Canine Life And Social Skills™

C.L.A.S.S.
Canine Life and Social Skills

Student Handbook

1/14/2012

The What, Who, How, and Where of C.L.A.S.S.™

Contents

What is C.L.A.S.S.™?

C.L.A.S.S.™, or Canine Life And Social Skills™, is an educational and hands-on program to promote training focused on the use of positive reinforcement and to strengthen relationships between humans and their canine companions.

Developed in 2010 by the Association of Pet Dog Trainers based on input from dog owners and non-dog owners, shelter workers, and professional dog trainers, C.L.A.S.S.™ is just one of many programs offered by the APDT to promote caring relationships between dogs and their owners through using reward-based training methods. Canine Life And Social Skills™ benefits pet owners, dogs, and those around them!

Who Should Read This Handbook?

This handbook is for anyone interested in learning about the C.L.A.S.S.™ program. This Student Handbook provides an overview of the C.L.A.S.S.™ components, and expounds on the Assessment portion of the program by describing the information that pet owners need to prepare themselves and their dogs for C.L.A.S.S.™

C.L.A.S.S.™ Overview

C.L.A.S.S.™ is an extensive program comprised of several components. The following introduces each of the C.L.A.S.S.™ components, providing insight into the program's purpose.

Components of Canine Life and Social Skills

C.L.A.S.S.™ Components

Education

At its core, C.L.A.S.S.™ is an educational tool, providing resources and promoting understanding in dog training methods that focus on using positive reinforcement and on building relationships and communication between dog and owner.

C.L.A.S.S.™ and the APDT offer these educational resources freely: to pet owners, the veterinary community, the general public, shelters, and dog trainers. Additional educational tools for dog trainers include curriculum ideas for teaching C.L.A.S.S.™ skills.

Understanding Dog Behavior

Dogs are not furry little people, and problems can arise when humans apply human characteristics to explain dog behavior. Dog behavior is often misunderstood, and myths have been perpetuated regarding their behavior. Dogs should be studied and understood as a species.

The more we understand dogs, the better relationship we can have with our dog. In order to minimize confusion and strife, it is important to know the facts based on scientific research. For instance, most dogs are not behaving "badly" in a dog sense; they are just using normal dog behaviors to get their needs met or to resolve conflict. They use those behaviors because it's what they know, and in dog culture, they usually work. Dogs do not feel guilty in the human sense of the word since dogs do not think in terms of right and wrong, but in terms of what works and what does not work for them. Dog behavior is driven by doggy needs, not human emotion or morals.

Canine Life And Social Skills™ is not just about training our dogs; it is about training people, too! Through the C.L.A.S.S.™ program, students can find resources for learning about dog behavior, including locating training professionals dedicated to advocating dog-friendly techniques. One of the requirements of the entry-level C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation is that owners pass a multiple-choice test on basic dog information and responsible pet ownership.

Promote Positive Training

C.L.A.S.S.™, through its evaluation, curriculum, and training resources, advocates the use of reward-based training. Positive, reward-based training minimizes the use of punishment and is fun for you and your dog! C.L.A.S.S.™ promotes relationship-based training, training in which the communication is two-way, the mutual trust is strong, and the student (i.e. dog owner) gets to know the dog as an individual to help him reach his

potential. It is training that is instructive, telling the dog, without anger or force, what we would like the dog to do.

The human tendency is to notice and react when a dog (or person!) is doing something we *don't* like. Yet we would have much better relationships if we rewarded the dog (and person!) for doing things we *do* like. Help set the dog up for success by giving feedback and rewards for behavior you like, and by arranging the learning environment so that the behavior you want is easily produced.

Positive, reward-based training does not mean that your training is indulgent or without restraint. Clear boundaries and rules still need to be set for our canine companions. For one, dogs feel more secure with clear boundaries, because they know what is expected of them. Two, boundaries are necessary to maintain harmony in the human household. With positive, reward-based training methods, those rules and boundaries can be established without creating a confrontational atmosphere.

Does Positive, Reward-Based Training Work?

Research has shown that positive reinforcement—rewarding a desired behavior—is an effective and reliable method of teaching new behaviors or changing current behaviors in any physically and mentally healthy animal. In other words, dogs are more likely to repeat behaviors that get rewarded, which is why positive reinforcement works. It is a simple rule that behaviors resulting in pleasant consequences will be repeated, and behaviors with no payoff will decrease. Positive consequences can be anything from treats and belly rubs, to going for a walk and sitting next to you. Furthermore, learning occurs readily in a reward-based training program in which the dog feels safe and relaxed. Training that relies on the use of physical and emotional punishment creates stress, hinder the learning process, and can harm the relationship.

Strengthen Dog/Student Relationships

A positive approach develops and safeguards harmonious relationships by maintaining a mutual trust between dog and student. By encouraging positive, rewards-based training, the C.L.A.S.S.™ program strengthens relationships through effective communication, understanding, and quality time spent together.

Effective communication is essential to any relationship. Training is communicating to help a dog learn what we want him to do, not forcing him to do it. Dogs and humans are born speaking different languages. When a dog is brought into a human household, it is up to the human to

communicate in a way the dog understands. Similarly, dogs have an expressive and well-developed system of body language for communication. If we expect the dog to listen to us, we should listen to what the dog is telling us.

Relationships are further enhanced by understanding the dog as an individual, learning the dog's personality and the dog's likes and dislikes. Remember that rewards are specific to each dog.

The dog/student relationship is also strengthened through shared activity. With positive, rewards-based training we spend quality time with the dog, resulting in the dog learning so that he has the social skills to spend more time with people. Dogs are living, emotional beings who thrive on social interaction; they require human attention to be well-adjusted, not to mention to learn appropriate social behavior. A dog left out in the yard is not only deprived of required human attention and a sense of belonging but the skills needed to live with humans, as dogs will do whatever works for them if left to their own devices.

Assessment

The C.L.A.S.S.™ assessment program provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate the practical real-life skills of their dogs through an evaluation. During an evaluation, students accompany their dogs through a series of real-life activities so that their training skills may be assessed by a professional trainer who has been approved as a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator. Passing a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation is a testimony to the life skills that a student and his dog have developed together.

There are three C.L.A.S.S.™ assessment levels:

The Bachelor's (B.A.) Level assesses the core life skills of a student/dog team.

The Master's (M.A.) Level assesses the life skills of a student/dog team with distractions.

The Doctorate (Ph.D.) Level is the highest level, designed to assess the performance reliability of a dog/student team's life skills.

All students begin in the B.A. Level, and progress to higher levels as they pass each level. Students must pass a written exam testing the student's understanding of basic dog handling and care as a requirement to begin earning C.L.A.S.S.™ certificates. Successfully completing each C.L.A.S.S.™ level is like earning an academic degree in real-life skills with your dog.

Encouragement of Ongoing Training

With its emphasis on teaching and maintaining reliable life skills as well as advancing to higher levels of training, the C.L.A.S.S.™ program supports continual training and encourages owners to engage in more shared activities with their dogs. Dogs are continually learning with every behavior, so why not use training to be proactive in what your dog does learn?

There are so many reasons to continue training with your dog:

- Training redirects your dog's natural behaviors to acceptable outlets

- Training builds your dog's behavioral repertoire

- The more acceptable behaviors a dog learns, the less room there is for undesirable behaviors

- Training is fun

- Training increases the odds that a dog will stay in the family for his lifetime rather than be given up due to behavior issues

- Training makes it possible to engage in many more activities with a well-trained dog, such as:
  - Earning C.L.A.S.S.™ B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. Certificates
  - Ongoing training classes
  - Dog sports and games
  - Animal-assisted therapy work
  - Outings
  - Vacations
  - Search and Rescue

Expand Opportunities for Well-Behaved Pets

C.L.A.S.S.™ is about teaching and appreciating real-life, practical skills, such as walking nicely on a leash, settle, meeting strangers, table manners, attention, and come when called, just to name a few. Moreover, by using those skills in everyday situations, a dog can become a well-behaved member of your household and a welcome part of society.

As responsible pet ownership and real-life training increases, the C.L.A.S.S.™ program will continue to secure benefits for C.L.A.S.S.™ graduates throughout communities by partnering with insurance, hospitality, and realtor associations in order to promote more public access for well-trained dogs and their owners.

Support for Shelters and Rescues

Another component of the C.L.A.S.S.™ program is to support training efforts of animal shelters and rescues. The lack of training or improper training is a primary reason for pets being relinquished to a shelter. C.L.A.S.S.™ can be used to promote adoption through training basic life skills, to provide dogs with mental and physical enrichment, and to reduce kennel stress and behavioral problems. C.L.A.S.S.™ can also provide a framework for a shelter volunteer program. The C.L.A.S.S.™ web site will feature dogs for adoption that have passed at least one level of the C.L.A.S.S.™ assessment, thereby giving adoptable dogs more visibility to

potential adopters looking to bring home a new canine friend. For more information on using C.L.A.S.S.™ in a shelter, see the Shelter Handbook in the shelter section at www.mydoghasclass.com.

Read on to learn more about how to help your dog reach his C.L.A.S.S.™ potential!

Who are C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation Participants?

Students

Anyone with a dog is encouraged to participate in the C.L.A.S.S.™ program. Students, whether well-bodied or disabled, must be at least 18 years of age.

Dogs

Pedigreed, mixed breed, designer dogs, adopted dogs, mutts, champion dogs, foster dogs, shelter dogs, seniors, service dogs, therapy dogs, disabled dogs—any dog at least four months of age is eligible for the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation.

Junior Handlers

Younger dog handlers are encouraged to participate in the C.L.A.S.S.™ program with their dog. Junior handlers are 12 to 17 years of age, and must have a parent or adult mentor present to observe during the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation. Written permission from the parent or adult mentor also must be provided at the time of the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation for the Junior handler to participate.

C.L.A.S.S.™ Instructors

C.L.A.S.S.™ instructors are like class professors—they are dog training instructors who teach a C.L.A.S.S.™ curriculum to prepare students for the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation. Search for a C.L.A.S.S.™ Instructor in your area by visiting the APDT Trainer Search at www.apdt.com/petowners/ts.

C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluators

Evaluators administer C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluations and score performances of dog/student teams. Evaluators are members of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers. Precise standards are in place to certify C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluators and to maintain evaluator status. See www.mydoghasclass.com for complete Evaluator qualifications. To search for a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator in your area, go to the APDT web site at www.apdt.com/petowners/ts.

C.L.A.S.S.™ Assistants

C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluators are required to have at least one Assistant present for each C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation. An Assistant must be at least 18 years of age. Assistants help out the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator during a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, and may perform such duties as positioning objects for test items and providing distractions.

What are the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation Rules?

We want C.L.A.S.S.™ to be an enjoyable experience for everyone—including the dogs, students, and Evaluators. For consistency, safety, and a positive environment, the following guidelines are in place for use during a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation.

What is Acceptable

Quick Reference C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation Rules		
	What is Acceptable	**What is Acceptable at Specific Times**
Student Activity	✓ Verbal Praise	✓ Food Treats ✓ Petting ✓ Toys/Games
Equipment	✓ 6' Leash ✓ Flat Buckle or Snap Collar ✓ Martingale/Limited Slip Collar ✓ Body Harness	✓ No-Pull Harness (B.A. Level only)

Rewards

By definition, rewards are essential to positive reinforcement training! The C.L.A.S.S.™ program encourages the use of rewards, within guidelines, during the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation.

Rewards Usage Rules

Here is how rewards may be used during an Evaluation:

- At the B.A. Level, food treats, petting, and toys/games may be used after each test item is completed, after each part of a two-part test item, and during pauses between test items.

- At the M.A. Level, food treats, petting, and toys/games may be given after all parts within each test item have been completed, and during pauses between test items.

- At the Ph.D. Level, food treats may only be given before the evaluation starts and after the evaluation ends. Petting and toys/games may be given after all parts within each test item have been completed, and during pauses between test items.

Food treats, petting, and toys/games may be given freely during the Warm-Up Time for all C.L.A.S.S.™ Levels.

As per the Evaluation Guidelines, a test item is considered complete after all elements of the test have been performed. For stationary behaviors, (sit, down, and stand) which are in a variety of test items throughout each level, the dog must maintain the behavior for at least 2 to 3 seconds to be considered a complete behavior.

For all C.L.A.S.S.™ Levels, food treats and toys must be concealed in the student's pocket. Food treats may not be carried by hand, in a treat pouch, or in the student's mouth.

Food Rewards

Food rewards, with correct usage, are a powerful tool in positive, reward-based training and relationship building. Dogs naturally love food, so food rewards can reinforce a behavior, making it more likely to occur again! Food rewards in positive training are given when the dog does a desired behavior, so that the dog will want to repeat the behavior in hopes of getting more food rewards. The dog does not have to see the treat first before doing the behavior; the dog gets the treat after doing the behavior.

Life Rewards

Life rewards can be anything a particular dog finds pleasant and enjoyable. The list of life rewards depends on the dog's individual personality, the relationship of the dog and student, as well as the context in which the reward is given.

Verbal Praise

Verbal praise is encouraged throughout the test. Students are encouraged to relate and connect verbally in a positive manner with their dogs during the evaluation just as in real-life.

Petting

We love our dogs and want to physically touch them. In a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, students may pet their dogs during the Warm-Up Time and between test items, that is, after completing one test item and before starting another test item. However, since petting can possibly interrupt a dog's performance or be construed as physical prompting, students may not pet their dog during other test items, except during items that require handling.

Toys/Games

There can be varying types of toys and games that are rewarding to dogs, such as tug, fetch, tennis balls, and flying discs, just to name a few. In a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, students may use toys and games during the Warm-Up Time and between test items, that is, after completing one test item and before starting another test item. Toys and games may *not* be used during other test items, as they could possibly be used to entice a dog to do a behavior or be distracting to the dog.
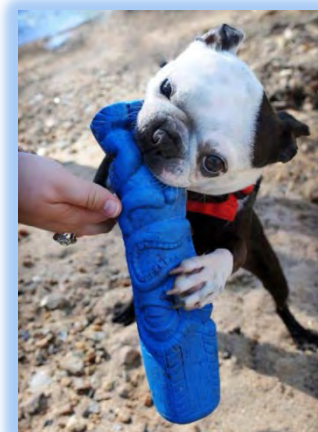
Equipment Allowed

For safety, compliance with leash laws, and expediency during a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, a student must have their dog on a 6-foot, non-retractable leash. The leash must be held in the student's hand, except when held by the Evaluator; the student should not drop the leash during stationary test items.

The leash should be attached to a properly-fitted flat buckle or snap collar, limited slip (martingale) collar, or standard body harness. In the B.A. Level only, additional equipment allowed includes no-pull harnesses such as front clip harnesses, Easy Walk™ harnesses, and Sporn™ harnesses; these harnesses may only be used in the B.A. Level if the leash remains loose and if the handler can manage the dog in the same fashion as if using a buckle collar or harness. (No-pull harnesses are not acceptable for use in the M.A. and Ph.D. Levels.) All equipment should be in good repair.

