

*Animal Sciences*

# 4-H DOG JUDGING GUIDELINES

Member Guide

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## General guidelines for judges

These are important. Please read!

Fouling or leaving the ring is not an automatic, immediate disqualification. Check the appropriate box at the bottom of the score sheet. Score each exercise as usual. Put score in “Total” box with a LARGE “NQ” next to it. This means a child does not receive a qualifying score or placing. They only show for the experience.

Bitches in season have their own ring away from all other judging. However, if one is brought to the regular ring, please have a steward escort them to the show office.

Late arrivals are to be accommodated within reason.

Score sheets: Our universal state-recommended score sheets will be provided and are used at this show.

Questions after judging: While time is very limited during competition, we appreciate any of your hints or advice to help or encourage the exhibitors for further competition.

NQ placing: An exhibitor will be eligible to receive a ribbon in his or her class but no trophy will be awarded to an exhibitor that receives a non-qualifying score.

Please take note of the time increments used in scoring sits and downs. (See 4-H score sheets.)

Pre-Novice only: Gently guiding is allowed to place a dog in position at the start of any exercise.

The high jump is to be set to one times the height of the dog. Broad jump is to be two times the height of the dog.

## Training and showing guidelines

### Training

Always talk to your dog when you train. (Coax, encourage, and entice your dog to do what you want him/her to do.)

Use motivators. (Use food, balls, or a squeaky toy to get your dog to cooperate.)

Correct your dog immediately (Show/place your dog, using leash/enticement, etc.)

Use commands frequently when first training your dog a new command. (Say “command” each time you show your dog what you want him to do until he understands what is expected.)

Training equipment is specified by each county.

### Showing

Never talk to your dog, except for necessary commands, such as, come, front, stay, and heel during exercises.

Do not use motivators (no food, no balls, no toys).

Do not correct your dog in the ring. (Keep your leash loose at all times; do not place/entice dog into position.)

Never give more than one command when showing, unless circumstances require it to prevent dog leaving ring, etc. (Do not give body/hand signals and voice commands; use only one method.)

A six-foot leather or fabric leash is required equipment. Do not use pinch collars or tags.

Dogs must enter and leave the ring on leash.

## Class guidelines

### Pre-Novice A

For first-time handler. Each child is eligible to show in this class once.

#### Exercises

Heel (on leash)

Figure 8 (on leash)

Stand for Examination (on leash)

Recall (on leash)

Long Sit – one minute (on leash)

Long Down – three minutes (on leash)

- Dog enters and leaves ring on leash.
- There may be some difference between AKC guidelines and these guidelines.

The leash must be six feet in length and made of leather or fabric. The child should hold the leash loosely. The snap should be hanging straight down. Points shall be taken away if a tight leash is used. Gentle guiding is allowed to place a dog into “ready” position in pre- novice ONLY.



### *Heel (on leash)*

When showing, the dog's name, along with the command to heel, may be used only ONCE after each forward command from the judge. During heeling, the dog may not be spoken to other than the command to heel. The dog cannot be told to sit when the judge calls for a halt.

### *Figure 8 (on leash)*

The Figure 8 exercise consists of the handler and dog completing a "figure 8" pattern around two people (called "posts") placed eight feet apart. The proper distance between the handler and the posts is an arm's length away. At no time should the dog or handler bump or touch the "posts." The commands are the same as for the regular heeling exercise.

### *Stand for Examination*

The judge will give the order to "Stand your dog and leave when you are ready." No other directions for this exercise will be given by the judge except "Return to your dog" and "Exercise finished." The dog may be placed gently in position for the Stand For Exam, and command and hand signal may be given for your dog to stay – no other commands may be given until the judge says "Exercise finished."

- Note – Only go six feet away from your dog, about two big steps. (See Image 1.)
- Handler must walk away, but not backwards, turn and face the dog.

