

Welcome
to the



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB



**Sports, Programs and Events For
ALL Dogs, From Newbie to Expert**

We're More Than Champion Dogs.
We're The Dog's Champion.SM



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB



First Things First: What, and Who, is the American Kennel Club®?

In short, the AKC® loves dogs. Little dogs, big dogs, show dogs, pet dogs.

The AKC was founded in 1884 to register purebred dogs and advance the interests of those who bred and exhibited them at dog shows. Today we are so much more: We still advocate for canine welfare and promote good health and responsible dog ownership. There are currently 180+ breeds recognized by the AKC and we also welcome mixed breeds, who can be enrolled to participate in a host of exciting and confidence-building sports and activities.

We believe that a stable, well-trained, healthy, and much-loved dog enriches our lives immeasurably, and we're here to help!

Following are just a few of the things you can get involved in with your dog, no matter where he comes from. You can also learn about the AKC's history, mission, benefits, and services by visiting akc.org. For games, apps, videos, a breed selector tool, and stories and news about dogs, visit woofipedia.com

Activities and Programs Available to You and Your Dog

The AKC offers a variety of activities and programs for dogs of all ages. We know that dogs love spending time with their owners and benefit greatly from socialization and training to keep their minds sharp and bodies fit. That's why we're always looking for new ways to strengthen the unique human-animal bond. Learn more about how you can get involved in our community of dog lovers.

* Join a local dog club. You can search akc.org for a complete list of clubs across the country. Even if competition is not your ultimate goal, the experience of being part of a special community with your dog will be very rewarding.

AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy®

Once you've completed a basic training class, you're ready to make your pup (up to 1 year old) a "S.T.A.R." It's an incentive program that establishes a solid foundation for many of the sports and programs you may want to try down the road. For details contact starpuppy@akc.org or go to our website.



AKC's Canine Good Citizen® Program

Is your dog a well-behaved member of his community? Here's your chance to prove it! A non-competitive program open to all dogs, CGC® tests a dog's ability to complete a list of basic commands. It promotes responsible dog ownership and positive interaction between dogs and people. Hundreds of thousands of dogs have earned their CGC certificate. Search akc.org for our list of more than 10,000 CGC evaluators for upcoming classes or tests, or email cgc@akc.org.



AKC Canine PartnersSM

This is a program for mixed breed and non-AKC purebred dogs that allows all dogs to join the AKC family and participate in AKC sports. Enrollment in this program will allow your dog to earn his CGC Certification and Therapy Dog Certification. You will also receive a one-year subscription to AKC FAMILY DOG and a lifetime membership to the AKC Reunite lost-and-found program. You can enroll your dog at moredogfun.com.





Whether purebred or mixed breed, there's only one thing standing between your dog and an AKC title: You!

Here is a rundown of AKC sports open to all dogs.

Obedience

Dog-and-handler obedience teams compete at three levels: Novice, Open, and Utility. Novice work includes the basic training all dogs require. They must heel on and off leash, stay, stand for a simple physical examination, and come when called.

At the Open level, the dog is required to work only off leash and for longer periods. There are also jumping and retrieving tasks. Utility adds still more difficult exercises, and the dog must perform scent-discrimination. The judge rewards the team performing nearest to perfect, as measured against AKC regulations.

Among the consistently high achievers in this precise, subtle sport are retrievers, herding dogs, working breeds, and Poodles—breeds created to perform complex tasks on command. A good training class might awaken the obedience champ within your mix of retriever, shepherd, Rottie, or Poodle lineage, but the sport was designed for all dogs.

AKC Rally®

In AKC Rally, a dog-and-handler team negotiate a course of exercises according to sequentially numbered signs. The team works at its own pace, with the dog heeling from sign to sign. Each sign contains a pictograph that illustrates the particular exercise. Judges choose from 50 signs to design courses unique to each trial. Novice exercises are performed on a leash. The Advanced and Excellent classes are done off leash.

Rally is less formal than traditional obedience. The handler may use signals, verbal encouragement, and body language to urge their dog through the course, and it isn't scored as tightly, but the principles are the same: A biddable, energetic dog looking for a job to do is an ideal candidate.

Agility

In agility, a dog and handler navigate an obstacle course as they race against the clock. In every trial the judge will lay out the obstacles in a different sequence, and the handler must decide how to run the course cleanly and efficiently. Typical courses include tunnels, jumps, an A-frame, weave poles, and a seesaw.

Classes are divided by jump height to make competition equal among dogs of different sizes, so tiny toys and galloping giants can perform at the highest championship levels. If your dog exhibits confidence, energy, focus, and athleticism, you just might have an agility champ waiting to be discovered.





Tracking

In a tracking test, dogs demonstrate the ability to follow human scent over a range of surfaces, from concrete and asphalt to grass and dirt. A dog-and-handler team works against the track, not against another team. Performance is judged with neither a stopwatch nor scorecard but on a pass/fail basis.

Unlike in obedience and rally, where dogs respond to the handler's commands, in tracking the dog is completely in charge. Many breeds are famous for their scenting ability, but any dog should have enough nose to complete a basic track.

Coursing Ability Test

The Coursing Ability Test (CAT) is based on the sport of lure coursing, in which sighthound breeds (Greyhounds and their fleet-footed cousins) test their instinct for high-speed pursuit by chasing a plastic lure over a course of straight-aways and turns. Unlike hound-specific lure coursing, CAT is open to all breeds and mixed-breeds.

The democratic nature of CAT gives it a particular charm. A galumphing Newfoundland or prancing Pomeranian, to say nothing of mixes of all conceivable shapes and sizes, competing in a sport usually reserved for leggy, aristocratic hounds is a sight not soon forgotten.



What is a Dog Show?

At their core, dog shows are an evaluation of breeding stock. They're called "conformation" events because they assess a dog's overall appearance and structure to see how well it *conforms* to its breed standard. (So naturally only AKC-registered purebreds can compete). There are different types of shows, many categories in which to compete, and key roles (judges, handlers, exhibitors, stewards). It's a fascinating world, and everything you want to know about dog shows can be found at akc.org.





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