

**Connecticut Guide to the 4-H Dog  
Program and 4-H Dog shows**

## Introduction

The primary purpose of this manual is to serve as a guide for 4-H members and leaders interested in the 4-H Dog Program in Connecticut. It provides an overview of what should be expected to occur in both the fitting and showmanship and obedience rings at a 4-H Dog Event.

The secondary purpose of this manual is to provide more uniformity among the Connecticut 4-H Fair dog shows that are held in the state. By doing this, members will be better prepared for regional competitions, such as the 4-H Dog Show at Eastern States Exposition, as well as have a minimum expectation of what is expected at each county 4-H fair they may attend in Connecticut.

Finally, this manual may be used to help 4-H Dog Project leaders to better understand what is expected of their members in competitive activities. It can be used as a valuable tool in giving direction to educational programs carried out in 4-H Club meetings and during training sessions.

The 4-H Dog Show is the high point of the year for many 4-H dog project members. It gives the members an opportunity to demonstrate the skills they have learned throughout the year in caring for, training, and grooming their dog, as well as general dog knowledge they have acquired during this process. The dog show serves as a tool to develop good sportsmanship. It is also an excellent opportunity to show to the public what is being accomplished through 4-H work and shows that any dog, purebred or mixed- breed can be a well-behaved member of the community.

The 4-H Dog Project encourages young people to set goals and by doing this, helps to develop self-confidence, problem solving techniques, self-discipline, and a feeling of self worth in members. The dog project also teaches the 4-H member the responsibilities of caring for another living thing, while emphasizing the skills and accomplishments of each individual.

## **Section 1. Objectives of the 4-H Dog Program**

All 4-H projects are designed for youth to gain knowledge and practice skills that revolve around a topic of interest to them. Specifically, these are:

- a.) develop and practice skills in setting goals, self-responsibility, teamwork and leadership
- b.) Develop communication skills and an appreciation for learning
- c.) Develop integrity, sportsmanship, decision-making skills, and public presentation skills
- d.) Care about and serve others through community service projects
- e.) Learn about general dog care and maintenance
- f.) Identify dog breeds and learn their characteristics
- g.) Demonstrate abilities in dog care, management, feeding, care, first aid, handling, grooming, and training
- h.) Explore career opportunities within animal science, specifically dog-related fields
- i.) Learn to keep accurate records of their project

## **Section 2. Eligibility of 4-H Member**

- a.) Member must be at least 7 years old (by January 1<sup>st</sup> of current 4-H year) to participate with a dog
- b.) Members must not have reached their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday by January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current 4-H year
- c.) Members must have filled out a CT 4-H Enrollment form and have it on file in their county office for the current year
- d.) Members must have a current, signed Code of Conduct form on file for the current year
- e.) Members must keep a Project Record for each dog that they are using as a project animal (record book)
- f.) Members may enroll in more than one county or across state lines in order to take advantage of the dog program. However, they may only be enrolled in the dog project in one county
- g.) Members must complete a Project Animal Verification form for each project dog and have it on file in their county 4-H office by June 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.
- h.) Members that lease a dog for their project must fill out a lease form and have it on file in their county office by June 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.
- i.) Enrollment is open to all interested youth, meeting the age requirements. The 4-H program is a part of the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System, an equal opportunity program provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, Stop Code 9410, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964. Anyone requiring special accommodations need to file a request at least 21 days prior to the event they are attending.

### **Section 3. Dog Project Requirements**

- a.) Member must have access to a dog for training purposes. Dog may be owned by the member, member's family, or leased by the member (see section on animal verification).
- b.) Only the enrolled 4-H member is allowed to train the project dog. Training assistance in the learning situation can include occasional handling or training by another person, as long as the 4-H member is present, but the majority of the training must be by the 4-H member.
- c.) The project dog may only be trained by the 4-H member at training classes and at home. This includes both 4-H training classes and those training classes taken outside of the 4-H program. The Dog project involves general dog care/knowledge and fitting and showmanship and obedience with the same dog. Members are not allowed to use one dog for showmanship classes and a different dog for obedience. When showing, the scores for only one dog will count towards points for that day.

### **Section 4. Sharing of Project Dogs**

- a.) Dogs may be shared by 4-H members of the same family.
- b.) At shows, dog and/or handler may only be entered competitively ONCE in the same class.

### **Section 5. Eligibility of Dog**

- a.) Dogs do not need to meet an age requirement, but **MUST** be 6 months of age or older on day of the show in order to be shown. Dogs participating in Agility events **MUST** be at least one year old on day of show.
- b.) Dogs may be purebred or All American (mixed breed) with no preference given to either.
- c.) Dogs may be male or female, neutered or intact.
- d.) Females in season are **NOT** allowed on show grounds or at 4-H events. (Lactating and pregnant females are allowed at show committee's discretion.)
- e.) Dogs with disabilities, such as blindness and deafness, are allowed to compete, provided that they have a letter from a veterinarian stating the disability and any permanent conditions which may be present and need to be taken into consideration in judging of the dog's general well-being (such as a permanent limp).
- f.) Dogs that attempt to attack or menace a person on show grounds or at a 4-H event will be asked to leave the event and future participation of that dog is subject to leader and/or event committee decision.
- g.) All 4-H dogs **MUST** be vaccinated against Rabies and members must carry a current certificate with the veterinarian's **ORIGINAL** signature. Dogs must also be vaccinated against Parvovirus and Distemper, and show proof of such vaccination. It is **highly recommended** that dogs also be vaccinated against Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Coronavirus, Parainfluenza, and Kennel Cough
- h.) Dog eligibility is the same whether the dog is owned, leased, primary dog, or alternate dog.

