

THE KENNEL CLUB GOOD CITIZEN DOG SCHEME – GOLD AWARD



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISES

AIM

The Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Scheme Gold Award is the highest level of achievement of the Scheme. It builds upon the skills learnt in the Silver Award and develops more advanced training skills of the dog and handler. The Gold Award is a natural progression of practical dog training skills and introduces new concepts such as relaxed settle, stop the dog and send the dog to bed exercises, which are important in every day life situations. The Gold Award aims to provide handlers with a greater knowledge and understanding of their canine companion. Dogs that are awarded a Gold Certificate should reach the required standards in all exercises and be a worthy representative of the Scheme's highest standard. Where possible it is preferable that certain exercises are tested at indoor and outdoor locations.

ELIGIBILITY

The Scheme is aimed at all dogs whether Kennel Club registered or not. Dogs must be a minimum of 12 months old to be eligible to take part in a Gold Award Test. For the Gold Test, Examiners will only accept dogs that have been awarded a Silver Award Certificate. Handlers must show that they have means of cleaning up after their dog and that it has proper identification which is legally compliant. With effect from the 6th April 2016 dogs are required to have a microchip which is registered on a Defra-approved database, in the UK (check exemptions). Examiners are required to check each dog's eligibility and the suitability of their collar, lead and equipment prior to the test commencing.

STANDARD REQUIRED

The test is non-competitive but Examiners should be satisfied that dogs are worthy of passing. Examiners should also observe the spirit of the Scheme, which is to produce happy, contented dogs, which are well behaved, and under the control of handlers who fully understand the responsibilities to their dogs, to their neighbours and to the community.

Handlers are permitted only one attempt at each exercise under test, unless there are exceptional circumstances or where a dog has been clearly disadvantaged or interfered with. Examiners should be aware that they should give clear instructions to the handlers as to how they would like the exercise conducted in order to avoid confusion. A Certificate will be awarded when the required standard has been achieved.

Any uncontrolled mouthing, barking, growling or other threatening behaviour is not acceptable and further training will be required before the dog can be passed. In order for it to be meaningful the testing must be carried out thoroughly and in the same manner for each dog under test. Emphasis must be placed upon the ability of the handler to handle, care for and generally be responsible for their dog. Examiners can reserve the right to insist that the handler secures the dog in a safer manner if the equipment used is deemed inadequate. An additional lead could be used in this instance.

THE TEST

Dogs may be tested singly or in groups, those passing all parts of the test will receive a Good Citizen Dog Scheme Gold Award Certificate. The Examiner will enter the comment "Passed" or "Not Ready" along side each exercise. In order to receive a Certificate, dogs must receive the comment "Passed" for each exercise during one testing session. The Club/Organisation arranging the test will be responsible for appointing an Examiner and the standards required are stated in the Scheme's Guidelines and Information Handbook and should be strictly adhered to.

HANDOUTS

Literature to be given out at the beginning of each training course:-
Gold Award Description of Exercises • Canine Code (both include Responsibility and Care)

DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISES

Exercise 1 - Road Walk

The object of this exercise is to test the ability of the dog to walk on a lead under control on a public highway beside the handler and for the handler to determine the speed of the walk. This exercise should be carried out at a suitable outdoor location and an occasional tight lead is acceptable. The handler and dog should walk along a pavement, execute a turn, then stop at the kerb where the dog should remain steady and controlled. On command they should proceed, observing the Highway Code. When reaching the other side they should turn and continue walking, making a few changes of pace from normal to slow or fast walking pace. The handler and dog will return across the road to the starting point of the exercise. Distractions should be incorporated such as passing vehicles or bicycles, people, wheelchairs, prams, pushchairs, etc.

Note: The turns are only tests of ability to change direction.

Exercise 2 - Return to Handler's Side

The object of this exercise is to be able to bring the dog back under close control during a lead free walk. With the dog off lead and not less than 10 paces away, upon instruction, the dog will be called back to the walking handler's side and both should continue together for approximately ten paces.

Note: A dog moving loosely at the handler's side, under control, is quite acceptable and there is no requirement for a halt to complete the exercise.

