



Well-Trained Dogs Can Do More Test!

(Level 1)

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Test Program Overview

The idea for this testing program came out of need (okay, maybe want) for a program that actually looked at the skills that well-trained dogs (and their handlers) should have and what situations they should be able to successfully navigate.

None of the available programs were exactly what we wanted to see from well-trained dogs. They had unclear criteria, tested things that were unimportant to the average well-trained dog, and had rules that were arbitrary and in some cases somewhat unfair to the testing team. Our test aims to recognize dogs who can be successful by maintaining good manners in a variety of common situations in the world successfully while maintaining good manners and identify owners who can support their dog successfully through solid training and education.

The Well-Trained Dogs Can Do More! program has two test levels to show your dog is well-trained dog in both more controlled and less controlled situations. This booklet is all about the Level 1 test.

Our Level 1 test is designed to be performed almost entirely inside. Our Level 2 test is designed to be completed in both indoor and outdoor environments.

This testing protocol should look fairly realistic and be a fair evaluation of the team's skills in daily life. The skills are presented with reasonable flow – where multiple items may be tested in one smooth sequence. The test is scored based on a points system with clear guidelines and criteria for what is a 6-point performance and what is a 1-point performance. This rubric with clear criteria should help evaluators fairly and consistently score their testing teams.

Perfection isn't a thing; even well-trained dogs may have a skill they aren't great at and we recognize that! Our scoring rubric allows for an

area or two where the team wasn't perfect but was still good enough to pass the test.

What makes our test different from others?

- 2 minute acclimation period once in the main testing area – we recognize that in the real world, you can often give your dog a minute or two to take in their environment and feel safe before you ask them to settle or get to work. This acclimation period can be vital for dogs to be able to feel safe in a new place or get over the initial excitement of arrival. The test starts outside at the door, but after the first test item the dogs have time to get comfortable before getting to work. During this acclimation period handlers can use treats to warm their dog up and they can ask the dog to get on the equipment that will be used so they are comfortable. If numerous treats or crumbs are being dropped, the evaluator can intervene by informing the handler to adjust their treat usage or change treats.
- Realistic scenarios that flow together and are incorporated together in a cohesive test. The test starts with no prior briefing or discussion – handlers are provided a walk through prior to the test and have taken the written Responsible Dog Owner test to prove they are aware of the rules and should come prepared.
- We recognize that food rewards are easily and readily given in real world situations, so why would we not permit them in our test at specified times? A human with a pocket full of hotdogs will not cause an untrained dog to magically behave properly, but allowing rewards after successfully completing a skill can keep a well-trained dog engaged during the test just like rewards will keep them engaged in real life. Food rewards must

stay in a pocket until after the completion of a skill.

- We also know that the collar/harness a handler uses doesn't magically train the dog to behave appropriately. If a dog is always walked on a certain piece of equipment in the world, testing them on something completely different seems arbitrary. Dogs may be tested on buckle collars, rear-attach harnesses, front-attach harness, and even head halters. If a team is using a head harness, there is an additional test item to show the dog is comfortable with the tool and is not uncomfortable putting it on.

Test Eligibility

- Dogs must be 1 year of age or over when they are tested.
- Teams must have completed 1 or more in-person group class sessions prior to testing (for example, a 7 week basic manners class) – class could be basic manners, sports, or another fun topic. Handlers must present proof of that class if they had taken it with a trainer other than the WTDCDM evaluator. They need to show either a certificate of attendance, homework sheets, email confirmation of classes, or an email from prior instructor.
- Dogs of any breed/mix, altered or intact are permitted (wolf and coyote hybrids are not permitted).
- Dogs must have been seen by a veterinarian within the last year and be up to date on rabies vaccines. There is a veterinary form for your vet/clinic to sign.
- Blind, deaf, tri-pawd, and dogs using wheelchairs or other mobility assistance equipment are permitted to test.

- Dogs who are currently ill or injured are not permitted to test and must reschedule. Minor injuries that do not affect the dog's ability to comfortably and confidently participate are allowed at the evaluator's discretion. Please note on the veterinary form if your dog is sound to test per your vet but has a chronic injury or condition that may alter their gait or cause them to look unwell. If a dog seems obviously ill or injured, an evaluator can choose to refuse to test your dog that day for the dog's well-being.
- Dogs must have some form of ID (collar tag, microchip, tattoo) when they test.
- In season females are allowed to be tested but must wear britches/panties and will be tested last.
- A dog with a bite history to a human is not permitted to take the exam. Working towards mastering these skills is a great focus, but to earn the certificate, dogs must not display this level of aggression.

Testing Rules

- **Rewards:** Food, petting, and personal play may be used AFTER the completion of a test item when the evaluator says the exercise is complete. If rewarding during the leash walking skills, the team should pause to deliver the food/play reinforcement before moving on to the next test item. Personal play rewards should be less than 15 seconds and should not disrupt the testing space. A dropped food reward that is quickly picked up will not be penalized, but dropped food that is not

picked up quickly will result in a 1 point penalty per incident.

- **“Cookie Hand”:** While treats may be used, owners may not pretend to hold a cookie in their hand, fake a food lure, or pretend to get treats out of a pocket prior to asking for a behavior or after a dog doesn’t respond immediately.
- **Cues and Multiple Cues:** A single cue is either a verbal cue, a hand signal, or a simultaneous verbal and hand signal. Deaf or blind dogs may use tactile cues to replace either visual or verbal signals that they cannot perceive, but the handler must identify what the tactile cues are for that dog. Owners of dogs who are neither deaf nor blind may not touch their dog to cue a behavior.

Multiple cues are when a handler asks for a behavior 2 or more times before the dog responds correctly. A constant hand signal (on a stay for example) is considered a repeated cue and will be scored as such. Saying the dog’s name prior to the cue is not considered a second cue.

Periodic specific praise “good stay” is permitted as long as the dog has not deviated from the original behavior. If, for example, a dog starts to pull during leash walking and the owner gives another cue to get the dog back into heel, that is a second cue. If during a 2 minute stay the handler says, “good stay” twice while the dog has remained stationary, that is allowed.

However, it is the discretion of the evaluator as to what is periodic and what is excessive.

- **Praise/talking may be used liberally throughout**—you cannot repeatedly cue a dog to do a skill (sit, sit, siiitttt), but you can talk to them throughout and encourage them to continue their good work. “Good job, nice work, good puppy” can be liberally used throughout.

- **Equipment**—Dogs are tested on a 4-6ft leash (required) and can wear a buckle collar, martingale collar, body harness (rear/front attach), and, with an additional testing item, even head halter like a Gentle Leader (dogs may also wear a collar if they are testing on a harness/head halter).
- **Head Halter/Gentle Leader**—If testing with a head halter, the dog must demonstrate that it has acclimated to this tool and is not uncomfortable with it. During the test, the dog cannot try to rub it off at any point. At least once (possibly twice) during the test, the head halter will be removed to complete an exercise and then put back on at the completion. When the head halter is put back on, the dog must not show major avoidance or discomfort (a head turn is fine but the dog cannot walk away, actively avoid, cower, or roll on their side to avoid it being put on).
- **Corrections**—Owners may not verbally reprimand their dog during the test. Owners may not give harsh leash corrections. Owners may not threaten or intimidate their dog with their cues.
- **Physical prompting**—Owners may not physically touch, nudge, or push their dog into positions. If a dog doesn't sit on the first cue, an owner is NOT permitted to push the dog's bum down or tap their bum with a finger (owners of blind/deaf dogs that use tactile cues are permitted to do so, but should tell the evaluator what to expect).
- **Required equipment for test day**—Handlers need to be prepared on test day and should have poop bags, ID for their dog (tags, microchip, or tattoo), vet form (detailed below), and the dog wearing approved equipment. Failure to have required items will cause an automatic 'not yet' on your test.
- **Dogs showing signs of excess stress must not be tested**—If a dog is displaying moderate to severe signs of stress that don't quickly resolve during acclimation time, that dog will not

be tested. Signs of stress include but not are limited to behaviors such as stress panting, pacing, lack of focus, inability to eat, frantic searching (hypervigilance), cowering, or slinking movements.