The student has the option to remove the leash for the following test items, ONLY if the test is performed in a secured area:

Optional Off-Leash Test Items if in Secured Area	
(All B.A. Test Items must be performed on leash)	
M.A. 4. Come and Leashing Up Manners (part A)	Ph.D. 4. Come and Leashing Up Manners (part A)
M.A. 5. Sit, Down, and Stand	Ph.D. 5. Meet and Greet
M.A. 6. Handling	Ph.D. 6. Attention
M.A. 8. Stay	Ph.D. 7. Table Manners
	Ph.D. 8. Do You Really Know Sit?

What is Not Acceptable

To foster a positive focus, effective training, and pleasant atmosphere, certain activities and equipment are not allowed in a C.L.A.S.S.™ testing environment.

Quick Reference: C.L.A.S.S.™ Rules What is NOT Acceptable / Automatic Incompletes	
Student Activity	✖ Luring or using food rewards when not allowed ✖ Physical Prompting ✖ Physical Force ✖ Harsh Corrections ✖ Aggression Toward Dogs or People ✖ Unpreparedness
Student/Dog Activity	✖ Unmanageable Behavior
Dog Behavior and Health	✖ Inappropriate Elimination ✖ Excessive Stress ✖ Illness ✖ Physical Pain or Injury ✖ Aggression Toward Dogs or People
Equipment	✖ Slip Lead ✖ Martingale Lead ✖ Head Halters ✖ No-Pull Harness (M.A. and Ph.D. only) ✖ Muzzle ✖ Choke Chain ✖ Prong Collar ✖ Shock/Electronic Collar

The occurrence of any of the following during a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation will mandate an Incomplete test score for the overall evaluation, with the exception of excessive stress, during which instance the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator may allow the dog extra time and patience to see if the dog will relax in a reasonable amount of time.

Luring or Using Food Rewards at the Incorrect Time

Luring is using food or other desirable object to entice a dog to do a particular behavior. Pretending to use food, tricking a dog into thinking you have food in your hand, or pretending to pull a treat out of your pocket is also considered luring. When a dog is lured into a position, the dog may have learned to follow a treat but not necessarily how to perform the behavior on cue. So luring may be a sign that the dog has not yet learned the desired behavior. A C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation is intended to assess the skills a dog/student team has already acquired. Therefore, luring a dog is not allowed during a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation at any level, including during the bonuses. (Even though bonuses are not scored as Excellent, Needs Work, or Incomplete, the C.L.A.S.S.™ Rules of "What is Not Acceptable – Automatic Incompletes" still apply during bonuses as in any test item.) Food rewards given at the incorrect time will also be scored as an Automatic Incomplete.

Though hand signals can be derived from the action of a lure, hand signals are not considered lures, and therefore are acceptable. The Evaluator will use discretion when assessing if a hand signal is intended to try to lure the dog.

Physical Prompting

Physical prompting is touching a dog as a cue to perform a behavior. Some examples include touching a dog's rear as a cue to sit, blocking (with physical contact) the dog with the student's body to keep the dog from moving forward, or touching a dog to get his attention. Physical prompting can create pressure or anxiety for dogs, even if no physical pressure is used. C.L.A.S.S.™ tests are for assessing responses to verbal and visual cues, so physical prompting is not allowed. An exception to this rule will be made for students with deaf dogs, where touch can be used for attention.

Physical Force

Students may not use physical force or a taut leash to control a dog's movements. For example, pushing a dog into a sit or down and pulling a dog's body with the leash is not allowed. This signifies more training is needed for the dog to choose to do the behavior voluntarily.

Harsh Corrections

The following corrections are not allowed in nor around the evaluation site.

Harsh Tones

Yelling at or intimidating a dog with voice tone is not allowed.

Harsh Startle Corrections

Students may not use startle or fear-based corrections such as squirt bottles or shake cans during a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation.

Physical Corrections

Students may not use physical corrections, including, but not limited to, rolling a dog on his back, grabbing, hitting, kicking, slapping, shaking, pinching, muzzle popping, or finger jabs.

Leash Corrections

Students may not use leash corrections (also known as leash jerks, leash checks, or leash pops).

Students Who Exhibit Aggression Toward Other People

A student should not be allowed to test, or be given an Incomplete if testing has already begun, if the Evaluator observes the student exhibiting aggressive or threatening behavior toward other people or dogs in and around the C.L.A.S.S.™ test area, including before and after the evaluation. Threatening or aggressive behavior may include, but is not limited to, shoving, yelling, using foul language, and being argumentative.

Unpreparedness

If the student does not have the required equipment for the evaluation, the student is not allowed to take the evaluation at that time.

The required equipment is:

- o   Permissible collar or harness
- o   6-foot non-retractable leash
- o   Doggy clean-up supplies (waste bags, poop scooper, etc.)

While it is preferable that students have their C.L.A.S.S.™ Student ID and Dog ID Numbers on or before the day of the evaluation, and that the dog has been registered for each level of evaluation that will be taken that day, students may also register their dogs for C.L.A.S.S.™ after an Evaluation. Evaluation scores may not be reported to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office until the student has registered their dog at www.mydoghasclass.com for each evaluation level taken.

For the B.A. Level Evaluation, it is also preferable that students have their signed Veterinarian Certificates to present to the Evaluator, since this certificate is part of the requirements for each team to complete the B.A. Level. If the student does not present the Veterinarian Certificate to the Evaluator at some point prior to the Evaluation, the student may still take the evaluation. However, when the Evaluator reports the team's score, it will be noted that the Veterinarian Certificate requirement, and therefore the B.A. Level, is not yet complete. The student will then need to send the Veterinarian Certificate to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office in order to get credit for meeting that requirement.

Unmanageable Behavior

In Canine Life And Social Skills™, an overall goal is to teach and encourage students to properly manage so-called "unruly" dog behaviors so that dogs are welcome in more social situations. Jumping up, barking, chewing, mouthing, peeing, pooping, digging, chasing, tugging—these are all normal dog behaviors. Although there could be different reasons why these behaviors may occur, dogs basically engage in these activities

because it is what they naturally know and it works for them. While dogs should be allowed to be dogs, we also need to teach our dogs the rules of living in a human world.

Therefore, if, during a dog's C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, the dog engages in unruly activity that cannot be managed by the student, such as excessively and repeatedly jumping up on a person, barking, or mouthing, the team shall receive an Incomplete score for the overall evaluation.

Inappropriate Elimination

Appropriate times and places for eliminating are important in Canine Life And Social Skills™. Urinating, including urine marking, or defecating during any part of a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, except during the Warm-Up time, will result in an Incomplete for the overall evaluation. Students are encouraged to potty their dogs before the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation begins, in addition to learning to read their dogs' physical signs of needing to go potty.

An exception to the elimination rule will be made during the Warm-Up Time in each level, during which time dogs are allowed to eliminate in the designated potty area only. In the interest of fairness to all dogs, a designated potty area will be set up for all C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluations whether held indoors or out.

For the indoors, the potty area is available just in case stress or nervousness create the need to eliminate. Moreover, the indoor potty area provides for dogs who are not yet housetrained (such as shelter dogs), as long as the student recognizes the signs and directs the dog to the designated potty area. For indoor testing locations, depending on the location, there may be both an indoor and outdoor potty area option, so that owners may choose to take their dogs outside to eliminate if necessary.
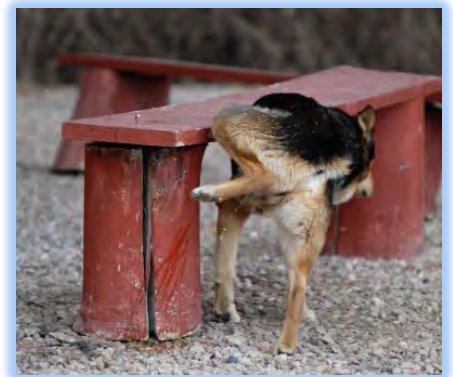
For the outdoors, the designated potty area again is available in case of stress or nervousness, or if the dog did not potty before the evaluation. Also, by designating a specific potty area outdoors, the outdoors area allocated for the test does not become a potty area which would serve to stimulate more dogs to potty as well as distract dogs with enticing smells. This is realistic as even if dogs are trained not to potty in the house, they also need to be taught appropriate times and places to potty outside, and the student should know how to observe and redirect their dog to an acceptable place to potty if necessary.

Excessive Stress

Testing a dog who is experiencing extreme stress may not reveal information about how the dog will behave when he is relaxed. Responsible students should protect their dog from extremely distressing situations. The C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator may allow the dog extra time and patience to see if the dog will relax in a reasonable amount of time.

The C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation will not begin if a dog is exhibiting signs of excessive stress. If a dog becomes excessively stressed during an evaluation, the Evaluator should end the testing at that time. This dog may need more socialization and/or training before retaking the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation.

Some signs of excessive stress include: shutting down, tail tucked between legs, trembling, whining, excessive barking, cowering, excessive chewing of the leash, pacing, excessive drooling, excessive panting, and trying to escape or hide. There are different intensities of these stress signs, and the Evaluator shall use their best judgment in deciding whether to begin, pause, or continue an evaluation or not if the dog is displaying these signs due to stress.

Illness

A team will not be allowed to go through a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, or be given an Incomplete if already begun testing, if the dog demonstrates illness, such as vomiting, severe diarrhea, or fatigue.

Physical Pain or Injury

A team will not be allowed to test, or be given an Incomplete if already begun testing, if the dog:

- appears to be in pain or discomfort
- has stitches or bandages from a recent wound

Dogs Who Exhibit Aggression Toward Others

A dog will not be allowed to test, or be given an Incomplete if already begun testing, if the Evaluator observes the dog exhibiting aggressive or threatening behavior inappropriately toward people or dogs in and around the C.L.A.S.S.™ test area, including before and after the evaluation. Threatening or aggressive behavior may include, but is not limited to, snarling, growling, lunging, snapping, or biting toward a person or dog. If, in the Evaluator's opinion, the dog threatens the safety of any people or dogs in the vicinity of the testing area, the Evaluator shall ask the student to remove the dog from the evaluation site.

Equipment Not Allowed

Equipment not allowed includes slip leads, retractable leashes, muzzles, and any type of clothing that covers the dog's body (such as Thundershirts™ or Anxiety Wraps™.) This equipment may be helpful and practical for use in some settings; however, a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation should be performed without the use of these training aids.

No-pull harnesses, such as front clip harnesses, Easy Walk™ harnesses, and Sporn™ harnesses, are not acceptable in the M.A. and Ph.D. Levels; a dog may wear a no-pull harness in these levels, but ONLY if the leash is attached to the collar or in such a way so that the no-pull functionality is not activated. (No-pull harnesses are acceptable in the B.A. Level only if the leash remains loose and if the handler can manage the dog in the same fashion as if using a buckle collar or harness.) Head halters, such as the Halti™ and the Gentle Leader™, are not allowed at any C.L.A.S.S.™ Level.

Equipment and techniques that try to modify behavior through fear, pain, or threats are not allowed in a C.L.A.S.S.™ setting nor are they generally recommended to prepare a dog for C.L.A.S.S, as fear and anxiety are not the basis for building a mutually rewarding relationship. The equipment not allowed includes choke chains, prong collars, and shock/electronic collars. (Vibration-only collars, however, are allowed for use with deaf dogs.)

How Do I Prepare for a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation?

The following describes the practical steps for preparing for a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation.

Quick Reference
Preparing for a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation
1. Take a C.L.A.S.S.™ training course (optional)
2. Register for C.L.A.S.S.™
3. Complete the Veterinarian Certificate (B.A. only)
4. Pass the Student Knowledge Assessment (B.A. only)
5. Find a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator
6. Be Familiar with C.L.A.S.S.™ Rules and Test Items
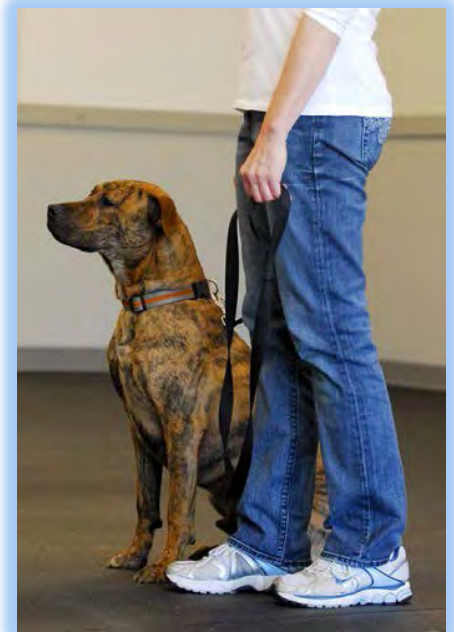
Training for a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation

A great way for students to prepare themselves and their dogs for the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation is to take a training course from a dog training instructor offering the C.L.A.S.S.™ curriculum. Find C.L.A.S.S.™ Instructors at www.mydoghasclass.com. Attending an organized class is highly recommended to prepare for the evaluation in a structured manner and to socialize you and your dog in the process. If there are no C.L.A.S.S.™ Instructors in your area, you may search for dog training instructors via the APDT Trainer Search at www.apdt.com/petowners/ts and contact them about a course to prepare for C.L.A.S.S.™ There are also resources available to help students train their dog at home. Remember that training is a team process—the dog and student must work together as a cohesive team for success in C.L.A.S.S.™

It is a good idea to do some practice run-throughs of an evaluation with the help of friends or trainers you have worked with. A complete list of the Evaluation Test Items is included in this handbook for your review and practice. Also, a sample Evaluation form for each level may be downloaded from the C.L.A.S.S.™ web site to use for your practice run-throughs. Since dogs do not generalize well, we recommend that students practice each test item with their dog in different places. Even if a dog can perform the necessary skills in his home, the dog may not be able to perform the skills in another location.

Register for C.L.A.S.S.™

The first step to take for students interested in a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation is to register their dog for C.L.A.S.S.™ There are three ways to register: online registration, paper registration form, or by phone. Online registration is the fastest and most efficient method.

Students may register up to four dogs from the same household at one time, and may register each dog for one level (B.A., M.A., or Ph.D.) at a time. When the student registers a dog, the registration system automatically identifies which level(s) that dog has already been registered for, and will select the next level in the sequence (starting with the B.A., then the M.A., and finally Ph.D.) for which your dog is eligible to be registered. In this way, students cannot inadvertently register the same dog twice for the same level. Students may login to their Student account at any time to register additional dogs or to register for an additional level for their dog.

While it is preferable that students have their C.L.A.S.S.™ Student ID and Dog ID Numbers on or before the day of the evaluation, and that the dog has been registered in advance of each level of evaluation taken, students may also register their dogs for C.L.A.S.S. after an Evaluation. Evaluation scores may not be reported to the C.L.A.S.S. Office until the student has registered their dog at www.mydoghasclass.com for each evaluation level taken.

Registration fees are non-refundable.