### *Recall (on leash)*

The dog may be told to sit at the designated spot. The judge will say "Leave your dog." At this point, the handler must give the "Stay" command and/or signal, walk to the end of the leash, then turn and face the dog. When directed by the judge to "Call your dog," the handler must give either a verbal command or hand signal (not both) with their body in an upright position. The dog may not be pulled to come; a command to sit in the front position may NOT be given. When told to "Finish your dog," a SINGLE verbal OR hand command may be given.

### *Long Sit and Long Down*

In both these exercises the dog may be told to sit/down when the exercise begins. When told to "Leave your dog," a single command and/or signal to stay is given by each handler to their dog. If your dog moves out of line or disturbs another dog, gently and quietly remove the dog from the line and keep it quietly by you. Do not correct at a show or give a second command. Be considerate of the others in the ring if your dog makes a mistake. Judges and kids, take note of time increments used in scoring (see 4-H Score Sheet).

### **Pre-Novice B**

For the handler who has competed previously, but has a new dog, or a new handler who has a previously trained dog, ALL rules are the same as Pre-Novice A.

### **Novice**

If you passed the Pre-Novice class at the state or county fair, you must move up to the Novice class unless your obedience instructor gives you special permission to remain in the Pre-Novice class for one more year.

### *Exercises*

Heel (on leash)

Figure 8 (on leash)

Stand for Exam (off leash)

Heel (off leash)

Recall (off leash) full length of ring (approximately 40 feet)

Long Sit – one minute (off leash) full length of ring away

Long Down – three minutes full length of ring away

### *Heel (on leash)*

When showing, the dog's name along with the command to heel may be used once after each halt order from the judge. During heeling, the dog may not be spoken to other than the command to heel – the dog cannot be told to sit when the judge calls for a halt.

### *Figure 8*

The Figure 8 exercise consists of the handler and dog completing a "figure 8" pattern around two people (called "posts") placed eight feet apart. The proper distance between the handler and the posts is an arm's length away. At no time should the dog or handler bump or touch the posts. The commands are the same as for the regular heeling exercise.

**Image 1: The handler is six feet away from the dog.**



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At this point you will take off the dog's leash and hand it to the ring steward and the rest of the exercises will now be performed with the leash off. In between exercises you may gently guide your dog by his/her collar.

### *Stand for Examination*

The judge will give the order to "Stand your dog and leave when you are ready." No other directions for this exercise will be given by the judge except "Return to your dog" and "Exercise finished." The dog may be placed gently in position for the Stand for Exam, and command and hand signal may be given for your dog to stay – no other commands may be given until the judge says "Exercise finished."

- Note – Only go six feet away from your dog, about two big steps.
- Handler must walk away, but not backwards, turn and face the dog.

### *Heel Free*

The same rules apply and the judge will use the same heeling pattern that he/she used for the heel on leash.

- Done without leash. (See Images 2 and 3.)

### *Recall (off leash)*

The dog may be told to sit at the designated spot. The judge will say "Leave your dog." At this point, the handler must give the command and/or hand signal to stay, walk to the opposite side of the ring, and turn and face his dog. When ordered by the judge to "Call your dog," the handler must give a verbal command or a hand signal (not both) with their body in an upright position for their dog to come and sit in

the front position: your dog may not be told to sit when coming or in front of the handler. When told to "Finish your dog," a command or hand signal may be given for your dog to return to the heel position (not both).

### *Long Sit and Long Down*

In both of these exercises the judge will say "This is the Long Sit for one minute or the Long Down for three minutes. Are you ready?" At which point, the command and/or hand signal for the dog to either sit or down should be given. When all of the dogs are either in the sit position or the down position, the judge will give the order to "Leave your dog." The stay command and/or hand signal should be given. The handlers leave their dogs and walk to the opposite side of the ring and wait for the judge to give the order "Back to your dogs." At this point return to the dog's heel position by means of walking behind your dog. If your dog moves out of line or disturbs another dog, gently and quietly remove your dog from the line and keep him/her by you. Do not correct at a show or give a second command. Be considerate of the others in the ring if your dog makes a mistake.

### **Graduate Novice**

If you pass the Novice class at the state or county fair, you must move up to the Grad-Novice class unless your obedience instructor gives you special permission to remain in the Novice class for one more year.