- **Aggression**—Any dog who initiates reactive or aggressive behaviors (barking, lunging, growling, snarling, snapping, fixating, posturing or freezing) towards a person or dog will get a 'not yet' score and the test will be ended immediately.
- **Inappropriate elimination** —Dogs who inappropriately pee or poop within the testing area will receive a “not yet” result for their test. Dogs MAY eliminate in the appropriate place outside during their 'break' and an owner may request a pause between exercises to allow for a potty break if they sense their dog needs the break.
- **Owners must maintain physical control of their dog at all times**—An overall “not yet” score may be given for teams who are not well-managed or who fail to maintain control of their dog. Out of control behavior may including jumping up on equipment or walls unprompted, lunging at the end of their leash, frantic movement on their leash, or repeatedly jumping up on their handler out of excitement. Repeated dropping the leash, outside of Test Item 6, can result in a "not yet" score.
- **Test modifications**—We welcome all teams to test as Well-Trained Dogs. Reasonable modifications to specific test items can be made for handlers or dogs with disabilities. The request for modifications needs to be made in advance to your evaluator and must include what modifications are needed. Modifications might include “On test items 1 and 8, please allow for a tight leash coming in/out due to my motorized wheelchair and the dog needing to get out of the way” or “On test item 10, my dog is fully deaf and we use a tactile leash cue that results in a tight leash briefly” or “Test item 10—I have limited dexterity in my hands and leashing/unleashing can be difficult, so I'd like to let my dog drag their leash and be

unrestrained in the test area during the recall and sit while I grab the leash”

- **Test Environment**—The test environment should be indoors in a neutral environment with typical indoor distractions—not a ‘obedience ring’ type environment void of everything, there should be other things, even if just stacks of chairs and crates along the walls. The test may not be completed in a team’s home or property.
- **Evaluators’ decisions are final**—Disagreeing with, pressuring, arguing with, or being confrontational with your evaluator will not be tolerated—you could not only earn a ‘not yet’ for that evaluation attempt, but could be banned from future tests if your behavior is unacceptable. If you have a question, you may ask the evaluator for clarification on a score, but evaluators must be spoken to respectfully. If you have a problem with an evaluator, you can file a respectful complaint in writing. Don’t make the evaluator think—if you don’t understand the exercise, ask questions to make sure you are sure before you say you are ready.

Other WTDCDM program requirements

- **Responsible Dog Ownership Knowledge Assessment**—Prior to the test, owners must pass the Responsible Dog Ownership Knowledge Assessment and read through the study guide in this packet.
- **Group Class Forms**—We require dogs to have attended or graduated from 1 in-person group class that was 6+ weeks

long. Teams should continue their learning and training with at least 1 group class per year (virtual or in person) or proof of successfully competing in dog sports to maintain the Well-Trained Dog title. We know skills that aren't practiced can atrophy over time and we want our "Well Trained Dogs" to maintain that status through continued practice. You'll submit images of your graduation certificates, class enrollment confirmation, or an email from your class instructor from prior classes and each year you'll get a reminder to send in your pictures of those items or a new dog sport title certificate to maintain your Well-Trained Dog status!

- **Veterinary Form**—Part of being a responsible dog owner is making sure your dog is seen by a veterinarian for wellness visits. Our form needs a vet/clinic signature or stamp that your dog has been seen in the last year and is up to date on the rabies vaccine.

Test Items and scoring—Level 1

Test Item 1— Walk by a friendly person

Walk by a friendly person welcoming them to the test AND have appropriate equipment – The evaluator will greet the team and hold the door wide open for them to enter. The dog and handler will walk by the evaluator and into the testing area where the evaluator will observe leash/collar/harness/tags etc. The dog may show interest and sniff the evaluator as they walk by but may not jump on the person. The dog should enter in a controlled fashion but does not need to 'heel' through the door. Once inside the evaluator will ask if the handler has poop bags. Dogs may not be carried.

6 Points– Dog passes by evaluator with or without interest and maintains a loose leash (they can be ahead of the person or behind using the full length of leash, just no tension). Dog does not jump on the evaluator and enters in a controlled manner. Dog is wearing appropriate equipment and owner has required items.

4 points– Dog passes by evaluator with or without interest and there are 2 or fewer momentary tight leashes entering the building/room or slight lagging/nervousness. The dog does not jump on the evaluator. Dog is wearing appropriate equipment and owner has required items.

1 points– Dog passes by evaluator with or without interest but there's constant moderate tension on the leash as it walks through the door, but tension abates once the dog is inside the testing area. Or the dog needs lots of encouragement to enter the training room because they are nervous. Or the dog shows too much interest in the person—they do not jump but are overly interested and may whine or not want to walk through the door and owner uses leash pressure or lots of encouragement to get them to move on. Dog does not jump on the evaluator. Dog is wearing appropriate equipment and owner has required items.

0 Points– Dog is not wearing appropriate equipment or owner doesn't have required test items (ID, vet form, poop bags, proof of Responsible Dog Ownership Knowledge Assessment). Dog jumps on evaluator or shows any aggression or reactivity. Dog is too nervous to come in the room. Dog does not enter in a controlled manner, it has constant moderate or greater leash tension that does not stop upon going through the door.

Test Item 2— Crate up or settle during paperwork

Crate up OR stay on a raised station while the owner fills out paperwork – After the 2-minute acclimation time, the team will head to a chair to fill out their test form. The owner can choose where to put the crate/station in relationship to the chair where they'll be filling

out the paperwork. It can be directly next to them or farther away. They may provide their own crate/station/carrier or use one provided by the evaluator.

CRATE option: Dog will enter the crate willingly, the door will be closed, the owner will fill out paperwork (approximately 2 minutes), the door will be opened and the leash attached or grabbed, and the dog will exit when cued to do so (the owner may cue the dog to sit/down/stay while they open the door). The dog should tolerate this confinement without distress. The owner MAY choose to provide a long lasting chewy (bullystick etc), Kong, or Lickimat AFTER the dog enters the crate for the dog to work on while crated, but may not use the treats or toys to lure them into the crate. The owner may provide a bed or blanket from home for the crate or the station.

****IF the dog is being tested on a head halter they must pass the Test Item HH—the head collar must be removed prior to entering the crate.** When being released from the crate, the leash should be attached to a collar initially. Once out of the crate, the owner must show that the dog puts the head halter on without distress.