Online Registration

With online registration, a student visits www.mydoghasclass.com to create a C.L.A.S.S.™ Student account and receive their Student ID. The first time a student registers a particular dog(s), the student will fill out a short registration form for each dog, and submit the registration fee electronically, at which point the dog(s) will be registered for the B.A. Evaluation. (See Registration Fees below.) The student will receive the C.L.A.S.S.™ Dog ID immediately for each dog registered. The Dog ID should be submitted to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator on or before the day of a student/dog team's evaluation.
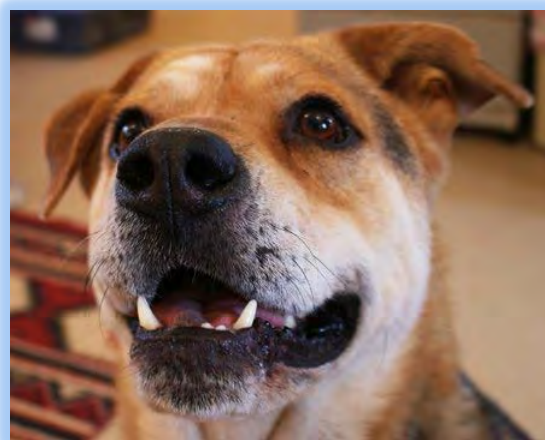
If the student already has a C.L.A.S.S.™ account and wishes to register a dog for another level of C.L.A.S.S., they will log in and see a list of dogs registered to their account. The student will select the dog or dogs they wish to register for another level, and submit the registration fee electronically. Students may also register additional dogs and look up Dog ID numbers at any time by logging in to their C.L.A.S.S.™ account.

Registration by Mail, Email, or Fax

C.L.A.S.S.™ Student/Dog Team Registration Forms are available for download from www.mydoghasclass.com, by calling or emailing the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office at 800-PET-DOGS (800-738-3647) or class@apdt.com to request a form be mailed to you, or may be obtained from a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator or Instructor. The student will mail, fax, or scan/email the completed Student/Dog Team Registration Form with the appropriate registration fee as per the instructions on the form. Upon processing the form, the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office will email the student with the C.L.A.S.S.™ Student ID and Dog ID numbers for each dog registered. Please note that registration forms without a valid email address cannot be processed. The Dog ID number should be submitted to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator on or before the day of a student/dog team's evaluation. Students may look up their Student ID and Dog ID numbers at any time by logging in to their C.L.A.S.S.™ account.

While registration may be done by mail or phone, the Student Knowledge Assessment, a requirement to qualify the student to begin earning C.L.A.S.S.™ certificates, must be done online.

Registration by Phone

To register by phone, a student should dial the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office at 800-PET-DOGS (800-738-3647) during regular business hours. Students should be prepared to pay the registration fee with a credit or debit card, and have a pen handy to write down their Student ID and Dog ID numbers. Students may look up their Student ID and Dog ID numbers at any time by logging in to their C.L.A.S.S.™ account.

Request for Test Modification

As stated in the eligibility for C.L.A.S.S.™ participants, any student or dog, whether well-bodied or disabled, is welcome to participate in a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation. In the event that a student's or dog's disabilities or health restricts the team from performing a test item as described, the student shall check the "Request for Test Modification" box during online C.L.A.S.S.™ registration, and provide the reason(s) for the request. All test items must be completed, though items may be modified to accommodate that student's particular disability or health restriction.

If necessary, exceptions in general are allowed for dogs or students with disabilities. For example, food lures and touching prompts may be allowed for blind dogs. The distance of the recalls may be shortened for some disabled dogs. For some test items, students and/or dogs may stand instead of sit, or sit instead of stand, depending on the particular health limitation.

Registration Fees

To complete the C.L.A.S.S.™ registration process, the student will submit the appropriate registration fee. Fees may be paid with a debit or credit card (American Express®, Discover®, MasterCard® or VISA®) or with personal check or money order.

Register for a C.L.A.S.S.™ Student ID...*FREE*

Register a dog for a C.L.A.S.S.™

B.A. Level...$5.00 per dog
M.A. Level ....$5.00 per dog
Ph.D. Level..$5.00 per dog

Discounts are given for registering more than one dog from the same household at the same time.

Printed certificates (suitable for framing)

1 certificate $5.00

Discounts are given for ordering more than one certificate at the same time.

Certificates are printed on metallic silver cardstock with the student's and dog's names, date, and level passed, and sent via US Mail. Printed certificates may be ordered at any time from the C.L.A.S.S.™ web site after passing the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation (and after the scores have been received by the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office.)

Veterinarian Certificate (B.A. Level only)

Part of responsible dog ownership is providing your dog with regular veterinarian care. A signed Veterinarian Certificate is a requirement for every team to complete the B.A. Level requirements. This certificate affirms that the dog has been examined by a veterinarian within the last year, has been well-cared for, and is free of parasites. The form does not request proof of vaccinations, as the vaccinations appropriate for each dog will vary.

Students may download the Veterinarian Certificate from the Resources tab of their online Student Account. This signed certificate can be presented to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator on the day of the B.A. Evaluation (preferred) or mailed to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office.
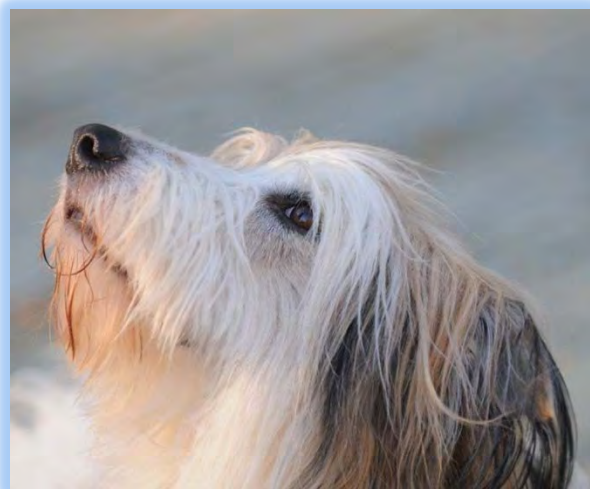
Pass the Student Knowledge Assessment (B.A. Level only)

As one of the purposes of C.L.A.S.S.™ is to encourage students to understand their dogs and dogs as a species, all students shall take an exam, the Student Knowledge Assessment, on topics related to dog care and handling. Passing the exam is a requirement to qualify the student to start earning C.L.A.S.S.™ certificates with the student's dog(s).

The test consists of 30 randomly-selected multiple choice questions, based on the information in the Study Guide below. Students must get at least 24 questions correct to pass.

If students do not pass the Student Knowledge Assessment, students will be notified of what questions were missed and why. Students may retake the exam after 24 hours. Students may continue to retake the exam until they pass, though they may only take the exam once per 24 hour period.

The student has the option to take the Student Knowledge Assessment multiple-choice test at any time by logging into their C.L.A.S.S.™ Student account. The Student Knowledge Assessment is only available in an Internet-based format.

Students must retake the Student Knowledge Assessment every three years, in accord with the renewal process for their dogs' C.L.A.S.S.™ certificates, which are valid for three years.

Study Guide for the Student Knowledge Assessment

The questions in the Student Knowledge Assessment exam are based on the following information, and we recommend that students use this information to prepare for the exam. This Study Guide is in a question and answer format covering basic dog information that every student should know, from Dog Training and Learning, to Communication and Body Language, to Dog Ownership.

Study Guide: Dog Ownership

Where can a student take a young puppy (8 – 12 weeks) who is current on all required vaccinations?

Socialization of young puppies ages 8 to 12 weeks is a very important part of having a well-rounded dog. At this age they should have received a minimum of their first series of vaccines for protection against infectious diseases, and all puppy classes should require this at the very least for admission. The risk of a dog dying from exposure to diseases should be weighed against the risk of a dog being relinquished to a shelter or euthanized because of behavioral issues that develop due to a lack of socialization. This period of puppy learning is a critical period to help influence good behavior of dogs. Places that you can take your puppy include your veterinary clinic, a puppy class that observes proper sanitization and vaccines protocols, and locations where your puppy can meet people and see new things without meeting strange dogs.

Why is picking up after my dog important?

Part of responsible dog ownership is being a good neighbor. Nobody enjoys the chore of picking up after their dogs in our own backyard. Imagine how your neighbors would feel if they had to pick up after dogs they do not even own! Picking up after or "curbing" your dog is a law in many places but perhaps more importantly you should be a good neighbor and good citizen no matter where you are with your dog; always carry waste bags with you.

Do dogs really need to be walked every day?

Dogs need exercise every day just like humans do. Taking a leash walk with your dog is not only great physical exercise for your dog, but it also provides great mental stimulation and helps with ongoing socialization to new places and scents. Taking leash walks with your dog can also contribute toward the two of you building a strong relationship as you walk and (work / explore) together.

What do I do if my dog is uncomfortable greeting another person?

It is common courtesy to have a person ask to pet your dog. As a responsible student you should always be proactive in protecting your dog from situations that may make them uncomfortable. This means that you might need to take the first step to help ensure that approaching people are respectful of your dog's space. Simply ask them to wait before reaching for your dog. You need to determine when—or if—your dog is comfortable enough for petting from a stranger. There is no need to be embarrassed or to feel rushed. Remember that just as there are some people who are a bit more shy and stand-offish, so are there dogs who may need to take some extra time to get to know a stranger. Some dogs may never enjoy meeting strangers and may need extra time and socialization to get used to a new person before allowing themselves to be touched. Always move at your dog's pace and comfort level.

How do I keep my dog safe if someone is trying to bring a dog over to greet and my dog is reactive?

Never rely on the actions of another person to keep your dog (and dogs around you) safe. As a responsible dog student you need do whatever it takes to immediately create distance between your dog and the other dog. Do not feel uncomfortable informing the other dog owner to please keep their dog away from yours and explain that your dog does not care for other dogs. If you have not already done so, consider consulting an expert in canine behavior modification to address your dog's reactive issues, too. Visit the APDT Trainer Search at www.apdt.com/petowners/ts to find a trainer near you who can be of assistance.

Why is crate training beneficial?

Having a doggie safe area such as a crate will provide your dog with his own personal space and is essential to many aspects of your training. Your dog's crate will be used during times when you cannot supervise him or when you just need a break. Dogs are den animals so when they are properly introduced to the crate they usually love them. Crate training can keep your dog out of trouble when you are away from home too. You will not have to worry about him chewing on your furniture, shoes or other valuable items and you will not need to worry about him having an accident in your home. Crates can also be a safe place when traveling. Your dog's crate can be a safe and fun place to be!

What is the best way to pick out treats or food for my dog?

There is such a variance of products available on the market. Marketing and advertising are very alluring to humans, but that does not mean the ingredients are as good as the package may look. As a responsible pet student you will want to be aware that some ingredients may not be good for your dog. It is important to educate yourself as to what it takes to maintain good health for your pet for a long and healthy life. Talk to your veterinarian about your dog's nutritional needs and about what ingredients you should look for, and which you should avoid, when selecting a brand of food for your dog.

Do I really need to trim my dog's nails if my dog does not like it?

Proper nail trims ensure that your dog maintains a healthy, natural gait. There is no need for this to be a stressful event for your dog! By hiring a positive reinforcement-based dog trainer, you can learn humane, low-stress methods that will help your dog to accept nail trims, regardless of whether they are done by a veterinarian, a groomer, or you.

If my dog does not like the leash, is it okay for me to just let him run loose?

Responsible dog ownership includes keeping your dog safe from environmental hazards; many city and state laws also require dogs to be on-leash when in public. Even if you live in a rural area where environmental hazards are minimal or city and state laws do not apply, it is wise to prepare your dog to happily accept a leash. This can be quickly achieved with reward-based, positive reinforcement training.

Why should a student check their dog's entire body every month?

There are many health issues that may go unnoticed if not checked for regularly. Dogs are also masters at hiding their discomfort or pain. Going over your dog 's entire body closely once a month, including looking at his teeth and gums, can potentially help you identify a health issue early in its development which may save you from a large veterinary bill later. Noticing the small things early on in many instances may even save your dog's life.

How is a dog's sense of smell and hearing different from a human's?

Dogs observe the world much differently than humans. We rely mostly on our sense of sight, followed by our sense of hearing. Dogs, on the other hand, have a much keener sense of smell than humans. Therefore, they gather much more information about their surroundings by sniffing. They also have a much greater sense of hearing than humans and can hear sounds from up to a mile away or deep in the ground. Dogs can hear a mole traveling underground and can smell a minute amount of explosives / drugs hidden in an entire warehouse.

Do all dogs of the same breed act the same? Are some breeds of dog inherently vicious and aggressive?

Each breed of dog has their own unique personality, individual quirks and some are genetically predisposed to certain behaviors such as retrieving or tracking. Within any breed, there will be a range of calm to high energy dogs. Contrary to popular opinion there are no inherently "bad" breeds, but there are irresponsible owners that allow antisocial behavior to develop whether due to indifference or actually teaching or allowing the dog to behave in an antisocial manner.

Study Guide: Communication and Body Language

Why do dogs bark and how should I talk to my dog when he is barking?

Barking is as natural to a dog as eating, sleeping, and scratching. There are many different reasons why dogs bark. They bark to alert, out of frustration, because they are frightened, bored or even out of excitement during play. Many people do not realize that they may actually be contributing the barking by yelling or scolding their dog. Your dog may think you are joining in and will take the attention as a sign that you agree with his actions. Barking can be very frustrating to a person. If your dog is barking, it is important to first get his attention to interrupt the behavior. Using a cheerful, happy tone will help to get your dog focused on you rather than what he is barking at. When your dog responds to your cheerful voice, reward him with a high value treat for being quiet. The next step would be to redirect your dog's attention to an appropriate, quiet behavior, such as fetch, chewing on a bone, or playing with a toy.

Why does my dog turn away when I hug him?

Although humans love hugs, it does not necessarily mean that a dog will be comfortable with one. Dogs do not hug each other; in fact, dogs are very respectful of each other's space. There are many other ways to show affection to your pet. If your dog turns away when you hug him, your dog is politely letting you know he does not want or enjoy the hug. Hugging can be stressful for dogs to accept as he may feel trapped by the embrace. If you must, keep it short and sweet.

What is the best way to let my dog approach and greet another dog?

In terms of canine social behavior, appropriate greetings are nose-to-tail. Nose-to-nose greetings in the dog world are not only impolite, but they increase the risk of your dog being bitten by a dog who may *not* love other dogs.

What are the best ways to communicate with my dog and why is understanding dog body language important?

Many people feel their dogs understand every word they are saying and then are frustrated when their dog does not respond to something they are asking them to do. While dogs can learn to associate many words with items or actions, they fall far short of understanding everything people are saying. They are, however, quite good at understanding your tone of voice. For instance, a happy, high pitched, cheery voice indicates that you are pleased or that you want to play. Your tone of voice is important in order to begin good communication with your dog, and to let him know what you expect from him and when. Dogs are also very good at communicating through body language. Once you start to understand your dog's body language you can start to communicate with your best friend in a way they can understand. The signs dogs use to communicate with each other include facial expressions, body postures and movements. Dogs specifically use their faces, ears, tails and eyes to communicate. Students need to learn how they use different body movements to communicate as they are often misinterpreted. For example, we commonly think a wagging tail means a dog is friendly, but depending on the speed of the wag and the stiffness and posture of the body, it can also mean that a dog is potentially in a defensive or offensive aggressive mode.