Exercise 3 - Walk Free Beside Handler

The object of this exercise is for the dog to be kept close to the handler's side as may be necessary on a walk in the park. This is a test of control whilst walking with a dog off lead beside its handler for approximately 40 paces. Competition heelwork is not the aim, but is acceptable. Therefore, it is only necessary for the dog to be kept loosely beside the handler. Two changes of direction will take place

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and there will be the distraction of another handler passing with a dog on a lead. Upon instruction the handler will attach the lead to finish to the test.

Note: Changes of direction are right and left turns without formality.

Exercise 4 - Stay Down in one Place

The object of this exercise is that the dog will stay down on the spot while the handler moves away for two minutes. The handler should remain in sight. This stay will be tested off lead and handlers should place their dogs in the down position. Upon instruction the handler will move a distance of ten paces away for a period of two minutes. The time starts when the handler leaves the dog and it finishes when the handler returns to the dog's side and replaces the lead.

Note: This exercise is a test to see if the dog will stay down in one place without changing position. The dog must stay in the down position. Dogs must not be placed on beds or individual mats.

Exercise 5 - Send the Dog to Bed

The object of this exercise is to demonstrate control such as might be required in the home. The handler may provide the dog's bed, blanket, mat, or an article of clothing, etc. The handler should place the dog's bed in a position determined by the Examiner. The handler will stand approximately ten paces from the bed. Upon instruction, the handler will send the dog to bed where the dog will remain until the Examiner is satisfied the dog is settled.

Note: The dog is not being sent to bed in disgrace. Where possible this exercise should be tested indoors. The bed used should be suitable for the dog under test and no inducement e.g. toys or food should be used during this exercise.

Exercise 6 - Stop the Dog

The object of this exercise is for the handler to stop the dog at a distance in an emergency situation. With the dog off lead and at a distance, not less than approximately ten paces away, the handler will be instructed to stop the dog on the spot in any position. *Note: The dog should be moving and is expected to respond straight away to the stop command, but if moving at speed, will be allowed a reasonable distance to come to a stop.*

Exercise 7 - Relaxed Settle

The object of this exercise is for the dog to be content when left in isolation. The handler should move out of sight for a period of 2 minutes. During such times the dog should not become agitated, unduly stressed or defensive. The handler will choose the method of isolation providing there are adequate facilities to do so. The designated area chosen by the handler must also be considered safe and appropriate by the Examiner. Handlers can choose to fasten the dog to an approximate two-metre line, or the dog may be left loose in a room on its own or left in a cage/crate, or the dog may be placed in the handler's vehicle, providing undetected observation can take place. A bed may be used for the dog to lay on. If the handler chooses to carry out this exercise in a vehicle there must be no other animals present and consideration must be given to current weather conditions, adequate ventilation and the location of the vehicle with regard to the safety of the dog and handler. Any number of dogs may be tested at the same time provided they are isolated at different locations. It is acceptable for the dog to move around during isolation, however should the dog whine, howl, bark or indulge in any disruptive activities it should not pass this exercise.

Note: Dogs should be tested for their relaxed demeanour in isolation without any prior controls being imposed by the handler. This is not a stay exercise but handlers may settle their dogs before leaving. The location of the dog's isolation is determined by the Examiner and should be considered carefully. If a long line is used, this should be tied to a secure holding. The location chosen should allow the Examiner to observe the dog. The Examiner should be able to observe the dog under test without being too close. Examiners can reserve the right to insist that the handler secures the dog in a safer manner if the equipment used is deemed inadequate.

Exercise 8 - Food Manners

The object of this exercise is for the dog to be fed in an orderly manner. The handler will offer food to the dog either by hand or in a bowl. The dog must wait for permission to eat. After a three - five second pause, the handler will be asked to give the dog a command to eat. *Note: The dog should not eat until given permission, however if attempting to do so, it is acceptable for the handler to restrain the dog by voice alone.*

Exercise 9 - Examination of the Dog

The object of this exercise is to demonstrate that the dog will allow inspection of its body by a stranger as might be undertaken by a veterinary surgeon. The dog on lead will be required to be placed for inspection of its mouth, teeth, throat, eyes, ears, stomach, tail and feet whilst standing, sitting or lying down as required. Other than mild avoidance, the dog should allow inspection without concern. The lead must be held securely by the handler throughout the exercise. The lead, collar and equipment should not be used to restrain the dog. If required the Examiner can insist that if applicable a head collar or body harness is removed if it interferes with the Examination.

