Obedience Regulations

Amended to May 12, 2026

Obedience Judges' Guidelines

Amended to April 1, 2023

The Steward in Obedience

Amended to April 1, 2023

AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB®

AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB'S MISSION STATEMENT

The American Kennel Club® is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to upholding the integrity of its Registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Founded in 1884, the AKC® and its affiliated organizations advocate for the purebred dog as a family companion, advance canine health and well-being, work to protect the rights of all dog owners and promote responsible dog ownership.

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OBEDIENCE REGULATIONS
PURPOSE

Obedience trials are a sport and all participants should be guided by the principles of good sportsmanship both in and out of the ring. Obedience trials demonstrate the dog's ability to follow specified routines in the obedience ring and emphasize the usefulness of the dog as a companion to man. All contestants in a class are required to perform the same exercises in substantially the same way so that the relative quality of the various performances may be compared and scored. The basic objective of obedience trials, however, is to recognize dogs that have been trained to behave in the home, in public places and in the presence of other dogs in a manner that will reflect credit on the sport of obedience at all times and under all conditions. The performance of dog and handler in the ring must be accurate and correct according to these regulations. It is also essential that the dog demonstrate willingness and enjoyment while it is working and that a smooth and natural handler be given precedence over a handler moving with military precision and using harsh commands.

CHAPTER 1
GENERAL REGULATIONS

Section 1. Application to Hold an Obedience Trial. An obedience club that meets all the requirements of the American Kennel Club® and wishes to hold an obedience trial must apply on the form the AKC provides for permission to hold such a trial.

In addition to obedience clubs, any AKC club may be granted permission to hold an obedience trial if, in the opinion of the AKC Board of Directors, it is qualified to do so, provided the club holds the event(s) for which it was originally formed at least once every two years.

The trial may be held either in conjunction with a dog show, rally trial, agility trial or as a separate event. A club that is not a member of the AKC must pay a license fee in order to hold a trial. The AKC Board of Directors determines this fee.

A club may hold two all-breed obedience trials concurrently or consecutively at the same site on the same day, or two all-breed obedience clubs may hold their obedience trials one following another if the events are held on the same site on the same day. The combined scheduled judging program for both events should not exceed eight hours of judging time. This information must be clearly stated in the premium list(s).

No judge will be assigned to judge for more than eight hours in one day. This limit includes rally and/or any breed judging assignments.

Specialty and group clubs have three options to hold an obedience trial.

(1) These clubs may hold a trial exclusively for their own breed(s).

(2) If entries are limited, these clubs may accept entries of dogs of their own breed(s) first then accept entries from group breeds or all breeds until the entry limit specified in the premium list is reached.

If option (2) is selected, awards as described in these regulations, Chapter 1, Sections 19-22, will be offered for the specialty breed(s). In addition, awards as described in these regulations, Chapter 1, Sections 19-22, will be offered for the all-breed event.

(3) These clubs may hold their specialty or group obedience trial followed by an all-breed or group obedience trial, so long as the scheduled judging program for both events does not exceed eight hours of judging time.

If option (3) is selected, the specialty obedience and all-breed or group obedience trials will be approved and held as two separate events.

Any club eligible to hold all-breed obedience trials may open their trial to dogs listed with AKC Canine Partners at their option. This must be clearly stated in the premium list.

Section 2. Special Event Trials. The AKC allows clubs to offer two types of Special Event Trials.

1) **Junior Showcase Events** limited to Juniors only; and

2) **Special Event Obedience Trials** where a club proposes a unique mix of obedience classes or a unique eligibility criterion, **1) Junior Showcase Events.** A Junior Showcase is a special event available for obedience trials in which the host club offers a unique eligibility criterion limited to Juniors only. The purpose of a Junior Obedience Showcase is to provide a low-stress, mentoring environment, with camaraderie in a relaxed atmosphere to assist junior handlers to achieve their goals. A junior handler must have an AKC Junior Handler number and is defined as someone under 18 years of age on the first day of the trial.

A club may not change the regulation requirements pertaining to AKC obedience classes, including the equipment regulations.

Junior handlers entered in Junior Obedience Showcase events will be permitted to have a mentor walk with them during the exhibitor walkthrough times in all classes that allow a walkthrough.

Junior Obedience Showcases must be open to all breeds, including dogs listed with AKC Canine Partners, except at specialty events limited to one breed. All dogs must be eligible for the classes in which they are entered.

An application for a Junior Obedience Showcase may be completed online using the PDF fillable application form. A club must submit an application no later than eighteen (18) weeks prior to the trial and it must be reviewed and approved by the Companion Events Department. There will be no event application fee required for the Junior Obedience Showcase events. Clubs may apply for an unlimited number of Junior Showcase Events per year.

2) Special Event Obedience Trial. The Special Event Obedience Trial is where the host club proposes a unique mix of AKC obedience classes and/or non-regular classes or a unique eligibility criterion.

A club may select the classes and/or divisions offered at a Special Event Obedience Trial and may offer the upper level classes without offering the lower level classes. A club may not change the other Regulations pertaining to a titling class, including the equipment requirements.

Special Event Trials must be open to all breeds, including dogs listed with AKC Canine Partners, except at specialty events limited to one breed. All dogs must be eligible for the classes in which they are entered.

An application for a Special Event Trial may be completed online using the PDF fillable application form. A club must submit an application no later than eighteen (18) weeks prior to the trial and it must be reviewed and approved by the Companion Events Department. A club may only apply for two Special Event Obedience Trials per year.

Section 3. Premium Lists, Entries, Opening & Closing of Entries and Catalog Order. A premium list must be provided for sanctioned "A," licensed or member trials. The premium shall be published and shall measure not less than 5½ x 8½ inches or more than 8½ x 11 inches.

To be acceptable, an entry must:

- Be submitted with the required entry fee
- Be on an official AKC entry form
- Be signed by the owner or their duly authorized agent

Include all of the following information:

- Name of show/trial-giving club
- Date of show/trial
- Breed
- Variety, if any
- Sex
- Name of class(es) entered
- Full AKC name of dog
- Name of owner(s)/co-owner(s)
- Address of owner

Include one of the following:

- AKC number
- PAL number
- AKC Canine Partners listing number
- Foreign registration number and country of registration for an unregistered imported dog
- Identification number issued by AKC

Include the following, if known:

- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Name of breeder(s)
- Name of sire
- Name of dam
- Jump height

A club will arrange entries according to jump height order in all classes in which jumps are used. It shall be stated in the premium list what jump height will begin the class and if the order will be ascending or descending. Handlers with multiple entries in the same class and with the same jump height should be accommodated.

The catalog must be prepared in the following class order, regardless of the order in which the classes are listed in the judging program.

- Regular classes—Open B and Preferred Open, and Utility B and Preferred Utility class entries may be listed together in the catalog.
- Preferred classes
- Optional classes
- Non-Regular classes

For all other catalog requirements, refer to *Rules Applying to Dog Shows*.

Note: A dog listed with AKC Canine Partners should mark their breed as an "All American Dog."

The premium list shall specify the name and address of the Superintendent or Trial Secretary who is to receive the entries.

Opening & Closing Dates. The premium list for stand-alone obedience trials (trials that are assigned an individual event number) with limited entries must be published at least 72 hours prior to accepting entries. The opening date and time must be prominently displayed on the cover page of the premium list.

Premium lists for all obedience trials must specify the date and time at which entries for a trial close. The specified closing date and time must be no later than 11:59 PM seven (7) days prior to the trial. Whenever the closing date falls on a postal holiday, entries received (in any form) up to 24 hours from the published date and time may be accepted.

Entry Fees/Special Inducements. A host club shall not accept an entry fee other than that published in its premium list or discriminate between exhibitors by offering certain owners or handlers special inducements such as rebates, prizes or other concessions unless allowed by another section of these regulations, except a club, at its discretion, may allow for a reduced entry fee for dogs handled by juniors. A junior must have an AKC Junior Handler number and is defined as being under 18 years of age on the first day of the trial. An event is defined by a unique event number.

Section 4. Obedience Classes Offered. Clubs may elect at their option to apply to hold a licensed or member obedience trial limited to the Regular and/or Preferred classes.

A licensed or member obedience trial need not include all the Regular or Preferred obedience classes, but a club will not be approved to hold the upper level classes without the lower level classes being offered in the same titling program.

For either the Regular or Preferred class titling path, a club will not be approved to hold the Open classes unless it also holds the Novice classes. Nor will it be approved to hold the Utility classes unless it also holds the Novice and the Open classes, except at Special Event Obedience Trials *(see Chapter 1, Section 2-2)*.

Any club that has been approved to hold a licensed or member obedience trial for the Regular and/or Preferred classes may also offer a mix of the optional classes and/or non-regular classes upon AKC approval. See table below:

REGULAR CLASSES (Titling)	PREFERRED CLASSES (Titling)	OPTIONAL CLASSES (Titling)	NON-REGULAR CLASSES (Non-Titling)
Novice A & B	Preferred Novice	Beginner Novice, Graduate Novice	Wild Card Novice, Brace, Veterans & Team
Open A & B	Preferred Open	Graduate Open	Wild Card Open
Utility A & B	Preferred Utility	Versatility	Wild Card Utility

Regular classes are the traditional standard titling obedience classes. Preferred classes offer alternative titling opportunities without a group exercise and have reduced jump heights. Optional titling classes offer a variety of intermediate and standard exercises and allow reduced jump heights. Non-regular classes are not titling classes; they provide an opportunity for dogs and handlers to hone their skills and gain ring time.

If a non-regular class is one that is not defined in these regulations, a clear and complete description of both the eligibility and performance requirements will appear in the premium list.

Section 5. Declining Entries. An Event Committee may decline any entries or may remove any dog from its trial for cause but in each such instance shall file good and sufficient reasons for doing so with the AKC.

Section 6. Obedience Trial Committee. Any obedience club holding an obedience trial must appoint an obedience trial committee that will exercise all the authority of a dog show's Event Committee. The Event Committee will consist of at least five (5) members of the club. The names of the members must be stated in the premium list and catalog, and at least three (3) of the members must be on site at all times. If an obedience club's trial is held in conjunction with a dog show, the obedience trial committee will have sole jurisdiction only over the dogs, handlers and owners entered in that obedience trial. If, however, any dog is entered in both obedience and conformation classes, the obedience trial committee's jurisdiction pertains only to the *Obedience Regulations*.

When an obedience trial is to be held in conjunction with an all breed or specialty show, the club's Event Committee will include one person designated as obedience chairperson. At this event, the Event Committee has sole jurisdiction over all matters coming before it, whether the matter has to do with the dog show or the obedience trial.

The Event Committee will investigate any report of abuse or severe disciplining of dogs on the grounds or premises of a show, trial or match. Any person whose conduct is in any manner prejudicial to the best interests of the sport will be dealt with promptly. All clubs holding events under AKC rules and regulations must have a copy of the most

current sport regulations book, and the *Dealing with Misconduct* booklet available at every event.

The judge must immediately report any abuse of a dog in the ring to the Event Committee.

Section 7. Sanctioned Matches. A club may hold an obedience match with approval of the AKC and under its *Match Regulations*. Scores awarded at these matches will not count toward any obedience title and will not be recorded by the AKC. All the *Obedience Regulations* apply to sanctioned matches, except for those sections specifying that the provisions apply to licensed or member trials and except where specifically stated otherwise in the *Match Regulations*.

Section 8. AKC Sanction. AKC sanction must be obtained by any club that holds AKC Obedience trials as well as any type of match for which it accepts entries from non-members.

Section 9. Rules Applying to Dog Shows. All applicable rules found in *Rules Applying to Dog Shows* will govern the conduct of obedience trials. They will apply to any person and dog entered, unless these regulations state otherwise.

Section 10. Identification. Club clothing, AKC event clothing, or breed clothing may be worn by anyone exhibiting a dog or by ring stewards. Clothing may display the person's name, the dog's call name and/or the dog's picture. Titles may not be displayed. Writing or graphics on the clothing must not be in poor taste or contain profanity. Clothing must not display any information that would be in conflict with a sponsor of the trial.

Section 11. Immediate Family. As used in these regulations, "immediate family" means one's spouse, domestic partner, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, siblings, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, daughters-in-law, and sons-in-law; adopted, half, and step members are also included in immediate family.

Section 12. Dogs Eligible to Enter. As used in these regulations, the word "dog" refers to either sex. Dogs registered with an AKC Full or Limited Registration number and any dog eligible for entry in the Miscellaneous Class at dogs shows may be entered in Obedience trials. Dogs registered with a PAL (Purebred Alternative Listing) and dogs registered with AKC Canine Partners may be entered in Obedience trials but must be spayed or neutered to compete. The registration number must be included on the entry form. A dog that is deaf may compete. Tripod dogs may compete in classes that do not require the dog to jump, provided that the dog shows no signs of discomfort, or pain while performing.

Section 13. Unregistered Dogs. Dogs with a Foundation Stock Service record are eligible to compete in Obedience trials provided their AKC identification number appears on the entry form. For more information, please see *Rules Applying to Dog Shows* Chapter 11, Section 1.

Section 14. Dogs That May Not Compete. No dog under six months of age may compete. No dog belonging wholly or in part to a judge, or superintendent, or any member of such a person's household may be entered in any obedience trial at which such person officiates or is scheduled to officiate. Nor may they handle or act as agent for any dog entered at that obedience trial.

Females in season are not permitted to compete. If a female is withdrawn from competition because it came into season and the event secretary is notified no later than one half hour prior to the start of the first class in the trial, the club is required to refund the entry fee. The club may retain a processing fee and must publish this information in the premium list. Clubs may determine the documentation, if any is required to confirm the female is in season. This shall be stated in the premium list. **Note:** No fee is paid to the AKC for females in season who are withdrawn.

If allowed by the host club, the obedience trial secretary may enter dogs owned or co-owned by the secretary and may handle dogs in the obedience trial. The secretary's priority must be the handling of official secretary duties in a timely manner. If participation in the trial interferes with these duties, other arrangements for handling dogs must be made.

The official veterinarians will not exhibit or act as agent or handler at the show, and dogs owned wholly or in part by them will not be eligible to be entered at that show. No dog owned wholly or in part by a superintendent, any other employee of that superintendent, or any person residing in the same household as any of the foregoing will be eligible to be entered at any show held 30 days before or after a show that the superintendent has been approved to service by the AKC. Nor may that person exhibit or act as an agent or handler.

For the purpose of this section, the employees of a superintendent would include only those individuals who represent the superintendent or superintending organization at dog shows.

No judge or any person residing in the same household as the judge will exhibit or act as agent or handler at a dog show, obedience trial, or rally trial on the day in which they are judging. Dogs owned wholly or in part by such judge or any member of their household will not be eligible to be exhibited in conformation, obedience, rally, or any other AKC venue on the day the judge is judging if the show or trial is on the same show grounds. This applies to obedience, rally and dog show judges when an obedience or rally trial is held in conjunction with a dog

show. Subject to the foregoing, members of a judge's immediate family who no longer live in the same household may enter or handle a dog at a show or trial if the judge is not officiating over any competition that might involve that dog. If a club does not advertise in its premium list who is to judge run-offs between classes, an exhibitor will automatically be considered to have lost the run-off of any tie scores between classes if the judge of the run-off is a member of the exhibitor's immediate family.

No dog may be entered or shown under a judge at an obedience trial if the dog has been owned, sold, held under lease or handled in the ring within six months prior to the date of the obedience trial by the judge or by any person residing in the same household as the judge.

No exhibitor may show a dog under a judge at an obedience trial if the exhibitor has participated in a training session taught by that judge within ten (10) days prior to the date of the event.

No dog may be entered or shown under a judge at an obedience trial if the dog is owned or handled by any person who has regularly served as a trainer or instructor of that judge, either individually or through classes, within ten (10) days; or if the dog has been regularly trained or instructed by the judge within ten (10) days prior to the date of the obedience trial. "Trained or instructed" applies equally to judges who train professionally or as amateurs and to judges who train individual dogs or train or instruct dogs in classes with or through their handlers (see "Glossary of Terms").

In either case above, the ten (10) day period is not in effect when a judge has been assigned on an emergency basis within 72-hours of an event.

Section 15. Qualifying Score. A qualifying score means that the dog has earned more than 50 percent of the points for each exercise with a total score of at least 170 points. This score must be earned in a regular, alternative, or optional titling class at a licensed or member obedience trial. There is no minimum number of dogs necessary in any class to earn a qualifying score toward a title.

Section 16. When Titles Are Won, Class Eligibility.

Regular classes:

- After a dog earns a title from an "A" class, it may continue showing in that "A" class for 60 days. After the 60 days, it may compete in that level "B" class.
- During the above referenced "A" class 60-day period an unlimited number of the Highest Scoring Dog in the Regular Classes may be obtained.
- Once a Highest Scoring Dog in the Regular Classes is received in Novice B after the 60-day period, the dog may not be entered in Novice B at future trials for which entries have not closed and the entry must be changed.

- A dog may continue to compete in Novice B until it receives either a qualifying score in a Regular Open class or earns a Highest Scoring Dog in the Regular Classes after the 60-day time period. Once a dog earns a qualifying score in Open or earns a Highest Scoring Dog in the Regular Classes more than 60 days after earning the title the dog may be shown in trials for which entries have closed; if entries have not closed they must be changed.
- A dog may compete indefinitely in Open B and/or Utility B after the Open or Utility title is earned.
- Once a dog has competed in Open, it may not again be shown in Novice A; and once a dog has competed in Utility, it may not again be shown in Open A, even if the entries have closed.

Preferred classes:

- A dog may continue to compete in Preferred Novice until it has won the CDX or PCDX or higher Regular or Preferred titles, or earns a Highest Scoring Dog in the Preferred Classes more than 60-days after earning the Preferred Novice title.
- Once a Highest Scoring Dog in the Preferred Classes is received after the 60-day period, the dog may not be entered in Preferred Novice at trials for which entries have not closed and the entry must be changed.
- A dog may continue to compete indefinitely in Preferred Open and/or Preferred Utility after those titles are earned.

Optional classes:

- A dog may continue to compete in the optional titling classes indefinitely after earning a title except in the Beginner Novice classes.
- After a dog earns a title in the Beginner Novice A class, it may continue showing in that "A" class for 60 days. After the 60 days, it may compete in the Beginner Novice "B" class.
- Dogs with a BN, CD and/or PCD title may compete in Beginner Novice B. Once a dog earns any obedience title other than the BN, CD or PCD titles the dog is no longer eligible to compete in Beginner Novice.

Section 16a. Transfers.

- The club will clearly state in its premium list whether transfers will or will not be allowed. If no statement is provided in the premium list the default is to allow transfers.
- A transfer (i.e., from an obedience class to an obedience class; or a rally class to a rally class) may be requested if, according to the owner's records the handler and dog are eligible provided the club offers transfers.
- Transfers from an "A" to "B" class at the same level are allowed provided the host club allows transfers. (When a club does not allow transfers, refer to **Section 16b. Entry Eligibility, Change of Entry.**)

- The request for a transfer must be in writing and presented to the superintendent or trial secretary at least 30 minutes prior to the start of each trial.
- Clubs may choose to accept transfers prior to the day of the trial and this should be clearly stated in the premium list.
- Transfers may be approved provided the class is scheduled, the judge is available, and the class has not reached its limit.

Section 16b. Entry Eligibility, Change of Entry. In addition to transfers as described in Chapter 1, Section 16a, entries may also be changed as noted in this section. A dog which has been entered in an "A" class for which it is not eligible, due to class restrictions on the dog or handler, may be transferred to the "B" class at the same level.

If a dog was entered in the Novice class in error and it has not earned an obedience title it may be transferred to the Beginner Novice class; even if the closing date for entries has passed, provided the class and judge are available and the class has not reached its limit.

The change to the entry must be requested as follows:

- The request for the transfer must be in writing and presented to the superintendent or trial secretary at least 30 minutes prior to the start of each trial.
- The request must state the reason and justification for the transfer.

Judging Procedures Regarding Eligibility. *When the eligibility of a handler or a dog to compete is in question, the matter should be referred to the Event Committee. When the Event Committee determines, from the information available, that a dog or a handler is ineligible to compete in the class, the handler is to be informed of the requirement of the Obedience Regulations that make him or her ineligible to compete. If any alternative exists (such as substituting an eligible handler to replace the handler who is ineligible to take the dog into the ring), it should be suggested. If the handler insists on competing, regardless of their or the dog's eligibility, then it is the duty of the secretary or superintendent to point out to the handler that the judge will be requested to judge the dog "under protest," and the dog or handler's eligibility to compete will be reviewed by the AKC. The secretary or superintendent should inform the judge of the situation, requesting that the dog and handler be permitted to compete.*

The judge then permits the dog to compete. Judges are required to make a notation in their judges' book when they encounter a situation where an exhibitor or dog is not eligible to show under them at an event. This report should give identifying information on the exhibitor and dog and a brief statement as to why, in the opinion of the judge, the handler or dog was ineligible. It is the responsibility of the trial secretary or superintendent to provide a concise, factual statement of the problem in the official AKC show/trial report. The AKC will make a determination

based on what has been reported. If it is determined that the dog is not eligible, the dog's score will be disallowed.

Section 17. Disqualification, Ineligibility, Excusal, and Change in Appearance of Dogs. If an ineligible dog has been entered in any licensed or member obedience trial or dog show, the name of the owner on the entry form is not the person(s) who actually owned the dog at the time entries closed, the dog is shown in a class for which it has not been entered, the dog is entered in the same class more than once, or the dog's entry is unacceptable to the AKC, all resulting awards will be cancelled. In computing Obedience Trial Championship points, such ineligible dogs will ***not*** be counted as having competed regardless of whether they have received awards. Any time a judge marks a dog "Disqualified" or "Excused" the judge must state the reason in the judge's book and will give the superintendent or show or trial secretary a brief report of the dog's actions. The judge's book will be submitted to the AKC with the report of the show or trial.

A dog that is blind or has been changed in appearance for cosmetic reasons (other than changes customarily approved for its breed) may not compete in any obedience trial and will be disqualified. Blind means without useful vision. The judge will not obtain the opinion of a veterinarian.

The judge must disqualify any dog that attempts to attack any person in the ring and fill out the required "Disqualification for Attacking" form (AEDSQ1).

When a dog has been disqualified under this section as being blind, for having been changed in appearance for cosmetic reasons, or for having attacked or attempted to attack a person in the ring, all awards made to the dog at the trial will be cancelled by the AKC. The dog may not again compete unless the owner applies for and receives reinstatement.

The judge must excuse a dog that attacks another dog and fill out the required "Dog on Dog Attack" form (AEDSQ3). The owner of any dog that has been excused on two occasions for attacking or attempting to attack another dog will be notified that the dog is no longer eligible to be shown in any AKC event. Such dogs are ineligible to be on the grounds of an AKC event unless and until, following application for reinstatement by the owner to the American Kennel Club, the owner receives official notification in writing from the AKC that the dog's eligibility has been reinstated. The judge must excuse a dog that appears dangerous to other dogs.

Any dog whose appearance has been surgically altered to correct a congenital or hereditary defect may participate in obedience trials provided that dog has been neutered or spayed. Spayed bitches, monorchid, cryptorchid or castrated dogs, and dogs that have disqualifying conformation faults may compete in obedience trials, if eligible under these regulations.

Dogs disfigured as the result of accident or injury are eligible to compete provided the disfigurement does not interfere with functional movement. A dog that shows no signs of physical discomfort is to be considered fit to compete. The judge must excuse a dog "unfit" to compete if the dog demonstrates sickness, discomfort, or pain while performing.

No dog will be eligible to compete in an obedience trial if it is taped, stitched or bandaged in any way or if it has anything attached to it for medical or corrective purposes. Such a dog must be immediately excused and may not be judged under any circumstances. Dogs whose hair surrounding the eyes, ears or beard interferes with their performance may have their hair tied back with elastic bands or small plain barrettes, or in the manner as they are normally shown in the breed ring. No dog will be eligible to compete if it appears to have been dyed or colored in any way, if its coat shows evidence of chalk or powder, or if the dog has anything attached to it for protection or adornment. Such a dog may be judged later if the condition has been corrected and if the judge desires to do so.

If a judge determines that a bitch in the ring is in season or appears to be so attractive to males as to be a disturbing element, the bitch is excused. The judge shall not obtain the opinion of the veterinarian.

If it is reported to the trial secretary or the superintendent that the bitch is in season before the bitch enters the ring for judging the matter is to be brought to the attention of the trial committee. The committee must examine the bitch and may consult with the veterinarian, if desired. If the Event Committee finds the bitch to be in season, it shall excuse the bitch and so inform the judge, who will mark the judge's book accordingly.

If a report is made to the trial secretary or superintendent after the judging of the bitch is completed that the bitch is in season or so attractive to males as to have been a disturbing element, the matter shall not be investigated. There would be no basis for changing the scoring of the bitch. The judge made the decision as to the condition of the bitch at the time of judging, and the judge's decision is final.

Judging Procedures: Reference the *Obedience Judges' Guidelines*, Chapter 3.

Section 17a. Dog Attacks/Event Committee Hearing. Any dog that, in the opinion of the Event Committee, attacks a person or a dog at an AKC event resulting in injury and is believed by that Event Committee to present a hazard to persons or other dogs, shall be disqualified. When the dog is disqualified by the Event Committee pursuant to this section, a report shall be filed with the Executive Secretary of the American Kennel Club. The disqualified dog may not again compete at any AKC event nor be on the grounds of an AKC event unless and until, following application for reinstatement by the owner to the American Kennel

Club, the owner receives official notification in writing from the AKC that the dog's eligibility has been reinstated. Refer to *Rules Applying to Dog Shows* – Chapter 11, Section 8-A, "Event Committee Procedural" (RDEOB1) and "Dog Disqualified by Event Committee" (AEDSQ4).

Section 18. Disturbances. The judge must release any dog that is not under its handler's control. Any handler who willfully interferes with another competitor or that competitor's dog must be excused. If a dog or handler is excused by a judge, the reason must be stated in the judge's book or in a separate report.

Section 19. Obedience Ribbons. At licensed or member obedience trials, the following colors must be used for prize ribbons or rosettes in all regular, preferred and optional titling classes:

First Prize – Blue
Second Prize – Red
Third Prize – Yellow
Fourth Prize – White
Qualifying Prize – Dark Green

The ribbons or rosettes for Highest Scoring Dog in the Regular Classes and for the Highest Combined Score in Regular Open B and Utility will be as follows:

Highest Scoring Dog in the Regular Classes – Blue and Gold
Highest Combined Score in Open B and Utility – Blue and Green

If ribbons or rosettes are offered for Highest Scoring Dog in the Preferred Classes and/or for the Highest Combined Score in Preferred Open and Preferred Utility the colors will be the same as listed above.

The following colors shall be used for non-regular classes:

First Prize – Rose
Second Prize – Brown
Third Prize – Light Green
Fourth Prize – Gray

Each prize ribbon or rosette, including qualifying ribbons or rosettes, in all regular, preferred and optional titling classes will be at least 2 inches wide and a minimum of 8 inches long and will bear on its face a facsimile of the seal of the AKC, the words "Obedience Trial," the name of the placement and the name of the trial-giving club. The date of the trial and the name of the city or town where the trial is held must appear on the face, back tab or on a label attached to the specific ribbon.

Ribbons or rosettes for non-regular classes will be at least 2 inches wide and a minimum of 8 inches long, and will bear on the face a facsimile of the seal of the AKC, the words "Obedience Trial," the name of the placement and the name of the trial-giving club. The date of the trial and the name of the city or town where the trial is held may be on the face of the ribbons.

