

Obedience Curriculum At-A-Glance

Foundational Courses for a Well-Mannered Dog

1. AKC Star Puppy
2. Beginner 1
3. Beginner 2

Next steps with your dog as a family dog, competition obedience, rally and/or scent work.

Family Dog	Competition Obedience	Rally	Scent work
4. Canine Good Citizen (CGC) 5. Community Canine (CGCA)	4. Competition skills and/or Heel Work 5-6. Open 1 & 2 7-8. Utility 1 & 2 9. Ring Ready Novice 10. Adv. Open/Utility	4. Rally	4. Scent Work

Foundational Courses for a Well-Mannered Dog

An owner that commits to teaching their dog a strong foundation with these classes will learn how to train for a well-mannered dog. These foundational skills are required to take the next steps as a family dog in the CGC classes and/or pursuing a specific dog sport in agility¹, competition obedience, rally, and/or scent work.

1. AKC STAR Puppy: Star Puppy, a program developed by The American Kennel Club, is designed to get your puppy off to a good start in life. Your dog will learn obedience skills such as sit, down, come, and beginner heeling and focus work.

2. Beginner 1: This class develops the owner's understanding of a dog's learning and principles to train by when teaching basic commands and desired behavior, including impulse control, voluntary attention, a functional sit/down-stay, come/recall, and walking on a loose leash.

3. Beginner 2: This class focuses on improving communication between an owner and their dog, teaching and cuing engagement behaviors, strengthens basic obedience skills, and attention is required in both a stationary position and when moving.

¹ Agility is not discussed in this document.

Family Dog

All dogs can be good dogs, and all owners can be great owners, it takes training, lots of love, dedication, patience, a lot of praise and time. The Canine Good Citizen® (CGC) program is a 10-skill test that is designed to help you and your dog be the best you can be together. CGC is open to all dogs that have completed Beginner 2 with a continued focus on teaching good manners to dogs and responsible dog ownership.

4. Canine Good Citizen: The Canine Good Citizen (CGC) program is designed for the responsible dog owner to reinforce and reward a well-mannered dog to have good manners at home and in the community.

5. Community Canine (CGCA): This advanced CGC class is designed to ensure you have a well-behaved dog while you're out and about in the community, including walking on a busy sidewalk, local park, through a crowd, or sitting politely at an intersection etc.

Obedience Curriculum At-A-Glance

Obedience

These classes are designed for teams interested in participating in competition obedience. Each class focuses on strengthening the relationship between owners and their dogs while they learn the elements within 5 components of competition obedience, one element at a time. These classes may be taken in any order, concurrently, as well as repeated multiple times. Successful development and performance of the skills taught in these classes prepare teams to progress to the next stage of competition obedience, “Teaching the Exercises.”

4. Competition Skills: This class focuses on teaching stationary, recall, jumping and retrieving skills needed for competing obedience including games to build drive, engagement and listening skills. Owners become more consistent and effective in using their “marker” system to communicate with their dog. (Prerequisite: Successful completion of Beginner 2 or instructor permission.)

Or

4. Heel work: This class focuses on building a solid foundation with heeling skills. Teams learn to perform left, right and about turns, figure 8’s, pace changes and halts. Multiple heel work drills will be performed to strengthen the owner’s cueing, footwork and posture in heeling exercises, while the dog learns to maintain heel position with attention by reading the owner’s nonverbal behavior. (Prerequisite: Successful completion of Beginner 2 or instructor permission.)

Teaching the Exercises

Competition obedience is a journey not a destination. These classes are designed to further prepare owner and their dog for this journey by applying the skills and behaviors acquired in the competition skills to learning the competition obedience exercise one component at time. Participants at this stage have introduced heeling, stationary, recall, jumping and retrieving skills, and are ready to start chaining these skills together within the open and utility exercises. In these classes handlers will place more and more responsibility on the dog as a true partner, as teams learn the heeling, stationary, recall, jumping and retrieving Open and Utility exercises. Knowing heeling skills are developed over miles and year, each Open 2 and both Utility classes will include heeling exercises to strengthen accuracy and animation on and off lead. Successful development of the skills taught in these classes will prepare teams to progress to the next stop on your journey, “Preparing to Show.”