STATION option: Owner may use a raised station like a dog cot, Cato board, or Klimb platform of appropriate size for the dog. Dog is cued to get on the station and can be cued to get into a particular position like sit/down/stand if the owner chooses. Dog should keep all 4 paws on the station for the duration of the paperwork. Dogs are permitted to change position but must keep all 4 paws on the station until released when paperwork is done.

6 Points— Dog enters crate/gets on station with 1 cue and stays there with 1 or fewer 'stay' type cues (handlers choosing to cue a position may give up to 2 cues with no penalty). Dog gets into the right position with 1 cue (IF owner opts for this). Dog stays in/on that spot while the owner fills out paperwork until released with no vocalizing or distress. Dogs in the crate are permitted a sit/down cue and a wait/stay cue while the crate is opened.

4 points– Dog enters crate/gets on station with 2 cues **OR** stays on the station with 2 ‘stay’ type cues. Dog stays in/on that spot while the owner fills out paperwork until released with no vocalizing or distress. Crated dog needed a second sit/down/stay/wait type cue while the door was opened.

1 point– Dog enters crate/gets on station with 2 cues **AND** stays on station with 2 cues. Dog gets part way off the station (up to 2 paws off) but either the owner cues the behavior a second time and the dog gets the paws back on **OR** the dog maintains position with the 1 or 2 paws off (paws dangling off a cot touching the floor don’t count). Dog displays vocalizing or distress for 10 or fewer seconds total. Crated dogs needs 2 cues to get in the crate and 2 cues to stay before being released.

0 points– Dog needs more than 2 cues on any portion of the skill, dog completely leaves the station, or dog is unsettled in the crate. Dog leaves the crate before being released. Dog does not complete skill.

Test Item 3— Accept a person approaching

Accept a friendly person approaching the dog and handler—Once the dog has been released from the station/crate the owner will go to a specific spot with their paperwork and can choose to ask their dog to maintain a particular position like a sit, down, or stand stay, but is not required to do so. The evaluator will approach the team in friendly manner, ignoring the dog, and stop approximately 4ft away to reach for the clipboard/paperwork that the owner will hand them. The evaluator will then explain the leash walking path to the team. The dog may be placed in the sit, down, or stand further away from the approaching evaluator if the owner chooses (within the length of the leash), but the dog may not approach the evaluator and cannot lunge, bark, or hide behind the handler.

6 points– Dog does not move towards the evaluator (may move towards the owner), the leash remains loose, and does not show any aggression, reactivity, or fear.

4 points– Dog advances toward evaluator slightly and the owner interrupts verbally with one cue (“Fluffy, look” or “Fluffy, sit”, etc) and the dog responds BEFORE the dog reaches the evaluator and the leash remains loose. Or the leash tightens upon approach and the dog stops moving towards the evaluator and does not continue to pull (leash does not remain tight). Dog does not show any aggression, reactivity, or fear.

1 point– Dog advances towards the evaluator but does not reach the evaluator and comes back to the owner within 2 cues with the leash remaining loose (“Fluffy, look! **Fluffy!**, Sit!” etc)) OR the dog returns with 1 cue plus the leash getting tight. Dog does not show aggression, reactivity, or fear.

0 points – Dog makes contact with the evaluator (whether they jump or keep their four feet on the floor), OR it takes 3 or more cues to get them to not approach. OR the leash gets tight and the dog continues to pull towards the evaluator. OR the dog shows any sort of aggression, reactivity, or fear.

Test item 4— Loose leash walking

Loose leash walking – Dogs will walk a total of approximately 200ft (either following tape on the floor or signs/cones) that includes items 4, 5, 6, and getting to test item 7. The first ≈125ft of the course is evaluated as the loose leash walking section (though loose leash is required throughout). It will consist of at least 4 of the following 6 elements–left turn, right turn, u-turn, halt (handler stops, dog stops, dog does not need to sit), slow pace, fast pace. (Owners may communicate turns, pace changes, and halts to the dog with no ‘extra cue’ penalties unless multiple cues are given when the dog has

started to make an error. For example, the owner cues, “Easy, easy” initially and the dog initially slows down but 5 steps in the dog starts to speed up again and the owner gives a 3rd “Easy” cue. This would be a double cue because of that third cue). Handlers may reward after Test Item 4, while stationary, before continuing to test item 5.

6 points– Dog walks the first portion of the path with 1 or fewer tight leashes and stays on the side it started on unless specifically cued to change sides by the owner.

4 points– Dog walks first portion of the path with 3 or fewer tight leashes and stays on the side it started on unless cued to change sides OR 2 or fewer tight leashes with 1 unplanned side switch. Owner uses 3 or fewer cues to remind dogs to stay with them (does not include turns or pace cues).

1 point– Dog walks the first portion of the path with 6 or fewer tight leashes or has multiple side switches. Owner uses 6 or fewer cues to remind the dog to stay with them.

0 points– Dog walks the first portion of the path with more than 6 moments of tight leashes, or a constant tight leash, or the owner needs more than 6 cues to try and keep their dog walking nicely.

Test item 5— Leave it

Leave it– After the first portion of the leash walking path, there will be an approximately 50ft section where there will be 3-4 items (*depending on the course design) placed 6ft off the center of the path that you will walk—a crumpled up paper towel, a dog toy, an edible chewy item (raw hide, bullystick, etc), and then 1 item that is neither a treat nor a toy but that a dog may encounter in public (this could be almost anything: a suitcase, a stick, chair, wheelchair, folded blanket or towel, etc). (*If testing in an area with limited space, this test item will be performed using a 25ft down and back route with

3 items: an edible item, a toy, and either a crumpled paper towel or interesting object. With the down and back, the team will pass the items twice)

6 Points— Dog walks by on a loose leash past all items without getting within 2 ft of any of any items with 1 or fewer tight leash moments. Owner uses 1 ‘leave it’ type cue per item (or per pass if a down and back).

4 points— Dog has 2 or fewer momentary tight leashes OR Owner uses 2 cues on 1 item plus 1 tight leash moment OR owner uses 2 cues on 2 items without any tight leash moments. Dog must not get within 2ft of any items to score 4 points.

1 point— Dog has more than 2 tight leash moments but not a constantly tight leash OR dog gets within 2 ft of one item but does not touch it OR owner needs 2 cues for more than 2 items or 3 cues on a single item.

0 points— Constantly tight leash, dog gets within 2 ft of more than 1 item, or dog touches any item.

Test item 6— Response to a dropped leash

Dropped leash— On the leash walking path described in Test Item 5, at the designated spot near the end of the course, the handler will drop the leash and stop walking – the handler should be able to maintain control until the leash is picked up. The dog should either automatically stop walking or the owner can cue specific behavior(s) (“Fluffy, look, sit, wait” would not be penalized if the dog responded to each cue on the first cue) to cause the dog to stop moving and allow the owner to pick up the dropped leash within 5 seconds. Handlers may grasp the part of the leash near the collar as to not need to bend to the floor. Handlers who simply struggle to regain a

grasp on the leash while their dog waits patiently will not be penalized.

The dog should not just keep walking, start to run around, or make it challenging to pick up the leash. Handlers may not step on the leash to restrict the dog's movement. Once the leash has been picked up, the team may stop at the reward station to reward their dog.

A dog who jumps up once on their handler while they are regaining control of the leash is not penalized if the owner settles the dog easily. A dog who puts the leash in their mouth but drops it when asked is not penalized. Continual jumping, continual tugging or chewing on the leash, or a general inability for the handler to quickly settle the dog will be penalized.

