



JULY 2025



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Board Members Info.PVIWC@gmail.com
Kathy Lewis, President naturelady58@gmail.com
Susan Montgomery, Vice President, Rescue, Web Page pviwcweb@gmail.com
Christina Buckner, Treasurer pvtreasurer@pviwc.org pviwcshowsecretary@gmail.com
Susan Wine, Secretary pvsecretary@pviwc.org
Carole Silverthorne Breeder Referral carolesilverthorne@comcast.net
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WHAT IS A KAHU?

In Hawaiian culture, you do not call yourself your pet's "owner." You are referred to as their "Kahu." The word Kahu has a deep meaning and is defined as the sacred role of a guardian, protector, steward or honored attendant. Essentially, someone entrusted with the safe keeping of something precious - something cherished. What a Kahu protects is not their property. What they protect is a part of their soul. We become better when we truly love an animal. We embrace the connection of all life when we embody what it means to be a Kahu.

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

How to Help Keep Your Dog Safe on July Fourth

By AKC Staff, Updated: Mar 26, 2024

Although a celebratory day for humans, the July 4th holiday can be dangerous for your dogs' health and happiness. The American Veterinary Medical Association warns that fireworks, picnics, cookouts, and other Fourth of July traditions can be frightening and even dangerous for pets.

Up to half of dogs react fearfully to fireworks, according to owner surveys, and the Fourth of July is among the most active times of year for pet recovery. The sound of fireworks commonly causes dogs to panic and run away.

There are some steps you can take before, during, and after the holiday to keep your dog safe.

Prepare For the Festivities

Desensitize Your Dog to Loud Sounds

Use positive enforcement to show that these loud noises are too scary. Play recordings of fireworks and thunder while you and your dog relax together. As the sounds play, toss your dog a treat. Fireworks may be pretty to humans, but they are very loud and the noise can be extremely scary for your dog. Once the displays get started, keep him in a room where he is safe and relaxed. Block outside sights and sounds as much as possible by lowering the blinds and turning on the television or radio.

Identify Your Dog's Stress Signals

Dogs that are fearful may whine, pant or drool, pace, tremble, attach themselves to you, or look for a place to hide. Acknowledge this and know when to comfort your dog.

Be Sure Your Dog Is Easy to Identify

Many dogs take flight when they're frightened. If your dog makes a run for it, are their tags and microchip information up to date? Do you have a current photo? Identification is extremely important in case your dog gets loose. Make sure to keep collar ID tag contact information up to date, have permanent ID with a microchip should his collar fall off, and always alert your pet recovery service to any changes in contact information so they can find you when your dog is recovered. For more information about Microchips and Pet Recovery Services, visit AKCReunite.org.



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Get Professional Help if Needed

If your pet's anxiety is severe, make an appointment with your vet, so you can discuss a medication that could help soothe your dog, and/or solicit assistance from an animal behaviorist. This may help them calm down during these traumatic times.

When You Celebrate

Keep Your Dog Inside in a Safe Space

If you go outside, watch your dog for signs of stress and to talk to and reassure them using a pet camera. Set up an area away from doors and windows, for example in a basement or large closet, where noise is muted. Some dogs feel safest in a crate with their blankets, toys, and treats. Consider whether to bring your dog to a Fourth of July party elsewhere, even if it's just next door.

Secure Your Doors and Windows

A dog that is truly terrified may bolt through a screen to find a safe place to hide. By making sure everything is shut, you'll reduce the likelihood of them getting out.

Keep Your Dog on a Leash

When you need to take your dog outside to do his business, go with him and hold on to the leash even in your own backyard, in case fireworks go off during this time.

Keep Curious Dogs Away From Fire

Not only do fireworks, sparklers, and glow sticks scare dogs, but they also contain hazardous chemicals and can burn when they're hot. Barbecue grills, charcoal, matches, and lighter fluid should also be kept out of reach.

Don't Let Guests Feed Them Table Scraps

Avoid scraps from the grill. While tempting to our pets, any sudden change to your pets' diet can cause stomach upset. In addition, certain foods like onions, avocado, grapes, and raisins can be toxic for dogs.



Alphotographic/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images

Keep Your Dog Cool Inside the House

July can be a particularly hot time of year. You're your pet is outside, make sure clean water and shady areas are available. Stay alert for signs that they could be overheating, and never leave your dog in the car on a warm day.

Stay Away From Sunscreen or Insect Repellents Made for Humans

Your dog may lick them and get sick. Keep citronella candles, insect coils, and tiki torch products out of reach. They can be extremely irritating to the stomach, lungs, and central nervous system if ingested.

Comfort Your Nervous Dog

If your dog exhibits signs of severe stress, stay calm and use a soothing tone of voice as you pet them slowly and gently.

After the Holiday

Check Your Yard

Before letting your dog outside to play, look for and remove all fireworks debris, which can be dangerous if ingested. Also remove full trashcans, trash bags, beer cans, drink cups, and food scraps that your pet could get into.

5 Summer Barbecue Safety Tips for Dog Owners

By **AKC Staff**, Updated: Mar 26, 2024

Warm weather means cookouts, pool parties, and long days spent outdoors. While most dogs love to spend time outside, there are safety precautions to keep in mind before planning your next backyard BBQ bash. Keep these five tips in mind to ensure you and your dog will have a stress-free summer cookout.

