



**Story County
4-H Dog Project**

Obedience Manual



July 2017

© 2017 Story County 4-H Dog Project Superintendent Erin Topp



Purpose of Obedience

Obedience training is the process in which dogs and humans learn to communicate with each other. It is the process in which dogs learn how to be polite members of a household. It is also how they learn how to be a well-behaved companion in public.

Objectives

The purpose of the Story County 4-H Dog Project is to help 4-H'ers:

- Develop leadership, initiative, self-reliance, and sportsmanship.
- Experience the pride and responsibility of involvement with a dog.
- Learn a greater love for animals and develop a humane attitude toward them.
- Prepare for citizenship responsibilities by working together in groups and supporting community Dog Projects and activities.

At the Dog Show

The armband is worn on your left arm with the number visible. The ring steward will signal you to enter the ring and start the class. Handlers and dogs will enter the ring in the order they are called. The moment you enter the ring with your dog the show has begun.

Clothing

At the Story County Dog Show all exhibitors are required to follow the fair dress code. The 4-H t-shirts will be required for all youth exhibiting at the Story County 4-H Dog Show; they emphasize the importance of proper dress and equal representation of all youth. In addition, the t-shirts will provide a uniform recognition of 4-H youth participating in livestock programs at the Story County Fair.

4-H'ers should be neatly and appropriately dressed when exhibiting in the show ring. All shirts must have sleeves and be tucked in. Dark colored jeans, pants, shorts (fingertip length) or skirt (fingertip length) are acceptable. No torn blue jeans, no commercial advertising on shirts or equipment and no caps are allowed in the show ring. Wearing close-toed and closed-heeled shoes is necessary when showing any animal. Shoes should also be flat and easy to walk in. Avoid wearing jewelry that makes noise or interferes with handling.

4-Her's Attitude

- The handler must be a good sport in the ring and outside the ring. They must exhibit a positive attitude toward other exhibitors as well as the judge.
- Handlers must be alert and attentive to what is going on in the ring, as well as to their dog, and its behavior. Smoothness and continual control of the dog is mandatory.
- Handlers should listen to the judge's directions. If a handler is unable to hear what the judge says for directions, they should ask the judge to please repeat what was said.
- Handlers need to be aware of the judge's presence at all times and should occasionally make brief eye contact with the judge. It is important for a handler to convey that they are enjoying showing their dog.

Competition Rules

Eligibility for Participation

Any dog may be shown in 4-H showmanship, regardless of breed or cross. No dog in season may be shown.

Classes

Beginners Novice A: 1st year for both exhibitor and dog. Dog must not have earned any obedience title. Dogs may wear head halters in the ring.

Heel ON leash 40 pts
Figure 8 ON leash 40 pts
Sit for Examination ON leash 40 pts
Recall (No finish) ON leash 40 pts
Sit/stay Handler walks ring Drop leash 40 pts

Preferred Beginners Novice: A 2+ year exhibitor/1st year dog OR 1st year exhibitor/2+year dog. Dog must not have earned any obedience title. Dogs may wear head halters in the ring.

Heel ON leash 40 pts
Figure 8 ON leash 40 pts
Sit for Examination ON leash 40 pts
Recall (No finish) ON leash 40 pts
Sit/stay Handler walks ring Drop leash 40 pts

Beginners Novice B: 2nd year exhibitor/2nd year dog. Dog must not have earned any obedience title. Dogs may not wear head halters in the ring.

Heel ON leash 40 pts
Figure 8 ON leash 40 pts
Sit for Examination ON leash 40 pts
Recall (No finish) OFF leash 40 pts
Sit/stay Handler walks ring Drop leash 40 pts

Preferred Beginners Novice B: 3+ year exhibitor/2nd year dog OR 2nd year exhibitor/3+ year dog. Dog must not have earned any obedience title. Dogs may not wear head halters in the ring.

Heel ON leash 40 pts
Figure 8 ON leash 40 pts
Sit for Examination ON leash 40 pts
Recall (No finish) OFF leash 40 pts
Sit/stay Handler walks ring Drop leash 40 pts

Novice A: 3rd year exhibitor/3rd year dog. Dog must not have earned any leg towards any CD obedience title. Dogs may not wear head halters in the ring.