### *Exercises*

- Heel (on leash)
- Stand for Exam (off leash)
- Heel (off leash)
- Figure 8 (off leash)

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**Images 2 & 3: The Heel Free exercise is done without a leash.**



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Down on Recall (off leash) full length of ring (approximately 40 feet)

Long Sit – three minutes (off leash, out of sight)

Long Down – five minutes (off leash, out of sight)

### *Heel (on leash)*

When showing, the dog's name along with the command to heel may be used once after each halt order from the judge. During heeling, the dog may not be spoken to other than the command to heel – the dog cannot be told to sit when the judge calls for a halt.

At this point you will take off the dog's leash and hand it to the ring steward and the rest of the exercises will now be performed with the leash off. In between exercises you may gently guide your dog by his/her collar.

### *Stand for Examination*

The judge will give the order to "Stand your dog and leave when you are ready." No other directions for this exercise will be given by the judge except "Return to your dog" and "Exercise finished." The dog may be placed gently in position for the Stand for Exam, and command and hand signal may be given for your dog to stay – no other commands may be given until the judge says "Exercise finished."

- Note – Only go six feet away from your dog, about two big steps
- Handler must walk away, but not backwards, turn and face the dog.

### *Heel Free*

The same rules apply and the judge will use the same heeling pattern that he/she used for the heel on leash.

- Done without leash.

### *Figure 8*

The Figure 8 exercise consists of the handler and dog completing a "figure 8" pattern around two people (called "posts") placed eight feet apart. The proper distance between the handler and the posts is an arm's length away. At no time should the dog or handler bump or touch the posts. The commands are the same as for the regular heeling exercise. In the Graduate Novice class this exercise is performed off leash.

### *Down on Recall (off leash)*

The dog may be told to sit at the designated spot. The judge will tell each exhibitor when and how he will signal the dog to be commanded or signaled to drop. Some judges will just tell

the exhibitors to drop the dogs at a certain spot and will not give the handler a command to drop the dog. After these instructions, the judge will say "Leave your dog." At this point, the handler must give the command and/or hand signal to stay, walk to the opposite side of the ring, and turn and face his dog. When ordered by the judge to "Call your dog," the handler must give a verbal command or a hand signal (not both) with their body in an upright position for their dog to come. When your dog is on the way in, the judge will either give you a hand signal or a verbal order (whichever he/she specified before the exercise started) to drop (down) your dog. Your dog must drop immediately and remain in that position until the judge gives you another signal or verbal order to call your dog again. The handler must give a hand signal or a verbal command (not both) with their body in an upright position for their dog to come. The dog must come and sit in the front position; your dog may not be told to sit when coming or in front of the handler. When signaled or told by the judge to "Finish your dog," a command or hand signal may be given for your dog to return to the heel position (not both).

### *Long Sit and Long Down*

This exercise is conducted out of sight. (Handlers leave the ring and are taken to a place where their dogs cannot see them.) In both of these exercises the judge will say "This is the long sit for three minutes or the long down for five minutes. Are you ready?" At which point the command and/or hand signal for you to either sit or down your dog should be given. When all of the dogs are either in the sit position or the down position, the judge will give the order to "Leave your dog." The stay command and/or hand signal should be given. The handlers will leave their dogs and walk to the opposite side of the ring and proceed to follow your ring steward out of the ring to a place where your dog cannot see you. After three minutes for the sit and five minutes for the down, the steward will lead everyone back to the ring. When everyone is back in the ring, the judge will say "Back to your dogs." At this point return to the dog's heel position by means of walking behind your dog. If your dog moves out of line or disturbs another dog, gently and quietly remove your dog from the line and keep him/her by your side in the appropriate position. Do not correct at a show or give a second command. Be considerate of the others in the ring if your dog makes a mistake.

### *Pre-Open*

If you passed Graduate Novice at the state or county fair, you must move up to the Pre-Open class unless your obedience instructor gives you special permission to remain in the Graduate Novice class for one more year.