What are calming signals and why does my dog use them?

Dogs do not have the ability to use verbal language like humans. They rely on body language to communicate with each other and other species. One aspect of their body language is called *calming signals*. They use these signals to share their intentions with other dogs and with us. For instance dogs use their tail as a way to communicate their feelings. Just because the tail is wagging does not necessarily mean the dog is happy. Depending on how he is carrying his tail as well as other body language will tell you whether the dog is in the mood to play, nervous or in the mood to fight.

When a dog wants to show another dog that he means no harm, he will turn his head and sometimes entire body away from the imposing dog. Dogs may also scratch, yawn or lick their lips as a way to signal they are feeling too much pressure. With humans, dogs will display these same behaviors in an attempt to communicate they are uncomfortable in their current situation. We should "listen" to these behaviors and give our dogs a break from the situation at hand. Just like people, dogs cannot work effectively if they are under too much pressure.

Of course, dogs also scratch when they have an itch, and yawn when they are tired or bored, so the signals must be read in context.

How should someone greet a dog?

When greeting a dog try to use slow, casual body movements. You should not be closer than two feet from the dog. If the dog does not approach you, turn your body slightly sideways to the dog, which is a nonthreatening posture, rather than squaring off / directly facing the dog. Always allow the dog to take the first steps to approach you and wait before you reach out to pet the dog. Once the dog feels comfortable enough to approach you, the first physical interaction you should have is to pet the dog under the chin, or along his side rather than reaching over the dog's head. If the dog does not want to approach you, simply respect the dog's choice and walk away politely.

How do dogs tell each other that they want to play?

Since dog-dog play can sometimes be confused by people as fighting, it is important to understand their body language so no harm may come to either of them. Dog play is often initiated by a play bow which is tells the other dog that he is doing this for fun. Dogs will often bark and growl a bit while playing. Typically they use a higher-pitched bark than a warning bark. Dogs will also take frequent quick breaks or pauses lasting just a couple of seconds during play. You will also likely see a lot of give and take during play. The dogs will essentially take turns with one dog leading and then the other. It is important to supervise the play sessions in case one dog has had enough, you can intervene if the other dog persists. For instance if one dog is consistently hiding underneath a chair or crying to get away it may be necessary for you to step in to protect the dog who does not want to play anymore.

Study Guide: Training and Learning

What kind of rewards can be used in positive reinforcement training?

There are many types of rewards that will provide the necessary praise and positive reinforcement for your dog. Dogs have varied temperaments and interests. Not all dogs are food motivated in every context or environment. Other types of rewards can include a favorite toy, a game of chase or tug, petting, verbal praise and even teaching the dog a special trick he enjoys making the training fun.

What is clicker training?

Clicker training is a type of positive reinforcement training that is a simple and very effective. The handler uses a clicker, which is typically a small plastic box with a metal strip inside of it that makes a clicking sound when pressed. The clicker is pressed to mark the desired behavior, indicating to the dog that he did the right behavior and that a reward is on its way!

Can my dog be trained positively if he does not like food as a reward?

A reward is quite simply anything that your dog finds intrinsically rewarding. Some examples of rewards include toys, access to the outdoors, a car ride, or attention/affection from people. Food is often used because many dogs are motivated by it and food is also quick and easy to deliver to your dog. However; if your dog just ate his dinner, using a food reward may not be your best option. The key is to know what is rewarding to *your* dog in that moment! Make a list of 20 things that are rewarding to your dog including food, toys, treats and other life rewards such as belly rubs or playing with another dog!

What is positive reinforcement and why should I use it?

The most effective way of teaching a new behavior is using positive reinforcement. Using positive reinforcement provides a win-win situation for you and your dog. The dog learns that doing what you want gets them what he wants – i.e., food, toys, affection. There are various ways to positively reinforce behavior. You can "lure" your dog into the desired behavior and then reward. You can wait for your dog to offer the desired behavior and then reward. You can use a marker signal, such as a clicker, to "mark" when a dog does something you want and then reward. Whatever behaviors you reward (or positively reinforce) are the behaviors that you will see increase.

How important is consistency in training?

Consistency is one of the most important aspects of training your dog. For instance, you do not want your dog on the couch. When you are home, you are able enforce that rule. While you are not home, other people in the house may tell your dog it is ok to be on the couch. This can lead to obvious confusion for your dog. This also applies to many other behaviors such as barking, pulling on the leash, chewing, jumping, etc. Consistency simply means that everyone uses the same rules for the dog all of the time for clear training results.

If my dog is not able to execute a behavior he has been trained to do reliably, what should I do?

Ideally a dog should respond to a cue asked of him on the first time. If your dog does not respond to your cue within a few seconds of you asking him one of a few things is likely occurring – either he does not know the behavior as well as you may have originally thought, he may not be motivated enough to execute the behaviors or there is something in the environment that is distracting him from executing the behavior successfully. There is also a possibility that there may be some underlying medical condition that is preventing him from completing the behavior. If the problem persists you should consider checking with your veterinarian to rule out any medical issues. Do keep in mind that dogs are not robots and may become distracted or become unmotivated at some point. Keep consistent in your training and remember that occasionally rewarding your dog from time to time will be the best way to keep him motivated for a reliable response.

How do you reward a dog when teaching him a behavior that has multiple steps?

An example of a behavior with multiple steps is fetch. The steps might be chasing after the ball, picking up the ball, and bringing the ball back to you. The trainer would teach each behavior step by step and reward each successful step. Eventually the student can gradually ask for more of the sequence of steps for the dog to achieve the reward. The steps might look something like this: Dog chases after the ball and gets a reward. Dog picks up the ball and gets a reward. Dog brings the ball back and gets a reward. Then, the dog chases the ball and picks the ball up which gets him a reward. Finally, the dog chases the ball, picks up the ball and brings the ball back (the complete behavior) to get the reward.

What should I do if my dog is barking in his crate?

You should first figure out why your dog is barking. There may be a number of reasons why he is barking in his crate including he is trying to get your attention, because he is stressed about his crate or perhaps because he needs to go to the bathroom? The most common answer is that he is barking because he wants your attention. There is a simple solution—ignore your dog. Do not look at him, do not say anything to him, you might even walk away. Once he stops barking wait a few seconds and then give him some attention which will be a reward for being quiet. By ignoring him your dog will quickly learn that being quiet, not barking, is the way to get your attention. If you think your dog needs to go to the bathroom, the answer is obvious. Let your dog out! If you think your dog is barking because he is stressed, speak with your trainer about ways to help him become better acquainted with his crate or what alternatives you can explore for containing your dog.

My dog does not understanding training. Is he just being stubborn or dominant?

Training your dog can sometimes require patience. Dogs learn quickly what works and what does not work. Dogs are often called stubborn or dominant when they seem to ignore our requests. What they are truly displaying is confusion or a lack of not understanding what you're asking them to do. Perhaps your dog has not generalized the behavior to that situation, or your dog is stressed, distracted or perhaps your dog has not made the connection between your cue and the behavior you are seeking yet.

Do dogs automatically learn to generalize new behaviors they have learned to every person and every situation?

Generalizing new behaviors is something dogs do not do well. You have to send a consistent message to your dog in all circumstances and keep it simple for your dog to avoid confusion. This means that everybody who comes into contact with your dog has to send the same message. For instance to teach your dog not to jump, you ask for and reward a behavior that you want instead, such as sit. To help him generalize the behavior you would ask him to sit when greeting you, family and friends. You would also need to ask him to sit in a variety of places and situations i.e. at the front door, while out for a walk, etc.

What do I do if my puppy is jumping up and scratching me and leaving welts on my arms and legs?

Teaching a puppy how to respect a human's space is an important life lesson. Lest the puppy think we do not ever want them to come into our space to relate, this life lesson must be taught in a positive fashion. It is helpful to redirect your puppy's attention to an alternative behavior that he can do instead of using you as a scratching post. Rewarding an alternative behavior such as "sit" instead of jumping all over you is one way to train the puppy to get his paws "off" of you. If the jumping, scratching and space invading is attention-driven, then a student must think about whether or not the puppy is getting meaningful, appropriate attention and exercise throughout the day. It is also important to make sure that your puppy's nails are well trimmed at all times.

What should I do if my puppy is biting my hands every time we play?

Puppy biting is a natural behavior for puppies. They explore their environment with their mouths. There are a few things you can do to minimize or eliminate puppy biting. During playtime make sure you are playing with a toy and not with your hands. A larger toy is better than a smaller toy and will help teach your dog to use his mouth appropriately during play. If your puppy's mouth comes into contact with your skin at any time the best reaction you can have is to say "ouch" and remove all of your attention for a few moments – just walk away, turn your back and ignore him. It will not take long before he learns what level of play is and is not acceptable. Consistency will be very important for your success. That means everyone needs to play the same way. Playing rough with your puppy, even if it's just with one person, will teach him that it's ok to play that way. It's also very important to make sure that your puppy is getting enough exercise. Try games like hide and seek with his favorite toy, set up a treat hunt, take him for a short jog in the park or give him a dog puzzle or brain game to wear him out mentally when you cannot wear him out physically.

What does "capturing" a behavior mean?

Capturing a behavior can be one of the fastest ways to train a new behavior. For example if you want to teach your dog to lay down using the capture method you would simply wait for your dog to decide lie down and then reward him the moment he does the behavior. Timing is crucial for capturing a behavior. Think of it as a camera – you want to take a picture of the exact moment your dog does the behavior. You are not asking, commanding or luring him into the action. You are waiting for your dog to offer the behavior on his own. Capturing works best for teaching a behavior that your dog does naturally, such as sit, lying down, barking on cue, sniffing, or holding objects. The primary difference between capturing and other positive reinforcement training techniques is that the dog is making the decision to offer the behavior without being asked or prompted.

Find a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator

After registering online, the students will receive a link to the APDT Trainer Search and the Calendar of Evaluations. If a student has not yet located or worked with a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator, the next step is for the student to find a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator in their area to schedule the live evaluation. Students may locate a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator via the APDT Trainer Search at www.apdt.com/petowners/ts. The Calendar of Evaluations is available online any time at www.mydoghasclass.com.

Schedule a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation

The student is responsible for contacting a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator to schedule the evaluation(s). A C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator directly oversees all aspects of a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, including scheduling the day of the evaluation.

Be Familiar with C.L.A.S.S.™ Rules and Test Items

The C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation is designed to assess both the dog and student as a team. Before an evaluation, students should be familiar with the C.L.A.S.S.™ Rules, including what is acceptable and what is not acceptable, as listed in this handbook.

Scoring Guidelines

Students should be aware of the criteria for each test item by studying the Scoring Guidelines, which are specific for each test item, and Test Item Descriptions listed in the "Evaluation Test Items" section. The C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluators may remind students of the expected criteria before each test item during the live evaluation, though it is still the responsibility of the student to understand what is required in each test item.

Scoring Categories

In general, there are three possible scoring categories for each test item: Excellent, Needs Work, and Incomplete. A fourth possible scoring category is an Automatic Incomplete, which is given if the student or dog performs any behavior on the "What is Not Allowed / Automatic Incompletes" section of the C.L.A.S.S.™ Rules; this section describes unacceptable student and dog behavior. If an Evaluator observes an unacceptable behavior at any time during a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, the team should automatically receive an Incomplete score.

Bonuses

There are two Bonus items in each C.L.A.S.S.™ Level. These extra items are intended to make the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation more fun and enriching. Some Bonuses aim to showcase tricks that serve a practical purpose. Other Bonuses, such as the "Trick of Student's Choice" in the B.A. and M.A. levels, give the student the chance to proudly feature their dog's favorite trick.

The Bonus items are completely optional. There is only one scoring guideline for Bonus items—"With Honors." If the team does not perform the criteria in the "With Honors" scoring category, the team receives no score for that Bonus item. There are no Needs Work or Incomplete scoring guidelines for Bonuses, so that attempting the Bonuses will not affect whether the team passes or not. The Bonus only determines whether or not the team passes "with Honors." If a passing team scores "With Honors" on both Bonus items in an evaluation, the team passes "with Honors."

The C.L.A.S.S.™ Rules of "What is Not Acceptable – Automatic Incompletes" still apply in Bonuses, so luring, physical prompting, etc. are not allowed.

Cueing and Repeat Cueing

One goal of C.L.A.S.S.™ and positive reinforcement training is reliability of responses, that is, the dog responds to each cue within one to three seconds. If a cue does not result in a reliable response, then the student/dog team needs more work on that particular cue. In the B.A., for most test items, one to two cues are allowed for an Excellent Score, while in the M.A. and Ph.D., dogs must respond to one cue for an Excellent Score. Refer to the Scoring Guidelines in the "Evaluation Test Items" section for exact criteria, including the number of cues allowed for each test item.

Cues are words or gestures that prompt a dog to perform a behavior. Repeat cueing is when the student repeats the same cue multiple times (e.g. 'sit,' 'sit,' 'sit,' 'sit'), often when the dog is not responding. Another form of repeat cueing is a steady visual signal that lasts more than 5 seconds (e.g. a hand held up continuously for a stay cue.) If the dog does not respond with one cue, either the dog has not been taught the behavior reliably, has not been rewarded generously enough to create a habit, or is distracted by something else. Repeating the cue word, like nagging, can also be an undesirable habit of the student. Training should be clear, effective, and pleasant for the dog.

Cues can be verbal (e.g. a spoken word or sound) or visual (e.g. a hand signal, body movement, or body blocking without physical contact). If both the verbal and visual cue are given simultaneously, they are considered a single cue for C.L.A.S.S.™ scoring purposes. Since cues will vary with each Student, Evaluators shall use discretion as always when assessing cues used.

There are an infinite number of possible cues. For example, ways a student might use to prompt the dog to do Loose Leash Walking (whether the dog needs reminding or not) include saying things like "Let's go," "With me," "Come on;" using signals such as hand targets or patting the leg; and making sounds like clucking the tongue and
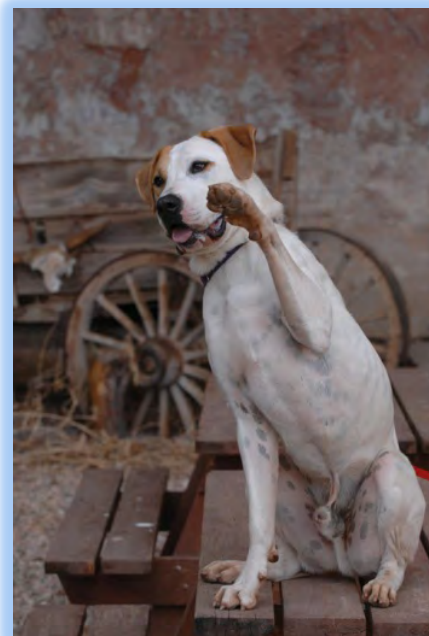
kissy noises. Any of these are perfectly legitimate cues for Loose Leash Walking and acceptable as cues in a C.L.A.S.S. evaluation. Yet none of them needs to be repeated if the dog has been well-trained and understands to perform the behavior on one cue.

