your dog is behaving badly?
- 3) How do you choose the right equipment for training your dog and how do you find the correct size collar?
- 4) If you wanted to participate in CGC training or get this title what would you need to do?

## Chapter 9 – *Virtual Home Manners*

**T**raining classes are wonderful, but there are times when you just can't get to a class. When you want to train your dog at home, AKC's Virtual Home Manners (VHM) program is for you! Virtual Home Manners can get you started on teaching your dog practical skills before you go to a training class and VHM is the perfect lead-in for AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy and Canine Good Citizen (CGC) in-person training.



*The two **Virtual Home Manners** tests each assess ten skills that well-mannered pet dogs need in the home setting. The skills relate to the dog owner having control over the dog, being able to walk the dog (which is one of the most frequently cited activities that owners want to do with their dogs) and developing a bond with the dog during playtime.*

Virtual Home Manners has two levels that include Puppy and Adult. By training your dog at home and submitting a video to an approved evaluator, you can earn the official VHM titles at home. 4-H leaders who are CGC Evaluators may evaluate VHM videos. Evaluators will provide you with the forms to apply for the AKC titles for Virtual Home Manners Puppy (VHMP) and Virtual Home Manners Adult (VHMA).

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## How Virtual Home Manners Works

To earn the Virtual Home Manners titles, all you have to do is follow these five easy steps:

1. Train your dog on the VHM skills. Your 4-H Dog Project Leader can guide you through the training process. There are also instructional videos online that provide instruction on how to train basic skills.

2. When your dog can perform the 10 skills on the test, video your dog performing the required skills on the VHM checklist. A family member can help you by taking your video with a smart phone.

3. Send the link to your video to an Approved AKC CGC Evaluator. This can be your 4-H Dog Project Leader. Zoom and other live formats may also be used for evaluating Virtual Home Manners. Another option is to have your video viewed by AKC. To do this, email [cgc@akc.org](mailto:cgc@akc.org). AKC can also provide you with a list of CGC Evaluators who do virtual evaluations.

4. After watching the video, if your dog passes, the Evaluator will send the forms to you that are needed for the title. The Evaluator will also send a copy of the form to AKC.

5. As a final step, you should send to AKC:

- 1) the Checklist/Video Verification, and
- 2) the Virtual Home Manners Title Application form.



*One of the most frequently cited activities that owners want to do with their dogs is taking the dog for a walk.*



*In the VHM tests, owners will demonstrate they have a good relationship with their dogs.*



# Test For the Puppy Title

## Puppy Title (3 months [12 weeks] to 1 year)

Food may be used as a reward during the test unless otherwise specified (#8, #10). For more details on how each of the test items for Puppy and Adult should be administered by the evaluator, see: [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) and type “Virtual Home Manners” in the search box.

### 1. Allows owner to pet the puppy

The puppy will allow the owner to pet its head/chin, shoulders and back.

### 2. Grooming

The puppy will tolerate brushing (*of the back and chest*) by the owner.

### 3. Sit on cue – can use lure

The puppy will respond to the owner’s cue (*verbal, hand signal, or both*) to “sit.”

### 4. Down on cue – can use lure

The puppy will respond to the owner’s cue (*verbal, hand signal, or both*) to “down.”

### 5. Comes when called

The puppy will come when called from 10 ft. This skill is tested in the house.

### 6. Go to place

The puppy will go to his or her ‘place’ and will stay for 15 seconds.

### 7. House-trained

The owner will attest that the puppy is house-trained (*or for young puppies, has a house training plan in place*).

### 8. Demonstrates relationship – no food rewards in this exercise

The owner (*or a family member*) and puppy will demonstrate that they have a good relationship by playing together. The puppy will play indoors with the owner or family member.

### 9. Out for a walk

The puppy will walk on a leash (*outside*) for at least 20 ft. two times.

### 10. Exercise outside – no food rewards in this exercise

The owner or a family member will provide the puppy with structured (*owner facilitated*) outdoor exercise.



## Test For the Adult Title

### Adult Title (4 months - on)

Food may be used as a reward during the test unless otherwise specified (#8, #10). For more details on how each of the test items for Puppy and Adult should be administered by the evaluator, see: [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) and type “Virtual Home Manners” in the search box.

**1. Allows owner to pet and groom the dog**

**2. Sit on cue – no lure**

The dog will respond to the owner’s cue (*verbal, hand signal, or both*) to “sit.”

**3. Down on cue – no lure**

The dog will respond to the owner’s cue (*verbal, hand signal, or both*) to “down.”

**4. Comes when called**

The dog will come when called from 20 ft. or another room. This skill is tested in the house.

**5. Manners related to food**

Will demonstrate good manners in the presence of food. This exercise is done indoors.

**6. Doorbell or knock on door – Dog behaves appropriately**

The dog will behave appropriately when the doorbell rings or there is a knock on the door.

**7. Go to place/crate – Stay 1 minute**

The dog will go to his or her ‘place’ or crate and will stay for 1 minute.

**8. Demonstrates relationship – no food rewards in this exercise**

The owner (*or a family member*) and dog will demonstrate that they have a good relationship by playing together. The dog will play indoors with the owner or family member.

**9. Out for a walk**

The dog will walk on a leash (*outside*).

**10. Exercise outside**

The owner or a family member will provide the dog with structured (*owner facilitated*) outdoor exercise.



## Chapter 9 – *Virtual Home Manners*

### More Virtual Programs

Once you have completed the Virtual Home Manners titles, there is *virtually* no limit to what you can do to train your dog. For training at home, now there are virtual options for agility, rally, and obedience. For more information, go to [akc.org](http://akc.org) and type, for example, “virtual agility” in the search box.



*From going to their beds or place when told or walking nicely on a leash, dogs with home manners are wonderful companions.*

### Summary

In Virtual Home Manners, (VHM) you can teach your dog and earn a title before you go to an in-person class. After training at home, your dog’s skills can be evaluated by video

### Reference

Virtual Home Manners. American Kennel Club.

<https://www.akc.org/products-services/training-programs/canine-good-citizen/akc-family-dog-program/virtual-home-manners/> Retrieved December 2020.

## Chapter 9 – Activities and Reflections

### Virtual Home Manners



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Find a local Canine Good Citizen Evaluator. This can be your 4-H Dog Project leader if she or he is an AKC Approved CGC Evaluator. Interview them about the steps involved in getting a Virtual Home Manners title.
- 2) Consider completing the Virtual Home Manners title. Depending on your dog's age, this could be the Puppy or Adult title.
- 3) Think of the manners that you and your family would like for your dog to have at home. Make a list of some of these good manners skills.

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) Why is it important for all dogs to have good manners at home?
- 2) What are some examples of what dogs do when they don't have good manners at home?
- 3) What fun things can you with your dog at home? This can be inside or outside.
- 4) If you wanted to earn the Virtual Home Manners title, how would you get started?

## Chapter 10 – Teaching Tricks

Some of the very first trick dogs were dogs who performed in circuses. As early as the 1700s and 1800s, dogs were performing in shows across Europe. They danced, carried trained monkeys on their backs, stood on their hind legs to box, and walked on tight ropes.

Later, from the 1920s through the 1950s, trick dogs such as Rin Tin Tin and Lassie appeared on television and in movies and won peoples' hearts. Since then, trick dog training has become one of the most exciting new areas in dog training. The popularity of trick dog training is growing by leaps and bounds and millions of people at a time watch dogs performing tricks on television shows such as "America's Got Talent."



### What is a Dog Trick?

Tricks are simply behaviors that are taught to the dog and in most cases, they



*Tricks are a fun activity for all dogs and trainers.*

are designed to entertain. Often, there is a story line. For example, in a trick demonstration for seniors in assisted living, "Buffy," a Cocker Spaniel, might do a tricks routine where she shows some of the activities in her day starting with sitting at a small desk at school, carrying the flag, dropping a basketball in a toy hoop, and at the end of the day, going to her bed and covering herself with a blanket. At dog events in past years, spectators were delighted to watch "Norman," a Briard who

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was a nationally recognized trick dog, as he rode a bike and scooter and amazed the crowd.

## Why Do Tricks Training?

Guess what!?! You *can* teach an old dog new tricks! And, you can teach a young dog new tricks. Tricks are a fun activity for all dogs and trainers. Teaching tricks to a dog can actually make someone a better dog trainer. How do you get a dog to jump through a hula hoop? It's easy, of course. Just put the dog on one side, hold a treat on the other, and call the dog through. But let's make the trick harder. How about this task? Now put the hula hoop on the ground. How do you get the dog to run across the yard and flip the hoop up and run through before it falls? When you teach tricks to your dog, you will learn to solve training puzzles like this one. Tricks are for every dog, and pet dogs aren't the only dogs who benefit from tricks training. Competition trainers often teach their dogs to do tricks to relieve stress. Tricks can also be used to entertain others in places such as nursing homes and assisted living centers.

## Trick Dog Titles

*Do More With Your Dog!*<sup>®</sup>

You can always teach your dog tricks at home for fun. But if you want to formalize your trick training and earn titles, there are



You can earn tricks titles at 4-H classes or events, or at AKC Trick Dog tests at dog shows.

two titling organizations that can help you. *Do More With Your Dog!* (DMWYD) was started by Kyra Sundance in 2005. DMWYD certifies instructors, awards titles, and holds education events and seminars. For information on DMWYD or training materials, see [domorewithyourdog.com](http://domorewithyourdog.com)

*American Kennel Club (AKC) Trick Dog Program*

In 2017, the AKC added trick dog titles to its rapidly growing list of training options for pet dogs. AKC's trick dog titles are noncompetitive and the program is administered by AKC Approved CGC Evaluators. Because 4-H dog leaders can

## Chapter 10 – *Teaching Tricks*

become AKC CGC Evaluators, this means that your 4-H leader can test and award AKC Trick Dog titles at 4-H classes and events. Of course, other options are you can attend classes by a CGC Evaluator and get tested there, or you can participate in AKC Trick Dog tests at dog shows.

### **Levels of AKC Trick Dog Titles**

There are five levels of AKC Trick Dog titles. These are:

#### **1. Novice (TKN)**

The dog performs 10 skills from the Novice list. Some of the Novice tricks include: walk on a balance beam, bark on cue, crawl, get in a box, high five, jump over a bar or through a hoop, paws up, shake hands, and spin in a circle.

- CGC + 5. If a dog has a Canine Good Citizen (CGC) certificate or title on record at AKC, it only has to do five Novice Tricks (CGC + 5) to earn the Novice title.

At the Novice level of AKC Trick Dog, the handler may use food (or toys) as a lure, and food may also be used after a trick as a reward. A lure (food or a toy) is used to guide the dog into position.

#### **2. Intermediate (TKI)**

The dog must have the Novice title, plus perform 10 Intermediate tricks. Some of the tricks on the Intermediate list include: balance a treat on nose, carry a basket,

catch, go to your place, hand signals, leg weave, paws up, roll over, weave poles and wobble board.

#### **3. Advanced (TKA)**

The dog must have the Intermediate title, plus perform 5 tricks from the Advanced list. Sample of tricks from the Advanced list include: back up, roll a barrel, bow, cover your eyes, go hide, jump into handler's arms, turn on a light, play dead, scent articles and take a tissue out of a box.

#### **4. Performer (TKP)**

For Trick Dog Performer, the dog performs at least 10 tricks. There must be at least 3 Performer tricks in the routine and at least 3 of the tricks must have props. Props are equipment that helps tell a story such as a toy phone, a baby stroller that the dog pushes, or a toy piano. The Performer routine may have a story or theme (such as "Princess Goes to School"), but it is not required.

#### **5. Elite Performer (TKE)**

The Elite Performer is the highest level of the AKC Trick Dog titles. Elite Performers must perform a routine that has a story and script. At least 5 props are used and at least 5 tricks must be from the Performer level.

The annual AKC Trick Dog Elite Performer Virtual Competition is a fun event in which videos are submitted and

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

judged to determine the leading Elite Performer Trick Dog.

## How to Teach Basic Tricks

Teaching your dog tricks is fun and you can get started at home. Here are five easy tricks to get you started. You can also watch videos on how to teach tricks at akc.org. See: <https://www.akc.org/sports/trick-dog/>



## Fetch It and Give (ball, toy, bring it to handler)

To teach fetch, start with a toy that your dog is willing to hold. This can be a tennis ball, stuffed animal, or soft toy.

1. Have your treats ready in your pocket or treat bag.

2. Begin by throw the toy a short distance away and in a perky voice, say, “fetch it!”

3. If your dog is a natural retriever and brings the toy back to you, praise him- say, “Good boy!” as you take the toy and give

him a treat.

4. If your dog does not bring the toy to you, start by putting the toy directly in front of you. Say, “fetch it!” and when the dog picks it up, back up only one step. You can pat your legs and encourage the dog to come to you. When he comes to you, praise and give him a treat.

5. Next, you will step back two steps, then continue adding distance to increase how far the dog will go to fetch the toy.

## Kiss on the Cheek

1. Have your treats ready in your pocket or treat bag, and have some peanut butter ready.

2. Some dogs are natural kissers. You can say, “Give me a kiss,” “Kiss, kiss,” or



“Kisses,” and point to your cheek. Keep the verbal cue that you choose consistent. If the dog gives you a kiss (licks your cheek), say, “good kiss,” and give him a treat.

## Chapter 10 – Teaching Tricks

3. If your dog is not a natural when it comes to kissing, you can help him along. Put a small dab of peanut butter (or another favorite taste) on your finger. Let the dog lick it off.

4. Next, put a small dab of peanut butter on your cheek. Say “Give me a kiss,” and turn your cheek so he can get the peanut butter. As soon as he licks the peanut butter, praise him.

5. The final step is you will say, “Give me a kiss,” and the dog will kiss your cheek without peanut butter. Until he does this reliably, give him a food reward for “kissing” you.

### Spin in a Circle

1. Have your treats ready in your pocket or treat bag. Before you begin, try several kinds of treats with your dog so that you have one she is eager to work for.

To teach your dog to spin, the treat is both a reward (after the behavior) and a lure that is used to guide the dog.

2. To teach your dog to spin to the right you can say, “spin” or “circle right”, as you hold the treat in your right hand.

3. Move the treat to the right in a large circle. Keep the treat at the level of the dog’s nose and move it slowly in a fluid motion.

4. Once your dog has completed a circle, say, “Good spin,” and give her the treat.



(© American Kennel Club).

5. Continue practicing and gradually move the lure faster, and make the circles tighter.

6. If you decide that you also want to teach your dog to spin to the left, say, “circle left,” and eventually the dog will learn the difference between right and left spins.

7. The steps above can be repeated by holding the lure in your left hand to teach the dog to circle left.

8. The final step is fading out the lure and simply giving the dog the hand signal for spin.

### Jump through a hoop

Jumping through a hoop is a good first step to teaching your dog to jump through your arms.

Jumping through your arms or a hoop is a trick that works best for small and

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medium sized dogs.

1. Have your treats ready in your pocket or treat bag.

2. Start with the hoop on the ground.

3. The first step is to have your dog simply walk through the hoop to get the treat.

4. Give the dog the verbal cue you have chosen such as, “Through,” or “Hup.” Don’t say, “Jump,” because this word will be used with other tricks.

5. As soon as the dog goes through the hoop give her a treat and praise.

6. Next, raise the hoop a few inches off the ground. Your dog will do a small hop over (and through) the hoop.

7. Continue to slowly raise the hoop so your dog will jump through.

## **Sit Pretty**

This fun trick will teach your dog to “sit pretty.” If you’ve ever done yoga, dance, or any other activity that requires good balance, you know that sometimes it can take a while to develop the muscles and

control you need to stand on one foot with the other leg in the air. This is the same for dogs, and in teaching “sit pretty,” it may take a while for a dog to be able to do this. “Sit pretty” is an easier for smaller and medium sized dogs because their centers of gravity are lower.

1. Have your treats ready in your pocket or treat bag.

2. Put the dog in a “sit.” (You have already taught “sit”).

3. Hold a treat just above your dog’s nose. Say “sit pretty,” then slowly raise the treat.

4. As the dog tries to get the treat, his front feet will come off the ground. As soon as the front feet are off the ground, give him the treat and praise him.

5. Repeat this process and continue to raise the treat a little bit higher each time until the dog is sitting up. Praise the dog and give him the treat.

6. Next, you want to add time to the sit. Do not try to add too much time at once; add a second or two at a time before giving the treat.



## Chapter 10 – Teaching Tricks



### Summary

Teaching your dog tricks is fun for both you and your dog. You can teach tricks at home or your 4-H dog leader can help you get started. 4-H dog leaders who are AKC CGC Evaluators can do the testing for AKC trick dog titles at 4-H classes and events. Teaching tricks will refine your skills as a dog trainer, and if your dog is a therapy dog, you can use tricks routines to entertain and bring smiles to people in therapy settings.

### References

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## Chapter 10 – Activities and Reflections

### Teaching Tricks



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Set goals towards learning one or more dog tricks. Note what steps you would take and when you plan to practice them.
- 2) Teach your dog a new trick!
- 3) Research dog tricks. Can you find articles about anyone that has made a living with dog tricks?

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) What is a dog trick and why teach tricks to your dog?
- 2) Does your dog do any tricks? Are there any tricks you would like your dog to learn?
- 3) Can you use food when teaching your dog a trick?
- 4) Name 2 places you can use your tricks.

## Chapter 11 – Therapy Dogs

If you want to team up with your dog to make an important difference in the lives of others, volunteering with a therapy dog may be the perfect activity for you. Therapy dogs make people happy and they bring joy to people who need it the most. Therapy dogs can also be used to teach new skills to people in therapeutic settings. From someone with a physical disability opening his hand to hold a brush for a patiently waiting Border Collie, to a child improving her reading by reading to a little mixed breed terrier, the people who are visited by therapy dogs benefit greatly from them.



*Therapy dogs volunteer with their owners in a variety of therapeutic settings.*

### What is a Therapy Dog?

Therapy dogs are dogs who volunteer with their human handlers to make a difference in the lives of others. Therapy dogs are seen in settings such as hospitals,

assisted living facilities, nursing homes, facilities for people with developmental disabilities, and schools. Therapy dogs have also been used in dental and doctors' offices to calm patients, at funeral homes, after disasters such as shootings at a school, and on college campuses to help students relax during final exam week.

Therapy dogs can be “meet and greet” dogs who do animal-assisted activities. An example is a therapy dog who is in a recreation room at an assisted living facility. Guided by the handler (and on leash) the dog interacts with the residents who may pet the dog or offer a treat. Therapy dogs might do tricks to entertain the crowd in addition to meeting and greeting people to provide comfort, smiles and happiness.

Therapy dogs can also help with therapy. This is called animal-assisted therapy and it is when a handler and dog work with a therapist who has specific measurable goals for a client. An example is a therapy dog who works with a child with cerebral palsy who has a physical therapy goal of opening and closing her hand. The physical therapist oversees the therapy session. The dog (on a leash and with the handler) might stand very still as the child opens her hand to pet the dog, or holds a brush to brush the dog. A newer application of therapy dogs is the “reading”

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or “read dog.” This involves taking therapy dogs to schools where children who need to improve their reading skills read to the therapy dogs.

## The History of Therapy Dogs

As far back as 900 B.C., Homer, an ancient Greek poet, wrote about Asklepios, the Greek god of healing. Asklepios had a divine healing power that was extended through sacred dogs, and it was believed that people who were sick could be cured by dogs.

One of the very first therapy programs involving animals was started in the 9th century in Gheel, Belgium. In the farming community of Gheel, many of the town’s residents provided care and training to people with disabilities, and much of the training related to caring for animals.

In the 1790’s, the York Retreat started in Yorkshire, England. At the York Retreat, the Society of Friends rejected the traditional methods (including strong drugs and physical restraints) of treating people with mental illnesses and instead, taught them to care for animals.

