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If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact Kathy Lewis.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER Happy New Year!

As always, I am full of resolve to Do and BE better. So... let me ask- how can we make OUR club better?

I would love in-person meetings- although I understand there are reasons you may not want to host a meeting in your house, but you can "host" a meeting at a local restaurant, pub, library, etc. Anyplace with a private meeting room, that will allow us to bring in food, if not a restaurant.

What ELSE can we do to make the club better? What kind of education would you like us to present? Would you be interested in random (not at monthly meetings) zoom presentations? Emails? Are there events you'd like to participate in, which we don't currently do?

How about a mentorship program? Would you be interested in being a mentor? Or in having a mentor? We ask this question on our membership application, but honestly, no one has ever followed through. Would anyone be interested in setting up a database of requested mentorship topics and participants?

I have investigated making the club an AKC "Fit Dog" club. This is really simple ... We can count our parades! we can also have regular group walks or hikes, or virtual or real fitness classes, if I become a fit dog instructor. LMK if you're interested!

Please- if you have ideas of ways the club can be better- things we can do, or fix- PLEASE let me or a board member know! I want to start the year off on the right foot!..... Jodie

New Year's Resolutions for You and Your Dog

By Stephanie Gibeault, MSc, CPDT, Updated: Dec 20, 2023 AKC

It's that time of year again – a time of self-reflection and good intentions. No doubt you made New Year's resolutions for yourself, but how about some resolutions that will benefit your dog, too? Simple changes will set you up for success and can enhance your dog's quality of life and deepen your relationship. Here are five easy ways to make this year wonderful for you and your dog.

Change the route of your daily walks

Walks don't just provide you and your dog with exercise, they're a source of mental stimulation, too. But the same walk, day after day, gets boring and predictable. Try taking a different path every week, so your dog gets some new sights and smells. It can be as simple as turning right at the end of your street instead of left or reversing your usual route. You can even hop in the car and drive to a new park or neighborhood for a change of pace.

Rotate your dog's toys weekly

Providing your dog with variety in their toys is another way of preventing boredom. Make sure they have enough toys to keep them busy at any given time and put the rest away. Then once a week, change them around. You don't have to keep buying new toys to pique their interest – an old toy will seem fresh and exciting when it hasn't been seen for a while. Be aware of any special favorites. Some dogs take comfort in certain toys, like a plush animal they sleep with, so keep those available at all times.



Chalabala/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images

Play mentally challenging games with your dog every day

Dogs love to play with their humans, and activities like playing fetch or cuddling on the couch are wonderful. But if you add some brain games into the mix, your dog will get a daily dose of mental exercise, which is an important part of keeping them healthy. There are puzzle toys that you can play with together or you can make your own fun with games like hide and seek.

Train a new trick every month

Your dog may have mastered all the basic obedience behaviors, but there are an endless number of tricks you can work on. Teaching tricks helps keep your training skills polished and provides your dog with fun and mental exercise. And by the end of the year, you'll have quite an act to show off to friends and family. Make sure you start with easy tricks for novice dogs, and be aware of any physical limitations, such as rolling over in some deep-chested breeds.

Practice obedience behaviors daily

Even though your life is busy, it can be beneficial for you and your dog to fit even one or two minutes of obedience practice into your daily schedule. It reminds your dog of the rules of the household and prevents their skills from getting rusty. It also keeps you from taking your dog's good behavior for granted. To help make obedience practice a habit, link your training to an already established routine. For example, whenever you put down your dog's food bowl, ask for a "sit" or "down" first.

How Exercise Can Improve Your Dog's Mental Health and Brain Function

By Mary Burch, Updated: Oct 17, 2023

When the new AKC FIT DOG titling program launched, Larissa O'Donnell jumped on it with her dogs, Ralphie and Finn. Having already competed in Obedience, AKC Rally, and AKC Scent Work, O'Donnell found the dog

exercise options in FIT DOG (walking, in particular) of particular interest — not only for her dog’s health, but her health too.

The Health Benefits of Walking Your Dog

“I have congestive heart failure,” she says, “and for this condition, walking is an exercise recommended by doctors. Prior to starting AKC FIT DOG walking, my echocardiogram was at 40%. My most recent test was normal and my cardiologist removed all of my activity restrictions. My doctor asked what I was doing and I told him about working toward the FIT DOG titles. He said, ‘Keep on doing what you’re doing.’ Now I tell everyone that AKC FIT DOG isn’t just for dogs — it helps their people too.”

O’Donnell’s husband works during the week, and he has joined the weekend walks and hikes with the dogs. He can’t wait to find out the next trail that his wife has selected. “I didn’t initially see this as a possible benefit,” O’Donnell says, “but through our AKC FIT DOG activities, I get a way to spend regular quality time with my husband and I love that.”



Larissa O'Donnell

For the O’Donnells, regular walks reap benefits for body, mind, and soul. The Bayshore Companion Dog Club, in Tinton Falls, New Jersey, introduced Larissa to the AKC FIT DOG program. She completed the virtual walks through Huron River Canines-FIT DOG club.

How about the dogs? Ralphie and Finn also like spending time with the family, and while their overall fitness is improving, O’Donnell reports another clear benefit of their exercise regimen. “After we started walking, I noticed that both dogs seemed to have more energy. They get excited at walk time. When we went to walk near the Atlantic Ocean, they were

fascinated with the sea gulls and they came home appearing relaxed, calm, and well-rested. Maybe it's my imagination, but I think my dogs are a lot happier since we started exercising."

Links Between Exercise and Dog Mental Health

According to the most current science, it is not O'Donnell's imagination. While the physical benefits of exercise are well-known, researchers are beginning to identify emotional and mental health benefits as well.