Praise is not considered a cue. Praise is verbal approval given to the dog, and students are encouraged to generously praise their dogs throughout the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation. A cheerful or soothing tone of voice, a smile, or an enthusiastic "yay!" to communicate to the dog the student is pleased with the performance and as a reward to the dog for performing the cued behavior, is allowed throughout the evaluation. The Evaluator shall use discretion in scoring whether a student's body movements or words are used as cues or as praise, as this can vary among different students, dogs, and situations. If the dog has been taught the behavior reliably, what amounts to verbal luring to get the dog to maintain the behavior is unnecessary.

Day of C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation

The following describes what to expect on the day of a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation.

Quick Reference **Day of a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation**
1. Checklist of Items to Bring 2. Tips for Success 3. Check-in Process 4. Evaluation Test Items 5. Score Results

What to Bring

Prerequisite Items

On the day of the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, the student is required to present the following items for the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator during the check-in process:

- o Permissible collar or harness
- o 6-foot non-retractable leash
- o Doggy clean-up supplies (waste bags, poop scooper, etc.)

The C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator will not begin the Evaluation if any of these items are unavailable or incomplete.

While it is preferable that students have their C.L.A.S.S.™ Student ID and Dog ID Numbers on or before the day of the evaluation, students may also register their dogs for C.L.A.S.S. after an Evaluation. Evaluation scores may not be reported to the C.L.A.S.S. Office until the student has registered their dog at www.mydoghasclass.com for each evaluation level taken.

For the B.A. Level Evaluation, it is also preferable that students have their signed Veterinarian Certificates to present to the Evaluator, since this certificate is part of the requirements for each team to complete the B.A. Level. If the student does not present the Veterinarian Certificate to the Evaluator at some point prior to the Evaluation, the student may still take the evaluation. However, when the Evaluator reports the team's score, it will be noted that the Veterinarian Certificate requirement, and therefore the B.A. Level, is not yet complete. The student will then need to send the Veterinarian Certificate to the Evaluator or the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office in order to get credit for meeting that requirement.

Junior Handlers

In additional to the required items above, Junior Handlers are required to have:

☐ "Waiver of Liability" form signed by the parent or adult mentor
☐ Parent or adult mentor present during the evaluation

Required and Recommended Supplies Checklist

Here is a checklist of the required and recommended supplies necessary on the day of the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation. It is a good idea to prepare these items the day before the test to have everything in one place on the evaluation day.

☐ C.L.A.S.S.™ Student ID and Dog ID Numbers

☐ Signed Veterinarian Certificate (B.A. Level only)

☐ Permissible collar or harness

☐ 6-foot leash

☐ Doggy clean-up supplies (waste bags, poop scooper, etc.)

☐ C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator contact information

☐ Address and directions to evaluation site

☐ Water and water bowl

☐ Training treats

☐ Mat or bed for your dog's comfort

☐ Toy, chew, and/or stuffed Kong for B.A. Settle and B.A. Give and Take tests

☐ Optional: Crate for B.A. Settle test

☐ Evaluation fee, if applicable

☐ [*Junior Handlers only*] "Waiver of Liability" form signed by the parent or adult mentor

☐ [*Junior Handlers only*] Parent or adult mentor present during evaluation

Tips for Success on Evaluation Day

Here are some tips to keep in mind to help make C.L.A.S.S.™ the positive experience it is intended to be:

Potty your dog prior to the evaluation

Even though allowances are made for dogs to potty during the Warm-Up Time, giving your dog ample time to potty beforehand will help everyone feel more comfortable.

Arrive promptly

Allow time so that you and your dog have time to acclimate to the evaluation site without rushing around.

Be prepared

Use the "Required and Recommended Supplies" checklist above so that you arrive prepared.

Maintain a positive attitude

Focus on and appreciate all the good things in your life, and you will reflect the same in others. Leave troubles, grudges, and insults in the past.

Relax with your dog

Worrying about the test will not help and may cause distress in your dog. Breathe and let go of your tensions.

Actively listen

Turn your attentions off of yourself and focus on others. Listening is not only courteous but if we open our ears, we can learn a lot in the process.

Check-In Process

For the check-in process, the Evaluator will request the Student and Dog ID Numbers (if available) for the Evaluation Form. If these ID numbers are unknown or not yet registered, the student will need to provide this information to the Evaluator before the evaluation scores may be reported to the C.L.A.S.S. Office.

Next the Evaluator will check that the student has the following items:

1. For a B.A. Level evaluation, the Veterinarian Certificate will be requested (if available, the Evaluator shall keep this certificate with the student's evaluation; if not available, the student shall be reminded to send the completed certificate to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office to fulfill this requirement)

2. Required Equipment:
   o   Permissible collar or harness
   o   6-foot non-retractable leash
   o   Doggy clean-up supplies (waste bags, poop scooper, etc.)

- If the handler is a Junior Handler, the "Waiver of Liability" form must be signed by the parent or adult mentor and collected by the Evaluator.

Evaluation Fees

Contact the Evaluator to find out if the Evaluator requires an evaluation fee for each evaluation. Evaluation fees are at the discretion of the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator, and help offset the Evaluator's time, expertise, and other resources used during the evaluation. (Evaluation fees are separate from Dog registration fees, which are paid directly to the APDT to register their dog for each C.L.A.S.S.™ level.) Evaluation fees will be collected by the Evaluator before the evaluation begins, and are non-refundable.

Evaluation Guidelines

Each level is conducted in the order enumerated below for consistency. Exercises are placed in an order that seem to flow best for the student and dog. For each test item, there are "Notes" for the student, which give additional details and tips related to the test description.

An Evaluation is considered complete after all test items, and the bonuses if opted, have been performed. A test item is considered complete after all elements of the test have been performed. For stationary behaviors, (sit, down, and stand) which are in a variety of test items throughout each level, the dog must maintain the behavior for at least 2 to 3 seconds to be considered a complete behavior. Otherwise, the behavior is not considered complete as performed.

For safety and compliance with leash laws, the dog must be on-leash for C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluations, starting from the time the dog arrives at the testing location.

During the test, the student will initiate any attaching and detaching of the leash.

The student may use a mat for the dog's comfort during any part of the evaluation.

Evaluation Test Items

B.A. Level

Goal: Assess the core life skills of a dog/student team.

1.	WAIT AT THE DOOR		K9-BA
Test Description	Student asks their dog to wait at the door until student releases dog to enter.		
Notes	Dog may sit, down, or stand for the wait. The dog must not move forward until released.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT**	**NEEDS WORK**	**INCOMPLETE**
	Dog waits with 1 to 2 cues until released.	Student gives 3 cues to wait, or the student resets dog 1 time.	Student gives 4 or more cues to wait, or student resets dog 2 or more times, or dog does not wait.

	WARM-UP TIME		K9-BA
Test Description	Dog and student are allowed up to 5 minutes to explore and acclimate to the testing area.		
Note	Dog should remain on-leash during this time. Food treats, petting, toys, and on-leash games may be used freely during the Warm-Up Time.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT**	**NEEDS WORK**	
	Dog does not eliminate, or dog eliminates in potty area, or student successfully interrupts and redirects dog to potty area if dog starts to eliminate outside of potty area.	Dog eliminates outside of the designated potty area, or needs more than 5 minutes to acclimate before continuing evaluation.	

2.	COME AND LEASHING UP MANNERS		K9-BA
Test Description	A. Student asks their dog to come from 10 feet away. B. Student attaches leash to their dog's collar.		
Notes	A. Student will attach long line (provided by Evaluator) to their dog and detach their leash. Evaluator will hold long line and student will walk to a point 10 feet away and then call their dog. B. When dog comes, student will attach their leash and detach long line.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT**	**NEEDS WORK**	**INCOMPLETE**
	A. Dog comes to student with 1 cue and responds to cue within 3 seconds. B. After dog comes, dog sits or stands allowing student to attach leash within 3 seconds, or student grasps dog's collar within 3 seconds.	A. Student gives 2 cues to come or dog needs 4 to 5 seconds to respond to cue. B. After dog comes, student needs 4 to 5 seconds to attach leash or to grasp dog's collar.	A. Student gives 3 or more cues to come; or dog does not respond to cue within 5 seconds, or passes by student, or does not come. B. After dog comes, student is unable to attach leash or grasp dog's collar within 5 seconds.

3.	LOOSE LEASH WALKING AND ATTENTION		K9-BA
Test Description	A. Student loose leash walks with their dog in a loop pattern. B. Student demonstrates that their dog can give 2 seconds of eye contact at any point during the test item.		
Notes	Two cones (or other visual markers) will be placed 20 feet apart, and student will walk their dog for 2 loops around the pair of cones. The eye contact can be demonstrated before, during, or after the loose leash walk.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** A. Leash remains loose or tightens 1 to 2 times with 0 to 2 cues, and dog is within 2 feet of student. B. Dog gives eye contact for 2 seconds with 0 to 2 cues.	**NEEDS WORK** A. Leash tightens 3 times, or student gives 3 cues to loose leash walk, or dog is 2 to 3 feet from student >50% of time. B. Dog gives less than 2 seconds of eye contact, or student gives 3 cues for eye contact.	**INCOMPLETE** A. Leash tightens 4 or more times, or student gives 4 or more cues to loose leash walk, or leash is consistently or mostly tight. B. Dog does not give eye contact, or student gives 4 or more cues for eye contact.

4.	MEET AND GREET		K9-BA
Test Description	A. Student asks their dog to sit, down, or stand, and an unfamiliar person approaches dog and student. B. An unfamiliar person asks the student for permission to greet their dog by petting and giving a treat. Student chooses if either is appropriate for their dog or not.		
Notes	A. A person unfamiliar with the dog, typically the Evaluator or Assistant, will approach to approximately 5 feet from student/dog for the meet and greet. Student may request for approach to be at an angle rather than head-on. B. Person will ask if they may treat the dog (student may provide a treat if desired), and then if they may pet the dog. The student has the option to decline having their dog petted, treated, or both. Petting, if granted permission, will be under the dog's chin for 2-3 seconds. Student may request that petting be done in a manner without leaning over the dog.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** A. Dog sits, stands, or downs with 0 to 2 cues; leash remains loose though dog may move toward person. B. Student gives permission to pet their dog and dog accepts petting, and student gives permission to treat their dog and dog takes treat gently, or student declines having their dog petted and/or treated.	**NEEDS WORK** A. Student gives 3 cues to sit, stand, or down; or leash tightens 1 to 2 times; or dog jumps up 1 time. B. Student gives permission to pet their dog and dog jumps up 1 time or dog shies away but allows petting within 4 to 5 seconds; and/or student gives permission to treat their dog and dog takes the treat roughly but does not break skin.	**INCOMPLETE** A. Student gives 4 or more cues to sit, stand, or down; or leash tightens 3 or more times; or dog jumps up 2 or more times; or dog lunges; or dog shies to end of leash away from person. B. Student gives permission to pet their dog and dog jumps up 2 or more times or does not allow petting within 5 seconds, or student gives permission to treat their dog and dog breaks skin while taking treat.

⭐	BONUS 1: ROLLOVER, SPIN, FETCH, SPEAK, OR PAW	K9-BA
Notes	Student will have dog perform one of the following tricks: rollover, spin, fetch, speak, or paw. (Bonuses are optional, though the Rules of Automatic Incompletes still apply.)	
Scoring Guidelines	**WITH HONORS** Dog performs trick with 1 to 2 cues and responds to cue within 3 seconds.	

5.	LEAVE IT		K9-BA
Test Description	Student walks with their dog by three items and student diverts dog's attention from the items.		
Notes	Two cones (or other visual marker) will be positioned 20 feet apart. Within dog's view, Evaluator or Assistant will place three Leave It items (a plush toy, chew item, and wadded piece of paper) on the ground offset 5 feet from either side of path between the two cones. Student will walk with their dog from one cone to the second cone and back again, passing Leave It items from approximately 5 feet away.		

Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT**	**NEEDS WORK**	**INCOMPLETE**
	Dog leaves items with 1 to 2 cues, leash remains loose, and dog's nose does not investigate within 2 feet of items.	Student gives 3 cues to leave it for one or more Leave It items, or dog's nose investigates within 2 feet of an item but does not touch item, or leash tightens 1 to 2 times.	Student gives 4 or more cues to leave it for one or more Leave It items, or dog touches an item, or leash tightens 3 or more times or is consistently tight.

6.	WAIT FOR THE FOOD BOWL		K9-BA
Test Description	Student asks their dog to wait for the food bowl until student releases dog to eat out of it.		
Notes	Student will be handed a food bowl containing several food treats (student may use their own treats if desired). Student will have dog wait in a sit, down, or stand, while student places food bowl on the floor approximately 3 feet in front of dog. After bowl is placed on the floor, student may release dog to eat out of bowl. Dog must not move forward until released.		

Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT**	**NEEDS WORK**	**INCOMPLETE**
	Dog waits with 1 to 2 cues until released.	Student gives 3 cues to wait, or student resets dog 1 time.	Student gives 4 or more cues to wait, or student resets dog 2 or more times, or dog gets food before being released.

7.	STAY		K9-BA
Test Description	Student asks their dog to stay in a sit or down position while student converses with Evaluator for 1 minute.		
Notes	Evaluator or Assistant will stand 5 feet from student and dog. Student may choose either a sit or down for the stay. Timing begins when student cues dog to stay. Student may praise and focus on their dog as needed without physically touching the dog during the 1 minute stay. The dog may shift in place during the stay though must remain in the same position (sit or down) throughout the stay.		

Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT**	**NEEDS WORK**	**INCOMPLETE**
	Dog stays with 1 to 2 cues until released.	Student gives 3 cues to stay, or student resets dog 1 time.	Student gives 4 or more cues to stay, or student resets dog 2 or more times.

8.	SETTLE		K9-BA
Test Description	Student asks their dog to settle in a down for 1 minute while the student sits next to their dog. Student chooses a crate, the floor, or a mat for the settle.		
Notes	Student may use a crate, the floor, or a mat for the settle, and can give their dog a chew or toy item to have during the settle. Timing begins when the student cues dog to settle. Dog may shift in place during the settle but must remain in a down position.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** With mat, dog settles with 1 to 2 cues. With crate, dog willingly enters crate with 1 to 2 cues and settles within 10 seconds.	**NEEDS WORK** With mat, student gives 3 cues to settle, or student resets dog 1 time. With crate, student gives 3 cues to enter crate, dog needs 20 seconds to settle, or student resets dog 1 time.	**INCOMPLETE** With mat, student gives 4 or more cues to settle, or student resets dog 2 or more times, or dog does not settle. With crate, student gives 4 or more cues to enter; or dog does not settle within 20 seconds; or dog excessively vocalizes, paws or chews on crate; or dog does not enter crate.

