

Section 2

PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

HEEL POSITION

The dog is considered in heel position when both dog and handler are facing the same direction and the handler can reach out and touch the dog's head.

REWARDS

Food and touch rewards are allowed when the team has completed a stationary exercise and before the team has begun to heel forward towards the next exercise. An exercise is considered complete when the last element of an exercise has been performed and the team has not begun to move forward. Rewards may be given at the completion of any stationary exercises that share a sign. Exercise descriptions note if an exercise is considered stationary.

All food must be concealed in the handler's pocket. It may not be carried in hand or in the handler's mouth. Bait pouches and fanny packs are not allowed in the ring. Delivery of rewards should not significantly interrupt the flow of the performance.

LURING

Luring is the appearance of having a reward in hand. An example of this is holding the thumb and first two fingers together as if holding a treat. No treat need be present. Handlers who appear to be luring and/or lure their dog will receive a non-qualifying score.

COMANDS/CUES

Commands may be spoken or signaled. If both are used and given simultaneously they are considered a single command. Additional commands are defined as any command that prompts the dog to perform when they are not complying. Handlers are encouraged to communicate with their dogs throughout the course. Praise and encouragement are not considered commands.

RETRIES

Teams may choose to retry exercises at a cost of -3 points for each retry. Retries are allowed if the team has not started performing the next exercise on the course. The number of times an exercise may be retried is not limited, but the maximum point deductions allowed for any exercise is -10. Retries are not allowed if a team has already committed an error that would result in a non-qualifying score for that exercise, or if it is specified in an exercise description that retries are not allowed.

SIGN PLACEMENT

Signs must be placed so that they are on the handler's right with the following exceptions:

- Turns and pivots may be placed directly in the handler's path.
- Straight figure 8, Offset Fig. 8, Spiral Left, Serpentine, Send over Jump signs are placed so that they are on the handler's left.

- When halts and pivots are combined, it may be necessary to place a sign so that it is on the handler's left. Judges shall make handlers aware of this during the judge's briefing.
- In some circumstances due to space constraints or safety issues a sign may be placed in a position other than the handler's right. The judge shall make handlers aware of this during their briefing.

MULTIPLE SIGN STATIONS

Multiple sign stations are designed to share a stationary element (Ex. Halt Sit and Halt Sit Down). The team may choose to perform the shared element (Sit) once or may move forward after completing the first sign to perform the second sign separately.

WALK-THROUGHS

Exhibitors are provided with a 10 minute period at the beginning of each class during which to walk the course (without dogs) and ask the judge questions. If there are more than 20 competitors, an additional 10 minutes will be provided after every 20 competitors have walked the course. All walk-throughs will be held before judging of the entire class begins. Walk-throughs are for entered exhibitors only. A Junior handler may have a parent accompany them. Disabled handlers may have a helper assist them at the discretion of the judge.

COURSE TIME

APDT Rally Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Puppy Level and Junior Level courses have a maximum course time of 4 minutes. There is no maximum course time for a Veteran Level course.

START

The Judge will indicate to the team that they may begin. Timing will begin when the team crosses the Start Line. The dog does not have to be sitting in heel position to begin the course. Teams should cross the start line at their normal heeling pace.

FINISH

Timing concludes as the team crosses the Finish Line. If the team has not chosen to perform the Bonus Exercise, judging concludes as the team crosses the finish line. If the team has chosen to perform the Bonus Exercise, judging will conclude after the team completes the exercise.

BONUS EXERCISE

The Bonus Exercise is optional and is performed after the team crosses the finish line. Teams may earn up to ten additional points for the Bonus performance. There is one bonus exercise on each course. The Bonus is scored the same as other exercises.

SCORING GUIDELINES

Each team enters the ring with a perfect score of 200 points.

Deductions are taken based on the exercise requirements and the scoring guidelines. Deductions are taken in one-point increments from a minimum of one point up to a ten point deduction. The judge indicates point deductions on the score sheet as faults occur on the course.

- **1 point**
- Tight leash, each occurrence
- Ticking a jump
- Performing an exercise with the sign on the wrong side

- **1+ points depending on the severity of the error**
- Heeling faults – lagging, forging, bumping, wide
- Substantially out of position sits/downs/fronts/stands (handler must be able to touch dog)
- Overly large circles/270's
- Slight movement during Stand exercises / "1 point per paw"
- Failure to maintain pace change
- Barking, jumping on handler
- Unmanageable behavior
- Food or touch rewards that significantly interrupt the performance.

- **3 points**
- **Retries:** Retries are scored as a 3 point deduction, but any deductions previously taken for that exercise will be erased with the retry.
- Additional commands/cues
- Dropping the leash (Level 1 and Puppy)
- Dropping food
- Failure of the dog to move with handler as specified in exercise description
- Handler stepping inside 6 ft line when sending dog over jump – Level 2
(Also see five point deduction)
- Sniffing a food bowl (3 points per occurrence)

- **5 points**
- Failure to sit, down or stand (with the exception of the Halt-Sit)
- Extra sit, down, or stand
- Failure to finish
- Incorrect finish
- Failure of handler to pivot
- Handler is in front of jump/uprights when sending dog over – Level 2
- Knocking over a cone or exercise sign
- Performing an obstacle exercise backwards or in the wrong direction
- Performing a turn in the wrong direction

- **1-10 points**
- Failure to perform all the elements of an exercise as described in the individual exercise descriptions.

NQ (retries are not allowed in the event any of the following should occur)

- Failure of dog to hold position during walk-around exercises
- Touching the dog to prompt an exercise (unless specifically allowed in exercise description)
- Dog refuses jump (passing the jump uprights will result in the NQ)
- Dog uses jump as aid in going over
- Dog knocks jump over
- Failure to change pace
- Dog and handler pass on opposite sides of a cone
- Nipping, biting, attempting to turn over food bowls in Offset Fig. 8
- Failure of the dog to sit in Halt Sit
- Failure of the dog to down in Moving Down
- Dog anticipates / moves forward on recall exercises before being called
- Failure of the dog to down during Halt Leave Dog Down on Recall
- Deductions of ten or more points on any exercise
- Exceeding course time
- Dog leaves the ring, eliminates in the ring or becomes ill in the ring.
- Appearance of luring
- Food reward given before exercise is completed (except Puppy Level)
- Food reward is given while moving towards an exercise sign (except Puppy Level)
- Consistently tight leash
- Handler performs exercises out of sequence (off course)
- Handler misses an exercise