6 points— Dog automatically stops when the leash is dropped OR responds to the handler's cues the first time given and does not move more than 2ft after the cues to allow the handler to pick up the leash. If dog gets excited or stressed the owner is able to easily settle them down.

4 points— Dog continues to moves 2-5ft away from handler after noticing the dropped leash or after the handler gives them a cue to stop. Handler cues a behavior so the dog stops and they can pick up the leash but it requires more than 1 cue for any single cue but the leash gets picked up within 5 seconds. Handler needs 2 or 3 cues for the dog to settle.

1 point— Dog moves 5-10ft away from handler after noticing the leash or after the handler gives them a cue to stop. Handler picks up the leash within 5 seconds but needs 3 cues for the dog to respond to the requested behaviors or to stop their motion. It takes between 5-10 seconds of the owner to grab the leash because the dog is struggling to stand still but the dog remains under control and within proximity of the owner. Handler needs 4 or 5 cues for the dog to settle

0 points– Handler takes more than 10 seconds to grab the leash because the dog is unsettled OR the dog leaves the handler completely to check out the environment OR the owner needs more than 4 cues to get the dog to respond to a single behavior (ex: fluffy, sit! Sit! SIT!).

Test item 7— Interacting with a friendly stranger

Interacting appropriately with a friendly stranger– The team continues loose leash walking from Test Item 6 to the Test Item 7 station. The team will complete their leash walking path and stop 10-15ft away (handler's choice) from the evaluator or friendly stranger. Once stopped, the handler can choose to cue their dog to sit, or down, or stand, or wait as the evaluator approaches and stops about 4ft away and greets the handler asks if they can pet the dog.

The handler has three options for how to respond:

- A) The handler can respond that they may pet the dog and send the dog to visit the person who now engages with the dog for petting or the handler can invite the person to approach the dog to pet – the dog must seek out the physical petting and they must not jump on the friendly stranger
- B) The handler can say “No you can’t pet them, but you can offer them a treat” or “No you can’t pet them but if you put your hand down and they’ll come say hi to you”. The dog must be able to do what the owner suggests—they must readily take the treat from the stranger or successfully do a hand target and touch their hand. The dog may not jump on the person.
- C) The owner can say “No, thank you” and the dog must stay by the owner as the friendly stranger asks a few questions about the dog before leaving.

6 points– *Option A*): The dog does not approach the stranger until instructed to go say hi or until the friendly stranger is instructed to approach the dog to pet them, the dog accepts the petting comfortably, and keeps 4 paws on the floor. *Option B*): The dog does not approach the stranger until instructed to hand target or accept food from the stranger, they complete the instructed task with confidence (not tentatively or fearfully), and keep 4 paws on the floor. *Option C*): The dog must not approach the stranger for the duration of the conversation and must not show overt signs of stress or discomfort, including but not limited to: growling, barking, lunging, hiding from, cowering, or repeated yawning.

4 points– *For all options*: The dog starts to approach the stranger but handler uses 1 extra cue or there is 1 tight leash until the dog can successfully wait until they are told to visit, or take the treat, or do a hand target, or until the person is done chatting. The dog does not jump up if allowed to interact with the person.

1 point– *For all options*: The dog starts to approach the stranger but the handler successfully resets the dog before the dog makes contact with the person with either 2 extra cues or 1 tight leash and 1 extra cue and they successfully wait until told to visit, take the treat/touch the hand, or until the person is done chatting. The dog does not jump up if allowed to interact with the person.

0 points– *For all options*: The dog approaches the stranger and reaches them before being instructed to (if they were instructed to visit). The stranger gets jumped on at any point. The owner doesn't advocate for their dog's preferences and allows petting when the dog clearly doesn't want to be pet or the dog is not comfortable enough to confidently take the treat from the human or do a hand target. The shows signs of being overly fearful or aggressive: the dog growls, barks, or lunges at the friendly stranger or is trembling, cowering, or attempts to run away or hide.

Test Item 8— Wait at the door

Wait at a door until released to go through— After Test Item 7, the team will walk to an “exit” door (or door leaving that room even if to an interior hallway) where the dog must sit, down, or stand and wait while the door is opened (handler may cue the specific position and give a wait cue but is not required to so). The dog should remain stationary until the door is opened wide (more than 45 degrees open) and the handler releases them forward. When released, they should not bolt forward but the leash can get tight momentarily. The owner need not exit the door first, but they can should they choose. Once through the door, they have a 1-2 minute break while the evaluator sets for the next test item. Handler can use this time to give their dog a chance to eliminate outside, they can use treats freely, or give their dog a minute or two of sniffing to relax.

6 points— The dog responds to the position cue (if given) with a single cue, waits with a single cue as the door is opened, and releases on a single cue. Dog remains in position until released forward and goes through the door in a controlled manner (not running, if the leash gets tight, it's momentary, and there is no reacting to things outside). If the dog is in a poor position on the initial position, the owner can reset the entire set up without penalty.

4 points— The dog needs either 2 cues to get into position OR 2 cues to wait while the door is being opened. OR the door doesn't open more than 45 degrees before the owner releases the dog, but the dog stays until released and exits the door in a controlled manner (not running, if the leash gets tight, it's momentary, and there is no reacting to things outside)

1 point— The dog needs 2 cues to get in the requested position AND 2 cues to wait while the door is being opened but the dog waits until released. Or the dog needs 2 cues for only one of those components but releases through the door without control (sustained pulling,

running out the door, not reorienting to the owner, or reacts to things outside the door).

0 points— The dog releases out the door prior to being given the cue. The dog needs more than 2 cues to get in position and 2 cues to wait as the door opens and the dog and the dog exits without control

Test item 9— Settle around a neutral dog

Settle around a calm neutral dog— As the team is taking the break in Test Item 8, a volunteer and a calm neutral dog will set up in a down on a mat or cot at a station 30ft from the testing team's station (the volunteer may use small soft treats during the test for the neutral dog). The evaluator will set up the testing team's station per their requests: a chair for the human and a mat, cot, or bare floor for the dog.

After the break, the team enters the testing area and walks to their settle spot. The handler can choose to give 1 food reward when their dog notices the other dog for the first time. The dog being tested will lay at their station and relax for approximately 1-2 minutes while the evaluator explains the final exercise and while the helper dog walks away and out of sight. The dog being tested is then released from the settle.

The dog may shift positions in the down, but should not shift positions continually. The dog being tested should not initiate reactions by fixating on the neutral dog (staring without being able to be redirected or hard staring) and they should not growl or bark (whining that abates quickly will not be penalized if they are not also staring at the dog). The handler may periodically praise the dog for good choices or redirect the dog with a verbal cue if they are overly interested in the neutral dog, "Fluffy, look! Good boy".

Should the neutral dog become unsettled and initiate staring or vocalizing, the test will be paused while the neutral dog is removed and the testing dog will have a break before resetting with a different dog. If this occurs more than half way through the 1-2 minutes, the evaluator can, at their discretion score the team based on the time prior to the neutral dog becoming unsettled and move forward.

If the testing dog's reaction is significantly over the top for the provocation, the evaluator can end the test at their discretion. For example, the neutral dog was looking at the testing dog and started to wag their tail with a soft thumping noise on the floor and the testing dog explodes in a large barking and lunging reaction.