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## Exercises

Heel (off leash)

Figure 8 (off leash)

Drop on Recall

Retrieve on Flat

Broad Jump

Long Sit – three minutes (out of sight)

Long Down – five minutes (out of sight)

- No physical guidance of dog allowed between exercises.

### Heel (off leash)

When showing, the dog's name along with the command to heel may be used once after each halt order from the judge. During heeling, the dog may not be spoken to other than the command to heel – the dog cannot be told to sit when the judge calls for a halt.

### Figure 8

The Figure 8 exercise consists of the handler and dog completing a "figure 8" pattern around two people (called "posts") placed eight feet apart. The proper distance between the handler and the posts is an arm's length away. At no time should the dog or handler bump or touch the posts. The commands are the same as for the regular heeling exercise.

### Down on Recall (off leash)

The dog may be told to sit at the designated spot. The judge will tell each exhibitor when and how he will signal the dog to be commanded or signaled to drop. Some judges will just tell the exhibitors to drop the dogs at a certain spot and will not give the handler a command to drop the dog. After these instructions the judge will say "Leave your dog." At this point the handler must give the command and/or hand signal to stay, walk to the opposite side of the ring, and turn and face his dog. When ordered by the judge to "Call your dog," the handler must give a verbal command or a hand signal (not both) with their body in an upright position for their dog to come. When your dog is on the way in, the judge will either give you a hand signal or a verbal order (whichever he/she specified before the exercise started) to drop (down) your dog. Your dog must drop immediately and remain in that position until the judge gives you another signal or verbal order to call your dog again. The handler must give a hand signal or a verbal command (not both) with their body in an upright position for their dog to come. The dog must come and sit in the front position; your dog may not be told to sit when coming or in front of the handler. When signaled or told by the judge to "Finish your dog," a command or hand signal may be given for your dog to return to the heel position (not both). (See Image 4.)

### Retrieve on Flat

Handler starts with dog sitting in the heel position at a spot designated by the judge. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" When you and your dog are ready, the judge will order you to "Throw your dumbbell." Before you throw your dumbbell, you must give your dog a verbal command and/or signal to stay. The dumbbell must be thrown a distance of at least 20 feet. If the dumbbell is not thrown at least 20 feet, the judge will have the dumbbell re-thrown at his/her discretion. No points will be deducted for mis-throws.

When the dumbbell comes to rest, the judge will order the handler to send his/her dog. A single verbal command ("Take it," "Fetch," etc.) or a hand signal (not both) may be given for the dog to retrieve the dumbbell. The dog should go directly to the dumbbell, pick it up without playing, and return directly back to the handler in the "front" position. The judge will say "Take it" or something similar; the handler should then give a verbal command ("Out," "Give," etc.) as he/she removes the dumbbell from the dog's mouth. The dog should readily release hold of the dumbbell when commanded. The dog must not drop the dumbbell or play "tug of war" as it is removed. The judge will then give the command "Finish your dog." As in all other exercises where a finish is required, the handler may give either a verbal command or hand signal for the dog to return to the heel position (not both).

### Broad Jump

The handler will stand with his/her dog in the heel position and at least eight feet in front of the jump. When ordered by the judge to "Leave your dog," the handler will give the verbal command and/or hand signal to stay. The handler will then go to the right side of the jump, turn to face the jump (1/4 turn to left), remaining two feet away from the jump. When told by the judge to "Send your dog," the handler will give a verbal command ("Jump," "Over," etc.) or a hand signal (not both) for the dog to jump over the jump. The dog

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**Image 4: This dog is being trained to drop.**



must clear the full length of the jump – not touching any board. When the dog is in midair, the handler will turn 1/4 turn to the right but will remain in the same spot. Upon completing the jump, the dog will go to the “front” position. When signaled or told by the judge to “Finish your dog,” the handler will again give the command or signal (not both) for the dog to return to the heel position.

The length the dog is required to jump is two times the height of the dog at the withers (shoulder), to the closest even number (16 inches, 18 inches, 20 inches, 22 inches, etc.).