Section 20. Match Ribbons. If ribbons are given at sanctioned obedience matches, they will be of the following colors and will have the words "Obedience Match" printed on them but may be of any design or size:

First Prize – Rose
Second Prize – Brown
Third Prize – Light Green
Fourth Prize – Gray
Qualifying Prize – Green with Pink edges

Section 21. Ribbons and Prizes. Ribbons for the four official placements and all prizes offered for competition within a single regular, preferred, or optional titling class at licensed or member trials or at sanctioned matches will be awarded only to dogs that earn qualifying scores. Qualifying scores will not be required for the awarding of ribbons and prizes in the non-regular classes. Awards for the four placements in these classes will be based solely on the number of points earned. The ribbon and any prizes offered for the dog with the highest combined score in the regular Open B and Utility classes at a licensed or member trial will be awarded only to a dog that earns qualifying scores in both of those classes. The ribbon and any prizes, if offered, for the dog with the highest combined score in the Preferred Open and Preferred Utility classes at a licensed or member trial will be awarded only to a dog that earns qualifying scores in both of those classes.

Prizes for which dogs in one class compete against dogs in one or more other classes at licensed or member trials or at sanctioned matches will be awarded only to dogs that earn qualifying scores. Prizes at a licensed or member obedience trial must be offered to be won outright. However, a prize requiring three wins by the same owner for permanent possession, but not necessarily with the same dog, may be offered for the dog with the highest qualifying score in one of the regular classes, the highest scoring dog in the preferred classes, or the dog with the highest combined qualifying scores in the regular Open B and Utility classes.

Subject to the provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this section, prizes may be offered for the highest scoring dog of the groups as defined in Chapter 3 of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows* or for the highest scoring dogs of any breeds, but not for a breed variety, with the following exceptions: In accordance with Chapter 3 of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows*, all Miniature and Standard Poodles are in the Non-Sporting Group and all Toy Poodles are in the Toy Group. In addition, Standard Manchester Terriers are in the Terrier Group, and Toy Manchester Terriers are in the Toy Group.

Prizes offered only to members of certain clubs or owners of specific breeds may be published in the premium list.

If an award in any of the regular, preferred, or optional titling classes is cancelled, the next highest scoring dog within that class will receive that award. If there is no dog to move up, the award will be void. If the AKC cancels a dog's win, the dog's owner must return all prizes other than ribbons to the show-giving club within 10 days of receiving the AKC's cancellation notice.

Optional titling classes are not considered to be regular or preferred classes.

Section 22. Highest Scoring Dog in the Regular and Preferred Classes and Highest Combined Score in the Regular and Preferred Classes.

Regular Classes: The dog receiving the highest qualifying score in the regular classes will be awarded the ribbons and any prizes offered for these placements after the announcement of final scores of the last regular class to be judged. The dog receiving the highest combined score in the regular Open B and Utility classes may be awarded the ribbon and any prizes offered for this placement after those classes have been judged and after the announcement of those final scores. The superintendent or show or trial secretary will mark the catalog to identify the dogs receiving these awards.

Preferred Classes: Clubs may offer ribbons and prizes for the dog receiving the highest qualifying score in the preferred classes after the announcement of final scores of the last preferred class to be judged. Clubs may offer ribbons and prizes for the dog receiving the highest combined score in Preferred Open and Preferred Utility. These may be awarded after the completion of those classes. The superintendent or show or trial secretary will mark the catalog to identify the dogs receiving these awards.

If a club chooses to allow dogs listed with AKC Canine Partners to enter their trial, such dogs are eligible for any of the above awards offered for the regular or preferred classes.

In the case of a tie between dogs eligible for any of the above awards, each dog will be tested again, individually, by performing the entire Novice Heel Free exercise. The judge for a run-off will be designated by the Event Committee from among the judges of the obedience trial. When a run-off has been completed, the judge will record the results on a special sheet that identifies the dogs taking part in the run-off by catalog number, class and breed. When the judge has marked and signed the sheet, it will be turned over to the superintendent or show or trial secretary who will mark the catalog accordingly and forward the sheet to the AKC as part of the records of the trial.

Section 23. Risk. The owner or agent entering a dog in an obedience trial does so at his own risk and agrees to abide by the AKC *Rules Applying to Dog Shows* and the *Obedience Regulations*.

Section 24. Decisions. At the trial, the decisions of the judge shall be final in all matters affecting the performance and scoring of the team.

The only situations that would require the judge to request the services of the veterinarian would be when a dog in the ring requires immediate medical attention or when a judge needs the veterinarian's recommendation concerning the health of the dog in the ring.

The Event Committee shall decide all other matters arising at the trial, including protests against dogs made under Chapter 15 of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows*.

Section 25. Dogs Competing. Exhibitors will be provided armbands or stickers, which must be worn on the upper left arm, indicating their dog's order in the class. If a dog is excused by the trial's official veterinarian, the excusal must be in writing and must be approved by the superintendent or show or trial secretary. The excusal must be submitted to the AKC with the report of the trial.

Exhibitors may leave the ring at any time by politely informing the judge they are doing so.

Section 26. Judging Assignments, Scheduling and Judging Program. In determining daily judging assignments, it is strongly recommended that clubs group classes with similar equipment and ring set-up requirements together to facilitate a more efficient trial.

Classes Requiring Similar Equipment & Set-Ups:		
Novice	**Open**	**Utility**
Novice A & B Preferred Novice Beginner Novice	Open A & B Preferred Open Graduate Novice Versatility	Utility A & B Preferred Utility Graduate Open Versatility

The order in which classes are scheduled in each ring should also be considered; having classes with similar ring set-ups follow one another.

After entries have closed, any club holding a licensed or member obedience trial must prepare a judging program.

The judging program will be based on the judging of no more than the following:

10 dogs per hour	**9 dogs per hour**	**8 dogs per hour**	**7 dogs per hour**	**6 dogs per hour**
Beginner Novice	Preferred Novice Novice	Graduate Novice Preferred Open Open	Graduate Open Preferred Utility Utility	Versatility

No judge will be assigned to judge for more than eight hours in one day. This limit includes rally and/or any breed judging assignments. Judges may take 45 minutes to one hour for rest or meals at their discretion.

When the Preferred Open or the Preferred Utility classes are offered, the Preferred class entries must be assigned to the same judge as the Regular "B" class entries and the judging of the two classes will be combined. The dogs will be assigned in the jump height order stated in the premium list. The Preferred class entries will be designated with the letter P in the judging program, catalog, judge's books, and on the exhibitor armband. The awards as described in these regulations, Chapter 1, Sections 19 and 21, will be offered. The awards ceremony for each class must be conducted separately. Dogs may be entered in both the Regular and Preferred classes at the same trial.

The judging program must list the start time for each class scheduled to start before 12:00 noon unless otherwise stated in these regulations. In the case of a licensed or member specialty trial open only to the specialty breed, or a group trial, the start time for only the first obedience class needs to be given.

Classes scheduled to start at, or after 12:00 noon, will be listed to start "after noon" and must be judged in the order listed in the judging program. If a judge is scheduled to begin a class in an assigned ring that is not available, the class may be moved to any available ring at the trial site that meets the same requirements as the original ring. When an assigned ring is changed after the judging program is published, a notice must be posted at the original ring, informing exhibitors of the change in ring location. If the published judge is available prior to the listed start time and all exhibitors have checked-in and agree, the judge may start a class earlier than the class time listed in the judging program.

For classes that allow a walkthrough (Beginner Novice, Novice A and Preferred Novice) the listed start time is the time of the walkthrough and judging of the class will follow.

When the same judge is judging Novice A and Preferred Novice, and there are less than 20 combined dogs entered, the same start time will be listed for both classes, and only the walkthrough will be combined. When the same judge is judging Beginner Novice A and B, and there are less than 20 combined dogs entered, the same start time will be listed for both classes, and the walkthrough and judging may be combined. Each of these classes will have a separate judge's book, and the awards ceremony for each class and division must be conducted separately.

If ten or more dogs are entered in Beginner Novice A and/or B, or Novice A and/or Preferred Novice, 10 minutes will be allocated in the schedule for the walkthrough. When there are less than ten dogs entered in those classes, 5 minutes will be allocated in the schedule for the walkthrough.

All trials starting at or after 12:00 noon will list the start time for only the first obedience class in each ring. When there are two trials scheduled for the same day/same site, a start time must be given for each trial. No trial may begin prior to the trial start time published in the judging program.

Any non-regular class must be judged after the regular, preferred, or optional titling classes if the classes are scheduled to be judged in the same ring.

Contact information, e.g. cell telephone number for at least one committee member that will be present at the trial on the day of the event must be listed in the judging program.

A copy of the judging program will be sent to the owner of each entered dog and to each judge; printed correspondence may be utilized at the exhibitor's request.

A copy of the judging program will be published in the catalog.

Section 27. Limitation of Entries and Methods of Entry. If a club anticipates an entry to exceed the capacity of its facilities for a licensed or member trial, it may limit entries, not to exceed up to eight hours of judging time per day, per judge. Non-regular classes, however, may be included, if so desired.

Prominent announcement of such limits will appear on the title or cover page of the premium list for an obedience trial or immediately under the obedience heading in the premium list for a dog show. This announcement must state that entries in one or more specified classes will automatically close when certain limits have been reached, even if this occurs before the official closing date.

However, a club, at its discretion, may choose to establish a wait list in order to fill openings created by entries that are withdrawn prior to a date and time established by the club. Such date may be beyond the event closing date; however, it must be a minimum of three (3) days prior to the first trial date of the set of trials. All entries must be received prior to the closing date and time. If a club is maintaining a wait list, this shall be stated in the premium list. The full entry fee shall be refunded to an entrant whose entry is replaced by a wait-listed entry.

At obedience trials that have their own standalone event number, a club may use either the **First Received** or **Random Draw** method of acceptance of entries to a limited entry trial. The premium list must state an opening date/time for when entries will be accepted. These trials may be held in conjunction with rally or agility trials.

When entries are limited in the regular Open B and/or Utility B classes, a club must designate a regular UDX class in the premium list. Dogs entered in this UDX class would be entered in both Open B and Utility B, and the combined entry fee for these two classes must be paid. Once the limit has been reached in either the regular Open B or the Utility B class, the regular UDX class will be considered closed and any subsequent entries for this class will be unacceptable in their entirety.

If Preferred Open and Preferred Utility are offered and entries are limited in these classes, a club must designate a Preferred UDX class in the premium list. Dogs entered in this Preferred UDX class would be entered in both Preferred Open and Preferred Utility and the combined entry fee for these two classes must be paid. Once the limit has been

reached in either Preferred Open or the Preferred Utility class, the Preferred UDX class will be considered closed and any subsequent entries for this class will be unacceptable in their entirety.

First Received. Entries are accepted in the order of receipt. If stated in the premium list, a club may further restrict the delivery options (i.e. No FedEx, No hand-deliveries at any time.) However, USPS delivery must be allowed.

Random Draw. When using the Random Draw method, entries are treated equally without regard to date/time received or any other criteria during the Draw Period. The AKC strongly recommends using the Random Draw method for trials which are likely to exceed the "total entry limit" within the first 24 hours after the opening date and time.

For Random Draw entries only, one mailing address may be used for receipt of paper entries. Paper entries delivered to any other address are invalid and must be returned to the sender. An envelope containing entries for more than than ten (10) dogs maximum will be considered invalid and must be returned to the sender.

Random Draw Time Period. Clubs determine a "Draw Period" during which time entries are accepted for the Random Draw. Acceptance of entries begins on the opening date/time established for the trial as stated in the premium list. This time period must be at least seven (7) days in length (14 days is recommended). The Random Draw Time Period closing date and time must be stated in the premium list.

Reserved Spots for Trial Workers. When using the Random Draw method, the club may reserve a specific number of spots for exhibitors who have been selected to work at the trial. A spot is defined as a person who has entered the trial and has been selected to work. The number of reserved spots allowed is based on the number of rings used. A club may reserve up to three (3) spots for each ring that is used (i.e. one ring equals three reserved spots, two rings equals six spots, and so on). Once the spots reserved for workers are filled, the remaining entries then become part of the Random Draw.

Conducting the Random Draw. If the entry limit for the trial is exceeded during the Random Draw Time Period, the club must conduct a Random Draw of all entries received, otherwise the Random Draw is not necessary. One draw may be conducted for all trials (concurrent or consecutive) held at the same site. One secretary or group of cooperating secretaries are responsible for conducting the draw.

The Random Draw must be held within 48 hours of the "Draw Period" closing date and time and held in a place accessible to the public. The location, date and time of the draw must be stated in the premium list.

In conducting the draw, the Trial Secretary must avoid any method that raises any questions as to its randomness and impartiality.

The drawing may be conducted by manually selecting entry envelopes or by using a computerized random drawing program. In either case, all entries submitted in one envelope must be included and counted. If the

last envelope selected in the Random Draw contains entries that would exceed the stated total entry limit, a manual or computerized random draw of those individual entries must be conducted.

After the advertised limit of entries has been randomly drawn, clubs maintaining a wait list will randomly draw all remaining entries for a position on the wait list.

Accepting Entries After the Random Draw Time Period. If the trial did not exceed the limit during the Random Draw Time Period, all the entries received during this time period will be accepted into the trial. Clubs may continue to accept entries after the Random Draw Time Period according to the procedures for the First Received method of entry, though all entries must be received prior to the closing date and time for the trial.

Section 28. Additional Judges, Reassignment, Split Classes. After the entries have closed, if any judge exceeds the limit established in Chapter 1, Section 26 of these regulations the club will immediately secure the approval of the AKC for an additional judge or for reassignment of its advertised judges so that no judge will be required to exceed the limit.

If a judge was advertised to judge more than one class and receives an excessive entry, at least one of the classes shall be assigned to another judge.

Reassignment shall first go to any non-regular classes, then to either the class with the lesser number of entries or those with the lesser scheduled time. This will bring the advertised judge's schedule as close as possible to the maximum limit.

If a judge with an excessive entry was advertised to judge only one class, the superintendent, show or trial secretary will divide the entry as evenly as possible between the two judges by drawing lots.

After the entries have closed, for the purpose of balancing the judging schedule among the approved panel of judges for the cluster, the club may request to change the class assignments to facilitate the smooth running of the trial. The club should make every effort to affect as few entries as possible. Adjustments may be requested to rectify problem imbalances, overloads, low entries, etc. When such judging class changes are proposed, the club must first obtain approval in writing from each judge affected, and then final approval from the American Kennel Club prior to publishing the judging program. Clubs may remove judge(s) from the judging panel if entries are low, and both the club and the judge(s) agree to this action in writing.

A notification of any change of judge must be sent to the owner of each entry affected. The judging schedule must clearly state which classes have a judge change, that an affected entry may be cancelled, and that a full refund will be given provided the cancellation is in writing, and received by the superintendent or trial secretary no later than one half hour prior to the scheduled start of any regular obedience classes at the trial.

Should an Event Committee be informed within 72 hours prior to the start of the trial, that an advertised judge cannot fulfill their assignment, the club will find an approved substitute judge or any person in good standing with the American Kennel Club. The Event Committee shall obtain approval of the change from the American Kennel Club if time allows. A change of judge notice, to those affected exhibitors, does not need to be sent. The Event Committee must post a change of judge notice in a prominent place within the trial area as soon as it is possible to do so. An exhibitor who has entered a dog under an advertised judge who is being replaced may withdraw such entry and will have the entry fee refunded provided notice of such withdrawal is given to the superintendent, show or trial secretary prior to the start of judging of the class.

Section 29. Split Classes in Premium List. A club may choose to announce two or more judges for any class in its premium list. In such case, the entries will be divided by lots as provided above. The identification slips and judging program will be made up so that the owners of each dog will know the division and the judge under which their dog is entered, but no owners are entitled to a refund of entry fee.

Section 30. Split Classes, Official Ribbons, Prizes. A club that holds a split class will award AKC qualifying ribbons in each division even if the split is made after entries close. The four dogs with the highest qualifying scores in each division will be awarded the four AKC official placements.

Section 31. Stewards. Judges are in sole charge of their rings until their assignments are completed. Stewards are provided to assist but may act only on the judge's instructions. They must not give information or instructions to owners and handlers except when the judge asks them to do so. Any request from an exhibitor for special consideration must be directed to the judge.

It is the judge's responsibility to review with the stewards their duties and the way those duties are to be performed. When a dog leaves its handler to leave the ring, the stewards' safety is a priority, and they must be advised not to reach for or grab a dog to stop it. At a show with ring gating, if the stewards are near the open gate area when a dog leaves its handler, and the dog is not responding to its handler's commands, the judge may advise the stewards to block the gate to prevent the dog from leaving the ring if it is safe to do so. The dog will then be released from the ring.

Section 32. Ring Conditions. An indoor ring should be rectangular and about 40 by 50 feet for all obedience classes. The Utility ring should never be less than 35 by 50 feet, and the Novice or Open ring should not be less than 30 by 40 feet. The floor must have firm footing, using rubber matting or similar non-slip material at least 4 feet wide for the

takeoffs and landings of all jumps unless the judge feels the surface does not require it.

At an outdoor show or trial, the rings should be about 40 by 50 feet. The ground must be clean, level, and safe for takeoffs and landings of all jumps. Any grass should be cut short. Under unusual or adverse weather conditions, a club may provide a separate regulation size ring for the group exercise. If inclement weather at an outdoor show or trial necessitates the judging of obedience under shelter, the requirements as to ring size may be waived.

The judge's table and chairs will be of such size and location so as not to interfere with the dog and handler's performance while in the ring.

Section 33. Obedience Rings at Dog Shows. At an outdoor dog show a separate ring or rings should be provided for obedience. A sign forbidding anyone to permit any dog to use the ring (except during judging) should be set up in each obedience ring by the superintendent, show or trial secretary. It is the duty of the superintendent and/or the show/trial committee to enforce this regulation. At an indoor show where limited space does not permit the exclusive use of any ring for obedience, the same regulation will apply after the obedience rings have been set up. At a dog show, the material used for enclosing the obedience rings will be at least equal to the material used for enclosing the breed rings. If the ring has previously been used for breed judging, it must be thoroughly cleaned before the obedience judging starts.

A show or trial-giving club may designate a confined warm-up area, physically defined by ropes or ring gates. If offered, it must not be disruptive to any dog or person. The area should be monitored at all times by a person or persons designated by the club.

Section 34. Judges, Equipment, and Judge's Reports. The superintendent and the officials of the club holding the obedience trial are responsible for providing rings and equipment that meet the requirements of these regulations. The judge must check both the ring and equipment before starting to judge.

The judge will pace out the ring to verify that it meets the minimum size requirements for the class. When measuring the jumps, a deviation of up to one-half inch is considered a minor change and is acceptable. At an outdoor trial, depending on the weather, weight may need to be added to the base of the uprights for the high and/or bar jumps. Having checked the jumps, the judge will place the jumps in the ring, giving special attention to lighting and ring enclosures, and make an observation from a dog's line of sight. If mats are placed under the jumps, they should be at least 4 feet in width.

If there are ring or equipment deficiencies, the judge will bring them to the attention of the trial chairperson or superintendent so that they may be corrected in accordance with the provisions of the *Obedience*

Regulations. If the deficiencies cannot be corrected, the judge will proceed to judge the class under the deficient conditions; after the trial, the judge will notify the AKC Companion Events Department via an email to obedience@akc.org. In extreme cases where the deficiencies, in the opinion of the judge, are of such major proportion as to seriously affect the dog's performance or safety, the judge will give each handler the option of not competing. If the handler's decision is not to compete, they will be referred to the trial secretary or superintendent for a refund of the entry fee. Under no condition may a judge refuse to judge a class.

Broad Jump: The broad jump will consist of four white nested hurdles, all about 8 inches wide. The largest hurdle will measure about 5 feet in length, and approximately 6 inches at the highest point. In the ring, the hurdles will be evenly spaced and arranged in order of size from smallest to largest, so as to cover a distance equal to twice the height of the high jump setting for each dog. It is the judge's responsibility to see that the distance jumped by each dog is in accordance with these regulations.

Four hurdles will be used for a jump of 48 to 72 inches, three for 28 to 44 inches, two for a jump of 16 to 24 inches, and one for 8 inches. When decreasing the number of hurdles in the jump, the highest hurdle will be removed first.

For the safety and welfare of dogs and exhibitors, the AKC is transitioning to high jump panels that are displaceable. To not cause an undue burden on event giving clubs, this transition must be completed by July 2025.

High Jump: The high jump will be designed and built so that the panels may be displaced without affecting the uprights. The jump will be 5 feet wide and constructed to be set at a height of 4 inches and adjustable at 2-inch increments from 8 inches to 36 inches. The uprights of the high jump will be 4 feet high. The jump will include four 8-inch panels, one 4-inch panel and one 2-inch panel. The jump will be white. The height of each panel will be indicated in black 2-inch numbers.

Bar Jump: The bar jump will consist of a bar between 2 and 21/2 inches square with the edges rounded to remove any sharpness. The bar will be black and white in alternate sections each about 3 inches wide. It will be supported by two unconnected 4-foot upright posts set about 5 feet apart. Post must be built to be set at a height of 4 inches and adjustable at 2-inch increments from 8 inches to 36 inches. The jump must be built so that the bar may be knocked off without affecting the uprights.

The high and bar jumps should be checked throughout the class to ensure the pins, pegs, and/or cup holders (that hold the panels and/or bar in place) are securely seated after each jump change.

Figure 8 Cones: Two cones will be provided for the Figure 8 exercise in Beginner Novice, Novice, Preferred Novice, Open, Preferred Open, Graduate Novice, and Versatility classes. Each cone will be 17 to 37

inches high and no more than 15 inches wide at the base. The cones will be placed 8 feet apart, measured from the base of each cone to ensure there is a full 8-foot walking space between the cones.

Section 35. Judges' Education. The knowledge gained from studying the *Obedience Regulations*, routinely reviewing the online judges education program, and putting this knowledge into practice will assist a judge in making sound judging decisions.

Obedience judges must complete the online AKC Obedience Judge's Education Program once every three years, and will be ineligible to accept assignments if this requirement is not met.

A person who is not currently suspended from the privileges of the AKC and who has trained and exhibited a dog to the Utility Dog title may be approved to judge non-regular classes, unless these regulations state otherwise.

An approved regular status rally judge may accept assignments to judge nonregular obedience classes.

CHAPTER 2
REGULATIONS FOR PERFORMANCE AND JUDGING
JUDGING STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

Section 1. Standardized Judging. *The Obedience Regulations are the basic guide to judging but do not contain explicit directions for every possible situation and only list the more common and serious faults. They clearly define the exercises, their order and the standards by which they are to be judged. If a decision depends on the exact wording of the Obedience Regulations, the judge is expected to look up the specific regulation prior to making the decision.*

Standardized judging is of paramount importance. Judges are not permitted to inject their own variations into the exercise but will see that each handler and dog perform the various exercises exactly as described in these regulations. A handler who is familiar with these regulations should be able to enter the ring under any judge without having to inquire how that particular judge wishes to have an exercise performed and without being confronted with any unexpected requirements.

Handlers should expect and train for a reasonable amount of movement by the judge while the dog is working. Judges must not move quickly toward a dog as it is moving, stand closely behind a dog, or follow a heeling dog too closely. Judges should always be in a position to see both the dog and handler at the same time without having to turn their heads.

The judge will inform the first exhibitor in each class what the heeling pattern will be before that exhibitor enters the ring. This may be done verbally, by posting the pattern ringside or by demonstration. This same procedure will be followed in the event of run-offs.

Heeling Pattern. *The same pattern should be maintained as far as practicable for each competing dog. This is a foundation exercise, and it determines the standards for all exercises in which the dog is heeling. The minimum heeling requirements for any class are normal heeling, a fast, a slow, a left turn, a right turn, an about-turn, a halt, and a sit.*

The heeling patterns should not be in the area of the table and/or gate and should have only one element of an exercise on a leg. (For example, there shall not be a halt and a slow on the same leg of an exercise.) A fast must always be on a long dimension of the ring; slow may be either on the short or long dimension of the ring. The fast and slow should be of significant length, not just several steps. No pattern will have more than one fast and one slow. If possible, have one leg of the heeling pattern with no element on it. The "L" pattern is a minimal pattern. Other patterns are acceptable, but excessive complexity should be avoided.

The judge may leave the Figure Eight cones in position in the ring, provided this equipment will not interfere with the performance of the other exercises.

Measuring. *In all classes with jumps, as the dog is brought into the ring, the judges may, at their discretion, measure the dog to verify the height at the withers. The measurement is made using an ordinary folding ruler or steel tape that may be calibrated to show the correct jump height. Nothing may be attached to determine level position. No other measuring device is required or acceptable in the ring. The ruler or tape is held by the judge. Measurements made by the judge are final and are not subject to verification.*

Section 2. Standard of Perfection. *The Obedience Regulations set the standard of perfection by which the performance of each dog is scored and give the judge little choice in deciding how an exercise is to be performed. They require that judges fulfill their responsibility by making competent decisions based on a mental picture of the perfect performance.* The judge must carry a mental picture of the theoretically perfect performance for each exercise and score each dog and handler against this standard. This "perfect picture" must comply with these regulations and shall combine the utmost in willingness, enjoyment and precision on the part of the dog with naturalness, gentleness and smoothness on the part of the handler. *The Obedience Regulations place emphasis on handling that appears natural. A judge is expected to penalize a handler if, in the judge's opinion, the handler's manner or handling is unnatural.*

Speed alone does not necessarily indicate willingness and enjoyment. Lack of willingness and enjoyment on the part of the dog must be penalized, as must lack of precision in the dog's performance. Roughness in handling, military precision or harsh commands by the handler must also be penalized. There shall be no penalty of less than one-half point.

Section 3. Qualifying Performance. *An obedience title is intended to evoke admiration. To be worthy of this admiration, the title must be based on performances that fully meet the requirements of the Obedience Regulations.* A qualifying score in the judge's book is certification that the dog has performed all the required exercises according to these regulations and justifies the awarding of the obedience title associated with the particular class.

Scores for each exercise must be amply justified by the performance of dog and handler. The owner of any dog that receives a deserved score of 190 points has reason to be very proud of the dog. A score of 170 points should indicate a very creditable performance and fully justify the awarding of a title.

A score of 200 points is possible, but it is extremely rare when the requirements of the Obedience Regulations are followed. It is a normal occurrence for a dog and handler to earn a perfect score on one or two of the exercises, but it is very rare for a judge to have the privilege of

observing and scoring a dog and handler who perform perfectly all the exercises in a class.

In deciding whether a faulty performance of an exercise warrants a qualifying score, the judge will consider whether the awarding of an obedience title would be justified if all dogs in the class performed the exercise in a similar manner. The judge must not give a qualifying score for the exercise if they decide that it would be contrary to the best interests of the sport if all dogs in the class were to perform in the same way.

A qualifying score must never be awarded to a dog whose performance has not met the minimum requirements, to a dog that shows fear or resentment, or to a dog that relieves itself at any time while in the ring for judging. *A judge may allow a handler to leave the ring temporarily to prevent soiling of the ring if it appears that the dog might foul the ring. However, the judge must consider that had such permission not been given, the ring probably would have been fouled. Therefore, the dog shall be considered as having relieved itself in the ring and be given a non-qualifying score, and may be released.*

Handlers who carry or offer food in the ring or discipline or abuse their dogs in the ring must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score. *Handlers are not permitted to wear such things as waist packs/pouches or any item that, in the judge's opinion, appears to be a training device or aid.*

Section 4. Judge's Directions. The judge's orders and signals should be given to the handlers in a clear and understandable manner but in such a way that the work of the dogs is not disturbed. Before starting each exercise, the judge will ask, "Are you ready?" At the end of each exercise the judge will say, "Exercise finished." Each dog will be worked and judged separately, except for during the group exercise. The judging of an exercise will not begin until the judge has given the first order.

Section 5. No Added Requirements. No judge will require any dog or handler to do anything, nor penalize a dog or handler for failing to do anything, that is not required by these regulations.

Section 6. Judging of Classes and Different Breeds. The same methods and standards will be used for judging and scoring of all dogs, regardless of breed, in the regular, preferred, and optional titling classes.

Section 7. Interference and Double Handling. A judge who is aware of any assistance, interference, or attempts to control a dog from outside the ring must act promptly to stop such double handling or interference and must penalize the dog substantially. If the judge feels the circumstances warrant, the dog will receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score for the exercise during which the aid was received.