Heel & Figure 8 ON leash 40 pts
Stand for examination OFF leash 30 pts
Heel Free OFF leash 40 pts
Recall with finish OFF leash 30 pts
Long Sit (1 min) Drop leash 30 pts
Long Down (3 min) Drop leash 30 pts

Preferred Novice A: 4+ year exhibitor/3rd year dog OR 3rd year exhibitor/4+ year dog. Dog must not have earned any leg towards any CD obedience title. Dogs may not wear head halters in the ring.

Heel & Figure 8 ON leash 40 pts
Stand for examination OFF leash 30 pts

Heel Free OFF leash 40 pts Recall with finish OFF leash 30 pts
Long Sit (1 min) Drop leash 30 pts
Long Down (3 min) Drop leash 30 pts

Novice B: 4+ year exhibitor/4+ year dog. Dog must not have earned any leg towards an CD obedience title. Dogs may not wear head halters in the ring.

Heel & Figure 8 ON leash 40 pts
Stand for examination OFF leash 30 pts
Heel Free OFF leash 40 pts
Recall with finish OFF leash 30 pts
Long Sit (1 min) Drop leash 30 pts
Long Down (3 min) Drop leash 30 pts

Rally Novice: For dogs and handlers in second year and third year. Dogs entered in this class may not be entered in Beginners Novice A or Preferred Beginners Novice A. Dogs must exhibit in at least one obedience class at the fair to be eligible to exhibit in Rally. Winner of this class is not eligible for Highest or Reserve Highest Scoring Dog in show. Dogs may not wear head halters in the ring.

Rally Advanced: For dogs and handlers in 4+ year. Dogs entered in this class may not be entered in Beginners Novice A, Preferred Beginners Novice A, Beginners Novice B, Preferred Beginners Novice B, Novice A or Preferred Novice A. Dogs must exhibit in at least one obedience class at the fair to be eligible to exhibit in Rally. Winner of this class is not eligible for Highest or Reserve Highest Scoring Dog in show. Dogs may not wear head halters in the ring.

Eliminating in the Ring

Eliminating in the ring is an automatic 10-point deduction in all classes. Please make sure to potty your dogs before entering the ring.

Leash and Collars

Dogs may be shown on regular collars or on gentle leaders (if allowed in that class). Leashes should be 6 ft. long and either nylon or leather.

Use of Food

In the 4-H obedience ring food is NOT allowed except for in the Beginner Novice A class. If, in the Beginner Novice A class, a handler uses food, it must be used discreetly, with no deliberate baiting near other dogs and **can only be used at the completion of each exercise**. If the food is dropped in the ring and not immediately picked up OR is used to deliberately distract other dogs, the handler will automatically receive a white ribbon.

- The size of the food bait pieces should be appropriate for the size of the dog. Semi-moist food chunks work best because they can be easily handled and quickly broken off without too much mess. Bait should not be messy or gooey.
- “Mouth bait” that is actually kept in your mouth is not permitted in the 4H ring. This is to prevent any accidental choking.
- Keep bait in a bait bag or in a skirt, pants, or jacket pocket until ready to use it.
- Never, ever throw food while in the 4-H obedience ring. This is just common courtesy and respect to other dogs and 4-H’ers in the ring.

Praise

Praise and petting are allowed at the completion of each exercise. Praise and petting are not allowed during any exercise. 5-10 points will be deducted for a dog that is not under reasonable control while being praised.

Entering the Ring

After being invited into the ring by the judge, the handler will enter the ring with the dog on a loose leash and stand with the dog in heel position where the judge indicates.

Judging the Exercise

In most exercises, judging begins when the 4-H’er responds positively to the judge asking “Are you ready?” and concludes when the judge says “Exercise finished.” In the sit/stand for exam, judging begins the first time the 4-H’er tells the dog to stay and concludes when the judge says exercise finished. In the long sit and long down exercises, judging begins with the first stay command except that multiple commands and forcing into position before the stay command is judged.