Much later, in the 1950s in the United States, one of the first therapy dogs was used to work with children who had psychological and emotional problems. A psychologist named Dr. Boris Levinson at Yeshiva University in New York noticed that when he brought his Shetland Sheepdog, Jingles, to therapy sessions, children with emotional problems made good progress. Dr. Levinson noticed that children who were withdrawn and would not talk would suddenly start talking to Jingles. This was the beginning of animal assisted therapy.

The use of dogs in therapy continued from the 1950s until the 1980s but the benefits of dogs were not widely known. Then, in the early 1980s, Dr. Aaron Katcher, a psychiatrist, and his colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania, made the

## *The Difference Between Therapy and Service Dogs*

*Therapy dogs and service dogs are not the same. Therapy dogs volunteer with their owners to help other people or provide comfort and happiness.*

*Service dogs are dogs who are specially trained to perform specific tasks to help a person who has a disability. An example of a service dog is a dog who helps a person with a physical disability walk without falling, or a dog who guides a person who is blind.*

*Service dogs have special access privileges in public places. This means that according to the law (the Americans with Disabilities Act) they can go into hotels, stores and restaurants as well as fly on airplanes with their owners. Therapy dogs do not have the same access to public places.*

## Chapter 11 – Therapy Dogs



*In the 1950s, Dr. Boris Levinson, a psychologist, used his dogs to work with children.*

national news when they published a study that showed petting a dog can lower a person's blood pressure.

Now dogs are used in almost every therapy setting imaginable. In addition to the settings listed earlier in this chapter, therapy dogs work in facilities for people who have head injuries, in court rooms to help children testify, with abused children, in hospices, and in prisons. Therapy dogs are also used with people who are terminally ill and who have a lot of pain. There is research that shows that when we pet a dog, endorphins are released in our brains. Endorphins are the body's natural pain suppressors, and when some patients pet a dog, they report less pain than when the dog is with them. So, not only do dogs give us unconditional love and make us happy, they can also make us feel better.

### Therapy Dogs and Service Dogs in 4-H

4-H members everywhere have volunteered with their therapy dogs, and many 4-H members have played an important part in raising or training service dogs. Through the 4-H Dog Project, 4-H members have participated in community service with their therapy dogs. Other members have become puppy raisers for puppies from service dog organizations.



*Research shows that when some hospital patients pet a dog, they report less pain.*

### 4-H Across the Country

From east to west and north to south, 4-H members are having an impact with their therapy and service dog contributions.

In California, 4-H has guide dog programs in conjunction with Guide Dogs for the Blind, Inc., and in Michigan, there

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is a very special 4-H project that involves dogs. Founded in 1988, Best Friends 4-H club is dedicated to working with both members with disabilities (nontraditional members) and members who do not have a life disability (traditional members). Best Friends 4-H Club teaches 4-H members about handling and caring for dogs as well as dog training and responsible dog ownership. The members earn Canine Good Citizen awards with their dogs.



*Through the 4-H Dog Project, some 4-H members are puppy raisers for service dogs.*

## What is the Florida 4-H Dog Project?

**The Florida 4-H Dog Project was formed** in 2005 when 4-H Leaders from several Florida Counties formed an alliance to increase communication between the various County 4-H Dog Projects and Clubs in Florida. The leaders also wanted to provide new opportunities and events for 4-H Dog Project members on a State Level.



Volunteer 4-H Leaders provide training classes for 4-H members and their dogs, and both purebred and mixed breed dogs are welcome. The 4-H year generally follows the public school calendar, of September through May of each year. To participate in the Dog Project, enrollment as a 4-H member is required. Most County programs ask 4-H members to enroll in 4-H and sign up under the 4-H insurance program. The cost of insurance is one dollar per person for the 4-H year. It is also recommended at least one parent (or adult) sign up as a 4-H volunteer. 4-H parents and leaders volunteer to work at Florida 4-H Dog Project sponsored events such as shows, seminars and fundraising activities throughout the year. This is a great way to contribute to the success of the 4-H program and a way parents can give back to the 4-H program for the training their children receive. (From: [http://florida4h.org/programsandevents /dog-show](http://florida4h.org/programsandevents/dog-show) )

## Chapter 11 – Therapy Dogs

In another guide dog project, the Hunterdon County (NY) 4-H club raises puppies for Seeing Eye, Inc. of Morristown, NJ. Puppy raisers receive 7-week old puppies and provide socialization and training them for 13 to 16 months when the pups go to receive their formal training for guide dog work.

Therapy dogs are also an area of interest in Wisconsin 4-H, where there are youth conference seminars on “What is Pet Therapy and How Does It Work?” to teach members about the important work done by therapy dogs in the community.

### Special Projects with Dogs

Thanks to Marshall, a Labrador Retriever from St. Louis, Missouri, a 4-H anti-bullying curriculum aimed at teaching students to be kind and caring was started. Marshall, who had surgery to remove a badly broken leg, was rescued and went to live with Cyndi Willenbrock. Even though he only had 3 legs, Marshall has a good attitude about life and he helped people think about caring and concern for others (<https://www.longisland.com/news/09-14-15/marshall-the-miracle-dog-inspiration-to-stop-bullying.html>).

Another very special dog project is being done by the Dynamic Dogs of Putnam County 4-H group. This project doesn't exactly involve therapy dogs- it is more like it involves therapy for dogs. The



*While not exactly therapy dogs, in some special projects, 4-H members provide therapy for dogs by reading to them. A member of Paws and Pages 4-H (Putnam County, FL) helps this shelter dog relax.*

incredibly dynamic members of Dynamic Dogs volunteer at the Putnam County Animal Shelter where they read to the dogs. That's right, each member sits in front of a dog's kennel and reads to the dog. Staff report that dogs are calmer and more socialized as a result of this special interaction with the 4-H members. In communities across America, 4-H dog project members are doing their part to make the world a better place for dogs and people.

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## Skills for Therapy Dogs

If you want your dog to become a therapy dog, Canine Good Citizen (CGC) training is a good place to start. In CGC, your dog learns all of the basic skills a therapy dog should know including sit, down, come, stay, walk nicely on a leash and act appropriately around other dogs and people. In CGC, dogs also learn to accept petting and remain under control while greeted by a person, skills that every therapy dog should have.

But the CGC test alone isn't a therapy dog test. The skills a therapy dog needs go beyond CGC and depending on the setting in which you volunteer with your dog, these skills can vary. Some examples of what a therapy dog should know how to do are:

- Go say hello (go see a person)
- Say good-bye or Let's go (which means, "Visit is over, let's go.")
- Put your head HERE (handler points to location)
- Turn around (to get in position for petting)
- Accept a hug (depending on dog)
- Paws up
- Jump up (onto a surface)
- Get off
- Heel (for crowded hallways)
- Easy (for taking a treat gently; facility permission and handler's discretion)

- Leave it
- Take it to (point to person)
- Get under or in
- Go potty (in place specified outside, dog on leash)

There may also be some basic tricks you want your dog to know in order to entertain the people you visit.

## How to Get Started in Therapy Dog Work

By now, you've heard the amazing stories about what therapy dogs can do. If you believe that your dog is great with people and you are ready to try therapy dog work, there are 4 steps.

### 1. You like dogs, but do you like people?

There is more to therapy dog work than working with your dog. The people your dog will visit may be children with learning problems, or they may be very elderly people in assisted living, or someone who is sick in a hospital. Think about whether or not you have a desire to work with people. If you don't, there are many other activities you can do with your dog. The most important part of the therapy dog activity is the person you will be visiting.

A good idea is to go on a visit with a working therapy dog and its handler so you get a feel for the people and what you and your dog would be doing as a therapy team.



## Chapter 11 – Therapy Dogs

2. Provide your dog with basic training:  
The CGC test.

Therapy dogs need to be under control and have basic training. CGC is a great starting point for potential therapy dogs, because in CGC, your dog will learn good manners and basic skills such as sit, down and stay. After the CGC test, your dog will also take a therapy-specific test given by the therapy dog organization.

3. If you were not in 4-H, the advice would be to do your homework about therapy dog organizations so you can choose the best one for you.

But the beauty of your 4-H membership is that most likely, your 4-H dog leader will



*There is more to therapy dog work than working with dogs. You also need to care for and like working with people.*

be organizing your therapy dog group and arranging the visits at a facility for which you and your dog are best suited.

If you want to get involved with therapy dogs and your 4-H chapter is not working with therapy dogs, you can:

1) contact a local facility such as a hospital where you would like to volunteer. Ask to be put in touch with the therapy dog coordinator. Some facilities have age restrictions and if you are a younger 4-H member, you may need an adult to go with you on visits.

2) To see a list of therapy dog organizations and their requirements, go to: [www.akc.org/akctherapydog](http://www.akc.org/akctherapydog)

4. Register with a therapy organization.

Get signed-up with your 4-H therapy dog group, or, if your chapter does not have one, contact an organization (see above).

### AKC Therapy Dog Titles

Once you and your dog have been volunteering as a therapy dog team, you might be interested in earning AKC Therapy Dog titles. AKC does not train, register or certify therapy dogs. The purpose of the therapy dog titles is to recognize dogs and their owners who have given their time and volunteered in a therapy setting.

Titles are earned by dogs who are

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working with a recognized therapy dog organization (including 4-H therapy dog groups) and who have performed the required number of visits. Here are the visits required for each title:



*Your 4-H leader will help you get started at the type of facility where you and your dog can make a difference. By using two leashes, this therapy dog team works to improve the balance of the person receiving physical therapy.*

- 10 visits = AKC Therapy Dog Novice (THDN)
- 50 visits = AKC Therapy Dog (THD)
- 100 visits = AKC Therapy Dog Advanced (THDA)

- 200 visits = AKC Therapy Dog Excellent (THDX)
- 400 visits = AKC Therapy Dog Distinguished (THDD)

All dogs are eligible to earn AKC Therapy Dog titles, including purebreds and mixed breeds. To earn an AKC



*Touching Hearts. Changing Lives.*

Therapy Dog title (or any other official AKC title), dogs must be registered or listed with AKC and have a number of one of three types: 1) AKC Registration Number, 2) PAL number, or 3) an AKC Canine Partners Number. The reason AKC requires a dog to have a number to earn official titles is that AKC titles are created by attaching the title to the dog's AKC number.

## 1. AKC Registration Number (*purebreds with registered parents*)

This is often known as the "AKC papers" provided to a dog owner by a breeder. If you have received a registration paper from your breeder or previous owner you can register online.

## Chapter 11 – *Therapy Dogs*

### 2. PAL Number

PAL is Purebred Alternative Listing. PAL (formerly called ILP) is a program that allows unregistered dogs of registerable breeds to compete in AKC Performance and Companion Events. PAL dogs include the many wonderful purebred dogs who may have come from shelters or rescue without AKC registration.

### 3. AKC Canine Partners Number

Used by mixed breed dogs (and dogs otherwise not registered with AKC such as some purebreds from other countries). A special Canine Partners Therapy Dog Enrollment Form is available for mixed breed Therapy Dogs needing to obtain a dog number in order to receive their Therapy Dog Title. This form must be submitted together with the Therapy Dog Title Application.

### **Add Canine Good Citizen to Your Therapy Dog Titles**

Effective July 2015, dogs who are registered with an AKC recognized therapy organization and have earned an AKC Therapy Dog Title may receive the official Canine Good Citizen Title when the owner submits the CGC Therapy Dog Grandfather Application.

### **Summary**

The remarkable contributions of 4-H members and their dogs are seen in a wide

variety of community programs, and some of those programs include therapy dogs. Before moving to Florida, 4-H leaders Bob and Kay Pierce lived in Wyoming where they were the leaders of the Crazy Canines 4-H club. As therapy dog project, the club visited Ami Holt Care Center, a facility for senior citizens, in Buffalo, Wyoming. Once a week, in the recreation area, surrounded by a room full of seniors who were delighted to see the therapy dogs, the 4-H therapy dog handlers practiced their obedience, demonstrated tricks their dogs could do, and they performed together as a drill team. In addition to the dogs, there was one more crowd pleaser- the drill team performed to 1930s big band music. Each week, the recreation room was full of happy residents who couldn't wait for the show to start. Therapy dogs and Duke Ellington were a great combination that brought back memories for the seniors.

Have you ever heard of a win-win situation? This 4-H dog project, like the Dynamic Dogs 4-H Drill Team (Putman County, FL), was not just a win-win situation. It was a win-win-win situation. From this marvelous activity planned and organized by two very dedicated dog project leaders, the seniors benefited, the dogs and their handlers benefited, and the community benefited. 4-H dog projects such as this one are a superb example of 4-H members developing outstanding

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*The 4-H Dynamic Dogs Drill Team (Putnam County, FL) gives a demonstration at the Putnam County Fair. Drill team routines can be used in therapy settings to entertain residents.*

communication skills, getting involved in the community, and becoming citizens who make a contribution in the world around them.

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### Activities and Reflections



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Meet a therapy dog and its owner. Ask why they chose to be involved with therapy dog work.
- 2) Organize a community service project with your dogs to help others. Be sure to include a theme, location, goals and the community benefit in your plan.
- 3) Create a presentation or poster showing the differences in therapy, service and emotional support dogs.

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) What important role do therapy dogs play?
- 2) What is the difference between a therapy and service dog?
- 3) How can you help others through your 4-H dog project?
- 4) What skills does a therapy dog need?



## Chapter 12 – *Farm Dog Certified*

**F**or dogs who have experience on farms and around livestock, there's another exciting activity in which you and your dog can participate – Farm Dog Certified. For 4-H members, Farm Dog testing is easy to access because many 4-H Dog leaders qualify to become Farm Dog judges who can administer the Farm Dog Certified test. Farm Dog testing is for both purebred and mixed breed dogs that are at least 9 months of age. The Farm Dog test is often described as, “Canine Good Citizen for dogs on farms.” Farm Dog certification is the perfect activity for the many 4-H members who own a dog and live on a farm or raise livestock.



*Farm Dog certification is the perfect activity for the many 4-H members who own a dog and live on a farm.*

### **What is the AKC's Farm Dog Certified test?**

The Farm Dog Certified test consists of 12 exercises that replicate situations a dog might encounter on a typical farm. The testing is performed on leash unless the dog is in a crate or vehicle. The dog must demonstrate self control throughout the test and work on a loose lead. During the test, the first of the 12 exercises is always Greet the Judge. The last of the 12 exercises is always the physical exam. Then, the remaining 10 exercises may be presented by the judge in any order.

To pass the Farm Dog certification test, dogs are not expected to be skilled at herding livestock. Instead, Farm Dog Certified assesses the dog's ability to be a working partner on a farm and assist the handler in day to day chores. During the Farm Dog Certified test, dogs are exposed to many of the sounds and objects seen on a farm. For example, a sound might include the noise from a tractor or hammer, and the objects include elements such as bales of hay, gates and fencing. Dogs are also exposed to livestock under safe, protected situations (i.e., always on leash and behind fencing).

During the Farm Dog test, dogs must show that they can greet the judge politely, walk over surfaces that are typically seen on a farm, navigate obstacles, and behave appropriately around livestock.

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

## Farm Dog Certified Test Items

### 1. Greet Judge – Initial Dog Appraisal

- The handler approaches the Judge with the dog on a loose lead.
- The dog may stand, sit or down at the handler's side on a loose lead while the Judge greets the dog and handler.

#### *Skills Demonstrated*

- Ability of the dog to demonstrate patience and self-control while meeting a friendly stranger.
- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog jumps on Judge, shows any signs of aggression, excessive shyness, or is restrained by a tight lead.

### 2. Perform A Walking Pattern Around Farm Environment / Passive Stranger

- The handler walks the dog on a loose lead through a prescribed pattern (minimum of 200 feet) around a number of objects. As the facility permits, the marked path should guide the handler and the dog safely around farm equipment, through barn aisles, by stacks of feed, etc.
- A passive stranger should be sitting quietly approximately 20 feet away from the path of the dog.
- Livestock and gates should be avoided at this stage. The dog must remain on a loose lead, and willingly follow the handler throughout the pattern.



*In the Farm Dog Certified test, the dog will walk under control in a farm environment.*

#### *Skills Demonstrated*

- Ability of the dog to demonstrate self-control, responsiveness to the handler, and ability to adapt to an unfamiliar environment.
- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog is repeatedly on a tight lead, barks or refuses to follow the handler, or shows fear or aggression to the passive stranger or unfamiliar objects.

### 3. Jump On Hay/Straw Bale

- The handler approaches a hay/straw bale or a safe pile of sacks of grain/feed with the dog on a loose lead and instructs the dog to jump up on the bale of hay. The dog may stand, sit or down until the Judge instructs the



## Chapter 12 – Farm Dog Certified

handler to allow the dog to jump off of the hay bale.

- The Judge shall determine length of stay (minimum of 10 seconds).



*In the test, the dog will jump on and off the hay bale.*

### *Skills Demonstrated*

- Ability of the dog to exhibit obedience to the handler, traverse varying terrain on farms, and athletic ability to be positioned as needed.
- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog fails, after two attempts, to jump on the bale independently, with no assistance from the handler, or, if the dog does not stay on the bale/pile for the minimum of 10 seconds.

### **4. Walk By Farm Animals**

- The handler walks the dog on a loose lead in view of penned farm animal(s) approximately 30 feet away from the fence line housing the farm animals.

The dog is not expected or encouraged to engage with livestock and should pay no undue attention to the animal(s) at this distance.

- Any animal routinely found on a farm is suitable, cow, pig, sheep, horse, chickens, ducks etc. All livestock must be penned or fenced in a manner to ensure safety from any uncontrolled dogs.
- Allows for the Judge to evaluate the dog's initial response to livestock.



*On leash, the dog will be walked by farm animals who are in pens or fences.*

### *Skills Demonstrated*

- Ability of the dog to demonstrate self-control, responsiveness to the handler, and ability to not disturb livestock.
- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog is repeatedly on a tight lead, refuses to

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

follow the handler, or shows fear or aggression towards the livestock.

## 5. Walk Over Or Through Unusual Surfaces

- The handler walks the dog over or through three different unusual surfaces.
- One surface shall be a piece of plastic that is a minimum of 8 feet long and 4 feet wide, such as a polyethylene tarp or clear plastic in good condition.
- A second surface shall be a wood surface that is a minimum of 8 feet long and 4 feet wide, such as a sheet of plywood or wood flooring that is lying flat on the ground.
- A third option shall represent typical rural terrain and can include such examples as safe metal or wire grating lying flat on the ground, mud, water, or jump over a series of three logs that are a minimum 4" diameter which are placed 3 feet apart. If mud or water is used, the dog must place all four feet in the mud/water. Surfaces should not present any risk of injury to the dog or handler.

### *Skills Demonstrated*

- Demonstrates that the dog is fit to walk on different surfaces and to willingly accompany the handler on a loose lead to any places necessary to perform chores on a farm.

- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog refuses to calmly walk over a new surface after two attempts, is excessively fearful, requires a tight lead, or demonstrates avoidance.

## 6. Supervised Separation

- The handler places the dog in a free standing kennel or dog crate, removes the leash and walks out of sight for a minimum of 1-minute.
- The dog may move around within the space allotted but should not continually bark, whine, or pace unnecessarily, or exhibit any behavior greater than mild agitation or nervousness.



*Supervised Separation demonstrates that the dog can be confined temporarily while out of sight of the handler.*

### *Skills Demonstrated*

- Demonstrates that the dog can be confined temporarily as needed, and will maintain training and good manners out of sight of the handler.

## Chapter 12 – Farm Dog Certified

- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog appears frantic or anxious or exhibits excessive barking.

### 7. Pass Through a Gate

- The handler approaches a designated gate with the dog on a lead. The handler instructs the dog to stay in position while the handler opens the gate (the dog may stand, sit or down). The handler opens the gate away from the dog, passes through and calls the dog through the gateway. The handler then instructs the dog to stay as the gate is closed.
- At no time should the dog impede the handler in opening and closing the gate.
- The gate should function properly, be simple to operate, and present no safety hazard to the dog or the handler.