Because there are similarities in the structure of the brains of different species of mammals and how those brains function, researchers are investigating both human and animal models that show the results of exercise on emotional and mental health. Physical exercise triggers the release of a protein called the brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which is one of the molecules that results in the growth of new brain cells. Animal research has also shown that exercise increases the blood supply to the brain and promotes the growth of new neurons in the hippocampus, the part of the brain that is related to learning and memory.



Larissa O'Donnell

The O'Donnells' dog Ralphie models his gold FIT DOG medallion.

One animal study gave two groups of rats access to either a running wheel or a treadmill. Both groups showed a better blood supply to their brains after 30 days, while rats who were not active showed no increase. In addition to increasing desirable conditions such as increased blood supply

or the growth of new brain cells, exercise can also decrease stress-related hormones such as cortisol and epinephrine.

One popular theory that is now being questioned is that exercise releases a flood of endorphins. These are the hormones in the brain that activate the body's opiate receptors. They are considered natural pain relievers and mood elevators. The new thinking is that rather than increasing endorphins, exercise increases the concentrations of norepinephrine in the part of the brain related to stress responses. Along with this is the idea that physical activity can trigger the release of dopamine and serotonin. These chemicals can improve an animal's mood. Whatever the chemicals or hormones that are involved, scientists agree that exercise improves mood.

Staying Active Keeps Your Dog's Brain Sharp

Matt Kaeberlin, Ph.D., is a researcher at the Dog Aging Project at the University of Washington in Seattle. He studies dogs with canine cognitive dysfunction (which is the name for dog dementia). In a study with more than 15,000 dogs, physical activity was shown to be beneficial for brain function. Inactive dogs were 6.5 times more likely to develop canine cognitive dysfunction than active dogs that were the same age.



Larissa O'Donnell

Finn sparkles in his silver AKC FIT DOG medallion.

Other researchers have also examined the benefits of exercise. Breer Gordon, Ph.D., is an exercise psychology researcher at the Penn State College of Medicine, and studies the effects of exercise on mental health

conditions such as anxiety. According to Gordon, exercise can improve mood almost immediately.

So, the summary statement on exercise is that it not only greatly improves physical health (of you and your dog), but it can improve mental health as well. For you and your dog to be happy, it may be as simple as starting with daily walks. Take the advice of O'Donnell's cardiologist: Take two dogs for a walk, and no need to call him in the morning.

What I Have Learned in 45 Years as a Breeder

By AKC Staff

Published: Apr 03, 2015, Updated: Jan 22, 2018, By Kathy Lorentzen

Reprinted with permission from Dogs in Review and author Kathy Lorentzen, from the February 2015 issue of Dogs in Review magazine.



1. Start slow.

Regardless of how much you think you know, you probably don't know very much when you are a fledgling breeder. The faster you go, the more mistakes you will make and the more messes you will have to clean up. Plan your first few litters with great care and a lot of help from your mentors, and take the time to watch them grow up before you breed again. Waiting and watching those first litters will fill you with knowledge that you didn't realize you were missing.

2. Believe in survival of the fittest.

This is one of the most difficult lessons a breeder must learn but also one of the most critical. Going to great lengths to save a puppy that nature says was not meant to survive brings nothing but heartache. I have yet to see a happy outcome at the end of a monumental attempt to save a dog at all costs.

3. Listen to the opinions of your peers.

An opposing opinion from a successful breeder may give you something completely different to think about. Nobody says you have to do what other people tell you, but by all means be open to what they have to say.

4. Don't succumb to Frequently Used Sire syndrome.

It happens all the time. Ten other people bred to a dog, so you think you should breed to him too. Stop and ask yourself why you think you should breed to that dog. Are you familiar with several generations of the dogs in his pedigree? Does he have ancestors in common with your bitch that were strong for the characteristics you are looking for from your litter? Have you had your hands on the dog and a number of his children? Does he (and do his children) have the strengths you are looking for? If he is a total outcross for you, is he even the same style as your bitch? Are you comfortable with not only his health clearances but also those of his parents, grandparents and siblings? Forcing yourself to honestly answer all of these questions may bring you to the conclusion that he is not at all the right dog for your bitch.

5. Listen to your gut, not to your heart.

Difficult as it might be, do not let sentimentality enter into your breeding decisions. I don't care if your best friend has a dog that she wants you to breed to; if he isn't the right dog, say no. I don't care if you raised a singleton puppy and are incredibly attached to it; if it isn't of the quality to move you forward in your breeding program, find a pet home for it. I don't care if you have two dogs of your own that you absolutely love; if they are not the right match, then don't breed them to one another. If someone wants to buy a dog from you but your gut is telling you it's a bad idea, then I will bet you that it is a bad idea. Just say no. Learning to say no is very important. Do not get sucked into anything that your head and your

gut tell you is wrong. You can be nice and say no at the same time. It is a word that will serve you well.

6. Create your own stud force.

Having watched the most successful breeders in many breeds for 50 years, I firmly believe that your family of dogs will be better if you create your own stud dogs to breed to your own bitches. Make two lines of dogs that are loosely related yet far enough apart so that you can breed them back and forth to one another. Keep the characteristics that you consider critical in your breed prominent in both lines, but differ the style of the two lines somewhat. Example: You cannot keep breeding elegant to elegant to elegant without eventually losing size and substance. If your breed should be strong yet elegant, you can maintain size and substance and also keep the correct amount of elegance if you breed two lines back and forth where one is more elegant and one is more compact, bigger boned and ribbed. The blending of your two lines of dogs will result in a family that has a specific look that will be recognizable as having come from your kennel. Your dogs will breed more true and consistently higher in quality than if you just keep a few brood bitches and continually breed them to the stud dogs around the country that are the flavor of the month.