1. Make Sure Your Dog Can't Escape

It only takes one guest to leave a door or gate open for your pet to get loose. Make sure visitors know you have a dog, and if people are coming and going frequently, consider putting your dog on a lead or in a bedroom or crate.

For any dog, it's always a good idea to give your dog some private space to retreat to in case they get overwhelmed. Be proactive and give

your dog intentional breaks — put your dog’s bed or their crate in a quiet area of the home separate from the gathering.



s-eyerkaufner/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images

Puzzle toys or food-stuffed toys can keep your dog occupied. This is an especially good idea if you are going to be distracted and not able to give full attention to your dog, such as when you are putting food on the grill.

2. Keep Your Dog Cool

If your party is outdoors, be sure your pet has plenty of water and access to shade. On especially hot days, it may be best to leave your dog inside. If your pet starts showing signs of heatstroke (restlessness or agitation with vigorous panting or bright-red gums), bring them to a cooler area and contact your veterinarian immediately.

Swimming and water games can be a great way to keep your dog cool. If your pup does decide to join in on swimming, follow safety protocol and make sure they are supervised at all times.

3. Avoid Giving Them Table Scraps

Remind your guests not to give your dog any people food. Barbecued food, especially, can be greasy and upset your pet’s stomach. Keep an eye on the food to make sure your dog does not grab anything. More importantly, certain foods (such as onion, avocado, and grapes) can be toxic. If you’re uncertain if a food is safe for a dog or not, check our full list of cookout foods that are hazardous for dogs or ask your veterinarian before giving it to your pet.



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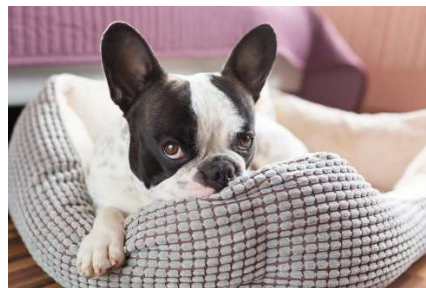
It's a good idea to make sure your dog eats their meal before your barbecue starts so they will be less tempted by hunger. If your pup is feeling left out while everyone else enjoys their meal, treat them to some BBQ-flavored dog treats.

4. Keep Your Dog Away From Fire

Safety first. Keep your dog away from the grill while you are using it. The open flame is very dangerous. Your dog should not be allowed near the grill even after you have finished cooking, as it stays hot for a while. This shouldn't be a problem if your dog is trained to stay away from the grill or if your grill is in an area inaccessible to your dog.

5. Prevent Canine Anxiety

Many summer holidays call for fireworks or other loud noises, much to the dismay of our skittish, four-legged friends. Remember that dogs don't understand those loud explosions are only for fun. Many dogs each year run away from home after being spooked by these loud sounds.



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Playing recordings of fireworks accompanied by treats in months ahead can help desensitize dogs to the sound of fireworks. Otherwise, confine your

pet in a safe place, offer them treats during the fireworks, and/or talk to your veterinarian about medication options or possible anxiety aids (such as CBD oil for dogs).

Hello Fellow PVIWC Club Members and Supporters,

I hope this message finds you and your hounds doing well. Our 2025 Irish Wolfhound Specialty Dog Show was a success! For those of you that supported your Club, THANK YOU! For those of you that may not know what a Specialty Dog Show is all about, I encourage you to join us for two days to see and watch a dog show only for Irish Wolfhounds.

As a valued member of the Potomac Valley Irish Wolfhound Club, you and your family have opportunities to join the Club in the events throughout the year as well as help at the dog show. Plan to join us March 29-30, 2026. PLEASE READ: The Club could use you! We are an independent specialty show. Most of the same people have carried the specialty for years, and age and health are taking their toll. No Skills Required: If you can read, write, have a great speaking voice, or if you are the quiet type, the Club can use you. If you want to sell raffle tickets, the Club can use you. We need you as a Club member.

Do you already know your schedule for March 2026, and know you can't make it? That is okay, you can still help by financially Sponsoring ribbons, trophies, prizes, or make a General Show Fund Donation for 2026. How? Easy, simply make a check out payable to PVIWC Treasurer (memo note "General Show Funds", or ribbons, etc,) and send to: PVIWC Treasurer, 1348 Sycamore Ave, Annapolis, MD 21403. You may also pay via PayPal using the email pviwctreasury@gmail.com. Please add a note breaking down the amounts of the payment – dues, trophies, ribbons, General Show Fund, rescue, etc.

If you have questions about your Club Membership dues or if you think you have already paid, please send an inquiry to: pviwctreasury@gmail.com or to the Club's Secretary, Susan Wine at sulowine@aol.com

Remember, PVIWC welcomes volunteers for the following positions:

Set up (Friday or Saturday requirement) / Catalog sales / Armbands / Stewards / Grounds / Breakdown (needed Monday afternoon)

and Judges Hospitality (responsible for judges' transportation, taking them out to dinner, escorting

them to the ring, and so on)

SAVE the DATE:

PVIWC 2026 Specialty Show

Sunday and Monday, March 29-30, 2026

Interested in volunteering? Please contact Tammy at elkhorniws@gmail.com

 **VOLUNTEER CALL-OUT!** 

OBEDIENCE & RALLY TRIALS



Sunday, March 29, 2026

- ✓ VOLUNTEER FOR 3 HOURS
- ✓ LIGHT STEWARDING DUTIES
- ✓ MEAL MAY BE PROVIDED
- ✓ MUST ARRIVE 30 MINUTES BEFORE JUDGING

**We need RELIABLE VOLUNTEERS to help support
our 2026 Obedience and Rally Trials.**

Note: Volunteers may not be entered in Obedience or Rally
on this date due to stewarding responsibilities.

