



Training Tips - Help and Advice for new dog owners

Dog Showing Information – Getting Ready for Your First Dog Show

Whether you own a pedigree dog or a cross breed there are dog shows held around the country to suit everyone. They can be a lot of fun and you meet some lovely like minded people along the way. The information below is by no means concise and is only designed to give a brief outline and introduction to Dog Showing.

Therefore I suggest you log onto the kennel club website www.the-kennel-club.org.uk for more detailed information or contact them by telephone on 0870 606 6750. They will also have the up to date rules and regulations. I have always found them very helpful.

There are Companion dog shows, Open dog shows and Championship dog shows.

The Companion Dog Show

These shows are sometimes held in conjunction with a village fete but not always. The classes held vary from breed classes(for pedigree dogs)from age of 6 months to the most prettiest bitch, most handsome dog, dog the judge would most like to take home and best crossbreed along with many other similar titles.

These are fun shows and in my experience have the best rosettes and generous prizes. Usually cost no more than a couple of pounds to enter per class on the day. These shows are advertised either in local papers or in Our Dogs or Dogs Today.

The Open Dog Show

These shows are for kennel club registered pedigree dogs and have to be pre-booked by sending away for a schedule from the show secretary. These shows are advertised in Our Dogs and Dogs Today, both are excellent dog papers for those doing the show circuit.

Dogs must be at least 6 months of age by the start of the first day of the show. Classes are divided into groups, Gundog, Hound, Terrier, Toy and Pastoral group.

There are also classes for any variety not separately classified (AVNSC) and any variety gundog, any variety terrier etc.

The Championship Dog Show

Again these shows are advertised in the Our Dogs and Dogs Today newspapers. Championship dog shows are where you attend to qualify for Crufts and gain Challenge Certificates to make your dog up to Championship Status. Not all championship dog shows have Challenge Certificates (CCs) on offer and not all breeds have CCs on offer either.

Only registered pedigree dogs are permitted to enter and again these must be pre-booked in advanced. At these shows dogs are usually benched away from the show ring under cover. So a secure collar and bench chain will be required. Some dogs are put in crates.

What To Take With You

Show lead(s), pooh bags, proof of entry, grooming equipment, water for your dog (take more than you may need in case you get held up in traffic on a warm day), food for yourself, drinks for yourself, money/credit cards, towels, bedding for bench, bench chains. Dog crate if required, entry passes, car park passes, water sprayer to cool the dogs down, ice cubes on hot day. Plasters, number clip or number band for entry number, normal lead and collar, comfortable shoes, jacket/coat, sun hat, shades, baby wipes to freshen up your face and camera for when you get placed or better still when you win !!!

Some of the above are more for the championship shows like the passes, however, some two-three day open shows also send out passes before the event.

The Entry Form

When you send for your entry form for the show try to enclose a SAE for your schedule to save time and money for the show secretary.

Once you receive your schedule read through it first cover to cover, take special note of the rules and conditions and the classes available.

Fill in the entry form which is usually in the middle of the schedule BUT NOT until you have taken a photocopy of it in case you make a mistake on the first one.

The name of the sire, dam, and name of your dog needs to be filled in along with the breeders name and your name and address. There is often a box to tick if you DO NOT wish your name and address to be published in the show catalogue. Enter the classes you wish to put your dog in, whether you want a catalogue (I would always reserve one so you can see what ring you are in, how many dogs entered and you can also mark where the dogs were placed).

Check it through and then write your payment details, some shows only take cheques whilst others will take credit cards.

Put a self addressed stamped postcard with 'receipt forshow' and the name of your dog and breed and enclose it with your entry. The show secretary will then return it to you as confirmation they have received your entry. Also get proof of postage so that if in the event you get to a show and you are not on the list of entries you can at least prove you had sent the entry off to begin with. How embarrassing and disappointing to arrive to a show after a very long journey to discover your name is not on the entry sheet.

Post off first class and wait.

NB: You do not need to pre-book companion dog shows.

Other Suggestions

- Go and watch open shows and championship dog shows before you enter your dog.
 - Chat to other people in your breed for advice and support.
 - Watch those who are placed to see how they handled their dog and presented it before the judge.
 - The breed you have chosen, was it stacked (owner places paws and body as it should be) before the judge or did the handler free stand it (trained to stand correctly without being touched). Was it stood face onto the judge or side on. Was it stood on a table or on the ground? Watch and you will learn, if you watch the right people.
 - Find out as much as possible from your breeder which judges prefer their 'type' of dog. Some like finer lines, shorter backs etc. The breed standard is interpreted differently by different judges.
 - Study the breed standard for your breed. Log on to the kennel club web site for further details.
 - Make sure you wear clothing which is not only flattering and comfortable for you but will also compliment your dog. For example, if you show a black dog avoid wearing black clothes. Maybe wear cream or lilac or even pale blue. Wear comfy shoes to run in.
 - Although it is fair to say the judge is looking at your dog on the day, try to be well turned out yourself as well.
 - Make sure your dog has a chance to settle at the show before your class starts and has the opportunity to relieve himself before going in to the ring.
 - Remember, the judge's decision on the day is what counts and therefore if your much loved canine is not placed, please show good sportsmanship and congratulate the winners.
 - I have seen many people in all breeds become consumed with frustration because their dog wasn't placed as highly as the owner felt or not been placed at all. You always take the best dog home and you may be placed another day.
- ... Finally, have fun and good luck!

Call Sophia on 01359 233 049 to discuss your dog training requirements