### **Section 6. Verification and Lease Forms**

- a.) Each dog/member team must have a completed Connecticut Animal Verification Form on file in their county office by June 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

- b.) If the member is training and working with more than one dog, one dog must be designated as “Primary” project and the other designated as “Alternate”.
- c.) If the dog is leased, a completed “4-H Dog Project Lease Form” must also be on file in their county office by June 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. *It is strongly encouraged for the member and dog’s owner to have a written agreement, outlining what is expected from both parties.*

## **Section 7. Member and Adult Rules for Conduct**

- a.) Dress Code:
  - 1.) Members and adults must dress appropriately for the events. This includes, but not limited to: no bare midriffs, skirts or shorts of appropriate length (up to 3 inches above knee), no overly revealing clothing
  - 2.) At events, 4-H members may not have clothing advertising a kennel or a breed.
  - 3.) Suggested show uniform: green bottoms (skirt, pants, culottes, jumper) and a white top.
  - 4.) NO open-toed shoes, flip-flops, sandals, or clogs are allowed while participating in a 4-H dog event. Properly secured sneakers or closed shoes are allowed.
- b.) Behavior
  - 1.) Drinking of alcoholic beverages or smoking at 4-H events is not allowed.
  - 2.) All those attending a 4-H event (members, parents, guardians, guests) must follow the Code of Conduct set forth by those running the event
- c.) Members are expected to participate fully in the events for which they are taking part.
- d.) At an event, members are responsible for 100% of the care, feeding, training, and safety of their dog. *Exception:* anyone, preferably an adult, should step in the event of an emergency (i.e. dog fight, loose dog)
- e.) Adults are not allowed to handle or groom dogs while at a 4-H dog show
- f.) Coaching from ringside and double-handling is not allowed at 4-H shows. Members found in violation of this rule will forfeit all prizes, ribbons, and scores from the class from which the violation occurred.
- g.) Adults are not allowed in the show rings at any time.
- h.) 4-H members MAY receive assistance from another 4-H member at 4-H events. If a member is not immediately available, assistance may come from an approved leader, instructor, or judge.
- i.) Anyone mistreating an animal will be asked to leave the 4-H event.
- j.) Members and adults that violate any of these will be asked to leave the event, and any prizes, ribbons, or awards will be forfeited.
- k.) 4-H members are expected to follow these rules as well as those items as appear and were signed by the member in the 4-H Membership form Code of Conduct.

## **Section 8. Ribbons and Awards.**

- a.) all 4-H dog shows are judged under the Danish system or the Dual-merit system. Under the Danish system, each exhibit is judged on its own individual merits. Ribbons are awarded based on the points that the exhibit earned. Under the Dual-Merit system, an exhibit is judged both on the Danish System

and the standard system, which judges an exhibit against the other exhibits in a given class.

- b.) Under the Danish system, ribbons will be awarded using the following point system:

Ribbon Color	Fitting and Show	Obedience	General Knowledge
Blue	100-90 points	200-170 points	100-80 points
Red	89.5-80 points	169.5-130 points	79.5-60 points
White	79.5-70 points	129.5-100 points	59.5-40 points
Yellow	Below 69.5 points	Below 100 points	Below 40 points

### **Section 9. Problems regarding Placements/Awards/Judging**

- a.) All questions regarding a judge's placements or scores should be brought to the attention of the show committee as soon as possible.
- b.) Under no circumstances should a judge be approached by an exhibitor, parent or guardian in regard to questioning a placement or score of a given class. Such problems or concerns should be brought to the show committee.
- c.) Judge's decisions are final.

### **Section 10. Dog Show Classes and Explanations**

#### **a.) Fitting and Showmanship**

- 1.) Purpose: To demonstrate the 4-H member's ability to show his/her project dog to the best of their ability, as if they were presenting their dog in the conformation ring at an AKC, CKC, UKC, or other breed association show. The member must be able to show off the dog's best points, while minimizing faults, demonstrate knowledge of proper ring procedure, and the proper way to present a dog for examination by a judge. In no way should the dog's conformation be considered when scoring an exhibitor.
- 2.) Acceptable patterns include: "around the ring" or the "O", the "I" or "up and back", the triangle, the "L", the "T", and the down and back with 2 dogs gaing side by side. Also acceptable are the reverse patterns of the triangle, "L", and "T" patterns. (Please see gaing patterns at end of this manual for explanations.) In the "up and back" patterns, handlers may choose to either turn towards their dog or away from their dog, as long as the movement is done smoothly and efficiently.
- 3.) Courtesy turns may be done at the start of a gaing pattern and are encouraged.
- 4.) Dogs should be stacked or posed as their breed would in AKC conformation events. All-Americans should be presented as closely to the breed that they most resemble.
- 5.) Dogs should be clean, free from parasites, and free from mats and excessive loose hair. Show clips will not be considered, although grooming scores should strive to recognize the efforts in grooming.
- 6.) Baiting is allowed at each judge's discretion, but when done, should not hinder or distract others in the ring.
- 7.) Dogs may be shown on a show lead (such as a one piece martingale, resco-type lead, etc.) or on a slip collar (leather, chain, or fabric) and

attached leash. The handler's ability to control the dog's show equipment in a non distracting manner is more important than the actual equipment being used.