6 points— The dog does not fixate, pull towards, or vocalize toward the helper dog and gets settled with one cue per action but there can be multiple actions as part of the chain (get on the mat, lay down, flip on your hip, and a cue to wait or settle, for example) and remains settled at their station for the 1-2 minute duration while instructions are being given and as the helper dogs walks out of sight until released from the settle

4 points— The dog does not fixate, pull toward, or vocalize toward the helper dog. They need an extra cue to get settled or to stay settled during the exercise, but they are successful at staying in the down until released.

1 point— The dog fixates, pulls towards, and/or vocalizes once (a couple barks, one pull, or one whine episode) upon initial awareness of the dog but can be redirected to the settle exercise. Dog requires 1 or fewer resets where they get out of the down but do not leave their station or area and successfully completes the exercise with no more than 2 extra cues.

0 points— The dog fixates, pulls towards, and/or vocalizes more than once or they need 3 or more cues to remain settled or are unable to remain settled for the duration.

Test item 10— Recall and leashing up

Recall and leashing up— The handler will attach a 20ft long line to the dog's gear and then remove the normal leash. The handler will continue to carry the leash in a pocket, in their hand, or across their body. The handler will let the dog explore the environment for up to 2 minutes. At some point during this time, the handler will recall the dog using any cue when the dog is at or near the end of the 20ft long line. The dog should turn to return toward the handler within 2 seconds and continue until they are stationary in front of the handler. The recall is considered complete when the dog either sits or downs in front of the handler or the handler grabs the dog's collar. After the recall, the dog will sit, down, or stand still while the owner attaches their leash and then takes off the long-line. The dog is then released by the handler.

If the dog does not go to the end of the long line during the time to explore, the owner can pick one of the following options for the recall:

A) Recall away from a friendly stranger getting the dog's attention. The stranger sets up more than 20ft away (so inaccessible to the dog on the long line) and the handler can recall as soon as the dog is 10ft away from the handler actively moving toward the stranger). The stranger should start with just sweet talking to get the dog to start to approach them. If the dog is disinterested, they can show a toy or a treat to entice the dog to start to approach and then put the item out of view once the dog is engaged. For all options the stranger should become neutral once the dog is actively engaged and approaching.

B) Set up a 20ft recall where the owners puts the dog in a stay and walks 20ft away. There will be 2 distractors placed 8ft off of the center line between the handler and the dog. These items should be either a toy or a food item and either a crumpled paper towel or interesting object. The dog must recall passed the items with 1 cue.

****If a dog was tested with a head halter, the head halter must be removed prior to the recall test item. The head halter must be put back on during the 'leashing up' component to fulfill the Test Item HH.**

6 points— Dog responds to 1 recall cue within 2 seconds ("Fluffy, come" with a simultaneous hand signal is considered 1 cue) and comes all the way to the person. The dog either stops to allow their collar to be grabbed or sits or downs when cued. If the dog is not already in a sit or down, the handler may cue either of those or a stand and then may give 1 cue to wait in that position. The dog does not change positions while the owner clips on the regular leash and takes off the long line. The dog releases when cued.

4 points— Dog responds to the recall cue within 4 seconds or needs a second cue to recall but dog completes the recall by allowing their collar to be grabbed or getting in a sit or down within 2ft of the owner. Dog needs an additional cue to stay in the position while the leash is clipped on and long line taken off, but they hold position until released

1 point— Dog responds to the recall within 4 seconds but needs a second cue. The dog completes the recall by allowing the collar grab or responding to the sit or down cue but the dog changes position (does not walk away, just a sit to down or sit to stand type change) as the leash is being clipped on/off but with an additional cue, they quickly reset and maintain position until released.

0 points— Dog fails to respond within 4 seconds or fails to complete the recall with a collar grab or a sit or down within 2ft of the owner or the dog needs a 3rd recall cue or the dog needs more than 1 reset during leashing up.

Test item HH— Head Halter Use

Head halters or Gentle Leaders can be useful tools but only if the dog is comfortable. The dog must not paw at the HH, rub their face

on things to get the noseband off, or flail their head around to get the nose band off. When the HH is put back on after test item 2 and 10, the dog cannot walk away, wag their head to avoid the loop, cower, or roll on to their side or back. They do not have to shove their nose through the loop, but they shouldn't actively avoid it and owners shouldn't forcibly hold their head to get it on.

(Must pass all of the applicable sections)

HH being put on after test 2 (if crating) _____ pass _____ not pass

HH being put on after test 10 (recall) _____ pass _____ not pass

HH use during duration of test _____ pass _____ not pass

Passing Scores!

0 Points is a failure to perform the skill within the criteria at all

1 Point is "acceptable", the dog could perform the skill with ample help

4 points is "good", the dog could perform the skill with a little extra help

6 points is "excellent", the dog performed the skill with no extra help

55-60 points is a passing score

Below 55 is a not quite yet.

55 points allows a variety of scoring options to still pass but doesn't allow for a failure (0 points) of any 1 item. Dogs don't have to be excellent at all the things. They can have 1 or 2 items where they could do the skill, just needed some extra help.

For Evaluators

The Test Set Up

Dogs are tested individually and owners are given a detailed run down of the test and the rules prior to arriving as there is no briefing before the test begins. The test is not a short one and will likely take 20-30 minutes including 2 breaks for the teams. There will always be a second person in the testing area acting as a friendly stranger, a general helper with the test, and witness.

The dog is given the opportunity to eliminate in an appropriate area and the owner is given a chance to make sure they have all the required items and are following all the rules regarding treats and gear before being invited into the test area and starting the test right away.

The test should flow fairly smoothly between the exercises to mimic real life flow of events. There are pauses written into the flow of the test where instructions can be given for each of the exercises to prevent down time in between exercises. Unless the physical space makes the order impossible, test items should be done in the described order to allow for proper flow.

At the completion of the test, evaluators should go over the test items with the teams. Be positive and supportive even when things didn't go as well as planned.

Testing area and equipment requirements

- A second person in the testing area as a witness, helper, or friendly stranger
- A manual door where teams will enter
- Crate(s) of several sizes for folks to use if they choose
- Raised stations like Klimb platforms, Cato boards, agility tables, or elevated cots

- Ability to track out a continuous loose leash walking path of 200ft -250ft where 25-50ft is dedicated to a 'leave it' section that will not be in the path of the rest of the leash walking
- Chair for the handler
- Pens
- A clipboard for the evaluator and handler
- A stopwatch or timing device
- Cones, tape, chalk, signs, or numbers to mark the leash walking path
- Leave it items – crumpled paper, food item, toy, and extra item
- 20ft long line
- Signs for some of the different stations that flow together could be very helpful for the teams to be reminded of the test item, such as an "I'm Ready" station for test item 3, a sign for the start of the "Leave It" portion of the leash walking, a sign for the "Dropped Leash" portion of the leash walking, and a sign for where they should stop for Test Item 7
- A neutral dog who can calmly lay 30ft from the tester dog
- All passing teams will go home with a Well Trained Dogs Can Do More sticker. These stickers will be provided to evaluators when they purchase the program materials from Success Just Clicks Dog Training (contact them to re-order stickers). Evaluators may provide their own certificates or swag as well.
- When teams submit their scores and forms to Success Just Clicks Dog Training for their official certificates, they will have the option to purchase a Well-Trained Dogs Can Do More rosette.