Section 8. Re-judging. If a dog has failed an exercise, it will not ordinarily be re-judged unless the judge feels the dog's performance was prejudiced by peculiar and unusual conditions. In such a case, the judge will re-judge the dog only on the portion of a two-part exercise in which the unusual condition occurred, (e.g., the Figure 8 part of the Heel on Leash/Heel Free exercise, the Sit or Down part of the Novice Group-Sit and Down Stay exercise, and the first or second part of Directed Jumping).

Re-judging of the dog or dogs for the group exercise will be done with the next scheduled group. The limits on the number of dogs allowed in the ring for the group exercise will apply as listed in Chapter 3, Section 14. Should there be no further group within that class, the dog or dogs to be re-judged will immediately do the exercise alone. The dog or dogs involved will be re-judged only on the exercise in question.

Section 9. Ties. In case of a tie for a placement in any class, except Beginner Novice, each dog will be tested again, individually, by performing the entire Novice Heel Free exercise. The original scores will not be changed. In the case of a tie in the Beginner Novice class, each dog will be tested again, individually, by performing the original Beginner Novice Heel on Leash exercise. All applicable penalties listed under the Novice Heel on Leash exercise will apply.

Section 10. Judge's Book and Score Sheets. The judge must enter the number of points deducted from each exercise in the official judge's book immediately after each dog has been judged on the individual exercises. An "NQ" should be recorded in the proper box and on the Total Score line for any dog that fails to qualify in that exercise. This is to be completed before the next dog is judged.

If a handler leaves the ring the judge will mark the book ("HLR") for "Handler Left Ring" and carry an "NQ" down to the Total Score box.

If a dog has non-qualified and is released from performing the group exercise the judge will mark the book "NQ-R" ("Non-Qualifying Released") and carry an "NQ" down to the Total Score box.

Scores for the dogs performing the group exercise and qualifying total scores will be entered in the official judge's book immediately after each group of dogs has been judged.

No person other than the judge may make any numerical entry in the judge's book and no score may be changed by the judge except to correct a numerical error or an error in posting.

All final qualifying scores will be entered in the judge's book before ribbons are awarded. Judges may use separate score sheets for their own purposes but should not give out such sheets or any other written scores. Nor should a judge permit anyone else to distribute score sheets or cards prepared by the judge. Copies of the sheets in the official judge's

book will be made available through the superintendent or show or trial secretary for examination by handlers immediately after the ribbons have been awarded in each class.

If a club distributes score sheets after the ribbons are awarded, they must contain no more information than is shown in the judge's book and will be marked "Unofficial."

Judging Procedures: Reference the *Obedience Judges' Guidelines* Chapter 5.

Section 11. Notification and Announcement of Scores. Immediately following the last individual exercise in Novice, the judge will inform the handler if the team may return for the group exercise. After the group exercise the judge will inform the handlers of a qualifying performance. In Beginner Novice, Preferred Novice, Graduate Novice, Open, Preferred Open, Graduate Open, Utility, Preferred Utility and Versatility, the judge will inform the handler immediately following the last exercise of a qualifying performance.

After all the scores are recorded for the class or division of the class, the judge will call the qualifying handlers back into the ring for the awards ceremony. The awards ceremony for each class and division must be conducted seperately. For the awards ceremony, dogs may be picked up and carried into the ring if the handler desires. Before awarding the placements, the judge will inform the spectators of the maximum number of points required for a perfect score. After scores of each placement have been announced the judge will tell the other qualifying handlers their scores.

Section 12. Explanations and Errors. After a judge completes an assignment and has turned in their judge's book, it is appropriate for the judge to discuss an individual dog's performance with the handler if the handler requests this information. Judges are not required to explain their scoring and should never continue a conversation with an angry or aggressive person. Any interested person who thinks that there may have been a numerical error or an error in identifying a dog may report the facts to one of the stewards, the judge, the superintendent or to the show or trial secretary so that the matter may be checked.

Section 13. Compliance with Regulations and Standards. In accordance with the certification on the entry form, the handler of each dog and the person signing each entry form will be familiar with the AKC *Obedience Regulations* applicable to the class in which the dog is entered.

Section 14. Physically Challenged Handlers. Judges may modify specific requirements of these regulations so that physically challenged handlers may compete. Such handlers must be able to move around the ring without physical assistance or guidance. However, on the judge's

instructions, an assistant may position a blind handler before, between and after each exercise, read any signs used in the class. Dogs handled by such handlers will be required to perform all parts of all exercises as described in these regulations and will be penalized for failure to perform any part of an exercise.

Section 15. Judging Program Order. Dogs should be judged in the judging program order listed for each day if it is practical to do so without holding up any judging in any ring. The group exercise will be judged in judging program order. Judges are not required to wait for dogs for either the individual or the group exercises. Each handler is responsible for being ready at ringside when required and without being called. The judge's first consideration should be the convenience of those exhibitors who are ready when scheduled and who ask no favors.

If a request is made in advance of the class starting time, a judge may agree to judge a dog earlier or later than the time scheduled by the judging program order. *A judge should not mark the absentees in the judge's book until the end of the class*.

Section 16. Use of Leash. All dogs must be kept on a leash except when in the obedience ring, warm-up ring or exercise area and must be brought into and taken out of the ring on leash.

Leashes must be clipped to the collar when dogs are brought in for classes requiring an on-leash exercise, a group exercise and awards. In a class where a leash is not required for the performance of the individual exercises, the dog may be brought into and taken out of the ring on a leash that slips/attaches through the dog's collar.

The leash must be made of fabric or leather and need only be long enough to provide adequate slack during the Heel on Leash exercise, unless stated otherwise in these regulations. The Novice Group Exercise – Sit and Down Stay, and the Beginner Novice Sit for Exam must be performed with the dog on a 6-foot leash.

Section 17. Collars. All dogs in the obedience ring must wear a properly fitted collar approved by the judge. No dog may enter the ring, either for judging or for awards, with unacceptable equipment. No special training collars, such as electronic collars or prong collars, will be permitted. Nothing may be hanging from the dog's collar.

Section 18. Heel Position. The heel position as defined in these regulations applies whether the dog is sitting, standing, lying down or moving at heel. The dog should be at the handler's left side straight in line with the direction the handler is facing. The area from the dog's head to shoulder is to be in line with the handler's left hip. The dog should be close to but not crowding its handler so that the handler has freedom of motion at all times.

Section 19. Hands and Arms. *The Heel on Leash and Figure Eight exercise specifically states that the hands must be in a natural position but do not require that they be at the handler's side while heeling on leash. On the other hand, no judge should consider that a handler is unnatural just because they do not perform with the hands and arms in the same position for each exercise.*

In all exercises where the dog is required to heel free, one of these options should be followed: (1) when the handler is in motion, the arms and hands must move naturally at the sides and must hang naturally at the sides when stopped; or (2) the right hand and arm must move naturally at the side, while the left hand must be held against the front of the body, centered in the area of the waist, with the left forearm carried against the body. There will be a substantial deduction if the hands and arms are not carried in one of these positions. The hands and arms may be adjusted during the fast portion of an exercise in order to maintain balance.

In any exercise that requires a dog to sit in front, the handler's arms and hands must hang naturally at the sides until the dog has sat in front. The handler must receive a substantial deduction for not doing so. Any movement of the handler's hands or arms from the time the dog sits in front and prior to the dog returning to the heel position will be considered an additional signal or command and will be penalized unless such movement is otherwise permitted by these regulations.

In any exercise that requires the dog to stay in one position until the handler returns to heel position, handlers may fold their arms once while leaving and once while returning to the dog without penalty. Additional movement of the arms and hands that aid the dog, will be considered additional signals and will be penalized.

Section 20. Commands and Signals. The dog's name may be used once immediately before any verbal command or before a verbal command and signal when these regulations permit command and/or signal. The dog's name, when given immediately before a verbal command, will not be considered as an additional command, but a dog that responds to its name without waiting for the verbal command will be scored as having anticipated the command. Loud commands by handlers to their dogs create a poor impression of obedience and should be avoided. Shouting is not necessary, even in a noisy place, if the dog is properly trained to respond to a normal tone of voice. Commands the judge feels are excessively loud will be penalized substantially.

When a signal is permitted, it must be a single gesture with one arm and hand only, and the arm and hand must immediately be returned to a natural position. A handler may bend their body and knees to bring their hand level with the dog's eyes while giving a signal to a dog in heel position. Signals must be inaudible, and the handler must not touch the dog. Any unusual noise or motion may be considered to be a signal.

Position of the arms and hands and movements of the head and/or body that aid the dog will be considered additional signals. Signaling a correction to a dog is forbidden and will be penalized.

When these regulations mention a command or signal, only a single command or signal may be given. When these regulations specify command and/or signal, the handler may give either one or the other or both command and signal simultaneously. The name will not be used with any signal not given simultaneously with a verbal command. Any extra commands or signals must be penalized. An extra command and/or signal in any non-principal part of an exercise does not constitute a failing score for that exercise.

The dog should never anticipate the handler's directions but will wait for the appropriate commands and/or signals. Moving forward at the heel without any command or signal other than the natural forward movement of the handler's body will not be considered anticipation.

Lack of prompt response by the dog to a command or signal is subject to a penalty. Delay in following a judge's order to give a command or signal must be penalized, unless the judge directs the delay. Any kind of whistling is prohibited.

Section 21. Additional Commands or Signals. If a handler gives an additional command or signal not permitted by these regulations the dog shall be scored as though it had failed to perform that particular part of the exercise. This includes giving a signal or command when none is permitted or using the dog's name with a permitted signal but without a permitted command.

Section 22. Praise. Praise and petting are allowed between and after exercises, but points will be deducted from the total score for a dog that is not under reasonable control while being praised. There will be a substantial penalty for any dog that is picked up or carried at any time in the obedience ring while under judgment. **Note:** A dog is under judgment from the time it enters the ring until it leaves the ring.

Section 23. Handling Between Exercises. In the Beginner Novice, Preferred Novice, and Novice classes, the dog may be guided gently by the collar between exercises. No other physical guidance is permitted and, if used, must receive minor or substantial penalties, depending on the circumstances.

In the Graduate Novice, Open, Preferred Open, Graduate Open, Utility, Preferred Utility or Versatility classes, there will be a substantial penalty for any dog that is physically guided at any time or not readily controllable. Minor penalties will be imposed for a dog that does not respond promptly to its handler's commands or signals before or between exercises in these classes.

Judging Procedures: Errors occurring before, between or after an exercise will be penalized under miscellaneous penalties.

Section 24. Orders and Minimum Penalties. The orders for the exercises and the standards for judging are set forth in the following chapters. The lists of faults are not intended to be complete, but minimum penalties are specified for most of the more common and serious faults. There is no maximum limit on penalties. A dog that makes none of the errors listed may still receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score for other reasons.

Section 25. Misbehavior. In all classes, the handler is required to exit the ring with the dog under control and without jumping, pulling, or tugging on the leash. A substantial deduction, under Miscellaneous Penalties, must be made for a dog that does not remain under control when exiting the ring. Any display of fear or nervousness by the dog must be penalized according to the seriousness of the misbehavior whether it occurs during or between an exercise or before or after judging. The judge may release the dog from further competition in the class. A dog that relieves itself while in the ring for judging, must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score and may be released from the ring. A dog must be released for uncontrolled behavior such as excessive barking or running away from its handler.

If a dog is working smartly and continuously but goes outside a ring boundary while completing an exercise (as opposed to a dog that bolts out of the ring or leaves the ring between exercises), the penalty, if any, is left to the discretion of the judge. A dog who has left its handler to leave the ring, who is not responding to its handler, and/or the stewards have blocked the dog to keep it in the ring, must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score and must be released from the ring.

If the misbehavior occurs during an exercise, the penalty must first be applied to the score for that exercise. Should the penalty be greater than the value of the exercise, the additional points will be deducted from the total score under Miscellaneous Penalties. If such behavior occurs before or after the judging or between exercises, the entire penalty will be deducted under Miscellaneous Penalties.

The judge must disqualify any dog that attacks or attempts to attack any person in the ring and complete the *Disqualification for Attacking* form (AEDSQ1). Any dog that attacks another dog or that appears dangerous to other dogs must be excused and not allowed back in the ring for the group exercises. The judge must complete the *Dog on Dog Attack* form (AEDSQ3) if there was an attack.

Section 26. Training and Warm-up on the Grounds. There will be no intensive or abusive training of the dogs on the grounds or premises at an AKC licensed or member obedience trial or sanctioned match. Collars must be in accordance with Chapter 2, Section 17 of these regulations. These requirements should not be interpreted as preventing handlers from moving normally about the grounds or premises or from warming up their dogs using any exercise performed in the obedience

ring provided the dog is on a leash being held by the handler. Warm-ups should be performed as far from the obedience rings as is reasonably possible and must not be disruptive to any dog or person. Physical or verbal disciplining of a dog will not be permitted, except to a reasonable extent in case of an attack on either a dog or a person.

All dogs will be kept on leash except when in the obedience ring, designated warm-up area or exercise area. The superintendent, event secretary and Event Committee members shall be responsible for compliance with this section and shall investigate any reports of infractions.

Section 27. Training and Handling in the Ring. When a handler is using excessive verbal commands, this could indicate the dog is not under control and is not working with the handler willingly. The judge must determine if this dog should be released for a lack of control. The handler is not allowed to correct or discipline a dog and will be released from the ring.

When the dog's performance does not meet the handler's expectation, the handler may choose to use a "Fix n' Go" option once, which allows the exhibitor to immediately reattempt a single individual exercise. This allows the team to reattempt that one exercise, and then leave the ring. In a two-part exercise, the handler may choose only one part to reattempt. It is the handler's responsibility to tell the judge they are choosing to "Fix n' Go." Using the Fix n' Go option will result in a non-qualifying score (NQ). The handler may begin the reattempt from the start or at any point during the exercise.

The handler may choose to help the dog through the Fix n' Go exercise, Helping the dog may be accomplished using verbal encouragement, including additional commands and praise, and/or approaching the dog in a friendly/positive manner without touching the dog.

Harsh verbal and/or physical corrections will not be tolerated. If there is any determination of harshness by the judge, the handler will be immediately released from the ring.

Spectators form their opinion of the sport through seeing the action of the handler and the dog. Care must be taken to avoid any action that might reflect poorly on the sport.

CHAPTER 3
NOVICE

Section 1. Novice A Class. The Novice A class shall be for dogs that have not won the CD title. A handler must own the dog entered or be a member of the owner's household or immediate family and may not have previously handled any dog that has earned an AKC Regular or Preferred Novice, Open, or Utility title. Owners may enter more than one dog in this class. The same person who handles the dog in the first five exercises must handle the dog in the group exercise; however, if a person has handled more than one dog in the first five exercises that will participate in the group exercise, that person must provide a handler for the additional dog in the same group exercise. The additional handler for the group exercise need not be a member of the owner's household or immediate family. No dog may be entered in both Novice A and Novice B at any one trial.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post where the leash will be placed.

At the listed start time for the class, a walkthrough of up to 10 minutes will be allowed for handlers without their dogs, and judging of the class will follow. The judge must be available in the ring during this period to brief the handlers and answer any questions they might have.

Section 2. Novice B Class. The owner or any other person may handle dogs in this class to earn a CD title. Owners may enter more than one dog in this class. The same person who handles the dog in the first five exercises must handle the dog in the group exercise; however, if a person has handled more than one dog in the first five exercises that will participate in the group exercise, that person must provide a handler for the additional dog in the same group exercise. No dog may be entered in both Novice A and Novice B at any one trial.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post where the leash will be placed.

Section 3. Novice Exercises and Scores. The exercises and maximum scores in the Novice classes:

1. Heel on Leash and Figure Eight	40 points
2. Stand for Examination	30 points
3. Heel Free	40 points
4. Recall	30 points
5. Sit Stay – Get Your Leash	30 points
6. Group Exercise – Sit & Down Stay	30 points
Maximum Total Score	200 points

The maximum judging rate is nine (9) dogs per hour.

Section 4. Companion Dog Title. The letters CD may be added after the name of each dog that has earned qualifying scores in Novice classes at three licensed or member obedience trials. That dog will receive a Companion Dog certificate from the AKC.

Section 5. Heel on Leash and Figure Eight. The principal feature of this exercise is the ability of the dog and handler to work as a team.

The orders are: "Forward," "Halt," "Right turn," "Left turn," "About turn," "Slow," "Normal" and "Fast."

"Fast" means that the handler and dog must move forward at a noticeably accelerated speed. All about turns will be right about turns. Orders for halts and turns will be given only when the handler is moving at a normal speed. The other orders may be given in any sequence, and turns and halts may be repeated. However, the judge should standardize the heeling pattern for all dogs in the class.

The leash may be held in either hand or in both hands, but the hands must be held in a natural position.

The handler will enter the ring with the dog on a loose leash and stand with the dog sitting in the heel position in a place designated by the judge. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. The handler may give a command or signal to heel and will walk briskly and naturally with the dog on a loose leash. The dog should walk close to the handler's left side without swinging wide, lagging, forging or crowding. The dog must not interfere with the handler's freedom of motion at any time. At each order to halt, the handler will stop. The dog shall sit straight and promptly in the heel position without command or signal and shall not move until the handler again moves forward on the judge's order. After each halt, it is permissible for the handler to give a command or signal to heel before moving forward again. The judge will say "Exercise finished" after this portion of the exercise.

For the Figure Eight, the handler will stand and the dog will sit in heel position facing the judge, midway between the two cones that are 17 to 37 inches high and no more than 15 inches wide at the base, that will be placed 8 feet apart. The Figure Eight in the Novice classes will be done on leash; the handler may go around either cone first. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. The handler and dog will walk briskly around and between the two cones twice. There will be no about turn, fast or slow, but the judge must order at least one halt during this exercise and another halt at the end.

Judging Procedures: *In scoring this exercise, judges shall accompany the handler at a discreet distance so that they can observe any signals or commands given by the handler to the dog. The judge must do so without interfering with either dog or handler. The judge should attempt to be in a position during the course of the exercise so that the dog and the handler may be observed from the rear, front, and side.*

Dogs receiving an extra command or signal during heeling can still qualify, although a deduction must be made for the extra command or signal. Subsequent additional commands or signals could indicate the dog is not under control and is not working with the handler as a team. The judge must determine whether the dog should receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score for heeling based on the overall performance of the dog and handler during the entire exercise.

Section 6. Heel on Leash and Figure Eight, Scoring. If a handler is constantly controlling the dog by tugging on the leash or is adapting to the dog's pace, that dog must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score for the exercise.

Depending on the circumstances, minor or substantial deductions, will be made for additional commands or signals to heel or for failure of dog or handler to speed up noticeably for the fast or slow down noticeably for the slow.

Minor or substantial deductions shall be made for lagging, heeling wide, forging, crowding, poor sits, failure to sit at a halt and other heeling imperfections. Deductions should also be made for a handler who guides the dog with the leash, any tightening or jerking of the leash, or does not walk at a brisk pace.

While scoring this exercise, the judge should be near enough to observe any signals or commands given by the handler to the dog without interfering with either.

Section 7. Stand for Examination. The principal feature of this exercise is that the dog stand in position before and during the examination without displaying resentment.

The orders are: "Stand your dog and leave when you are ready," "Back to your dog," and "Exercise finished."

Prior to the start of the exercises the handler will remove the leash and give it to a steward, who will place it on the judge's table or other designated place. The handler will take their dog to the place indicated by the judge. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handler will stand/pose the dog by the method of the handler's choice, taking any reasonable time if they choose to pose the dog as in the show ring. The handler will then stand with the dog in the heel position, and may give the command and/or signal to stay, walk straight forward about 6 feet, and then turn and face the dog.

The judge will approach the dog from the front. Using the fingers and palm of one hand, the judge will touch the dog's head, body and hindquarters. On the order "Back to your dog," the handler will walk around behind the dog and return to the heel position. The dog must remain standing until the judge has said "Exercise finished."

Judging Procedures: *The dog need not be sitting at the start of this exercise. The judge must be alert to keep handlers from going more or less than about 6 feet and must penalize, even to the point of non-qualifying, the dog whose handler backs away when leaving.*

The examination is complete when the judge lifts their fingers and palm from the dog's hindquarters.

Judges should not expose themselves needlessly to the danger of being bitten. Should a dog in the ring give warning that it may bite if you proceed with the examination, you should excuse the dog from the ring and mark the judge's book "Excused – Unable to Examine." If a dog attempts to attack or bites any person in the ring, the judge must disqualify the dog, mark the judge's book "Disqualified – Attack" and fill out the "Disqualification for Attacking" form (AEDSQ1).

Section 8. Stand for Examination, Scoring. The scoring of this exercise will not start until the handler has given the command and/or signal to stay, except for such things as rough treatment by the handler or active resistance by the dog to its handler's attempts to have it stand. Either of these will be penalized substantially.

A dog must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score if it sits or lies down, moves away from the place where it was left either before or during the examination, or growls, snaps or displays resentment.

Minor or substantial deductions, even to the point of a non-qualifying (NQ) score, will be made for shyness. Minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that moves its feet at any time or sits or moves away after the examination has been completed.

Section 9. Heel Free, Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed as in the Heel on Leash but without either the leash or the Figure Eight. The scoring and orders will be the same.

Section 10. Recall. The principal features of this exercise are that the dog stay where left until called by the handler, and that the dog responds promptly to the handler's command or signal to come.

The orders are: "Leave your dog," "Call your dog," and "Finish."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position in a place designated by the judge. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handler may give a command and/or signal to the dog to stay in the sit position. The handler will then walk forward to the other end of the ring, turn to face the dog, and stand with the arms and hands hanging naturally. On the judge's order or signal, the handler will either command or signal the dog to come. The dog must come directly, at a brisk trot or gallop and sit straight, centered in front of the handler. The dog must be close enough to its handler so that the handler could touch its head without excessive bending, stretching or moving either foot. On the judge's order, the handler will give a command or signal to finish. The dog must go smartly to heel position and sit. The manner in which the dog finishes will be optional, provided it is prompt and that the dog sits straight at heel.

Judging Procedures: Reference the *Obedience Judges' Guidelines,* Chapter 3.

Section 11. Recall, Scoring. A dog must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score if it is given an additional command and/or signal to stay, if it fails to come on the first command or signal, if it moves from the place it was left before being called or signaled to come, or if it does not come close enough to its handler so that the handler could touch its head without excessive bending, stretching or moving either foot.

Substantial deductions will be made for a handler's extra command or signal to sit or finish and for a dog that fails to remain sitting and either stands or lies down, fails to come at a brisk trot or gallop, fails to sit in front, or fails to finish or sit at heel.

Minor or substantial deductions will be made for not coming directly, slow or poor sits, for finishes that are not prompt or smart, for touching the handler on coming in or while finishing, and for sitting between the handler's feet.

Section 12. Sit Stay – Get Your Leash. The principal feature of this exercise is that the dog remains in the sit position until the handler returns to heel position.

The orders are: "Sit your dog," "Leave your dog to get your leash," and "Back to your dog."

The handler will take the dog to the place indicated by the judge. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order the handler may command and/or signal the dog to sit without touching either the dog or the dog's collar. On further order to "Leave your dog to get your leash," the handler may give a command and/or signal to stay and will walk forward immediately to the place designated by the judge for the leash, pick up the leash, turn, and face the dog. The judge will give the order "Back to your dog." The handler must return directly, walking around and in back of the dog to heel position. The dog must not move from the sitting position until after the judge has said "Exercise finished." The judge will tell the handler "Clip your leash to the collar and maintain control of your dog." The handler is required to exit the ring with the dog under control and without jumping, pulling or tugging on the leash.

Judging Procedures: *Prior to the start of judging, the judge will instruct the steward where to place the leash after the Heel on Leash and Figure Eight exercise.*

The leash will be placed inside the ring near the gate entrance on a chair or similar leash holder. The handler and dog will be positioned at least 30 feet from and facing the direction of the gate entrance. The judge must be in position to watch the dog and handler throughout the exercise including exiting the ring.

Section 13. Sit Stay – Get Your Leash, Scoring. A non-qualifying score (NQ) is required for the following: The dog moving a substantial distance away from the place where it was left any time during the exercise, not remaining in the sit position until the handler has returned to heel position, and repeatedly barking or whining.

Scoring of the exercise for such things as rough treatment of a dog by its handler or resistance by a dog to its handler's attempts to make it sit starts with the first order, "Sit your dog." These will be penalized substantially and in extreme cases the dog may be released.

Substantial deductions will be made for a dog that moves even a short distance from where it was left, that barks or whines only once or twice, or that changes from the sit position after the handler has returned to the heel position and before the judge has said, "Exercise finished." A substantial deduction, under Miscellaneous Penalties, must be made for a dog that does not remain under control when exiting the ring.

Section 14. Group Exercise – Sit and Down Stay. The principal feature of this exercise is that the dog remains in the sitting or down position, whichever is required at the time.

The orders are: "Sit your dogs," "Down your dogs," "Leave your dogs," and "Back to your dogs."

If a dog has non-qualified (NQ) in an individual exercise the judge must release the dog from performing the group exercise. A dog that does not remain sitting during the first part of this exercise must be released from participating in the second part.

Handlers of dogs that have qualified during the individual exercises will have the option of returning for the group exercise. After completion of the last individual exercise, if the dog has qualified, the judge will ask if the handler will be returning for the group exercise. Once handlers have notified the judge of their decision not to return for the group exercise they may not change their minds. Dogs that have been released or excused and handlers who have left the ring during the individual exercises may not return for the group exercise. See Judges' Guidelines, Judge's Book.

Dogs must be spaced with a minimum of six (6) feet between each dog and a minimum of four (4) feet from the ring barriers. Judges will position the dogs in the approximate center of the ring in one row or back-to-back in two rows with a minimum of six (6) feet between the rows. If the back-to-back formation is used, it must be used for all groups in the class. On a 50' side of the ring the maximum # of dogs allowed in a single row would be six (6) and in a back-to-back row twelve (12) dogs (see table):

Ring Length	Maximum # of Dogs Single Row	Maximum # of Dogs Back-to-Back Row
50'	6	12
45'	5	10
40'	4	8
35'	4	8
30'	3	6

The group exercise will be conducted after the last individual team in the class, or combined classes, is judged. If there are more dogs competing than can be handled in one group exercise, the judge will divide the class into approximately equal sections.

If Novice A and B classes in the same classification have different judges, each judge must judge the group exercise separately. A judge with only a single dog competing in a class would be required to have the dog perform the group exercise alone. If the same judge is judging both the Novice A and B classes and the combined total of the dogs returning for the group exercise can be judged in only one group without exceeding the limit of dogs based on the size of the ring, the judge may combine the two classes for the group exercise.

This exercise must be performed with the dog on a 6-foot leash. The leash will remain clipped to the dog's collar and the handler will hold on to the leash throughout the entire exercise. The armband will remain on the handler's left arm. The dogs will be lined up in judging program order. Prior to beginning the exercise, the judge will instruct the handlers to remove their dog if it starts to move out of position. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handlers will command and/or signal their dogs to sit without touching either the dog or the dog's collar. On further order to "Leave your dogs," the handlers may give a command and/or signal to stay and will walk forward immediately to the end of the leash, without jerking or tightening the leash, turn, and face their dogs. The leash must remain loose with slack throughout the entire exercise.

After one minute from the time the judge ordered the handlers to leave their dogs, the judge will give the order "Back to your dogs." The handlers must return directly, walking around and in back of their own dog to heel position. The dogs must not move from the sitting position until after the judge has said "Exercise finished." This order will not be given until the handlers are back in heel position. The dogs must remain under control between this two-part exercise.

Before starting the Down Stay portion of this exercise the judge will ask "Are you ready?" On the judge's order, the handlers will command and/or signal their dog to down without touching either the dog or the dog's collar. On further order to "Leave your dogs," the handlers may give a command and/or signal to stay and will walk forward immediately to the end of the leash, without jerking or tightening the leash, turn, and face their dogs. The leash must remain loose with slack throughout the entire exercise.