TASKS INCLUDE:

- Issuing armbands to competitors
- Checking ring equipment, judges' bag, and catalog
- Supporting ring flow & accident cleanup
- Reporting issues to Show Chair or Secretary
- Escorting the judge to lunch

Your help keeps the event running smoothly — we couldn't do it without you!

SIGN UP OR LEARN MORE:

elkhorniws@gmail.com

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Protect Your Dog From These Hidden Hazards of Hot Weather

By **AKC Staff**, Updated: Mar 14, 2024



jtyler/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images

Summer means ice cream, hikes in the woods with your dog, swimming in ponds, running through fields, and generally having a ball while soaking up the warmth.

All that fun in the sun can have a downside, though. Most people are aware of the more obvious hazards that come with long, warm days — heat stroke, drowning, disease-spreading mosquitoes, and fleas and ticks. But here are some other hazards that may not be on your radar screen.

Foxtails and Other “Mean Seeds”

“Mean seeds” is a term that has been coined to refer to foxtails or any number of plants, including Canada wild rye and cheatgrass, that have barbed grass awns or seed heads. Dogs may pick up a grass awn on an ear, eye, mouth, nose, or between their toes – and awns can even burrow directly into their skin. These plants and seeds can be particularly dangerous, causing pneumonia if the dog inhales them. The shape of the barbs allows the seed to continuously move forward, traveling inside the dog from the nose to the brain or into a lung, and spreading bacteria that cause infections.

Disease caused by grass awns is a growing problem among hunting dogs. But any dog can come in contact with these plants when running or

walking through tall grass, since grass awns are common throughout North America, especially from May through December. Dogs with long ears and coats may be more likely to pick up the barbs.

Embedded foxtails are painful. Your dog may have an embedded foxtail or similar barbed awn if you see these symptoms:

- Swelling between the toes, limping, or licking one area of the foot
- Scratching at an ear and/or tilting or shaking their head
- Pawing at an eye that is red, swollen, or has a discharge
- Frequent sneezing and nasal discharge, as well as repetitive sneezing and coughing
- Persistent licking of the genitals



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Preventing Problems Caused by Foxtails and Other Barbed Awns

- Keep your yard clear of foxtails and other tall grasses.
- Trim your dog's hair during foxtail season.
- Avoid taking your dog to areas or hiking trails where you see foxtails or any overgrown fields of tall grasses.
- If you do walk through any area where foxtails are growing, check your dog for visible seeds, especially between the toes. Run a fine-toothed comb through their coat and look for awns in their fur. Also, check the ears, face, and mouth. Remove awns before they start to burrow with a brush or tweezers.

- If the awn is embedded and surrounded by red and swollen skin, take the dog to your veterinarian.
- If your dog starts to exhibit strange symptoms of illness, especially sneezing or breathing problems, see your veterinarian right away and mention that you've been in a place where foxtails were growing.
- If there's a strong chance you won't be able to avoid locations where foxtails grow when you're out hiking or hunting with your dog, consider covering their paws with dog booties.

Toxic Algae

Algae are a normal part of the ecosystem of ponds, lakes, and other bodies of water, including fresh and salt water. Algae can even grow in swimming pools that aren't cleaned frequently. However, some varieties of blue-green algae, also known as cyanobacteria, are toxic and often fatal to dogs, causing damage to skin, liver, and nervous system.

They are most dangerous in a form called a "bloom," which is easy to spot. Blooms will have a horrible odor and a distinctive appearance, looking most often like green paint or pea soup. Toxic algae blooms can also be brown and red.

Cyanobacteria can also affect people. Most people will avoid a dip in a swimming hole that looks like a pot of stinky pea soup, but dogs love that kind of stuff and will dive right in. Within the last few years, dogs have died after swimming in waters infested with blue-green algae, mainly in the southern United States but also in Colorado and Minnesota. Licking their paws after just walking in the algae can even poison dogs.

Toxic blue-green algae prefer warmer water, and the Environmental Protection Agency reports that climate change and the resulting warmer water may increase the occurrence and threat of blue-green algae. In 2019, blue-green mats of algae blanketed more than 1,500 square kilometers of Lake Erie's surface by August, toxic algae forced officials to close New Jersey's largest lake to recreational activities, and officials in

North Carolina and Georgia warned dog owners to keep their pets out of the water after at least four dogs died swimming in contaminated water.

Symptoms of Blue-Green Algae Toxicity

Symptoms of blue-green algae toxicity can occur within a few minutes to a few hours of exposure, and dogs can die within one hour. These symptoms include:

- Vomiting and diarrhea
- Bloody or black, tarry stool
- Pale gums
- Muscle tremors and seizures
- Excessive salivation
- Difficulty breathing
- Shock and coma

According to Dr. Jerry Klein, Chief Veterinary Officer for the AKC, there is no antidote for the toxins created by blue-green algae. "It's especially important to avoid bodies of water that are infected, and if your dog does swim in an infected area, seek immediate veterinary care. Dogs who recover may have long-term liver damage or other complications. It can depend on the type of toxin, size of the dog, how much he has ingested, and how quickly he is treated."