#### *Skills Demonstrated*

- Ability of the dog to demonstrate self-control and basic obedience and not interfere with necessary tasks of the handler.
- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog does not hold a stay after two attempts, will not pass through the gate when instructed, or interferes with the handler operating the gate.



*Farm dogs should remain under control when passing through a gate.*

### 8. Handler Feeds Livestock

- The handler performs a farm chore of feeding farm animals. At no time will the handler or the dog enter an enclosure or have direct contact with the animal(s). All feeding of livestock shall be over or through a fence or enclosure.
- The handler approaches the animal enclosure with the dog at side on a loose lead. Approximately 30 feet from

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the enclosure, the handler ties/stakes the dog in a designated area. The dog must be wearing a secure, flat collar. The handler instructs the dog to stay and proceeds to complete the chore of feeding the animals before returning to the dog.

## *Skills Demonstrated*

- Ability of the dog to be tied and remain calm while the handler performs the task of interacting with livestock. This establishes the foundation for the dog to be trusted around livestock.
- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog is frantic or anxious while tied, barks repeatedly, pulls excessively on lead or demonstrates aggression toward the livestock.

## 9. Reaction to Another Dog

- The handler is positioned in a designated area with the dog at side on a loose lead. The dog may stand, down or sit. Another dog is walked by twice on lead approximately 10 feet away. The first time, the distraction dog is walked by on the side of its handler that is away from the dog being tested. The distraction dog and handler will then reverse direction and pass with the distraction dog on the side toward the dog being tested.
- While acceptable to notice the other dog, the tested dog should be accepting

of the other dog and not appear to be unduly distracted.

- The tested dog must remain on a loose lead and show no fear or aggression toward the passing dog.

## *Skills Demonstrated*

- Ability of the dog to exhibit self-control and acceptance of other dogs working on the farm property.



*Farm dogs should have an appropriate reaction to noises in the farm environment.*

- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog incessantly barks, pulls on lead or tries to make contact with the other dog, or demonstrates fearfulness or aggression toward the other dog.

## Chapter 12 – Farm Dog Certified

### 10. Reaction to Noise Distraction

- The handler may stand or quietly walk in a designated area with the dog at side on a loose lead. The assistant creates two background noises typical to a working farm environment.
- Noise distractions can consist of any common farm sound, such as hammering nails, sawing wood, leaf blower, farm machine starting up, lawn mower, chain saw, air compressors, etc.
- The tested dog must remain on a loose lead, and exhibit no excessive fear or sensitivity to the background noise.

#### *Skills Demonstrated*

- Ability of the dog to demonstrate normal sensitivity to typical noises of everyday life on a farm.
- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog appears excessively fearful or demonstrates strong avoidance.

### 11. Dog Approaches Livestock

- The handler, with the dog at side on a loose lead, enters a fenced area that contains livestock within a separate inside enclosure. The handler and the dog approach penned livestock, close enough so that the dog can clearly observe the stock. The dog can move ahead of the handler but cannot lunge or be held on a tight lead.
- The dog must remain responsive and under control both when approaching

livestock or if the dog's presence causes the livestock to move within their enclosure.

- It is acceptable and anticipated that the dog may show interest and liveliness towards the livestock, but at no time should the dog exhibit fearfulness or aggressiveness.
- When instructed by the Judge, the handler will go to the end of the lead and recall the dog to the handler. The dog must comply and willingly return to the handler without tugging within two attempts. The dog must return attention to the handler and willingly exit the fenced area with the handler.
- All enclosure fencing must be in good condition, safe, and of a type that



*In the Farm Dog Certified test, dogs should exhibit self-control when approaching livestock.*

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would not permit any passage by a dog, small or large.

## *Skills Demonstrated*

- Demonstrates that the dog can exhibit self-control when asked to approach, and possibly move livestock, while on lead. Demonstrates the dog's ability to be called away from livestock when instructed by the handler.
- **The dog shall not pass** if the dog appears excessively fearful or aggressive towards the livestock, is excessively pulling on lead, demonstrates strong avoidance or refuses to obediently leave the livestock or the outer enclosure when instructed.

## 12. Physical Examination

- The handler examines the dog for any plant material, debris or objects that the dog may have collected while working on the farm.
- The handler may place the dog on a hay bale, table, or on the ground, and briefly examine the dog's ears, eyes, mouth, coat and toes to ensure the dog is free of any foreign material such as grass, hay, burrs, etc.
- The dog must willingly accept the examination by the handler.

## *Skills Demonstrated*

- Ability of the dog to exhibit patience, obedience, and trust in the handler while being touched and examined.



*In the last step of the AKC Farm Dog Certified test, the handler checks to make sure the dog has not picked up any debris or objects.*

- The dog shall not pass if the dog fails to accept any part of the examination, exhibits annoyance, fear, or aggression towards the handler or will not stay in place during the exam.

Throughout the test, handlers can use verbal cues, praise and hand signals. Dogs

## Chapter 12 – *Farm Dog Certified*

may attempt each test item no more than two times, and all twelve test items must be passed in order to successfully qualify as “Farm Dog Certified.”

Even if a dog passes each of the twelve test items, judges may determine if the dog has exhibited behaviors that would not be conducive to working well on a farm. Examples of problem behaviors might include excessive barking, or lunging aggressively at livestock. Traits such as extreme fearfulness could also mean that a dog does not have the aptitude for working on a farm.

### **What You Need to Organize a Farm Dog Certified Test**

In order to hold a Farm Dog Certified test, you need an approved Farm Dog judge. 4-H Dog Leaders are often qualified. Applications for judges are at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) (type “Farm Dog” in the search box). There must be at least one assistant to help the judge conduct the test.

Whenever dogs are exposed to livestock in the Farm Dog Certified test, safety is the first priority. The dogs and livestock are always separated by secure fencing or double fencing.

Dogs taking the test wear a flat buckle collar and they are on a 6 ft. leash. For the separation exercise, there should be a kennel or crate for the dogs being tested.

### **Summary**

Farm Dog Certified is a test of the basic skills of a companion farm dog. The test assesses that the dog can demonstrate self-control and a working relationship with the handler. The Farm Dog Certified test is non-competitive and pass/fail. This means that everyone can win!

To learn more about the program, review the detailed test regulations or obtain a judge’s application, see: [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) (type “Farm Dog”) in the search box.

### **References**

American Kennel Club. Farm Dog Certified Test.

<https://www.akc.org/sports/herding/farm-dog-certified-test/> (Retrieved December 10, 2020).

## Chapter 12 – Activities and Reflections

### Farm Dog Certified



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Make a promotional flyer for farm dogs. Be creative and be sure to highlight the benefits of training for Farm Dog Certification.
- 2) If the Farm Dog Certification interests you, make a plan and work toward the certification.
- 3) Make a safety plan for you and your dog for when you are around livestock.

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) What is a farm dog? Is there a certification for that?
- 2) What are some reasons for getting a Farm Dog Certification?
- 3) What are some livestock animals that could pose a threat to your dog and why?
- 4) How would you prepare your dog for the Farm Dog Certification?



## Chapter 13 – Agility

**A**gility...once you see it, you won't forget it. Agility is the thrilling, fast-paced, athletic sport in which handlers direct their dogs through an obstacle course while racing against the clock. The goal is to complete the course as accurately and as fast as possible.

The sport of dog agility had its start at the Crufts Dog Show in England in 1978. John Varley and Peter Meanwell borrowed from the horse jumping world and created a demonstration that was designed for dogs and their handlers to entertain the crowd. Starting with jumps that resembled those in equestrian jumping courses, they added obstacles such as weave poles, tunnels, tire jumps, A-frames, and the dog walk, and the sport of agility was born.



*Agility is the thrilling, fast-paced, athletic sport in which handlers direct their dogs through an obstacle course while racing against the clock. (© American Kennel Club).*

The spectators at Crufts were in awe of the agile movements and speed of the dogs, and by 1980, The Kennel Club (England)

recognized agility as a competitive dog sport complete with rules and judging standards.

Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, agility organizations were formed in the United States. Some of these included the United States Dog Agility Association (USDAA), the agility program of the Australian Shepherd Club of America (ASCA), and the North American Dog Agility Council (NADAC).

In 1993, the American Kennel Club developed its agility rules and standards. The first AKC sanctioned agility trial was held in 1994 at the Houston Kennel Club shows in Houston, Texas. Within 10 years, the interest in agility had exploded and agility is now one of AKC's most popular and rapidly growing events.

Agility is now a popular 4-H activity. Different states and counties have their own rules for agility, and they may also offer different levels of classes in which handlers and dogs can participate. States such as Florida, Indiana, Minnesota, Michigan, South Dakota and Wyoming include agility guidelines in their Dog Project materials.

In this chapter, we're going to talk about the basics of agility such as the obstacles. We'll also talk about 4-H agility, and then we will provide some details about AKC agility. Qualified 4-H Leaders can now

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become approved to judge AKC's ACT Agility (*Agility Course Test*).

## Why Do Agility?

Because agility requires that dogs run, jump and use their balance, agility provides an extraordinary form of conditioning for dogs. Dogs aren't the only part of the agility team that benefit from exercise; handlers have to run with their dogs in agility, so there are exercise benefits for the human as well.

Teaching your dog to do agility exercises will make you a better trainer. Using a positive reinforcement approach, you will learn to solve training problems, how to break down skills, and how to better communicate with your dog by using your voice, hand signals and body language. At the advanced levels, once you have developed a good working relationship with your dog, your dog will work at a distance.

Agility builds confidence in both dogs and handlers. Did you know that agility training is often recommended as therapy for a shy or fearful dog?

Finally, competing in agility gives 4-H members an opportunity to show good sportsmanship which is ultimately a goal of all 4-H activities.

## Getting Started: Determining a Dog's Jump Height

One of the first things you will do when you decide to train your dog in agility is have your dog measured to determine the proper jump height. When you compete in an agility trial, you will obtain a jump height card.



*4-H Agility jump heights vary from state to state. (© American Kennel Club).*

The jump height for your dog is critically important because jumping at the proper height will keep your dog safe and prevent injuries. The jump height will be used to set all of the jumps for your dog.

Below, jump heights for Florida and Wisconsin 4-H Agility are listed to show you the variation that may occur from state to state. AKC competition jump heights for regular classes are also provided.

## Chapter 13 – Agility

*4-H has several modifications for agility that are lower than the AKC competition standard. A goal with the 4-H program is to promote safety, so very often, modifications to training and competition will be made. When a 4-H member is ready to compete outside of 4-H, local trainers can assist with making the transition.*

<b>JUMP HEIGHT FOR FLORIDA 4-H (Regular classes)</b>	
4 inches	For dogs 11 inches and under at the withers
8 inches	For dogs 14 inches and under at the withers
12 inches	For dogs 18 inches and under at the withers
16 inches	For dogs 22 inches and under at the withers
20 inches	For dogs 22 inches and over at the withers

<b>JUMP HEIGHT FOR WISCONSIN 4-H (Regular classes)</b>	
4 inches	For dogs 10 inches and under at the withers
8 inches	For dogs over 10 inches and under 14 inches at the withers
12 inches	For dogs over 14 inches and under 18 inches at the withers
16 inches	For dogs over 18 inches at the withers

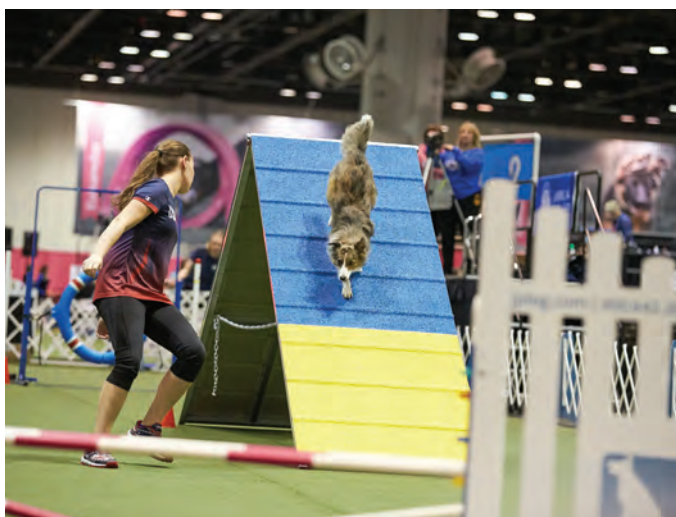
<b>JUMP HEIGHT FOR AKC AGILITY (Regular classes)</b>	
8 inches	For dogs 11 inches and under at the withers
12 inches	For dogs 14 inches and under at the withers
16 inches	For dogs 18 inches and under at the withers
20 inches	For dogs 22 inches and under at the withers
24 inches	For dogs over 22 inches at the withers – entered at their handlers choice

As a reminder, the withers are the highest point of the shoulder blades. You can find the withers by starting at the base of the neck and feeling for the bony point at the top of the shoulder. At an agility trial, your dog will be measured with an official measuring device called a “wicket.”

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## The Obstacles

There are a variety of obstacles on an agility course. The obstacles are listed below in alphabetical order. The heights and sizes related to obstacles as listed below are from the American Kennel Club Agility Regulations (<http://images.akc.org/pdf/rulebooks/REAGIL.pdf>)



*For the A-Frame, the dog goes up and over the top of the A-Frame, comes down the other side, and must touch the downside contact zone. (© American Kennel Club).*

## A-Frame

The A-frame is constructed from two wooden or wood-like panels that are each 35 to 49 inches wide and their length is within 2 inches of 9 feet. The panels are connected at the top and adjusted so the A-frame is within 1 inch of 5 feet, 6 inches tall, except for 4 inch and 8-inch jump heights (dogs that jump very low jumps). In this case, the A-frame is set to within 1 inch of 5 feet. The name comes from the

shape of the obstacle, which is like the letter “A.” The dog scrambles up and over the top of the A-frame, coming down the other side and touching the downside contact zone with at least one foot before moving on to the next obstacle. Contact zones are the lower 42 inches of both panels.

## Jumps (single, double, triple or panel)

Jumps include bar jumps with a single bar, double bars, or triple bars, and they may also be panel jumps. Panel jumps are made of solid cross-boards (made of wood or PVC) and they have the appearance of a solid wall. Constructed most often of PVC (or sometimes wood), bar jumps consist of bars that are set at the correct height for each dog, and the bars are mounted to uprights that are 48 inches wide. For panel



*To teach your dog to jump, you will begin with very low jumps that are gradually raised until you get to the dog's agility jump height. (© American Kennel Club).*

## Chapter 13 – Agility

jumps, the board supports and uprights are the same as they are for bar jumps.

For both bar and panel jumps, the dog must jump over the jump (whether single, double, triple or panel) from a proper distance and from any angle without displacing the board or bar. Training is done by starting with bars and panels at a low height and systematically raising them until they are at the height the dog will need to jump in competition. Single bar jumps are sometimes referred to as hurdles.

### Broad Jump

The Broad Jump is made of PVC. Depending on the designated jump height for the dog, the length (number of boards) dogs must jump in the Broad Jump varies.

In the Broad Jump, the dog should soar over all of the boards, clearing each and every board without touching any board with a foot. Below are Broad Jump specifications for AKC Agility competition.

Number of Broad Jump Boards Depending on Jump Height			
Division	Length (inches)	No. of 6-inch Sections	No. of 8-inch Sections
4 inch	6-8	1	1
8 inch	16	2	2
12 inch	24	3	3
16 inch	32	4	3
20 inch	40	5	4
24 inch	48	5	4

Note that as of January 2, 2018, AKC only allows 8” boards. There may be some 4-H groups that still have 6” boards so we have included the 6” boards in the table.

### Closed tunnel (*also called the Collapsed Tunnel or Chute*)

The Closed Tunnel has a rigid (plastic) entrance section with a fabric chute (from 6 feet to 6 feet 6 inches in length) attached. Dogs enter the open rigid end of the tunnel and exit through the closed fabric chute.

*NOTE: As of August, 2016, the American Kennel Club and all other major agility organizations suspended the use of the Closed Tunnel. As agility has evolved, dogs began to run faster through courses. The safety of dogs is always the first priority and changes with regard to approved equipment are made when needed. The closed tunnel is referenced here only for the purpose of saying that for safety reasons, it should not be used in 4-H agility competition.*

### Dog Walk

The Dog Walk consists of a center section and two ramp sections, one at each end. All sections are 12 inches wide (plus or minus 1 inch) and all are 12 feet long. The top center section is 48 inches above the ground (with a 2-inch tolerance). The dog approaches the raised dog walk, touching the upside contact zone, then

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The Dog Walk has a center section and two ramp sections. The dog goes up one side of the Dog Walk and down the other. (© American Kennel Club).

races across the top and then runs to the bottom, touching the downside contact



The Open Tunnel is a flexible tube that can be formed in a straight line or curved.

zone.

## Open Tunnel (sometimes called the Pipe Tunnel)

The Open Tunnel is a flexible tube of durable material. Between 15 and 20 feet

long, this tunnel can be formed into a straight line or curved shapes. The two openings are round and their height and width is 25 inches (plus or minus 2 inches). Open tunnels are made of an opaque material. The dog runs at full speed to the entrance of the tunnel, runs through it and then exits quickly.



Dogs must pause on the Pause Table for 5 consecutive seconds. (© American Kennel Club).

## Pause Table

The pause table is exactly what the name implies. It is a table the dog must get on and pause for 5 consecutive seconds. The judge will count the time. The Pause Table is a 36-inch square with a non-slip surface. The Pause Table is set at a height related to the dog's jump height. For dogs with jump heights of 4 or 8 inches, the Pause Table is 8 inches off the ground; and for dogs with 12-inch jump heights, the table is set at 12 inches. For 16-inch jump heights, the Pause Table is set at 16 inches, and 20 inches for the 20-inch and 24-inch

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jump height division. The judge starts counting when all 4 paws have touched the table and the dog is remaining on top.



*The Seesaw is sometimes called the Teeter-Totter or Teeter. (© American Kennel Club).*

### **Seesaw (sometimes called the Teeter-Totter)**

The seesaw looks like a seesaw or teeter-totter that you may have seen on a playground. For dog agility, the seesaw consists of a plank or panel made of wood or a fabricated material. The 12-ft. long “board” is suspended near the center by a base that acts as a fulcrum. The plank is balanced so that it hits the ground in less than 3-seconds when a weight is placed 12 inches back on the board from the raised end. Seesaws have 42-inch contact zones at each end, with the same color specification as for the A-Frame contact zones. The dog must approach the seesaw, touch the

upside contact zone and then move down, touching the downside contact zone. The dog may not exit until the plank touches the ground.

### **Tire Jump**

The tire jump is made of a circular object that resembles a tire. It is suspended from a rectangular frame. The “tire” is made of two halves that are connected at the top so that each side can move. The height of the tire is related to the jump height for the dog. The dog must jump cleanly through the tire rather than over it or running around it.



*The Tire Jump resembles a tire.*

### **Weave Poles**

The weave poles are a series of poles (either 6 or 12 depending on the level of competition) that your dog will weave in and out of. When you compete in an agility trial, the weave poles will be on a fixed

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Tire Jump Height Depending on Jump Height (AKC Agility)	
Tire Jump Height	Bar Jump Height
4 inches	4 inches
4 inches	8 inches
8 inches	12 inches
12 inches	16 inches
16 inches	20 inches
20 inches	24 inches



Depending on the level of competition, there are either 6 or 12 weave poles. (© American Kennel Club).

base. The poles are  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch PVC and they are 40 inches tall. The poles will be spaced with 24 inches between them. The dog will enter the weave poles by passing between poles 1 and 2 from right to left. Then, the dog passes through poles 2 and 3 from left to right. Weaving is continued until the dog reaches the end of the poles. In AKC agility, the dog will be allowed three attempts at the weave poles and then must move to the next obstacle. While the weave poles in competition are on a fixed base, you can

purchase individual poles that stick in the ground for training and practice at home. The dog enters to the right of the first pole. While focused straight ahead, the dog weaves through each pole as quickly as possible, staying as close to the center line as possible.