- 8.) Judges may ask exhibitors questions in fitting and showmanship classes. Sources for questions are listed under the General Knowledge section of this manual, but in general can cover general dog care, dog first aid, AKC obedience rules and Regulations, and the exhibitor's dog's breed history and purpose. Questions regarding the specific show's rules and 4-H rules may also be used as sources for questions.
- 9.) When and if classes are divided based on experience, it is based on the number of years the HANDLER has been showing dogs, either in 4-H events OR other recognized dog activities, i.e. AKC, UKC, breed associations, not the dog's age or dog's experience level.
- 10) Classes for fitting and showmanship should be divided based on handler's age and experience level, if the entry is large enough. An example of classes would be:
  - Novice (1-2 years experience)
  - Intermediate (3-4 years experience)
  - Advanced (5 or more years experience)
  - Open (anyone showing at non-4-H shows OR those that handle dogs for others as a job, i.e. professional handler's assistants or consistently shows in junior showmanship events)

#### b.) Obedience

- 1.) Generally, American Kennel Club rules will be followed, with modifications for 4-H, for all obedience classes, unless otherwise noted.
- 2.) Acceptable obedience collars include well-fitting plain buckle or quick release collars, or slip collars (choke, training) of an appropriate single length of leather, fabric, or chain with two rings, one at each end, or properly fitted martingale (limited slip) collars. Leashes may be made of leather or fabric. In sub-novice classes, they should be six feet long. In novice, graduate novice, open, graduate open, and utility classes the leashes need only be long enough to provide sufficient slack in the heel on leash exercise. Chain leashes, prong collars, spiked collars, electric collars, and harnesses are not acceptable in the show ring. Head halters may be used for training purposes only. Head halters may be worn in the show ring by service dogs only in the service dog classes.
- 3.) In classes that are divided into an "A" or "B" class, the "A" class is for those exhibitors that are exhibiting at that level for the first time. A member is eligible to show in the "A" class of each level for only one year. If they show at the same level (i.e. sub-novice) for subsequent years, they must enter the "B" class the second year. Also, if the 4-H'er gets a new dog, and the new dog is shown at a level where the previous dog was shown, the new dog must be entered in the "B" class.
- 4.) Handlers and dogs that are shown at non-4-H shows, including but not limited to AKC, UKC, sanctioned matches, are required to enter the "B" class.
- 5.) In 4-H shows, dogs that foul the ring are allowed to complete the class and be scored, but their score sheet is marked "NP-fouled ring" for "non-

placement” and the dog will not receive a placement (according to the standard system of judging).

- 6.) In 4-H shows, dogs that run around the ring “uncontrollable” will receive a zero (0) for that exercise, will complete that exercise with dog on leash, and will do the Long Sit and Long Down exercises on leash. Dog and handler will receive a NP (non-placement) score.
- 7.) Examples of score sheets are included at the end of this packet.
- 8.) Class Descriptions
  - a.) Sub-Novice-exercises are performed on lead. These include: heel on lead-45 points, Figure 8-25 points, Stand for Examination-30 points, Recall-40 points, Long Sit (1 minute)-30 points, Long Down (3 minutes)-30 points. Total maximum score-200 points.
    1. *divided into 2 separate classes- sub-novice A and sub-novice B, see section 10.b.2.*
  - b.) Service Dog Sub-Novice-for those dogs that are to be utilized in a service dog program and are part of a bona fide service dog program. The same rules for “A” and “B” classes hold true for service dog classes.
  - c.) Sub-Novice C- performed according to United Kennel Club (UKC) rules. Complete rules may be found at: <http://www.ukcdogs.com/dogevents/rules/o-8.shtml> . Exercises include: Honoring(on lead) - 40 points, heel on leash and figure 8- 40 points, Stand for Examination (on lead)- 40 points, Recall Over Jump (on lead)- 40 points, Long Sit (1min., on leash)- 40 points.
    1. *Jump heights will be  $\frac{3}{4}$  the dog’s height in all breeds, **rounded down to the nearest whole number.***

Dog’s height at withers (in inches)	Jump Height (in inches)
Less than 12.5	8
12.5-less than 15	10
15 to less than 17.5	12
17.5 to less than 20	14
20 to less than 23	16
23 to less than 25.5	18
25.5 to less than 28	20
28 to less than 31	22
31 or over	24

- d.) Novice - exercises include: heel on lead and figure 8- 40points, stand for exam (off-lead)- 30 points, Heel off lead- 40 points, Recall (off lead)- 30 points, Long Sit (1 min, off lead)- 30 points, Long Down (3 min. off lead)- 30 points. Total maximum score- 200 points.
  1. dogs must not have had training beyond the Novice level
  2. divided into an “A” class and a “B” class
  3. Dogs that have completed their CD or equivalent must enter the “B” class.
  4. Dogs must not have a qualifying score in Graduate Novice, Open, Graduate Open, or Utility.

- e.) Graduate Novice-may follow either the old AKC Grad. Novice class (Graduate Nov. A) or the new AKC Grad Novice Class (Grad, Novice B), but must be stated in rules.
  - 1. Graduate Novice A- exercises are: Heel on lead (40 points), Stand for Exam off lead (30 points), Heel Free and Figure 8 (40 points), Drop on Recall (30 points) Long Sit (3 min, handler out of sight)- 30 points, Long Down (5 min, handler out of sight)- 30 points
  - 2. Graduate Novice B- exercises are: heel free & figure 8- 40 points, moving stand for exam (Novice Exam)- 30 points, moving drop on recall- 30 points, Dumbbell Recall- 40 points, Recall over broad jump- 30 points, Long Down (3 min, handler out of sight)- 30 points.
- f.) Open- follows AKC Open rules
  - 1. if divided into "A" and "B", dogs entered in "A" classes must not have completed their CDX or equivalent. Dogs entered in "B" classes may have completed their CDX, but not their UD title.
- g.) Utility- follows AKC Utility class rules
  - 1. if divided into "A" and "B", dogs entered in the "A" class must not have completed their UD or equivalent. Dogs entered in the "B" class may have completed their UD or higher degrees.