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Before you and your dog go swimming, it's a good idea to check the website of your state's natural resources agency to find out where blue-

green algae is a problem. Here are some other tips to prevent blue-green algae poisoning:

- Keep your dog leashed around bodies of water.
- Don't let your dog drink out of ponds and lakes.
- Err on the side of caution. If you see suspicious-looking algae in the water, keep your dog out.
- Rinse the dog off with fresh water if they come in contact with blue-green algae (wash your hands or use gloves) and take them to the veterinarian immediately.
- Watch for symptoms including vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, jaundice, and rashes.

Sea Grant, New York offers a very helpful brochure called "Dogs and Harmful Algal Blooms."

Myiasis (Maggot Infestation)

Flies reproduce by laying eggs, which hatch and release maggots. Myiasis is an infestation of the maggot larvae of flies. This condition may occur with neglected dogs who are tied up outside, but it can also infest well-cared-for pets. It can arise so quickly — it takes less than 48 hours for larvae to hatch and reach a size of about a grain of rice.

Elderly and incontinent dogs, or those with open wounds or bacterial skin infections, are most susceptible because certain odors will attract flies. The flies will land on the dog and lay eggs. When the larvae emerge, they'll hook on to the skin and start to feed, resulting in serious lesions.



“If you suspect myiasis, get to a veterinarian as soon as possible,” says Dr. Klein. “Treatment will include manually removing the maggots, which sometimes requires shaving hair at the site, application of a topical insecticide, and oral antibiotic medication often for several weeks.”

Prevention is the wisest route, and it entails keeping a dog indoors if they have wounds or other obvious conditions that might attract flies. Keep wounds clean and be sure to have skin problems treated by a veterinarian. If your dog is old or incontinent, keep them inside and keep their coat clean of urine and feces. And if you see flies buzzing around your pet, shoo them away.

Keep Your Dog Safe in the **Summer Heat**

Limit Activity on Hot Days

Stick to short walks in the early morning or evening when it's cooler. Be sure to bring plenty of water.



Never Leave Your Dog in a Car

The inside of an automobile can soar to dangerous temperatures in minutes, even in the shade or with the windows cracked.



Know the Signs of Overheating

Dogs cool themselves by panting, but on hot, humid days, that may not be sufficient. Watch out for nonstop panting, excessive drooling, hot skin, weakness, and lack of coordination.



Keep Your Hound Hydrated

Set up water stations around your home to ensure your dog has a constant supply. Add a few ice cubes to keep the water cooler longer.



Be Aware of Your Dog's Risk

Pugs, bulldogs, and other brachycephalic or “flat-faced” breeds are prone to heatstroke since they pant less efficiently than dogs with longer snouts.



The risk is also greater if a dog has a dark coat, is very young or old, is overweight, or has a heart or respiratory condition.

Prevent Sunburn

The risk is greater for dogs with short hair, pink skin, or light-colored fur. Keep them out of the sun during peak hours (from 10am to 4pm).



Cooling an Overheated Dog

Move your dog inside or out of direct sunlight. Use a hose to mist your dog's body or apply cool, wet towels to your dog's armpit and groin regions. Avoid ice packs. If you suspect heatstroke, seek veterinary care immediately.



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Getting Started in AKC Fast CAT

By Caroline Coile, PhD, Published: Sep 04, 2024 **AKC**

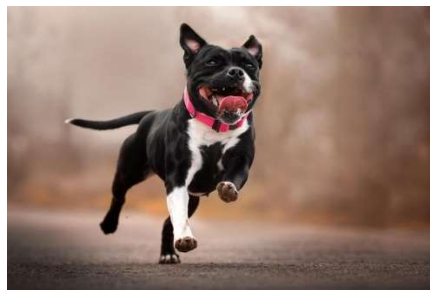
Does your dog love to run or chase? Fast CAT, which stands for Coursing Ability Test, is one of the most popular AKC sports and a great opportunity to test just how fast your dog is. In this sport, dogs complete a timed 100-yard dash, running one at a time as they chase a lure. To increase your enjoyment, follow these steps to get your dog ready!

How Do I Enter a Fast CAT Trial?

Both purebred and mixed breed dogs are eligible to compete, as long as they're individually registered with the AKC. Although dogs can practice coursing at a younger age, to participate in Fast CAT they must be at least 12 months old.

The best way to find a Fast CAT event is to visit the AKC events site. The "premium list" will list all the details of the event, including contact information, in case you need more details. Look for the local club Chair or Secretary as your best contact point.

You may also find out about events by contacting a local kennel club or coursing club. Many clubs hold Fast CAT events in conjunction with conformation shows.



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The good thing about most Fast CAT trials is that you can usually enter on the day of the trial. Typical entry fees range from \$20 to \$25. If you enter a trial on the day of the event, the entry fee may be an additional \$5 or \$10 more. Fees for practice or "fun" runs are typically less expensive,

ranging from \$5 to \$15. However, on busy days, regular runs get priority over fun runs.