Exiting the Ring

At the completion of all individual exercise, the 4-H’er and dog(s) will be excused from the ring. If the dog is off leash, the 4-H’er will pick up the leash from the stewards and attach it to the dog’s collar BEFORE passing the ring barrier. Politely thank the judge. If there are group exercises, the judge or ring steward should notify the 4-H’er when the group exercises will be evaluated. At the completion of group exercises, the 4-H’ers should exit in single file, making sure to maintain a safe distance between dogs. It is preferable, although not required, that the dogs exit in heel position. Be extra careful when exiting the ring after group sits and downs and award presentations.

- Keep your dog on a short leash
- Don’t crowd dogs together
- Don’t let dogs stare at each other
- Keep an eye on your dog – it is easy to get distracted and dog fights could occur while doing a group exit from the ring.

Dog Leaves The Ring During Judging

If a dog is working continuously but goes outside of a ring boundary while completing an exercise the penalty, if any, is left to the discretion of the judge. If a dog obviously bolts out of the ring or leaves the ring between exercises, a 10 point deduction will be made from the overall score – found at the bottom of the score sheet. If the dog leaves the ring during the exercise, they are penalized as part of the exercise.

Ties/Run-offs

In case of a tie for any placing in any obedience class, each dog will be judged individually by performing the entire heeling exercise again (run-off). The heeling exercise will be performed on leash for those classes without off-leash heeling. If the class has an off-leash heeling pattern, the off-leash heeling pattern will be used to break the tie. If, after the run-off, a tie still exists, the judge will pick an exercise from the class in which the dog was shown and the exhibitors will perform that exercise again similar to the heeling run-off. The original score will not change.

Ribbons and Point Systems

Every exhibitor who completes a class shall receive a ribbon, except those exhibitors excused or disqualified. The ribbons will be purple, blue, red, or white. A champion and reserve champion ribbon will be given to the highest scoring handlers in each class. All 4-H members compete against their own class and age division. Awards and/or trophies may be given at the discretion of the 4-H group putting on the show. The point system is shown in the Fair Book.

Announcement of Scores

The judge will not disclose any scoring to anyone until the entire class has been judged. Score sheets will be handed out to 4-H'ers when awards are presented. Questions asked in a courteous manner may be answered. No one other than the judge or the Superintendent may disclose scores. After all the scores are recorded on the official placing sheet for the show, all 4-H'ers will be called back. The ribbon placings shall be read from purple to white. Scores for white and red ribbons should not be announced publicly. The scores of the top placings (Champion, Reserve, etc.) may be announced publicly.

Removal from Dog Training Class or Dog Show

The Superintendent or Fair Board Committee may remove from class or 4-H dog show any dog in season, any aggressive dog, any dog a handler cannot control, or any handler who abuses a dog.

Mistreatment of Dogs

Absolutely no abuse or mistreatment, verbal or physical, of dogs will be tolerated in 4-H. Anyone caught hitting, kicking, or otherwise physically abusing a dog will be immediately dismissed from class.

Aggressive Dog Policy

Any dog who attempts to bite or attack a human or another dog will be immediately removed from class or show. At training class, the situation will be reviewed by the Superintendent with input from the Fair Board Committee, fellow training class instructors, and the family of the 4-H'er involved. They may rule to put the dog on probation, work individually with the dog and handler, or expel the dog from classes and dog show. Expelling could be necessary for the safety of other members and dogs. Show a dog actually be expelled, it must be remembered that the action is against the dog and not the 4-H'er. The 4-H'er will still be encouraged to attend classes without the dog and train it at home.

Terminology and Exercises Explained

HEEL POSITION AND FINISH

Heel position is referred to throughout these obedience rules. Heel position can apply whether the dog is sitting, standing, lying, or moving. Heel means the dog should be in straight alignment and facing the same direction as the handler. The dog should be close to the handler's left leg without crowding. This permits the handler freedom of movement. The area from the dog's head to shoulder should be in line with the handler's left hip. See the following link to see what heel position should look like:

http://images.akc.org/pdf/events/obedience/reference_heel_position.pdf

The finish can be either the dog going around the handler in a clockwise motion and sit or swing into heel position on the left side and sit.