7. Know how to add new blood to your program.

Obviously, you will eventually have to introduce at least a partial outcross into your family of dogs. I learned long ago from a very savvy breeder that the way to do this is to buy the right bitch to bring in to breed to your own stud dogs. Choose very carefully. Buy one that is the same style as your dogs, from a pedigree that has some common ancestors with your dogs and make certain that she (hopefully) will be useful to breed to at least two of your own stud dogs. If you are looking to introduce a characteristic that you think is somewhat lacking in your breeding program, be absolutely certain that not only does the bitch have that characteristic but that she is from a pedigree filled with dogs that had it. Then when you breed her to your dogs, select those that have the characteristic and breed those back into your lines. In this manner, your dogs will not lose their "look," and you will have introduced some new blood and a new strength to your bloodlines.

8. Look back often, but never go backward.

Advances in the use of semen from dogs long dead have given breeders options never before available. It's one thing to use frozen semen from a dog that was your own or a dog you knew well. It's quite another to use frozen from a piece of breed history that you never laid eyes on. Predicting the outcome of such a breeding is not possible, and it could be a giant step backward. I also have watched while some breeders have used semen from one of their own deceased dogs over and over and over, which results in a program that never moves forward. The outcome of someone using a particular dog over and over is a decrease in the general quality of their family of dogs. Breeding programs are meant to move forward with each generation, in my opinion, and while an occasional dose of a long-deceased dog might be a wonderful thing to have, I believe that too much can lead to ruination.

9. Deal with your mistakes.

Everybody makes mistakes, but it's what you do about fixing it and trying to never make that same mistake again that defines you as a dog breeder. Keep the best interest of your breed, not just your own dogs, foremost. Follow that path and you will leave your breed healthy, sound and full of quality for the next generation of breeders. Honesty is always the best policy in dog breeding. If you create a problem, own up to it and perhaps you will save someone else from the same fate.

10. Be objective about judging.

The first thing I would ask you all to do is to remove the word "dumped" from your vocabulary. Just because your dog did not win does not mean that it got dumped. I have always disliked that word and never use it in reference to judging. Train yourself to understand what individual judges are looking for. Different people have different priorities, and understanding those priorities will help you decipher their judging. If you feel that you have a legitimate question about why another dog defeated yours, there is nothing wrong with approaching the judge when on break (with your dog in tow, please) and asking. Please do not open the conversation with, "What didn't you like about my dog?" Instead, ask why the other dog placed over yours. Try to make the conversation a positive

learning experience. If you find that dogs from a particular family consistently defeat yours, sit down and watch those dogs, and try to understand why. If your dogs don't win, do not immediately think politics. The great majority of the time, it simply isn't. School yourself in your breed, how to condition, trim and present it to its absolute best, and take a step back and ask yourself if your dogs are truly worthy of winning in good competition. Ask seasoned, successful breeders for advice. We want you to stay in our sport, not get frustrated and leave because your dogs don't win. We want you to learn, have good dogs and develop into the next generation of knowledgeable breeders so that we can breathe easy when we hand the reins of our breed over to you.

Unknown Canine Respiratory Illness: What We Know So Far

By Melanie Haid, Published: Dec 11, 2023 AKC



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Outbreaks of an unknown canine respiratory illness have been becoming increasingly prevalent as noted in the media over the past few months in many states across the United States. Especially this time of year, increased respiratory infections are reported among dogs, but this particular one doesn't yet have a name – or a clear cause or treatment.

Owners are reporting symptoms that mainly include prolonged coughing, lethargy, and change in appetite. We spoke to

American Kennel Club Chief Veterinarian Dr. Jerry Klein about what we know so far, and what dog owners should do to stay vigilant.

Symptoms to Look Out For

Dogs that are being treated for what is believed to be the same respiratory illness have symptoms that include coughing, significant lethargy, and a change in appetite. "If you see those together, that would warrant seeing a veterinarian," says Dr. Klein.

"I would advise owners not to panic when their dog coughs, but to contact their veterinarian at the first sign of a cough and see what they recommend and voice their concerns," Dr. Klein says. "Certainly visit a veterinarian or visit an emergency clinic if a cough is lingering, changes character, and doesn't seem to go away, or if the dog becomes lethargic or goes off feed."

These symptoms could also be the cause of other upper respiratory illnesses in dogs, like kennel cough, pneumonia, and canine influenza.

What We Know About This Canine Respiratory Illness

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) first reported cases of this canine respiratory illness in August 2023 in the Portland metro area of Oregon. From mid-August to mid-November, more than 200 cases of this illness were reported. National numbers are not known exactly because states have different reporting requirements, but cases of this canine respiratory illness have been found in Colorado, New Hampshire, and Oregon. Reuters recently reported that potential cases of the canine respiratory illness have been found in California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington.

Dr. Klein says that because the cause is unknown, tracking the illness is also more difficult. "We don't know if the outbreaks that were experienced in Oregon, for example, are the same cause or causes of the dogs that were studied in New Hampshire."

But it's not as widespread as people may think. "I don't think cases are as prevalent all around the country," he says. Dr. Klein mentions that only two

dogs had been brought in at the practice that he works at in Chicago with similar symptoms in the past few weeks, and these cases turned out to be Bordetella. "There may be other areas that may be worse, and certain parts of the country that may be experiencing outbreaks of something."

In some cases, pneumonia has been reported in relation to this illness. "The dogs that got pneumonia were a little bit different than typical pneumonia cases that vets see," Dr. Klein says. "But it doesn't give us an idea of what it is."

Is Unknown Canine Respiratory Illness Contagious?

Unfortunately, at the moment, there is no certain answer on whether or not this illness is contagious between dogs.

"We can't be 100% certain on the exact means of contagion, the duration in the environment, and things like that," Dr. Klein says. "Whether it's a virus or bacteria, and how exactly it's spread, we don't know exactly." Until researchers know more, Dr. Klein says that vets are taking extra precautions to keep dogs that are showing symptoms isolated.

Dr. Klein does say that it does appear to be contagious dog-to-dog. "We haven't seen it in people or in cats relating to this, so we think it's species-specific." That being said, he emphasizes that it's still not known how it transfers, or how it can pass between dogs in the same household, kennels, etc.