9.	GIVE AND TAKE		K9-BA
Test Description	Student asks their dog to give a high-value item and take a treat, chew, or toy.		
Notes	If dog is not already chewing on an object from previous test, student will offer their dog a chew for this test. After dog has chewed, held, or engaged with the chew or toy object (student may not hold the object for the dog) for a 5 to 10 seconds (does not have to be 5 to 10 consecutive seconds), student will take object (can use cue such as "give" or "drop it" if desired) and then give their dog something in exchange as a reward. (If dog is not interested in a chew or toy item, Evaluator will provide a food bowl filled with kibble or other food that student approves of and the dog shows interest in, and student will give food bowl to their dog. After 3 to 4 seconds and while dog is eating out of food bowl, student will pick up food bowl. After picking up bowl, student will give their dog something in exchange as a reward.)		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** Dog releases item with 0 to 2 cues and within 3 seconds. (If using food bowl, dog freely allows student to pick up food bowl with 0 to 2 cues and within 3 seconds.)	**NEEDS WORK** Student gives 3 cues to release item or dog needs 4 to 5 seconds to respond to cue. (If using food bowl, student gives 3 cues, or student needs 4 to 5 seconds to get bowl, or dog holds bowl with nose or paw.)	**INCOMPLETE** Student gives 4 or more cues to release item, or dog does not release item within 5 seconds, or student pulls item out of dog's grasp. (If using food bowl, student gives 4 or more cues; or student needs more than 5 seconds to get bowl; or dog freezes, growls, or snaps.)

⭐	BONUS 2: TRICK OF STUDENT'S CHOICE	K9-BA
	Dog demonstrates a trick other than the trick performed in Bonus 1.	
Notes	Student will choose a trick other than spin. (Bonuses are optional, though the Rules of Automatic Incompletes still apply.) Student will describe the trick before asking the dog to perform it.	
Scoring Guidelines	**WITH HONORS** Dog performs trick with 1 to 2 cues and responds to cue within 3 seconds.	

M.A. Level

Goal: Assess the life skills of a dog/student team with distractions.

1.	WAIT IN THE CAR		K9-MA
Test Description	With their dog in the car, student asks their dog to wait 5 seconds until student releases dog to exit.		
Notes	Test begins with dog in car. (Student can load up the dog just as the test starts, and close the door for one to two seconds.) Student must hold their dog's leash after opening car door. Student will stand 5 feet away from the car door and hold the leash while dog waits for 5 seconds. (If student does not have a car, student may use an alternative entry/exit point such as a friend's car, elevator, or taxi.)		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** Dog waits with 1 cue until released.	**NEEDS WORK** Student gives 2 to 3 cues to wait, or student resets dog 1 time.	**INCOMPLETE** Student gives 4 or more cues to wait, or student resets dog 2 or more times, or dog does not wait.

2.	PASS BY OTHER DOGS		K9-MA
Test Description	Student walks with their dog, passing by 3 dogs of varying breed, size, or gender.		
Notes	Test dogs will be with handlers and positioned approximately 10 feet offset the pathway to the test area entrance. Test dogs should be nonreactive to people and dogs. Student will walk with their dog to the test area, passing the test dogs, and stop at the test area entrance.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** Leash is loose or tightens 1 time.	**NEEDS WORK** Leash tightens 2 to 3 times.	**INCOMPLETE** Leash tightens 4 or more times or is consistently or mostly tight, or dog barks repeatedly or lunges 1 or more times at other dogs.

3.	WAIT AT THE DOOR		K9-MA
Test Description	Student asks their dog to sit and wait at the door while a person walks by until student releases dog to enter.		
Notes	Test begins outside the testing area. Student will have their dog sit and wait, and then open the door. After opening the door, a person will walk by approximately 5 feet away from the entrance. After person walks by, student may release dog and enter testing area. The dog must not move forward until released.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** Dog waits with 1 cue until released.	**NEEDS WORK** Student gives 2 to 3 cues to wait, or student resets dog 1 time.	**INCOMPLETE** Student gives 4 or more cues to wait, or resets dog 2 or more times, or dog does not sit or wait.

	WARM-UP TIME		K9-MA
Test Description	Dog and student are allowed up to 5 minutes to explore and acclimate to the testing area.		
Notes	Dog should remain on-leash during this time. Food treats, petting, toys, and on-leash games may be used freely during the Warm-Up Time.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** Dog does not eliminate, or dog eliminates in potty area, or student successfully interrupts and redirects dog to potty area if dog starts to eliminate outside of potty area.	**NEEDS WORK** Dog eliminates outside of the designated potty area, or needs more than 5 minutes to acclimate before continuing evaluation.	

4.	COME AND LEASHING UP MANNERS	K9-MA
Test Description	A. Student asks their dog to come from 15 feet away after dog is distracted by a treat. B. Student asks their dog to sit or down, and attaches leash and detaches long line before releasing the dog.	
Notes	A. Student will attach long line (provided by Evaluator) to their dog and detach their leash. Evaluator will hold long line and student will walk to a point 15 feet away. Student will call their dog after Evaluator presents a treat to the dog's nose for an instant and removes treat from dog's sight. B. When dog comes, student will have dog sit or down, and attach their leash and detach long line before releasing the dog from the sit or down. Dog should remain in sit or down while the leash is attached and the long line is detached. (Tip: This is a great time to treat the dog, so the dog learns that leaving a treat results in a treat from the student.)	

Scoring Guidelines	EXCELLENT	NEEDS WORK	INCOMPLETE
	A. Dog comes to student with 1 cue to come (and 1 cue to leave it, if needed) and responds to cue within 3 seconds. B. Dog sits or downs with 1 cue until released.	A. Student gives 2 cues to come and/or to leave it, or dog needs 4 to 5 seconds to respond to cue. B. Student gives 2 to 3 cues to sit or down until released, or student resets dog 1 time.	A. Student gives 3 or more cues to come and/or to leave it, or dog does not respond to cue within 5 seconds, or passes by student, or does not come. B. Student gives 4 or more cues to sit or down, or resets dog 2 or more times, or dog does not sit or down.

5.	SIT, DOWN, AND STAND	K9-MA
Test Description	Student asks their dog to sit, down, and stand.	
Notes	Student will start with either the sit or down cue.	

Scoring Guidelines	EXCELLENT	NEEDS WORK	INCOMPLETE
	Dog does behaviors with 1 cue for each and responds to each cue within 3 seconds.	Student gives 2 to 3 cues for one or more behavior, or dog needs 4 to 5 seconds to respond to one or more cues.	Student gives 4 or more cues for one or more behavior; or dog does not respond to one or more cues within 5 seconds; or dog does not sit, down, or stand.

6.	HANDLING	K9-MA
Test Description	Student handles each of their dog's paws, strokes their dog on one side from shoulder to tail, and examines either each of their dog's ears, or their dog's teeth from each side of mouth.	
Notes	(The handling does not have to be done in any particular order.) Student will pick up and apply light pressure on each of their dog's paws (not ankles) for 2 to 3 seconds. Student will stroke their dog on one side from shoulder to tail. Student will choose either to examine their dog's ears or teeth. If student chooses ears, student will hold and examine each of their dog's ears for 2 to 3 seconds. If student chooses teeth, student will lift their dog's lips and examine dog's teeth for 2 to 3 seconds on each side.	

Scoring Guidelines	EXCELLENT	NEEDS WORK	INCOMPLETE
	Dog allows handling of paws, stroking of one side, and handling of ears or teeth.	Dog does not allow handling in 1 of the 3 (paws, side, or ears or teeth) areas.	Dog does not allow handling in 2 of the 3 (paws, side, and/or ears or teeth) areas; or dog growls, snaps, or bites during handling.

7.	LOOSE LEASH WALKING AND LEAVE IT		K9-MA
Test Description	Student walks with their dog by 2 food bowls and student diverts dog's attention from the bowls.		
Notes	A course will be set up in flattened diamond pattern. Two cones (or other visual markers) will be the "end" items placed 10 feet apart, and 2 food bowls containing kibble will be the "side" items placed 10 feet apart. (Food bowls will be covered so that dog cannot, by chance, ingest the food.) Student will walk their dog in a Figure 8 pattern around the 2 cones.		
	EXCELLENT	**NEEDS WORK**	**INCOMPLETE**
Scoring Guidelines	Dog leaves food bowls with 1 cue for each, leash remains loose with 0 to 1 cues, and dog's nose does not investigate within 2 feet of food bowls.	Student gives 2 to 3 cues to leave it for one or both bowls, or student gives 2 to 3 cues to loose leash walk, or dog's nose investigates within 2 feet of a bowl but does not touch bowl, or leash tightens 1 to 2 times.	Student gives 4 or more cues to leave it for one or both bowls, or student gives 4 or more cues to loose leash walk, or dog touches a food bowl, or leash tightens 3 or more times or is consistently or mostly tight.
8.	STAY		K9-MA
Test Description	Student asks their dog to stay in a sit or down position for 1 minute during distractions while student stands 5 feet away.		
Notes	Student may choose either a sit or down for the stay. Student will hold leash and stand 5 feet away from their dog during the stay. Timing begins when student cues dog to stay. The dog may shift in place during the stay though must remain in the same position (sit or down) throughout the stay. Distractions will consist of commonplace movement and low-key noise, such as people walk around, a pen dropped on the ground, hand clapping, and phone ringing. Distractions will occur approximately 10 feet away from dog. Dog must maintain either the sit or down for the stay.		
	EXCELLENT	**NEEDS WORK**	**INCOMPLETE**
Scoring Guidelines	Dog stays with 1 cue.	Student gives 2 to 3 cues to stay, or student resets dog 1 time.	Student gives 4 or more cues to stay, or student resets dog 2 or more times.
☆	BONUS 1: TARGETING		K9-MA
	Dog uses his nose to touch each of the student's hands on cue.		
Notes	Student will have their dog use nose to touch both their left and right hands, one at a time, with hand at least 2 feet away from dog's nose when cued. (Bonuses are optional, though the Rules of Automatic Incompletes still apply.)		
Scoring Guidelines	**WITH HONORS** Dog targets each hand with 1 cue and responds to each cue within 3 seconds.		
☆	BONUS 2: TRICK OF STUDENT'S CHOICE		K9-MA
	Dog demonstrates a trick other than the trick performed at the B.A. level.		
Notes	Student will choose a trick other than the tricks performed at the B.A. level. (Bonuses are optional, though the Rules of Automatic Incompletes still apply.) Student will describe the trick before asking the dog to perform it.		
Scoring Guidelines	**WITH HONORS** Dog performs trick with 1 cue and responds to cue within 3 seconds.		

Ph.D. Level

Goal: Assess the performance reliability of a dog/student team's life skills.

1.	LOOSE LEASH WALKING		K9-PhD
Test Description	Student holds an unsteady object in their hand while walking with their dog for 15 feet and enters through a door.		
Notes	Test begins 15 feet away from entrance to test area. Student will choose an unsteady object, either a full mug of coffee or water, a cardboard box to be carried on their palm or under one arm, or a paper sack filled with tissue paper to be carried like a bag of groceries. Student will carry the unsteady object while they walk their dog to the entrance and enter the test area.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT**	**NEEDS WORK**	**INCOMPLETE**
	Leash remains loose or tightens 1 time with 0 to 1 cues; dog is within 2 feet of student; and object is not spilled, dropped, or crushed.	Leash tightens 2 to 3 times, or student gives 2 to 3 cues to loose leash walk, or dog is between 2 to 3 feet of student >50% of time, or student struggles to hold object.	Leash tightens 4 or more times or is consistently or mostly tight; or student gives 4 or more cues to loose leash walk; or object is spilled, dropped, or crushed.

2.	BACK UP		K9-PhD
Test Description	A. Student holds an unsteady object in their hand while walking with their dog to maneuver around household items. B. Student asks their dog to back up 3 feet.		
Notes	A. One "end" chair is positioned 20 to 30 feet away, and 5 additional household obstacles (such as a chair, table, trash bin, large box, suitcase, vacuum cleaner, etc.) are placed between the "end" chair and a starting point. Student shall continue to hold unsteady object from Loose Leash Walking test. Student will loose leash walk with their dog in no particular pattern around the 5 obstacles to get to the "end" chair. Student and dog must be on the same side when walking around each obstacle so they do not "split the obstacle" with the leash. B. When student and dog reach the end chair, student will ask their dog to back up 3 feet. For the Back Up, the student may start beside or in front of dog; student may not move behind the dog and call him to come for the Back Up. Student may move with the dog for the Back Up. Dog may back up either by moving backwards or turning and moving away from the student to the back up.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT**	**NEEDS WORK**	**INCOMPLETE**
	A. Leash remains loose or tightens 1 time with 0 to 1 cues. B. Dog backs up with 1 cue and responds to cue within 3 seconds.	A. Leash tightens 2 to 3 times, or student gives 2 to 3 cues to loose leash walk, or student struggles to hold object. B. Student gives 2 to 3 cues to back up or dog needs 4 to 5 seconds to respond to cue.	A. Leash tightens 4 or more times or is consistently or mostly tight; or student gives 2 to 3 cues to loose leash walk; or object is spilled, dropped, or crushed; or team "splits the obstacle." B. Student gives 4 or more cues to back up, or dog does not back up 3 feet, or dog does not respond to cue within 5 seconds.

3.	STAY	K9-PhD

Test Description	Student asks their dog to stay, in a sit or down, while student places an unsteady object on a chair.
Notes	Student shall continue to hold unsteady object from Loose Leash Walking and Back Up tests. Student can choose either a sit or down for the stay. With the dog in the stay, student will place the unsteady object on a chair. The dog may shift in place during the stay though must remain in the same position (sit or down) throughout the stay. Student may release dog after placing the object on the chair.

	EXCELLENT	NEEDS WORK	INCOMPLETE
Scoring Guidelines	Dog stays with 1 cue.	Student gives 2 to 3 cues to stay, or student resets dog 1 time.	Student gives 4 or more cues to stay, or student resets dog 2 or more times.

	WARM-UP TIME	K9-PhD

Test Description	Dog and student are allowed up to 5 minutes to explore and acclimate to the testing area.
Notes	Dog should remain on-leash during this time. Food treats, petting, toys, and on-leash games may be used freely during the Warm-Up Time.

	EXCELLENT	NEEDS WORK	
Scoring Guidelines	Dog does not eliminate, or dog eliminates in potty area, or student successfully interrupts and redirects dog to potty area if dog starts to eliminate outside of potty area.	Dog eliminates outside of the designated potty area, or needs more than 5 minutes to acclimate before continuing evaluation.	

4.	COME AND LEASHING UP MANNERS	K9-PhD

Test Description	A. Student calls their dog to come from 20 feet away and pass by distractions placed between the dog and student. B. Student asks their dog to sit or down, and attaches leash and detaches long line before releasing the dog.
Notes	A. Distraction items of 2 food bowls containing kibble and 2 non-food items (plush toys, rubber toys, or wadded pieces of paper) are placed on the ground at 4 foot intervals and offset 5 feet from each side of path between dog and student. (Food bowls must be covered so that dog cannot, by chance, ingest the food.) Student will attach a long line to their dog, and Evaluator will hold the long line. Student will walk by the distraction items to a point 20 feet away and then call their dog to come. B When dog comes, student will have dog sit or down. Student will both attach leash and detach long line while dog remains in sit or down, and then release their dog. Dog should remain in sit or down while the leash is attached and the long line is detached.