After one minute from the time the judge ordered the handlers to leave their dogs, the judge will give the order, "Back to your dogs." The handlers must return directly, walking around and in back of their own dog to heel position. The dogs must not move from the down position until after the judge has said "Exercise finished." This order will not be

given until the handlers are back in heel position. The judge will tell the exhibitors "Maintain control of your dogs." The handlers are required to exit the ring with their dogs under control and without jumping, pulling or tugging on the leash.

Judging Procedures: *If a judge observes any signs of aggression or potential problems when the dogs are being assembled outside the ring for the group exercise or once the dogs are brought into the ring, the judge must excuse the dog and mark the judge's book "Excused" and state the reason.*

Any handlers who physically correct their dogs before or after the group exercise or while exiting the ring must be penalized under Miscellaneous Penalties.

Judges must stand with their full attention on the dogs and handlers during the group exercise and remain alert to any potential problems. To have both dog and handler under constant observation in this exercise, a judge should take a position slightly to the rear of the dogs at one end of the row(s) of dogs.

Section 15. Group Exercise – Sit and Down Stay, Scoring. A non-qualifying score (NQ) is required for the following: The dog moving a substantial distance away from the place where it was left any time during the exercise, not remaining in the required position until the handler has returned to heel position, and repeatedly barking or whining.

Substantial deductions will be made for the following: A dog that must be repositioned by its handler if it is out of position enough to interfere with an adjacent dog (in extreme cases the dog may be released), that moves even a short distance from where it was left, that barks or whines only once or twice, or that changes position after the handler has returned to heel position and before the judge has said, "Exercise finished." A substantial deduction will be made for jerking or tightening of the leash before the judge has said "Exercise finished;" depending on the extent, the deduction may include a non-qualifying (NQ) score. A substantial deduction, under Miscellaneous Penalties, must be made for a dog that does not remain under control while leaving the ring.

Minor or substantial deductions, depending on the circumstances, will be made for touching the dog or its collar while getting the dog into the down position.

Scoring of the exercise for such things as rough treatment of a dog by its handler or resistance by a dog to its handler's attempts to make it sit or lie down starts with the first order, sit or down your dogs. These will be penalized substantially and in extreme cases the dog may be released.

The timing of each stay exercise begins on the judge's order, "Leave your dogs."

CHAPTER 4
OPEN

Section 1. Open A Class. The Open A class will be for dogs that have won the CD title but have not won the CDX title. Anyone who has trained or exhibited a dog that has earned an OTCH may not enter or handle dogs in this class. Each dog must be handled by its owner or by a member of the owner's household or immediate family. Owners may enter more than one dog in this class. No dog may be entered in both the Open A and Open B classes at any one trial.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post where the leash will be placed.

Section 2. Open B Class. The Open B class will be for dogs that have won the CD or CDX titles. A dog may continue to compete in this class after it has won the UD title. The owner or any other person may handle dogs in this class. Owners may enter more than one dog in this class. No dog may be entered in both Open A and Open B classes at any one trial.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post where the leash will be placed and the order of the exercises. This information will not be disclosed to exhibitors until it is posted at the ring. In future assignments, judges are required to alternate the six orders of exercises so that each will be used approximately the same number of times.

Section 3. Open A Exercises and Scores. The exercises and maximum score in the Open A class:

1. Heel Free and Figure Eight	40 points
2. Command Discrimination (Stand, Down, Sit)	30 points
3. Drop on Recall	30 points
4. Retrieve on Flat	20 points
5. Retrieve over High Jump	30 points
6. Broad Jump	20 points
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash	30 points
Maximum Total Score	200 points

The maximum judging rate is eight (8) dogs per hour.

Section 4. Open B Exercises and Scores. The various orders of exercises in the Open B class (points and total scores are the same as in Open A):

OPEN I

1. Heel Free & Figure Eight
2. Command Discrimination (Stand, Down, Sit)
3. Drop on Recall
4. Retrieve on Flat
5. Retrieve over High Jump
6. Broad Jump
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

OPEN II

1. Broad Jump
2. Retrieve over High Jump
3. Retrieve on Flat
4. Drop on Recall
5. Command Discrimination (Down, Sit, Stand)
6. Figure Eight & Heel Free
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

OPEN III

1. Retrieve on Flat
2. Drop on Recall
3. Retrieve over High Jump
4. Broad Jump
5. Figure Eight & Heel Free
6. Command Discrimination (Stand, Sit, Down)
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

OPEN IV

1. Drop on Recall
2. Heel Free & Figure Eight
3. Retrieve over High Jump
4. Command Discrimination (Down, Stand, Sit)
5. Broad Jump
6. Retrieve on Flat
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

OPEN V

1. Retrieve over High Jump
2. Drop on Recall
3. Command Discrimination (Stand, Sit, Down)
4. Figure Eight & Heel Free
5. Retrieve on Flat
6. Broad Jump
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

OPEN VI

1. Command Discrimination (Down, Stand, Sit)
2. Broad Jump
3. Figure Eight & Heel Free
4. Drop on Recall
5. Retrieve over High Jump
6. Retrieve on Flat
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

Section 5. Companion Dog Excellent Title. The letters CDX may be added after the name of each dog that has earned qualifying scores in Open classes at three licensed or member obedience trials. That dog will receive a Companion Dog Excellent certificate from the AKC.

Section 6. Heel Free and Figure Eight, Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed in the same manner as the Novice Heel on Leash and Figure Eight exercise except that the dog will be off leash. Orders and scoring are the same as in the Novice Heel on Leash and Figure Eight.

Section 7. Command Discrimination. The principal features of this exercise are the dog's correct response to the handler's first commands and/or signals and that the dog stays until the handler returns to heel position.

The orders are: "Leave your dog" and "Back to your dog." The judge must use signals for directing the handler to command and/or signal the dog to change position except for the first position and that order is: "Stand your dog" or "Down your dog."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in heel position in a place designated by the judge. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order to "Stand your dog" or "Down your dog." The handler will give a command and/or signal for the dog to change position. On further order to "Leave your dog," the handler may give a command and/or signal to stay and will immediately walk forward 15 feet, turn, and face the dog. On the judge's signal, the handler will give a command and/or signal for the dog to change to the second position. The judge will then order "Leave your dog." The handler may give a command and/or signal to stay and will immediately turn around and walk forward an additional 15 feet, turn, and face the dog. On the judge's signal, the handler will give a command and/or signal for the dog to change to the third position. The judge will then order "Back to your dog." The handler may give a command and/or signal to stay, and then must return directly, walking around and in back of the dog to heel position. The dog must stay in position without additional commands or signals until the handler has returned to heel position. The handler's hands and arms must hang naturally at the handler's side.

Judging Procedure: *This exercise may be performed in an area of the ring that is at least 40 feet in length. The 15-foot distances must be clearly marked. The judge must be positioned so that both the dog and handler are under continuous observation during the entire exercise. An excellent position for judging this exercise is at an adequate distance to the side and slightly to the rear of the dog.* Reference to *Obedience Judges' Guidelines,* Chapter 3.

Section 8. Command Discrimination, Scoring. A dog that fails to obey the handler's first command and/or signal for each position and stay, or that does not stay until the handler returns to heel position must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score.

Substantial deductions will be made for a dog that changes position after the handler has returned to heel position and before the judge has said "Exercise finished."

Minor or substantial deductions, up to a non-qualifying (NQ) score, will be made for the handler's hands and arms not hanging naturally at the handler's side. Depending on the extent, minor or substantial deductions, up to a non-qualifying (NQ) score, will be made for a dog that walks forward.

Section 9. Drop on Recall. The principal features of this exercise, in addition to those listed under the Novice Recall, are the dog's prompt response to the handler's command or signal to drop and the dog's remaining in the down position until again called or signaled to come. The dog will be judged on the promptness of its response to the command or signal.

The orders are: "Leave your dog," "Call your dog," then give a clear signal to drop the dog, followed by "Call your dog" and "Finish."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position in a place designated by the judge. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order the handler may give a command and/or signal for the dog to stay in the sit position. The handler will walk forward to the other end of the ring, then turn, face the dog, and stand naturally. On the judge's order or signal, the handler will either command or signal the dog to come. The dog must come directly at a brisk trot or gallop. On the judge's arm or hand signal, the handler shall give the command or signal to drop, and the dog must drop immediately to a complete down position. The dog must remain down until the handler gives the command or signal to come when ordered by the judge. The dog completes the exercise as in the Novice Recall.

Judging Procedures: Reference the *Obedience Judges' Guidelines,* Chapter 3.

Section 10. Drop on Recall, Scoring. A non-qualifying (NQ) score must be given to any dog that does not drop completely to the down position on a single command or signal or to a dog that does not remain down until called or signaled.

Minor or substantial deductions, up to a non-qualifying (NQ) score, will be made for delayed or slow response to the handler's command or signal to drop and for slow response to either of the recalls. All applicable penalties listed under the Novice Recall shall apply.

Section 11. Retrieve on Flat. The principal feature of this exercise is that the dog retrieve promptly.

The orders are: "Throw it," "Send your dog," "Take it," and "Finish." The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position in a place designated by the judge. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order "Throw it," the handler may give the command and/or signal to stay. If the handler does use a signal, that signal may not be given with the hand that is holding the dumbbell. After the dumbbell is thrown at least 20 feet, the judge will order the handler to "Send your dog." On the judge's order the handler may command or signal the dog to retrieve. The retrieve should be performed at a brisk trot or gallop. The dog will go directly to the dumbbell and retrieve it, returning directly to the handler as in the Novice Recall without unnecessary mouthing or playing. On the judge's order to "Take it," the handler will give command or signal and take the dumbbell.

The finish will be performed as in the Novice Recall.

The dumbbell, which must be approved by the judge, will be made of one or more solid pieces of wood or non-wooden material similar in size, shape and weight to a wooden dumbbell. Metal dumbbells are not permitted. Dumbbells will not be hollowed out. They may be unfinished, coated with a clear finish or may be any color. They may not have attachments but may display the person's name, the dog's call name, and/or the dog's picture (or insignia). Titles may not be displayed. The size of the dumbbell will be proportionate to the size of the dog. The judge will require the dumbbell to be thrown again before the dog is sent if it is thrown less than 20 feet, too far to one side or too close to the ring's edge.

Judging Procedures: *A judge should not place a dumbbell that is improperly thrown but should require the handler to throw the dumbbell again. A judge will not ask the handler's opinion when deciding whether a dumbbell is to be thrown again or not; it is the judge's sole responsibility to make this decision. Once the decision is made, the judge or steward will retrieve the dumbbell. Under no circumstances should the handler be penalized for a bad throw. Requiring the handler to re-throw the dumbbell signifies that the exercise is being restarted; therefore, the handler may pet, praise, and reposition the dog without penalty before the exercise is begun again. If a dumbbell breaks when thrown, the judge will stop the exercise and allow the handler to obtain a replacement dumbbell.*

The retrieve, including the pickup, must be brisk and without hesitation.

Once the exercise begins, the handler will be penalized for adjusting their feet or position.

Section 12. Retrieve on Flat, Scoring. A dog must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score if it fails to go out on the first command or signal, goes to retrieve before the command or signal is given, fails to retrieve, or does not return with the dumbbell sufficiently close that the handler can easily take the dumbbell as described above.

Minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog's slowness in going out, returning, or picking up the dumbbell, not going directly to the dumbbell, unnecessary mouthing or playing with the dumbbell, and reluctance or refusal to release the dumbbell to the handler. Depending on the extent, minor or substantial deductions will be made for dropping the dumbbell. All other applicable penalties listed under the Novice Recall will apply.

Section 13. Retrieve Over High Jump. The principal features of this exercise are that the dog go out over the jump, pick up the dumbbell and promptly return with it over the jump.

The orders are: "Throw it," "Send your dog," "Take it," and "Finish."

This exercise will be performed in the same manner as the Retrieve on Flat, except that the dog will clear the high jump both going and coming. The handler will stand with the dog sitting in heel position at least 8 feet (or any reasonable distance beyond 8 feet) from the jump and will remain in the same spot throughout the exercise. On the judge's order the handler will throw the dumbbell at least 8 feet beyond the jump. (These 8-foot distances must be clearly marked.)

Jump heights shall be set in multiples of 2 inches with no dog jumping less than 4 inches or more than 36 inches. A jump height is determined by the height of the dog at the withers (see table in Appendix B for standard jump heights). The actual height of the dog shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of 2 inches to determine the minimum jump height, with the exception of dogs eligible for the 4-inch jump height. Dogs eligible for the 4-inch jump height must be less than 7½ inches at the withers. Handlers who choose to have their dogs jump more than the minimum required height will neither be penalized nor receive extra consideration.

The minimum jump height for breeds listed in Appendix A shall be set to three-quarters the dog's actual height at the withers. This jump height shall also be rounded to a multiple of 2 inches. The minimum jump heights for approved breeds will be set in accordance with the table listed in Appendix B. Handlers of these breeds may choose to have the dog jump higher than listed in the table.

The stewards, based on the jump height listed, will pre-set the jumps. The judge will make certain the jump is at least the minimum required height for each dog and must also be aware that the jump may be set at a higher height if requested by the handler. Judges may, at their discretion, verify the height of any dog at the withers.

Judging Procedures: *The judge must make certain that the handler throws the dumbbell at least 8 feet beyond the jump*. Reference the *Obedience Judges' Guidelines*, Chapter 3.

Section 14. Retrieve Over High Jump, Scoring. A dog that fails to go over the full height of the jump in either direction, that uses the jump for any aid in going over, or that returns over the jump without the dumbbell must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score.

Depending on the circumstances, minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that touches the jump when going over it or for a dog that displays any hesitation or reluctance in jumping. All applicable penalties listed under the Retrieve on Flat apply.

Section 15. Broad Jump. The principal features of this exercise are that the dog stay where left until directed to jump, that the dog clear the jump on a single command or signal, and that the dog return to its handler after it has jumped.

The orders are: "Leave your dog," "Send your dog," and "Finish."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position at least 8 feet from the jump facing the lowest side of the lowest hurdle. (This 8-foot distance must be clearly marked.)

The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order the handler may give the command and/or signal to stay and go to a position facing the right side of the jump. Handlers may stand anywhere between the lowest edge of the first hurdle and the highest edge of the last hurdle with their toes about two (2) feet from the jump.

On the judge's order, the handler will give the command or signal to jump. While the dog is in midair, the handler will make a 90-degree pivot, but will remain in the same spot. The dog will clear the entire distance of the hurdles without touching them and, without further command or signal, immediately return to a sitting position in front of the handler, finishing as in the Novice Recall.

Judging Procedures: *A handler standing too close or too far from the side of the jump shall be required to move to the proper position.* Reference the *Obedience Judges' Guidelines,* Chapter 3.

Section 16. Broad Jump, Scoring. A dog that fails to stay until directed to jump, refuses the jump on the first command or signal, or steps on or between the hurdles must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score.

Depending on the circumstances, minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that does not return directly to the handler, that displays any hesitation or reluctance in jumping, or that touches the jump. All applicable penalties listed under the Novice Recall shall apply.

Section 17. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash. The principal features of this exercise is that the dog stand on the handlers first command and/or signal and stay in position until the handler has returned to heel position.

The orders are: "Stand your dog," "Leave your dog to get your leash" and "Back to your dog."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in heel position in a place designated by the judge, approximately 15 feet from the ring gate. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order the handler will command and/or signal the dog to stand without touching the dog or the dog's collar. The dog must stand but need not stand in heel position.

On further order to "Leave your dog to get your leash," the handler may give a command and/or signal to stay and will walk forward directly to the place outside the ring gate designated by the judge for the leash. The handler will pick up the leash, re-enter the ring, stop and wait for the judge's order "Back to your dog." The handler must return directly, walking around and in back of the dog to heel position. The dog must remain standing until the judge has said "Exercise finished." The judge will tell the handler "Attach your leash to the collar and maintain control

of your dog." The handler is required to exit the ring gate with the dog under control and without jumping, pulling or tugging on the leash.

Judging Procedures: *Prior to the start of judging, the judge will decide where the leash will be placed, outside the ring on a chair or similar leash holder.*

The leash will be placed outside the ring by the steward after the dog and handler have entered the ring for judging. When positioning the dog and handler for this exercise, the judge should ensure that such positioning will permit the dog to keep the handler in its direct line of vision as the handler leaves and returns to the ring, and that the handler, when reentering the ring, is at least 15 feet away from the dog until ordered to return. During this exercise the judge must be in position to watch the dog and see the handler leave and return to the ring. Once the exercise is finished, the judge must watch the dog and handler exit the ring together.

Section 18. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash, Scoring. A non-qualifying (NQ) score is required for a dog that does any of the following: Fails to stand on the first command and/or signal, moves a substantial distance away from the place where it was left, sits or lies down before the handler has returned to heel position, or repeatedly barks or whines.

Substantial deductions will be made for a dog that sits or lies down after the handler has returned to heel position and before the judge has said, "Exercise finished."

Depending on the circumstances, minor or substantial deductions will be made for the dog that moves a short distance from where it was left, or that moves its feet repeatedly while remaining in place.

A substantial deduction, under Miscellaneous Penalties, must be made for a dog that does not remain under control when exiting the ring.

CHAPTER 5
UTILITY

Section 1. Utility A Class. The Utility A class is for those dogs that have won the CDX title but have not won the UD title. Anyone who has trained or exhibited a dog that has earned an OTCH may not enter or handle dogs in this class. Each dog will be handled by its owner or by a member of the owner's immediate family or household. Owners may enter more than one dog in this class.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post which glove will be retrieved.

Section 2. Utility B Class. The Utility B class is for dogs that have won the CDX or UD title. The owner or any other person may handle dogs in this class and owners may enter more than one dog in this class. No dog may be entered in both Utility A and Utility B classes at any one trial.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post which glove will be retrieved and the order of the exercises. This information will not be disclosed to exhibitors until it is posted at the ring. In future assignments, judges are required to alternate the six orders of exercises so that each will be used approximately the same number of times.

Section 3. Utility A Exercises and Scores. The exercises, maximum scores and order of judging in the Utility A class:

1. Signal Exercise	40 points
2. Scent Discrimination Article # 1	30 points
3. Scent Discrimination Article # 2	30 points
4. Directed Retrieve	30 points
5. Moving Stand and Examination	30 points
6. Directed Jumping	40 points
Maximum Total Score	200 points

The maximum judging rate is seven (7) dogs per hour.

Section 4. Utility B Exercises and Scores. The various orders of exercises in the Utility B class (points and total scores are the same as in Utility A):

UTILITY I	UTILITY II
1. Signal Exercise	1. Directed Jumping
2. Scent Discrimination # 1	2. Moving Stand & Examination
3. Scent Discrimination # 2	3. Directed Retrieve
4. Directed Retrieve	4. Scent Discrimination # 1
5. Moving Stand & Examination	5. Scent Discrimination # 2
6. Directed Jumping	6. Signal Exercise

UTILITY III
1. Scent Discrimination # 1
2. Scent Discrimination # 2
3. Directed Retrieve
4. Signal Exercise
5. Moving Stand & Examination
6. Directed Jumping

UTILITY IV
1. Moving Stand & Examination
2. Directed Jumping
3. Signal Exercise
4. Directed Retrieve
5. Scent Discrimination # 1
6. Scent Discrimination # 2

UTILITY V
1. Directed Retrieve
2. Scent Discrimination # 1
3. Scent Discrimination # 2
4. Directed Jumping
5. Signal Exercise
6. Moving Stand & Examination

UTILITY VI
1. Directed Retrieve
2. Signal Exercise
3. Directed Jumping
4. Moving Stand & Examination
5. Scent Discrimination # 1
6. Scent Discrimination # 2

Section 5. Utility Dog Title. The letters UD may be added after the name of each dog that has earned qualifying scores in Utility classes at three licensed or member obedience trials. That dog will receive a Utility Dog certificate from the AKC.

Section 6. Signal Exercise. The principal features of this exercise are the ability of dog and handler to work as a team while heeling and the dog's correct response to the signals to stand, stay, down, sit and come.

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position in a place designated by the judge. Orders are the same as in the Novice Heel on Leash, except for the judge's order to "Stand your dog." This order will only be given when the dog and handler are walking at a normal pace and will be followed by the order to "Leave your dog." The judge must use signals for directing the handler to signal the dog to down, sit, come (in that sequence) and to finish.

Heeling will be done as in the Heel Free, except that handlers may use signals only and must not speak to their dogs at any time during this exercise. While the dog is heeling at one end of the ring, the judge will order the handler to "Stand your dog." On further order to "Leave your dog," the handler will signal the dog to stay, go to the other end of the ring, then turn and face the dog. On the judge's signal, the handler will give the signals to down, sit, come and finish as in the Novice Recall.

Judging Procedures: Reference the *Obedience Judges' Guidelines,* Chapter 3.

Section 7. Signal Exercise, Scoring. A dog that fails to obey the handler's first signal to stand, stay, down, sit or come, or that receives a verbal command from the handler to do any of these parts of the exercise, must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score.

A substantial deduction will be made for any audible command during the heeling or finish portions of the exercise.

Depending on the circumstances, minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that walks forward on the stand, down or sit portions of the exercise. The deduction could be up to a non-qualifying (NQ) score. All applicable penalties listed under the Heel on Leash and the Novice Recall (after the dog has been signaled to come) exercises will apply.

Section 8. Scent Discrimination. The principal features of these exercises are the selection of the handler's article from among the other articles by scent alone and the prompt delivery of the correct article to the handler. In each of these two exercises, the dog must select and retrieve an article that has been handled by its handler. The dog must make this selection based on scent alone.

The orders are: "Take an article," The taking of the article from the handler, "Send your dog," "Take it," and "Finish."

The articles will be provided by the handler and will consist of two (2) sets only. The handler will choose which two (2) sets are to be used, metal, leather or wood. Each set of articles will be comprised of five identical objects, which may be items of everyday use. The size of the articles will be proportionate to the size of the dog. The metal set must be made entirely of rigid metal. The leather set must be made of leather. The wood set must be made of one or more solid pieces of wood. The articles may be unfinished, stained or dyed and must be designed so that only a minimum amount of fastening material is visible. The articles may display the person's name, the dog's call name, and/or the dog's picture (or insignia). The articles in each set will be legibly numbered with a different number and must be approved by the judge.

The handler will present all ten articles to the judge, who will make a written note of the numbers of the two articles they have selected. These articles will be placed on a table or chair within the ring until the handler picks each up separately when ordered by the judge. The judge or steward will handle each of the remaining eight articles while randomly arranging them on the floor or ground about 6 inches apart. The closest article should be about 20 feet from the handler and dog. The judge must make sure that the articles are visible to both dog and handler and that they are far enough apart so that there will be no confusion of scent among articles. Handlers may choose to watch the articles being placed or face away. After the articles have been placed the handler will face away from the articles with the dog sitting in heel position.

The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, "Take an article"; the scoring of the exercise will begin. The handler may give a command and/or signal to the dog to stay in the sit position, then take an article and return to heel position. The handler may use either article first, but must hand it to the judge immediately when ordered. The judge will make certain handlers scent each article with their hands only.

Once the handler has returned to heel position with the article, the handler may talk to but not pet their dog. As the handler is scenting the article the judge will ask, "What method will you be using to send your dog?" The handler should respond with either "After a sit" or "Send directly." At this time, the handler may inform the judge the procedure will be the same for both articles. If not informed, the judge will ask the question again for the next article.

The judge's taking of the article will be considered to be the second order. On the judge's order, the handler will place the article on the judge's book or worksheet. Without touching that article, the judge or steward will place it among the others. Once the judge takes the article from the handler, the handler is not permitted to talk to the dog.

On order from the judge to "Send your dog," the handler has the option as to how the dog is sent. The handler may give the command or signal to heel and will turn in place; either right or left, to face the articles. The handler will come to a halt with the dog sitting in the heel position. The handler will then give the command or signal to retrieve. Or the handler may do a right about-turn, simultaneously giving the command or signal to retrieve. In this case, the dog should not assume a sitting position but must go directly to the articles. Handlers may give their scent by extending the palm of one hand in front of the dog's nose or gently touching the dog's nose, but the arm and hand must be returned to a natural position before they turn and face the articles. The dog should go directly to the articles at a brisk trot or gallop. It may take any reasonable time to select the correct article but must work continuously. After picking up the correct article, the dog will complete the exercise as in the Retrieve on Flat. This procedure will be followed for both articles. If a dog retrieves the wrong first article, that article and the correct one must be removed. They will be placed on the table or chair, and the next exercise will be done with one less article.

Judging Procedures: Reference the *Obedience Judges' Guidelines,* Chapter 3.

Section 9. Scent Discrimination, Scoring. A dog that retrieves a wrong article or that does not complete the retrieve of the right article must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score. If the "After a sit" method is used, anticipating the command or signal to retrieve must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score. If the "Send directly" method is used, any additional command or signal to retrieve must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score.

Depending on the circumstances, minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that is given an additional command and/or signal to stay, once the handler leaves the dog to take an article, that changes position while the handler is taking or scenting the article, or moves from the place where it was left. Similar deductions will be made for a handler petting the dog while scenting the article, for any roughness

in giving their scent to the dog, not returning their arm and hand to a natural position after giving the scent and before turning, excessive motions when turning toward the articles, or for not turning in place or for talking to the dog after the judge has taken the article.

Minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that is slow, that does not go directly to the articles, that does not work continuously, or that picks up the wrong article, even if it is immediately put down again. There should be no penalty for a dog that takes a reasonably long time examining the articles, provided it is working continuously. All applicable penalties listed under the Heel Free, Novice Recall and the Retrieve on Flat will apply.

Section 10. Directed Retrieve. The principal features of this exercise are that the dog stay until directed to retrieve and that it complete the retrieve of the designated glove.

The orders are: "One," "Two," or "Three," "Take it," and "Finish."

In this exercise the handler will provide three gloves that are predominately white. They may not have attachments but may display the person's name, the dog's call name, and/or the dog's picture (or insignia). Titles may not be displayed. They must be open and must be approved by the judge. Handlers will stand with their backs to the unobstructed end of the ring midway between and in line with the jumps. The dog will be sitting in heel position. The judge or steward will drop the gloves across the end of the ring while the handler and dog are facing the opposite direction. One glove is dropped about three (3) feet in from each corner, and the remaining glove is dropped in the center, about three (3) feet from the end of the ring.

The gloves will be designated "One," "Two," or "Three," reading from left to right when the handler is facing the gloves. The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order.

When the judge designates the glove by number, the handler will turn in place to face the glove, halting with the dog sitting in heel position. The handler may not touch the dog or reposition it. The handler will give the dog the direction to the designated glove with a single motion of the left hand and arm along the right side of the dog. Either simultaneously with or immediately following giving the direction, the handler must give a verbal retrieve command. The dog must then go directly to the glove, completing the exercise as in the Retrieve on Flat.

Handlers may bend their bodies and knees as far as necessary to give the direction to the dogs but must then stand up in a natural position with their arms and hands hanging naturally at their sides.

Judging Procedures: *The judge should be certain the gloves are visible to the smallest and largest dogs.*

The judge may point to the designated glove at the same time they give the order.

The direction the handler turns is at the option of the handler, no matter which glove is designated, but the dog should maintain heel position throughout the turn and sit at heel when the turn is completed.

Giving the direction to the dog must be done with a single motion. When the motion stops, the direction is completed.

Section 11. Directed Retrieve, Scoring. A non-qualifying (NQ) score is required for any commands or signals to position the dog after the handler turns to face the glove, for a handler failing to give a verbal command to retrieve, for a dog that retrieves a wrong glove or that does not complete the retrieve of the designated glove.

Depending on the extent, a substantial deduction up to and including a non-qualifying (NQ) score will be made for a handler who does not turn in place, does not face the designated glove, does not give the verbal command to retrieve simultaneously or immediately after giving the direction to retrieve, or for a dog that does not go directly to the designated glove. All applicable penalties listed under the Heel Free, Novice Recall and the Retrieve on Flat will apply.

Section 12. Moving Stand and Examination. The principal features of the exercise are that the dog heel, stand and stay as the handler moves away; accept the examination without shyness or resentment; and return to the handler on command.

