

The Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Scheme Puppy Foundation Assessment

Aim

The Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Scheme Puppy Foundation Assessment aims to provide a means of socialising puppies and to lay down a foundation for education and training.

On successful completion of the course puppies will respond to their handlers and the handlers will have an awareness of the responsibilities of dog ownership.

The inclusion of play exercises adds an extra dimension to a dog's life and can be used to make training fun. Constructive play and suitable incentives are encouraged within this puppy training programme.

Eligibility

Age definition – up to a maximum of 12 months old. At their discretion the course organiser can set a minimum age for enrolment. A puppy must attend for a minimum of four weekly sessions. The course should be focused around the progress of the puppy and its owner over a period of time and not on the first or one particular meeting.

The enrolment of puppies onto the Puppy Foundation Assessment should be carefully monitored, especially to ensure that puppies complete the course before they reach the maximum age for this Scheme.

Assessments

No part of the Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Scheme is competitive and assessments should be carried out in a relaxed and informal manner. Remember that the course should be focused around the progress of a puppy and its owner over a period of time and not on the first or one particular meeting.

A Good Citizen Dog Scheme Puppy Foundation Certificate will be awarded when the required standard in all parts of the assessment have been achieved.

The Assessor will enter the comment "Passed" or "Not Ready" alongside each exercise. The puppy must receive the comment "Passed" for each exercise in one course in order to receive a Certificate. In any exercise aggressive behaviour from the puppy or undue fear will classify the puppy as "Not Ready".

Puppies that pass and puppies, which reach the maximum age before they are ready to take the assessment, should be encouraged to enrol at classes offering the Bronze Good Citizen Dog Scheme Award.

The class Instructor may act as the Assessor. The organisers of the course must ensure that the Instructor they appoint is competent and able to fulfil the requirements of the course proficiently. A dog may take a Good Citizen Dog Scheme Bronze Award test without having been awarded a Good Citizen Puppy Foundation Assessment Certificate. Unless otherwise stated practical assessments will be carried out on a lead.

Handouts

Literature to give out at the beginning of each training course
Puppy Foundation Diary
Puppy Foundation Description
Puppy Foundation Information Sheet
Responsibility and Care leaflet

How old Does A Puppy Have To Be?

The minimum puppy age limit is at the discretion of the training course provider (club) taking into account the premises and training environment being used. Some training clubs may enrol puppies for their course from as young as 10 weeks, other clubs may ask that puppies have completed their second vaccination, whilst other training clubs may like puppies to be older still. The maximum age for a puppy to enrol will again depend on the individual training club, but will not exceed 12 months old on the date of week four of the assessment.

Exercise 1 - Responsibility and Care

The object of this exercise is to educate the owner on the basic principles of owning a puppy. This exercise should be conducted as a talk or open discussion and puppy owners will be encouraged to participate and ask questions. This exercise can be conducted with the use of the Canine Code and Good Citizen Dog Scheme Puppy Foundation literature supplied with each course pack. These talks should cover all the basic topics related to owning a puppy, but must include the following:-

- a) Cleanliness and identification
- b) Recognition of basic health problems
- c) Health protection for the puppy
- d) Teething, chewing and daily routine
- e) House training and separation anxiety
- f) Socialisation with people and other dogs

Other reading or video material may be recommended if desired.

Exercise 2 - Cleanliness and Identification

Each handler must carry with them some form of "poop scoop" and all puppies must wear a collar and Identification tag complying with the law. The owner should be reminded that they must always remove any fouling caused by their puppy and carry with them some form of "poop scoop". It is a legal requirement to inscribe the name and the address of the owner on the collar or on a plate or disc attached to it. Furthermore it is a legal requirement to clean up after your puppy in public areas and dispose of the bag in an appropriate bin. Note: Even if a puppy is microchipped, you can be fined if your puppy is not wearing the correct Identification. Telephone numbers are not compulsory but can be very helpful in returning your dog back to you in an emergency. Engraved tags can be purchased from the Kennel Club website.

Exercise 3 - Attentive Response to Name

The puppy should know its name when spoken and at least pay brief attention. This assessment should be carried out on lead when the handler will call its name.

Exercise 4 - Play With The Puppy

The object is to demonstrate that the puppy will play with its owner. When invited to do so the owner should commence to play with the puppy. Play should be under the owner's control and if it involves articles they should not be dangerous and should be readily given up by the puppy. Play should be appropriate to the puppy under assessment but should not include play fighting.

Exercise 5 - Socialisation

With a placid dog unknown to the puppy

The puppy will be carefully introduced on a lead to a suitable non-aggressive adult dog unfamiliar to the puppy. This is an assessment to determine sociability with other dogs. Relative size of the two animals should be considered. Aggressive behaviour or undue fear will classify the puppy as "Not Ready". Playful growling, mild wariness or aloofness is acceptable.

With an adult person unknown to the puppy

The puppy will be carefully introduced on a lead to a man or woman unfamiliar to the puppy. They should gently make friends with the puppy without immediately descending upon it in friendship. Backing off and undue wariness should be classed as "Not Ready".

With Noise Distraction

The puppy should not be unduly startled or excited by normal day to day sounds and every care should be taken when undertaking this exercise. With the puppy on a lead, suitable noises should be made at least several paces from the puppy.

Exercise 6 - Handling and Inspection to Maintain Health

Preparatory to grooming, a puppy should allow handling of its body and inspection by its owner. Mild fidgeting and avoidance is acceptable. Definite aggressive behaviour should result in the classification "Not Ready". This exercise will be conducted on a lead.

Exercise 7 - Puppy Recall

In an enclosed area handlers should in some way distance themselves from the puppy by at least two or three paces. They should recall, praise and secure the puppy. If necessary this assessment can be conducted away from the distractions of other dogs. It may involve any reasonable incentive to return and the owner may back away when the puppy starts to move. An assistant may hold the lead.

Exercise 8 - Basic Puppy Positions

The owner should demonstrate that the puppy will stand, sit and go down. Any reasonable incentives and assistance may be used and the order of positions may be at the handler's choice. Each position need only be very briefly adopted. Any minor movements are acceptable.

Exercise 9 - Walking in a Controlled Manner

With the puppy on lead, and without distractions, the owner and puppy should walk for approximately 20 paces and include a turn. They should demonstrate that this can be done without undue inconvenience to themselves or others. A tight lead does not necessarily result in classification "Not Ready".

Exercise 10 - Stay for Approximately Ten Seconds

With the puppy on lead and in any position the owner will be invited to tell the puppy to stay for approximately ten seconds. Changing position is acceptable. This exercise should be used as a foundation for future stay training.

Exercise 11 - Take Article Away from the Puppy

Puppies must learn that they should give up articles when required. An article should be given to the puppy who should give it up when the handler attempts to take it away. The article will be of the handler's choice and suitable for the type of puppy being assessed but should not be food. If the puppy refuses to take an article the Instructor may provide an alternative, however if the puppy will not take an article it should still be passed.

Exercise 12 - Food Manners

The handler should demonstrate that the puppy can take a treat without snatching and in a controlled manner. If the puppy refuses to take a treat, the Assessor may provide an alternative, however if the puppy will not take a treat it should still be passed.

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