### *Long Sit and Long Down (out of sight)*

(Handlers leave the ring and are taken to a place where their dogs cannot see them.) In both of these exercises the judge will say “This is the long sit for three minutes or the long down for five minutes. Are you ready?” At which point the command and/or hand signal for you to either sit or down your dog should be given. When all of the dogs are either in the sit position or the down position, the judge will give the order to “Leave your dog.” The stay command and/or hand signal should be given. The handlers will leave their dogs and walk to the opposite side of the ring and proceed to follow your ring steward out of the ring to a place where your dog cannot see you. After three minutes for the sit and five minutes for the down, the steward will lead everyone back to the ring. When everyone is back in the ring, the judge will say “Back to your dogs.” At this point, return to the dog’s heel position by means of walking behind your dog. If your dog moves out of line or disturbs another dog, gently and quietly remove your dog from the line and keep him/her by your side in the appropriate position. Do not correct at a show or give a second command. Be considerate of the others in the ring if your dog makes a mistake.

### **Open**

If you passed the Pre-Open class at the state or county fair, you must move up to the Open class unless your obedience instructor gives you special permission to remain in the Pre-Open class for one more year.

### *Exercises*

Heel (off leash)

Figure 8 (off leash)

Drop on Recall

Retrieve on Flat

Retrieve over the High Jump

Broad Jump

Long Sit – three minutes (out of sight)

Long Down – five minutes (out of sight)

- No physical guidance of dog allowed between exercises.

### *Heel (off leash)*

When showing, the dog’s name along with the command to heel may be used once after each halt order from the judge. During heeling, the dog may not be spoken to other than the command to heel – the dog cannot be told to sit when the judge calls for a halt.

### *Figure 8 (off leash)*

The Figure 8 exercise consists of the handler and dog completing a “figure 8” pattern around two people (called “posts”) placed eight feet apart. The proper distance between the handler and the posts is an arm’s length away. At no time should the dog or handler bump or touch the posts. The commands are the same as for the regular heeling exercise.

### *Down on Recall (off leash)*

The dog may be told to sit at the designated spot. The judge will tell each exhibitor when and how he will signal the dog to be commanded or signaled to drop. Some judges will just tell the exhibitors to drop the dogs at a certain spot and will not give the handler a command to drop the dog. After these instructions, the judge will say “Leave your dog.” At this point the handler must give the command and/or hand signal to stay, walk to the opposite side of the ring, and turn and face his dog. When ordered by the judge to “Call your dog,” the handler must give a verbal command or a hand signal (not both) with their body in an upright position for their dog to come. When your dog is on the way in, the judge will either give you a hand signal or a verbal order (whichever he/she specified before the exercise started) to drop (down) your dog. Your dog must drop immediately and remain in that position until the judge gives you another signal or verbal order to call your dog again. The handler must give a hand signal or a verbal command (not both) with their body in an upright position for their dog to come. The dog must come and sit in the front position; your dog may not be told to sit when coming or in front of the handler. When signaled or told by the judge to “Finish your dog,” a command or hand signal may be given for your dog to return to the heel position (not both).

### *Retrieve on Flat*

Handler starts with dog sitting in the heel position at a spot designated by the judge. The judge will ask “Are you ready?” When you and your dog are ready, the judge will order you to “Throw your dumbbell.” Before you throw your dumbbell, you must give your dog a verbal command and/or signal to stay. The dumbbell must be thrown a distance of at least 20 feet. The judge will have the dumbbell re-thrown at his/her discretion. No points will be deducted for mis-throws. When the dumbbell comes to rest, the judge will order the





handler to send his/her dog. A single verbal command (“Take it,” “Fetch,” etc.) or a hand signal (not both) may be given for the dog to retrieve the dumbbell. The dog should go directly to the dumbbell, pick it up without playing, and return directly back to the handler in the “front” position. The judge will say “Take it” or something similar; the handler should then give a verbal command (“Out,” “Give,” etc.) as he/she removes the dumbbell from the dog’s mouth. The dog should readily release hold of the dumbbell when commanded. The dog must not drop the dumbbell or play “tug of war” as it is removed. The judge will then give the command “Finish your dog.” As in all other exercises where a finish is required, the handler may give either a verbal command or hand signal for the dog to return to the heel position (not both).