The orders are: "Forward," "Stand your dog," and "Call your dog to heel."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in heel position in a place designated by the judge. The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order the handler may command or signal the dog to heel. After the handler has proceeded about 10 feet, the judge will order "Stand your dog." Without pausing, the handler will command and/or signal the dog to stand and continue forward about 10 to 12 feet. The handler will then turn either to the right or left to face the dog, which must stand and stay in position.

The judge will approach the dog from the front to examine it. The exam will consist of the judge gently using both hands in a single smooth motion beginning at the sides of the dog's neck, proceeding along the body and ending at the dog's croup. The exam will not include the head, teeth, legs, testicles, or tail.

On the judge's order, the handler will command and/or signal the dog to return to the heel position. The dog should return to heel position in a brisk manner.

Judging Procedures: *This exercise may be judged from the side while the dog and handler are heeling and until the dog is to be examined.*

Section 13. Moving Stand and Examination, Scoring. A non-qualifying (NQ) score is required for a dog that does any of the following: displays fear or resentment; moves from the place where it was left; sits or lies down before it is called; growls or snaps; repeatedly whines or barks; fails to heel, stand, stay, or accept the judge's examination; or fails to return to the handler.

Depending on the circumstances, minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that moves its feet repeatedly while remaining in place or for a dog that returns to the handler as defined in the Novice Recall but not to heel position.

Depending on the extent of hesitation, minor or substantial deductions will be made for the handler who hesitates or pauses while giving the stand command and/or signal. All appropriate penalties of the Novice Heel Free, Stand for Examination and Recall exercises will apply.

Section 14. Directed Jumping. The principal features of this exercise are that the dog goes away from the handler to the opposite end of the ring, stop, jump as directed, and return as in the Novice Recall.

The orders are: "Send your dog," "Bar," "High" and "Finish."

The jumps will be placed midway in the ring at right angles to the longest sides of the ring 18 to 20 feet apart. The judge must see that the jumps are set at the required height for each dog, as described in the Retrieve over High Jump.

The handler will stand in the approximate center of the ring with the dog sitting in heel position, about 20 feet from the jumps and midway between them. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order the handler will command and/or signal the dog to go forward at a brisk trot or gallop to a point about 20 feet past the jumps in the approximate center of the unobstructed end of the ring. When the dog reaches this point, the handler will give a command to sit. The dog must stop and sit with its attention on the handler, but it need not sit squarely.

The judge will order either "Bar" or "High" for the first jump, and the handler will command and/or signal the dog to return to the handler over the designated jump. While the dog is in midair, the handler may turn to face the dog as it returns. The dog will sit in front of the handler and, on order from the judge, finish as in the Novice Recall. After the dog has returned to heel position, the judge will say, "Exercise finished." When the dog is set up for the second half of this exercise, the judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the order for the second part of the exercise. The same procedure will be followed for the second jump.

It is optional which jump the judge first indicates, but both jumps must be included. The judge must not designate the jump until the dog has reached the far end of the ring.

Judging Procedures: *The judge should determine the 10-foot distance before beginning the class. The same sequence of jumps should be used for each dog.* Reference the *Obedience Judges' Guidelines,* Chapter 3.

Section 15. Directed Jumping, Scoring. A dog will receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score if it: anticipates the handler's command and/or signal to go out; fails to leave the handler; does not go out between the jumps; does not stop and remain at least 10 feet past the jumps without an additional command; anticipates the handler's command and/or signal to jump; returns over the wrong jump; knocks the bar off the uprights; or uses the top of any jump for aid in going over.

Minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that does not stop on command, that does not stop in the approximate center of the ring about 20 feet past the jumps, that does not sit, that receives an additional command to sit after the dog has stopped, or that anticipates the handler's command to sit.

Minor or substantial deductions, depending on the extent, will be made for slowness in going out, for touching the jumps, or for any hesitation in jumping.

All applicable penalties of the Novice Recall exercises will apply.

CHAPTER 6
UTILITY DOG EXCELLENT

Section 1. Dogs That May Compete. UDX scores will be recorded only for dogs that have earned the Utility Dog title. Dogs who already have the UDX title may continue to compete in Open B and Utility B.

To earn a Utility Dog Excellent title the dog must have received qualifying scores in both Open B and Utility B at 10 separate licensed or member obedience trials.

Section 2. Utility Dog Excellent Title. The AKC will issue a Utility Dog Excellent certificate and will permit the use of the letters UDX following the name of each dog that meets these requirements.

The letters UDX will be followed by a numeric designation indicating the number of times a dog has met the requirements of the UDX title as defined in the regulations. (UDX2 for 20 qualifying scores, UDX3 for 30 qualifying scores, UDX4 for 40 qualifying scores, etc.)

CHAPTER 7
OBEDIENCE MASTER TITLE AND GRAND MASTER TITLE

Section 1. Dogs that May Compete. Obedience Master title and Obedience Grand Master title points will be recorded for dogs that have earned the Utility Dog title. When a dog earns an Obedience Master title, it may continue to compete and earn points until it is awarded an Obedience Grand Master title.

Section 2. Master Title and Grand Master Title Points. Obedience Master points will be recorded for those dogs earning a score of 190 or better in Open B or Utility B classes, according to the schedule of points established by the AKC Board of Directors.

To acquire an Obedience Master title, dogs will be required to earn a total of 200 points based on the points awarded for scores of 190 or better from the Open B or Utility B classes as listed in the point schedule shown (Section 3).

For a title to be earned, 30 percent of the points (60 points) must come from the Open B class and 30 percent of the points (60 points) must come from the Utility B class. The remaining 40 percent of the points (80 points) can come from the Open B or Utility B class, for the total of 200 points.

When a dog earns a total of 200 points based on the point schedule shown (Section 3) it will be awarded an Obedience Master title. Obedience Master titles will be awarded for nine levels and upon completion of the 10th level, a dog will be awarded an Obedience Grand Master title. Points accumulated in excess of the 200 points required for each level will be applied towards the next level of award if available. Only one title for Obedience Grand Master will be awarded.

Upon being awarded an Obedience Master title or the Obedience Grand Master title, dogs will be permitted to display the title of Obedience Master (OM#) or OGM after their names.

Section 3. Point Schedule.

Dog's Score	Points Awarded	Dog's Score	Points Awarded
190	6	195.5	12
190.5	6	196	12
191	6	196.5	12
191.5	6	197	15
192	9	197.5	15
192.5	9	198	15
193	9	198.5	15
193.5	9	199	15
194	9	199.5	15
194.5	9	200	15
195	12		

Succession of Obedience Master Titles
OM1 Obedience Master 1
OM2 Obedience Master 2
OM3 Obedience Master 3
OM4 Obedience Master 4
OM5 Obedience Master 5
OM6 Obedience Master 6
OM7 Obedience Master 7
OM8 Obedience Master 8
OM9 Obedience Master 9
OGM Obedience Grand Master

CHAPTER 8
OBEDIENCE TRIAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Section 1. Dogs that May Compete. Obedience Trial Championship points will be recorded for dogs that have earned the Utility Dog title. When a dog earns the Obedience Trial Champion title, it may continue to compete and earn points.

Section 2. Championship Points. Obedience Trial Championship points will be recorded for those dogs that have earned a first, second, third or fourth place ribbon competing in the Open B or Utility B class, according to the schedule of points established by the AKC Board of Directors. When counting the number of eligible dogs in competition, a dog that is disqualified or excused from the ring by the judge will not be included.

One (1) Championship point will be recorded for those dogs that earn a qualifying score of 197 or better in the Open B or Utility B class, if they did not earn points based on the Point Schedule.

Requirements for the Obedience Trial Champion are as follows:

The dog must have won:

1. 100 points
2. A first place in Utility B with at least three dogs in competition
3. A first place in Open B with at least five dogs in competition
4. An additional first place under the conditions of 2 or 3 above
5. All three first places under three different judges

Only one of the required first places may have been won at a specialty show or a Junior Obedience Showcase.

Section 3. Obedience Trial Champion Title. The AKC will issue an Obedience Trial Champion certificate and will permit the use of the letters OTCH preceding the name of each dog that meets the requirements.

The letters OTCH will be followed by a numeric designation indicating the number of times a dog has met the requirements of the OTCH title as defined in these regulations (OTCH2, OTCH3, OTCH4, etc.).

Section 4. Dual and Triple Champion. Any dog that has been awarded the titles Champion of Record (CH) and Field Champion (FC) or Herding Champion (HC) may be designated as a Dual Champion (DC). Any dog that has been awarded the title of Dual Champion (DC) and the title of Obedience Trial Champion (OTCH), Tracking Champion (CT) or Agility Champion (MACH or PACH) may be designated as a Triple Champion (TC).

Section 5. Point Schedule.

OPEN B

Number Competing	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
5-9	2	1	1	0
10-14	4	1	1	0
15-19	6	2	1	0
20-24	10	3	1	1
25-29	14	4	2	1
30-34	18	5	2	1
35-39	22	7	3	1
40-44	26	9	4	2
45-49	30	11	5	2
50-64	34	13	6	3

UTILITY B

Number Competing	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
3-4	2	0	0	0
5-7	4	1	0	0
8-10	6	2	0	0
11-13	10	3	1	0
14-16	14	4	1	0
17-19	17	5	2	0
20-23	20	7	2	1
24-26	24	9	3	1
27-29	27	11	4	1
30-32	30	13	4	2
33-36	33	14	5	2
37-40	37	15	6	3
41-56	40	17	7	3

UTILITY B CLASS - HAWAII ONLY

Number Competing	1st	2nd
3-4	5	1
5-7	8	2
8-10	10	3
11-13	13	3

(Rest of scale same as regular schedule)

UTILITY B CLASS – ALASKA & PUERTO RICO ONLY

Number Competing	1st	2nd
3-4	3	0
5-7	5	1
8-10	8	2

(Rest of scale same as regular schedule)

CHAPTER 9
NATIONAL OBEDIENCE CHAMPION

A National Obedience Champion title will be awarded annually to the dog who wins the National Obedience Championship. The winner of the event will be designated as National Obedience Champion (NOC) of ___ (year) and the AKC will permit the use of the letters NOC preceding the name of each dog that earns the award.

The National Obedience Championship event will include a variety of obedience exercises performed as described in these regulations. This event is by invitation only for dogs who qualify during the event qualifying period.

Section 1. Invitation Process. To be invited to enter the National Obedience Championship, a dog must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be ranked in the top 25 dogs across all breeds by OTCH points.
- Be ranked in the top six of its breed by OTCH points; dogs listed with the AKC Canine Partners will be considered one breed.
- If a breed has more than 30 dogs who have earned an OTCH point during the qualifying period, invitations will be sent to 10% of the total number of eligible dogs in that breed in addition to the top six.
- Be ranked as one of the top four dogs in one of the regional qualifying competitions.

To be eligible to be included in the final rankings in a regional qualifying event, a dog must:

- Have a UD title prior to competing at the regional competition.
- Enter and compete in both Open B and Utility B in all three of the trials held at the regional competition. Each dogs cumulative totals will determine the rankings in each region.

Should a dog qualify based on ranking in a regional event but also earn an invitation by being in the top 25 dogs or top six of its breed, the next highest scoring dog in that regional will be invited.

Section 2. AKC Regional Competitions. The American Kennel Club will identify yearly the events/shows to be regional qualifying events for the next year. Events will be selected based on criteria established by the AKC Companion Events Department. Regions will be as follows:

Region 1: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
Region 2: Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania
Region 3: District of Columbia, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia
Region 4: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina
Region 5: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio
Region 6: Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Wisconsin
Region 7: Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas

Region 8: Oregon, Washington
Region 9: California
Region 10: Idaho, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming
Region 11: Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico

Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico are combined as one Region with separate qualification criteria to be set. (Criteria for Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico may vary.) For all Regions, the top four dogs based on the qualification criteria as established by the Companion Events Department will be invited to attend the AKC National Obedience Championship.

The qualification time period for regional competitors will be from December 1 to November 30 for qualification to attend the National Obedience Championship (NOC) following the November 30 cut-off date.

For events identified as AKC Regional Obedience competitions:

1. The selected regional event(s) must have obedience trials over three consecutive days, must be open to all breeds, including canine partners, and entries may not be limited. Only three consecutive obedience trials will be recognized as the regional trial. (Each region will only have one regional competition per year.)
2. Previous shows for trials at the events must have a minimum of 80 plus entries. This may vary by region.
3. If there are no events that meet the given requirements in a region, Events Selection Committee can select a smaller show or allow another region to have two events.

To qualify, dogs must:

- Have a UD title prior to competing at the regional competition
- Compete in both Open B and Utility B in all three of the shows identified as an AKC regional competition
- Have a cumulative score obtained from the dog's participation in Open and Utility at the regional competition
- Be ranked from highest to lowest based on their cumulative score with 1,200 points being a perfect score
- Qualify by cumulative score as one of the top four at one regional competition for an invitation to the National Obedience Championship

Should a dog qualify for the NOC in more than one regional event, the next highest scoring dog will qualify.

CHAPTER 10
VERSATILE COMPANION DOG
(Established January 1, 2001)

Section 1. Versatile Companion Dog Title. The AKC will issue a Versatile Companion Dog certificate and will permit the use of the letters VCD following the name of each dog that completes the titles as follows:

Versatile Companion Dog 1 (VCD1) – CD, NA, NAJ, [TD or TDU] or CD, NAP, NJP, [TD or TDU]

Versatile Companion Dog 2 (VCD2) – CDX, OA, OAJ, [TD or TDU] or CDX, OAP, OJP, [TD or TDU]

Versatile Companion Dog 3 (VCD3) – UD, AX, AXJ, TDX or UD, AXP, AJP, TDX

Versatile Companion Dog 4 (VCD4) – UDX, MX, MXJ, VST or UDX, MXP, MJP, VST

Dogs listed with AKC Canine Partners are eligible for the Versatile Companion Dog titles.

Section 2. Versatile Companion Champion Title. The AKC will issue a Versatile Companion Champion certificate and will permit the use of the letters VCCH preceding the name of each dog that completes the titles as follows: OTCH, MACH and CT or OTCH, PACH and CT.

NOTE: Explanation of Titles
CD = Companion Dog;
CDX = Companion Dog Excellent;
UD = Utility Dog;
UDX = Utility Dog Excellent;
OTCH = Obedience Trial Champion;
NA = Novice Agility;
NAJ = Novice Agility Jumpers;
NAP = Novice Agility Preferred;
NJP = Novice Jumpers With Weaves Preferred;
OA = Open Agility;
OAJ = Open Agility Jumpers;
OAP = Open Agility Preferred;
OJP = Open Jumpers With Weaves Preferred;
AX = Agility Excellent;
AXJ = Excellent Agility Jumper;
AXP = Agility Excellent Preferred;
AJP = Excellent Jumpers With Weaves Preferred;
MX = Master Agility Excellent;
MXJ = Master Agility Jumper;
MXP = Master Agility Excellent Preferred;
MJP = Master Excellent Jumpers With Weaves Preferred;

MACH = Master Agility Champion;
PACH = Preferred Agility Champion;
TD = Tracking Dog;
TDU = Tracking Dog Urban;
TDX = Tracking Dog Excellent;
VST = Variable Surface Tracker;
CT = Champion Tracker

CHAPTER 11
PREFERRED NOVICE
ALTERNATIVE TITLING CLASS

(Replaced the Pre-Novice class established July 1, 2013)

Section 1. Preferred Novice Class. The Preferred Novice class is an alternative titling class for dogs that have not won the CDX or PCDX or higher Regular or Preferred titles. This is an additional class that may be offered by clubs at obedience events. The owner or any other person may handle dogs in this class. Owners may enter more than one dog in this class. Dogs entered in Preferred Novice may also be entered in other obedience classes.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post which position will be required for the Stay – Sit or Down exercise.

At the listed start time for the class a walkthrough of up to 10 minutes will be allowed for handlers without their dogs. The judge must be available in the ring during this period to brief the handlers and answer any questions they might have.

This class may be judged by anyone approved to judge Novice obedience classes.

Section 2. Preferred Novice Exercises and Scores. The exercises, maximum scores and order of judging:

1. Heel on Leash and Figure Eight	40 points
2. Stand for Examination	30 points
3. Heel Free	40 points
4. Recall	30 points
5. Stay – Sit or Down	30 points
6. Sit Stay – Get Your Leash	30 points
Maximum Total Score	200 points

The maximum judging rate is nine (9) dogs per hour.

Section 3. Preferred Companion Dog Title. The letters PCD may be added after the name of each dog that has earned qualifying scores in Preferred Novice class at three licensed or member obedience trials. That dog will receive a Preferred Novice certificate from the AKC.

Section 4. Heel on Leash and Figure Eight Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Novice Heel on Leash and Figure Eight.

Section 5. Stand for Examination Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Novice Stand for Examination.

Section 6. Heel Free Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Novice Heel on Leash but without either the leash or the Figure Eight.

Section 7. Recall Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Novice Recall.

Section 8. Stay – Sit or Down – Handler Walk Around the Ring. The principal feature of this exercise is that the dog remains in the sit or down position as directed by the judge, until the handler has returned to heel position.

All dogs entered in the class will perform the same stay exercise. The team should be positioned approximately in the center of the ring facing one of the sides. The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position.

The orders are: "Sit your dog" or "Down your dog," "Leave your dog," and "Exercise finished."

The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handler will command and/or signal the dog to sit or down. The judge will order, "Leave your dog," and the handler may give a command and/or signal to stay and immediately proceed straight forward to the edge of the ring. The handler will walk around the inside perimeter of the ring in a direction as indicated by the judge, with all dogs entered in the class being judged the same way. Upon completing a full perimeter walk around the ring, the handler will approach the dog from the front and proceed to walk around and in back of the dog to the heel position. Once the handler has returned to heel position, the judge will give the order "Exercise finished."

Section 9. Stay – Sit or Down – Handler Walk Around the Ring, Scoring. A non-qualifying (NQ) score is required for the dog moving a substantial distance away from the place where it was left any time during the exercise, not remaining in the sit/down position until the handler has returned to heel position, and repeatedly barking or whining, or any additional command or signal as the handler is walking around the ring.

A substantial deduction will be made for a dog that moves even a short distance from where it was left, that barks or whines only once or twice, or that changes position after the handler has returned to the heel position and before the judge has given the order, "Exercise finished."

Scoring of the exercises will not start until after the judge has ordered the handler to leave their dog, except for such things as rough treatment of a dog by its handler or resistance by a dog to its handler's attempts to make it sit/down. These will be penalized substantially; in extreme cases, the dog may be released.

The judge will not give the "Exercise finished" order until the handler has returned to heel position.

Section 10. Sit Stay – Get Your Leash Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Novice Sit Stay – Get Your Leash.

CHAPTER 12
PREFERRED OPEN
ALTERNATIVE TITLING CLASS

(Replaced the Pre-Open class established July 1, 2013)

Section 1. Preferred Open Class. The Preferred Open class is an alternative titling class for dogs that have won the CD or PCD or higher Regular or Preferred titles. This is an additional class that may be offered by clubs at obedience events. The owner or any other person may handle dogs in this class. Owners may enter more than one dog in this class. Dogs entered in Preferred Open may also be entered in other obedience classes.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post where the leash will be placed and the order of the exercises, which will be the same as the Open B class. This information will not be disclosed to exhibitors until it is posted at the ring. In future assignments, judges are required to alternate the six orders of exercises so that each will be used approximately the same number of times.

This class may be judged by anyone approved to judge Open obedience classes.

Section 2. Preferred Open Exercises and Scores. The various orders of exercises in the Preferred Open class (points and maximum score are the same for all orders):

PREFERRED OPEN I

1. Heel Free & Figure Eight	40 points
2. Command Discrimination (Stand, Down, Sit)	30 points
3. Drop on Recall	30 points
4. Retrieve on Flat	20 points
5. Retrieve over High Jump	30 points
6. Broad Jump	20 points
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash	30 points
Maximum Total Score	200 points

The maximum judging rate is eight (8) dogs per hour.

PREFERRED OPEN II

1. Broad Jump
2. Retrieve over High Jump
3. Retrieve on Flat
4. Drop on Recall
5. Command Discrimination (Down, Sit, Stand)
6. Figure Eight & Heel Free
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

PREFERRED OPEN III

1. Retrieve on Flat
2. Drop on Recall
3. Retrieve over High Jump
4. Broad Jump
5. Figure Eight & Heel Free
6. Command Discrimination (Stand, Sit, Down)
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

PREFERRED OPEN IV

1. Drop on Recall
2. Heel Free & Figure Eight
3. Retrieve over High Jump
4. Command Discrimination (Down, Stand, Sit)
5. Broad Jump
6. Retrieve on Flat
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

PREFERRED OPEN V

1. Retrieve over High Jump
2. Drop on Recall
3. Command Discrimination (Stand, Sit, Down)
4. Figure Eight & Heel Free
5. Retrieve on Flat
6. Broad Jump
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

PREFERRED OPEN VI

1. Command Discrimination (Down, Stand, Sit)
2. Broad Jump
3. Figure Eight & Heel Free
4. Drop on Recall
5. Retrieve over High Jump
6. Retrieve on Flat
7. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash

Section 3. Preferred Companion Dog Excellent Title. The letters PCDX may be added after the name of each dog that has earned qualifying scores in the Preferred Open class at three licensed or member obedience trials. That dog will receive a Preferred Open certificate from the AKC.

Section 4. Heel Free and Figure Eight Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Open Heel Free and Figure Eight.

Section 5. Command Discrimination Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Open Command Discrimination.

Section 6. Drop on Recall Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Open Drop on Recall.

Section 7. Retrieve on Flat Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Open Retrieve on Flat.

Section 8. Retrieve over High Jump Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Open Retrieve over High Jump, except that the jump height is to be set at ½ the height of the dog at the withers, rounded to the nearest multiple of 2 inches. The actual height of the dog shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of 2 inches to determine the minimum jump height, with the exception of dogs eligible for the 4- and 18- inch jump heights. Dogs eligible for the 4-inch jump height must be 12 inches or less at the withers and all dogs over 34 inches are eligible for the 18-inch jump height. Handlers who choose to have their dogs jump more than the minimum required height will neither be penalized nor receive extra consideration.

Section 9. Broad Jump Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Open Broad Jump. The hurdles will be arranged in order of size, evenly spaced, covering a distance equal to twice the height of the Preferred Open High Jump setting for each dog in this class.

Section 10. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Open Stand Stay – Get Your Leash.

CHAPTER 13
PREFERRED UTILITY
ALTERNATIVE TITLING CLASS

(Replaced the Pre-Utility class established July 1, 2013)

Section 1. Preferred Utility Class. The Preferred Utility class is an alternative titling class for dogs that have won the CDX or PCDX or higher Regular or Preferred titles. This is an additional class that may be offered by clubs at obedience events. The owner or any other person may handle dogs in this class. Owners may enter more than one dog in this class. Dogs entered in Preferred Utility may also be entered in other obedience classes.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post which glove will be retrieved and the order of the exercises, which will be the same as the Utility B class. This information will not be disclosed to exhibitors until it is posted at the ring. In future assignments, judges are required to alternate the six orders of exercises so that each will be used approximately the same number of times.

This class may be judged by anyone approved to judge Utility obedience classes.

Section 2. Preferred Utility Exercises and Scores. The various orders of exercises and maximum scores in the Preferred Utility class (points and maximum score are the same for all orders):

PREFERRED UTILITY I

1. Signal Exercise	40 points
2. Scent Discrimination Article #1	30 points
3. Scent Discrimination Article #2	30 points
4. Directed Retrieve	30 points
5. Moving Stand and Examination	30 points
6. Directed Jumping	40 points
Maximum Total Score	200 points

The maximum judging rate is seven (7) dogs per hour.

PREFERRED UTILITY II

1. Directed Jumping
2. Moving Stand & Examination
3. Directed Retrieve
4. Scent Discrimination # 1
5. Scent Discrimination # 2
6. Signal Exercise

PREFERRED UTILITY III
1. Scent Discrimination # 1
2. Scent Discrimination # 2
3. Directed Retrieve
4. Signal Exercise
5. Moving Stand & Examination
6. Directed Jumping

PREFERRED UTILITY IV
1. Moving Stand & Examination
2. Directed Jumping
3. Signal Exercise
4. Directed Retrieve
5. Scent Discrimination # 1
6. Scent Discrimination # 2

PREFERRED UTILITY V
1. Directed Retrieve
2. Scent Discrimination # 1
3. Scent Discrimination # 2
4. Directed Jumping
5. Signal Exercise
6. Moving Stand & Examination

PREFERRED UTILITY VI
1. Directed Retrieve
2. Signal Exercise
3. Directed Jumping
4. Moving Stand & Examination
5. Scent Discrimination # 1
6. Scent Discrimination # 2

Section 3. Preferred Utility Dog Title. The letters PUTD may be added after the name of each dog that has earned qualifying scores in the Preferred Utility class at three licensed or member obedience trials. That dog will receive a Preferred Utility certificate from the AKC.

Section 4. Signal Exercise Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Utility Signal Exercise.

Section 5. Scent Discrimination Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Utility Scent Discrimination exercise.

Section 6. Directed Retrieve Exercise Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Utility Directed Retrieve exercise.

Section 7. Moving Stand and Examination Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Utility Moving Stand and Examination exercise.

Section 8. Directed Jumping Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Utility Directed Jumping exercise except that the jump height is to be set at ½ the height of the dog at the withers, rounded to the nearest multiple of 2 inches. The actual height of the dog shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of 2 inches to determine the minimum jump height, with the exception of dogs eligible for the 4- and 18-inch jump heights. Dogs eligible for the 4-inch jump height must be 12 inches or less at the withers and all dogs over 34 inches are eligible for the 18-inch jump height. Handlers who choose to have their dogs jump more than the minimum required height will neither be penalized nor receive extra consideration.

CHAPTER 14
PREFERRED UTILITY DOG EXCELLENT ALTERNATIVE TITLING CLASS

Section 1. Dogs That May Compete. PUDX scores will be recorded only for dogs that have earned the Preferred Utility Dog title. Dogs who already have the PUDX title may continue to compete in Preferred Open and Preferred Utility.

To earn a Preferred Utility Dog Excellent title the dog must have received qualifying scores in both Preferred Open and Preferred Utility at 10 separate licensed or member obedience trials.

Section 2. Preferred Utility Dog Excellent Title. The AKC will issue a Preferred Utility Dog Excellent certificate and will permit the use of the letters PUDX following the name of each dog that meets these requirements.

The letters PUDX will be followed by a numeric designation indicating the number of times a dog has met the requirements of the PUDX title as defined in the regulations. (PUDX2 for 20 qualifying scores, PUDX3 for 30 qualifying scores, PUDX4 for 40 qualifying scores, etc.)

CHAPTER 15
PREFERRED OBEDIENCE CHAMPION ALTERNATIVE TITLING CLASS

Section 1. Dogs that May Compete. Preferred Obedience Champion points will be recorded for dogs that have won the Preferred Companion Dog Excellent (PCDX) and Preferred Utility Dog (PUTD) title. Dogs that have won the Preferred Obedience Champion (POC) title may continue to compete and earn points.

Section 2. Preferred Obedience Champion (POC) Points. Preferred Obedience Champion points will be recorded for those dogs earning a score of 190 or better in Preferred Open or Preferred Utility classes according to the schedule of points established by the AKC Board of Directors.

Requirements for the Preferred Obedience Champion title are as follows:

In order to acquire the Preferred Obedience Champion (POC) title, a dog must achieve a minimum of 750 points and qualifying scores obtained in both the Preferred Open class and the Preferred Utility class at 20 separate licensed or member obedience trials.

Section 3. Preferred Obedience Champion (POC) Title. The AKC will issue a Preferred Obedience Champion certificate and will permit the use of the letters POC preceding the name of each dog that meets the requirements.

The letters POC will be followed by a numeric designation indicating the number of times a dog has met the requirements of the POC title as defined in these regulations. (POC2 for 40 qualifying scores and 1500 points, POC3 for 60 qualifying scores and 2250 points, etc.)

Section 4. Point Schedule.