Note: It is the responsibility of training officials to ensure that only suitable dogs take part in this exercise. The handler may assist the examiner in opening the dog's mouth, so that the examiner can touch and inspect the mouth appropriately.

Exercise 10 - Responsibility and Care

The object of this exercise is to test the knowledge of the handler on specific subjects relating to owning a dog. The Examiner should construct questions based on section two and three of Responsibility and Care. Topics covered include - other responsibilities, children, barking, dogs and stationary vehicles, vehicle travel, health, worming, the Country Code, miscellaneous, frightening, out of control, biting and psychology of learning. The questions should not be phrased in an ambiguous manner and where necessary, Examiners should rephrase the same question in an attempt to bring out the correct answer from the handler.

At the start of each training course, in addition to the Description, handlers should be given a copy of the Canine Code. There should be a session during which the importance of these topics in every day life situations are discussed.

Note: Only one numbered item may constitute a question. The handler should be able to give eight out of ten correct answers from section two and three of Responsibility and Care.

RESPONSIBILITY AND CARE (SECTIONS TWO AND THREE)

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

41. Socialisation

Dogs should be gradually socialised with other dogs, people and children and be familiarised with traffic. Not doing so can cause apprehension. Withdrawing a dog from something that frightens it will only make apprehension worse in the long run. Never make eye contact with an unfamiliar dog. All socialisation should be carried out in a careful manner.

42. More than one dog

If owning more than one dog, do not initially try to train two or more together. It has to be remembered that, not only will one dog distract the other but when one is admonished, or praised, this will also apply to the other and will be confusing. Always train a dog on a one to one basis with the other out of the way. When both are well behaved individually they can be handled together.

43. Dogs off lead

No matter how well trained or under control a dog might be, it should never be walked off lead in environmentally unsuitable areas or those that do not permit dogs to be off lead.

44. Equipment

A dog's lead should be totally secure and attention should always be paid to worn stitching or a clip that may not be reliable. There are many different types of collar, head collar and body harness available and handlers should ensure that the one they choose to use is in good condition and will not break under strain. Also it should always be adjusted so that, in the event of panic, it would be impossible for the dog to get free. It remains a legal requirement for the dog to wear a collar with legally compliant identification.

45. Babies, children and dogs

When the family has a baby it is natural that much attention will be given to the new arrival. It is therefore important that the dog does not become jealous. Owners should try to ensure that the dog continues to receive the same love and affection.

CHILDREN

Children are usually less predictable than adults and they should be warned: -

46. Never to make sudden movements close to a dog.
47. Never to scream or suddenly yell close to a dog.
48. Never to lunge at a dog, particularly when it is asleep.
49. Never to put their face close to a dog's face.
50. Never to eat food close to a family dog.
51. Never to tease or pull a dog's body or coat.
52. Never to ignore a dog's warning growl.
53. Never touch a dog whilst it is eating
54. Always wash their hands after playing with a dog.
55. Always ask permission before touching a dog they do not know.

Note: Children should be reminded to respect all dogs and follow The Kennel Club Safe And Sound Code.

BARKING

Excessive barking at home can be a nuisance, and the way the dog is kept at home may inadvertently encourage the problem.

56. Territorial reasons

Dogs barking for territorial reasons might do so at the front door or a window where they can see people or dogs approaching. In the garden they may do so at the garden gate or a fence. Excluding them from such areas helps to reduce the habit factor.

57. Predatory or chase instinct

Allowing a dog to constantly indulge in this habit in the garden will exacerbate this problem.

58. Reasons of insecurity

Constant company and excessive reassurance and touching given to an insecure dog may cause stress when left without the company of people. The result may be barking, whining or howling.

59. At night

If it is necessary to vocally command a noisy dog at night, it should be done at a distance. This avoids the dog learning how to call its owner back.