LOOSE LEASH

The snap portion of the leash is hanging down from the place it attaches to the dog's collar. There should be a small loop of slack leash which hangs loosely below the snap of the leash. This slack in the leash should not be so big that the dog can step over the leash or so small that the handler could easily make the leash tight with only a small hand movement. If the snap on the leash faces straight upward, with no slack in the leash, it is considered a tight leash, and deductions from the score will occur. Depending on severity, the deduction may be Minor for a single occurrence while heeling, all the way to a Major deduction for a constant tight leash. A tight leash may be called whether it tightens by a correction by the 4-H'er or accidentally by the dog moving away from the handler.

COMMANDS AND SIGNALS

Whenever a command or signal is mentioned in these rules, a single command or signal may be given by the handler, and any extra commands or signals must be penalized. Whenever the rules specify "command and/or signal" the handler may give either a signal or voice or both voice and signal simultaneously. When a signal is given, it must be a single gesture with one arm and hand only, and the arm must immediately be returned to a natural position. Signals must be inaudible and the handler must not touch the dog. Position of the arms and hands and movements of the body that aid the dog shall be considered additional signals except that a handler may bend the body and knees as far as necessary to bring his hand on a level with the dog's eyes in giving a signal to a dog in the heel position. Whistling or the use of a whistle is prohibited. The dog's name may be used once immediately before any verbal command or before a verbal command and signal when these rules permit command and/or signal. The name shall not be used with any signal not given simultaneously with a verbal command. The dog should never anticipate the handler's directions, but must wait for the appropriate command and/or signal. Moving forward at the heel without any command or signal other than the natural forward movement of the handler's body shall not be considered as anticipation.

Loud commands by handlers to their dogs create a poor impression of obedience and should be avoided.

EXPLANATION OF OBEDIENCE EXERCISES

Please refer to the score sheet for each class. Each dog will be worked and judged separately except for any group exercises (long sit and long down). At the beginning of each exercise, the judge will ask "Are you ready?". The 4-H'er should answer "Yes" or "No". The judge's orders and signals shall be given to the handlers in a clear and understandable manner, but in such a way that the work of the dog is not disturbed. At the completion of each exercise the judge will say "Exercise Finished". At this time it is appropriate for the 4-H'er to praise his/her dog. Petting and praising is not permitted while performing a given exercise, but is permitted between exercises (after the "exercise finished").

Heel on Leash

The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate the ability of the handler and dog to work as a team. The judge's orders can be given in any order. Orders for halts and turns will be given only when the handler is moving at a normal speed. In competition, the judge will conduct the same pattern for all handlers within the same class. The leash may be held in either or both hands. Any tightening or jerking of the leash will result in the loss of points. The orders given by the judge will be:

- Forward: Handler and dog walk briskly, in a natural manner, with the dog on a loose leash. The dog walks in heel position, without swinging wide, lagging, forging, or crowding. The dog must not interfere with the handler's freedom of motion at any time. The handler may use a command OR signal to heel.
- Halt: The handler stops when the judge says "Halt". The dog should sit straight and promptly in heel position. This should be done without a command OR signal to the dog. The dog should not move until the handler again moves forward on the judge's command. After each halt, the 4-H'er can give a command or signal to heel before moving forward again.
- Right Turn: The handler and dog make a 90-degree turn to the right upon the order from the judge. This should be done squarely.
- Left Turn: The handler and dog make a 90-degree turn to the left upon command from the judge. This should be done squarely.
- About Turn: The handler and dog make a 180-degree turn, to the right, upon the order from the judge.
- Slow: The handler and dog walk noticeably slower than normal.
- Normal: The handler and dog walk at a normal pace.
- Fast: The handler and dog run, moving forward at a noticeably accelerated pace. The handler should run or jog. There will be no penalty of a one-time single phrase of praise or encouragement by the handler to the dog. (Good, yes, nice, super, great, hurry, and come on are some examples of praise that would be allowed.) Long phrases and repeating commands will be penalized.