Dog's Score	Points Awarded	Dog's Score	Points Awarded
190	6	195.5	12
190.5	6	196	12
191	6	196.5	12
191.5	6	197	15
192	9	197.5	15
192.5	9	198	15
193	9	198.5	15
193.5	9	199	15
194	9	199.5	15
194.5	9	200	15
195	12		

CHAPTER 16
BEGINNER NOVICE
OPTIONAL TITLING CLASS

(Established July 1, 2010)

Section 1. Beginner Novice Class. The Beginner Novice classes are optional titling classes that may be offered by clubs at obedience events. If eligible as defined in these regulations, dogs entered in Beginner Novice A or Beginner Novice B may also be entered in any other obedience classes.

At the listed start time for the class, a walkthrough of up to 10 minutes will be allowed for handlers without their dogs. The judge must be available in the ring during this period to brief the handlers and answer any questions they may have.

This class may be judged by anyone approved to judge Novice obedience classes.

Section 2. Beginner Novice A Class. The Beginner Novice A class shall be for dogs that have not won the BN title or any other AKC obedience title. A handler must own the dog entered or be a member of the owner's household or immediate family and may not have previously handled any dog that has earned any AKC Obedience title. Owners may enter more than one dog in this class. No dog may be entered in both Beginner Novice A and Beginner Novice B at any trial.

Section 3. Beginner Novice B Class. This class is for dogs that have not earned any AKC obedience title, or who have earned a BN, CD, and/or PCD title; but no other additional AKC obedience titles. The owner or any other person may handle dogs in this class to earn a BN title. Owners may enter more than one dog in this class. No dog may be entered in both Beginner Novice A and Beginner Novice B at any trial.

Section 4. Beginner Novice Exercises and Scores. The exercises and maximum scores in the Beginner Novice classes:

1. Heel on Leash	40 points
2. Figure Eight	40 points
3. Sit for Exam	40 points
4. Sit Stay	40 points
5. Recall	40 points
Maximum Total Score	200 points

The maximum judging rate is ten (10) dogs per hour.

Section 5. Beginner Novice Title. The letters BN may be added after the name of each dog that has earned qualifying scores in Beginner Novice classes at three licensed or member obedience trials. That dog will receive a Beginner Novice certificate from the AKC.

Section 6. Heel on Leash. The principal feature of this exercise is the ability of the dog and handler to work as a team.

The orders are: "Forward" and "Exercise Finished."

Rally signs will be used for this exercise and will be placed to the right of the handler's path except for those indicating a change in direction, in which case the sign will be directly in front of the team to aid in that change. The "Start" sign, while not required, may be used to signify the starting point for the heel on leash exercise.

Signs to be used are "Right turn," "Left turn," "About turn," "Slow," "Normal," "Fast" and "Halt/Sit." "Fast" means that the handler and dog must move forward at a noticeably accelerated speed. Turns will be used only when the handler is moving at a normal speed. Turn signs may be placed in any sequence and may be repeated. Two of each turn sign must be available for the judge's use. Both the fast and slow signs must be followed by a normal sign. The "Halt/Sit" sign will be used once at the end of the exercise. The judge will standardize the heeling pattern for all dogs in the class.

The leash may be held in either hand or in both hands, but the hands must be held in a natural position.

The handler will enter the ring with the dog on a loose leash and stand with the dog sitting in the heel position. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order the handler may give a command or signal to heel and will walk briskly and naturally with the dog on a loose leash. The dog should walk close to the handler's left side without swinging wide, lagging, forging, or crowding. The dog must not interfere with the handler's freedom of motion at any time. At the "Halt/Sit" sign, the handler will stop. The dog shall sit straight and promptly in the heel position without command or signal. The judge will order "Exercise finished" at the completion of this exercise.

Section 7. Heel on Leash, Scoring. If a handler is constantly controlling the dog by tugging on the leash, constantly talking to the dog or is adapting to the dog's pace, that dog must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score for this exercise.

Minor deductions will be made for lagging, heeling wide, forging, crowding, poor sits, failure to sit at a halt, and other heeling imperfections. Similar deductions will be made for any tightening or jerking of the leash, for a handler who guides the dog with the leash, or does not walk at a brisk pace. Minor deductions will be made for additional commands or signals to heel, or for failure of dog or handler to speed up noticeably for the fast, or slow down noticeably for the slow.

A one-time single phrase of praise or encouragement by the handler to the dog will be allowed without penalty. (Good, yes, nice, super, great, and atta boy/girl, are some examples of praise that would be allowed.)

While scoring this exercise, the judge should be near enough to observe any signals or commands given by the handler to the dog without interfering with either.

Section 8. Figure Eight. The principal feature of this exercise is the ability of the dog and handler to work as a team.

The orders are: "Forward," "Halt," and "Exercise Finished."

For the Figure Eight, the handler will stand with the dog sitting in heel position facing the judge, midway between the two cones that are 17 to 37 inches high and no more than 15 inches wide at the base, that will be placed 8 feet apart. The Figure Eight will be performed on leash; the handler may go around either cone first. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handler and dog will walk briskly around and between the two cones twice. There will be no about turn, fast or slow, but the judge must order at least one halt during this exercise and another halt at the end. After each halt, it is permissible for the handler to give a command or signal to heel before moving forward again.

A onetime single phrase of praise or encouragement by the handler to the dog will be allowed without penalty.

Section 9. Figure Eight, Scoring. Scoring is the same as the Heel on Leash exercise.

Section 10. Sit For Exam. The principal feature of this exercise is that the dog sits in position before and during the examination without displaying resentment.

The orders are: "Sit your dog and leave when you are ready," "Back to your dog" and "Exercise finished."

This exercise is to be performed with the dog on a 6 foot leash.

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position in a place designated by the judge. The judge will ask "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handler will command the dog to sit if they are not already sitting. The handler will then stand with the dog sitting in the heel position and may give the command and/or signal to stay, walk straight forward about 6 feet to the end of the leash, turn and face the dog.

The judge will approach the dog from the front. Using the fingers and palm of one hand, the judge will touch only the dog's head. On the order "Back to your dog," the handler will walk around behind the dog and return to the heel position. The handler may gather the leash at any time while returning to the dog. The dog must remain sitting until the judge has said, "Exercise finished."

Section 11. Sit For Exam, Scoring. The scoring of this exercise will not start until the handler has given the command and/or signal to stay, except for such things as rough treatment by the handler or active resistance by the dog to sit. Either of these will be penalized substantially.

A dog must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score if it stands, lies down, or moves away from the place where it was left either before or during the examination, or growls, snaps, or displays resentment.

Substantial deductions will be made for an extra command to the dog after the handler has given the command and/or signal to stay and left the heel position.

Minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that moves its feet at any time or stands or moves away after the examination has been completed. Minor or substantial deductions, even to the point of a non-qualifying (NQ) score, will be made for shyness.

Minor deductions will be made for any tightening of the leash during the exercise.

Section 12. Sit Stay – Handler Walk Around the Ring. The principal feature of this exercise is that the dog remains in the sit position until the handler has returned to heel position.

All dogs entered in the class will perform the same stay exercise. The team should be positioned approximately in the center of the ring facing one of the sides. The handler will stand with the dog sitting in heel position in a place designated by the judge.

The orders are: "Sit your dog," "Leave your dog," and "Exercise finished."

The leash remains attached to the dog's collar and will be dropped/placed on the ground between the dog and the handler before the exercise begins. The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order "Sit your dog," the handler will command and/or signal the dog to sit, if they are not already sitting. On the judge's order the handler may give a command and/or signal to stay and immediately proceed to walk around the inside perimeter of the ring in a direction as indicated by the judge. Upon completing a full perimeter walk around the ring, the handler will approach the dog from the front, and proceed to walk around and in back of the dog to the heel position. Once the handler has returned to heel position, the judge will give the order "Exercise finished."

During this exercise the judge will stand so that the dog and handler are clearly visible throughout the entire exercise.

Section 13. Sit Stay – Handler Walk Around the Ring, Scoring. A non-qualifying (NQ) score is required for the dog moving a substantial distance away from the place where it was left any time during the exercise, not remaining in the sit position until the handler has returned to heel position, and repeatedly barking or whining, or any additional command or signal as the handler is walking around the ring.

A substantial deduction will be made for a dog that moves even a short distance from where it was left, that barks or whines only once or twice, or that changes position after the handler has returned to the heel position and before the judge has given the order "Exercise finished."

Scoring of the exercises will not start until after the judge has ordered the handler to leave their dog, except for such things as rough treatment

of a dog by its handler or resistance by a dog to its handler's attempts to make it sit. These will be penalized substantially and in extreme cases, the dog may be released.

Section 14. Recall. The principal features of this exercise are that the dog stay where left until called by the handler, and that the dog responds promptly to the handler's command or signal to come.

The orders are: "Leave your dog," "Call your dog," and "Exercise finished."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in heel position in a place designated by the judge. The leash is removed for this exercise and kept by the handler. The handler may hold the leash in either hand, put the leash in a pocket or drape it around their neck.

The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handler may give a command and/or signal to the dog to stay in the sit position. The handler will then walk forward, approximately 25 feet, to a location as directed by the judge, turn to face the dog. On the judge's order or signal, the handler will command or signal the dog to come. Thereafter, the handler's arms and hands should hang naturally at the sides until the dog has sat in front.

The dog must come directly, at a brisk trot or gallop, and sit in front near the handler. While the dog is coming directly to the handler, a one-time single phrase of praise or encouragement will be allowed without penalty. (Good, yes, nice, super, great, atta boy/girl, are some examples of praise that would be allowed.)

The dog must come close enough to its handler so that the handler could touch its head without excessive bending, stretching, or moving either foot. (No finish will be required of the dog by the handler.)

After the judge orders "Exercised finished," the handler will reattach the leash to the dog's collar.

Section 15. Recall, Scoring. A dog must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score if it is given an additional command and/or signal to stay, if more than two commands or signals are required for the dog to come, if it fails to come, if it moves from the place it was left before being called or signaled to come, or if it does not come close enough to its handler so that the handler could touch its head without excessive bending, stretching, or moving either foot.

Substantial deductions will be made for a handler's extra command or signal to come or to sit.

Minor or substantial deductions will be made if the dog fails to come at a brisk trot or gallop, or fails to sit.

Minor deductions will be made for slow or poor sits.

CHAPTER 17
GRADUATE NOVICE
OPTIONAL TITLING CLASS

Section 1. Graduate Novice Class. The Graduate Novice class is an optional titling class for all dogs. The minimum required jump height for dogs in this class is half the height of the dog at the withers, as stated in Appendix B, Preferred & Optional Titling Classes Jump Height Table. This class may be offered by clubs at obedience events. The owner or any other person may handle dogs in this class. A person may enter more than one dog in this class.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post where the leash will be placed.

This class may be judged by anyone approved to judge Novice or higher classes.

Section 2. Graduate Novice Exercises and Scoring. The exercises and maximum scores in the Graduate Novice class:

1. Heel Free and Figure Eight	40 points
2. Drop on Recall	40 points
3. Dumbbell Recall	30 points
4. Dumbbell Recall over High Jump	30 points
5. Recall over Broad Jump	30 points
6. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash	30 points
Maximum Total Score	200 points

The maximum judging rate is eight (8) dogs per hour.

Section 3. Graduate Novice Title. The letters GN may be added after the name of each dog that has earned qualifying scores in the Graduate Novice classes at three licensed or member obedience trials. That dog will receive a Graduate Novice certificate from the AKC.

Section 4. Heel Free and Figure Eight Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Novice Heel on Leash and Figure Eight exercise, except that the dog will be off leash.

The orders and scoring are the same as in Heel on Leash and Figure Eight.

Section 5. Drop on Recall. The principal features of this exercise, in addition to those listed under the Novice Recall, are the dog's prompt response to the handler's command and/or signal to drop and the dog's remaining in the down position until again called or signaled to come. The dog will be judged on the promptness of its response to the command and/or signal to drop.

The orders are: "Leave your dog," "Call your dog," then give a clear signal to drop the dog, followed by "Call your dog" and "Finish."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position in a place designated by the judge. The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handler may give a command and/or signal for the dog to stay in the sit position. The handler will walk forward to the other end of the ring, then turn, face the dog, and stand naturally. On the judge's order or signal, the handler will either command or signal the dog to come. The dog must come directly at a brisk trot or gallop. On the judge's arm or hand signal, the handler will give the command and/or signal to drop, and the dog must drop immediately to a complete down position. If the handler choses to give both, a command and signal to drop, they must be given simultaneously. The dog must remain down until the handler gives the command or signal to come when ordered by the judge. The dog completes the exercise as in the Novice Recall.

Section 6. Drop on Recall, Scoring. A non-qualifying (NQ) score must be given to any dog that does not drop completely to the down position on a single command and/or signal or to a dog that does not remain down until called or signaled.

Minor or substantial deductions, up to a non-qualifying (NQ) score, shall be made for delayed or slow response to the handler's command and/or signal to drop and for slow response to either of the recalls. All applicable penalties listed under the Novice Recall shall apply.

Section 7. Dumbbell Recall. The principal feature of this exercise is that the dog promptly takes the dumbbell from the handler, on the handler's first command or signal, and delivers it as in the Open Retrieve on Flat.

The orders are: "Give your dog the dumbbell," "Leave your dog," "Call your dog," "Take it" and "Finish."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position in a place designated by the judge. The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handler will present the dumbbell and command or signal the dog to take it. The dog must promptly accept, take and hold the dumbbell. On the judge's order, the handler may give the command and/or signal to stay, walk forward to the other end of the ring, then turn, to face the dog and stand naturally. On the judge's order or signal, the handler will command or signal the dog to come. The dog must come directly at a brisk trot or gallop without unnecessary mouthing or playing with the dumbbell. On order from the judge to "Take it," the handler will give a command or signal and take the dumbbell. The finish will be performed as in the Novice Recall. All other applicable penalties listed under the Novice Recall and Open Retrieve on Flat will apply.

The judge must approve the dumbbell to ensure it meets the requirements stated in the Open Retrieve on Flat exercise.

Section 8. Dumbbell Recall, Scoring. A dog must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score if it fails to take the dumbbell on the first command or signal or does not return with the dumbbell sufficiently close that the handler can easily take the dumbbell as described above.

Depending on the extent, minor or substantial deductions will be made for unnecessary mouthing or playing with the dumbbell, dropping it, and reluctance or refusal to release the dumbbell to the handler. All other applicable penalties listed under the Novice Recall and Open Retrieve on Flat will apply.

Section 9. Dumbbell Recall over High Jump. The principle feature of this exercise, in addition to those listed under the Dumbbell Recall, is that the dog return with the dumbbell over the jump.

The orders are: "Give your dog the dumbbell," "Leave your dog," "Call your dog," "Take it" and "Finish."

This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Dumbbell Recall except that the dog must clear the high jump. The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position at least eight (8) feet (or any reasonable distance beyond 8 feet) from the jump. The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handler may give a command and/or signal to stay, go around the jump to at least eight (8) feet beyond the other side of the jump, then turn, face the dog and stand naturally. (These 8-foot distances will be clearly marked.)

Section 10. Dumbbell Recall over High Jump, Scoring. A dog that fails to jump the full height of the jump, that uses the jump for an aid in going over, or that returns over the jump without the dumbbell must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score.

Depending on the circumstances, minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that touches the jump when going over it or for a dog that displays any hesitation in jumping. All applicable penalties listed under the Novice Recall, Dumbbell Recall and Retrieve on Flat will apply.

Section 11. Recall over Broad Jump. The principal features of this exercise, in addition to those listed under the Novice Recall, is that the dog clear the jump.

The orders are: "Leave your dog," "Call your dog," and "Finish."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position at least eight (8) feet from the jump, (or any reasonable distance beyond 8 feet) facing the lowest hurdle. The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order the handler may give the command and/or signal to stay, go around the hurdle(s) to at least eight (8) feet beyond the last hurdle, then turn and face the dog. On the judge's order, the handler will give the command or signal to jump. The dog must clear the entire distance of the broad jump and return to the

handler as in the Novice Recall.

The jump will be set to cover a distance equal to twice the height of the high jump setting for each dog.

Section 12. Recall over Broad Jump, Scoring. A dog that fails to clear the jump, or steps on or between the hurdles must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score.

Depending on the circumstances, minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that touches the jump when going over it, or for a dog that displays any hesitation in jumping. All applicable penalties listed under the Novice Recall will apply.

Section 13. Stand Stay – Get Your Leash Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored in the same manner as the Open A class Stand Stay – Get Your Leash.

CHAPTER 18
GRADUATE OPEN
OPTIONAL TITLING CLASS

Section 1. Graduate Open Class. The Graduate Open class is an optional titling class for all dogs. The minimum required jump height for dogs in this class is half the height of the dog at the withers, as stated in Appendix B, Preferred & Optional Titling Classes Jump Height Table. This class may be offered by clubs at obedience events. The owner or any other person may handle dogs in this class.

Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post which jump will be performed and which glove will be retrieved. This information will not be disclosed to exhibitors until it is posted at the ring.

This class may be judged by anyone approved to judge Open or higher classes.

Section 2. Graduate Open Exercises and Scoring. The exercises and maximum score in the Graduate Open class:

1. Signal Exercise	40 points
2. Scent Discrimination	30 points
3. Go Out	30 points
4. Directed Jumping	40 points
5. Moving Stand & Examination	30 points
6. Directed Retrieve	30 points
Maximum Total Score	200 points

The maximum judging rate is seven (7) dogs per hour.

Section 3. Graduate Open Title. The letters GO may be added after the name of each dog that has earned qualifying scores in Graduate Open classes at three licensed or member obedience trials. That dog will receive a Graduate Open certificate from the AKC.

Section 4. Signal Exercise. The principal features of this exercise are the ability of dog and handler to work as a team while heeling and the dog's correct response to the commands and/or signals to stand, stay, down, sit and come.

The orders are the same as in the Novice Heel on Leash, except for the judge's order to "Stand your dog." This order will only be given when the dog and handler are walking at a normal pace and will be followed by the order to "Leave your dog." The judge must use signals for directing the handler to command and/or signal the dog to down, sit, come (in that sequence) and to finish.

Heeling will be done as in the Heel Free, except that handlers may use signals only and must not speak to their dogs at any time during this

portion of the exercise. While the dog is heeling at one end of the ring, the judge will order the handler to "Stand your dog." On further order to "Leave your dog," the handler will command and/or signal the dog to stay, go at least ten (10) feet from the dog, then turn and face the dog. On the judge's signal, the handler will give a command and/or signal to down, sit, and come as in the Novice Recall. On the judge's signal the handler will give a command or signal to finish as in the Novice Recall.

Section 5. Signal Exercise, Scoring. A dog that fails to obey the handler's first command and/or signal to stand, stay, down, sit or come must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score.

Depending on the circumstances, minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that walks forward on the stand, down or sit portions of the exercise. The deduction could be up to an NQ. All applicable penalties listed under the Heel on Leash and the Novice Recall (after the dog has been given the command and/or signal to come) exercises will apply.

Section 6. Scent Discrimination Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored the same as in the Utility Scent Discrimination except as stated in this section. The handler will present four articles, consisting of two (2) sets only. It is the handler's discretion as to which type of article is retrieved. The dog and handler will remain facing the articles and only one article will be retrieved. On the judge's first order, "Take an article," the dog is not required to stay in a sit position.

Section 7. Go Out. The principal features of this exercise are that the dog go away from the handler to the opposite end of the ring and stop as directed.

The orders are: "Send your dog" and "Back to your dog."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position facing the unobstructed end of the ring in the approximate center at any distance from about 20 feet beyond the jumps up to midway between the jumps. The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order the handler will command and/or signal the dog to go forward at a brisk trot or gallop to a point about 20 feet past the jumps in the approximate center of the ring. When the dog reaches this point, the handler will give a command to sit. The dog must stop and sit with its attention on the handler, but it need not sit squarely. On the judge's order the handler will return to the heel position by walking around and in back of their dog.

Section 8. Go Out, Scoring. A dog will receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score if it: anticipates the handler's command and/or signal to go out; fails to leave the handler; does not go out between the jumps; does not stop and remain at least 10 feet past the jumps without an additional command.

Substantial deductions will be made for a dog that changes position after sitting or moves even a short distance after stopping.

Minor or substantial deductions will be made for a dog that does not stop on command, that does not stop in the approximate center of the ring about 20 feet past the jumps, that does not sit, that receives an additional command to sit after the dog has stopped, or that anticipates the handler's command to sit.

Depending on the extent, minor or substantial deductions will be made for slowness in going out.

Section 9. Directed Jumping. The principal features of this exercise are that the dog stay where left, jump as directed, and return to the handler as in the Novice Recall.

The orders are: "Leave your dog," "Bar" or "High," and "Finish."

The handler will stand with the dog sitting in the heel position at the unobstructed end and in the center of the ring. The judge will ask, "Are you ready?" before giving the first order. On the judge's order, the handler may give a command and/or signal to the dog to stay then walk forward to the other end of the ring, turn to face the dog and stand with the arms and hands hanging naturally. The judge will order either "Bar" or "High" for the jump, and the handler will command and/or signal the dog to return to the handler over that designated jump. While the dog is in midair, the handler may turn to face the dog as it returns. The dog will sit in front of the handler, and, on order from the judge, finish as in the Novice Recall. The dog will be sent over only one jump.

Section 10. Directed Jumping, Scoring. A dog will receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score if it is given an additional command and/or signal to stay, if it moves from the place it was left or anticipates the handler's command and/or signal to jump; fails to jump; returns over the wrong jump; knocks the bar off the uprights; or uses the top of any jump for aid in going over.

Depending on the extent, minor or substantial deductions will be made for touching the jump, or for any hesitation in jumping.

All applicable penalties of the Novice Recall exercise will apply.

Section 11. Moving Stand and Examination Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored the same as in the Utility Moving Stand and Examination except that the handler may pause/hesitate when giving the command and/or signal to stand.

Section 12. Directed Retrieve Performance and Scoring. This exercise will be performed and scored the same as in the Utility Directed Retrieve except that a center glove is not used.

CHAPTER 19
VERSATILITY
OPTIONAL TITLING CLASS

Section 1. Versatility Class. The Versatility class is an optional titling class for all dogs. The minimum required jump height for dogs in this class is half the height of the dog at the withers, as stated in Appendix B, Preferred & Optional Titling Classes Jump Height Table. This class may be offered by clubs at obedience events. The owner or any other person may handle dogs in this class. A person may enter more than one dog in this class.

Six exercises will be performed: two each from the Novice, Open and Utility classes. There will be no group exercise. The exercises will be performed and judged as in the regular classes. For the purpose of this class, scent discrimination articles 1 and 2 will be considered as a single Utility exercise.

Each handler will provide a dumbbell, scent discrimination articles and directed retrieve gloves. Approximately 45 minutes before the start of the class (or earlier), the judge is required to post the combination of exercise and glove number if the combination includes the Directed Retrieve exercise. This information will not be disclosed to exhibitors until it is posted at the ring.

This class may be judged by anyone approved to judge the Utility class.

Section 2. Versatility Exercises and Scoring. The exercises and maximum scores in the Versatility class:

Novice exercise No. 1	25 points
Novice exercise No. 2	25 points
Open exercise No. 1	35 points
Open exercise No. 2	35 points
Utility exercise No. 1	40 points
Utility exercise No. 2	40 points
Maximum Total Score	200 points

The maximum judging rate is six (6) dogs per hour.

Section 3. Versatility Combinations.

V1- Stand for Exam, Recall, Drop on Recall, Broad Jump, Signal Exercise, Directed Retrieve

V2- Heel on Leash and Figure Eight, Recall, Retrieve on Flat, Broad Jump, Moving Stand and Exam, Directed Retrieve

V3- Stand for Exam, Recall, Drop on Recall, Retrieve Over High Jump, Signal Exercise, Directed Jumping

V4- Novice Heel Free, Recall, Retrieve on Flat, Retrieve Over High Jump, Moving Stand and Exam, Directed Jumping

V5- Stand for Exam, Recall, Heel Free and Figure Eight, Retrieve on Flat, Scent Discrimination, Directed Jumping

V6- Stand for Exam, Recall, Figure Eight and Heel Free, Retrieve Over High Jump, Directed Retrieve, Directed Jumping

V7- Heel on Leash and Figure Eight, Stand for Exam, Drop on Recall, Retrieve Over High Jump, Scent Discrimination, Directed Retrieve

V8- Stand for Exam, Recall, Retrieve on Flat, Broad Jump, Signal Exercise, Moving Stand and Exam

V9- Novice Heel Free, Stand for Exam, Drop on Recall, Broad Jump, Scent Discrimination, Moving Stand and Exam

V10- Stand for Exam, Recall, Figure Eight and Heel Free, Retrieve on Flat, Scent Discrimination, Directed Jumping

V11- Heel on Leash and Figure Eight, Recall, Retrieve Over High Jump, Broad Jump, Scent Discrimination, Directed Retrieve

V12- Novice Heel Free, Stand for Exam, Drop on Recall, Broad Jump, Moving Stand and Exam, Directed Retrieve

Section 4. Versatility Title. The letters VER may be added after the name of each dog that has earned qualifying scores in Versatility classes at three licensed or member obedience trials. That dog will receive a Versatility certificate from the AKC. Dogs that have obtained the Versatility title (VER) may continue to compete in the Versatility class.

CHAPTER 20
NON-REGULAR CLASSES

An approved regular status rally judge who is in good standing with the AKC, may accept assignments to judge non-regular obedience classes.

Any dog that is eligible under the *Obedience Regulations* to compete in AKC events may enter the non-regular obedience classes. The teams in these classes, may return for the group exercise in the relevant Novice associated classes, provided the judge has not otherwise excused or released the dog.

Section 1. Ribbons and Prizes. These classes are not based on qualifying scores.

A qualifying score is not required to earn ribbons or prizes in any non-regular class.

Section 2. Wild Card Novice. The Wild Card Novice class is for any dog that is capable of performing the Novice exercises and that is eligible under the *Obedience Regulations* to compete in AKC events. No title is required to enter and handlers may enter more than one dog. Dogs in this class may be handled by the owner or any other person, and may be entered in another class or classes. The Novice exercises will be performed and judged as in the regular Novice class except that verbal praise during the exercises is to be encouraged and not penalized. (Good, yes, nice, super, great and atta boy/girl are some examples of praise that would be allowed.) Handlers may give additional commands but they will be penalized accordingly. Each handler may choose to select one exercise as a wild card. The exhibitor will have the option of performing the selected wild card exercise, but will receive the full point value regardless of how the dog performs. When checking in, the handler must inform the steward or judge which exercise will be used as the wild card. The exercises will be performed in the same order as the regular Novice class. The point values for the exercises, scoring and maximum total points are the same as the regular Novice class.

Section 3. Wild Card Open. The Wild Card Open class is for any dog capable of performing the Open exercises and that is eligible under the *Obedience Regulations* to compete in AKC events. No title is required to enter and handlers may enter more than one dog. Dogs in this class may be handled by the owner or any other person and may be entered in another class or classes. The Open exercises will be performed and judged as in the regular Open A class except that the minimum jump height a dog must jump is to be set at ½ the height of the dog at the withers, rounded to the nearest multiple of 2 inches. The actual height of the dog shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of 2 inches to determine the minimum jump height, with the exception of dogs eligible for the 4- and 18- inch jump heights. Dogs eligible for the 4-inch jump height must be 12 inches or less at the withers and all dogs over 34 inches are eligible for the 18-inch jump height. Handlers who choose to have

their dogs jump more than the minimum required height will neither be penalized nor receive extra consideration.

Additionally, verbal praise during the exercises is to be encouraged and not penalized. (Good, yes, nice, super, great and atta boy/girl are some examples of praise that would be allowed.) Handlers may give additional commands but they will be penalized accordingly. Each handler may choose to select one exercise as a wild card. The exhibitor will have the option of performing the selected wild card exercise but will receive the full point value regardless of how the dog performs. When checking in, the handler must inform the steward or judge which exercise will be used as the wild card. The exercises will be performed in the same order as in the regular Open A class. The point values for the exercises, scoring and maximum total points are the same as in the regular Open class.