	EXCELLENT	NEEDS WORK	INCOMPLETE
Scoring Guidelines	A. Dog comes to student with 1 cue to come (and 1 cue to leave it, if needed) and responds to cue within 3 seconds, and dog's nose does not investigate within 2 feet of items. B. Dog sits or downs with 1 cue until released.	A. Student gives 2 cues to come and/or to leave it, or dog needs 4 to 5 seconds to respond to cue, or dog's nose investigates within 2 feet of an item but does not touch item. B. Student gives 2 to 3 cues to sit or down until released, or student resets dog 1 time.	A. Student gives 3 or more cues to come and/or to leave it; or dog does not respond to cue within 5 seconds, or touches an item, or dog passes by student, or dog does not come. B. Student gives 4 or more cues to sit or down, or resets dog 2 or more times; or dog does not sit or down.

5.	MEET AND GREET		K9-PhD
Test Description	A. Student asks their dog to sit or down, and an unfamiliar person approaches student and dog. B. Person greets dog and gently pets dog's head, ears, and back.		
Notes	Evaluator or Assistant will approach and ask to pet the dog. Evaluator or Assistant will pet the dog's head gently for 2 to 3 seconds, handle each ear for 2 to 3 seconds, and stroke dog's back for 2 to 3 seconds. Dog may stand at any time after the petting begins.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** A. Dog sits or downs with 0 to 1 cues. B. Dog allows petting of head, handling of ears, and stroking of back.	**NEEDS WORK** A. Student gives 2 to 3 cues to sit or down, or student resets dog 1 time, or dog jumps up 1 time. B. Dog does not allow handling in 1 of the 3 (head, ears, or back) areas, or dog jumps up 1 time.	**INCOMPLETE** A. Student gives 4 or more cues to sit or down, or student resets dog 2 or more times, or dog jumps up 2 or more times. B. Dog does not allow handling in 2 of the 3 (head, ears, and/or back) areas; or dog jumps up 2 or more times; or dog growls, snaps, or bites during any part of handling.
6.	ATTENTION		K9-PhD
Test Description	Student asks their dog for 15 seconds of eye contact after an unfamiliar person knocks on the door and enters the testing area.		
Notes	Assistant will make a knocking or ringing noise, and then enter test area. Assistant will be carrying a food item for the next test. Assistant will move about the test area, and will not interact with the student or dog. Student has 90 seconds in which to complete 15 seconds of eye contact with their dog, and the timer starts when the Assistant enters the test area. The eye contact does not need to be continuous.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** Dog watches student for 15 seconds with 0 to 1 cues.	**NEEDS WORK** Student gives 2 to 3 cues to watch student for 15 seconds.	**INCOMPLETE** Student gives 4 or more cues to watch, or dog does not watch student for 15 seconds.
7.	TABLE MANNERS		K9-PhD
Test Description	Student asks their dog to settle in a down while student and an unfamiliar person sit at a table for a snack for 30 seconds.		
Notes	Assistant will sit at a table first. Then student will sit at the table, and have dog settle in a down for 30 seconds within leash length of the table, while the student and Assistant sit at the table and eat (or pretend to eat) a snack. The dog may not greet the Assistant. The snack will be in crinkly-sounding packaging such as a bag of potato chips, wrapped granola bars, or bag of candy. Dog may shift in place during the settle, though must remain in a down position.		
Scoring Guidelines	**EXCELLENT** Dog settles with 1 cue.	**NEEDS WORK** Student gives 2 to 3 cues to settle, dog touches Assistant, or student resets dog 1 time.	**INCOMPLETE** Student gives 4 or more cues to settle; or student resets dog 2 or more times; or dog does not settle; or dog whines, barks, or tries other attention-getting behavior.

8.	DO YOU REALLY KNOW SIT?		K9-PhD
Test Description	Student asks their dog to sit 3 separate times, varying the student's body position each time.		
Notes	Student will choose and perform 3 different options from the list of Sit Test Variations.*		

	EXCELLENT	**NEEDS WORK**	**INCOMPLETE**
Scoring Guidelines	Dog sits with 1 cue for each variation and responds to each cue within 3 seconds.	Student gives 2 to 3 cues to sit for one or more variations, or dog needs 4 to 5 seconds to respond to one or more cues.	Student gives 4 or more cues to sit for any one variation, or dog does not sit, or dog does not respond to one or more cues within 5 seconds.

☆	BONUS 1: DO YOU REALLY KNOW SIT?	K9-PhD
	Student asks their dog to sit using 2 additional Sit Test Variations.*	
Notes	Student will choose and perform 2 different Sit Test Variations than the ones performed in the previous test. (Bonuses are optional. If attempted, the Rules of Automatic Incompletes still apply.)	
Scoring Guidelines	**WITH HONORS** Dog sits with 1 cue for each variation and responds to each cue within 3 seconds.	

☆	BONUS 2: TARGETING WITH AN UNFAMILIAR PERSON	K9-PhD
	Dog uses his nose to touch each of an unfamiliar person's hands on cue.	
Notes	Student will have their dog use nose (or Evaluator can cue dog) to touch Evaluator's hands, held with palms facing dog, one at a time. (Bonuses are optional, though the Rules of Automatic Incompletes still apply.)	
Scoring Guidelines	**WITH HONORS** Dog targets each hand with 1 cue and responds to cue in 1-3 seconds.	

*Sit Test Variations

For Test Item #8 in Ph.D. Level

1. Student sitting on hands in a chair
2. Student with back to the dog
3. Student with hands on head
4. Student walking around
5. Student standing 10 feet away
6. Student clapping hands
7. Student shaking hands with another person
8. Student with hand in front of their mouth
9. Student sitting on ground
10. Student bending at waist toward toes
11. Sit on recall (student has dog wait while student walks 35 feet away; student calls dog to come and when dog is halfway to student, student cues sit)
12. Student standing on a chair
13. Student holding one knee to chest
14. Student hopping on one foot
15. Student swinging arms
16. Student lying on the ground
17. Student jogging in place
18. Student doing jumping jacks
19. Student doing squats
20. Student doing leg lunges
21. Student doing push ups
22. Student doing sit ups
23. Student standing on hands
24. Student doing calf raises
25. Student doing a back bend

Score Results

After completing the evaluation, the Evaluator will tally the score immediately and let the student know the results. The score is computed by adding up the marks for the Needs Work, Incomplete, and Automatic Incomplete scoring categories. (If there are 2 or more Needs Work marks for a single skill in a test item, count that as only one mark for scoring purposes. For example, in the B.A. Stay, if a student gave 3 cues and also reset the dog 1 time, that counts as 1 Needs Work for the Stay test item. Test items with 2 skills parts, such as Loose Leash Walking and Attention, are scored separately, so it is possible that a team could get up to 2 Needs Work counts in one test item if the test has 2 skill parts.)

Scoring a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation		
Team Does Not Pass	**Team Passes**	**Team Passes With Honors**
✖ Needs Work marks = 2 or more OR ✖ Incomplete marks = 1 or more OR ✖ Automatic Incompletes = 1 or more	✓ Needs Work marks = 0 or 1 AND ✓ Incomplete marks = 0 AND ✓ Automatic Incompletes = 0	✓ Team Passes AND ✓ "With Honors" marks = 2 (Bonuses)

Passing Score

If the team passes all items, the team is to be congratulated on an Excellent evaluation. The Evaluator will review any Needs Work item for the team, if applicable. The original Evaluation Form is kept by the Evaluator.

Passing "with Honors"

If a team with a passing score also scored an Excellent on both Bonus items, the team earns the designation of passing "with Honors." This designation will be included on their certificate.

Non-passing Score

If a team receives a non-passing score either due to more than one Needs Work, or any Incomplete or Automatic Incomplete marks, the Evaluator will review the evaluation with the student, so the student knows what the team needs to work on. The team is still to be congratulated on test items scored as Excellent. The original Evaluation Form is kept by the Evaluator.

Additional Evaluations

A student may be evaluated in multiple levels (e.g. B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.) in a single day without having to wait until the scores are reported to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office, if the following is true:
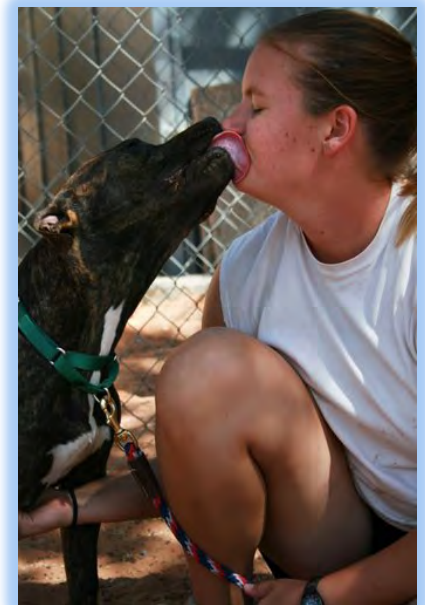
1) the student has passed the previous level
2) the student has scheduled the additional evaluation with an Evaluator
   - the same Evaluator may be used for each level
   - if a different Evaluator is used, the Evaluators should communicate with each other whether or not the student received a passing score on the previous evaluation

If the student has not yet registered the dog with the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office for the additional level he wishes to take, he may still take the evaluation; however, his evaluation score may not be reported to the C.L.A.S.S. Office until he registers his dog for that level at www.mydoghasclass.com. Students may only register their dogs for one level at a time, so if a student takes more than one level in a single day, the student will have to register for the additional level either before or after that evaluation. A score for a particular evaluation level cannot be reported by the Evaluator until the student has registered their dog for that specific level. Registration may be done online at any time via a smart phone or other computer. Registrations may also be done by paper registration or phone.

Repeat Evaluation

Everyone has times when, for some reason, their performance is not the best it can be. If a team does not pass the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation and would like to try again, they will be eligible to retake the evaluation after at least one week. The team must perform the entire evaluation during a repeat evaluation. As for all C.L.A.S.S.™ evaluations, the student is responsible for contacting a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator to schedule the evaluation. There is no limit to the number of times a student can schedule a repeat evaluation, although an evaluation cannot be repeated more than once per week.

After the Evaluation

Viewing Scores

Official Score Results from evaluations are posted online. To access their scores, the student will log in with their Student ID and password at www.mydoghasclass.com, select their dog, and view or print their scores. Students should allow 7 to 10 days after an evaluation for the scores to be posted. The Evaluator must report the results of all Evaluations to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office within 7 days of any C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, either by entering the scores online or mailing a copy of the Evaluation Form to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office.

Certificates

All passing teams will automatically receive an award certificate via email from the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office when their scores have been posted. (One exception is that a certificate will not be sent for the B.A. Level until all the requirements, which include the Student Knowledge Assessment, the evaluation, and the Veterinarian Certificate, have been completed.) This certificate may be printed at any time, and may also be accessed from the student's C.L.A.S.S.™ account. If a student would like to order a printed certificate, they may do so at any time from the student's C.L.A.S.S.™ account.

Additional B.A. Level Requirements

If a team passes their first evaluation (the B.A.) but the student has not yet passed the online Student Knowledge Assessment and/or not yet submitted a completed Veterinarian Certificate, the B.A. level will not be considered complete until these items are completed.

Other Congratulatory Items

All passing teams are entitled to:

1. Upload a photo of their dog onto the Gallery of Graduates, a page dedicated to all the dogs who have earned a C.L.A.S.S.™ certificate.

2. Download an icon for Facebook and other social media announcing their dog's C.L.A.S.S.™ graduate status.

3. Order special items, such as t-shirts, bandannas, and ID tags, announcing that their dog has C.L.A.S.S.™!

Additional Opportunities for Student/Dog Teams

Once a team earns their B.A. in C.L.A.S.S.™, they are eligible to be evaluated at the M.A. level. After earning their M.A., they may enter the Ph.D. level. No matter what C.L.A.S.S.™ level the team is in, there are always activities for further training and relationship building. See the C.L.A.S.S.™ web site resources for more ideas at www.mydoghasclass.com.

Maintaining Graduate Status

Because behavior can change over time and must be maintained through regular training, C.L.A.S.S.™ graduates are required to renew their graduate status every 3 years. For this reason, certificates and Student Knowledge Assessment scores are valid for 3 years after the evaluation date. Students may renew their graduate status by:

1. Renewing their Dog ID Number online at www.mydoghasclass.com by submitting a $5.00 renewal fee for each dog.

2. Passing the evaluation at the highest level already earned by their dog.

3. Passing the online Student Knowledge Assessment.

Appendix

Real-Life Relevance of Test Items

C.L.A.S.S.™ is intended to encourage the teaching of real-life skills to dogs, so that dogs have healthy "Canine Life" and "Social Skills." Therefore, the test items in each evaluation level purposely reflect every day and important uses. The following is a list of each test item with common real-life correlations and examples.

B.A. for Dogs™ Real-Life Relevance

1.	WAIT AT THE DOOR	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	The ability to maintain position until invited to advance through a door is a convenience to the student and can save a dog's life. (See "20 Uses for Wait or Stay" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/20UsesWaitStay.aspx.)	
	WARM-UP TIME	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	A dog is better able to focus and relax when he has a chance to assess his immediate environment.	
2.	COME AND LEASHING UP MANNERS	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	Coming when called could save your dog's life if he gets loose. Training a dog to want to come to you also helps strengthen the bond between dog and student. (See "15 Uses for Coming When Called" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/15UsesCome.aspx.)	
3.	LOOSE LEASH WALKING AND ATTENTION	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	Teaching and practicing loose leash walking and checking in with one another builds comfort, ease, and connectedness between the dog and student. (See www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/15UsesLLW.aspx for "20 Uses for Walking Without Pulling.")	
4.	MEET AND GREET	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	The importance of a dog remaining politely at the student's side shows the dog's self-control when meeting someone. This also allows the opportunity for the student to understand if it is appropriate or not for someone to greet or handle their dog. (See "The Importance of Socialization" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/socialization.aspx.)	
☆	BONUS 1: ROLLOVER, SPIN, FETCH, SPEAK, OR PAW	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	Teaching simple tricks is a fun way to practice training with your dog. (See "20 Uses for Tricks at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/20UsesTricks.aspx.)	
5.	LEAVE IT	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	Leave It is useful when you do not want your dog to go near something, and can be a life-saving skill.	
6.	WAIT FOR THE FOOD BOWL	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	Rather than grabbing or rushing for the food, waiting for the food bowl is good manners and strengthens a dog's self-control.	
7.	STAY	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	Stay is useful when you need your dog to remain in place. (See "20 Uses for Wait or Stay" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/20UsesWaitStay.aspx.)	
8.	SETTLE	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	A dog who can calm down on cue is more manageable in the home and may be more welcome in other social settings. (See "25 Uses for Down" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/25UsesDown.aspx.)	
9.	GIVE AND TAKE	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	Living with a dog who does not guard food or objects, willingly drops items on cue, and takes items gently from the student is safer for the student and less stressful for the dog.	
☆	BONUS 2: TRICK OF STUDENT'S CHOICE	K9-BA
Real-life Relevance	Tricks are fun, can be useful, and exercise a dog's mind. (See www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/20UsesTricks.aspx for "20 Uses for Tricks.")	

M.A. for Dogs™ Real-Life Relevance

1.	WAIT IN THE CAR	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	Car parking lots or other areas saturated by moving vehicles can be potentially dangerous for a dog. Self-control while exiting a vehicle could be life-saving skill. (See "20 Uses for Wait or Stay" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/20UsesWaitStay.aspx.)	
2.	PASS BY OTHER DOGS	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	The student and dog will likely be exposed to other dogs while walking in public. It is important that the student's dog remains calm and relaxed to prevent any altercations.	
3.	WAIT AT THE DOOR	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	The ability to maintain position until invited to advance through a door is a convenience to the student and can save a dog's life. (See www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/20UsesWaitStay.aspx. for "20 Uses for Wait or Stay.")	
	WARM-UP TIME	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	A dog is better able to focus and relax when he has a chance to assess his immediate environment.	
4.	COME AND LEASHING UP MANNERS	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	Coming when called amid distractions could save your dog's life if he gets loose. (See "15 Uses for Coming When Called" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/15UsesCome.aspx.)	
5.	SIT, DOWN, AND STAND	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	The behaviors of sit, down, and stand have a variety of real-life applications. As alternatives to undesirable behavior, each of these behaviors has unlimited uses. All three behaviors are useful for grooming and veterinary examinations as well.	
6.	HANDLING	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	Handling your dog is essential to grooming and important to maintaining your dog's health.	
7.	LOOSE LEASH WALKING AND LEAVE IT	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	Leave It is useful when you do not want your dog to go near something, and can be a life-saving skill.	
8.	STAY	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	Stay is useful when you need your dog to remain in place amid distractions. (See "20 Uses for Wait or Stay" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/20UsesWaitStay.aspx.)	
☆	BONUS 1: TARGETING	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	Hand targeting is a fun activity for dogs. It can raise the confidence of shy dogs, can be useful when directing a dog to a place, and is the foundation of many advanced skills such as closing doors.	
☆	BONUS 2: TRICK OF STUDENT'S CHOICE	K9-MA
Real-life Relevance	Tricks are fun, can be useful, and exercise a dog's mind. (See "20 Uses for Tricks" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/20UsesTricks.aspx.)	

Ph.D. for Dogs™ Real-Life Relevance

1.	**LOOSE LEASH WALKING**	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	Loose leash walking is helpful when you need to safely carry an object while walking your dog. (See "15 Uses for Walking Without Pulling" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/15UsesLLW.aspx.)	
2.	**BACK UP**	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	Back Up can be a useful skill when you want your dog to move away from you or back up with you.	
3.	**STAY**	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	Stay is useful when you need your dog to remain in place amid distractions. (See "20 Uses for Wait or Stay" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/20UsesWaitStay.aspx.)	
	WARM-UP TIME	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	A dog is better able to focus and relax when he has a chance to assess his immediate environment.	
4.	**COME AND LEASHING UP MANNERS**	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	Coming when called and leaving distractions could save your dog's life if he gets loose. (See "15 Uses for Coming When Called" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/15UsesCome.aspx.)	
5.	**MEET AND GREET**	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	When you take your dog to a veterinarian, groomer, or other similar place, it is important that your dog allows being handled. (See www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/socialization.aspx. for "The Importance of Socialization.")	
6.	**ATTENTION**	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	When you have your dog's attention, you can help him focus and give him other guidance.	
7.	**TABLE MANNERS**	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	A dog who can calm down on cue around food is more manageable in the home and may be more welcome in other social settings. (See "25 Uses for Down" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/25UsesDown.aspx.)	
8.	**DO YOU REALLY KNOW SIT?**	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	This test helps students assess if their dog understands familiar instructions in unusual and distracting settings. (See "25 Uses for Sit" at www.trainyourdogmonth.com/tips/25UsesSit.aspx.)	
☆	**BONUS 1: DO YOU REALLY KNOW SIT?**	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	Students may need to cue their dog to sit in unusual and distracting settings.	
☆	**BONUS 2: TARGETING WITH AN UNFAMILIAR PERSON**	**K9-PhD**
Real-life Relevance	This bonus demonstrates that the dog not only knows the target cue, but has generalized the cue to other people. A dog who has learned to target a person's hand is less likely to jump up on them or shy away from the hand.	

Where Can I Learn More About C.L.A.S.S.™?

Web Site Links

www.mydoghasclass.com for Evaluators
- How to Become an Evaluator
- Online Exam
- Download the Evaluator Handbook

www.mydoghasclass.com for Instructors
- C.L.A.S.S.™ Curriculum Games/Exercises
- Downloads for Marketing

www.mydoghasclass.com for C.L.A.S.S.™ Graduates
- Gallery of Graduates

www.mydoghasclass.com for Students
- What is C.L.A.S.S.™?
- How to Prepare for the Evaluation
- Finding an Instructor or Evaluator
- What Other Activities Can I Do With My Dog?

www.mydoghasclass.com for Shelters
- C.L.A.S.S.™ graduate dogs for adoption
- Resources for shelters and rescues to implement C.L.A.S.S.™

Training Resources

www.apdt.com
www.trainyourdogmonth.com

Networking

www.facebook.com/TheAssociationofPetDogTrainers.US
www.twitter.com/APDT

Contact Us

class@apdt.com
800-PET-DOGS (800-738-3647)
101 North Main Street
Suite 610
Greenville, SC 29601
Fax 864-331-0767

C.L.A.S.S.™ Student FAQ's

How do I find my Dog ID Number?

You may look up your dog's Dog ID Number at any time by logging in to www.mydoghasclass.com with your Student ID Number and password.

Do I have to begin with the B.A. Level Evaluation?

Yes, all student/dog teams begin in the B.A. Level. While the higher levels build on some of the skills in the B.A., there are different skills tested in each level. After passing the B.A. Level, teams are eligible to be evaluated at the M.A. level. After earning their M.A., they may enter the Ph.D. level. If a student takes a higher level evaluation without passing the previous level, their score for the higher level will be invalid. For example, if you enter the M.A. before passing the B.A., you will have to re-take the M.A. after you pass the B.A. Level.

Do I need a Veterinary Certificate for the M.A. and Ph.D. Levels?

No, the Veterinary Certificate is only required for the B.A. Level.

What do the letters B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. stand for?

C.L.A.S.S.™ levels are named after human university degree programs. B.A. signifies the first level of C.L.A.S.S.™, the "Bachelor's" degree. M.A. signifies the second level of C.L.A.S.S.™, the "Master's" degree. Ph.D. signifies the third level of C.L.A.S.S.™, the "Doctorate" degree.

How do I find out the details of when and where my evaluation is?

Any questions regarding the details specific to the student's scheduled C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation should be submitted directly to the Evaluator who arranged the test.

Do I need to register my dog for each level in which I would like to be evaluated?

Yes, a dog must be registered separately for the B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. Though you may only register at www.mydoghasclass.com for one level at a time, you are allowed to take more than one level of an evaluation in a single day if you pass the previous level.

Do I need to register my dog again to retake the Evaluation?

No. Students only register their dog one time for a particular level, except when renewing their certificate. If a team gets a non-passing score and would like to retake an Evaluation, the student only needs to contact the Evaluator to reschedule an evaluation. They will use same Dog ID assigned when first registered for that level.

Do Award Certificates expire?

Certificates are valid for 3 years.

How do I renew my certificate?

To renew a certificate that has expired, there are three steps: 1) renew your dog's registration for the highest level of C.L.A.S.S. certificate your dog has earned, 2) pass the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation, and 3) pass the online Student Knowledge Assessment.

When my certificate expires, do I need to renew all levels that my dog has earned?

Students only need to renew the highest certificate earned. For example, if a dog has earned his Ph.D., after 3 years, he only needs to take the Ph.D. level to renew.

How can I view my dog's score after an evaluation?

Scores are posted online within two weeks of the evaluation date. To view and print scores, log in to your online C.L.A.S.S.™ student's profile and click on your dog's ID number.

What do I do if my score posted online is different than the score I received on the day of the evaluation?

In the event of any discrepancies in the online scores, please contact the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office. (See "Contact Us" for contact information.)

What can I do with my online C.L.A.S.S.™ student profile?

When you register for a student profile at www.mydoghasclass.com, you will be able to log in at any time to:
- Update your contact information
- View and print your Student ID and Dog ID Numbers
- View and print your evaluation scores
- Order certificates and other items for C.L.A.S.S.™ graduates

I would like to express my opinion about my C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation experience.

Any student may submit comments and concerns about their C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation experience or an Evaluator by contacting the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office via email or mail. (See "Contact Us" for contact information.) All comments and concerns received will be reviewed by the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office and explored accordingly.

How do I find C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation locations and date?

Check the Calendar of Evaluations at www.mydoghasclass.com for upcoming CLASS Evaluation dates and locations, or contact a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator (via the APDT Trainer Search at www.apdt.com/petowners/ts) to schedule an evaluation.

How often are C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluations given?

This depends on how often Evaluators are offering the evaluations. Contact a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluator (via the APDT Trainer Search at www.apdt.com/petowners/ts) to schedule an evaluation.

Can I be evaluated on more than one level in a single day?

Yes, you may be evaluated in the next level as soon as you pass the previous level. For example, after you pass your B.A. Evaluation, you may enter the M.A. Evaluation without having to wait for the Evaluator to report your scores from the B.A. Evaluation to the C.L.A.S.S.™ Office if:

1) the Evaluator is available to evaluate you at the M.A. Level
2) the Evaluator also evaluated you at the B.A. Level or was informed by the B.A. Evaluator that you passed the B.A. Level.

Before the evaluation scores can be entered by the Evaluator, the student must register his dog at www.mydoghasclass.com for that additional level(s). Even though a student may register his dog for one level at a time, the student has the option to register more than once in a single day. For instance, if a student plans to take the B.A. and M.A. Evaluations on the same day, the student may register for the B.A., and after receiving confirmation of the B.A. registration, the student may register for the M.A. at any time. When the student logs into his account, the registration system automatically knows which level(s) have already been registered for, so you cannot register a dog twice for the same level.

How long does the evaluation take?

The evaluation process takes about 30 minutes, but may vary depending on each situation. Plan to arrive early to allow yourself and your dog time to acclimate to the testing environment so you are not rushed on the day of the evaluation.

If I don't pass the evaluation, can I repeat it?

Yes, you may repeat the evaluation after at least one week. A particular C.L.A.S.S.™ level may not be retaken more than once per week. This allows time for the student and dog to work on any test items not passed.

Do I have to repeat the entire evaluation or can I just retake the test items we missed?

If a team receives a non-passing score and would like to try again, the entire evaluation must be repeated. This ensures validity of the testing process.

Why should I take the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation?

Since the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation advocates positive reinforcement training, the evaluation is meant to be an enjoyable activity for you and your dog, based on skills that you use in real-life. Furthermore, the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation is designed to give students a fair and unbiased assessment of their skills with their dogs.

What is a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation like?

Watch a short video at www.mydoghasclass.com for a preview of what to expect when you and your dog go through a C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation.

How do you define a No-Pull Harness?

No-Pull Harnesses are devices designed to manage a dog's pulling. They differ from standard harnesses in that standard harnesses are made so that the dog can safely pull without putting pressure on the dog's neck. There are different styles of No-Pull harnesses—some are made for the leash to clip in front of the dog's chest and work with the dog's natural opposition reflex, and some are made for the leash to clip on the back and put tension under the front legs if the dog pulls. These harnesses do not teach the dog not to pull; they are a management tool.

How do you define "body blocking" as listed in the "Cueing and Multiple Cueing" section?

Body blocking is using your body to take up space. Body blocking can be used (and is used) by humans and dogs as a way to control the movement of others. Some examples of body blocking include standing between the dog and an open door to block the dog from going through the doorway, shuffling into the dog so that the dog moves away, and positioning yourself between the dog and the food bowl to block the dog's access to the bowl. During a C.L.A.S.S. Evaluation, body blocking without physical contact (i.e. not touching the dog with any part of your body) is considered a cue. Body blocking with physical contact, as listed in the physical prompting section, is not allowed and will be scored as an Automatic Incomplete.

What is the difference between a cue and praise?

Cues are words or gestures that prompt a dog to perform a behavior. To assess whether the student is cuing the dog, an Evaluator may ask himself, "Is the student's intent to communicate to the dog to perform the behavior? Does it seem the student is reminding the dog of what she'd like the dog to do?" If yes, that will be scored as a cue.

Praise is verbal approval given to the dog, and students are encouraged to generously praise their dogs throughout the C.L.A.S.S.™ Evaluation. A cheerful or soothing tone of voice, a smile, or an enthusiastic "yay!" or "yes!" to communicate to the dog the student is pleased with the performance and as a reward to the dog for performing the cued behavior, is allowed throughout the evaluation.

One way not to get bogged down in this question of cues versus praise is to develop a perspective of "How can I polish my training so that my dog needs one cue, responds reliably, and then I give clear praise?" This is very different than trying to figure out what the test allows, how many cues can a student give and still pass. The whole idea is to aim for the sort of dog training that is clear, clean, effective and pleasant for the dog, without a lot of extras that muddy things.

Summary of C.L.A.S.S.™ Test Items

B.A. for Dogs™ Level Summary

1.	Wait at the Door	K9-BA
	Warm-Up Time	K9-BA
2.	Come and Leashing Up Manners	K9-BA
3.	Loose Leash Walking and Attention	K9-BA
4.	Meet and Greet	K9-BA
☆	Bonus 1: Rollover, Spin, Fetch, Speak, or Paw	K9-BA
5.	Leave It	K9-BA
6.	Wait for the Food Bowl	K9-BA
7.	Stay	K9-BA
8.	Settle	K9-BA
9.	Give and Take	K9-BA
☆	Bonus 2: Trick of Student's Choice	K9-BA

M.A. for Dogs™ Level Summary

1.	Wait in the Car	K9-MA
2.	Pass By Other Dogs	K9-MA
3.	Wait at the Door	K9-MA
	Warm-Up Time	K9-MA
4.	Come and Leashing Up Manners	K9-MA
5.	Sit, Down, and Stand	K9-MA
6.	Handling	K9-MA
7.	Loose Leash Walking and Leave It	K9-MA
8.	Stay	K9-MA
☆	Bonus 1: Targeting	K9-MA
☆	Bonus 2: Trick of Student's Choice	K9-MA

Ph.D. for Dogs™ Level Summary

1.	Loose Leash Walking	K9-PhD
2.	Back Up	K9-PhD
3.	Stay	K9-PhD
	Warm-Up Time	K9-PhD
4.	Come and Leashing Up Manners	K9-PhD
5.	Meet and Greet	K9-PhD
6.	Attention	K9-PhD
7.	Table Manners	K9-PhD
8.	Do You Really Know Sit?	K9-PhD
☆	Bonus 1: Do You Really Know Sit?	K9-PhD
☆	Bonus 2: Targeting with an Unfamiliar Person	K9-PhD

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