4-H classes help beginning agility handlers and dogs get a gradual start in agility and experience success.

## Agility Classes in 4-H

The classes in 4-H competition vary from state to state. 4-H has created classes (including a basic class that is on lead) that are designed to help beginning agility handlers get a gradual start in agility and experience success.

### FLORIDA 4-H AGILITY CLASSES

Classes in the 4-H Florida State Fair include:

- **Basic – On Lead**

This class is for beginning handlers and dogs in their first year of showing. The course is simple and may include



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any of the following: A-Frame (with a height of 4 feet, 11 inches), Dog Walk, Open (Pipe) Tunnel, and Pause Table (with Sit or Down at the judge's discretion for 5 cumulative seconds). These are approximately 6 jumps. When handlers tie on accuracy, the course times will be used to break ties.

For all classes, the Pause Table will be 8 inches for dogs that jump 8 inches or 12 inches. Dogs with a jump height of 16 inches or above will use a 16 inch Pause Table.

### • Sub-Novice A – On Lead

This class is for the experienced handler with a beginning dog, or a beginning handler with an experienced dog. (If the team has scored 200 points in the State Dog Show or if they have two of more years of experience showing, they must move to Sub-Novice B). A simple course may include any of the following: A-Frame (height of 4 feet, 11 inches), Dog Walk, Open (Pipe) Tunnel, Pause Table (with Sit or Down at judge's discretion for 5 cumulative seconds), and approximately 6 jumps. The course time will be used only to break ties.



### • Sub-Novice B – On Lead

This class is for the experienced handler who has won first place in the Sub-Novice A Agility class in the previous year, or who has achieved a score of 200 at a previous State Dog Show.

A simple course may include any of the following: A-Frame (with a height of 4 feet, 11 inches), Dog Walk, Open (Pipe) Tunnel, Pause Table (with Sit or Down at judge's discretion for 5 cumulative seconds), and approximately 6 jumps. The course time will be used only to break ties. If the dog has any qualifying agility legs, it must be shown in the Novice class or higher.

- An experienced handler is defined as an exhibitor who has previously shown at a state level dog show, or has competed in any outside venue (e.g., AKC, UKC, NADAC, etc.), or who has already completed their first full year of 4H or FFA with a dog project.
- An experienced dog is defined as a dog that has been previously shown at a state level dog show, or has competed in any outside venue (e.g., AKC, UKC, NADAC, etc.), or who has already completed their first full year of 4H or FFA with a dog project, or, any titled dog whether or not the

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4-H handler was the person who titled the dog. A dog with a title must be entered into the class equivalent with their title or higher, and the dog must be entered into the B class.

## • Novice – Off Lead

In the Novice Off Lead class, a simple course may include: an A-Frame (4 feet, 11 inches), Dog Walk, Open (Pipe) Tunnel, Pause Table (with Sit or Down at judge's discretion for 5 cumulative seconds), and approximately 6 jumps. The course time will be used only to break ties.



*Once a dog has been shown off lead in another venue, it must show in the Advanced class in 4-H. (© American Kennel Club).*

## • Advanced – Off Lead

A dog that has been or is showing off lead in other venues (e.g., AKC, UKC,

NADAC, etc.) must show in the Advanced class. In the Advanced class, course designs are likely to be more complex. They may include any of the following obstacles: A-Frame (4 feet, 11 inches), Dog Walk, Seesaw, Open (Pipe) Tunnel, Weave Poles (5 or 6), Pause Table (with Sit or Down at judge's discretion for 5 cumulative seconds), Tire Jump, Broad Jump, and approximately 6 jumps. The course time will be used only to break ties. As with AKC agility, Advanced agility for Florida 4-H allows three refusals on weave poles with points deducted for each refusal. In the Florida Fair 4-H agility, age groupings are: Junior (8 to 10 years of age), Intermediate (11-13 years of age) and Senior (14 to 18 years of age). Other states have different classes for 4-H agility. While agility is modified and designed to keep 4-H members and their dogs safe, there is some variation from state to state (for the state show) with regard to specific rules and classes. There can also be variation within a state between county level events and the State Fair. The examples below show the variety in classes in different states.

## MICHIGAN

There are 3 levels of classes in Michigan 4-H agility. For each of these levels, there

## Chapter 13 – Agility

are “A” and “B” classes. Class A is for members who are competing for the first year with an inexperienced dog. Class B is for members who competed in Class A during the previous year and have not received a title. Class B is also for members who are competing with a new dog in this class and have run dogs before at this level, or when the member is competing with a dog that has been trained by someone else.

### • **Beginner Agility**

The course has at least 11 but not more than 13 obstacles and includes: A-Frame (4 feet, 6 inches), Closed Tunnel, Open Tunnel, Table or Pause Box, Tire Jump, Broad (Long) Jump, other jumps and hurdles.

### • **Intermediate Agility**

The course has at least 13 but not more than 15 obstacles. In addition to the obstacles in Beginner Agility, 6 weave poles are added. The A-Frame is set at 5 feet.

### • **Advanced Agility**

Includes all of the Intermediate Agility obstacles plus the addition of the Sway-bridge or Seesaw. There are 12 weave poles in this class. The A-frame is increased from 5 feet to 5 feet 6 inches.

## SOUTH DAKOTA

### • **On-leash class**

Tests the handler and dog’s ability to perform obstacles safely and correctly, and tests the handler’s ability to train a dog for beginning agility. The main evaluation is for control of the dog within an allotted time. The course is a simple S, M, or U shape. There are 9 obstacles that are: A frame, Pause Table, Open (pipe) Tunnel, and six jumps. The standard course time is 60 seconds.

### • **Off-leash class**

This class tests the partnership between the dog and handler and evaluates focus and control off leash. The course shape, obstacles and time are the same as for the on-leash class. Dogs are shown off leash with a collar. Dogs advance to the next level when they have achieved a round of 10 fault/points or less during a state competition.

### • **Advanced class**

More focus and control is required in this class. In addition to the obstacles in the two previous classes, the Dog Walk, Tire Jump, and Broad (Long) Jump are added. The standard course time is 75 seconds. Dogs that have earned a qualifying score in a venue such as AKC, UKC or NADAC may not compete in this class.

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## • **Excellent class**

This class demonstrates advanced handling and training skills. The course shape is more complex, and the Open (pipe) Tunnel can be under the A-Frame. There are 13 to 15 obstacles that include the addition of the Seesaw and Weave Poles. The standard course time is 2 yards per second, not to exceed 75 seconds.

## **Examples of agility classes in other states include:**

- Indiana: (Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced and Excellent)
- Minnesota: (Beginner, Elementary, Intermediate, Senior, Advanced, Jumpers 1, Jumpers 2, Jumpers 3)
- Washington: STANDARD (Elementary, Pre-Novice, Novice, Open, Excellent) and JUMPERS (Pre-Novice Jumpers without weaves, Pre-Novice Jumpers with weaves, Novice Jumpers with weaves, Open Jumpers with weaves, Excellent Jumpers with weaves).

## **AKC Agility**

The American Kennel Club offers three types of agility classes. The first, the *Standard Class*, includes contact obstacles such as the dog walk, the A-Frame, and seesaw. Each of the contact obstacles has a "safety zone" painted on

the object. In AKC Agility, the safety zone is always yellow and the dog must place at least one paw in that area to complete the obstacle. The second is *Jumpers with Weaves*. It has only jumps, tunnels and weaves poles with no contact obstacles to slow the pace. The third is *FAST*, which stands for Fifteen and Send Time. This class is designed to test handler and dog teams' strategy skill, accuracy, speed and distance handling. There are A and B divisions in AKC



*The Standard Class in AKC agility includes contact obstacles such as the dog walk, A-Frame, and Seesaw in addition to jumps.*

agility for the Novice level.

- Division A is for dogs that have never acquired any AKC agility title on a dog. Dogs in Novice A must be handled by a person that has never put an AKC title on any dog, and the handler must be the owner, co-owner, or a member of the owner's household.
- Division B is for dogs that have

## Chapter 13 – Agility

acquired the Novice Agility title, or the Novice Agility Jumper title, or for persons who have handled a dog to any AKC agility title, and for dogs being handled by someone other than the owner, co-owner, or household member subject to the restrictions listed above.

The number of AKC Agility titles make it possible for dogs and handlers from beginning to very advanced skill levels to compete and earn titles. After the Novice title, dogs must have earned the previous title to compete in a specific class. For example, to enter an Excellent class, the dog must have earned the Novice and Open titles.

AKC agility titles include:

### STANDARD

- Novice (NA)
- Open (OA)
- Excellent (AX)
- Master (MX)
- Premier (PAD)

### JUMPERS WITH WEAVES (JWW)

- Novice (NAJ)
- Open (OAJ)
- Excellent (AXJ)
- Master (MXJ)
- Premier (PJD)

Newer AKC agility titles include FAST

titles (Fifteen and Send Time) that focus on strategy, and the Time 2 Beat titles that focus on speed. AKC Agility has a Master Agility Champion title (MACH) for dogs who have earned the required number of championship points and qualifying scores. There are also Lifetime Achievement titles.

AKC's Preferred Agility classes have modified standards (such as lowered jump heights) and they provide an opportunity for a greater variety of dogs and their handlers to participate in the sport of agility.

### **AKC ACT Agility: An Agility Course Test for Beginners**

The American Kennel Club's ACT agility provides a perfect fit with 4-H agility training. 4-H Dog Project leaders can apply to judge and award this certificate at 4-H events and classes.

ACT is entry level agility and there are two classes that include ACT 1 and ACT 2 (Agility Course Test). The classes provide shorter courses with basic obstacles that are appropriate for dogs beginning in the sport. ACT 1 is designed for the beginner level dog to show beginning sequencing and performance skills. ACT 2 requires an increased skills level shown by the additional obstacles to be performed.

ACT is designed to be adopted by

# 4-H Dog Project Manual



*4-H Dog Project Leaders can apply to judge and award the AKC ACT certificate at 4-H events and classes.*

clubs and trainers as the graduation exercise for their training classes and may be held at regular AKC agility trials or as stand-alone events at training facilities. ACT classes are open to all dogs fifteen months of age or older.

Holding ACT classes at a training facility (such as 4-H classes) provides exhibitors a familiar and comfortable setting to learn the basics of agility competition. In ACT classes, exhibitors learn to fill out an entry form, prepare themselves and their dog for competition, become familiar with event protocol, and handle their dog while being evaluated by a judge.

ACT events can be judged by an AKC

agility judge or an AKC approved ACT evaluator. Qualified 4-H Dog Project leaders can become ACT judges.

ACT is open to all dogs, and dogs jump at the height that the handler feels will best prepare them for future success in the sport. No jump height card is required. Dogs not yet registered/listed with AKC may participate. Results will be recorded by assigning the dog a temporary recording number.

## **ACT 1**

- Run a course at any jump height, 10-12 obstacles.
- A-Frame (5'), Table, Jumps, Open Tunnels
- Complete the course in 60 seconds, no missed contacts, no dropped bars, no obstacle attempted more than 3 times, no more than 3 wrong courses
- 2 qualifying scores

## **ACT 2**

- Run a course at any jump height, 11-13 obstacles.
- A-Frame (5'), Teeter, Dog Walk (allowed), Tire, Table, Jumps, Spread jumps (1), Weave poles (6), Open Tunnels
- Complete the course in 70 seconds, no missed contacts, no

## Chapter 13 – Agility

- dropped bars, no obstacle attempted more than 3 times, no more than 3 wrong courses
- 2 qualifying scores

### **Virtual ACT!**

One of the most exciting new developments in ACT is that you and your dog can now be tested virtually. This means you can train your dog at home and send a video to AKC for review. AKC will select an ACT judge to review your video. For more information, see: <https://www.akc.org/sports/agility/act-program/act-virtual-program/>

### **Summary**

Agility is one of the most exciting, athletic activities for dogs and their handlers. Agility can improve the health of both you and your dog. Agility provides rigorous exercise, a way to increase your cardiac (heart) function, better balance, and increased physical conditioning.

Figuring out how to best teach your dog the agility exercises will make you a better trainer. Agility builds confidence in both people and their dogs, and if you compete in agility, you will get a chance to demonstrate good sportsmanship, an important goal in 4-H.

# 4-H Dog Project Manual

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### Activities and Reflections



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Research the training needed to safely perform agility.
- 2) Safely create some obstacles you could use to practice agility at home (be sure to complete the necessary training).
- 3) Look up videos of dogs competing in agility and name as many of the obstacles as you can.

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) Why is it important to have formal training before trying agility?
- 2) Have you seen an agility competition before? When and where?
- 3) Would you like to try agility with your dog? If so, how would you start?



## Chapter 14 – Obedience & Rally

### Obedience: Responding to Handler Instructions

Once you have completed Canine Good Citizen training (see Chapter 8), you might decide to move on to more advanced training for your dog. If you find yourself getting hooked on training, Obedience or Rally can be the next exciting steps.

### What is Dog Obedience Training?

*Obedience training involves teaching a dog to respond to handler instructions or commands.* Training in obedience ranges from the dog learning foundation skills such as sit, down, come, stay and walk on a leash to more advanced skills such as finding a scent article or going over a jump in response to a handler's hand signal. Beginning competition classes are done on leash, and by the time the dog gets to an advanced level (i.e., the Open and Utility classes), the exercises are done entirely off leash.

In obedience competition, the performance of the dog and handler team is judged for accuracy. A perfect score of 200 points indicates a dog has responded correctly to every command given by the handler and therefore, has delivered a flawless performance. A qualifying score is 170 points with more than 50% of the



*Training your dog in obedience builds a wonderful bond. Obedience is the foundation for many other dog sports. (© American Kennel Club).*

points earned for each exercise. A score of 170 points indicates a very credible performance and fully justifies the awarding of a title.

### The History of Obedience Training

In the 1900s, Colonel Conrad Most was a dog trainer in Germany. In 1910, Most wrote his book, “*Training Dogs*,” which was one of the first how-to manuals for obedience training.

In the 1900s to the 1920s, the idea of training one's dog was becoming more

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*Helene Whitehouse Walker and Blanche Saunders at WNYC (AKC Gazette Collection).*

popular, and in 1933, Helene Whitehouse Walker organized the first competitive obedience trial in the United States. Then in 1936, the American Kennel Club approved the first set of regulations for earning obedience titles. Obedience was on its way to becoming a popular dog training activity.

To promote this new sport, Helene Whitehouse Walker and her friend, dog trainer Blanche Saunders, took three Poodles and got into a 1930's Buick to launch a 10,000-mile tour around the country to promote dog training. The banner that they proudly displayed said, "Train Your Dog." A high point of this tour was an obedience demonstration during a break at a New York Yankees baseball game where more than 50,000 fans were awed by

well-trained dogs performing obedience tasks.

In 1941, the New England Dog Training Club became the first obedience club to become a member club of the AKC. Now there are thousands of clubs across the country that can teach you to train your dog. The 1950s and 1960s saw an increase in well-known trainers such as Milo Pearsall, Bill Koehler, and Winifred Strickland writing dog training books.

In the beginning, there was an emphasis on the use of corrections in dog training. In the 1980s, Ian Dunbar and Karen Pryor began to promote the use of food lures and rewards when training dogs. Dog training had taken a welcomed shift toward the positive reinforcement approach that is still widely used today.

## **4-H Obedience**

The regulations for 4-H Obedience vary from state to state and county to county. As an example of 4-H regulations for obedience, the regulations for the Florida State Fair obedience competition follow.

Obedience is judged according to AKC regulations that have been modified by the Florida State Fair Youth Dog Committee. AKC refers to the rules for obedience as "regulations." Dogs that have competed in or hold a title in AKC obedience may not compete in Basic or Sub-Novice classes in

## Chapter 14 – Obedience & Rally

Obedience. This also pertains to Rally. Dogs who have earned obedience titles in venues other than 4-H (such as AKC) shall enter the same class level they compete in for the other venue.



*In beginning obedience classes, dogs are on a leash.  
(© American Kennel Club).*

The 4-H Obedience classes for the 2021 Florida State Fair were:

- **Basic** – for beginning handlers and dogs in their first year of showing.
- **Sub-Novice** – for an experienced

handler with a beginning dog, or a beginning handler with an experienced dog (except for dogs with Obedience or Rally titles, or a second year handler and second year dog). No dog that has an AKC or UKC title may compete in Sub-Novice classes. The exercises for Basic and Sub-Novice are:

- **Individual:** Heel on Lead, Figure 8 on Lead, Stand for Exam on Lead, Recall on Lead.
- **Group:** One Minute Sit on Lead, One Minute Down on Lead.
- **Beginner Novice** – for handlers and dogs who are training for novice off-lead classes. Dogs with AKC Beginner Novice A titles may still compete in Beginner Novice B. This class prepares the handler/dog team for off-lead work. Exercises are:
  - **Individual:** Heel on Lead, Figure 8 on Lead, Sit for Exam, Recall off lead, and Sit-Stay off lead (with a walk around the ring).
  - **Group:** One Minute Down on Lead.
- **Novice A** – for handlers and dogs ready to compete in Novice exercises except for dogs with Novice obedience titles or handlers and dogs who have won first place in Novice A at a previous state level dog show. Having a Novice title in obedience requires that the dog and handler compete in the Novice B class.

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- **Novice B** – for handlers showing dogs with Obedience titles. Handlers and dogs who have shown in Obedience competition at AKC Obedience trials or have won First Place in Novice A at a previous State Level Dog Show are in Novice B. The exercises for Novice A and Novice B are:

- Individual: Heel on Lead, Figure 8 on Lead, Stand for Exam Off Lead, Heel Off Lead, Recall Off Lead, Sit Stay - Get Leash.

- Group: One Minute Sit and One Minute Down Stay.

- NOTE: *AKC rules change from time to time and there have been some recent changes with regard to group exercises. The Florida State Fair Obedience rules may change as AKC rules change, so handlers who are going to compete should carefully review the rules from the year in which they will be competing.*

- **Open** (formerly called Advanced) – For dogs and handlers ready to compete and perform the Open exercises. Dogs without titles show in Open A; dogs with titles show in Open B. The Open exercises are:

- Individual: Heel Free, Figure 8, Command Discrimination (Stand, Down, Sit), Drop on Recall, Retrieve



Dogs work off-lead for Open obedience exercises such as the Broad Jump. (© American Kennel Club).

- on Flat, Retrieve Over High Jump, and Broad Jump and Stand Stay – Get Your Leash.

In addition to the classes above, there are some additional non-regular Obedience classes and activities for the Florida State Fair Youth Dog Show.

- **Utility** – the class that is the next level beyond the Open class. In 4-H Utility, handlers and dogs compete for ribbons only. Exercises include:

- Signal exercise, Scent

- Discrimination, Go Out, Directed Jumping, Moving Stand & Examination, and Directed Retrieve.

- **Brace** – in this class the dogs are coupled. This means that they are shown side by side, as a pair. They are each attached to the same leash. They should be similar height at the withers but do not have to be the same breed.

- **Four Member Team** – the team

## Chapter 14 – Obedience & Rally

consists of four handlers and four dogs who work simultaneously. The class is judged using the Novice exercises and handlers may respond to the judge's or a team captain's commands. For the recall, handlers leave the dogs in unison, call the dogs one at a time, and finish in unison.

(Retrieved from <https://www.floridastatefairag.com/show/youth-dog>, 12-10-20).

### AKC Obedience: Levels of Competition

At an AKC obedience trial, there are three levels of competition that are perfect for beginners. Clubs have a choice regarding whether or not these classes will be offered at shows. These are considered *optional titling classes* and they are:

#### 1. Beginner Novice

- Beginner Novice A is for dogs that have not earned the Beginner Novice title or any AKC obedience title.
- Beginner Novice B is for dogs that have not earned any AKC obedience title, or who have earned a Beginner Novice title (BN), Companion Dog title (CD), and/or Preferred Companion Dog title (PCD), but no other additional AKC obedience titles.