Section 4. Wild Card Utility. The Wild Card Utility class is for any dog that is capable of performing the Utility exercises and that is eligible under the *Obedience Regulations* to compete in AKC events. No title is required to enter and handlers may enter more than one dog. Dogs in this class may be handled by the owner or any other person and may be entered in another class or classes. The Utility exercises will be performed and judged as in the regular Utility A class except that the minimum jump height a dog must jump is to be set at ½ the height of the dog at the withers, rounded to the nearest multiple of 2 inches. The actual height of the dog shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of 2 inches to determine the minimum jump height, with the exception of dogs eligible for the 4- and 18- inch jump heights. Dogs eligible for the 4-inch jump height must be 12 inches or less at the withers and all dogs over 34 inches are eligible for the 18- inch jump height. Handlers who choose to have their dogs jump more than the minimum required height will neither be penalized nor receive extra consideration.

Additionally, verbal praise during the exercises is to be encouraged and not penalized. (Good, yes, nice, super, great and atta boy/girl are some examples of praise that would be allowed.) Handlers are allowed to praise their dogs during the performance of all Utility exercises except the signal exercise. Handlers may give additional commands but they will be penalized accordingly. Each handler may choose to select one exercise as a wild card. The exhibitor will have the option of performing the selected wild card exercise but will receive the full point value regardless of how the dog performs. When checking in, the handler must inform the steward or judge which exercise will be used as the wild card. The exercises will be performed in the same order as in the regular Utility A class. The point values for the exercises, scoring and maximum total points are the same as in the regular Utility class.

Section 5. Brace Class. The Brace class will be for two dogs (including dogs listed with AKC Canine Partners) of similar height at the withers that are eligible under these regulations and capable of performing the

Novice exercises. The dogs need not be owned by the same person but will be handled by one handler. Dogs may be shown unattached or coupled (the coupling device will not be less than 6 inches in overall length). Whichever method is used will be continued throughout all exercises. A separate official entry form will be completed in full for each dog entered. Exercises, performances and judging will be as in the Novice class. The brace should work in unison at all times. Either or both dogs in a brace may be entered in another class or classes.

Section 6. Veterans Class. The Veterans class will be for dogs that have an obedience title and are at least 7 years old on the date of the trial. The exercises will be performed and judged as in the Novice class. Dogs may be entered in another class or classes. At breed specialty trials, the minimum age requirement for the Veterans class may be set by the breed Parent Club, in which case the age will be stated in the premium list.

Section 7. Team Class. The Team class will be for teams of any four dogs that are eligible under these regulations. Five dogs may be entered, one to be considered an alternate for which no entry fee will be required.

However, the same four dogs will perform all exercises. Dogs may be handled by the owner or any other person, need not be entered in another class at the same trial, and need not have obedience titles. A separate official entry form will be completed in full for each dog entered. No dog may be entered on more than one team. The handlers and dogs may wear costuming that is in good taste and does not contain profanity.

There will be two judges, one of whom will call orders while the other scores the team's performance. The teams will be judged one at a time, except for the group exercises. Dogs must be spaced with a minimum of six (6) feet between each dog and a minimum of four (4) feet from the ring barriers. Judges will position the dogs in the approximate center of the ring in one row or back-to-back in two rows with a minimum of six (6) feet between the rows. If the back-to-back formation is used, it must be used for all groups in the class. On a 50' side of the ring the maximum # of dogs allowed in a single row would be six (6) and in a back-to-back row twelve (12) dogs. (See table in Chapter 3, Section 14.)

The dogs on a team will perform the exercises simultaneously and will be judged as specified for the Novice class, except that a Drop on Recall will be used in place of the Recall exercise. In all exercises except the Drop on Recall, the teams have the option of executing the judge's orders on the team captain's repeat of the command.

In the Figure Eight portion of the Heel on Leash exercise, five cones will be used. The cones will be placed 8 feet apart in a straight line. Each handler, with the dog sitting in heel position, will stand approximately centered from each of two cones with all members of the team facing the same direction. On orders from the judge, the team will perform the Figure Eight, each handler starting around the cone on his/her left and circling only the two cones between whom he/she had been standing.

In the Drop on Recall exercise the handlers will leave their dogs simultaneously on order of the judge. The dogs will be called or signaled in, one at a time, on a separate order from the judge to each handler. Handlers will, without any additional order from the judge, command or signal their dogs to drop at a spot midway between the line of dogs and the handlers.

Each dog will remain in the down position until all four have been called and dropped. The judge will give the order to call the dogs, which will be called or signaled simultaneously. The finish will be done in unison on order from the judge.

Section 8. Team Class, Scoring. Individual dogs' scores will be based on the performance of the dogs and handlers individually plus team precision and coordination. Each dog and handler will be scored against the customary maximum for a team total of 800 available points. Individual dogs' scores need not be recorded.

The exercises and maximum scores in the Team class:

1. Heel on Leash and Figure Eight	160 points
2. Stand for Examination	120 points
3. Heel Free	160 points
4. Drop on Recall	120 points
5. Sit Stay – Get Your Leash	120 points
6. Group Exercise – Sit & Down Stay	120 points
Maximum Total Score	800 points

GLOSSARY OF OBEDIENCE TERMS

AKC Canine Partners — an American Kennel Club program that is available to spayed/neutered dogs that are not currently eligible for AKC registration, AKC Foundation Stock Service (FSS) enrollment, or an AKC Purebred Alternative Listing (PAL) number

Brisk, briskly — keenly alive, alert, energetic

Command — verbal order from handler to dog

Croup – the dogs top rump area

Crowding — a dog so close to the handler as to interfere with the handler's freedom of motion

Directly — immediately, without deviation or hesitation

Down — the dog's body is on the ground; the dog's weight is off the feet & legs

Drop completely — a down position that would be acceptable for a Long Down exercise

Excused – A dog must be excused any time there is aggressive behavior toward another dog, unfit to compete, if there is anything attached to it for medical or corrective purposes, bitch in season, handler who willfully interferes with another competitor/dog, a handler disciplining a dog in the ring, or a dog that is unable to be examined.

Finish — the dog goes from a position in front of the handler to the heel position

Gently — with kindness, without harshness or roughness

Guiding gently by the collar — control of the dog by holding any part of the collar with minimal pressure on the dog's neck

Minor deduction — 1⁄2 point to 21⁄2 points

Mouthing — when a dog chews or rolls the dumbbell in its mouth unnecessarily

Natural — not artificial; free of affectation; what is customarily expected in the home or public places

Order — direction from judge to handler, either verbal or nonverbal

Prompt response — without hesitation, immediate, quick

Regularly trained or instructed — where a dog and/or handler meet on a regular basis for instruction. A regular basis is considered a set pattern of dates, such as monthly or more often.

Released – a dog must be released if it is not under the handler's control. A dog will be released from performing the group exercise if it has non-qualified in the individual exercises. In the group exercise, in extreme cases, a dog that must be repositioned by its handler if it is out of position enough to interfere with an adjacent dog may be released.

A dog must be released from the group exercise if it does not remain sitting during the first part. A dog may be released from competition in the class for misbehavior, or fouling the ring.

Resentment — resistance, unwillingness

Signal — nonverbal direction from the handler to dog, as described in Chapter 2, Section 20

Sit — the dog has its rear and/or hocks on the ground

Smartly — quickly, vigorously

Substantial deduction — 3 points or more

Training — as related to where a student-handler/teacher-judge relationship is established, with or without compensation.

Turn in place — turning in the circle that was occupied by the handler before they started to turn

Walking Forward — all four feet of the dog move forward

Withers — highest point of the dog's shoulder

APPENDIX A
Revised May 12, 2026
List of breeds approved for the three-quarter jump height as shown in the table in Appendix B.

AKITA
ALASKAN MALAMUTE
AUSTRALIAN TERRIER
BASSET HOUND
BERGAMASCO
BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG
BLACK RUSSIAN TERRIER
BLOODHOUND
BOLOGNESE
BORZOI
BOUVIER DES FLANDRES
BULLDOG
BULLMASTIFF
CANE CORSO
CARDIGAN WELSH CORGI
CAUCASIAN SHEPHERD DOG
CHINESE SHAR-PEI
CHOW CHOW
CLUMBER SPANIEL
DACHSHUND
DANDIE DINMONT TERRIER
DOGO ARGENTINO
DOGUE DE BORDEAUX
ESTRELA MOUNTAIN DOG
FIELD SPANIEL
FRENCH BULLDOG
GLEN OF IMAAL TERRIER
GRAND BASSET GRIFFON VENDÉEN
GREAT DANE
GREAT PYRENEES
GREATER SWISS MOUNTAIN DOG
IRISH WOLFHOUND
KISHU KEN
KOOIKERHONDJE
KUVASZ
LAGOTTO ROMAGNOLI
LEONBERGER
MASTIFF
NEAPOLITAN MASTIFF
NEWFOUNDLAND
NORFOLK TERRIER
NORWICH TERRIER
OLD ENGLISH SHEEPDOG
OTTERHOUND
PEKINGESE

APPENDIX A (continued)

PEMBROKE WELSH CORGI
PETIT BASSET GRIFFON VENDÉEN
PORTUGUESE PODENGO
PUG
SAINT BERNARD
SCOTTISH TERRIER
SEALYHAM TERRIER
SHIH TZU
SKYE TERRIER
SUSSEX SPANIEL
SWEDISH VALLHUND
TEDDY ROOSEVELT TERRIER
THAI RIDGEBACK
WEST HIGHLAND WHITE TERRIER

APPENDIX B
Jump Height Tables

Standard Jump Height Table	
Measured height of dog at withers	**Minimum height to be jumped**
Less than 7½"	4"
7½" to 9"	8"
Greater than 9" up to 11"	10"
Greater than 11" up to 13"	12"
Greater than 13" up to 15"	14"
Greater than 15" up to 17"	16"
Greater than 17" up to 19"	18"
Greater than 19" up to 21"	20"
Greater than 21" up to 23"	22"
Greater than 23" up to 25"	24"
Greater than 25" up to 27"	26"
Greater than 27" up to 29"	28"
Greater than 29" up to 31"	30"
Greater than 31" up to 33"	32"
Greater than 33" up to 35"	34"
Greater than 35" up to 37"	36"
Greater than 37"	36"

APPENDIX B (continued)
Jump Height Tables

Three-Quarter Jump Height Table	
Measured height of dog at withers	**Minimum height to be jumped**
Less than 10"	4"
10" to less than 12½"	8"
12½" to less than 15"	10"
15" to less than 17½"	12"
17½" to less than 20"	14"
20" to less than 23"	16"
23" to less than 25½"	18"
25½" to less than 28"	20"
28" to less than 31"	22"
31" to less than 33½"	24"
33½" to less than 36"	26"
36" to less than 39"	28"

Preferred & Optional Titling Class Jump Height Table Preferred Open & Preferred Utility Graduate Novice, Graduate Open, & Versatility	
Measured height of dog at withers	**Minimum height to be jumped**
12" or less	4"
Greater than 12" up to 18"	8"
Greater than 18" up to 22"	10"
Greater than 22" up to 26"	12"
Greater than 26" up to 30"	14"
Greater than 30" up to 34"	16"
Greater than 34"	18"

Obedience Judges' Guidelines

AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB®

OBEDIENCE JUDGES' GUIDELINES
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CHAPTER 1
OBEDIENCE JUDGES' GUIDELINES

These guidelines reflect the policies and practices set forth by the AKC Board of Directors. Judges are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the guidelines in this booklet. Failure to comply with these guidelines subjects a judge to possible disciplinary action.

Remember, You Make it Work! As an obedience judge, you are an essential part of the fancy. The obedience trial system needs your dedication and expertise in order to function properly.

This section of the book is a supplement to the *Obedience Regulations* and is for all AKC and visiting judges. We believe it will make it easier for you to do your job and contribute to the sport of obedience.

You should be thoroughly familiar with these guidelines, as well as all of the AKC rules, regulations and policies if you:

- Are an approved or provisional judge
- Have accepted match or non-regular class judging assignments
- Are a visiting judge accepting assignments at AKC events
- Plan to apply for provisional judging approval

This book cannot cover all situations; nor can it substitute for common sense.

Whenever you have a question about judging procedure or conduct, remember that an AKC Field Representative is present at many all breed shows. When at a trial, the field representative is the first person to whom you should turn to discuss questions having to do with your judging. Also, please do not hesitate to contact the AKC Companion Events Department.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A JUDGE

Judges must understand their responsibilities to the sport.

Responsibility to Exhibitors. Each exhibitor has paid an entry fee for the purpose of competing and having their dog's performance evaluated. Judges are expected to be friendly and courteous to all who enter the ring. Without exhibitors, there would be no trials. For every experienced exhibitor there are many newcomers. The future of this sport is in the hands of the novice.

Responsibility to Spectators. Spectators form their opinion of the sport through seeing the actions of the judge, the handler and the dog. Care must be taken to avoid any action that might reflect poorly on the sport. Judges should work to maintain spectator appeal in the sport while keeping foremost in mind the welfare and convenience of the exhibitor and the dog.

Responsibility to the Sport. Approval to judge carries with it the full endorsement of the AKC. Whether judging at a licensed trial or sanctioned match or engaging in any dog-related activity, judges must be cognizant of their responsibility to the sport.

Judges must never ignore or condone any type of abuse of a dog at any time. All judges are expected to take appropriate action when witnessing such conduct.

As a judge, you are required to meet these key criteria:

- **Knowledge.** Through experience and continuing study, you must demonstrate sound knowledge of the dogs you evaluate and score. Good judges never stop learning about the sport of obedience.
- **Procedure.** You must demonstrate sound judging procedure and ring control, plus a thorough knowledge of the AKC *Obedience Regulations* and the *Obedience Judges' Guidelines*. Good procedure is essential. With it, a judge will inspire the confidence of exhibitors and spectators.
- **Impartiality.** It is essential that exhibitors have full faith in the impartiality and competence of judges. There is no room for even the suggestion that anything other than the work of the dogs in the ring is involved in your decisions.

Judges' Certifications. As an Obedience judge you should adhere to the certifications made when you signed your application to become an AKC judge. These certifications are restated below:

I HEREBY submit my application to the Companion Events Approval Committee of the AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB for its consideration and make the following certifications:

I certify that I am occupationally eligible to judge under AKC *Rules Applying to Dog Shows* and will adhere to the restrictions, if applicable, outlined in the Addendum clarifying Chapter 7, Section 1.

I certify that I am familiar with the American Kennel Club's Rules, Regulations, Policies *Obedience Regulations* and *Obedience Judges' Guidelines*, and agree to abide by them.

I certify that if granted provisional or regular judging status, I fully understand that my judging eligibility is conditional and therefore reviewable by the AKC Board of Directors at any time subsequent to the date the status is initially granted.

I certify that upon review, AKC's Board of Directors may relieve me of continued judging eligibility.

I certify that I fully understand and stipulate that the committee's authorization to judge on a provisional basis does not guarantee or imply eventual approval as a regular judge.

I certify that I am in good standing with the American Kennel Club, 21 years of age or older, and that all information submitted in this application is truthful and accurate.

ETHICS: HONESTY PLUS COMMON SENSE

You must possess and project an unwavering air of integrity and ethical behavior that maintains the reputation of AKC Obedience trials as being fair and properly judged. With common sense, judges can easily avoid situations that might raise ethical questions.

Judges are presumed to be honest, competent and dedicated. Nevertheless, it is all too easy to find yourself in uncomfortable or even inappropriate situations. These guidelines cannot cover every situation. They can, however, help you avoid improprieties or perceived improprieties. Some ethical rules are clear. For example:

- Never accept any payments or presents for past or future placements.
- Advise potential exhibitors not to enter under you when their presence or the presence of their dogs might give the impression of unfair advantage, such as a person with whom you own dogs, wholly or in part, dogs that have been regularly trained or instructed by you, or participated in a training session taught by you within ten (10) days prior to the date of the event, your employer, your employee, or a relative.

These are only examples. The key is to avoid situations that might give the impression of impropriety.

The AKC recognizes you cannot control who enters. This does not diminish the importance of appearances. Everything possible must be done to keep your reputation above reproach.

BEWARE OF THOSE GRAY AREAS

Judges are often singled out for critical observation by exhibitors. Keep in mind that a perfectly innocent action or discussion can be misconstrued.

Attending Shows. If you attend shows immediately before events you are to judge, do not watch the class(es) you are scheduled to judge later.

Training and Exhibiting. All judges start in the sport as exhibitors and trainers. It is natural to want to continue these activities after becoming a judge. The AKC understands this. It is acceptable to exhibit or have your dogs exhibited at shows on the days that you are not officiating.

Many judges combine exhibiting and judging without causing complaints. The reason is simple. They are prudent in how and when they exhibit, and they demonstrate the utmost in decorum and sportsmanship. Judges who exhibit should expect to be subject to special scrutiny. The AKC will evaluate all complaints concerning judges who exhibit on an individual basis. Whatever steps are deemed necessary will be taken in each particular situation.

Exhibiting. Judges (including provisional) may not handle dogs that are not owned or co-owned by themselves or a family member at obedience and/or rally trials. It is not proper for a judge to co-own a dog solely to permit the judge to handle the dog. Tracking, agility, obedience, rally and conformation judges may enter the "A" classes, if otherwise eligible.

Judges assigned to judge non-regular class assignments only may exhibit in classes for which they are not judging on the same day they judge the non-regular classes. Members of the same household as the officiating judge may not compete in the non-regular class in which they are judging.

Social Functions. It is appropriate to attend an affair given by a club holding the show/trial. Judges have the option of attending club dinners and other social functions where exhibitors will be present. In such cases, take extra care in regard to any exhibitor who might appear in your ring.

As an example of those "gray areas," you might find yourself at a social function seated next to someone who mentions exhibiting in the class you will judge. The best ways to handle it include:

- Telling everyone you will be judging that class and feel it would be inappropriate to discuss anything concerning your assignment.
- Tactfully change the subject.

There will be other "gray areas" that could cause problems. Ask yourself if whatever is happening, however innocent, maintains an outward appearance of propriety. The rule of thumb is to ask yourself, "Would I be getting this treatment if I were not a judge?"

ACCEPTING ASSIGNMENTS

Written Invitations Only. Require all clubs to send you written invitations for assignments. Their requests should clearly specify the class(es) you are being asked to judge. Promptly acknowledge all invitations, again in writing, and keep accurate records of assignments you accept.

Avoid Conflicts. It's your responsibility to acknowledge judging invitations promptly. Careful record keeping and prompt acceptance (or refusal) of invitations helps eliminate unnecessary confusion and conflicts for both judges and trial-giving clubs.

Travel Between Assignments. Judges cannot do their best work if they are tired from travel. They should not accept assignments on succeeding days where more than a few hours' travel by ground transportation is involved.

Judges should understand that upon acceptance of an invitation, they are committing themselves to the trial-giving club for the entire

day. Their travel plans should not be predicated on arriving late or on leaving early to get transportation home or to another show. Judges should not ask clubs or superintendents to arrange judging programs to accommodate their travel plans.

Judges should not travel to or from trials or stay with anyone who is likely to be exhibiting or handling under them.

Expenses. When you accept an invitation, clearly inform club officials what your expenses and fee, if any, will be, so they will not be surprised by a larger than anticipated bill on the day of the trial. This is a contract between you and the club. The more specific details you and the club include in the contract, the less the potential for misunderstanding. This is an important consideration and a courtesy to clubs. If you sign a contract provided by the club, you and the club are responsible for abiding by its conditions.

SICKNESS AND FITNESS TO JUDGE

Fitness to Judge. An obedience judge must be capable of performing the functions necessary to properly evaluate the dogs.

This means judges must have:

- The maneuverability to negotiate a ring, indoors and out, with or without mechanical assistance, i.e., a wheelchair, crutches, or a cane.
- The flexibility to examine and measure dogs and the retrieval of articles, where applicable.
- The dexterity to move at a sufficient speed to adhere to the schedule of the trial-giving club and AKC policy.
- Normal vision (correctable by eyeglasses or contact lenses), i.e., be able to judge dogs at a distance.
- The capability to complete all the necessary paperwork.

Sickness. Judges are expected to be physically fit. If you find you cannot fulfill an assignment because of illness or other serious occurrence, immediately notify the trial secretary and/or superintendent and the trial chairperson by telephone, overnight letter, telegram, e-mail or fax. If you become ill while judging and it becomes necessary to find a replacement, you will not be allowed to continue your assignment later in the day. If you are delayed en route to a show, make every effort to contact the trial secretary or superintendent's office immediately.

When judges can no longer properly perform the duties of a judge because of physical difficulties, they do the position and the sport a disservice by continuing to accept assignments. The AKC has a Judge Emeritus Program to honor judges who have served the sport faithfully and wish to retire. Contact the AKC Companion Events Department for additional information.

Change of Address. Judges are responsible for promptly notifying the AKC Companion Events Department of any change in mailing address, e-mail address and phone number(s). The change will be automatically reflected in the AKC Judges Directory.

CHAPTER 2
PREPARATION PRIOR TO JUDGING

Be on Time. Be at your ring at least 30 to 45 minutes before your judging time. Upon arrival, report immediately to the superintendent or trial secretary to obtain a judge's badge if necessary. The judge's book, ribbons and other materials necessary to start judging on schedule will usually be brought to the ring by the trial chairperson.

If you are judging a class on a provisional basis, advise the AKC Field Representative so that you may be observed.

Avoid Contacts. A judge is not permitted to look at a catalog until their judging is completed. Do not carry or examine a catalog, discuss the merits of the dogs to be judged, or talk at length with anyone who may be exhibiting under you. When you have completed all assignments for a trial, then such contact is permissible. But be prudent.

Your friends, if they are considerate, should be discreet in making conversation with you prior to judging. It is your responsibility to remind them to do so.

Proper Dress. All judges shall wear business attire (weather permitting). It is important for a judge to maintain a proper and professional appearance. The judge is in the ring to do a job, not to be the center of attention because of outlandish dress or bizarre behavior.

Smoking. Smoking is permissible only between classes, provided it does not delay judging. Judges must comply with all non-smoking regulations.

CHAPTER 3
PROCEDURES IN THE RING

Judging the Dogs. The judge has absolute control and unquestioned authority over all persons and dogs in the ring. With this authority comes the responsibility to be courteous and considerate. Be as systematic in your ring procedure from dog to dog as conditions permit. Judges are required to make their own decisions and to accept the responsibility this implies.

A judge's comments, other than orders to the handler of a dog, shall be limited to a brief greeting, instructions on positioning the dog, and instructions covering the group exercise. A judge will never ask handlers about club affiliations, their opinions or about their dogs' past performances.

The actual judging procedure may vary from judge to judge, but performance requirements must remain the same.

Excuse – Unable to Examine, Disqualification for Attacking, Excuse – Dog on Dog. Excuse any dog that in your opinion exhibits any sign that it may not be safely approached or examined in the normal manner. Signs may include moving away, growling, showing its teeth, and rolling its eyes. Any dog that displays such demeanor is a threat to you. When you excuse the dog, mark your judge's book "Excused – Unable to Examine."

Disqualify any dog that attacks or attempts to attack any person in the ring. An attack is defined as a bite or an attempt to bite anyone, including its own handler, without valid extenuating circumstances, for example accidentally biting the hand when grabbing a toy offered as an award during awards. Whenever possible, keep the exhibitor and the dog in the ring. Call for the Superintendent, Trial Chairperson or Secretary immediately and fill out the "Disqualification for Attacking" form (AEDSQ1). Be certain to clearly communicate your decision to the exhibitor of the dog using the word "disqualified," and explain that the dog may not be shown again in any AKC event until it is officially reinstated by the American Kennel Club. As the judge you have little latitude regarding your responsibility to disqualify or not. Refer all questions to the Trial Chairperson or the Field Representative if present. Mark your book "Disqualified, attacked," give the exhibitor of the dog a copy of the disqualification form and deliver the original to the superintendent. You may be contacted by the Events Department at a later date for additional information. Disqualifications for attacking are very serious and different from other disqualifications. The failure to appropriately address a potentially dangerous dog compounds the vulnerability of future judges. Therefore it is of the utmost importance to use the word "disqualified" or "excused," as appropriate, when dismissing an exhibitor whose dog is vicious or shy.

Excuse any dog that attacks another dog. Call for the Superintendent, Trial Chairperson or Secretary immediately, and fill out the "Judge's Form Dog on Dog Attack" form (AEDSQ3). Such an incident that results in **contact with injury** to either dog is to be reported to the Trial Chairperson immediately, as it must be addressed by the trial committee.

Judging Position. Positioning is important for two reasons: first, to establish consistency of judging in the minds of exhibitors and spectators and, second, to properly evaluate the dog and handler the entire time they are in the ring. In determining a position for each exercise choose one that allows you to see both dog and handler without having to turn away to see one or the other. Being in the right position to observe a dog's performance is essential. There is no perfect position, but this does not mean that some positions are not better than others. All dogs shall be viewed from the same relative position. When viewing the dog and handler from the side, try to observe from the dog's side without the handler between you and the dog.

Fronts and finishes are to be judged from a position in front of the handler.

The judging of an exercise normally begins when the judge gives the first order, except for the unusual circumstances as stated in the *Obedience Regulations*.

Philosophy of Scoring. It is the judge's responsibility to qualify all the dogs that should qualify and to non-qualify all the dogs whose performances did not meet the standards for a qualifying performance. From the qualifying group of dogs, it is the judge's responsibility to place the top four dogs in order of their performance. The remainder of the qualifying dogs are ranked in order by their scores. Using clickers to score, although permissible, puts judges at a disadvantage when asked to explain decisions.

Recall Exercises. To have both dog and handler under constant observation in these exercises, a judge should take a position in line and slightly to the rear of the dog, facing the handler but at an adequate distance to one side.

This is a foundation exercise and governs the faults and behavior of a dog in all exercises where the dog is moving toward the handler.

Finishes are required to be executed promptly, smartly, and straight. This applies to faults in all exercises where the dog returns to heel position. The finish is not a principal part of any exercise. Therefore, failure to finish or extra commands or signals to finish do not require a non-qualifying (NQ) score for any exercise.

The judge should never ask the handler to touch the dog or otherwise assist the judge in making a decision. If, in the judge's opinion, the dog is not close enough to the handler, it must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score.

Drop on Recall. A perfect drop has three characteristics:

- The dog's prompt response to the handler's command or signal to drop
- No delay or slowness to down
- The dog must drop completely to a down position

Command Discrimination. The first position change is performed with the handler standing with the dog sitting in heel position and requires the dog to stand or down from the sit position. The dog is not required to sit, stand or down in a specific style which may result in the dog ending up somewhat out of the starting heel position, and should not be penalized. When changing from one position to another, a dog may raise or lower its front or rear in an effort to change position, and this should not be penalized, provided the movement is continuous. If a dog clearly adds a position where one is not required, it must receive a non-qualifying (NQ) score.

High Jump. In the Retrieve over High Jump exercise the handler, with the dog sitting in heel position, must be at least 8 feet in front of the jump or any reasonable distance beyond 8 feet. It is the judge's responsibility to see that the handler complies before the exercise begins. During this exercise a judge must stand clear of both the handler and the dog in order to prevent any interference with the dog's performance. The judge should be positioned so that both the dog and handler are under continuous observation during the entire exercise.

Broad Jump. In setting up the broad jump, the judge should make every effort to avoid having the dog jump toward the open gate or close to the table, and ensure that adequate room is allowed from all sides of the jump for the take-off, jumping and on the far side for landing and turning. The hurdles are to be positioned so the dog will be turning away from the ring barrier after landing.

The dog and handler must be at least 8 feet in front of the first edge of the jump. It is the judge's responsibility to see that the handler complies before the exercise begins.

During the exercise, the judge must stand clear of the handler and the dog in order to prevent any interference with the dog's performance. The judge must be positioned so that both the dog and the handler are under continuous observation during the entire exercise.

This exercise is a Novice Recall, except for the jump and the position of the handler.