Training Your Dog to Run in Fast CAT

It's never too late to train your dog to chase a lure. In most trials, the lure is a white kitchen garbage bag on a line. You can introduce the pole lure to your dog in several ways. The best way is to put your dog on one side of a wire fence and tease them with the lure from the other side. Flick it back and forth, and, once in a while, flick it into the yard with the dog. Let them catch it occasionally, but not too often. Next, go inside the yard with them. Run around your dog, swishing the lure in a circle, and let them chase and occasionally catch the lure.

While it's fun to run your dog with the pole lure, it's crucial to be careful when you first start training. If your dog is excited about the lure, they may run blindly after it, and you can accidentally run them into fences, trees, or other people or dogs. They can also leap wildly into the air when the lure changes direction and could hurt themselves when landing.

But what if your dog doesn't seem interested? Try buying a soft, closable bag that you can put yummy treats in, and attach that to the garbage bag. Train them incrementally, so they learn that when they catch the bag, they'll get the treats. You could even put the treats in a sandwich bag, so they bite the baggie open when they catch it, and automatically get the treats. This training method will likely take longer, as you are training them to chase rather than just letting their natural instinct do all the work for you, but it can be done.



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Finally, remove the toy, so they're just chasing the garbage bag. You can have a friend hold them, while you walk about 50 feet away, then start running straight away, dragging the bag behind you. Have your friend let them go and praise them when they catch the bag. If you repeat this, they'll get the idea of starting fast.

Finally, you'll want to run them on a real lure. The easiest way is to find a Fast CAT trial and sign up for a practice run. In these events, you can usually run alongside your dog and urge them to chase, which you cannot do during an official event. It's important to note that practice runs are often held on large fields. If your dog likes to run away, it may be best to wait until you've trained them to come to you reliably before participating.

What Do I Do on the Day of the Trial?

If your dog will be competing later in the day, feed them a very light breakfast. If your dog might run within two hours of when they usually eat, it may be best to put off breakfast until after they've completed their run and cooled down.

If you have a pre-appointed run time, be sure to show up at least a half hour early. More often, runs are arranged in the order you show up. The earlier you arrive, the better your chance of not standing in line. Check in or hand in your entry as soon as you get to the event. There should be a table with a few people behind it taking entries and checking dogs. Have your dog with you when you arrive there.

Inspection Before the Run



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Every dog will be asked to trot in a straight line away from and back toward an inspection person, who will check to ensure each dog isn't injured in some way. The inspection person will check each female by wiping her vulva with a tissue to make sure she's not in season. If a dog is lame or in season, they can't run, and the club will refund your entry fee.

Once you've passed inspection, you need to make sure your dog empties its bowels before running. If they stop on the track to do so, they will not get a do-over and will automatically fail. In addition, carrying the added weight will slow them down. Try to get this done before checking in, but if you can't, inform the check-in crew that you need to walk your dog before running.

Warming Up

Now that your dog has pooped and peed, you'll want them to warm up, just like a human racer does. If you can, trot them around for about five minutes. If it's a warm day, make sure your dog doesn't get overheated. Bring water in a spritzer bottle and spray any bare skin to cool them before running. If you're standing in line before running, make sure your dog stays in the shade.

Ideally, you'll have a friend with you, as you'll need two people: one to release, and the other to catch your dog. It's against the rules for you to do both, and it would take far too much time for you to release, then call your dog back, or run down to the end to catch it. If you're alone, ask the committee to help you find somebody — most people will be excited to help. It's usually advised to have the stranger release your dog, and you catch it.

Getting Ready to Run

It's important to respect the other dogs ahead of the run, and avoid standing near the track. If your dog barks as another dog runs by, it could distract or scare that dog and ruin its run. If your dog barks or gets upset in line, try to move them away from other dogs that could be upset.



Photo courtesy Mary Huff/Tails in Design

Some crews will use the following terms to let you know who's next to run:

- "To the line!" means it's your turn to walk into the track area and to the starting line.
- "On deck!" means you are next in line.
- "In the hole!" means you are next, after the "On Deck" dog.

Most Fast CAT Trials have more entries than time, so it's important that you respond when they call you to be in any of these places and get in line.

What Do I Do Once at the Starting Line?

Before your run, wait for the huntmaster to tell you when to enter the starting area. Ask the huntmaster to check your dog's collar and leash for any safety concerns, and go over how you will release the dog. Your dog can wear a collar but should not have any hanging tags.

The lure may still need to be run into its place at the start, so hold on tight to your dog, and make sure both of you are clear from the line. The dog's front feet must be within the start box, but their back feet can be outside of it. Some dogs tend to jump around and may end up facing the wrong way.

Once in place, the huntmaster will ask you if you're ready. When you say yes, the huntmaster will then check that the lure operator is prepared, and then check to make sure you're still ready. If yes, they'll signal the lure operator to start the lure. Once the lure is in motion and has a small head

start, the huntmaster will yell, "Tally-ho!" Your job is to release your dog when you hear the "T" in Tally-ho.



Brian Bastista

Here's a tip: Watch your dog, not the lure. If you watch the lure, you're much more likely to let go of your dog too soon. Timing starts when your dog breaks the electronic timing device beam just past the start line, not when the lure starts to move. If the lure is too close, your dog may not run as fast.

You aren't allowed to call your dog back to you at the start line once it has completed the course. However, some dogs do run back to the start, so, once they're committed, you can encourage them to return.