### **Section 11. General Knowledge/Canine Challenge/Dog Knowledge**

- a.) All 4-H members are encouraged to learn dog knowledge, including, but not limited to: general care & maintenance, disease and disease prevention, basic first aid, common medical problems, dog breeds (AKC based), training techniques, grooming, and other dog-related fields
- b.) 4-Hers are also expected to demonstrate their knowledge by taking a written test at Eastern States Exposition 4-H Dog Show, with topics including those listed in section 11.a, plus visuals (usually identifying breeds or equipment from the PetEdge catalogue, [www.petedge.com](http://www.petedge.com)), with focus on 2 specific topics named yearly. The 2 topics will include at least one AKC Group (i.e. working group) and some other aspect of dogs. These are determined in October/November the previous year. Your county extension agent should know them by January of the current show year. These can be viewed and downloaded from the 4-H Dog Packet on the Eastern States Exposition web site after mid January at [www.thebige.com](http://www.thebige.com).
- c.) Members are also expected to answer questions in the fitting and showing ring. These can be based on dog care, training, grooming, the member's dog's breed and original function, or anything else listed in section 11.a, as well as the specific topics to be covered at that year's Eastern States Expo. 4-H Dog Show, and general 4-H rules and regulations.
- d.) Sources for questions come from any of the following:
  - AKC Complete Dog Book, 20<sup>th</sup> ed.*, [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org), *Pet First Aid* (by Mosby, distributed through the American Red Cross 1-800-MYB-4-ARC), "AKC Obedience Rules and Regulations" (obtained from the AKC or [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)), *AKC Complete Dog Book for Kids*, PetEdge Catalogue (or [www.petedge.com](http://www.petedge.com)), *AKC Dog Care & Training*

- e.) scores for written tests should be based on the number right, or percentage correct, not the number or percentage incorrect
- f.) awards are made according to age divisions (Junior and Senior)

### **Section 12. 4-H Judges**

- a.) Judges for 4-H dog events should be familiar with the 4-H show rules for the classes which they will be asked to judge. This should include having an example copy of the score sheets they will be using at the show.
- b.) Judges should not show partiality for purebred dogs or All-American (mixed breed) dogs.
- c.) Judges must not be familiar with 4-H exhibitors they are to judge. This includes training a 4-Her in class (with or without their project dog), being a club member with a 4-H exhibitor anytime within the past 5 years of show date, owning or leasing a dog with the 4-H member or a member of their family.
- d.) If judges are recent 4-H graduates (within the past 5 years), they should preferably be from another state or at least another county.
- e.) Judges should be informed to write constructive comments on score sheets. If time allows, judges, at their discretion, can meet with individual exhibitors to discuss strengths and weaknesses.
- f.) Judges should judge according to the requirements of the class. Each dog/handler team should be judged in the same way.
- g.) Judges should not disclose any score to anyone but the show committee (and only on a need to know basis) before a class is completed. Announcements of scores at the end of a class are at the judge's discretion, but judges should keep in mind the sensitivity of scores to some exhibitors.
- h.) Judges are in control of their ring from the time that a class starts until its completion.
- i.) Judges decisions are final in all scoring and judging of a class. All other matters are to be decided by the show committee.
- j.) Judges should give commands and or signals in a clear and understandable manner.
- k.) Re-judging. If a dog, in the judge's opinion, had its performance prejudiced by peculiar and unusual circumstances, the judge may rejudge the dog on that particular exercise. If the judge finds it necessary to rejudge a dog(s) from a group exercise, the dog(s) should be rejudged immediately following the group or as soon as possible thereafter. The judge may ask for volunteer dogs, which will not be competing, in order to fill the ring.
- l.) Judges should not enter into discussion with any exhibitor (including parent, guardian, friend of exhibitor) who appears to be dissatisfied with the judging/scoring or his/her class. Such an exhibitor should be directed to the Show Committee, who will examine the problem and approach the judge, if necessary. This also applies to mathematical errors.
- m.) Judges should remember that 4-H should be a positive learning experience. The judge must remember that a 4-H show is an opportunity for a 4-H member to learn "how to make his best better, the next time." Judges should offer encouragement and advice, in addition to placements and scores.

## **Showmanship Guidelines: Pattern Explanation and Basic Stacking Methods**

### **1.) General Gaiting Techniques**

*Note: "Large dog" usually refers to those dogs that a handler must run or jog with when gaiting. "Small dog" refers to those dogs with which a handler typically walks with when gaiting.*

#### **a.) Courtesy Turn**

This is usually done at the beginning of a gaiting pattern. The purpose is twofold: 1) start the dog moving at a trot so it is at the proper speed when it leaves from in front of the judge and 2) line the dog up so he is directly in front of the judge when leaving for a gaiting pattern. This is an acceptable time for the handler to come between the dog and the judge.

Proper Execution: Dog's lead is in handler's left hand. Handler moves dog in a small circle in front of the judge and slightly to the judge's right side. The handler usually pivots or turns a much smaller circle. As the dog/handler completes the turn, the dog is moving in a straight line directly in front of and away from the judge.

#### **b.) Hand Change**

Used in some of the gaiting patterns and involves the handler switching the lead from his/her left hand to the right hand, and the dog moving from the handler's left side to the right side. It is used to keep the dog between the handler and the judge. When executing a *left to right hand change*, handler and dog pause, handler reaches in front of his/her body and grasps the lead with his/her right hand while turning his/her body to the left. At the same time, the dog pivots to the right, in time with the handler, and both are now facing the direction from which they have just come. When doing a *right to left change*, the handler moves the dog in front of themselves while grasping the lead in their left hand. The dog pivots to its left while on the handler's left side and the handler turns to the right, which results in handler and dog making a right turn.

### **2.) Patterns**

**a.) "Around the ring" or "O":** Usually done upon the class first entering the ring and after an individual gaiting pattern. Dog is on handler's left side for entire "O". Judge is usually standing in middle of ring. Dogs are moved at their own proper speed. Courtesy turn MAY be performed before an "O" after the individual gaiting pattern.

**b.) "Up and Back" or "I":** Starts with a courtesy turn and dog in the left hand. Handler moves dog (at its proper pace) straight away from the judge in the designated direction (either straight or on the diagonal of the ring). At specified distance (larger dogs-to end of ring, small dogs- either ½ or ¾ of ring), handler and dog turn and come straight back to judge, stopping about 3 feet away or when judge signals.

*Turn execution:* Large dogs- usually turn so dog is on the OUTSIDE of the turn (as in an obedience about turn), towards the right. It is permissible for handler to come between dog and judge at this time. Small Dogs- handler usually turns TOWARD dog, so dog pivots to the left. Handler does not come between dog and judge. Hand change method- at end of ring, handler and dog do a left to right hand

change and move straight back to judge. *NOTE: Any method may be used, but the key is to execute the turn smoothly with efficiency of movement.*

- c.) Triangle: Dog stays on handler's left side throughout the entire pattern. Handler/dog move away from judge, turn to the right and continue across the ring towards corner. At the end of the ring, handler/dog turn 45 degrees to the left and come across the diagonal of the ring back to the judge. *Note: Larger dogs may have trouble making a 45 degree turn at the second corner. These dogs may be moved in a small right circle on the handler's left side, in order to line the dog up for the diagonal.*
- d.) "L": There are 2 acceptable ways to perform the "L" pattern. The first involves 2 hand changes and dog gaing on handler's RIGHT side. Dog starts on handler's LEFT side and moves straight away from judge. At end of ring, handler/dog turn LEFT to corner diagonally opposite judge. Upon reaching that corner, handler does a LEFT to RIGHT hand change so the dog is on the handler's RIGHT side and handler/dog continue back across ring in the direction from which they just came. Upon reaching the corner (directly in front of judge) handler does a right to left hand change so the dog is back on handler's LEFT side, and they continue back to judge. The second method involves only one hand change. Dog starts on the handler's LEFT side and moves straight away from the judge. At the end of the ring, handler/dog turn 90 degrees to the LEFT and continue to the corner diagonally across from the judge. Upon reaching the corner, handler does a LEFT to RIGHT hand change, and the dog ends up on the handler's right side. Handler/dog continue back across the ring in the direction from which they just came. Upon reaching that corner (directly in front of the judge) handler/dog make a 90 degree turn to the RIGHT and continue to the judge. The handler does not perform a second hand change and the dog remains on the handler's right side while coming back to the judge. If the one hand change method is performed, the handler should be aware as to the judge's position and keep the dog between himself and the judge. A right to left hand change may be required, depending on the judge's instructions.
- e.) "T": This pattern involves 2 hand changes and starts with the handler/dog and judge on the side of the ring, halfway between the corners. Dog starts on handler's left side, moving straight away from judge to opposite side of ring, halfway between 2 far corners. At end of ring, handler/dog turn to the left and continue to corner. At corner, handler/dog execute a left to right hand change. They continue across the ENTIRE length of the ring with the dog on the handler's RIGHT side. At opposite corner, handler/dog execute a right to left hand change and continue to the MID POINT of the side of the ring (dog on handler's left side). When directly in front of the judge, handler/dog turn to the left and straight back to judge.
- f.) Double or Pair "Up and Back": Involves 2 handlers and dogs, moving straight away from the judge together, turning and coming back to the judge together. Usually this is done with dogs of a similar size/gaiting speed. The 2 dogs are to remain BETWEEN the HANDLERS AT ALL TIMES. Both handlers will have to switch hands at the side of the ring opposite the judge in order to keep the dogs between them. Handlers should stay as close as is **safely** possible while maintaining control of their dog. The two handlers should try to move their dogs together and stop and make turns at the same points.

- g.) Reverse Triangle:* Dog starts in handler's left hand heading down the diagonal away from the judge. Upon reaching the corner, handler/dog do a left to right hand change and head across the opposite side of the ring. When reaching the corner, a right to left hand change is performed and the team heads straight down the side of the ring towards the judge.
- h.) Reverse "L":* Dog starts on handler's Left side and moves away from judge. When reaching the corner, handler executes a left to right hand change while making a right turn (from original direction) and the dog moves across the ring on the handler's right side. At opposite corner of the ring, handler performs a right to left hand change and the team reverses direction. When the team reaches the corner in front of the judge, they make a left turn and continue straight to judge.
- i.) Reverse "T":* Starting point is the same as in the "T". Dog is on handler's RIGHT side. At midpoint across from the judge, handler/dog turn to the RIGHT. At corner, a right to left hand change is performed, and the dog moves on handler's left side across entire length of the ring. At the far corner, handler executes a left to right hand change and heads to midpoint of the ring. When across the ring from and directly in front of judge, handler MAY perform a right to left hand change with dog moving on handler's left side and continue straight to judge or handler may come back straight to judge with dog still moving on handler's right side.

### **General Stacking Methods**

There are MANY different methods to setting a dog up correctly for examination. In general, methods used in American Kennel Club conformation shows are the accepted methods. The following techniques are to be used as a GENERAL guideline. Each dog has its own abilities and preferences, and each breed has unique presentation techniques. The key to whichever method is used is to show off the dog's assets and minimize its flaws while the handler remains invisible and utilizes the economy of motion. All-Americans (mixed breeds) should be presented like the breed for which they most closely resemble. Dogs that are examined on a table at AKC shows are generally examined on a table at 4-H shows. Breeds which may be examined on a ramp (Sussex Spaniels, Basset Hounds, Staffordshire Bull Terriers, Bulldogs, Clumber Spaniels, and Whippets) are generally examined on the ground. Whippets may be examined on the ground or on the table at the handler's discretion or request.

In general, the handler takes control of the dog's head with the right hand and sets the dog's left front foot under the shoulder. The handler then switches the control of the head to the left hand and sets the dog's right front foot under the shoulder, toes pointing front. The handler then switches control of the head to the right hand and sets the left hind leg followed by the right hind leg. Once the dog is stacked, handler can either keep control of the head in the left or right hand. If the tail is held, it is held with the left hand, head in the right. This order can be altered depending on where the judge is located. For example, if the judge is standing behind the dog, the hind end should be set up first, followed by the front. If the judge has moved around, the side that the judge is on should be stacked first.

In 4-H, dogs should not be lifted by the tail, even though this is acceptable for some breeds at AKC shows. Dogs may be lifted and placed on the table by placing a hand under the pelvic bone and either under the chest or under the mandible. Breeds that are typically stacked in the rear by lifting the tail should be stacked by lifting under the pelvic bone.

The following section gives an overview of breed presentation by AKC Group. The seven groups are: Sporting, Hound, Working, Terrier, Toy, Non-Sporting, and Herding. The guidelines are simply guidelines and any specific differences are noted.

Sporting breeds:

*Tail Presentation:* All Setters, Golden Retrievers, Flat-Coated Retrievers, Labrador Retrievers, American Water Spaniels, Pointer, Clumber Spaniels, Sussex Spaniels, Field Spaniels, Welsh Springer Spaniels, Vizsla- tails are usually held out and level with the topline when the judge is looking from the side. Tails may be dropped when handler is trying to show expression of the head.

*Tail Presentation:* Cocker Spaniels, English Cocker Spaniels, Brittany, German Shorthaired Pointer, German Wirehaired Pointer, Wirehaired Pointing Griffon, Weimaraners, English Springer Spaniels- tails are usually docked and held slightly above the topline or left naturally.

*Tail Presentation:* Chesapeake Bay Retrievers, Curly-Coated Retrievers, Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retrievers, Irish Water Spaniels, Spinone Italianos,- tails are left naturally and not held at all. Note: Spinones usually carry their tail down when moving; the other breeds tend to carry their tails somewhat higher while moving.

*Table Breeds:* The following breeds are typically examined on a table- Cocker Spaniels, English Cocker Spaniels.

*Head Presentation/Expression:* The following breeds tend to have their head/ears presented naturally, without showing an alert expression during the exam- All Setters, Pointer, All Spaniels (except for American Water and Irish Water), Spinone Italiano. All Setters, Cocker Spaniels, English Cocker Spaniels and English Springer spaniels may have their ears held forward and over the muzzle while the judge examines the shoulders and body. Ears may also be held like this if the handler is trying to show off shoulder angulation.

*Head Presentation/Expression:* all other Sporting breeds may be shown with an alert expression.

SPECIAL NOTE: Labrador Retrievers are usually shown naturally and free-baited. Legs are only hand stacked if needed, and the dog’s head/collar should be held for the examination. Handler’s may opt to hard/hand stack Labradors, if they would like.

Hound Breeds:

The Hound breeds can be divided into 2 separate classifications- sight hound and scent hounds. Generally, the sight hounds are shown with a more alert expression and tails presented naturally, while the scent hounds are shown with a more relaxed expression and tails carried like a sickle over the back. The breeds are:

Sight Hounds	Scent Hounds
Afghan Hound	Basset Hound
Basenji	Beagle (13” and 15”)
Borzoi*	Black & Tan Coonhound
Greyhound*	Bloodhound
Ibizian Hound*	Dachshunds (all 3 coat varieties)
Irish Wolfhound*	American Foxhound
Norwegian Elkhound	English Foxhound

Pharaoh Hound*	Harrier
Rhodesian Ridgeback*	Otterhound
Saluki*	Petit Basset Griffon Vandeens (PBGV)
Scottish Deerhound*	
Whippet*	

*Table Breeds:* the following breeds are examined on a table- Basenji, Beagle (both 13” and 15”), all 3 varieties and both standard and miniature Dachshunds, Petit Basset Griffon Vandeens (or PBGV). Whippets may be shown on the table at handler’s discretion.

*Tail Presentation: Sight Hounds* marked with an asterisk (\*) above are shown with tail presented naturally. Norwegian Elkhounds should have their tails carried over their backs, which the handler may hold while presenting, if needed. Basenjis should also carry their tails curled over the back, which the handler may hold, if necessary. Afghan Hounds should carry their tails straight up while moving and while standing. Handler may hold the tail up with the flat of their fingers while presenting the dog, if needed.

*Tail Presentation: Scent Hounds, except for Dachshunds,* should carry their tails up, like a sickle, while moving. If the dog does not hold its tail like this while standing, the handler may hold the tail with the flat of their fingers while stacking. *Dachshunds* are shown with their tails held/carried straight off the topline.

### Working Breeds

None of the working breeds are presented on a table. Generally, breeds with naturally prick ears or ears that can be cropped (Boxers, Dobermans, German Pinschers, etc.) are shown with alert expression. Great Pyrenees and Portuguese Water Dogs are typically not shown with alert expressions during the judge’s exam.

*Tail Presentation: Breeds with docked tails-* tails are usually presented pushed up (above the topline). *Akitas, Alaskan Malamutes, Samoyeds-* tails are carried curled over the back and should touch the back. Handler may hold the tail while presenting, if necessary. *Portuguese Water Dog-* tail should be carried straight up (sickle-like) while dog is moving and while dog is standing. Handler should hold tail during presentation, if necessary. *Siberian Husky-* tails can be carried over the back like a sickle or trailing straight out behind dog while moving. Tail should NOT be held up or out at any time. Tails should hang naturally during presentation. *Samoyeds-* MAY be shown in a free stack at all times, with hand stacking only when needed.

### Terrier Group

Terriers should always show an alert, ready for anything expression. At no point in 4-H competitions should terriers “spar”. Terriers that are typically lifted by the base of the tail should not be lifted this way in 4-H events. Dogs should be lifted by placing a hand under the pelvic bone, between the hind legs. This method also applies for stacking a dog by dropping it into the stack, which is often done with the terriers.

*Table Breeds:* All terrier breeds are examined on the table, **EXCEPT** for Airedales, American Staffordshire Bull Terriers, Bull Terriers, Irish Terrier, Kerry Blue Terriers, Soft Coated Wheatan Terriers, and Staffordshire Bull Terriers.

*Tail Presentation:* Airedales, Australian, Cairn, Fox, Irish, Kerry Blue, Lakeland, Miniature Schnauzer, Norfolk, Norwich, Parson Russell, Scottish, Sealyham, Soft Coated

Wheatan, Welsh, and West Highland White Terriers are shown with tails straight up and pushed slightly forward if they are not holding their tails naturally like this.

*Tail Presentation: American Staffordshire Terrier, Bedlington, Staffordshire Bull Terriers (including Mini Bull Terriers)-* tails are presented naturally.

*Tail Presentation: Skye, Manchester-* tails are held straight off the back when presenting.

*Tail Presentation: Border, Glen of Imaal-* tails are held out slightly above the line of the back.

### Toy Group

All breeds in the toy group are presented on a table.

*Tail Presentation:* The following breeds have their tails presented curled over the back (touching the back) and may be held in place if necessary. *Havanese, Japanese Chin, Maltese, Papillons, Pekingese, Pomeranians, Pugs, Shih Tzu*

*Tail Presentation: Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, Italian Greyhounds-* tails left naturally during the exam.

*Tail presentation: Affenpinscher, Brussels Griffon, Miniature Pinscher, Silky terrier, Toy Fox Terrier, Yorkshire Terrier-* tails are usually held straight up during presentation.

*Tail Presentation: Chihuahua, Chinese Crested-* Tails may be held level from back or sickle-like over the back while presenting. *Chinese Cresteds* may also have tails left naturally hanging while presenting.

*Tail Presentation: Toy Manchester Terrier-* tail is held straight out or left naturally hanging.

*Tail Presentation: Toy Poodle-* tail is held at the 2 o'clock position from the topline. It can be natural, or held either by the base or by the hair of the pompom.

### Non-Sporting Group

This group is a very diverse group. No general presentation guidelines fit each, if more than one breed in this group. Each breed is listed below with special presentation notes.

*American Eskimo Dogs-* all 3 sizes examined on table; tail should fall forward over the back and may be held if necessary. Usually shown with an alert expression.

*Bichon Frise-* Examined on table; tail should be carried forward over the back and may be held if necessary.

*Boston Terrier-* examined on a table; ears should be up and alert; MAY be free stacked on the ground, with little or no hand stacking at handler's discretion.

*Bulldog-* shown on the ground. Hind legs are usually set closer than the front legs are, due to the dog being larger in the shoulder and chest. Head is often held just under jaw while examining. Should have a rolling gait and moved on a loose lead.

*Chinese Shar-Pei-* Stacked squarely on the ground. Tail should fall forward over the back and may be held. Handler should show the dog's blue-black tongue, a distinguishing breed characteristic, by opening the mouth.

*Chow Chow-* Set squarely on the ground, but tend to be straighter than the other breeds in the rear so it will look as if the dog is not stretched out in the rear. Tail should fall forward over the back and may be held, if necessary. Handler should also show the dog's blue-black tongue, which is a distinguishing characteristic of the breed. The breed's gait should be stilted, not free flowing.

*Dalmatian*- Set squarely. Tail may be held out straight or slightly above the topline. Moved at a brisk trot to show its heritage as a carriage dog.

*Finnish Spitz*- stacked squarely on the floor. Expression should be alert. Tail should be carried over the back and may be held if necessary.

*French Bulldog*- Examined on the table. May be slightly wider in front, due to body structure.

*Keeshonden*- Examined on the ground and stacked squarely. Tail is held forward over the back and may be held if necessary. This breed is usually shown free stacked, with handler standing in front of the dog. Expression should be alert.

*Lhasa Apso*- Breed is set squarely and examined on the table. Tail should fall forward on the back and may be held, if necessary.

*Lowchen*- Examined on the table. Tail is usually held sickle-like over the back.

*Miniature Poodle*- Examined on a table. Should give a regal appearance, set squarely. Tail should be up, if held, held at about 2 o'clock from the topline, either by the base or by holding the hair on the pompom.

*Standard Poodle*- Stacked on the ground. Otherwise, the same as for the Miniature Poodle.

*Schipperke*- Examined on the table. Usually have a docked tail, but if tail is present, should be carried curled over the back and may be held, if necessary. Should ALWAYS have a very alert expression. ALMOST ALWAYS free stacked when on the ground, with handler standing in front.

*Shiba Inu*- examined on the table, set squarely. Should show an alert expression. Often free stacked when on the ground.

*Tibetan Spaniel*- Examined on the table, with tail curled over the back. Tail may be held if necessary.

*Tibetan Terrier*- Examined on the table with tail curled over the back. Tail may be held in position if necessary. Toenails may seem to be too long in comparison to other breeds, due to the large, round, very flat structure of the feet.

### Herding Breeds

These breeds are all shown with an alert expression, with the exception of the Old English Sheepdog, whose head is usually held for examination.

Most of the breeds are hand stacked squarely on the ground, and the handler tries to keep the dog's alert expression. The German Shepherd Dog has a unique stack, which is explained below.

*Belgian breeds (Malinois, Tervuren, Sheepdog), Collies (Rough & Smooth), Shetland Sheepdogs, Welsh Corgis (Pembroke and Cardigan)*- ALMOST ALWAYS free stacked with minimal hand stacking. (Shetland Sheepdogs and the Welsh Corgis may be hand stacked on the table.) The expression should be alert on these breeds, with ears up.

*Breeds shown on the table*- Shetland Sheepdog, Pembroke Welsh Corgi, Cardigan Welsh Corgi, Puli

*Puli*- Shown with tail curled forward over the back, which may be held if necessary.

*Bouvier des Flanders*- tail usually docked and held above the level of the topline.

*German Shepherd Dog*- The hind leg closest to the judge (usually the left) is stretched back, hock perpendicular to the ground. The hind leg closest to the handler (usually the right) is left beneath the dog, hock at about a 45 degree angle to the ground. Also, the judge may do a temperament test by having the handler and dog walk up to the

judge out of the line-up before the judge asks the handler to stack the dog for examination. The German Shepherd Dog should be shown at a flying trot, within reason for the ring conditions, class size, and handler's control of the dog.

### **References for the 4-H Dog Program**

The following books can be found at bookstores or at the AKC Store ([www.akcstore.org](http://www.akcstore.org)):

- AKC Complete Dog Book, 20<sup>th</sup> edition. (about \$28.00)
- AKC Complete Dog Book for Kids (about \$15.95)
- AKC Dog Care & Training, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. (about \$16.99)

AKC Rules and Regulations for Obedience, Conformation, Junior Showmanship and other events, plus information on the breeds and standards:

[www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)

For hard copies of the various rules and regulations, contact:

[www.akcstore.org](http://www.akcstore.org) or

The American Kennel Club Operations Center  
5580 Centerview Dr.  
Raleigh, NC 27606  
919-233-9767

United Kennel Club (UKC) Rules and Regulations (for Obedience-Sub-Novice C)

[www.ukcdogs.com/dogevents/rules/o-8.shtml](http://www.ukcdogs.com/dogevents/rules/o-8.shtml) or

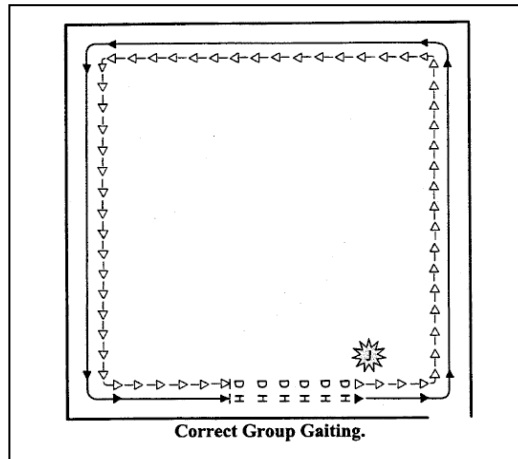
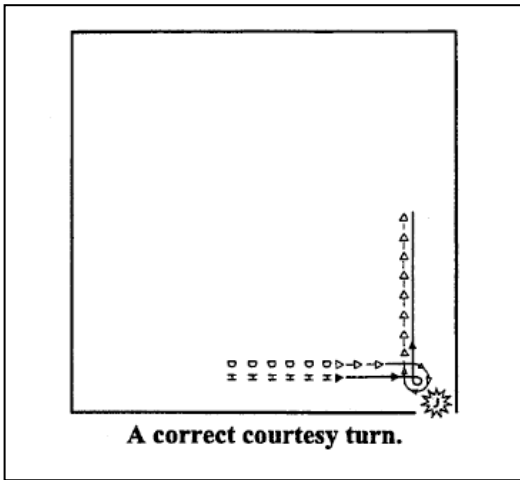
United Kennel Club  
Dog Events Department  
100 E. Kilgore Rd.  
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Pet First Aid: Cats and Dogs; by Bobbie Mammoto, DVM, MPH, distributed through the American Red Cross; (about \$12.95); [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org),

Eastern States Exposition, New England 4-H Dog Show Rules and Regulations: [www.thebige.com/detpages/agriculture11006.html](http://www.thebige.com/detpages/agriculture11006.html) or contact your county office for a copy

PetEdge Catalogue (used for visuals for general knowledge tests): [www.petedge.com](http://www.petedge.com)  
Or contact Pet Edge at 1-800-738-3343 for a copy of the catalogue

Diagrams of Basic Gaiting Patterns



"Around the ring" or "O"