Rules for judges

- **Be Kind**– Testing is stressful for your teams. Help them feel relaxed and comfortable by welcoming them in and giving them encouragement if the human half seems worried. Be fair in your evaluation, but kind in the test review.

- **Conflict of Interest**– Evaluators may not evaluate their own dogs (handled by someone else) and may not evaluate members of their immediate family or members of their household.

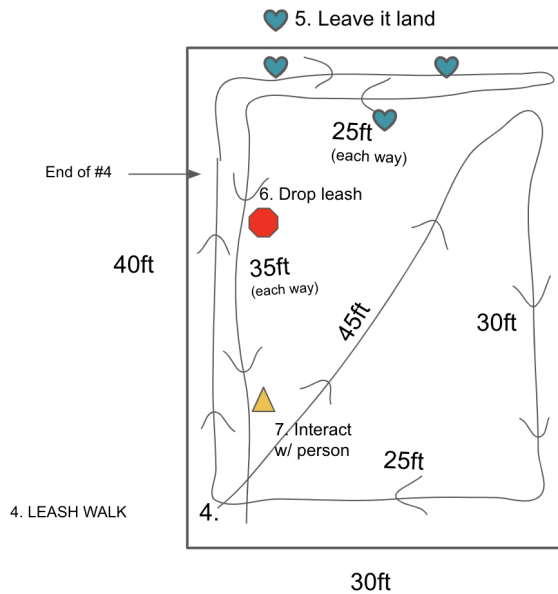
Trainers may absolutely evaluate their students – it is their discretion whether to act as the friendly stranger for their student’s dogs or to have the second person act as the friendly stranger.

- **Fees for evaluations**– It is up to the evaluator to decide the fee for testing. The fee covers the time, expertise, and initial materials for teams.
- **Fees to submit test results**— To get the official certificate and WTD title, teams must submit their scores on www.welltraineddogscandomore.com. During this submission, teams will have different price options depending on whether they want to include a rosette or award along with their certificate.
- **Test modifications**– Requests for modifications must be made in advance of your assessment. Reasonable modifications should be made for folks or dogs in need accommodation to successfully complete a skill. If their suggested modifications change the difficulty of the skill, you should think up an accommodation that retains the test item’s primary objective and difficulty while making it possible for the handler to complete the skill. For example, a human has mobility or balance challenges and they cannot bend to the floor to grab a leash on Test Item 6. An appropriate modification could be that the handler drops the leash and once the dog stops and the handler has regained control, the handler and dog move together to a nearby chair where the handler sits down to then grasp the leash.

- **Spirit of the test**– If there is a drastic environmental change that alters the difficulty level of the test, you should allow for a break and then a retry. For example, while performing the “Wait at the door” skill, if the handler opens the door on the dog’s toes, a retry can be done. If during the settle portion a loud crash happens and the dog startles and barks or gets off the station, a retry should be given. Distractions outside the guidelines of the test and typical testing environment should be taken into account

Appendix

Sample Loose Leash Walking Paths for different room sizes...

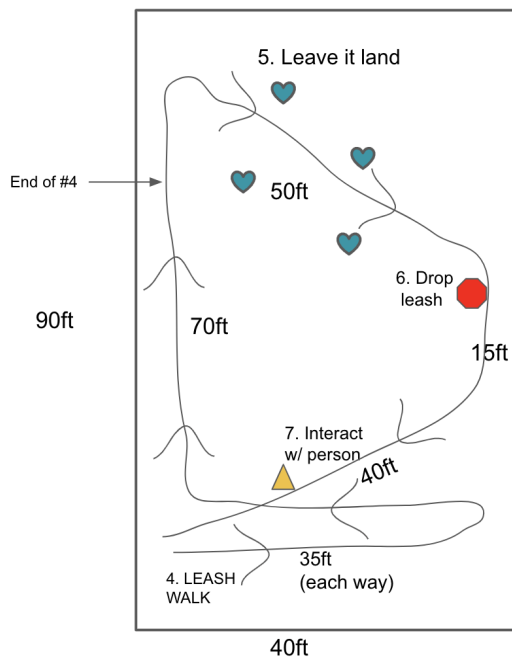


30x40ft room

Total of 220ft of leash walking for exercises 4-7

Approximately 130ft for the initial leash walking exercise (#4)

Approximately 50ft for leave-it (#5)--25ft down and back, with 3 items



90ft x 40ft room

Total of 245ft of leash walking for exercises 4-7

Approximately 140ft for the initial leash walking exercise (#4)

Approximately 50ft for leave-it

Well Trained Dogs Can Do More

Assessment – Level 1 Scoring Rubric



1. Walk by a friendly person and enter in a controlled manner			
Handler brought the veterinary form and proof of Responsible Owner Assessment £ YES £ NO			
6 points Appropriate equipment, dog walks by person with moderate to no interest without jumping, leash remains loose	4 points Appropriate equipment, dog walks by person with moderate to no interest without jumping. 2 or fewer tight leashes or slightly hesitant to enter	1 point Appropriate equipment, dog too interested in or fearful of person and needs coaxed to enter but doesn't jump. Leash consistently tight	0 points Owner did not have all required items or has inappropriate equipment. Dog jumps up on person, too fearful to enter, or owner doesn't maintain control
2. Crate or raised station while handler fills out paperwork (1-2 minutes roughly)			
*HH— If using the crate, head halter must be removed prior and put on after without major avoidance ☐ Pass ☐ NOT Pass			
6 points <u>Crate:</u> Dog enters crate with 1 cue and remains settled. Leaves crate only when released. <u>Station:</u> Dog gets on with 1 cue, gets in position with 1 cue, and stays on station until released	4 points <u>Crate:</u> 2 Cues to enter crate OR 2 Cues to stay in as door opens until released <u>Station:</u> 2 cues to get on OR get in position OR stay on but does stay on until released	1 point <u>Crate:</u> 2 Cues to enter crate AND 2 Cues to stay in as door opens until released. <10sec of vocal/unsettled <u>Station:</u> 2 paws come off the station but is reset. 2 cues to get on AND 2 cues to stay on until release	0 points <u>Crate:</u> more than 2 cues to enter, doesn't wait to be released, vocal/unsettled for >10sec <u>Station:</u> 4 paws come off of the station. More than 2 cues needed for any portion
3. Accept a friendly person approaching			
6 points Dog does not approach person, leash remains loose, dog shows no signs of fear or aggression	4 points Dog advances toward person but does not make contact. Owner stops movement with 1 verbal cue OR 1 or fewer momentary tight leashes. Dog shows no sign of aggression or fear	1 point Dog advances toward person but does not make contact. Owner redirects with 2 verbal cues OR with 1 verbal cue AND 1 or fewer momentary tight leashes. Dog shows no sign of aggression or fear	0 points Dog makes contact with person. It takes 3 or more cues to interrupt the approach, the leash gets tight 2 or more times or is constantly tight. Dog shows aggressive or fearful behaviors.
4. Loose leash walking			
6 points Dog walks path with 1 or fewer tight leashes and stays on the side the owner indicates with 2 or fewer cues (communicating turns etc aren't additional cues)	4 points Dog walks path with 3 or fewer tight leashes and stays on the side the owner indicates or 2 or fewer tight leashes with 1 side switch. With 3 or fewer cues (communicating turns etc aren't additional cues)	1 point Dog walks path with 6 or fewer tight leashes or has multiple side switches. Handler uses 6 or more cues (communicating turns etc aren't additional cues)	0 points Dog walks path with more than 6 tight leashes and multiple side switches or a constantly tight leash.
5. Leave it			
6 points 1 or fewer tight leashes, 1 cue per item per pass, does not get within 2ft of any item	4 points * less than 2 tight leashes and 1 cue per item *1 tight leash and 2 cues for 1 item *0 tight leashes and 2 cues for 2 items AND doesn't get within 2ft of items	1 point *more than 2 tight leashes but not constant *dog gets within 2ft of 1 item but doesn't touch *dog needs 2 cues for more than 2 items or 3 cues on any 1 item	0 points *constant tight leash *dog touches item *dog gets within 2ft of more than 1 item