Figure Eight on Leash

For the figure eight, the handler and dog will stand facing the judge between two cones about eight feet apart. The handler may choose to go in either direction and should go twice around with at least one halt during and another halt at the end of the exercise. After each halt, the dog should sit straight and promptly in heel position. There will be no about turn, fast, or slow during this exercise. Orders given by the judge are: "Forward" and "Halt". There will be no penalty of a one-time single phrase of praise or encouragement by the handler to the dog.

Sit for Exam on Leash in Heel Position

The principal feature of this exercise is that the dog sits in position before and during the examination without displaying resentment. This exercise is to be performed with the dog on a 6 foot leash. On the judge's order, the handler will command the dog to sit. The handler will then stand with the dog sitting in the heel position and give the command and/or signal to stay. The 4-H'er will remain in heel position. The judge will approach the dog from the front. Using the fingers and palm of one hand, the judge will touch only the dog's head. The dog must remain sitting until the judge has said, "Exercise finished." Orders are "Sit your dog", "Tell your dog to stay" and "Exercise finished."

Recall on Leash - No Finish

The principal features of this exercise are that the dog will stay where left until called by the handler and that the dog responds promptly. This exercise is to be performed with the dog on a 6 foot leash. On order from the judge, the handler will give a command and/or signal to stay in the sit position. The handler will then walk forward, approximately 6 feet, and turn to face the dog. On the judge's order or signal, the handler will command and/or signal the dog to come without assistance from the leash. The dog must come directly, at a brisk trot or gallop, and sit in front near the handler. The dog must be close enough to its handler so that the handler could touch its head without excessive bending, stretching, or moving either foot. Orders given by the judge are: "Leave your dog," "Call your dog," and "Exercise finished."

Sit Stay - Handler walks around the ring

The principal feature of this exercise is that the dog remains in the sit position. The handler will stand with the dog sitting in heel position prior to starting the exercise. The judge will ask if the handler is ready. When the judge gives the order "sit your dog," the handler will command and/or signal the dog to sit. The judge will order "leave your dog," and the handler will give a command and/or signal to stay, drop their leash, and immediately proceed to walk around the ring. The handler will return to their dog directly back to heel position. Once the handler has returned to heel position, the judge will give the order "Exercise finished." Orders given by the judge are: "Sit your dog," "Leave your dog," "Back to your dog," and "Exercise finished."

Heel Free - off Leash

The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate the ability of the handler and dog to work as a team without the control of a leash. Executed in the same manner as Heel on Leash, except the leash is taken off the dog. The left hand may be held against the front of the body centered at the waist or hang and move naturally at the handler's left side. The right hand should hang naturally at the right side of the handler's body. Hand position may be adjusted as needed while performing the fast pace order, in order for the handler to maintain balance. The judge's orders can be given in any order. Orders for halts and turns will be given only when the handler is moving at a normal speed. In competition, the judge will conduct the same pattern for all handlers within the same class. The orders given by the judge will be:

- Forward: Handler and dog walk briskly, in a natural manner. The dog walks in heel position, without swinging wide, lagging, forging, or crowding. The dog must not interfere with the handler's freedom of motion at any time. The handler may use a command OR signal to heel.
- Halt: The handler stops when the judge says "Halt". The dog should sit straight and promptly in heel position. This should be done without a command OR signal to the dog. The dog should not move until the handler again moves forward on the judge's command. After each halt, the 4-H'er can give a command or signal to heel before moving forward again.
- Right Turn: The handler and dog make a 90-degree turn to the right upon the order from the judge. This should be done squarely.
- Left Turn: The handler and dog make a 90-degree turn to the left upon the order from the judge. This should be done squarely.
- About Turn: The handler and dog make a 180-degree turn, to the right, upon the order from the judge.
- Slow: The handler and dog walk noticeably slower than normal.
- Normal: The handler and dog walk at a normal pace.
- Fast: The handler and dog run, moving forward at a noticeably accelerated pace. The handler should run or jog.