DOGS AND STATIONARY VEHICLES

60. Ventilation for a dog left in a car

Dogs must always be given ample ventilation when left alone in a vehicle. However, during hot weather even windows left wide open and/or shaded may not give sufficient ventilation. In such conditions dogs should not be left in vehicles.

61. Approaches to a vehicle from strangers

Most dogs are territorial when in their vehicle and may become aggressive if strangers put part of their body in through a window or door. Therefore this should always be prevented.

VEHICLE TRAVEL

The psychology of vehicle travel: -

62. Dogs should not be a distraction to the driver
63. Dogs or puppies should gradually be accustomed to vehicle travel by taking the dog out in the vehicle for very short training journeys.
64. Dogs learn to enjoy vehicle travel if they are often taken by vehicle to a place where they have a pleasurable experience.
65. Dogs learn to dislike vehicle travel if they are only taken by vehicle to places where they have an unpleasant experience.
66. How a dog behaves in a vehicle on the first few journeys will form its habits for the future.

When travelling in a vehicle a dog: -

67. Should not be constantly moving around.
68. Should be secure so that, in the event of an accident, injury to canine or human passengers is minimised.
69. Should not travel with his head out of the window.

HEALTH

70. Vaccinations

Most veterinary surgeons will administer the first vaccinations at eight/nine weeks. They will advise when the dog can be allowed on the street, parks or mix with other dogs. Discuss with your veterinary surgeon the necessary vaccinations and frequency of boosters.

71. Fleas

Fleas are usually found around the neck and abdomen of a dog. Owners should regularly look for signs of fleas or their droppings, which appear to be black and no bigger than a grain of sand. There are various products, which will effectively deal with fleas, and veterinary advice should be sought.

WORMING

Roundworms and tapeworms are common in dogs.

72. Roundworms

There are many kinds of roundworms but Toxocara is the most common. They are a round white worm between three and six inches long. When born nearly all puppies carry Toxocara canis as their mother will have transferred it to them. Badly infected puppies may pass worms in their faeces or vomit and often appear to be pot bellied. The eggs of Toxocara canis survive for years, therefore great care should be taken in cleaning up after a worm infected puppy or dog.

73. Tapeworms

Tapeworms are not so common and are less often found in puppies. However, they should also be treated. Tapeworms can be very long but usually small segments, which resemble cucumber pips, may be found in the faeces.

74. Other Types of Worms

Other types of worms - There are other types of worms that dogs are susceptible to. Veterinary advice should be sought.

75. Medication

When worms are evident the dog must quickly be given the right medication. Take veterinary advice about dosing and about preventing infestation in the future, to protect the health.

THE COUNTRY CODE

76. Chasing

Never allow a dog to chase or worry livestock or wildlife as it raises its predatory instinct and can cause distress, injury and death.

77. Awareness

Ensure that you know where your dog is and what he is doing at all times. Also be alert to any possible situation where the dog can cause a problem.

78. Arable land

Provided a dog's owner keeps it on a lead and on the footpath, dogs are allowed on all public rights of way even if the land either side of the footpath is cultivated.



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79. Gates

Always leave gates as you find them unless instructed otherwise.

80. Country lanes

These are as dangerous as urban roads and your dog should be on lead.

81. Leaving the countryside

Neither you nor your dog should leave anything behind including the dog's faeces.

MISCELLANEOUS

Dog owners and non-dog owners have the right to live side by side. There are, however laws which must be followed. They are made to safeguard the environment for the benefit of everybody.

82. Identification

All dogs must wear a collar with the name and address of the owner when in a public place (including the car). Dogs must be microchipped and are required to have a microchip which is registered on a Defra-approved database in the UK (check exemptions).

83. Fouling

Local authorities have the power to make it an offence if the owner or walker does not clear up dog faeces. This offence is punishable by a fine.

84. Nuisance and public health

It is an offence for a dog to be kept in such a place or manner as to be prejudicial to public health or a nuisance.

85. Sticks And Branches

It is not recommended to let your dog play with sticks as severe injury can result.