Exercises in the Beginner Novice class include:

- **Heel on Leash** – demonstrates whether the dog has learned to walk on a loose lead on the handler's left side.
- **Figure Eight** – same as Heel on Leash but done in a Figure Eight pattern.
- **Sit for Exam** – this exercise will be helpful when the dog needs hands-on care by a veterinarian.
- **Sit-Stay** – the sit-stay can be used to control the dog when visitors come to the home.
- **Recall** – the recall is an important skill that provides the handler with the ability to call the dog and get an immediate response at all times.

2. **Graduate Novice** – this class is open to all dogs. The exercises are:

- **Heel Free and Figure Eight (both off leash)** – shows whether the dog has learned to walk on a loose lead on the handler's left side.
- **Drop on Recall** – this exercise can be a lifesaving command for a dog, since it gives the handler control in potentially dangerous situations.
- **Dumbbell Recall** – this exercise is performed like Novice Recall but with the dog holding a dumbbell. This is a fun skill that can teach the dog how to retrieve something such as a newspaper.

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- **Recall over High Jump** – this exercise is performed like the Dumbbell Recall, but the dog will jump over a solid jump (like a wall). This skill teaches the dog to come to the handler even though they may not be able to see them.
- **Recall Over Broad Jump** – this exercise is performed like the Novice Recall, but the dog will jump over a wide ascending jump.
- **Stand Stay – Get Your Leash** – this shows the dog will remain in place while the handler retrieves the leash and returns. This command can be used at home when someone comes to the door so you can leave your dog in place while you answer the door.

**3. Graduate Open** – as with Graduate Novice, this class is open to all dogs. The exercises are:

- **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 shows the dog's ability to find the handler's scent among a pile of articles.
- **Go Out** – following the handler's command, the dog must go out a specified distance and stop as directed.



*In the AKC Novice Obedience class, dogs will sit for an exam. (© American Kennel Club).*

- **Directed Jumping** – The dog must clear whichever jump its handler indicates and promptly return to the handler.
- **Moving Stand and Examination** – 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 Retrieve** – shows the dog's ability to follow a directional signal to retrieve a glove and promptly return it to the handler.

## AKC Regular Obedience Classes at Obedience Trials

The regular classes are those that are offered at every obedience trial. These are *Novice* (in which the dog can earn the Companion Dog title, designated by CD),



## Chapter 14 – Obedience & Rally

*Open* (in which the dog earns the Companion Dog Excellent title or CDX), and *Utility* (in which the dog earns the Utility Dog title, designated by UD).

- **Novice** – the Novice class is for the dog just getting started in regular obedience. Exercises are designed as a progressive step from the Beginner Novice class. The Novice A class is for dogs that have not yet earned the CD title. In Novice A, the dog must be handled by the owner or someone in the owner's household or immediate family. In Novice B, the owner or any other person may handle the dog to earn the CD title. The Novice exercises are:

- **Heel on Leash and Figure Eight** – shows whether the dog has learned to walk on a loose lead on the handler's left side.
- **Stand for Examination** – the dog will stand as the judge briefly examines the dog.
- **Heel Free** – the dog performs a heeling routine (called by the judge) that is done off leash.
- **Recall** – provides the handler with the ability to call the dog and get an immediate response at all times.
- **Sit Stay – Get Your Leash**
- **Group Exercise – Sit and Down Stay**
  - As of May 1, 2018, the Novice

Group exercises were replaced with two new exercises. Each dog will perform the individual Sit Stay – Get Your Leash. There will be a two-part Sit and Down Group exercise with all dogs on a 6' leash, held by the handler with the dogs spaced a minimum of 6' apart.



*In the AKC Open and Utility classes, the exercises are more complicated than they are in Novice. For example, in the Retrieve Over High Jump exercise, the handler sends the dog over a jump and the dog must return with the dumbbell. (© American Kennel Club).*

- **Open** – the Open class, the second level of obedience, includes more complicated exercises and exercises are performed off-leash. In training for Open obedience, the dog learns to perform a variety of tasks and to follow commands either by voice or signal or both. The Open A class is for dogs that have won the CD title but have not won the CDX (Companion Dog Excellent). Dogs must be handled by the owner or

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by a member of the owner's household or immediate family. The Open B class is for dogs that have won the CD or CDX titles. The owner or any other person can handle dogs in this class.

Exercises for Open include:

- **Heel Free and Figure Eight** – Same as Novice, but off leash.
- **Command Discrimination (Stand, Down, Sit)**
- **Drop on Recall** – the handler calls the dog to come, and as it is coming, gives the hand and/or voice signal for the dog to drop into the down position.
- **Retrieve on Flat**
- **Retrieve Over High Jump**
- **Broad Jump**
- **Stand Stay – Get Your Leash**
  - NOTE: AKC rules change from time to time so handlers who are going to compete should carefully review the rules in effect for the year in which they will be competing.
  - The Open Group exercises were replaced by two new exercises effective May 1, 2018. The Command Discrimination exercise demonstrates the dog's ability to change positions (stand, down, sit) on voice and/or signal when the dog is in heel position, and with the handler 15' away from the dog and again at 30' away from the dog. The Stay – Get Your Leash exercise is a



*The Utility class demonstrates the dog's ability to work off leash and at a distance from the handler. In the Scent Discrimination exercise, the dog must find the article that has the handler's scent. (© American Kennel Club).*

two-part exercise demonstrating the dog's ability to stay in place while the handler leaves the ring momentarily to get the dog's leash.

- **Utility** – the Utility class is the third and highest level of regular obedience competition. The Utility 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 (articles #1 and #2)** – shows the dog's ability to find the handler's scent among a pile of articles.
  - **Directed Retrieve** – proves the dog's ability to follow a directional signal to retrieve a glove and promptly return it to the handler.

## Chapter 14 – Obedience & Rally

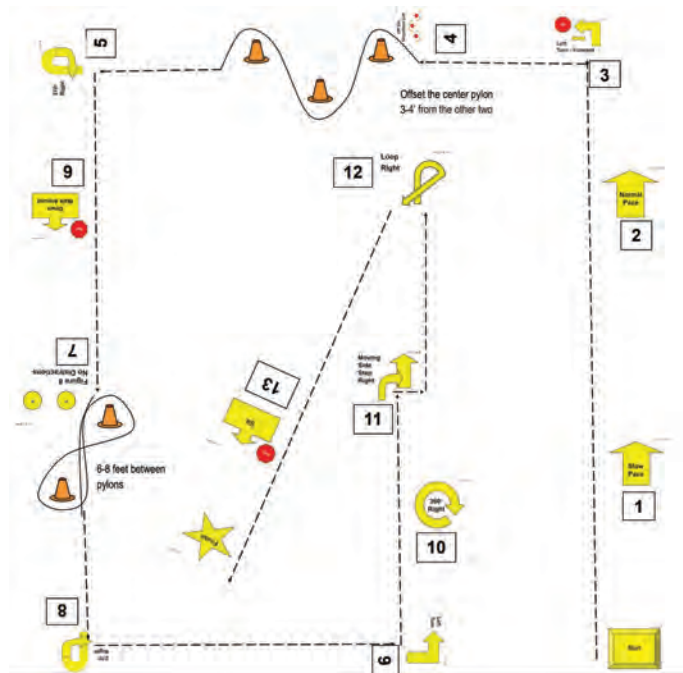
- **Moving Stand and Examination** – the dog must heel, stand and stay as the handler moves away. The dog must stay and accept an examination by the judge and return to the handler on command.
- **Directed Jumping** – the dog must go away from the handler, turn and sit. Then, the dog must clear whichever jump its handler indicates and promptly return to the handler.

In addition to the classes above, AKC obedience has “Preferred” classes. The Preferred Novice, Open and Utility classes have exercises that are modified (e.g., no group exercises) and there are lower jump heights. The Optional and Preferred titling classes provide additional opportunities for dogs and handlers to polish their skills and have access to time in the ring. There is a national obedience championship in which one dog each year is crowned the National Obedience Champion (NOC). AKC obedience also has competitions especially for Juniors, where clubs may hold Junior Showcase events limited to only Junior Handlers in obedience, rally and agility.

### Rally

Rally is considered a companion sport to Obedience. Rally can be both for beginners who want a fun training and competition activity to do with their dogs,

and it can be for advanced handlers who are looking to sharpen their obedience performance.



Rally is a sport in which the dog and handler complete a course that has been designed by the rally judge. (Credit: American Kennel Club).

Rally is a sport in which the dog and handler proceed at a brisk pace through a course that has been designed by the rally judge, with several sequentially numbered instructional signs. The judge tells the handler to begin, and the dog and handler move continuously throughout the course with the dog under control at the handlers’s left side. Each course will have between 10 - 20 signs, depending on the class level). Each of these signs has words and symbols (directional arrows) that provide a summary of instructions regarding a skill that is to be performed.

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While Rally is not judged with the same precision as traditional obedience but, there should be a clear sense of teamwork between the dog and handler both during and between the numbered signs. Whereas 200 is a perfect score in obedience, 100 is a perfect Rally score. A qualifying score in Rally is 70.

While it is important for a Rally judge to see that there is clearly teamwork with the dog and handler, in Rally, a perfect "heel position" is not required. The dog and handler work at a brisk and continuous pace. After the judge's "Forward", the team is on its own to complete the entire sequence of numbered signs correctly.

Many handlers proceed from Canine Good Citizen to Rally and then Obedience or Agility because Rally offers a gentle, fun stepping stone in training.

## 4-H Rally

As with 4-H Agility and Obedience, there is variability from county to county and state to state with regard to Rally rules. Many 4-H organizations base their rules on AKC Rally regulations. For example, the Florida State Fair Youth Dog Show's rules are based on AKC Rally (amended November 2017). The Rally classes for the Florida State Fair include:

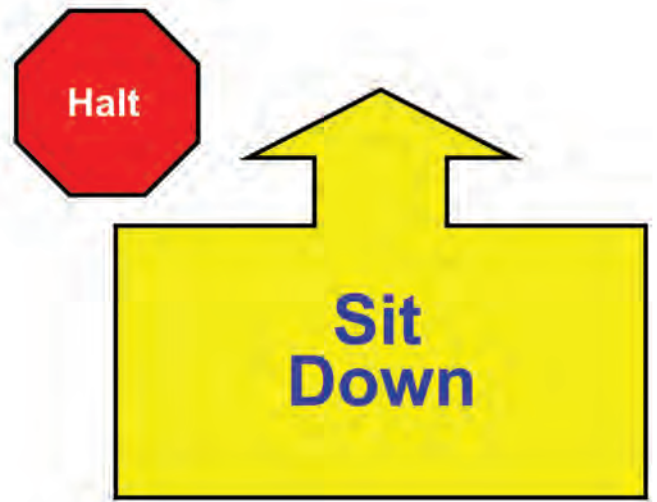
- **Basic** – is for first year handlers with beginner dogs. Dogs who have earned

any qualifying scores in Rally or Obedience from any venue are not eligible to compete in Basic.

- **Novice** – is divided into Novice A and Novice B. There are 10-15 station signs (Start and Finish not included) with a minimum of three and a maximum of five stationary exercises per class. Signs #1 to #36 from the AKC Rally regulations may be used.
  - Novice A is for 2nd year or greater handlers or dogs with qualifying scores in Rally or Obedience from any outside venue (AKC, UKC, etc.). All exercises are judged on leash.
  - Novice B is for dogs or handlers that have earned a Novice Title in Rally or Obedience in any outside venue, or who have placed in the top four with a qualifying score above 170 in the Novice A class at a state event or previous fair.
- **Intermediate** – is also divided into A and B classes. All exercises are done on least and there are between 12 to 17 signs (Start and Finish not included) with a minimum of three and maximum of seven stationary signs. There are no jumps in Intermediate.
  - Intermediate A is for dogs who have earned the Rally Novice title but have not yet qualified in Rally Advanced.

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- Intermediate B is for dogs and handlers that have earned an Intermediate title but are not ready to perform off leash.
- **Advanced** – is for handlers/dogs ready to perform off leash.
  - All exercises are done off lead. There must be between 12 to 17 signs (Start and Finish not included) with a minimum of three and a maximum of seven stationary exercises. Courses shall have a minimum of three Advanced level stations plus one required jump per class. Allowed jumps are the high jump, bar jump and broad jump. Signs #1 through #118 of the AKC Rally Regulations may be used.
- **Excellent** – for dog and handler teams ready to perform off lead at a more advanced level. Dogs who have earned a qualifying score at the Excellent, or similar level, from any organization must enter this class. All exercises are judged off leash. All dogs must enter and leave the ring on leash. Rally Excellent must have between 15 to 20 stations (Start and Finish not included) with a minimum of three and a maximum of seven stationary exercises. Courses shall have a minimum of three Advanced level stations and a minimum of three Excellent level



*In Rally, each station has a sign with words and symbols (directional arrows) that provide instructions regarding an obedience skill that is to be performed. (Credit: American Kennel Club).*

stations, plus the two required jumps and the Honor exercise per class. Unlike in the Rally Novice and Advanced classes, in Rally Excellent, handlers are not allowed to pat their legs or clap their hands to encourage the dog. Verbal encouragement, multiple commands and/or inaudible signals using one or both arms and hands are allowed; the handler's arms need not be maintained in any particular position at any time provided the handler is not giving the impression of luring the dog into position. Handlers may not touch their dog or make any physical corrections. Jump heights are specified in the Florida Fair guidelines for Rally competition. Times are used only to break ties.

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Deductions in points may be applied for handling the dog with a tight leash, if the dog interferes with the handler, or performs poorly such as slow sits, slow to respond, or touches the jump.

(Retrieved from <https://www.floridastatefairag.com/show/youth-dog>, December 10, 2020).

## AKC Rally®

The levels of competition in AKC Rally are: Rally Novice, Rally Intermediate, Rally



*In Rally Novice and Intermediate, exercises are done on leash. (© American Kennel Club).*

Advanced, Rally Excellent, Rally Advanced Excellent and Rally Master. Similar to Obedience, there are A and B classes in Rally Novice, Advanced, and Excellent. In the Novice, Intermediate, Advanced and Excellent levels, three qualifying legs are required to earn a title.

- **Rally Novice** – the first level for dogs and handlers just getting started. The dog earns the Rally Novice title (RN).
  - All signs are performed with the dog on leash.

- There is a requirement of 10-15 signs (Start and Finish not included) with a minimum of three and no more than five stationary signs.
- The signs performed vary from turning 360 degrees to changing paces during the course.
- Exhibitors at this level may talk, praise, encourage, give additional commands and/or signals using one or both arms, clap their hands and pat their legs or use any verbal means of encouragement through the course.
- **Rally Intermediate** – is an optional titling class. This title is not required to progress to the Advanced class but it does offer the newly Rally Novice titled dog an opportunity to work many of the more challenging Advanced signs while having the dog on leash. The course requirements are the same as in the Advanced class without the jump.
- **Rally Advanced** – offers more challenging signs throughout the course. The dog earns the Rally Advanced title (RA).
  - All signs are performed off-leash.
- There is a requirement of 12-17 signs (Start and Finish not included) with no more than seven stationary signs.
- Signs include one required jump.

## Chapter 14 – Obedience & Rally

- **Rally Excellent** – is a fun and challenging level of AKC Rally. The dog earns the Rally Excellent title (RE). If the dog qualifies 10 times in both the Advanced B and Excellent B Rally classes (at the same trial), it earns the Rally Advanced Excellent (RAE) title.
  - Signs are performed off-leash.
  - There is a requirement of 15-20 signs, no more than seven stationary exercises, plus two required jumps and a Sit Stay sign.
  - Handlers are allowed to talk, praise and encourage their dogs, but clapping or patting of the legs/body will be penalized.
  - The Excellent-level course includes many fun signs such as backing up three steps while the dog stays in the heel position, a moving stand while the handler walks around the dog, and the dog circling the handler.
- **Rally Advanced Excellent** – the RAE title is earned by completing the Rally Excellent and Rally Advanced titles. The dog must have received qualifying scores in both Advanced B and Excellent B at 10 separate AKC licensed or member rally trials.
- **Rally Master** – is for dogs that have earned the Rally Excellent title. There are 15 to 20 signs and courses must have a minimum of four Master level

signs plus on required jump, a minimum of three Excellent signs and a minimum of three Advanced signs. Rally Master requires a high level of performance. There are no retries for any of the signs and handlers are penalized if they pat their legs or clap to encourage the dog. They may give verbal encouragement.

### Virtual Options for Rally

The world is changing and sometimes, a virtual method of earning titles for your dog will be the best option for you. If attending Rally trials right now isn't for you, you can set up a pre-designed AKC Rally course, record your performance and submit it to AKC. AKC will assign an AKC Rally Judge to review your video and score the performance.

### How Do I Get Started in Obedience and Rally?

If you are a 4-H member, and you want to learn about Obedience and Rally, you're in luck. There's a good chance that your 4-H Dog Project leader will know how to teach you the basics or will know where you can go for advanced training when you and your dog are ready. In addition to the dog training opportunities you will find at 4-H, all across the country, many AKC clubs conduct a variety of classes that are

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instructed by experienced trainers who have earned titles and awards in obedience and rally competitions with their own dogs. These skilled trainers are up-to-date on the latest training techniques and they have experience training both purebred and mixed breed dogs of all sizes, shapes and temperaments. To find an AKC trainer near you, see [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org). Another option for finding an obedience or rally instructor who can teach you from the

basics to competition skills is to check with the dog trainers in your community. It is a good idea to go and observe a class before enrolling. If you want to compete with your dog, be sure to ask if the instructor has competed and earned titles. It is difficult to teach someone something that you have not done yourself.

It's one thing to read a description of a Figure 8 or a Drop on Recall, but the most helpful thing for a learner is to see the

The image shows a YouTube playlist interface. At the top, there is a search bar and a microphone icon. Below that is a video player showing a scene with several people and dogs in an outdoor setting. The video title is 'Novice Obedience Exercises' and it has a 'PLAY ALL' button. Below the video player, the playlist title 'Novice Obedience Exercises' is displayed, along with '7 videos • 30,200 views • Last updated on Jan 12, 2018'. There are icons for playlist management (list, share, link, etc.). A description follows: 'The new exercises listed in this playlist, Sit Stay - Get Your Leash and the Novice Group Exercise, will be performed in the AKC Novice A and B Classes beginning May 1, 2018. These two new exercises will replace the current Novice Group Exercises. The Sit Stay - Get Your Leash will be added to the Preferred Novice class.' Below the description is the AKC Obedience & Rally channel logo and a red 'SUBSCRIBE' button. The playlist items are listed on the right, each with a video thumbnail, a number, the video title, and the channel name 'AKC Obedience & Rally'. The items are: 1. Novice Obedience Exercises (0:06), 2. Novice Sit Stay - Get Your Leash (2) (1:03), 3. Novice Sit Stay - Get Your Leash (3) (0:59), 4. Novice Sit Stay - Get Your Leash (4) (1:08), 5. Novice Sit Stay-Get Your Leash, Classic Demo (1:02), 6. Novice Group Exercise Sit & Down Stay (2) (2:26), 7. Novice Group Exercise, Classic Demo - Back to Back Rows (2:52).

There are videos of obedience exercises on the “AKC Obedience and Rally Judges” YouTube channel. (See page 225). (© American Kennel Club).



## Chapter 14 – Obedience & Rally

behaviors in action. You can go to [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) and see videos of dogs doing the exercises required in each obedience class, or you can watch a dog and handler complete a Rally course. An especially useful resource is the YouTube video channel

“AKC Obedience and Rally Judges” which has videos of all of the obedience and rally exercises.

(<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOmnrKKiM2kcaowVl3SXeVQ>).

Another thing you can do if you are interested in learning more about obedience and rally is go to an event (AKC dog show) near you. You’ll be able to get a good idea of what you and your dog will need to do in order to be successful in the competition ring. You can also learn about ring procedures, and meet people who are successfully competing with their dogs.