### *Retrieve Over the High Jump*

The retrieve over the high jump is done exactly like the retrieve on the flat, except your dog must jump over the high jump on the way to retrieve the dumbbell and on the way back to you after he/she has picked up the dumbbell. The jump height will be one times the height of the dog. Your dog must not climb the wall either going or coming. (That is a disqualification.) You will also lose points if your dog hits the jump on the way out or coming back but that is not a disqualification. Handler will start with his/her dog in the heel position at least eight feet in front of the jump. The judge will ask “Are you ready?” When you and your dog are ready, the judge will order you to “Throw your dumbbell.” Before you throw your dumbbell you must give your dog a verbal command and/or signal to stay. The dumbbell must be thrown a distance of at least eight feet beyond the jump. If the dumbbell is not thrown in the proper direction or at least eight feet beyond the jump, the judge may have you re-throw the dumbbell but no points will be deducted for a poor throw. When the dumbbell comes to rest, the judge will order the handler to send his/her dog. A single verbal command (“Take it,” “Fetch,” etc.) or a hand signal (not both) may be given for the dog to retrieve the dumbbell. The dog should jump over the jump and then go directly to the dumbbell, pick it up without playing with it, return with the dumbbell over the jump, and go directly back to the handler in the “front” position. (If the dog goes around the jump either going or coming it is also a disqualification.) The judge will say “Take” (or something similar); the handler should then give a verbal command (“Out,” “Give,” etc.) as he/she removes the dumbbell from the dog’s mouth. The dog should readily release hold of the dumbbell when commanded. The dog must not drop the dumbbell or play “tug of war” as it is removed.

The judge will then give the command “Finish your dog.” As in all other exercises where a finish is required, the handler may give either a verbal command or hand signal for the dog to return to the heel position (not both).

The height the dog is required to jump is one times the height of the dog at the withers (shoulder), to the closest even number (8 inches, 10 inches, 12 inches, 14 inches, etc.).

### *Broad Jump*

The handler will stand with his/her dog in the heel position and at least eight feet in front of the jump. When ordered by the judge to “Leave your dog,” the handler will give the verbal command and/or hand signal to stay. The handler will then go to the right side of the jump and turn to face the jump (1/4 turn to left), remaining two feet away from the jump. When told by the judge to “Send your dog,” the handler will give a verbal command (“Jump,” “Over,” etc.) or a hand signal (not both) for the dog to jump over the jump. The dog must clear the full length of the jump – not touching any board. When the dog is in midair, the handler will turn 1/4 turn to the right but will remain in the same spot. Upon completing the jump, the dog will go to the “front” position. When signaled or told by the judge to “Finish your dog,” the handler will again give the command or signal (not both) for the dog to return to the heel position. (See Image 5.)

The length the dog is required to jump is two times the height of the dog at the withers (shoulder), to the closest even number (16 inches, 18 inches, 20 inches, 22 inches, etc.).

**Image 5: Training for the Broad Jump.**



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### *Long Sit and Long Down (out of sight)*

(Handlers leave the ring and are taken to a place where their dogs cannot see them.) In both of these exercises the judge will say “This is the long sit for three minutes or the long down for five minutes. Are you ready?” At which point, the command and/or hand signal for you to either sit or down your dog should be given. When all of the dogs are either in the sit position or the down position, the judge will give the order to “Leave your dog.” The stay command and/or hand signal should be given, The handlers will leave their dogs and walk to the opposite side of the ring and proceed to follow your ring steward out of the ring to a place where your dog cannot see you. After three minutes for the sit and five minutes for the down, the steward will lead everyone back to the ring. When everyone is back in the ring, the judge will say “Back to your dogs.” At this point, return to the dog’s heel position by means of walking behind your dog. If your dog moves out of line or disturbs another dog, gently and quietly remove your dog from the line and keep him/her by your side in the appropriate position. Do not correct at a show or give a second command. Be considerate of the others in the ring if your dog makes a mistake.





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