The catcher should be at the finish when the dog enters the start area. The catcher reaches the catch area by walking alongside, not on, the track to the catch area gate. Never open that gate until told to do so, as a loose dog could be inside. Once inside the catch area, avoid stepping on or touching the line. As the running dog approaches, don't stand in their path. They may plow right into you!

What Do I Do After the Run?

Once your dog is securely leashed, promptly exit the catch area, so the next dog can run. Walk your dog so they can cool down. In hot weather, there may be a cool off hose or pool for your dog to enjoy. Walk your dog until they quit panting hard, and offer them sips of water.

If your dog qualifies, an official will have their ribbon with their time on it after their run. This may be in a separate tent, often near the lure operator halfway down the course. Be sure to get it, as it will tell you how many

points they earned. To qualify, they had to run the entire length without interruption.

If you've entered a second run that same day, let them rest until it's time for the next run — then do it all over again!

How to Train Your Dog for Fast CAT

By Sassafra Patterdale, CPDT-KA, CTDI , Updated: Sep 16, 2024 **AKC**

AKC Fast CAT (Coursing Ability Test) is a timed 100-yard dash where dogs start at one end of a straight course and chase a lure to the end. This fun and fast-paced sport has become extremely popular with dogs of all sizes. Many dogs take naturally to Fast CAT and to get started there is very little training necessary. While most dogs will start running naturally after the lure, it's important to ensure your dog is physically prepared to compete in this sport. This means being in overall good physical health, being at a healthy weight, and having the muscle tone necessary for high impact running.

The Importance of Conditioning

While Fast CAT is a wonderful beginner-friendly sport to get your dog involved with, you need to make sure that your dog is physically fit enough to run. The first step towards training and conditioning your dog for Fast CAT should be a trip to the veterinarian. Explain to your dog's vet that you want to get involved with Fast CAT, have your vet do a complete physical, and make sure they feel like your dog is in the right physical condition for this high-energy sport.



Photo by MLBaer Photography

If you get serious about Fast CAT or your dog has a history of orthopedic injuries, it's a good idea to consider bringing your dog to a veterinary physical therapist for further evaluation and to help provide you with specialized exercise for your dog. Veterinary specialists can also provide therapeutic support to Fast CAT dogs like laser therapy, which can treat strains and support healing after injuries. Just like you wouldn't go out and start running a marathon without training, we need to think of sports training the same for our dogs. Proper conditioning can help our dogs to avoid injuries while running, and also support our dogs running faster, and get them closer to having their names on the AKC Fast CAT rankings.

Building Muscle and Strength Training

Strength training is important for all canine athletes, including those who participate in Fast CAT. Improving your dog's core strength has been shown to help prevent serious injuries in canine athletes like knee ligament tears. We want our dogs to be as strong as possible before we ask them to participate in strenuous exercises like running Fast CAT. Here are some exercises you can start doing at home with your dog to keep them running strong at Fast CAT:

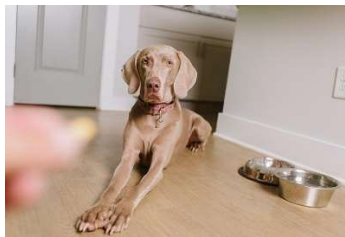
Balance Training

One of the best ways to help your dog build stronger core strength is to work on balance skills. You can do balance work at home with your dog using couch pillows. You can also purchase balancing equipment like wobble boards or inflatable exercise disks for your dog. When your dog is on the (safe) but unstable balance equipment, they're experiencing inconsistent movement under their feet, encouraging them to use their muscles to steady themselves. To start, use treats to lure your dog onto the wobble board or other balance equipment, then praise and treat your dog for getting on. When your dog is comfortable getting onto the balance equipment and standing, you can ask for more behaviors like sit, wave, down, or spin. Practicing these tricks, skills, and behaviors on balance

equipment allows our dogs to work their core muscles as they find and maintain balance while in motion.

Play Bow

Before dogs start running, we really want our dogs to be stretched and warmed up, and we want to always be working on their overall conditioning. The bow stretch strengthens your dog's core, as well as their shoulders, hamstrings, and spine. There are a couple of ways to teach your dog to bow. You can "capture" the behavior by marking every time with a verbal marker like "yes" or a clicker when your dog naturally offers the bow behavior, and then add a verbal cue of choice. Or you can use treats to gently lure your dog's head down and back into the bow position, marking and treating once your dog's elbows go down to the floor and their bottom raises in the air. With practice, you'll be able to fade out the lure and put the behavior on a cue of choice like "bow" or "stretch."



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Cookie Stretches

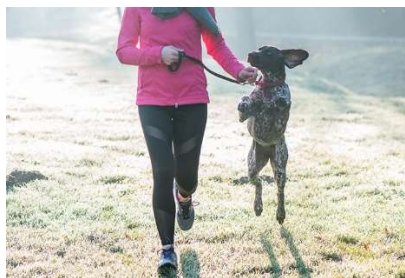
Cookie stretches involve using treats to gently lure your dog into stretching their body. For this exercise, the goal is for your dog to bring their nose to different body parts, like their hip, knee, or back paws. The stretch works on your dog's overall flexibility, which can help prevent injuries, increase fitness, and help their athleticism while running. When your dog is standing calmly, get their attention with a cookie on their nose and, with a slow fluid motion, bring your dog's nose back to touch their hip on one side. Hold that position for a few seconds. Then, gently bring your dog's head back to looking straight forward. Next, lure your dog back to touch their other hip with their nose. Hold again, and then back to a natural standing position.