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Looking For Answers Through Research

When a dog is brought in with coughing or similar symptoms, Dr. Klein says that vets have been trying to do diagnostic tests and respiratory panels when they can to rule out other known illnesses. Across the country, researchers are trying to piece together the common symptoms and potential causes to nail down whether this is something that is known, like a variant of kennel cough, a new illness entirely, or possibly multiple causes.

“Just like with humans, we have flu-like symptoms, and we go to urgent care to test for COVID, or Influenza, because these signs mimic each other,” says Dr. Klein. It is also still unknown whether or not this illness is viral or bacterial.

“Unfortunately in this case, the answers haven’t been as instant as anyone would like,” Dr. Klein says. “Veterinarians want to do the best thing for the dog. We want to be able to know what we’re treating and how to treat it properly.”

What Should You Do if You Suspect Your Dog is Sick?

If your dog has a lingering cough, owners should call and consult their vets. There might be procedures already put in place to sanitize rooms and keep offices less full so that the illness isn’t passed to other dogs in waiting rooms. In the case that this illness is contagious, Dr. Klein says it’s important to limit exposure to other dogs. “We don’t want to hurt other dogs if this is very contagious,” he says. “We don’t know how it is, so we have to go along the lines that it could be very contagious.”

In the case where these symptoms do arise, Dr. Klein says to bring your dog to the vet or emergency room. Your veterinarian can help identify and rule out other causes by running diagnostics tests, and treat anything that is identifiable in the meantime, as well as symptomatic care.

If you’re worried about the number of cases in your area, Dr. Klein urges owners to consult their veterinary offices to see if there have been cases in the area. The best people who will know of outbreaks around you will be your local vet or emergency veterinarian. “Be aware of what’s going on at your local level, and ask if they’ve seen a recent upsurge of respiratory

cases," he said. "If they have then your area may be experiencing an outbreak of something, and you should be especially prudent about how and where you handle your dog among other dogs."

What Can You Do to Help Prevent Your Dog From Getting Sick?

Dr. Klein says that part of the rising levels of panic have to do with the unknown illness being called a "mystery illness." "We don't know if there's a cause or multiple causes leading to the pronouncement of people saying their dogs are sick," he says. "And there's no way of knowing unless proper diagnostic tests are taken and ruled in, or ruled out, to figure out if this is one of those quote unknown cases or one of the many known cases."

But there are still things that you can do to keep your dog safe and stay aware of the situation. "Be preemptive and keep your dog as healthy as possible," he says. "Make sure that your dogs are up to date on all the things that we can vaccinate for that can cause illness."



Zinkevych/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images

Dr. Klein also advises trying to maintain your dog's hygiene. Dogs should not be sharing water bowls, and food and water bowls should be frequently disinfected. He also advises washing crates often, and making sure spaces that your dog inhabits have good ventilation. "There's no guarantee, but it's the best thing we can do to try to help minimize possible occurrence of things," Dr. Klein says. "We can't control the world and the environment completely, we can only control what we can." He says to make sure to wash your hands thoroughly and frequently, especially after handling any new or unknown dogs.

As more research is released on this illness, it's important to stay informed, from a local level as well as a national level. "This may be something else, but we want to protect our dogs even in the best case scenario," Dr. Klein says.

10 Essential Skills for Every Dog

By AKC Staff, Published: Jun 13, 2022

Before taking the Canine Good Citizen test, owners will sign the Responsible Dog Owners Pledge. We believe that responsible dog ownership is a key part of the CGC concept and by signing the pledge, owners agree to take care of their dog's health needs, safety, exercise, training, and quality of life. Owners also agree to show responsibility by doing things such as cleaning up after their dogs in public places and never letting dogs infringe on the rights of others.



After signing the Responsible Dog Owners Pledge, owners and their dogs are ready to take the CGC Test. The test is all done on leash. Items on the Canine Good Citizen Test include:

Test 1: Accepting a friendly stranger

This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to approach it and speak to the handler in a natural, everyday situation. The evaluator walks up to the dog and handler and greets the handler in a friendly manner, ignoring the dog. The evaluator and handler shake hands and exchange pleasantries. The dog must show no sign of resentment or shyness.

Test 2: Sitting politely for petting

This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to touch it while it is out with its handler. With the dog sitting at the handler's side, to begin the exercise, the evaluator pets the dog on the head and body. The handler may talk to his or her dog throughout the exercise. The dog may stand in place as it is petted. The dog must not show shyness or resentment.

Test 3: Appearance and grooming

This practical test demonstrates that the dog will welcome being groomed and examined and will permit someone, such as a veterinarian, groomer, or friend of the owner, to do so. It also demonstrates the owner's care, concern, and sense of responsibility. The evaluator inspects the dog to determine if it is clean and groomed. The dog must appear to be in healthy condition (i.e., proper weight, clean, healthy, and alert). The handler should supply the comb or brush commonly used on the dog. The evaluator then softly combs or brushes the dog, and in a natural manner, lightly examines the ears and gently picks up each front foot. It is not necessary for the dog to hold a specific position during the examination, and the handler may talk to the dog, praise it and give encouragement throughout.

Test 4: Out for a walk (walking on a loose lead)

This test demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog. The dog may be on either side of the handler. The dog's position should leave no doubt that the dog is attentive to the handler and is responding to the handler's movements and changes of direction. The dog need not be perfectly aligned with the handler and need not sit when the handler stops. The evaluator may use a pre-plotted course or may direct the handler/dog team by issuing instructions or commands. In either case, there should be a right turn, left turn, and an about turn with at least one stop in between and another at the end. The handler may talk to the dog along the way, praise the dog, or give commands in a normal tone of voice. The handler may sit the dog at the halts if desired.