86. Pet Passport

If travelling outside the UK your Pet will require a Pet Passport. There are various dog health and administration requirements.

FRIGHTENING, OUT OF CONTROL AND BITING

If a dog is dangerously out of control in a public place, the owner, or the person in charge of the dog, is guilty of an offence. It is not necessary that the dog injures, merely that there are reasonable grounds for believing that it will injure.

Penalties may be as follows:

87. An order that the dog is kept under proper control.

88. A fine.

89. Destruction of the dog.

90. A ban on keeping dogs in the future.

91. Imprisonment.

92. Dangerous dogs

Dogs under licence must be kept on a lead by

someone who is sixteen or over and must be muzzled in public and registered with the police and neutered. Dogs under license are also required to adhere to other relevant restrictions.

93. In the country

If a dog worries livestock on any agricultural ground, the owner, or the person in charge of the dog, is guilty of an offence. Even letting your dog walk off a lead in the same field as livestock may be considered 'worrying'. A farmer may legally shoot a dog they consider to be 'worrying' their livestock.

Note: There are conditions attached to the exercise of this right by any person.

94. Stray dogs

Every local authority appoints an officer responsible for the seizure of stray dogs. Where the officer has reason to believe that any dog found in a public place is a stray dog, he can seize and detain it. While the dog is detained it must be properly fed and maintained. If the owner is known they must be notified. Any dog not claimed within seven days of the seizure (or the owners notification of the seizure) may be sold or destroyed.

95. Local dog control measures

In England and Wales, local authorities are empowered to make local rules known as Dog Control Orders to replace old local byelaws. These orders can require that dogs be held on lead in certain areas when directed to do so by an authorised officer. The orders can also give authority to ban dogs altogether from certain places, limit the number of dogs that can be walked by one person at any one time, and require you to clean up after your dog. In Scotland it is an offence not to pick up after your dog in a public place. These orders and laws are punishable by fines.

96. Unnecessary suffering

It is an offence for an owner to cause unnecessary suffering to their dog or cause or permit anyone else to do so. This includes failing to provide food, water and necessary veterinary attention.

97. Abandoning

Temporary and/or permanent abandonment of a dog that causes suffering is an offence.

98. Dogs and food outlets

By law, dogs are not allowed into an area of restaurants or shops where food is prepared. Dogs are allowed where food is served at the discretion of the proprietor; there is no law banning dogs from areas where food is served. It is understood that owners will keep their dogs

under control, and may be required to leave by management.

99. Medical Treatment

It can be an offence for someone other than a veterinary surgeon to provide medical treatment to a dog other than emergency first aid.

100. Dogs knocked down by vehicles

Any motorist that knocks down a dog must report the incident to the police within 24 hours.

101. Third party claims and insurance

If a dog causes injury or damage to a person or property, the injured party can make a claim against the dog's owner. Often household contents policies cover third party claims against the dog but it is wise to check. You may wish to consider additional insurance cover for veterinary bills.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING

Learning by habit:

102. A dog learns by habit, therefore he is likely to repeat an experience that was pleasurable and avoid an experience that was not.

103. Every time he does something the habit becomes more ingrained. Therefore we should encourage and praise the good habits, and discourage the bad habits.

104. Inconsistency

Inconsistency causes confusion. If a dog learns by habit, our praise or discouragement allied to the dog's habit must be prompt and consistent to advance the learning process. When play and learning are linked the result is a happy dog.

105. Analysing problems

When there is a problem with your dog's training do not immediately work at the symptom. Instead try to think like a dog to find the cause of any problem before attempting to reverse it.

106. Teaching disobedience

If dogs learn by habit then it is easy to teach disobedience. To continually repeat commands that a dog disobeys is therefore to teach disobedience to that command.

107. Natural learning

When a dog performs naturally an act which is desirable to us, i.e. sitting when we stop walking. If we consistently add the appropriate command to the dog's natural action, the dog will learn to obey the command as a matter of course.



THE KENNEL CLUB

Making a difference for dogs

Clarges Street, London W1J 8AB

Telephone 01296 318540 Email gcds@thekennelclub.org.uk

www.gcds.org.uk