Keep working on this stretch touching different parts of your dog's body, including their hips, knees, back feet, front feet, and chest.

Be sure to keep your treat movements slow and gentle, so your dog gets a nice calm stretch. This cookie stretch helps to work on your dog's overall balance and works your dog's core and spine. While stretching, pay attention to if your dog is reluctant to stretch one way, seems unsteady, or if your dog seems tighter and less flexible going one direction. If you notice any stretching issues, this is something that's a good idea to bring up to your dog's veterinarian or veterinary physical therapist before their next Fast CAT run as it could be a sign of strain or injury.

Warming Up Before Running

Fast CAT events are fun and exciting for dogs and people. Even though you might enjoy the chance to socialize with your dog-loving friends, we never want to take our dogs directly out of the car or crate and ask them to run right away. Similarly, we don't want to take them directly from a Fast CAT run and put them back into a crate without a chance to cool down after running. Warming your dog's muscles up before they run will help them run faster and can also prevent injuries.



©Laszlo Lorik – stock.adobe.com

Walking is a gentle full-body exercise that gets your dog's leg muscles and back engaged and gets your dog's heart rate up. Before your Fast CAT run, try to spend about 10 minutes walking with your dog to help them get warmed up and work out any stiffness from having been sleeping or traveling to the dog show. After running, take your dog on a gentle walk to help slow down their heart rate. You can also incorporate any stretching

your dog knows and is comfortable with into your warm-up and cool-down routines before and after runs.

Don't Just Be Weekend Runners

Fast CAT is a sport you and your dog can have a great time jumping into without spending months or years training before competing, but it's essential to take precautions to make sure your dog is in good athletic shape, properly conditioned, and prepared to run. While Fast CAT is an excellent exercise for our dogs, we don't want it to be the only exercise they're getting. Participating in the [AKC FIT DOG program](#) is a great way to structure your dog's daily fitness routine, including regular walks, balance work to build core strength, and stretching to keep them well-conditioned. By focusing on keeping your dog well-conditioned to run, you can not only increase your dog's speed, but also decrease the likelihood of them getting injured.



Reflections On A Horrid Dog

By Wolfhound Poetry, Philip Santilhano

Reflections on a horrid dog
with manners, sadly, like a hog

I just now saw a purple Chow
it had a purple Chow tongue
and it's the truth, on this I vow
turned round, a purple Chow bum!

Dougal [D.Lit]

(Dad's note: A blast from the past from the late, much missed Dougal. The original Dad's note is hereunder:

Dad's note: Those of you who have followed Dougal's meanderings through the lands of rhyme may recall that he fell in love with the Purple Cow poem, and I had the devil's own job getting him to stop writing about all manner of cows.

Some of you may also recall that I have written about an extremely aggressive and obnoxious chow that inhabits the property situated next to our vet's consulting rooms. Every time we walk past this property, the chow makes a frightful fuss and tries to get at our dogs. Dougal, in particular, does not like this horrid little dog one bit.

I am not sure how his liking for the purple cow poem, and his dislike for the chow, ended up in a single poem, but they did. That is the mind of Dougal.)

Annaolis Irish Festival

Pics by Daniella St. Cyr





Carroll County Celtic Festival

Pics by Kathy Conant, Isaac Coffel, Kathy Lewis





Celtic Fling

Pics by Danielle St. Cyr, Kathy Lewis, Elizabeth Coffel





Events 101

The Potomac Valley Irish Wolfhound club is invited to a number of events throughout the year. Each one is different and comes with its own rules and regulations. We would like our members to understand some of the protocol when it comes to attending one of our events.

- An invitation to an event is a privilege. As a club we are required to follow the events rules and regulations.
- When attending an event we are considered a vendor. We usually can enter by a 'back or side' entrance. There is a need to check in and receive a pass. The reason we ask who will be attending an event is to determine the number of passes we need.
- For each event we have a contact person coordinating with the event. This person fills out all needed applications and forms. The coordinator then gathers the needed information and details for the event. The information is then provided to the secretary to send out to the membership.
- The member coordinating is responsible for providing club needed items such as canopy, table, and setting up our area. Having a small table and display is nice. This duty may be delegated to someone else.
- Space provided is determined by the event. Some only give us a 10 X 10 space. This fits one canopy. Others will give us an area that we can spread out in. Then we can put up more than one canopy.
- Canopies are set up for the members and their wolfhounds attending. The canopy is not for your own personal use but to provide shade and cover for everyone as needed.
- When you attend an event, you need to bring what you need for you, your family, and your wolfhound. Items to bring would be chairs, ground cover,

something for your wolfhound to lay on, food and water for your wolfhound. If it is hot, bring a battery-operated fan. We have a small solar generator and fan we bring sometimes. There may be some restrictions on bringing in outside food for yourself and family. Of course, one of those neat little wagons is great for transporting everything.