Test 5: Walking through a crowd

This test demonstrates that the dog can move about politely in pedestrian traffic and is under control in public places. The dog and handler walk around and pass close to several people (at least three). The dog may show some interest in the strangers but should continue to walk with the handler, without evidence of over-exuberance, shyness, or resentment. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise the dog throughout the test. The dog should not jump on people in the crowd or strain on the leash.

Test 6: Sit and down on command and staying in place

This test demonstrates that the dog has training, will respond to the handler's commands to sit and down and will remain in the place commanded by the handler (sit or down position, whichever the handler prefers). The dog must do sit AND down on command, then the owner chooses the position for leaving the dog in the stay. Prior to this test, the dog's leash is replaced with a line 20 feet long. The handler may take a reasonable amount of time and use more than one command to get the dog to sit and then down. The evaluator must determine if the dog has responded to the handler's commands. The handler may not force the dog into position but may touch the dog to offer gentle guidance. When instructed by the evaluator, the handler tells the dog to stay and walks forward the length of the line, turns, and returns to the dog at a natural pace. The dog must remain in the place in which it was left (it may change position) until the evaluator instructs the handler to release the dog. The dog may be released from the front or the side.

Test 7: Coming when called

This test demonstrates that the dog will come when called by the handler. The handler will walk 10 feet from the dog, turn to face the dog, and call the dog. The handler may use encouragement to get the dog to come. Handlers may choose to tell dogs to "stay" or "wait" or they may simply walk away, giving no instructions to the dog.

Test 8: Reaction to another dog

This test demonstrates that the dog can behave politely around other dogs. Two handlers and their dogs approach each other from a distance of about 20 feet, stop, shake hands and exchange pleasantries, and continue on for about 10 feet. The dogs should show no more than casual interest in each other. Neither dog should go to the other dog or its handler.

Test 9: Reaction to distraction

This test demonstrates that the dog is confident at all times when faced with common distracting situations. The evaluator will select and present two distractions. Examples of distractions include dropping a chair, rolling a crate dolly past the dog, having a jogger run in front of the dog, or dropping a crutch or cane. The dog may express natural interest and curiosity and/or may appear slightly startled but should not panic, try to run away, show aggressiveness, or bark. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise it throughout the exercise.

Test 10: Supervised separation

This test demonstrates that a dog can be left with a trusted person, if necessary, and will maintain training and good manners. Evaluators are encouraged to say something like, "Would you like me to watch your dog?" and then take hold of the dog's leash. The owner will go out of sight for three minutes. The dog does not have to stay in position but should not continually bark, whine, pace unnecessarily, or show anything stronger than mild agitation or nervousness. Evaluators may talk to the dog but should not engage in excessive talking, petting, or management attempts (e.g, "there, there, it's alright").

Find a dog trainer near your location and take the Canine Good Citizen test for your dog.

Holiday Party Pictures

Our Hostess

Our Photographer



Our President



How to Socialize Your Dog From Home

By Yasmine Ali, M.D., Updated: Jun 13, 2022 , American Kennel Club



David Woo ©American Kennel Club

Puppies have a short time window for optimal socialization, and that requires exposure to multiple different surfaces, people of all backgrounds, and various new situations. But what about the puppies who happen to be within that window now, during this time of necessary social distancing due to COVID-19? How can they be socialized so they can grow to be confident and happy dogs for the rest of their lives?

The Goals of Socialization

First, it's important to keep in mind the goals of puppy socialization. Paul Owens, professional dog trainer and bestselling author of *The Dog Whisperer* books, points out that "socialization does not mean putting a dog in a new situation and seeing what happens. Socialization means introducing new situations and making them safe, positive, confidence-building experiences."

Certified dog trainer and CGC evaluator Jacqui Foster, CPDT-KA, agrees: "As one of my mentors says, 'Absence of one bad experience far outweighs 100 good experiences!'" She adds that each puppy learns differently, so "work with the dog in front of you ... I tend to lean more towards developing self-confidence in the puppy, rather than flooding the dog with loads of people, noises, and experiences."

The Most Important Exposures for Your Puppy

There are certain new situations to which all puppies should be exposed if possible, preferably during the first 16 weeks of life, and the good news is that most of these can be accomplished in and around your own home. Each positive experience builds your puppy's self-confidence. These exposures include:

- Different surfaces: grass, leaves, concrete, gravel, linoleum, carpet, wood, sand, etc.
- Different sounds: think of all the everyday sounds around your home, including hairdryers, phone ringtones, radios, vacuum cleaners, and more. There are even recordings of sounds like thunder and other dogs barking that you can download for your puppy to hear. Be sure to make each noise exposure a positive experience by acting happy around the sound and associating the sound with yummy treats, and watch your puppy for any signs of stress.
- Other dogs: this can be done if you have other dogs in the neighborhood you know and trust to be safe and well-mannered with your puppy. It will be important for you to know the other dogs' owners as well; the best-case scenario would be to have a trusted, healthy friend who is also a dog owner, as you could then arrange safe play dates with the other dog while maintaining a safe distance from the other owner (more on this below).
- Other people: this may be the most difficult of all at this time, but there are still ways to achieve this exposure for your puppy. Certainly have your puppy socialize with all the members of your household who are healthy. You can also let your puppy look out the window of your home as other people go by, and let your puppy see you act happy about those people. Also, consider all that your puppy can see and hear from the safety of your own car.



You can introduce your dog to different surfaces such as grass, leaves, concrete, gravel, linoleum, carpet, wood, and sand all in your backyard or living room.

Safe Puppy Play Dates and Walks

Your first worry may be that your puppy can pick up or spread COVID-19 to you or other humans. However, statements from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) have all emphasized that, based on the available evidence, dogs cannot transmit COVID-19 to humans.

Kelly L. Moore, MD, MPH, is a medical epidemiologist and public health physician with expertise in pandemic planning and response; she trained at the CDC as an Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) officer. She notes the importance of paying close attention while out on a walk so as to maintain your own six feet of space from the nearest human being—that's the length of a six-foot leash—and, above all, the vital importance of washing your hands for at least 20 seconds after every encounter.