6. Dropped leash			
6 points Dog stops automatically or responds to first cues. Dog does not move more than 2ft away after realizing the leash dropped or the cues are given. Leash promptly picked up and dog remains settled	4 points Dog moves 2-5ft away after aware of leash drop or first cue. 2 cues needed to stop the dog. Leash picked up promptly. Handler needs 2 or 3 cues to settle the dog after getting the leash	1 point Dog moves 5-10ft away after aware of leash drop or first cue. 3 cues needed for handler to pick up leash and it takes 5-10 seconds to get the leash due to dog. 4-5 cues to settle the dog after getting leash	0 points More than 10 seconds for handler to get the leash because the dog is unsettled. Dog completely leaves the handler to explore. Or 4 or more cues to get the dog to stop so the leash can be picked up
7. Interacting with a friendly stranger			
6 points Dog does not approach person and does not jump A) dog allows petting nicely B) dog accepts treat or targets C) dog remains with handler during conversation. Shows no aggr/fear	4 points Dog starts to approach but is redirected with 1 verbal cue OR 1 tight leash. Dog does not jump. Dog successfully does handler's requested interaction. Dog does not jump and no signs of fear/aggr	1 point Dog starts to approach but is redirected with 2 extra cues or a tight leash and an extra cue. Dog successfully does handler's requested interaction. Dog does not jump and no signs of fear/aggr	0 points Dog approaches the stranger and makes contact. Dog jumps. 3 or more cues needed. Handler chose the wrong interaction for the dog and the dog was not successful. Dog shows signs of fear/aggression
8. Wait at the door			
6 points Dog waits until released as the door is opened. 1 or fewer cues for the dog to get in position at the door and 1 or fewer cues for the dog to stay. Dog releases forward with control 1 or fewer tight leashes	4 points Dog waits until released as the door is opened but needs 2 cues for any part one of the sequence. Dog releases out the door with control	1 point Dog waits until released as the door is opened but needs 2 cues for more than one part of the sequence OR dog the dog needs 2 cues for 1 part of the sequence and releases without control	0 points Dog releases out of the door before being given the cue. The dog needs more than 2 cues for any part of the sequence and exits without control
9. Settle around a neutral dog			
6 points Dog does not vocalize, fixate, or pull towards the neutral dog. The dog is able to get and stay settled in a down for the duration of the exercise with 1 cue per action. Dog stays until released	4 points Dog does not vocalize, fixate, or pull towards the neutral dog. The dog gets settled but needs 2 cues for 1 part of the sequence and needs 2 cues to stay settled. Dog stays until released	1 point Dog has 1 instance of fixating, vocalizing, or pulling but can be redirected. Stays settled with no more than 2 extra cues and 1 reset (dog gets out of position but stays on station) until released.	0 points Dog is unable to remain settled. Dog leaves their station or area on the floor. Dog vocalizes, pulls towards, or fixates on the other dog and cannot be redirected.
10. Recall and leashing up			
*HH— If using a head halter for the test it must be removed for this portion and put back on after the recall is completed ☐ Pass ☐ NOT Pass			
6 points Dog responds within 2 seconds with 1 cue. Dog sits/downs or gets collar held to complete recall. Handler cues sit/down/stand stay while they clip on the leash. Dog stays until released	4 points Dog responds within 4 seconds OR needs 2 cues to come. Dog sits/downs or gets collar held to complete recall. Needs 2 cues to sit/down/stand stay while leash is being attached. Stays until release	1 point Dog responds within 4 seconds AND needs 2 cues to come. The dog needs an additional cue while getting leashed up or changes position but is easily reset to the original. Stays until released	0 points Dog fails to respond within 4 seconds or fails to complete the recall with collar grab or the sit or down position. OR dog cannot stay while the leash is being attached. 3 cues needed at any point.
*Head halter overall— Dog wore the HH with no apparent distress during test and appears well-acclimated. ☐ Pass ☐ NOT Pass			
Total Score: _____ _____ Pass _____ Not Yet		Pass— 55-60 points and HH passes if applicable Not yet— <55 points or HH not pass	

For Prospective WTDCDM Teams

Human Knowledge Assessment Study Guide!

What is positive reinforcement?

Positive reinforcement is from the quadrants of operant conditioning. These are the building blocks of how dogs learn. One axis is Positive and Negative and the other axis is Reinforcement and Punishment.

When we think about positive and negative, we think of it more in terms of math—something is either added or something is taken away based on the dog's behavior or response (a consequence to their behavior). The thing being added or removed will either reinforce a behavior (make it more likely to happen again) or will punish a behavior (less it likely for that behavior to happen again)

So positive reinforcement means something desirable is added to make the dog more likely to do that behavior again in the future.

What is the benefit of clicker training or marker (using a sound or word like “yes”) training?

Clickers, “yes”, thumbs up signs, and tongue clicks are all often used as marker signals. Marker signals tell the dog exactly when they did the correct thing and that reinforcement is coming. It acts as a bridge between behavior and reinforcement.

Using a marker signal allows the trainer to pinpoint the exact thing the dog did correctly. It allows there to be a bit more of a delay between behavior and reinforcement. It also makes it very easy for multiple people to work with the dog because it's a communication system that's easily consistent.

What should my immediate action plans be when my dog is doing an unwanted behavior?

There are two big factors for an immediate initial response to problem behaviors. These are the foundations of a behavior change plan, but are not a training plan in and of themselves.

First is Environmental Management—control the environment that causes the unwanted behavior. The more they practice the unwanted behavior, the better they get, so prevent it in the first place. Don't give your dog high value bones if they are guarding them. Put your puppy on a leash before you open the door so they don't bolt out. Put your dog behind a gate as guest enter to prevent chaos and jumping.

Second is giving them something incompatible to do during the problem times. If your dog likes to counter surf while you cook in the kitchen, give them a kibble dispensing toy on the floor in another room. If your dog likes to nibble clothing or fingers when greeting new people give them a food-stuffed frozen kong to carry/hold or just choose to eat instead.

What are a dog's daily needs to have a high quality of life?

While food, water, and shelter are basic necessities for our dogs, they are not the only needs. If we want our dogs to have a high quality of life, dogs need more than those basics.

Dogs need physical exercise like walks, play time, free running, hikes, swimming every day. Dogs are social animals and need social interaction every day like pets and cuddles time on the floor, playing games like hide and seek together, personal play together, training session, and just engaging with them throughout the day in small ways. Lastly, dogs need mental enrichment, they need to flex their mental muscles by solving puzzles, scavenging for food through scatters or kibble dispensing toys, or a sniffari walk where they get to let their nose lead the way.