### Summary

The emphasis in Obedience and Rally training and competition is on teaching your dog to respond to your requests. Initially the requests are primarily verbal such as when you direct the dog to “Sit.” Over time, your dog will learn to respond to hand signals with no words at all. And then, in the advanced stages of training, you will notice that you have a dog who can respond in an instant to subtle changes

in your body language such as how you position your feet or turn your shoulders. This level of communication that comes about as a result of obedience or rally training ultimately results in a well-mannered, well-behaved dog who is a joy to live with and who functions as your teammate on all of life’s adventures.

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### Activities and Reflections



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Make a diagram explaining the different levels of obedience competition to someone who is new to the sport.
- 2) Demonstrate the exercises at the various levels of competition to the best of your ability. Make a plan to continue developing your dog's abilities.
- 3) Explain to your club or a group how to get started in obedience and rally.
- 4) Develop your dog's skills to be ready to compete in obedience and/or rally.
  - a. Practice reading AKC rally signs.
  - b. Use 2 volunteers to practice figure eights including fast, slow and normal.
  - c. Work on normal, fast and slow while heeling.
  - d. Choose other exercises to practice.

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) What is obedience? What is rally?
- 2) What motivates people to participate in these competitions?
- 3) Can you explain the different levels of competition for obedience? For Rally?



## Chapter 15 – More Dog Activities

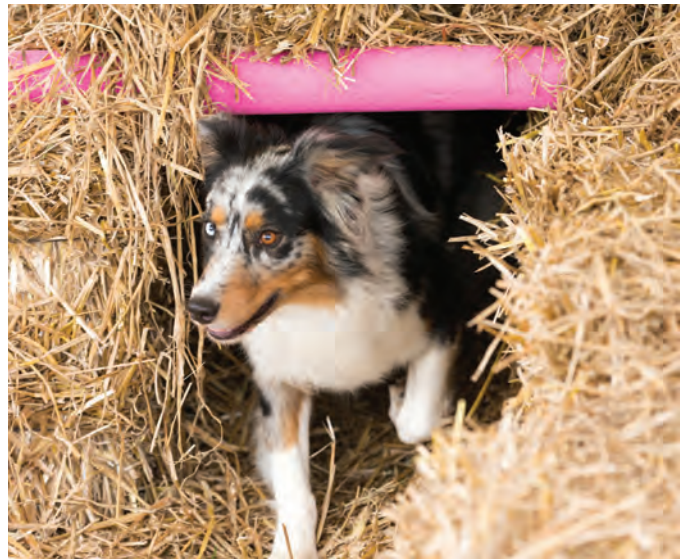
In addition to the many dog activities discussed in previous chapters, there are a number of other sports that you and your dog may enjoy. For some of these, you can earn an American Kennel Club (AKC) title, while others are certificate programs or activities you can just do for fun. Some of the activities for which an AKC title can be earned are administered by other organizations and AKC Parent Clubs (for particular breeds) and they are simply recognized by AKC.

### Barn Hunt

In Chapter 6, “Finding the Right Breed for You,” we talked about how breeds were developed to perform a specific job. The terriers were originated to hunt and rid the farm of vermin such as rats and mice.

*Barn Hunt is the activity where dogs and their handlers work as a team to find rats that are hidden in a maze of straw of hay bales. The rats are kept safe in tubes with ventilation holes, and oftentimes, the rats are family pets.*

All dogs, including purebreds and mixed breeds can participate in Barn Hunt as long as they can fit through a tunnel that is 18” wide and jump the height of a hay bale. In the Barn Hunt test, dogs are brought into the ring and finding the hidden rat (in a tube that is loosely covered with straw) involves tunneling and climbing.



*In Barn Hunt, dogs work to find rats in a maze of straw bales. The rats are kept safe in tubes with ventilation holes. (© American Kennel Club).*

There is a Barn Hunt Instinct Test (RATI), and Barn Hunt titles include: Novice Barn Hunt (RATN), Open Barn Hunt (RATO), Senior Barn Hunt (RATS), and Master Barn Hunt (RATM). There is also a fun Barn Hunt class called Crazy 8s and it is possible to earn National Championship titles in Barn Hunt.

The Barn Hunt Association (BHA) is an independent organization that holds trials and awards Barn Hunt titles. The BHA has been given approval to hold Barn Hunt events in conjunction with AKC events, so you may see testing at AKC shows. The Barn Hunt Association’s titles are recognized by AKC and may be listed on an AKC dog’s title record.

For more information, see: <https://barnhunt.com>

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## Breed Specific Activities

There are some activities that are mainly for one breed or several breeds.

**Carting**, which is sometimes called “drafting,” is the activity in which a dog wearing a harness is hitched to and pulls a cart or wagon. This activity came from the days when working breed were draft animals who helped farmers transport goods to the market. Some of the breeds that are known for their carting abilities include Bernese Mountain Dogs, Greater Swiss Mountain Dogs, Leonbergers, Newfoundlands, and Saint Bernards.

**Coaching** is an activity in which dogs run along (in the correct position) with a carriage or a rider on a horse. The most well-known coach (or carriage) breed is the Dalmatian. Historically, Dalmatians accompanied carriages that were pulled by horses. As a high energy breed who could travel extended distances, the Dalmatian guarded the carriage, followed the horses, and cleared the road.

**Trailing** is an activity that involves the dog using his nose. Whereas tracking is when the dog follows ground scent, the purpose of trailing is to use scent discrimination to correct identify a

specific person (such as a person who was suspected of committing a crime) in a field setting. Bloodhounds participate in trailing tests.

**Pack Dog** is the activity where dogs hike with their handlers and carry a canine pack of a required weight. Pack Dog is an activity for which Siberian Huskies can earn titles. For the Working Pack Dog Excellent title, no fewer than two hikes must cover a minimum of 40 miles hiked on two or more consecutive days. 40 miles! This means that you and your Siberian Husky will need to get fit together if you decide to participate in pack dog activities.

**Water Work** is for breeds such as the Portuguese Water Dog and Newfoundland. In Water Work, examples of tasks dogs perform include taking things to and from a boat, retrieving objects such as floating lines or fishing nets in the water, and carrying objects to shore.

## Coursing Ability Test (CAT)

The Coursing Ability (CAT) test is open to all breeds and mixed breeds that are registered with AKC. The CAT assesses a dog’s coursing instinct and ability to hunt by sight. Dogs must be at least 1 year old to

## Chapter 15 – More Dog Activities



*The exciting sport of disc dog involves dogs fetching and playing games with flying discs.*

participate in the CAT. Dogs run the course one dog at a time and as with lure coursing, dogs chase a lure.

AKC titles can be earned in coursing ability. Dogs that pass the CAT three times will earn a Coursing Ability (CA) title. Ten passes and a dog earns a Coursing Ability Advanced (CAA) title, and 25 passes results in a Coursing Ability Excellent (CAX) title.

### Disc Dog

*Disc Dog is an exciting, fast-paced, fun sport in which dogs fetch and play games with flying discs.* You might have heard this called “Frisbee™ dog”, but Frisbee™ is a specific brand and the general term is “disc dog.” AKC recognizes the disc dog titles of UpDog, a disc dog organization.

For more information, see: <https://updogchallenge.com>

### Dock Diving

Splash! Do you have a dog who loves the water? If so, then dock diving may be

an activity for you. *Dock diving is the sport in which dogs jump from a dock into bodies of water and compete for distance or jump heights.* Docks can be built at lakes and there are also special pools that can be transported to dog events.

North America Diving Dogs (NADD) is an organization that provides portable docks and pools for dock diving events. NADD also holds events and awards dock



*In dock diving, dogs jump into water and compete for jump distance or heights. (© American Kennel Club).*

diving titles. Titles include Novice, Junior, Senior, Master, and Elite for distance jumps, air retrieves, and a swimming event called hydro dash. The American Kennel Club recognizes NADD’s titles and these can be added to a dog’s AKC title record.

For more information, see: <http://northamericadivingdogs.com/about-2/>

### Earthdog

*AKC’s non-competitive earthdog tests provide a way to measure a dog’s natural aptitude and trained hunting and working*

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*behaviors when exposed to an underground hunting situation.* Earthdog tests are for small terriers and Dachshunds. In Earthdog tests, underground tunnels are constructed and dogs must enter the tunnels and follow the scent to a rat. The rat is in a protected cage at all times and neither the dog or rat are in danger.

In AKC Earthdog, dogs begin with Introduction to Quarry where they are acquainted with going to ground and using their noses to follow a scent trail. The dog has to negotiate a tunnel that is 10 feet long and has a right angle turn. Following Introduction to Quarry (which is an instinct test), dogs can earn earthdog titles that include Junior Earthdog (JE), Senior Earthdog (SE), and Master Earthdog (ME).

For more information, see: <http://www.akc.org/events/earth-dog/getting-started/>

## **FAST CAT®**

Do you think you have a fast dog? There's one way to find out. Open to all breeds and mixed breeds dogs that are registered with AKC, the Fast CAT test is a timed 100 yard- dash for dogs.

*FAST CAT® is an AKC titling program that gives dogs a chance to run fast as they chase a lure in a 100-yard dash in a straight line.* The dog's 100-yard dash time is converted to provide the speed in miles per hour. FAST CAT has a handicapping



*Flyball dogs compete with each other by racing over hurdles to get a box that releases a tennis ball.*

system that takes into account the height of the dog.

FAST CAT titles are earned by accumulating points. The following titles will be awarded: BCAT = 150 Points; DCAT = 500 points; FCAT = 1,000 points; and FCAT followed by a number (e.g. FCAT2) for every additional 500 points.

For more information, see: <https://www.akc.org/sports/coursing/fast-cat/>

## **Field Trials (also see Hunt Tests)**

Field trials were developed so that hunting dogs could compete and thereby improve their performance in the field. There are four different types of field trials based on the breeds and their hunting styles. These include Pointing Breeds, Flushing Breeds, Retriever Breeds, and breeds that trail scent.



## Chapter 15 – More Dog Activities

The first field tests were held in England in 1866. Beagle trials were held in the US in the 1880s. The first AKC field trial for pointing breeds was held in 1924 in New Jersey by the English Setter Club of America. Field trials have different standards for Bassets, Beagles, Dachshunds, Pointing Breeds, Retrievers, and Spaniels. There are also events for Coonhounds.

There are some key differences in Field Trials and Hunting Tests. In general, in field trials, dogs compete against each other, whereas, in hunt tests, every dog who can perform the required skills can pass the test.

For more information, see:

<http://www.akc.org/events/field-events/>

### Flyball

*Flyball is the sport in which teams of dogs race against each other over a line of hurdles to get to a box that releases a tennis ball.*

Dogs race side-by-side in a relay race. They run the 51-foot long course, get to the end, press a pad to release the ball, grab it, and then race back to their handlers. The first team that has all 4 dogs complete the course without errors wins the heat. Most of the time, there is a crowd watching flyball and they are screaming with excitement.

Flyball started in the late 1960s when a group of California dog trainers created scent discrimination hurdle racing. Over

time, this new activity evolved and the first flyball tournament was held in 1983. In 1984, the North American Flyball Association Inc. (NAFA®) was formed. NAFA is the sport's main sanctioning organizations. NAFA awards a number of flyball titles starting with Flyball Dog (FD), Flyball Dog Excellent (FDX), and Flyball Dog Champion (FDCh). In addition to these titles that will get you started, there



*Herding dogs move livestock from one place to another.*

are multiple Master, Champion and multibreed titles. The American Kennel Club recognizes NAFA's titles and these can be added to a dog's AKC title record.

For more information, see:

<https://www.flyball.org>

### Herding

If you live on a farm or ranch, your family may have a herding dog that is used to move livestock from one place to another. It is important that you never put an untrained dog with the livestock, even if the dog is a herding breed. This could

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result in dog or livestock getting hurt or becoming traumatized. If you want to learn about herding, there are classes and activities in which you can participate.

AKC has herding trials whose purpose is to preserve and develop the herding skills inherent in the herding breeds, as well as to demonstrate that herding dogs can perform the useful functions for which they were originally bred. In these trials that are artificial simulations of pastoral or farm situations, standardized tests are used. Dogs must have training and prior exposure to livestock before being entered in tests or trials.

A good way to get started is by entering a Herding Instinct Test. Dogs need very little training before entering a Herding Instinct Test. Dogs may be handled by the judge, owner or a designated handler. Judges look for the dog's ability to move and control livestock by fetching or driving. AKC herding clubs can provide opportunities for training. Following the instinct test, the basic herding titles can be earned. These include Herding Started (HS), Herding Intermediate (HI), and Herding Excellent (HX).

For more information, see: <http://www.akc.org/events/herding/getting-started/>

## Hiking

Hiking can be as informal as taking your dog for a walk on a trail, or it can



*AKC FIT DOG clubs organize hikes for dogs and their owners.*

involve hiking a longer distance with or without a pack. Hiking is a way for you and your dog to bond, get exercise, and enjoy the great outdoors.

If you decide to hike with your dog, as with any exercise program, make sure you have the approval of your veterinarian. Your veterinarian can also give you advice regarding distances you should not exceed when you start hiking with your dog. Always bring fresh water (for you and your dog) and for longer distances, you should have food and a first aid kit.

Young puppies, senior dogs and dogs with health or physical problems (such as being extremely overweight) should not walk long distances.

There are classes with names such as "Hiking with Hounds," or "Woof Walks," and in classes such as these, you can enjoy walking with others. In the AKC FIT DOG program you will have the benefit of an instructor who plans and monitors hikes.

## Chapter 15 – More Dog Activities

You can learn more about the AKC FIT DOG Program by visiting: <https://www.akc.org/sports/akc-family-dog-program/akc-fit-dog/>

### Hunt tests (also see Field Trials)

Sporting breed clubs offer hunting tests. These tests are a good place to start if you are interested in field training for your sporting breed. *Hunting tests are designed to evaluate the abilities of dogs who are performing hunting tasks by testing them against a standard.* Dogs are tested at various levels and when the requirements of a level are met, the dog will be awarded an AKC title. In the case of the sporting breeds, these titles would be the Junior Hunter (JH), Senior Hunter (SH) and Master Hunter (MH).

To get started in hunting tests, you can join a local dog club that relates to your specific breed or type, such as a spaniel, retriever or pointing breed club. You can also attend a hunting test to observe before you enter your dog in a test.

To find events and more information, go to [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) and in the search box, enter the type of hunting test you are looking for (e.g., “Spaniel hunting test,” “Retriever hunting test,” or “Pointer hunting test”).



*In lure coursing, dogs chase a lure that is mechanically operated. (© American Kennel Club).*

### Lure Coursing

*Lure coursing, a sport that involves chasing a lure that is mechanically operated, tests the dog's coursing instinct.* The lure is a piece of white plastic that is on a pulley system. The lure is strung around a course measuring 600 to 800 yards in an open field, and the whole activity simulates the dog chasing a rabbit or other prey.

Breeds that are eligible to participate in AKC Lure Coursing include the: Afghan Hound, Basenji, Borzoi, Cirneco Dell'Etna, Greyhound, Ibizan Hound, Irish Wolfhound, Italian Greyhound, Pharaoh Hound, Portuguese Podengo Pequeno, Rhodesian Ridgeback, Saluki, Scottish Deerhound, Sloughi, and Whippet. These are all breeds that see their prey at a distance and chase after it.

The AKC has lure coursing tests in which dogs are judged for the ability to follow the lure, speed, agility and endurance. In the Junior Courser test, the

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dog runs solo and is required to run at least a 600-yard course with four turns under two different judges.

There is a Qualified Courser (QC) certificate that is earned by having a hound run the course with another dog. For the Senior Courser test, the dog must run with at least one other dog and must earn a qualifying score at four AKC tests under at least two different judges.

Dogs may also go on to more advanced Lure Coursing and earn the Master Courser title, a Field Championship (FC), or the distinction of the Lure Courser Excellent title (LCX).

For more information, see:

<https://www.akc.org/sports/coursing/lure-coursing/getting-started/>

## Nose Work (see Scent Work)

### Scent Work (Nose Work)

In Scent Work, dogs use their sense of smell to detect hidden odors. For working dogs, such as police K9 dogs, a scent exercise might be to find drugs in the trunk of a car in a parking lot. In the sport of AKC Scent Work®, dogs search for cotton swabs that are saturated with the essential oils of Anise, Birch, Clove and Cypress. The swabs are hidden so that a judge knows where they are, but the dog and handler do not know until the dog finds them.

In AKC Scent Work, four different



*In Scent Work, dogs use their sense of smell to detect hidden odors. (© American Kennel Club).*

environments are called “elements.” These elements are Container, Interior, Exterior and Buried.

- Container – the dog is presented with an open area with a number of containers such as cardboard boxes, backpacks or luggage and they must determine which container holds the scent.
- Interior – the search takes place indoors, in an everyday setting and the dog searches around furniture.
- Exterior – the dog searches an everyday outdoor area with vegetation, objects and structures.
- Buried – the target scent is hidden beneath the ground and the dog must indicate the area under which the scent is buried.

Within each of the four elements are four difficulty levels and an AKC title can be earned in each class. This means that Scent Work can be an ongoing activity for the dog and handler.

## Chapter 15 – More Dog Activities

The National Association of Canine Scent Work (NACSW™) is another sanctioning and organizing body for the sport. NACSW refers to their scent work as K9 Nose Work.

For more information, see:

<http://www.akc.org/events/scent-work/>

### Search and Rescue (SAR)

Sometimes, when people hear about Search and Rescue dogs, they focus only on the dog finding someone who is lost. Because a critical part of Search and Rescue is that the handler is trained and qualified to provide first aid to people who are in distress or danger, you may have to wait to do this when you are older. For example, a Search and Rescue dog might find a lost hiker, but then, the handler is responsible for stabilizing any injuries until help arrives.

Started in 1972, the National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR), has training, certifications and credentialing for SAR dogs and handlers. Search and Rescue dogs are trained to locate people who have conditions related to wandering away (such as Alzheimer's or autism), as well as people who are lost such as hikers in a wilderness area. If you are interested in Search and Rescue, contact a SAR unit near you to learn more.

For more information, see:

<http://www.nasar.org>



*Sledding is a hobby that you can pursue if you live in a place where it snows. Otherwise, you may be able to experience a dog sled ride if your family takes a trip to a place where it snows.*

### Sledding

If you live in a place where it snows and you have a breed such as an Alaskan Malamute, Samoyed, or Siberian Husky, dog sledding may be the activity for you. Sled dogs have a history that goes back to 1000 A.D. when archeological evidence shows that early dogs transported people and cargo such as firewood, food and supplies.

In 1908, a sled dog race took place in Nome, Alaska. Then, in 1925, a deadly diphtheria epidemic struck Nome. There was no way to get the medicine that could

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cure people who were going to die without it via the roads or planes. Using a route that began in Seward, Leonhard Seppala and some Alaskan natives (including Athabascan and Inupiat Eskimos) drove teams of sled dogs 700 miles in 50-below temperatures to deliver the life-saving diphtheria medicine to Nome. “Mushers” commemorate this historic event when they compete in the annual Iditarod Dog Sled Race known as, “The Last Great Race on Earth.”

A statue of Balto, one of the lead dogs for Seppala’s team, is in New York’s Central Park.

There are sled dog clubs that can teach all of the basics of this exhilarating sport.

For more information, see:

<http://www.akc.org/content/entertainment/articles/meet-todays-sled-dogs/>

## Tracking

When it comes to dogs, the nose knows. Because the dog’s sense of smell is estimated as 10,000 to 100,000 times as strong as a human’s sense of smell (see Chapter 2), dogs can get an extraordinary amount of information by using their sense of smell. *Tracking is an activity that demonstrates a dog’s ability to recognize and follow a scent.*

Tracking requires very little equipment. All you need is a harness, a 20 to 40-ft. tracking lead, some flags to mark the track,

and an open, grassy area. Some hot dogs or food rewards are also helpful in the beginning stages of training. Dogs must be at least 6 months old to compete in tracking.

In a tracking test, judges and tracklayers go to the area the day before the test and plot a track for each dog. The morning of the test, the tracklayers walk the track. After the tracks have been aged for the required time, one at a time, the dogs will begin tracking. They must follow the path of the tracklayer and find the objects dropped along the track.

Dogs can earn four AKC Tracking titles with three increased levels of difficulty. The titles are Tracking Dog (TD), Tracking Dog Urban (TDU), Tracking Dog Excellent (TDX) and Variable Surface Tracking (VST).

In the beginning level of tracking (TD), the track is from 440 to 500 yards long. There are three to five turns (or changes in direction). The track is aged from 30 minutes to two hours. The dog must indicate a glove or wallet placed at the end of the track. Tracks are plotted in an open field with uniform cover.

In contrast, the Tracking Dog Excellent (TDX) track is more difficult. The TDX track is 800 to 1000 yards long. There are five to seven turns, and the track is aged from three to five hours. The track also has two sets of cross (diversionary) tracks and

## Chapter 15 – *More Dog Activities*

there are four personal, dissimilar articles (about the same size as a glove or wallet) for each track, one at the start and three more on the track. The last article may be a glove or wallet.

For more information, see:

<http://www.akc.org/events/tracking/faq/>

### Summary

In previous chapters, we talked in detail about training activities that could be administered by your 4-H Dog Project leader such as Canine Good Citizen and Farm Dog testing. This chapter has provided a list of many more areas in which you can choose to train your dog. Training is educational for both dogs and their owners and if you want to become a dog trainer, there is no limit to what you can do! Training can help maintain the working function of breeds, it teaches you to communicate better with your dog, and most of all, it is fun!

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## Chapter 15 – Activities and Reflections

### More Dog Activities



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Research one or two non-competitive activities. Find a local club/chapter to help mentor you to learn more.
- 2) Create a list of materials needed, local activities, and training needed to complete a non-competitive activity/certification. (Hint: Even though it is possible to earn titles in some activities, you may be able to do them just for fun with your dog).

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) Name two activities that would be classified as non-competitive.
- 2) What is the difference in tracking and trailing?
- 3) What is one non-competitive activity you would like to do with your dog?
- 4) Were there any of these non-competitive activities you were not aware of?



## Chapter 16 – *Dogs with Jobs*

For centuries, dogs have had jobs such as hunting and herding. On farms, dogs have worked as ratters whose job it was to rid the farm of vermin that were harmful to crops, game or farm animals.

Much of the early work that dogs performed was closely tied to their natural abilities and instinct. *Instinct is present when animals are born and it is an innate pattern of behavior that occurs in response to certain stimuli.* An example of instinct would be hounds in the field who see a rabbit and immediately begin to chase it.



*Much of the early work that dogs performed was closely tied to their natural abilities and instinct.*

Centuries ago, dogs also served as companions. Companion jobs were not necessarily related to instinct. Instead, they were jobs that people created. Examples were having dogs as lap dogs and foot warmers. Believe it or not, there was a time before bathtubs, showers, and indoor plumbing when fleas got on people. Small dogs were kept so the fleas would get on

the dog rather than the humans in the household.

Some breeds had a job that is no longer needed, so the job has been replaced. An example is Dalmatians who were known as coach dogs. Dalmatians would run alongside of coaches clearing the road. We no longer have coaches so the modern day job for Dalmatians is to run with riders on horseback. They also serve as mascots for fire departments.

Many dog related sports are built around the activities that dogs originally did as a job. In lure coursing, hounds chase a plastic lure that simulates a rabbit. There are herding titles for dogs who herd livestock in the same way that farmers and shepherds do to move their sheep, cattle and other stock.

### **Entertainment**

The idea of dogs entertaining people is certainly not new. Long before we saw dogs on America's Got Talent, dogs were performing tricks as far back as the Roman Empire (753 BC to 27 BC and then from 64 AD to 1453 AD). In the 1700s, dog acts were popular in circuses that traveled across Europe and these circuses came to the United States in the 1800s.

As a star of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, in the 1920s, Annie Oakley would show off her sharpshooter skills by shooting an apple off of the head of her

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*Dogs have entertained people in early circuses, in trick dog acts, on television, and in movies.*

dog, Dave. Dave clearly had a very reliable sit-stay! In the 1920s to the 1950s, there was an increase in using well-trained dogs in movies and in television. Two of the most well-known dogs in this time period were Rin Tin Tin and Lassie.

From 1922 to 1944, a series of short films called “Our Gang” (which were also called “The Little Rascals”) told stories about a group of children and their adventures. They always had a Pitbull whose name in the movies was, “Petey.”

In 1939, the magical beloved movie, “The Wizard of Oz,” featured “Toto,” a Cairn Terrier whose real name was Terry. After Toto, in 1959, the movie “The Shaggy Dog” was first produced by Walt Disney and since then, there have been several remakes of the movie demonstrating that dogs in film stand the test of time.

“Benji” was a highly successful movie in 1974 that told the story of a stray dog.

Other movies with canine stars were *Homeward Bound*, *The Adventures of Milo & Otis*, *Beethoven*, *Turner & Hooch*, and *Marley & Me*.

One of the most popular dogs in a television show was “Eddie,” a Parson Russell Terrier on the show, “*Frasier*.” Eddie’s real name was Moose and he delighted audiences for 11 seasons from 1993 to 2004.

There was a real-life dog named Air Buddy that could shoot basketball hoops and in 1997, Walt Disney Films made a movie about Air Buddy and named it, “Air Bud.”

If you would like to teach your dog to be a star, there are books, videos and classes for animal actors.



*While herding dogs usually herd livestock, some have been used to keep geese off golf courses or airport runways.*

## Herding Dogs

In Chapter 6, *Finding the Right Breed for You*, we talked about the herding breeds that are used on farms and ranches to herd

## Chapter 16 – *Dogs with Jobs*

livestock such as sheep, cattle and ducks. Herding dogs are directed by the handlers to move animals in a field, through gates and into or out of enclosures.

There are some urban jobs that take herding dogs off of the farm. In 1994, Bob Phipps taught his dog, JAC, a Border Collie to keep geese off of a golf course in Connecticut. Using his herding abilities, JAC moved the geese off the course and into a pond where they did not disturb golfers. At the same time, across town from where JAC was working to keep a golf course geese-free, another Border Collie, Cap, successfully kept geese off another golf course.

Herding dogs also have jobs at airports. In 2016, a Border Collie named Piper made national news for his work at Cherry Capital Airport in Traverse City, Michigan. Piper's job was to keep ducks, geese, owls, foxes and any other animals off the airfield.

Since JAC, Cap and Piper first did their jobs, an increasing number of golf courses and airports are relying on herding dogs to be the geese police.

### **K9 Dogs**

K9 dogs are specially trained to assist the police, other law enforcement, or the military. K9 dogs perform a variety of jobs including protection, locating narcotics, tracking/trailing suspects, and locating bombs or other explosive devices.



*K9 dogs are specially trained to assist the police, other law enforcement, or the military. Some K9 dogs are taught to search for illegal substances or objects.*

K9 dogs are also trained to do special jobs such as finding cell phones (that are not allowed in prisons), searching lockers in schools, patrolling and searching for illegal substances in airports (including luggage searches), and in cars in parking lots.

K9 dogs are also used by Border Patrol agents to search vehicles that are coming in to the United States. Sometimes, the scent dogs are searching for illegal drugs, but K9 dogs who are trained to search don't only search for illegal drugs. Some K9 dogs are trained to find firearms, or contraband such as certain fruit and vegetables and ivory that is not allowed to enter this country.

Cadaver dogs find dead bodies and human remains, bones, or bone fragments. There are also dogs who specialize in underwater searches.

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*The main job of livestock guard dogs is to protect their flocks of goats or sheep from predators.*

## Livestock Guard Dogs

The main job of livestock guard dogs is to protect their flocks of goats or sheep from predators. The ability to guard a herd is instinct and dogs who have this ability are born with it. There are certain breeds such as the Great Pyrenees, Komondor, and Maremma Sheepdog that work as livestock guard dogs.

Kudzu is an invasive weed that damages other plants by smothering them. One solution is to place goats in an area with kudzu. Within a short period of time, the goats will eat the kudzu and clear the area of this harmful plant that can damage the environment. When a flock of goats is taken somewhere to clear the kudzu, they are protected by livestock guard dogs.

In 2012, Max and Otter, two mixed breed (Great Pyrenees and Turkish Kangal) livestock guard dogs, watched over the goats at the East Knoxville (Tennessee) Williams Creek Urban Forest. With Max

and Otter keeping them safe, 35 goats cleared five acres of kudzu in only 10 days.

## Mascots

Another less common but widely recognized job for dogs is the job of mascot. With names like Ember and Cinder, Dalmatians are often the mascots of fire stations. While they no longer run alongside a fire coach, Dalmatians are present to meet and greet the public, take part of photo opportunities, and keep the firefighters company. They also go to schools and community clubs with firefighters to teach about fire safety.



*Dog mascots can be people in dog costumes or real dogs.*

## Businesses

If you've seen ads for the well-known store, Target, you may have noticed a white Bull Terrier in the ads. This Target mascot travels with a make-up artist who paints two red circles around one of the dog's eyes. The circles look just like

## Chapter 16 – *Dogs with Jobs*

the bullseye in the Target logo. So not surprisingly, the name of this dog is, “Bullseye.”

### Colleges

A number of colleges have dogs as their team mascots. Since 1956, Bulldogs named “Uga” have been the mascot of the University of Georgia. Texas A & M University has had a Collie named “Reveille” as the team mascot and as of 2017, there were Reveilles numbered I through IX. The University of Washington (the Huskys) has an Alaskan Malamute as the school’s mascot. The mascot’s name, “Dubs,” was chosen in a contest.

### Medical Detection Dogs

In 1989, a British general medical journal, “The Lancet,” had an article about a woman whose Border Collie kept sniffing at a particular mole on her leg while ignoring other moles on her body. The woman had the mole checked by her doctor only to discover that it was melanoma, a potentially deadly skin cancer. Since that published report in 1989, other research has been done to demonstrate that dogs can differentiate between cancer cells and normal cells. Dogs have been able to identify melanomas as well as lung, breast, and bladder cancer.



*There are a number of dogs trained for scent detection jobs. Arson dogs find the substances that were used to start a fire.*

### Scent Detection

In addition to the scent jobs that were mentioned above under “K9 Dogs”, scent dogs perform a number of other jobs.

There are dogs who find bed bugs in hotels and some dogs are trained to find mold. Mold can grow on the walls (in drywall, paint and wallpaper), in roofs, windows, pipes, carpet and fabric. The job of a scent detection dog who finds mold is very important because mold is dangerous and it can make everyone in a house sick.

Pipeline dogs are detector dogs that identify leaks in oil and gas pipelines. There are also dogs that are trained to detect sewage leaks and arson dogs who find the substances that were used to start a fire.

“Captain Ron” is a Beagle on Disney World’s Conservation Team. Captain Ron is trained to sniff out endangered sea turtle eggs so that nests can be marked and kept safe.

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## Search and Rescue Dogs

Search and Rescue (SAR) dogs are used for tracking in the wilderness and in urban areas. They also work in settings where there are natural disasters and they perform jobs such as finding people buried in rubble when there has been an earthquake. They also locate missing people such as a person with Alzheimer's Disease or dementia who has wandered away. SAR dogs have located children who were lost in the woods.

## Avalanche Dogs

If you go skiing at one of Colorado's ski resorts, don't be surprised if you see a dog riding the chair lift with its handler. There is a good chance that this is an avalanche dog. Avalanches occur when a large amount of snow rapidly moves down a sloping surface such as a mountain. Avalanches can get up to 80 miles an hour in 5 seconds and they happen so fast that everyone and everything in their path can be completely buried in snow. Avalanche dogs that are specially trained to find people buried in the snow are usually paired with a member of the ski patrol. Dogs can search for someone who is under snow faster than a person, and as a result, avalanche dogs can save lives.

## Service Dogs

Service dogs are dogs that are specifically trained to help people with



*Service dogs help a person with a disability. Service dogs are trained on tasks specifically related to the disability.*

disabilities that may include visual impairments or blindness, hearing impairments or deafness, and mobility impairments.

Service dogs are trained to work with people who have PTSD or seizures. Seizure dogs stand guard over a person who is having a seizure or they go and get help. A smaller number of seizure dogs have the ability to alert their handler that he or she is going to have a seizure.

Psychiatric service dogs have been trained to perform tasks that help their person detect the onset of a psychiatric episode (such as an extreme anxiety attack) and lessen the effects.

More recent uses of service dogs include dogs who detect substances such as gluten and dogs who give their owners a warning that they have low blood sugar or are going to have a migraine headache. There are also service dogs for children and adults with autism. Autism service dogs keep a child

## Chapter 16 – *Dogs with Jobs*

from running out of the yard or they help calm the child.

For these less common uses of service dogs, more research as to their effectiveness is needed. Unfortunately, there have been cases of fraud related to service animals. In cases of service dog fraud, the dog costs a lot of money, (sometimes more than \$10,000), only for the family to discover and it cannot do the tasks for which it was supposedly trained.

### **Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)**

Emotional support dogs are companion animals. They are not service dogs and they do not have the same access to public places such as airplanes. Emotional support dogs provide companionship and relieve loneliness. They can help with problems such as anxiety, nervousness, depression and certain phobias, but *they do not have special training to perform tasks that help the person with a disability.*

### **Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The Americans With Disabilities Act, often called the ADA, is a law that among other things, covers service and emotional support animals. Passed in 1990, the ADA prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. The law says that people with disabilities can not be discriminated against in areas such as employment, transportation, or public accommodations.

### **Rights of the Service Dog User**

The ADA requires that service dogs be under the control of their handlers. They must be well-behaved and housetrained. The ADA states that service animals are allowed in public buildings and on public transportation such as trains and airplanes. Business owners can not ask a person with a service dog about their disability; they can only ask two questions that include:

- 1) Is this dog required because of a disability and,
- 2) What work or task has this dog been trained to perform?



**Service Dogs:** *A service dog works with one person (the dog's owner) who has a disability. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability.*

**Emotional Support Dogs:** *The sole function of Emotional Support Animals (ESA) is to provide comfort or emotional support. ESAs do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.*

**Therapy Dogs:** *Dogs that volunteer with their owners to help others. Therapy dogs have no special access to public places.*

**Canine Good Citizens –** *The Canine Good Citizen test is a test of good manners and dogs are not service dogs, emotional support dogs, or therapy dogs simply as a result of passing the CGC test.*

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## A Brief History

References pertaining to service animals helping people go all the way back to the 16th century. During World War I (1914 – 1918), the first schools for service dogs were started in Germany to provide dogs to veterans who became blind as a result of combat injuries.

In 1929, in the United States, the Seeing Eye School was founded in Nashville, Tennessee. The school was later moved to New Jersey. In 1942, Guide Dogs for the Blind started to train dogs for people with low vision or blindness. As of 2017, more than 14,000 dog and handler teams had graduated from Guide Dogs for the Blind, making this one of the largest service dog organizations in the country.

In 1975, there was another breakthrough in the service dog world when Canine Companions for Independence (CCI) started and expanded the service dog concept from dogs who could assist people who were blind to dogs who could assist people with physical disabilities. The first handler and dog team that graduated from CCI was Kerry Knaus and her service dog Abdul, a black Labrador Retriever who performed tasks such as turning on the lights, standing on his hind legs to give money to a bank teller, and getting food from the refrigerator. By 2015, CCI had graduated nearly 5000 dogs.

The job of a service dog is one of the most important canine jobs. Service dogs help people perform daily tasks and live an independent life.

## Therapy Dogs

In Chapter 11, we described the rich history of therapy dogs, the skills needed by dogs in therapy settings, and we outlined how to get started in therapy work



*Therapy dogs are dogs that volunteer with their owners to help others. Therapy dogs have no special access to public places.*

with your dog.

Even though in some places, therapy dog services are billable (the therapy organization is paid), in most cases you will be volunteering with your therapy dog. Even if you are volunteering, therapy work is a job to be taken seriously. You and your dog can volunteer in schools, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, hospitals, programs for veterans, PTSD settings, at colleges (during stressful final exams week), and READ programs for children.



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Disaster relief therapy dogs are used after a natural disaster such as an earthquake or hurricane, and they have also made an invaluable contribution to ease the emotional pain of survivors following school shootings.

Therapy dogs and their handlers work with many types of professionals. These include: social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, recreation therapists, counselors, occupational therapists, physical therapists, directors of volunteer services, and teachers. If therapy work is something that you would like to do as a part of your career, you could consider going to college and getting a degree in an area in which you could use a therapy dog as a part of your job.

There are some special uses of therapy dogs.

- Airport Greeter – Airport Greeter therapy dogs bring cheer to travelers who may be stressed. Their handlers can help with directions, but people mainly want to pet the dogs. More than 30 airports across the country now have therapy dog programs.
- Dental offices – The dentist's office is a place where a person can experience stress, especially if that person is a child. Some dentists are adding therapy dogs to their offices. In Woodbridge, Virginia, at Golden Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics, "Flossie" sits on the

laps of children and helps them remain calm.

- Funeral dogs – Because dogs are so good at helping people deal with sadness, there are a growing number of dogs that work in funeral homes. Judd, a specially trained therapy dog in Fairmount, Indiana is handled by Shari Wallace, the grief therapy dog handler at Armes-Hunt Funeral Home. Judd sits with people who need him and comforts them during the service.
- Hotel Greeter – Like the Airport Greeter Dog, the Hotel Greeter welcomes and comforts travelers who may be experiencing stress or travel related frustration. The Hyatt in Coconut Point (Florida) Resort had two dogs to remind guests of their pets at home. Hoss and Honeybear were two big furry Newfoundlands that would greet guests or attend a child's birthday party in the hotel. Children who might normally be sad to have their birthday away from home would often say the party with the dogs was their best birthday ever!

### Summary

From the world of entertainment to traditional jobs such as hunting and herding, when they use their remarkable abilities, it seems there is no end to the list of jobs that dogs can do for us. Perhaps one

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of the most important dog jobs of all is to be a companion and a valuable family member who fills your days with joy and love.

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### Activities and Reflections



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Write or act out a time you saw a dog working. What was the dog doing and what role did the handler play?
- 2) See if you could shadow a working dog for a day (or part of a day) to see what it is like. Write a summary of what you observed to tell your club about it.
- 3) Create an informational poster on a job dogs can have.

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) What are some famous or popular dogs that you know of?
- 2) What are some jobs dogs have?
- 3) What job would you see your dog doing best?



## Chapter 17 – *Careers in Dogs*

### Animal Behaviorist

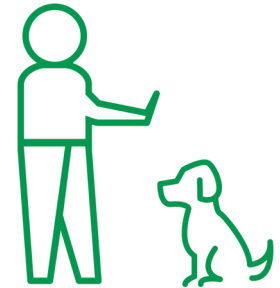
The job of an animal behaviorist is to solve animal behavior problems. Animal behaviorists and dog trainers often work together and many animal behaviorists are also skilled trainers because training is a critical part of changing or eliminating many problematic behaviors. After ruling out any medical issues by having the dog seen by a veterinarian, the animal behaviorist will work with the dog's family to address behavioral issues.

A complete assessment includes the veterinary check-up, assessing the dog's home situation, and evaluating factors such as the dog's nutrition and exercise. The dog should be directly observed by the animal behaviorist.



*Animal behaviorists assess the dog's home situation before developing a plan.*

Sometimes, when canine professionals are simply interested in animal behavior, they call themselves “animal behaviorists.” In fact, “Animal Behaviorist” is a credential that involves advanced training and certification. The most well-recognized animal behavior certifications are through two professional



***Animal Behaviorists Address Behavioral Issues such as:***

- *Aggression (toward people or animals)*
- *Anxiety*
- *Destruction*
- *Fear*
- *Housetraining*
- *Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)*
- *Phobias*
- *Pica (eating inedible objects)*
- *Resource guarding*

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organizations that are the 1) Animal Behavior Society ([www.animalbehavior.org](http://www.animalbehavior.org)) and, 2) the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants, known as the IAABC ([www.iaabc.org](http://www.iaabc.org)).

There are also veterinarians who are animal behaviorists.

If you choose a career as an animal behaviorist, you will help dog owners and make a very positive difference in the lives of dogs.



*Working in a boarding kennel will give you experience with a variety of breeds.*

## Boarding

You can begin a career in boarding by accepting an entry level position at a boarding kennel. This will initially mean that you will be providing basic care such as taking dogs in and out, feeding them, and cleaning kennels. If you decide that working in a boarding kennel is

something you would like to do long-term, you can move up the career ladder and manage a boarding kennel, or eventually start your own business. Some boarding operations have training as a part of the boarding package. Experienced dog trainers can put their training skills to work in a boarding kennel. If you would a career related to boarding dogs, consider volunteering at a kennel or shelter to gain experience.

Working in a boarding kennel is hard work and much of the work you'll do is not glamorous. Cleaning kennels, disinfecting, and doing laundry may not be the most fun tasks you've ever done, but they are jobs that must be done as a part of caring for dogs.

The best part of working in a boarding kennel is the reward that comes from knowing you are keeping the dogs in your care safe and happy.

## Daycare

An increasing number of dog owners are choosing to leave their dogs in doggy daycare while they work during the day. Daycare gives dog owners peace of mind because they know dogs are supervised and provided with stimulating activities such as playing with other dogs in play groups and going outside for exercise. If you choose to work in a daycare for dogs, you will be

## Chapter 17 – *Careers in Dogs*

involved in assessing dogs to determine if they are safe in groups, and there is a good chance you will be supervising playgroups that usually have a maximum of 10 dogs. You might also provide basic training such as teaching dogs to sit and wait before you open the kennel door. Daycare staff also interact with dog owners. These interactions might involve preparing short written reports or videotaping dogs so owners can see how they are doing in daycare. Other daycare tasks include taking dogs outside, playing with them, getting the dogs ready for rest time, feeding dogs and cleaning kennels, and providing medications as needed. Some daycare businesses have a certified groomer but staff might be responsible for emergency grooming (such as a bath for a dog who has soiled himself) or routine brushing.

### **Dog Shows**

There are a number of careers from which you could choose if you are interested in showing dogs. In 4-H, you may have already gotten a great start in showing in conformation, obedience or agility. Here are some careers related to dog shows:

#### **Breeder**

While it is unlikely that you could make a living breeding dogs, many responsible breeders consider breeding as a key part of the foundation for a career such as



*Responsible breeders breed dogs to improve a breed. They are well-educated about canine genetics and have an organized breeding plan.*

being a judge for dog shows. If you have fallen in love with a breed and decide to breed a litter, make sure that you are a responsible breeder. Responsible breeders breed dogs to improve a breed. They are well educated about canine genetics and they have organized breeding plans. Responsible breeders belong to their breed's national (AKC) parent club and they work closely with mentors before breeding a litter. When puppies are sold, there is a contract that says if for any reason the puppy buyer can not keep a puppy, it should be returned to the breeder rather than taken to a shelter.

#### **Handler**

Professional handlers show dogs in the conformation ring, and professional handling can be a full-time career. With the connections you can make by showing a dog in 4-H, you can get an early start by volunteering to help a

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handler in exchange for mentoring. The AKC Registered Handlers Program ([www.akc.org/events/handlers](http://www.akc.org/events/handlers)) helps handlers develop expertise in the care, conditioning and presentation of show dogs.



*Professional handling can be a full-time career.  
(© American Kennel Club).*

The Professional Handlers Association, Inc., ([phadoghandlers.com](http://phadoghandlers.com)) is a professional trade organization that represents the interests of professional dog handlers. The PHA has an apprentice program for beginning handlers. Many professional handlers are also very skilled groomers (see above for Groomers).

## **Judge**

There are dog show judges for events including conformation, obedience, rally, agility, herding, lure coursing, and other events.

- Conformation judges – are licensed and approved to judge breeds only after they can pass a written test on the breed standards of breeds they will be judging. Conformation judges must also demonstrate (in person) the ability to correctly judge a breed before being approved as a judge.
  - Agility judges – not only judge the dogs in the ring, they must also design the courses and have them approved before the trial.
  - Obedience and Rally judges – as with Agility, obedience and rally judges set up the ring and brief stewards before judging begins.

## **Staff (AKC)**

Another option for a career related to dogs is to work at the AKC or another dog registry or organization. These are jobs that do not involve handling or working directly with dogs. Most positions require knowledge and skills in a special area such as computer skills, data entry, administrative assistant, management, business, marketing (including digital marketing), Public Relations (PR), or working on special programs.



## Chapter 17 – *Careers in Dogs*

### **Dog Walker (and Pet sitters)**

Another dog related business that is increasing in popularity is that of a dog walker. Dog walkers come to the home while owners are away on vacation or at work and they take the dog out for a walk during the day. When an owner is out of town, the dog walker might take the dog on several walks during the day. Dog walkers sometimes combine the career of dog walking with pet sitting. Dog walkers usually just come in and take dogs for a walk, while pet sitters will watch the dog for an extended period of time. In addition to walking the dog, pet sitters feed the dog at scheduled times, play with the dog, and provide exercise in a fenced yard. The largest network of dog walkers is [rover.com](http://rover.com) and the professional organization for pet sitters is Pet Sitters International ([www.petsit.com](http://www.petsit.com))

### **Editor (see Writers)**

### **Groomer**

Dog groomers do a lot more than give haircuts to dogs. They bathe and dry dogs and style their coats. Groomers also trim nails, brush the dog's teeth, clean the ears, and express the anal glands when needed. Groomers are trained to safely use many different grooming tools that include a variety of combs, brushes, hair dryers, electric clippers, and various types of nail clippers.



Groomers can work in show kennels for professional handlers or in pet retail stores such as Petco and Petsmart. Some veterinarians have a groomer. If you are interested in grooming dogs as a career, you can work in a grooming salon or a mobile unit with the possibility of eventually owning your own grooming business. To become a groomer, you can learn from a professional groomer or attend a grooming school. Groomers for pet retail operations such as Petco and Petsmart are trained on the job.

If you have been involved in showing your dog in 4-H, there is a good chance you already have a basic knowledge of grooming.

### **Pet Industry**

There are many career paths in the pet industry for someone who wants to combine business and dogs. All of the dog food companies have jobs for researchers, sales representatives, event planners, and people with marketing and public relations (PR) skills.

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There are also companies that produce products for pets including toys or supplies such as collars, beds, leashes and brushes.

Companies that have retail stores such as Petco or Petsmart have jobs locally. Some of these jobs are sales/cashier, stocking the shelves, pet care for small animals such as fish and birds, and dog trainer. For the large retail chains, another option if you have the necessary training and skills is working in their national office in areas such as program development, marketing, PR, or computer support.

## **Pet Sitter (see Dog Walker)**

## **Photographer (see Writers)**

## **Professions (where you can specialize in dogs)**

There are a number of professions which are not typically dog oriented, but if you love dogs, you can enter these fields and create your own career.

- Artist – artist, gallery owner, museum curator (such as AKC Museum of the Dog)
- Attorney – specialize in dog and animal related law
- Health care professional – Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Recreation Therapist, Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Counselor, Physician. All of these are jobs in which you could

- include a dog as a part of the therapy.
- Media Host – for pet TV or radio



*To become a researcher, you will need college degrees. To study medical problems or diseases in dogs, you would most likely get a degree in veterinary medicine.*

## **Researcher**

If you enjoy school and plan to go to college, a career in research that is related to dogs might interest you. Researchers typically get their Bachelor's degrees (four years of college) and then go on to graduate school to earn their Masters and PhD degrees. Researchers often have research assistants who graduated from college (or are college students) but they may not have all of the graduate training as the primary researcher.

The area in which you would get a college degree would depend on the type of research you wanted to do. For example, if you wanted to study a medical problem or disease in dogs, you would most likely get a degree in veterinary medicine.

## Chapter 17 – *Careers in Dogs*

Dog related research can be done in many areas including Applied Behavior Analysis, Archaeology, the Canine Genome, DNA, Ethology, and Veterinary Medicine.

### **Applied Behavior Analysis**

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is the field of psychology that studies how to identify environmental variables and behavior change techniques. An example of ABA research question might be, “how does a shelter dog respond when given treats for being calm when approaching visitors?” The “applied” part of ABA means that the research is done in the real world rather than in a laboratory.

Dr. Alexandra “Sasha” Protopopova has a doctorate (PhD) in behavior analysis. Some of her research focuses on how to get dogs adopted from shelters. Dr. Protopopova has created a research team at Texas Tech University to study dog related issues.

### **Archaeology**

In Australia, Gary Jackson combined his love of dog training with his interest in archaeology to teach a black Labrador Retriever named “Migaloo” to find bones that were hundreds of years old. Migaloo was able to find a 600-year old grave, showing that a dog could be an

important resource for finding sacred grave sites.

### **Canine Genome**

At the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Dr. Elaine Ostrander is the chief of the Cancer Genetics program and she leads the Dog Genome project. This project about the domestic dog studies the genetics of health and body structures and asks basic questions such as, “what is inherited?”

Dr. Ostrander’s research team looks at the variation in individual dog breeds and they study more than 350 inherited diseases in dogs to locate the genes related to canine cancer.

### **DNA**

Dr. Elinor Karlsson is an assistant professor in bioinformatics and integrative biology at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. She has a special interest in diseases shared by humans and dogs and she leads the “Darwin’s Dogs” project. This project studies how canine DNA has changed from when dogs lived in the wild until they became our companions. Karlsson’s lab examines the DNA of dogs and how it relates to differences in behavior from one dog to the next and one breed to the next.

# 4-H Dog Project Manual



*Ethologists study the behavior of animals in nature. Instead of studying pet dogs, an ethologist might study wolves, dingoes, or jackals.*

## **Ethology**

Ethologists study the behavior of animals in the natural condition. This means that instead of studying dogs that are our pets, an ethologist might study wolves or African wild dogs in the jungle such as jackals or dingoes.

Dr. Roger Abrantes (from Portugal) has a PhD in Evolutionary Biology and Ethology. He is the director of the Ethology Institute at Cambridge University in England. In addition to studying dog behavior in the human environment, as an ethologist, Dr. Abrantes has studied body postures, dog language, facial features and social behaviors of dogs in the wild.

## **Veterinary Medicine**

Dr. Cynda Crawford, PhD, DVM, was a practicing veterinarian until she decided

to pursue her love of research and accept a faculty position (with an emphasis in research) at the University of Florida. Dr. Crawford studies viruses and bacteria that cause respiratory infections in dogs in shelters. She is known world-wide for discovering the canine influenza virus.



*Dr. Cynda Crawford  
PhD, DVM*

## **Retail**

Retail stores sell directly to the customer. There are dog related retail stores in malls, in smaller kiosks and even on the internet. Some retail stores are smaller boutique operations, while others are large such as Petco and Petsmart. You could work for an existing retail business, or if you are adventurous and have business training and skills, you could start your own small retail business.

## **Shelter Worker**

Shelters are one of the most difficult settings in which to work, but they are also one of the most rewarding. Keeping animals safe and helping them find loving homes is an important job done by very special people. Jobs in a shelter may include Animal Control Officers, kennel staff, office staff, and management (e.g., Director or Assistant Director). Shelters

## Chapter 17 – *Careers in Dogs*

with more resources may have positions such as Adoption Counselors, Trainers, Behavior Specialists, or PR and Marketing. NACA, the National Animal Control Association ([nacanet.org](http://nacanet.org)) provides training and certification and has a career center for Animal Control Officers.

### Trainer (Dog trainer)

If you have been a part of a 4-H Dog Project, you may have already discovered the joy that comes from successfully training your dog to do basic obedience, therapy dog work, or entertain your friends and family by doing tricks.



*Dog training can be a rewarding career. (© American Kennel Club).*

In addition to being a rewarding and fun hobby, dog training can be a rewarding career. In earlier chapters, we talked about all of the areas in which you can train dogs. Some jobs related to dog training include:

- Private trainers. Private trainers teach at dog training schools where they hold classes or lessons for the general public and their dogs. You can start your

career as a trainer by starting as a volunteer, then working for someone else, and finally, you might want to start your own business. As your business grows, it might be necessary to hire additional trainers to meet the need for quality training in your community. Private trainers teach classes ranging from puppy and Canine Good Citizen to obedience, rally, and agility. Some trainers teach therapy dog classes and if the space is available, activities such as lure coursing and dock diving can be offered.

- Specialty trainers. Dog trainers can also specialize and teach at field dog kennels, service dog organizations (e.g., dogs for people who are blind, medical alert dogs), or for police or military K9 units. Trainers can teach dog owners how to do herding with their dogs, and they can also teach animal actors that are dogs for the movies, plays and television.

Dog trainers focus on teaching new skills to dogs or teaching owners how to teach their dogs. Dog trainers can work for themselves, at a dog training business for someone else, or for a veterinarian or pet supply store that offers training. Some city recreation departments and colleges offer dog training classes.

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There are schools that you can go to in order to become certified as a dog trainer. The tuition for these training programs is usually between \$5000 and \$10,000.

There are also professional organizations that provide education for trainers to develop both their training and business skills. Two such organizations are the *Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT)* and the *International Association of Canine Professionals (IACP)*. For more information on these organizations, see [www.apdt.com](http://www.apdt.com) or [www.canineprofessionals.com](http://www.canineprofessionals.com)

A good place to start a career is to get experience training dogs, read everything you can about training and canine behavior, join a professional organization, and find a good mentor to work with before setting off on your own.

## Veterinary Medicine and Related Careers

Services that veterinarians provide to dogs (and other animals) may include internal medicine, surgery (including spay and neuter), oncology (cancer), and dermatology (skin). Veterinarians also provide laboratory services and microchipping. Veterinarians may offer additional non-medical services at their clinics such as dog training and boarding.

For a career as a veterinarian, you will go to college to get a Bachelor's degree, and

then enter a four-year veterinary school program to earn a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. This degree is designated by the letters "DVM" that you see after your veterinarian's name. To become a veterinarian, the total amount of time in college will be between seven and nine years.



*Veterinarians are physicians for animals. They treat diseases, illnesses, medical disorders and injuries.*

### Veterinary specialties

There are veterinarians who specialize in one practice area. To do this, they have completed additional training beyond the DVM and they have passed a test for Board certification. Some veterinary specialties include:

- Anesthesia
- Animal welfare
- Behavior (called Veterinary Behavior)
- Dental
- Dermatology

## Chapter 17 – *Careers in Dogs*

- Emergency Care
- Internal Medicine
- Laboratory animals
- Nutrition
- Shelter medicine
- Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation
- Toxicology (the study of poisons)

Veterinarians work in veterinary hospitals or clinics that belong to other veterinarians or they may have their own business. They also work in large pet supply chains that have a veterinary clinic, as faculty or researchers in university veterinary schools, or they may work for dog food companies or state agencies that employ veterinarians.

### **Veterinary technicians**

The job of the Veterinary technician is to assist the veterinarian. Veterinary technicians are also responsible for carrying out some animal health procedures on their own. They handle animals, take vital signs such as temperatures, and they do x-rays and lab tests. Veterinary technicians, sometimes called “vet techs,” assist with surgeries and they are responsible for maintaining medical equipment and ordering supplies. Some veterinary technicians also have office responsibilities including scheduling appointments, handling billing, and managing staff. Veterinary

technicians usually have at least a two-year college degree.

### **Non-traditional treatments**

Some dog owners choose to try alternative, non-traditional approaches to a dog’s problem and these can lead to jobs. Some of these approaches are acupuncture, canine massage, and homeopathic medicine. Homeopathic medicine uses a holistic, natural approach to treatment.

### **Videographer (see Writers)**

### **Writer (and Related Professions)**

Dog writers write dog books and articles for dog related publications that include print media (such as magazines or newspapers) or digital media such as [akc.org](http://akc.org) or [animalplanet.com](http://animalplanet.com).

### **Editor**

In written, visual, auditory or film jobs (e.g., magazines, book publishers, web content, dog videos), there is a need for editors. Editors revise, correct, and enhance the work of writers. They also select the media that will be used to present the information to readers. In general, the job of an editor is to make the writer’s work as clean, accurate and readable as possible.

# 4-H Dog Project Manual



*If you have an interest in both writing and dogs, you can become a dog writer. Author Mary Burch signs copies of the book, Citizen Canine.*

## Photographer

A number of careers combine dogs and a love of photography. There are photographers that attend conformation dog shows and other events (such as agility trials) and photograph dogs for their owners. Photographs can be sold to the owners, magazines, or for online photo purposes.

## Videographer

Videographers work in the area of video production. They can be involved of any aspect of making a video from shooting the footage to editing and creating the final product. Videographers have technical skills such as operating different types of equipment and sound recording devices.

## Zoologist

A zoologist studies the behavior, origins, diseases and genetics of animals. Some zoologists specialize in one species, such as dogs. Zoologists can work at universities as professors who teach classes and they may do research that is in the field. While some zoologists work in zoos, the word ZOOlogist does not always mean “zoo.”

Patricia McConnell is a Zoology professor at the University of Wisconsin and she uses her knowledge to study dogs and how we communicate with them. She hosted a radio show called, “Calling all Pets,” and she has written books about how to better understand dogs.

## Summary

There is no limit to the number of careers you can choose from if you want to have a job that is related to dogs. From A to Z, Animal Behaviorist to Zoologist, there are many choices you can make that will result in a rewarding career with dogs. One of the very best things about being a 4-H member is that 4-H is a place that will help you identify your interests in a variety of areas and develop your full potential. The education you receive in 4-H teaches skills such as responsibility and hard work, and these skills will stay with you forever, no matter what career you choose.



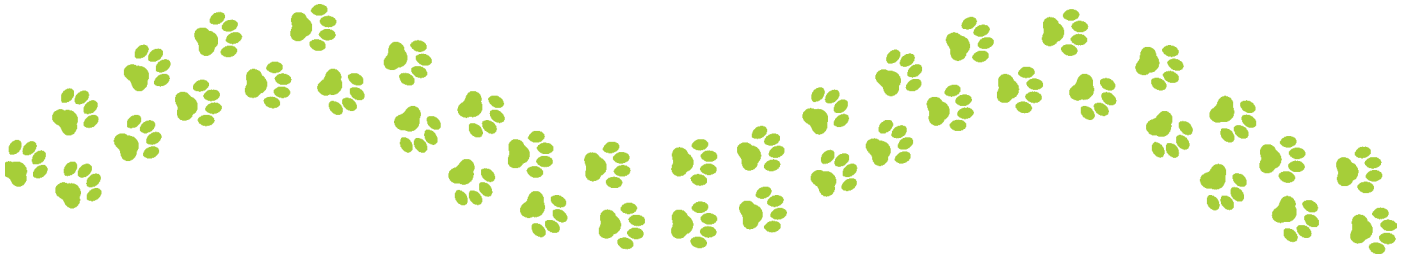
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## Chapter 17 – Activities and Reflections

### Careers in Dogs



#### Suggested Activities

- 1) Think about some careers that allow you to work with dogs. Locate some professionals in these lines of work in your area. Choose one to two people to contact to see if they would allow you to job shadow them for a day. Write a short summary about the experience you had job shadowing them. If you cannot shadow someone, list some questions and interview the person.
- 2) Create a resume including activities you have completed in the dog project that might be beneficial in applying for a job that involves dogs.
- 3) Research a career working with dogs. How much is the pay, is there travel involved, what type of training is required?

#### Suggested Reflections

- 1) Name a job working with dogs.
- 2) What are some skills you have developed in 4-H that could help you get a job with dogs?
- 3) What are some careers that interest you that would allow you to work with dogs?

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