Dr. Moore adds, "It's helpful to identify trusted friends that you know will tell you if they develop any symptoms of illness and that you can trust when they say they're feeling well, who can spend time with your puppy."

She also notes that "being outside is a great thing for people to do. The outside is an open environment with air that's well-circulated; you're able to stay more than six feet apart, so that's a good environment for puppies to socialize in. I would have no issue with someone petting my puppy if they're also healthy and have no symptoms [as long as] when you come

back in from your walking and socializing, you wash your hands thoroughly.”

Crate Training Is Still Important

Even though you may currently be at home all day, your puppy still needs a structured schedule to reduce stress on everyone and to let the puppy know what is expected. Trainer and dog sports enthusiast Alexa Hagood, LVMT, states that this is a good opportunity to institute periods of “alone time,” like crate and nap breaks, so the puppy doesn’t develop separation anxiety when you do return to your place of work. Crate training can be an invaluable tool for your puppy at this time, just as with any other time.

As Hagood puts it, “Just because someone is home with the puppy, doesn’t mean they need to be with the puppy 24/7. Crate breaks, even when brief, can help the puppy become acclimated to going in the crate and having some alone time, even when people are home.” She recommends starting with feeding times inside the crate (for five to ten minutes), and when the owner needs to do daily chores.

Is This a Good Time to Get a Puppy?

While Dr. Moore acknowledges that puppies can be a wonderful source of joy and distraction during stressful times, Paul Owens suggests thinking hard and being extra prepared if this will be your first puppy. He notes that “all the things related to having a new puppy, like vet visits, grooming, and socialization, can be more of a challenge” at this time. He adds, “But the first thing I would suggest, if a dog does come into a home, is to contact a professional trainer.”

Enlisting the help of a professional trainer can still be done during social distancing—you can do so over the phone or via online sessions, which many trainers are now offering. For example, AKC GoodDog! Helpline is live telephone service that connects you with a professional trainer. The trainer will offer virtual, individualized advice on everything from house-training to behavioral issues.

Yasmine S. Ali, MD is a cardiologist and writer in Tennessee, where she lives with three Canine Good Citizens.

How to Introduce Your Dog to New Neighbors

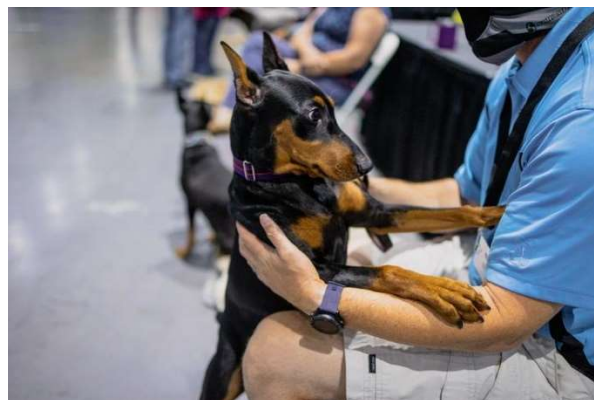
By Sassafras Lowrey, CTDI, Published: Jul 22, 2022

Being a responsible part of the community involves ensuring that your pet is a good neighbor. But while you probably want to be polite to other people, you should also be intentional and thoughtful about interactions between your dog and human neighbors.

Being Neighborly While Knowing Your Dog

Just because you're saying hello to your neighbors doesn't mean your dog has to. If you have a very social pet who loves people and greets them appropriately, you may want them to say hello. But first, check to see if your neighbors like dogs and want to greet your pup. Some people are nervous or afraid of canines, while others are allergic or would just prefer to keep their distance. It's important to respect your neighbors' boundaries and comfort levels. Similarly, not all dogs are going to be comfortable meeting strangers.

Be sure to consider how your dog feels about interacting with people they don't know well. You'll also want to think about how your pet feels about others approaching your property. If your dog doesn't have a lot of experience meeting strangers (which will be the case for many pets gotten during the pandemic), ensure they're comfortable and calm before greeting neighbors.



Stacey Salter Moore (SSM Photography)

Observe your dog watching other people from a distance and also offer them treats whenever they see your neighbors. Avoiding putting them in

stressful situations where they could feel afraid or threatened. This will also show your dog that they can depend on you to not put them in uncomfortable circumstances, which can help them feel more comfortable and confident. If your dog is selective about greeting strangers, explain that to your neighbors.

You can also use tricks to allow your dog to engage with new people from a comfortable distance. "Wave" allows your dog to say hello from afar and also tends to delight and impress. Teaching that trick is very similar to teaching them to shake hands, but instead of rewarding your dog for making paw contact with your hand, click/praise/reward right before your dog touches your hand. This trick can help increase a shy dog's confidence. Your pup will realize you aren't asking them to approach people; instead, they will start to associate seeing neighbors with doing tricks and subsequent rewards.

Meeting Neighborhood Pets and Children

Before introducing your dog to your neighbors' dogs, consider your pup's comfort level around other animals. Many dogs find on-leash greetings to be stressful. If you are going to allow your dog to greet another dog, try to do so on neutral territory, away from either of your yards.



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Be especially careful to manage any interaction between your dog and any children. Many kids love dogs but don't yet know how to safely interact with them. Make sure that your dog is comfortable around kids before allowing them to say hello. Do not let your dog approach children

uninvited, and ensure you have permission for the kids to greet your dog before then explaining to the youngsters how to safely greet your pet.

Educate Neighbors

Manage your dogs' interactions with your neighbors. If your dog is still working on calmly saying hello and your neighbors want to greet your pup, explain to them what your dog is learning. You can ask if they would like to practice helping you train for polite greetings.

This is especially useful if you're training your dog to become a Canine Good Citizen. Don't be afraid to tell your neighbors how your dog likes to interact, places where they like or dislike being petted, and whether it's okay to give your pet treats.