Recall Off Leash With Finish – Take Leash With You

The principal features of this exercise are that the dog stay where left until called by the handler and that the dog responds promptly. On order from the judge, remove the leash from dog. The handler will take the leash with them. The handler may roll the leash into either hand, put the leash in their pocket, or drape the leash around their neck while performing this exercise. When the judge says "Leave your dog," the handler may give a command and/or signal to the dog to stay in the sit position. The handler will then walk forward approximately 25 feet to a location directed by the judge and turn to face the dog. On the judge's order or signal, the handler will command or signal the dog to come. The dog must come directly, at a brisk trot or gallop, and sit in front near the handler. The dog must be close enough for the handler to touch its head without excessive bending, stretching, or moving either foot. Upon the order from the judge, the handler shall command or signal the dog to go to heel position. The method by which the dog goes to heel position is optional. After the judge orders "Exercise Finished," the leash is reattached to the dog's collar.

Orders given by the judge are: "Take the leash," "Leave your dog", "Call your dog", and "Finish".

Stand for Exam Off Leash

The purpose of this exercise is for the dog to stand and stay in position before, during, and after the exam without displaying resentment. Scoring of this exercise will begin when the handler gives the stay command and/or signal, except for rough treatment of the dog while getting them to stand. The handler will take the dog to the place indicated by the judge and have the dog sit in heel position. On the judge's order, the handler stands the dog for the judge to examine. The handler may choose the method for posing the dog, within a reasonable time limit, before giving the command and/or signal to stay. While being posed, the dog may never have all four feet off the ground at the same time. The handler will leave from heel position, walk six feet in front of the dog, turn and face the dog. The judge will approach the dog from the front and using the fingers and palm of one hand will touch its head, back, and hindquarters only. On the judge's order, the handler will then return to the dog – going behind the dog – and stand in heel position. The dog must remain in standing position without moving its feet until the judge says "exercise finished." The dog must show no shyness or resentment during this exercise. Orders given by the judge are: "Stand your dog and leave when ready" and "Return to your dog".

Group Long Sit – Drop Leash – 1 minute

If a dog, in the opinion of the judge, has demonstrated uncontrolled behavior, the judge must release the dog from performing the group exercises. Dogs must be spaced with a minimum of four (4) feet between each dog on one side of the ring. Dogs must be spaced a minimum of four (4) feet from the ring barrier. The leash shall remain attached to the dog's collar and will be placed on the ground between dog and handler. The judge will ask if the handlers are ready. When the judge gives the order, the handlers will command and/or signal their dogs to sit if they are not already sitting. On further order to "Leave your dogs," the handler will give a command and/or signal to stay and immediately go to the interior of the ring, turn and face their dogs. After one minute from the time the judge has ordered the handlers to leave their dogs, the judge will give the order to return. The handlers must go back promptly, walking around and in back of their own dog to heel position. The dogs must not move from sitting position until after the judge has said "Exercise finished – maintain control of your dog." This order will not be given until the handlers are back in heel position. Orders by the Judge are: "Sit your dogs," "Leave your dogs," and "Back to your dogs"

Group Long Down – Drop Leash – 3 minutes

If a dog, in the opinion of the judge, has demonstrated uncontrolled behavior, the judge must release the dog from performing the group exercises. Dogs must be spaced with a minimum of four (4) feet between each dog on one side of the ring. Dogs must be spaced a minimum of four (4) feet from the ring barrier. The leash shall remain attached to the dog's collar and will be dropped or placed on the ground between dog and handler. Before starting the Long Down, the judge will ask

if the handlers are ready. On the judge's order, the handlers will command and/or signal their dogs to down without touching either the dogs or their collars so that the dogs are facing the interior of the ring. The rest of this exercise is done in the same manner as the Long Sit except that the judge will order the handlers to return after three minutes and the dogs must not move from the down position until after the judge has said "Exercise finished – maintain control of your dog". Orders by the Judge are: "Down your dogs," "Leave your dogs," and "Back to your dogs"