Placement of Jumps. The judge will place the jumps in the ring giving special attention to lighting and ring enclosures, and make an observation from a dog's line of sight.

Jump Faults. All jumps are to be judged the same way.

There are four faults associated with jumps:

- Failure to clear the jump or the height of the jump; knocking the bar off the uprights

- Using the jump for aid in going over
- Touching the jump
- Hesitation or reluctance to jump

Signal Exercise. Judges should note that heeling is considered a principal part of this exercise; all penalties listed under the heeling exercises apply. A dog may non-qualify in the heeling portion using the same standards as in the Novice Heel on Leash and Figure Eight.

In the Utility classes, a judge should bear in mind that only during the stand, stay, drop, sit, and come parts of this exercise is it required to non-qualify (NQ) a dog for receiving a command or audible signal. Although penalized substantially, it is possible for the dog to receive a passing score if given a command or audible signal during other parts of the exercise.

The *Obedience Regulations* Chapter 5, Section 6, requires the judge to have the handler leave the dog at one end of the ring on the stand and then proceed on the judge's order to the other end of the ring. This should place the handler about 3 to 4 feet from the opposite end of the ring.

An excellent position for judging the stand, drop, sit, and come parts of this exercise is at an adequate distance to the side and slightly to the rear of the dog when the dog is in the stand-stay position.

This exercise is composed of three principal parts: a heeling portion, the signal portion, and a recall portion.

Scent Discrimination. The judge should be certain that the handler and dog are in position to observe the placement of the articles should they choose to do so.

The judge must take the necessary precautions to ensure the articles to be used by the handler are not fouled by the judge or any other scent.

Directed Jumping. In the Directed Jumping exercise, the dog is not required to go to the other end of the ring, only to a point about 20 feet beyond the jumps and in the approximate center. If the dog stops on command and remains at this point, it should not be penalized for not having gone out far enough.

An excellent position for judging this exercise is on the side of the ring of the designated jump, parallel to and slightly to the rear of the handler and dog.

There are several key points that require your attention:

- The dog must move at a brisk trot or gallop until commanded to sit.
- The dog must go out about 20 feet beyond the jumps.
- The handler should give the command to sit when the dog is about 20 feet beyond the jumps.
- The dog must stop and sit promptly on command.

The judge should not place a mark 20 feet beyond the jumps. The reference to 20 feet beyond the jumps is to require the sit command be given prior to the dog reaching the ring barrier so that the dog may be evaluated on its ability to stop and sit on command.

Grid for Scoring Directed Jumping. When scoring the Directed Jumping exercise, large variations in performance may occur and there is not a great deal of time to consider how far from perfect each variation is. As an aid to maintaining some consistency in the manner in which all dogs in the class are scored, there should be no question that some type of system needs to be adopted in advance of the class. Although the following suggestion may not fit your particular method of scoring, it may serve as an aid in developing your own individual style. A grid is based on the premise that the closer to perfection, the smaller the deduction.

Should the dog go out about 20 feet beyond the jumps, stop on command by the handler and sit in the approximate center of the ring, there is no deduction. (This is represented by an imaginary circle of about 3 feet in the center of the ring at about a distance of 20 feet beyond the jumps.) Keep in mind that the handler should stop and sit the dog about 20 feet beyond the jump, not precisely 20 feet beyond the jump. If the dog stops and sits on the handler's command at 21 feet or 19 feet beyond the jumps (this is about 20 feet beyond the jumps), no points should be deducted. The key is that the dog stops and sits on command. The dog should not stop and sit without a command from the handler or stop and/or sit when it arrives at the ring barrier simply because it can go no further. If the dog does either of these, points are deducted because the handler's command did not cause the dog to stop and sit. If the dog stops and sits on the handler's command but the handler has stopped the dog at about the 12-foot distance, a deduction is in order as the handler did not stop and sit the dog at about 20 feet beyond the jumps. Again, the requirement is to stop and sit the dog at about 20 feet beyond the jumps, not precisely 20 feet beyond the jumps.

If the dog goes out about 20 feet beyond the jumps, stops and sits on the handler's command but its final position is in one of the corners of the ring, a three point deduction should be made. If the dog goes out only 10 feet beyond the jumps, stops and sits on command but the final position is in the center of the ring, a three point deduction should be made. If the dog goes out about 10 feet, stops and sits on command but the final position is next to the side of the ring, a five or six point deduction is in order.

CHAPTER 4
PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED HANDLERS

Physically Challenged Handlers. It is perfectly permissible for physically challenged handlers to compete, provided they can do so under their own power with or without mechanical assistance, i.e., a wheelchair (self-propelled, electric, etc.), crutches, or a cane. The *Obedience Regulations* Chapter 2, Section 14, states that blind handlers may also compete, and, subject to the judge's instructions, anyone may position a blind handler before, between, and after each exercise. Directions by radio are not permitted. Handlers on crutches should not be penalized for any crutch motions considered normal for their disability. However, if, in the opinion of the judge, the handler uses the crutches in a manner unnecessary for their movement and as guidance or control of the dog, a scoring penalty must be imposed. In determining if a modification of the requirements of the *Obedience Regulations* for physically challenged handlers is acceptable under the provisions of Chapter 2, Section 14, the judge needs only to determine whether the modification aids the dog's performance. If the modification does not aid the dog's performance, it is acceptable. But, as stated in Chapter 2, Section 14, the dog is required to perform all parts of the exercises as described in the *Obedience Regulations* and shall be penalized for failure to perform any part of an exercise.

The *Obedience Regulations* Chapter 2, Section 18, requires all dogs to work from the handler's left side. It is proper for a judge to establish in advance a position on the disabled handler's left side that corresponds to the normal heel position for all exercises.

With respect to speed of the handler in the heeling exercises, a physically challenged handler is expected to do the regular heeling at the equivalent of a brisk pace with significant changes in speed for the slow and fast. Judges must penalize a handler, as they would any other handler disabled or not, who does not perform the regular heeling at the equivalent of a brisk pace or with a true slow and fast.

In the case of a blind handler, the judge may use stewards and/or cones, and permit the stewards to utter softly a verbal aid so that the handler may determine the position of the stewards/and or cones as they perform the Figure Eight.

After the judge or another person positions a blind handler for a jump, the judge may permit the handler to leave the dog, walk up to the jump to feel it in order to determine its exact location, and then proceed to perform the exercises as required.

Physically Incapacitated. Handlers whose disabilities prevent them from throwing the dumbbell the required distance may be permitted to line the dog up in the desired starting position and, after giving the command to stay, leave the dog and proceed away from the dog to throw the dumbbell. The handler should then return alongside the dog to continue the exercise. The same procedure should be followed for the Retrieve Over High Jump.

Hearing Deficiency. When faced with the situation where a handler is hard of hearing, judges should position themselves so that the handler may continuously observe them during the performance of the individual exercises. If such a handler desires, judges may use prearranged signals to the handler in lieu of verbal commands.

Group Exercise. It is permissible for a judge to allow additional space on each side of a disabled handler to permit the handler to work the dog without touching it or without touching the dog on either side. All dogs, however, must be judged in judging program order.

CHAPTER 5
THE JUDGE'S BOOK

Judge's Book. The judge alone is responsible for the judge's book. The trial secretary or superintendent may correct an error or omission that has been made in preparing the book for the judge. No one except the judge may enter any other notation in the judge's book. Following the judging of each class, the judge must immediately deliver the judge's book to the superintendent, obedience chairperson, or trial secretary. No other person may be entrusted with the judge's book.

Marking the Judge's Book. Chapter 2, Section 10, of the *Obedience Regulations* instructs judges how to correctly mark the book. Judges must be thorough, neat and precise in marking their books. The awarding of obedience titles based on a dog's performance at obedience trials is valueless if the scores are not accurate. Judges must double-check the accuracy of score totals.

When all dogs have been judged and the four official placements determined, then ribbon prizes can be awarded: blue, red, yellow, and white or white, yellow, red, and blue. Where ribbons or prizes for additional places are offered, the awards for these should be made after the awarding of the four official placements. The judge must sign the book, mark the time finished, and then return the book for the completed class promptly to the trial secretary, obedience chairperson, or superintendent. When the judge returns the book, the trial secretary, obedience chairperson or superintendent should briefly scan the book for obvious omissions or oversights that can be corrected immediately.

Once all the books are turned in and reviewed for the relevant classes, the trial secretary, obedience chairperson, or superintendent will determine the winner of the Highest Scoring Dog & Highest Combined awards.

The superintendent, trial secretary, or obedience chairperson will ensure the judges get a copy of their judge's book(s) at the end of their judging assignment. Judges must retain their judging records for at least six months. If such records are required to provide information relative to the judging of a particular class, the information will be readily available to the AKC.

On the following pages are samples of Novice, Open B and Utility A sheets that show the proper procedure for marking the judge's book. This procedure is applicable for all classes.

PROCEDURES FOR JUDGES TO FOLLOW IN MARKING THE JUDGE'S BOOK

(Use Ballpoint Pen)

- Indicate the class.
- In the Open B, Utility B, Preferred Open and Preferred Utility classes the exercises will not be listed; write them in.
- To correct an error after marking a score under a wrong catalog number, cross out the error, write the correction, and initial the change.
- Non-qualifying scores should be indicated in the relevant exercise box then carry down an "NQ" in the "Total Score" box.
- When a dog non-qualifies, and is "Released" write "NQ-R" (Non-Qualifying Released) then carry down an "NQ" in the "Total Score" box.
- If a handler leaves the ring before completing the exercises, write "HLR" (Handler Left Ring) then carry down an "NQ" in the "Total Score" box.
- Verify that the Group Exercise box has been marked accordingly, including a zero for no points off.
- Verify that all Miscellaneous Penalty boxes have been marked accordingly, including a zero for no points off.
- Verify all absentees have been marked accordingly.
- Carry only qualifying scores down to the "Final Qualifying Score" box.
- Mark the catalog number, the score of the four official placements, the time started, and the time finished. This should be on the first sheet for the class only.
- Where run-offs of ties have taken place for any of the four official placements, indicate the winner of the tie by placing a plus sign after the winner's score. In case of a three-way tie, use a double plus for the winner and a single plus for the dog placing second out of the three, etc.
- In the case of a dog that is "Disqualified," state the reason in the judge's book and bring it to the attention of the superintendent or trial secretary. In addition, if a dog is disqualified for attacking a person in the ring, complete the form available from the superintendent or trial secretary. This completed form must be turned into the superintendent or secretary.
- If any dog or handler is excused, state the reason.

SIGN THE BOOK.

NOTE: Judges should use the inside cover of the book for any comments or explanations required. If additional information is deemed necessary by the judge, comments or explanations should be forwarded to the Event Operations Department, or emailed to Obedience@akc.org.

SAMPLE MARKED JUDGES' BOOK
NOVICE

Name of Club: _____

(Event#): _____ Day/Month/Year

Judge: _____

NOVICE CLASS *A* (Indicate A or B)

MAXIMUM TOTAL SCORE — 200 Points

ENTER POINTS OFF FOR EACH EXERCISE UNDER APPROPRIATE ARMBAND NUMBER

Dog Number	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108
Heel on Leash (40 Points)	*1.5*	*1*	*0.5*	*8*	*4*	*2*	*5*	*1*
Stand for Exam (30 Points)	*0*	*0*	*0*	*NQ*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*
Heel Free (40 Points)	*4*	*4*	*4.5*	*6*	*8*	*9*	*3.5*	*6*
Recall (30 Points)	*1*	*0*	*3.5*	*1*	*0*	*14*	*2.5*	*10*
Sit-Stay Get Your Leash (30)	*0*	*0*	*0*	*NQ*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*
Subtotal of Points off	*6.5*	*5*	*8.5*	*NQ - R*	*12*	*25*	*11*	*17*
Group Sit & Down (30)	*0*	*0*	*0*		*3*	*0*	*0*	*AB*
Miscellaneous Penalties	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*20*	*0*	*0*	*0*
Maximum Score (200)	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
POINTS OFF (Subtract)	*-6.5*	*-5*	*-8.5*	*-*	*-35*	*-25*	*-11*	*-*
Total Score	*193.5*	*195*	*191.5*	*NQ*	*NQ*	*175*	*189*	*NQ*
FINAL QUALIFYING SCORE	*193.5*	*195*	*191.5*			*175*	*189*	

	First Place	Second Place	Third Place	Fourth Place
W INNERS:	102	101	103	107
SCORE:	195	193.5	191.5	189

Time Started: 9:00 Time Finished: 9:40

(Please Use Ball Point Pen)

SAMPLE MARKED JUDGES' BOOK
OPEN B

Name of Club: _____
(Event#): _____ Day/Month/Year
Judge: _____

OPEN B CLASS

MAXIMUM TOTAL SCORE — 200 Points

ENTER POINTS OFF FOR EACH EXERCISE UNDER APPROPRIATE ARMBAND NUMBER

Order Of Exercises (I-VI) 3

Dog Number	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108
ROF	1	0	4	Disqualified – changed in appearance	Absent	2	2.5	.5
DOR	1	0	3			Excused – Unfit to compete	1	.5
ROHJ	2.5	0.5	3				1	1
BJ	0	0.5	1				1.5	0
8+HF	4	2	5.5				3	2
CD	.5	0	0				1	0
SGL	0	0	0				0	0
Misc. Penalties	0	0	0				0	0
Maximum Score (200)	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
POINTS OFF (Subtract)	-9	-3	-16.5	-	-	-	-10	-4
Total Score	191	197	183.5				190	196
FINAL QUALIFYING SCORE	191	197	183.5				190	196

Heel Free = 40 Drop on Recall = 30 Retrieve on Flat = 20
Retrieve Over High Jump = 30 Broad Jump = 20
Command Discrimination = 30 Stay Get Leash = 30

	Place	Place	Place	Place
WINNERS:	102	108	101	107
SCORE:	197	196	191	190

Time Started: 9:00 Time Finished: 9:40

(Please Use Ball Point Pen)

SAMPLE MARKED JUDGES' BOOK
UTILITY A

Name of Club: _____

(Event #): _____ Day/Month/Year

Judge: _____

UTILITY CLASS A

MAXIMUM TOTAL SCORE — 200 Points

ENTER POINTS OFF FOR EACH EXERCISE UNDER APPROPRIATE ARMBAND NUMBER

Dog Number	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108
Signal Exercise (40 Points)	NQ	1	Absent	3	0.5	2.5	2	NQ
Scent Discrimination Article 1 (30 Points)	1	1.5		2	2.5	4	0.5	NQ
Scent Discrimination Article 2 (30 Points)	2.5	1.5		0.5	NQ	0.5	0.5	2
Directed Retrieve (30 Points)	3	1		1.5	2	0.5	1	2
Moving Stand & Exam (30 Points)	1	1		0	2	1	0.5	NQ
Directed Jumping (40 Points)	4	4		3	7	1	4	6
Miscellaneous Penalties	0	0		0	2	0	0	0
Maximum Score (200)	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
POINTS OFF (Subtract)	-	-10	-	-10	-	-9.5	-8.5	-
Total Score	NQ	190		190	NQ	190.5	191.5	NQ
FINAL QUALIFYING SCORE		190		190		190.5	191.5	

	First Place	Second Place	Third Place	Fourth Place
WINNERS:	107	106	104	102
SCORE:	191.5	190.5	190+	190

Time Started: 8:30 Time Finished: 11:30

(Please Use Ball Point Pen)

The Steward in Obedience

AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB®

THE STEWARD IN OBEDIENCE

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THE STEWARD IN OBEDIENCE

Planning an obedience trial is an endeavor that involves many months of preparation by the Obedience Trial Committee. The tasks are varied and demanding; selecting judges, preparing a premium list, compiling a mailing list, soliciting trophies, preparing equipment, making luncheon arrangements, securing admission tickets, and printing a catalog are only some of the tasks to be completed. The training of stewards is a necessary, but often neglected or lightly treated, element of preparation for an obedience trial.

A steward not acquainted with obedience ring procedures requires time-consuming instructions from the judge and can severely slow down the entire judging procedure. In order to ensure the smooth operation of a ring by the obedience stewards, clubs should provide at least one training session for them and use experienced stewards to instruct the training session.

Well in advance of their trial, clubs should appoint a chief steward whose duty it is to invite a sufficient number of experienced persons to act as stewards in the judging rings on the day of the event. Any person invited to serve as a steward must be in good standing with the AKC. The chief steward should, as soon as practicable, confirm in writing to all who accept an invitation to steward the date and location of the trial, the time at which they are to report for duty, and their particular ring assignments.

An exhibitor may not serve as a table steward in the class in which they are exhibiting in.

Stewards must keep in mind that they have been selected to help the judges and not to advise them. They should carefully refrain from discussing or even seeming to discuss the dog's performance with the judge and should not under any circumstances show or give the appearance of showing the catalog to the judge. When not actively engaged in their duties, stewards should position themselves so that they will not interfere with the judging of the dogs.

Under no circumstances should a steward give information or instructions to owners or handlers unless specifically instructed to do so by the judge, and then they should do so only in such a manner that it is clear that the instructions are those of the judge.

Stewarding functions in the obedience ring fall into three general categories: gate, table and ring. Under ideal circumstances, a club will provide three stewards to perform these functions. However, if the judge's assignment is relatively light, a club could manage quite well with two experienced persons for each ring. The following discussion will explain the specific duties of each function. Although the duties discussed below cover most of the steward's responsibilities, it is absolutely essential that the stewards be at ringside at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled start of judging to receive any specific instructions from the judge and to assist in setting up the ring as directed by the judge.

THE GATE STEWARD

The primary responsibility of the gate steward is to ensure that the next dog to be judged is immediately available when the judge is ready. As soon as the judge begins the judging routine of a dog, this steward calls the next dog to be judged and ensures the handler is at ringside when the dog in the ring has completed all exercises.

Dogs may not enter the rings until the judge indicates they are ready for the next dog. The gate steward is responsible for ensuring the judging time of the class is not delayed by having the judge wait for dogs. Dogs must be judged in judging program order as listed for each day to the extent that it is practical to do so without holding up the judging in any ring. If the dog listed next is not at ringside when needed, the steward should not hesitate to call the next dog in order and inform the judge. Stewards are not required to seek out handlers. Handlers are responsible for being ready when their dogs' numbers are called. The steward should report any absence to the judge, and the judge will decide when the dog is to be marked absent. This procedure should be followed even if the armband for the absent dog has already been issued.

It is normally the duty of the table/gate stewards to distribute armbands. When exhibitors check in, the steward will confirm that the armband being given to the exhibitor corresponds to the number in the catalog.

It is essential that every precaution be taken when distributing armbands. An exhibitor may ask for special consideration, such as being judged out of order, these requests must be directed to the judge. The gate steward should verify the height and distance that the dogs jump.

THE TABLE STEWARD

The extent to which a judge uses the services of a table steward varies greatly. Some judges prefer to do their own bookwork and do not feel it is necessary to have the steward perform many of the duties in this area. The steward must receive specific instructions from the judge to ascertain exactly what will be required as table steward.

Many judges use worksheets. The judge may ask the table steward to prepare and have ready the worksheet for the next dog. The steward should ensure that the class, proper armband number and breed of dog are correctly entered on the sheet. If the judge requests, the table steward must double-check to see that the scores on the worksheet are added correctly. If an error is detected, the steward should bring it to the attention of the judge. The judge — and only the judge — will transfer the scores from the worksheet to the judge's book. Under no circumstances should the steward write in the judge's book.

The table steward usually prepares the group exercise worksheets. These should be prepared according to the judge's instructions. It is

essential that these sheets be prepared in judging program order, even if that is not the order in which the dogs were individually judged.

The table steward must review the catalog to see what trophies (if any) are offered and to ensure that all trophies and ribbons are available at the conclusion of judging. Very often the steward is asked to assist in the awarding of the trophies and ribbons to the winners.

RING STEWARDS

Each judge requires two ring stewards. It is particularly important for these two stewards to report to the ring at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled time for judging to assist the judge in setting up the ring and equipment and to receive specific assignments from the judge. As the duties of the ring stewards vary with the class in which they are officiating, the remainder of this discussion will be divided by classes.

NOVICE CLASS

The first exercise in the Novice class is the Heel on Leash and Figure Eight. After completion of the Figure Eight exercise, a steward must be available to take the leash from the handler, and place it at the location previously determined by the judge. For the Stand for Examination exercise, the judge may ask the steward to hold the clipboard and pencil. Once the steward has these items, they should promptly move away from the area where the exercise is taking place. The steward should be close enough to quickly return the clipboard and pencil when the judging of the exercise is completed and the judge gives the order "Exercise finished."

The Group Exercise is done in judging program order. The gate steward will line up the dogs and handlers outside the ring immediately prior to the judging of the Group Exercise - Sit & Down Stay. The judge should not be made to wait while the handlers are lined up. Any number of incidents may occur during the group exercises, and stewards must be particularly alert. The stewards' attention should be divided between the dogs and the judge to make sure they are alert to a possible disturbance and be ready to follow further instructions from the judge.

OPEN CLASS

When issuing an armband to a handler, the gate steward should verify the height and distance the dog jumps. The gate steward should take the leash from the handler after the dog is brought into the ring, and place it at the location previously determined by the judge. The ring steward will be responsible for the dumbbell.

The Open class has two retrieving exercises: the Retrieve on Flat and Retrieve over High Jump. When directed by the judge, a ring steward shall deliver the dumbbell to the handler or to the judge as specified by the judge. This should be done immediately so handlers are not made to wait so keep your attention on the team in the ring.

UTILITY CLASS

When issuing an armband to a handler, the gate steward should verify the height the dog jumps. The Utility class includes the Directed Jumping exercise, during which the dog must complete a high jump and a bar jump. Prior to the team entering the ring, one steward must efficiently set the high jump while the other steward sets the bar jump. This must be done quickly and accurately. The judge will make sure that the jumps are properly set.

For the Scent Discrimination exercise, the gate steward will have placed the handler's articles on the chair or judge's table. The steward (or judge) will select the two articles, and separate them from the rest. The steward will position the remaining articles as instructed by the judge. The articles must be placed so that the closest article is about 20 feet from the handler. The judge or ring steward must touch (not necessary to scent) each of the eight remaining articles, spreading them in a random manner on the floor or ground, about 6 inches apart. The handler will place the scented article on the judge's book or worksheet. Without touching that article, the judge or steward will place it among the others.

After completion of the Scent Discrimination exercises, the ring steward will quickly gather up the unused articles placing those inside the handler's container, place the two used articles on top of the container, and return the container to the handler.

For the Utility class Directed Retrieve exercise the steward takes the three gloves from the handler's container and goes to the far end of the ring. After the dog and handler are in position (midway between and in line with the two jumps) but facing the opposite direction, the steward will drop the three gloves across the end of the ring. The steward will drop one glove in each corner, about 3 feet from the sides and the end of the ring, and one in the center, about 3 feet from the edge of the ring. The three gloves must be clearly visible to both dog and handler. After the exercise is completed, the steward retrieves the remaining two gloves, plus the one from the judge, and returns the glove to the handler's container.

For the Moving Stand and Examination exercise, a ring steward may be needed to hold the judge's clipboard and pencil during the examination and will stand aside as directed by the judge.

THE JUMPS

Although the gate steward will ask the handler what height the dog jumps, it is conceivable that the handler will know only the height of the dog. Because of this, it is essential that ring stewards be familiar with the *Obedience Regulations* concerning the setting of the jumps.

The minimum jump shall be set at the nearest multiple of 2 inches to

three-quarters the height of the dog at the withers for the breeds listed in Appendix A. A handler may request the jumps to be set higher than the minimum required height.

In the Regular Open and Utility classes the minimum jump shall be set to the nearest multiple of 2 inches to the height of the dog at the withers for all other dogs, with no dog jumping less than 4 inches or more than 36 inches.

In the Preferred Open, Preferred Utility, and Optional titling classes the jumps will be set to 1/2 the height of the dog at the withers.

The broad jump is set at twice the distance of the high jump. The low side of each hurdle and the lowest hurdle shall be nearest the dog. The highest hurdles shall be removed first.

The hurdles will be evenly spaced apart from each other as follows:

1. For dogs that jump 8 inches or less — use one hurdle
2. For dogs that jump 16 to 24 inches — use two hurdles
3. For dogs that jump 28 to 44 inches — use three hurdles
4. For dogs that jump 48 to 72 inches — use four hurdles

COMPANION EVENTS

Weekdays

Doug Ljungren *Executive Vice President,* *Sports & Events*	(919) 816-3903
Lisa Liggins *Administrative Director Obedience,* *Rally, and Tracking*	(919) 816-3816
Mary Higdem *Field Director* *Obedience, Rally, and Tracking*	(701) 361-1924
Department Direct Line	(919) 816-3575

Weekdays

Event Plans – Obedience	(919) 816-3579
Event Plans – Rally	(919) 816-3725

AKC Weekend Club Hotline	(919) 816-3955

Questions about Obedience: obedience@akc.org

AKC Obedience & Rally Judges' Blog:
https://akcobedrlyjudges.wordpress.com/

Judges may request an observation by contacting us at:
cejdgobs@akc.org

AKC Code of Sportsmanship and Civility

Preface: The tradition of competitive purebred dog events predates 1884—the year the American Kennel Club (AKC) was founded. Those involved in these sports share core values, including a strong commitment to sportsmanship and a welcoming, respectful culture that embraces the diverse community united by a love of dogs. These values are evident across all aspects of the sport: conformation, performance, companion, and family dog activities. Many believe that the enduring principles of sportsmanship and civility are key reasons the sport has thrived for over 140 years.

Recognizing that periodically reaffirming our shared values strengthens our community, the revised code will be shared widely to highlight the foundational values and principles that define the sport.

- Sportspeople always place the welfare of their dog above all else.
- Sportspeople prioritize the long-term health and preservation of their breed, making decisions that reflect a deep commitment to responsible breeding and ownership.
- Sportspeople respect the history, traditions and integrity of the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportspeople conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the sport, the American Kennel Club, and themselves.
- Sportspeople appreciate, encourage and support all who associate with and participate in the sports by fostering an environment where respect, equity, inclusion, and courtesy are foundational.
- Sportspeople understand, uphold and abide by all AKC bylaws, rules, regulations and policies.
- Sportspeople contribute to a positive atmosphere at events by avoiding negative gossip, disparagement, or unsportsmanlike behavior.
- Sportspeople extend their values of civility, fairness, and respect to all digital and social media platforms.
- Sportspeople actively support the education and mentorship of newcomers, helping them learn the rules, values, and traditions of the sport in a respectful way.
- Sportspeople recognize that they are role models in the sport, and strive to lead by example through humility, kindness, and ethical conduct.
- Sportspeople treat fellow exhibitors, judges, officials, volunteers, spectators, and AKC staff with dignity and respect, regardless of experience, background, or differences in opinion.
- Sportspeople are committed to fair play, honesty, courtesy, and competition, approaching both winning and losing with grace.
- Sportspeople understand that strong competition and civility can—and should—coexist. They appreciate the quality of their competitors, and the effort put forth by others.
- Sportspeople uphold their responsibilities to the sport of purebred dogs and refuse to let personal gain or self-interest influence their decisions or behavior.
- The sportsperson judges only on the merits of the dogs and considers no other factors.
- The sportsperson judge or exhibitor accepts constructive criticism.
- The sportsperson exhibitor declines to enter or exhibit under a judge where it might reasonably appear that the judge's placements could be based on something other than the merits of the dogs.
- The sportsperson exhibitor refuses to compromise the impartiality of a judge.
- Sportspeople are willing to share honest and open appraisals of both the strengths and weaknesses of their breeding stock.
- Sportspeople decline to exploit any positions of authority or recognition for personal advantage.
- Sportspeople appreciate those that have gone before them and realize they are responsible for maintaining and enhancing the sport for future generations.

Complete text of booklet available at:
www.akc.org

To order booklet(s), contact AKC at:
American Kennel Club
8051 Arco Corporate Drive
Suite 100
Raleigh, NC 27617-3390
Tel: (919) 233-9767
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Web site: www.akc.org

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The American Kennel Club
101 Park Ave
New York, NY 10178

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