5. Open 1: This class focuses on the application of competition skills in teaching the Open exercises, excluding heeling. Individual competition skills are linked together to teach a functional dumbbell retrieve on the flat and over the high jump, broad jump, recall, drop on recall, position changes, as well as fronts and finishes.

6. Open 2: This class focuses on putting together all the pieces of the Open exercises to create a solid Open performance. This class is designed to be more challenging with more exercises done off leash, at a greater distance, for longer durations, and/or with additional distractions/pressure. Exercises include, heel free and figure 8, command discrimination (stand, down, sit), drop on recall, retrieve on flat, retrieve over high jump, broad jump, stand stay, get your leash.

7. Utility1: This class focuses on the application of competition skills in teaching the Utility exercises. Individual competition skills are linked together to teach the signal exercise, directed jumping, scent discrimination, moving stand and examination, and directed retrieve.

8. Utility 2: This class focuses on putting together all the pieces of the Utility exercises together to create a solid Utility performance. This class is designed to be more challenging as owners fade cues and dogs perform each exercise in its entirety for a greater distance, for longer durations and/or with more distractions/pressure. Exercises include: signals, scent discrimination, directed retrieve, moving stand and examination, and directed jumping.

Preparing to Show

These classes are designed to build the competence and confidence of teams to enter the ring, knowing they have systematically taught and performed the exercises. During these classes owners condition their dog to perform for longer periods of time between rewards as they string together multiple exercises, and practice the choreography of their performance. When you prepare to show, no matter the level, it is beneficial to “Train Like You Show”. This allows you to practice your choreography, string multiple exercises together, and prepare the dog for their ring performance.

Classes at this level are designed to get you and your dog ready to enter the ring, have success in the ring and address in training and performance problems that arise over the course of a dog’s competition career.

9. Ring Ready Novice: This class is designed to prepare teams to enter an obedience trial. It focuses on Novice exercises, strategies for warming up, approaching and entering the ring, and moving around the ring from one exercise to another. Owners will focus on strengthening their handling skills and fading cues as their dog gains more responsibilities.

10. Advanced Open/Utility: This class is designed to strengthen the dog’s performance of open and utility exercises the first time on the first command. The dog is exposed to ring distractions and proofing skills that builds handler and dog confidence, focus and understanding of each exercise.

Rally

AKC Rally is a team sport. You and your dog will navigate a course, side-by-side, as you steer your dog through a course of 10-20 different signs. Each of these signs include instructions regarding the next skill that is to be performed. The dog and handler move continuously throughout the course with the dog under control at the handler’s left side. There is a clear sense of teamwork between the dog and handler both during and between the numbered signs. Although each performance is timed, having a good race time is not the goal; it is all about working as a team while performing the skills, with the dog under control.

4. Rally: This class focuses on rally signs and practice course for AKC Rally trials.

Scent Work

Scent work is a sport that mimics the task of working detection dogs to locate a scent and communication to the handler that the scent has been around. Real-life detection dogs are trained to search for a variety of items: drugs, explosives, human remains, currency, other contraband, living humans (such as search and rescue), and much more. AKC scent work takes this amazing working relationship and turns it into a fun game that any dog can play. Search scenarios will be based on trials and offered at the experience level of each team.

4. Scent Work: This class introduces students to the principles and techniques of scent work training for dogs. Owner will learn how to develop the dog’s natural scenting abilities. Essential oils used in AKC sent work trails are used as target odors (Birch, Anise, Clove and Cypress). Searches will be designed to create high value for the target odor and guild the handling skills of the owner.