Stacey Salter Moore

This is a great opportunity to gently educate people on how to interact with dogs. If your neighbor does anything that makes you or your dog uncomfortable, explain why that is unsafe or something your dog dislikes.

Irish Wolfhound History: Behind the Ancient Breed of Ireland

By Denise Flaim, Published: Oct 15, 2020, Updated: May 10, 2023 AKC



There is such a thing as being too good at your job.

Just ask the Irish Wolfhound.

As far back as Roman times, there were accounts of large Greyhound-like dogs in Ireland – **called *cú faoil* in ancient Gaelic** – revered for their size and ferocity. Some Irish chieftains and warriors even grafted the word *cú* onto their own names as an honorific, signifying that they were as venerable and loyal as the dogs themselves.

Like many Sighthounds of the time-misted past, ownership of these dogs was reserved for the high born. Over the centuries, they became coveted gifts to emperors and ambassadors, kings and cardinals, often arriving in ancient times in symbolic groups of seven, tied with silver chains.

Ancient Irish Hounds

In 391 AD, the Roman statesman Quintus Aurelius Symmachus wrote a letter of thanks to his brother for the gift of seven Irish hounds, noting that “all Rome viewed them in wonder.” And from two millennia ago comes the story of Ailbé, so famous that two kings vied to own him, one offering

“three score hundred milch cows at once and a chariot with two horses and as much again at the end of the year.” When the bidding war escalated into an actual one, Ailbé literally lost his head after attacking one of the king’s chariots and seizing its axle. Even beheaded, he hung on.

As those ancient – and arguably a bit inflated – anecdotes show, these imposing Irish dogs were prized in battle. Guardians of property and livestock, they also hunted deer, elk, boar, and – as their modern name attests – wolves.

The Irish people “are not without wolves and greyhounds to hunt them, bigger of bone and limb than a colt,” wrote Edmund Campion in his “Historie of Ireland” in 1571. So popular were the dogs overseas that in 1652 Oliver Cromwell issued a declaration prohibiting their exportation.



Folklore and Fate

The breed’s prowess in dispatching wolves and its unshakeable character are intertwined in the heart-rending story of Gelert, an Irish hound gifted to Llewellyn, the prince of Wales, by King John of England in 1210. Returning to his castle from a hunt in which Gelert was conspicuously absent, Llewellyn found the dog covered in blood, and his infant son’s cradle overturned and empty. Presuming Gelert had savaged the boy, Llewellyn plunged his sword into the dog’s side. As Gelert howled in his death throes, Llewellyn heard another source of wailing – his son, crawling

out from under a pile of swaddling. Nearby was the dead wolf that had intended the same fate for the boy, but was pre-empted by the now-dying hound.

While some maintain that the story of Gelert was fabricated by an innkeeper who wanted to improve foot traffic, the veracity of the tale almost doesn't matter. It embodies the strong and sentimental attachment that the Irish long had to their native hound.

But neither royal fiat nor flowery folklore could do much about the fate of Ireland's ancient wolf dog. After the last wolf in Ireland reportedly met his end in 1786, the dogs themselves soon followed suit. By 1836, the breed was included on a list entitled "Notices of Animals which have disappeared from Ireland."

Reviving the Irish Wolfhound

A quarter-century later, in 1863, Captain George Augustus Graham decided to revive the Irish Wolfhound. Initially a Deerhound enthusiast, Graham acquired some dogs descended from those of fellow Scotsman H.D. Richardson, who decades earlier had scoured the Irish countryside for dogs purportedly descended from the surviving strains of old Irish hounds. Experts argue over whether these pedigree-less dogs had any connection to the famed wolf-dogs of yore, but regardless, they were not basis enough to build a breed. To augment his stock, Graham used Scottish Deerhounds and Great Dane crosses, which provided the size and especially heavy bone that the more ethereal Deerhounds lacked.

Graham also incorporated a bit of Borzoi blood, specifically that of "Korotai," owned by the Duchess of Newcastle. There was a one-time cross to a Tibetan Mastiff named Wolf, which some believe was actually a rare Kyi Apso, a smaller, bearded version of those native Tibetan dogs; two of Wolf's daughters, Vandal and Nookoo, are behind every Irish Wolfhound alive today. And a well-known Mastiff of the period, Garnier's Lion, also made it into Wolfhound pedigrees through offspring he produced with a Scottish Deerhound named Lufra.

Even if he believed that the dogs he was breeding had a connection, however tenuous, to the old Irish hound, Graham acknowledged they lacked the “original integrity” of their forebears. To illustrate the goal he was breeding toward, Graham commissioned a local artist to paint a life-size cardboard model of his ideal Irish Wolfhound. Painted gray, it measured 35 inches at the shoulder, with a girth that Graham estimated at some 42 inches and a weight of 140 pounds.

“It presents to the vision a most striking and remarkable animal of a very majestic and beautiful appearance,” Graham mused with satisfaction, “far, far beyond any dog the writer has ever seen.”



The Modern Irish Wolfhound

The model has long since been scrapped, but a photograph of Graham posing with it survives. The two-dimensional dog looks for all the world like a modern Irish Wolfhound, with the requisite mass and substance, but still retaining its flowing, Greyhound-like lines – an important point to remember in a breed where the emphasis is sometimes placed exclusively on sheer size.

Graham himself was wary of putting such a premium on size that it eclipsed all else. “An all-round sound dog of medium height is far preferable to an overgrown badly-shaped, crooked-legged giant; for size, though most important, cannot in any way make up for unsoundness,” he wrote in the “Kennel Encyclopaedia” in 1907.

During Graham's time, dogs could be shown even if their breed was not officially recognized by the kennel club. Irish Wolfhounds bowed in 1879 at a dog show in Dublin, then again in 1881 in England, where they were registered under "Foreign Breeds." Demonstrating the fluidity of the situation in the breed's early years, some of those first Irish Wolfhounds had previously been exhibited as Deerhounds, or had littermates that were.

By 1885, the breed was stable enough that Graham and others founded the Irish Wolfhound Club, writing an official standard the following year.

Today, the Irish Wolfhound has stayed true to Graham's vision, having evolved into a powerful yet swift breed that could never be mistaken for any other. While scholars still argue whether Graham simply revived a fading breed, or manufactured a new one, one thing is for certain: In its current occupation as a beloved companion, the Irish Wolfhound has no need to fear another brush with extinction.

Celtic Solstice 5-Miler at Druid Hill Park

Aulfynn, Orlaith and Rosie were the stars of the day. They were overwhelmed with all the love and picture taking! They were in a parade to start the race following the bagpiper. They were doing a wonderful job when Orlaith decided to take a sharp right into the crowd to see small children. Aulfynn and Rosie were great, staying in formation while Orlaith had yet more pictures taken of her. The race organizers and all the runners were very welcoming. They love the hounds!! We were too busy to take our own pictures!



Aulfynn



Orlaith



Rosie



Dear Friends of the Irish Wolfhounds,

The Potomac Valley Irish Wolfhound Club's (PVIWC) back-to-back Specialties are scheduled to take place March 31 and April 1, 2024. Every year members, friends, and exhibitors financially contribute to sponsor trophies and ribbons, either in whole or in part. It has been through these generous contributions that the PVIWC specialties are successful.

On behalf of the PVIWC, I express great appreciation to past contributors.

I ask you to consider sponsoring or making a financial donation to this year's general trophy fund. Your donation(s) will allow us to recognize our shows' winners. There is no such thing as a donation too small.

To contribute, please indicate your contribution on the Ribbon and Trophy Sponsorship Specification and Guide on the reverse side of this letter, and send it along with your financial donation(s) (checks payable to PVIWC) to:

Christina Buckner
PVIWC Treasurer and Show Secretary
1348 Sycamore Ave.
Annapolis, MD 21403
You may also use the donations PayPal tab on our website!

Thank you for your continuing generosity.

Sincerely,

Jodie Jeweler
PVIWC President and Show Chair

Ribbon and Trophy Sponsorship Specification and Guide

Sponsorship of First in each class-\$18.00
\$12.00

Sponsorship of Second in each class-\$15.00
\$10.00

Sponsorship of Third in each class-

Sponsorship of Fourth in each class-

Or Sponsor the entire class for \$50.00

_____ 6-9 mo. Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ 9-12 mo. Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ 12-15 mo. Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ 15-18 mo. Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ Novice Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ AOH Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ Bred-By Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ Am-Bred Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ Open Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ Veteran Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ Stud Dog 1 2 3 4

_____ 6-9 mo. Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ 9-12 mo. Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ 12-15 mo. Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ 15-18 mo. Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ Novice Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ AOH Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ Bred-By Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ Am-Bred Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ Open Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ Veteran Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ Brood Bitch 1 2 3 4

_____ Obedience - \$50

_____ Rally - \$50

Trophy Sponsorship/Mementos to Challenge Trophies Donation

_____ Best of Breed \$125

_____ Best of Opposite \$115

_____ Best of Winners \$100

_____ Winners Dog \$100

_____ Winners Bitch \$100

_____ Am-Bred Dog \$30

_____ Open Dog \$30

_____ Best Puppy \$75

_____ Best in Sweeps \$75

_____ Reserve Winners Dog \$50

_____ Reserve Winners Bitch \$50

_____ Bred-By-Exhibitor Dog \$30

_____ Bred-By-Exhibitor Bitch \$30

_____ Best BBE \$40

_____ Am-Bred Bitch \$30

_____ Open Bitch \$30

_____ Veteran Bitch \$30

_____ BoS to BI Sweeps \$50

Name

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City, State Zip

To secure recognition in the Premium/Catalog, donations must be received no later than 14 November. Please make known the class you wish to sponsor in preferential order. All attempts at accommodating your request will be made. If you have no preference place an "X" in the no preference box.

First Choice Class Donation: _____

Second Choice Class Donation: _____

Third Choice Class Donation: _____
Preference:

No

Feel free to contact Christina Buckner via e-mail at: ckallay@verizon.net



PVIWC List of Meeting & Events 2024

January 14	Regular Meeting
February 11	Regular Meeting
March 2024	St. Patrick's Day Parades and Festivals
• March	Alexandria, VA
• March 9	Manassas, VA
• March 10	Baltimore, MD
• March	Gaithersburg, MD
• March 16	Harrisburg, PA
• March 17	Annapolis, MD
March 31&April 1	Specialty Harford County Equestrian Center, Bel Air, MD
March 31	Regular Meeting - Following judging at Specialty
April 12&13	Dills Celtic Festival, Dills Tavern, 237 Baltimore St, Dillsburg, PA
April 20&21	Tell-Tale Steampunk Festival
April 21&22	Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Carolinas Specialty
May	Annapolis Irish Festival, Anne Arundel County Fairgrounds, 1450 Crownsville, MD
May	Faerie Festival
May 19	Show Wrap Up Meeting
June 8	Carroll County Celtic Festival, Agriculture Center
June 9	Regular Meeting
June 15	Penn Mar Irish Festival, Shrewsbury, PA
June	Celtic Fling (with a concert on Friday night) PA Renn Faire grounds
August 11	Regular Meeting
August 31 & Sept 1	Virginia Scottish Games, Great Meadow 5089 Old Tavern Road, The Plains, VA 20198

September 15	Fun Day
October	Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Delaware Valley Specialty
October 20	Regular Meeting
November	Maryland Irish Festival, Timonium, MD
November 17	Regular Meeting Zoom
December 8	Holiday Party Susan and Bill Montgomery's
December	Druid Hill Winter Solstice 5Miler , Baltimore, MD
December	Military Bowl Parade, Annapolis, MD

Dates, Time, or location to be determined and subject to change on some events.

Need Volunteers to Host meetings.