Many activities will tick multiple boxes at one time, but doing these things will help meet your dog's needs and improve their quality of life.

Most people are now aware of the importance of socialization, but when is the ideal timing for socialization emphasis?

Socialization is the lifelong process of normalizing all the weird things your dog will encounter during their lifetime. Puppies between the age of approximately 5 weeks and 16 weeks are in the ideal developmental stage for socialization. They are open to new things be cool and interesting rather than new things being potential threats and being inherently suspicious. So it's important to thoughtfully orchestrate positive experiences in the world between those early weeks to help them feel safe and comfortable in the world

How should I respond to my dog if they are panicked or very fearful due to something like fireworks?

Preventing the things that make your dog panic OR altering the environment to make that thing less intense is always the most helpful. If your dog is panicking because of something like thunder, it's okay to reassure them calmly, to physically comfort them calmly, and to redirect them with something like a stuffed kong or a bully stick if they are able to eat something.

You cannot reinforce their fear by calmly soothing them.

If they are so upset that they cannot be soothed or able to eat instead of panicking, there are some calming tools that can be helpful to minimizing their stress.

How do you greet a social but unfamiliar dog?

There's no one perfect way to greet a dog because it should be a two-way conversation. In general, we recommend letting the dog take the lead and you reciprocate their level of interaction.

But in general, turning your body slightly to the side so you aren't directly facing the dog is a good starting point. Giving the dog a brief glance and friendly verbal invitation "Hey, puppy, how are you?", let the dog approach you to sniff. You can put your hands down near your own body (not reaching toward the dog) with your palms out like an invitation for petting and see if the dog nudges or rubs against your hands to solicit petting. If they don't ask to be pet by interacting with you closely and initiating repeated contact, don't pet them. Try chatting with them, getting a toy to play, or just ignore them so they can get more comfortable around you. If the dog is very social and comes up wiggly and excited as soon as you say hello, you can reciprocate their level of interaction right away.

What are signs that your dog might be uncomfortable or nervous?

Knowing what your dog looks like when they are nervous or uncomfortable is an important part of dog ownership. When reading body language you have to look at the body as a whole and put it in the context of a situation. Just because the dog has ONE body language feature of fear doesn't mean they are fearful if everything else says they are comfortable.

The things we commonly see in dogs who are nervous: cowering or crouched posture, tail tucked or held down close to their body, ears pinned backwards, hypervigilant of the environment, may not eat food, may move very slowly and tentatively, they may be avoidant of the thing making them nervous, sometimes they fixate on what scares them and other times they can't look at what scares them, often they can't respond to known behaviors, their pupils may be dilated, and they may be panting or trembling.

What should you do if your dog is uncomfortable interacting with a person?

If your dog seems nervous or uncomfortable interacting with a person, encouraging the dog away from that person and back to you to take off the social pressure is a great start. You can give your dog some treats away from the person they are nervous about to help them settle down and feel more relaxed away from the guest. Once they settle down, if they seem more interested, you can give them

the opportunity to explore the person again with clear instructions to the human to not reach down to pet them.

Luring the dog up to the person or having the person hand feed them treats is not at all advised. It can make the dog more uncomfortable because we are putting a lot of pressure on the dog to engage in close proximity to something scary.

Is it normal for a dog to become less tolerant of other dogs as they age?

A dog's sociability is on a spectrum and it is something that changes over time.

Most puppies like most, if not all, other dogs but it's normal as they mature into teenagers and then again into socially mature adults that their opinions of other dogs (and the shenanigans that happen at dog parks or daycare) may change.

There's a spectrum of normal outcomes for a dog's sociability towards other dogs. As adults, a small number of dog still love every single other dog and love to play and romp, some dogs like a lot of other dogs and like playing with some, some dogs tolerate most dogs but like to play with some, some dogs tolerate most dogs but don't want to play, some dogs dislike some dogs but tolerate some, some dislike most dogs and tolerate a few, and a small number of dogs dislike all dogs.

This range of sociability is all normal, but some dogs may have maladaptive behaviors as ways of expressing their feelings about other dogs.

Although many vaccines are good for 3years, how often should we visit our veterinarian for an otherwise healthy dog?

It's always important to follow your vet's recommendations, but it is generally recommended that dogs have a yearly wellness exam. Part of the importance for this is maintaining a relationship with a veterinarian. In case of a simple issue (maybe your dog needs heartworm preventative, or a simple anti-diarrheal after an eating something that upset their stomach) your vet is not permitted to prescribe medication for dogs who they have not seen in the last year. It's also important for yearly wellness visits just so your vet can give your dog a thorough once-over

checking for changes in your dog's condition over time. You can catch early signs of aging diseases through regular wellness visits and improve their prognosis rather than waiting for symptoms to appear.

While you are doing yearly vet visits, how often should you do a thorough examine your dog's body?

Checking your dog monthly for new lumps, bumps, injuries, ticks/fleas, and nail growth is generally advisable. Dogs can't tell us when things feel weird and we all know that catching things early improves the potential outcomes. It's also easy to miss your dog's nails growing a little long or gaining a few pounds, checking their body thoughtfully once a month allows you to keep tabs on the things that are easy to overlook.

Why is it important for dog owners to pick up their dog's poop and dispose of it properly?

Picking up poop is not one of the more glamorous parts of dog ownership, but it is an important one. Picking up dog poop while out on walks in public places but also from within your own yard is important. Besides picking up poop being the law in most areas, pet waste can contaminate our water sources if we just let it sit, and failure to clean up waste can spread parasites to other dogs and in some cases to people (some parasites are zoonotic in nature and that can get people sick).

It's also important to pick up the waste correctly—just bagging it isn't enough. You need to collect the waste, tie the bag closed, and dispose of it in a trash can. Picking up the poop in a baggie and then leaving the baggie on the ground is not helpful.

What's the responsible way to have off-leash time with your dog?

Off-leash adventures can be incredible ways to spend time with your dog and give them fabulous exercise and enrichment. However, having your dog off-leash must be done responsibly.

A dog can responsibly enjoy off-leash adventures in areas designated as off-leash areas as long as they are attentive, under control, and are tolerant of other living creatures using the area.

If your dog is not tolerant of other people, dogs, and critters who are using that public area, they should not be off leash.

If the area is a designated on-leash area, your dog should remain on a leash (try holding a long-line to give them more room in places where that is allowed).

Well-Trained Dogs Can Do More Test–Vet Form



Filled out by owner:

Dog Name: _____

Owner's Name: _____

Veterinarian's or Clinic Name: _____

Vet's Address: _____

(Street, city, state, zip)

Vet's Phone: _____ Vet's Email: _____

Filled out by Vet:

Date of last well-visit: _____

Date of last Rabies vaccine or titer*: _____ 3-YEAR or 1-YEAR ?

(*titer only if permitted by state law)

I attest that this dog has been seen by this clinic for well-visits and has remained up to date on required vaccinations (or is a new patient that you have seen within the last year). To the best of my knowledge their owner has sought medical care outside of well-visits as necessary and has followed medical advice. I believe this dog to be healthy enough to participate in this basic manners and life skills test.

If you have any comments you'd like to share about this team, please do! Or notes about chronic injuries or illness that may affect how the animals moves that may make them look unsound to participate.

Veterinarian Signature/Clinic Stamp

Date