- There is also the need to interact with the public. The wolfhounds are always a huge attraction. It is nice when we have a few of them in attendance. This gives you the opportunity to take turns walking around and enjoy the festival and music. Our booth should always have at least one wolfhound there while the event is going on.
- Because your wolfhound will be interacting with the public, he/she needs to get along with people. **Your wolfhound needs to be clean and groomed. The public, especially children, will be petting your wolfhound.** This means if you use flea and tick prevention that is put on the skin try to have at least a 48-hour period prior to the event.
- Of course, when we have several wolfhounds together there is the chance of some unfriendly interaction. **You are responsible for your wolfhound.** You should always be aware of him/her. Your wolfhound should always be on a proper leash and in your control. If your wolfhound does not get along with another wolfhound there are ways to avoid a conflict. For example, there was a time that Tyr and Patrick did not get along. If we came into the group and Patrick was there already it was an issue. Patrick's owner would take him out and walk around while we brought Tyr into the group. She would bring Patrick back. Things were fine then. Maybe if it can not be settled you just have to alternate who is sitting in our booth and who walks around. Things will happen. We want to avoid any confrontations. We want all attending to have an enjoyable time. Being aware of your surroundings is important. **DO NOT bring a female in**

or close to being in season. Many difficulties come from have a bitch just coming into or out of season.



PVIWC List of Meeting & Events 2025

March 30 & 31	<i>Specialty Harford County Equestrian Center, Bel Air, MD (Meeting Following Judging), Harford County Equestrian Ctr, 608 N Tollgate Rd, Bel Air, MD 21014</i>
April 6	'Paint Your Pet' Fundraiser, Checkerspot Brewery, Baltimore, 3PM
April 11 & 12	Dills Celtic Festival, Dills Tavern, 237 N Baltimore St, Dillsburg, PA 17019
April 19& 20	<i>Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Carolinas Specialty</i>
April 26	Southern MD Celtic Festival, Jefferson Patterson Park, 10515 Mackall Rd, St Leonard, MD 20685
May 2 & 3	Annapolis Irish Festival, Anne Arundel County Fairgrounds, 1450 Generals Hwy, Crownsville, MD
May 3 & 4	Faerie Festival Marshy Point Rocky Point Park, 2200 Rocky Point Rd, Essex, MD 21221
May 18	Show Wrap Up Meeting
May 25 - 29	<i>IWCA National Specialty Cache County Fairgrounds, Logan, UT</i>
June 14 & 15	Carroll County Celtic Festival, Carroll County Ag Center, 706 Agriculture Ctr Dr, Westminster, MD 21157
June 8	Regular Meeting – Brian Boru Irish Rest. 489 Ritchie Hwy #103, Severna Park, MD
June 21	Penn Mar Irish Festival, Pheasant Run Greenhouse 10241 Brillheart Rd, Glen Rock, PA 17327
June 27 - 29	Celtic Fling <i>(with a concert on Friday night)</i> Mt Hope Winery, 2775 Lebanon Rd, Manheim, PA 17545
August 10	Regular Meeting
August 30 & 31	Virginia Scottish Games, 5089 Old Tavern Rd, The Plains, VA 20198
September 14	Fun Day
September 20-21	PA Renn Faire Shamrocks and Shenanigans Weekend, Mt Hope Estate & Winery, 2775 Lebanon Rd, Manheim, PA 17545

October 5 & 6 October 19	<i>Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Delaware Valley Specialty</i> Regular Meeting
November 7 - 9 November 16	Maryland Irish Festival, 2200 York Rd, Timonium, MD 21093 Regular Meeting
December 14 December ~16 December	Holiday Party Montgomery's, 800 River Rd, Sykesville, MD 21784 Druid Hill Winter Solstice 5Miler, 1 Safari Place, Baltimore, MD 21217 Military Bowl Parade, Annapolis, MD

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

Need Volunteers to Host

If you are bringing a non-club member with a wolfhound to an event, please have them complete this form. Carry a couple of blank forms with you to events for visitors who come to hang out at the event with us. Give any completed forms to Susan Wine, secretary. This protects the club in case of any issues.:

LIABILITY WAIVER AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK NOTICE

I [print name]

agree and understand that by attending this Potomac Valley Irish Wolfhound Club event as a **non-member**, I am voluntarily assuming the risks to me, my child, or my dog that are inherent in interacting with large animals, which may behave unpredictably or may not be restrained. I acknowledge that the Club is making no promises or representations about the dogs attending its events or how they may behave toward me, my child, or my dog.

In recognition of these risks, I am voluntarily and freely waiving any liability that the Club, its members, the members' dogs may have to me for any injuries or damages sustained by me, my child, or my dog as a result of participation in this Club event, whatever the cause may be. I also agree that as a non-member I will indemnify and hold harmless the club, club members, or dogs belonging to club members, from any liability caused by me, my child, or my dog, during this event if damage or injury should occur to the club, its members and their dogs, or to event grounds and the general public.

I understand that I am welcome to pursue membership with the PVIWC and that I can find a membership application at www.pviwc.org/membership or by asking a club officer. I agree that I do not represent the Club by attending this event.

I also agree that the Club and I will pursue private mediation should any disputes arise between us, and that the laws of Maryland will govern, regardless of where the events giving rise to our dispute occurred.

Participant signature:

Date:

Parent/Guardian of :

Contact Information:

TO BE COMPLETED BY CLUB MEMBER

Name of Event:

Name of Member:

Signature of Member:

