KUSA

Kennel Union of Southern Africa

KUSA JUNIOR SHOWMANSHIP LEARNING PROGRAMME

STUDY GUIDE #13

JUDGING JUNIOR SHOWMANSHIP

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Edition August 2014

THE KENNEL UNION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
P O BOX 2659
CAPE TOWN.8000

CONTENTS

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF JUNIOR SHOWMANSHIP JUDGING 2
- What is showmanship? 2
- Showmanship competitions 2
- What is Junior Showmanship? 2
- Objectives of Junior Showmanship 2
- What makes a good Junior Showmanship Judge? 3
- Consistency 3
- Professionalism 3
- Impartiality 4
- Safety 4

WHAT IS EVALUATED? 5
- 1. Appearance and conduct 5
  - a. Appearance 5
  - b. Conduct 5
- 2. Affinity with the dog 6
- 3. Presentation of the dog 6
  - a. The appearance of the dog 6
  - b. Stacking the dog 6
  - c. Breed presentation 8
  - d. Showing the bite 9
  - e. Lead control 9
  - f. Economy of motion 9
  - g. Gaiting 10
- 4. Knowledge of ring procedure 10
  - a. The Golden Rule 10
  - b. Performing turns 11
  - c. Gaiting patterns 11

JUDGING PROCEDURE 12
- Entering the ring 12
- First impression 12
- Individual examination 12
- Gaiting exercise 13
- Line of vision 13
- Changing position 14
- Swopping dogs 15
- Final decision 15

A SUMMARY OF WHAT TO LOOK FOR 16

GAITING PATTERNS 17
- Circuit 17
- Away and back 18
- Triangle 19
- The L pattern 20
- The T pattern 20

MOST-USED TERMINOLOGY 21

BREED PRESENTATION CONVENTIONS 22
- Breeds examined on the table 22
- Breeds examined on a ramp (if available) or the floor 24
- Breeds examined on the floor 25

JUNIOR SHOWMANSHIP SCORESHEET 28

SCHEDULE 5K – REGULATIONS FOR THE HANDLER CLASSES 29

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 31

What is Showmanship?

As an experienced dog exhibitor, you will know that it is insufficient to simply walk or run a dog around the ring and get it to stand any old way if you want to win an award. The dog must be presented to the judge in the best possible manner to minimise its faults and highlight its good features. Showmanship, therefore, is how well the dog is shown by the handler. The handler and dog must appear to be members of a team – they must work together, move fluidly together, and give an impression of companiable unity. A good handler is constantly aware of the dog's behaviour and performance and, if the dog moves out of place or makes an error, the handler can quickly correct the problem and resume efficient presentation.

Showmanship competitions

Showmanship competitions are non-regular classes to test a handler's competence in the skill of presenting a dog. The emphasis is on the handler's presentation of the dog standing still and in motion. It is very important that the handler is able to demonstrate his/her knowledge of the dog's breed standard by the manner in which it is presented, but the conformation and movement of the exhibit is of no importance to the judge.

In South Africa, there are three levels of showmanship classes:

- **Child Handler Class** - for children aged between 8 and 11 years
  (In the calendar year in which the child turns 11, the child may elect to remain in the Child Handler Class for the remainder of that calendar year or elect to move to the Junior Handler Class, but once moved, he/she may not revert to the Child Handler Class.)
- **Junior Handler Class** – for juniors aged between 11 and 18 years
- **Open Handler Class** – for handlers of any age

The judging principles of Junior Showmanship will hold for all levels of handler classes.

What is Junior Showmanship?

Junior Showmanship is judged solely on the ability and skill of the handlers in the effective presentation of their dogs. ***The quality of the exhibit shall not be taken into consideration by the judge.***

The most likely winner of a showmanship class will be the handler that:

- shows the dog's best features to advantage
- minimises the dog's faults
- uses handling skills appropriate to the judge's examination

Objectives of Junior Showmanship

- To introduce and encourage young people into the sport of dogs
- To learn about the positive experiences associated with dog ownership, care and presentation
- To enjoy the pleasures of winning and to learn how to lose gracefully
- To develop leadership, initiative and responsibility
- To develop self-confidence and patience
- To learn about procedures, rules and etiquette
- To fine-tune emotional and social skills in a competition environment in preparation for the demands of adulthood
- To develop high standards of sportsmanship and courtesy
- To facilitate the opportunity for young people to learn, practice, and improve dog-handling skills

What makes a good Junior Showmanship Judge?

Over the years, showmanship has developed to a high standard of proficiency, requiring a judge to hold an equivalent level of competency and knowledge. Essentially, qualification as a Junior Showmanship Judge ought to be taken as seriously as the responsibility demands. When it is considered that the child and junior handling classes contain the exhibitors of the future, the encouragement and support these young people receive now must demonstrate the judge's sincere desire to nurture and guide the future bearers of this sport. Showmanship judges are, therefore, expected to have a genuine interest in young people and Junior Showmanship.

Judges need to be thoroughly familiar with the Junior Showmanship Rules & Regulations and current trends and policies that pertain to judging these classes.

The role of the judge is to find the handlers who present their exhibits most effectively and who clearly have a strong affinity with the dog. It is NOT an opportunity to trick or catch out the handler and it is not an opportunity for the judge to showcase his/her flamboyance.

Judges should conduct all ring procedures in a ***consistent***, ***professional***, ***impartial*** and ***safe*** manner.

Judges should make themselves available after the competition to answer any questions the handlers may have. The judge sets the standard of behaviour and must maintain a professional appearance, etiquette, and attitude at all times. Judges should be helpful to each handler who asks a question. They should be friendly but deliberate when talking to handlers or parents. Judges should not be afraid to admit that they do not know the answer to something or don't remember something. Truthfulness is an important character trait to model to young people.

Consistency

Plan your procedure before walking into the ring – preferably the night before. Know what you want to evaluate so that you know what routine to follow. Never, ever walk into the ring and wonder what you should do next!

Treat all entrants the same, allotting approximately the same amount of time to each exhibitor. Request the same routine from each handler and avoid inconsistency. In their training, child and junior handlers are encouraged to observe your ring procedure to prepare themselves, which they cannot do if you are on a mission to trick them.

Professionalism

Judges should teach by example, displaying kindness of attitude, promptness, fairness, courtesy, patience and proper attire. Always show good manners – congratulate the winners and give a word of encouragement to the other competitors.

The judge is the sole person in charge of the ring, so the organisation of the ring, instructions given and decisions made are final and should not come under dispute. It is thus important to bear in mind the enormity of such responsibility and act in a befitting manner.

Give clear instructions and avoid confusion. Make yourself understood by word and gesture and avoid speaking too softly or mumbling. If the handler consequently performs an action incorrectly, it will be your fault and you will have successfully embarrassed the young person in front of their peers and audience.

Impartiality

Judges should show no bias towards or against any handler or breed of dog. Total impartiality is an essential element of this task, so there can be no thoughts of past or future assignments, friendships, external knowledge of a handler's record, nor any assumptions or prior knowledge.

Judges are not permitted to solicit for appointments, but it is acceptable to mention your qualifications in your CV.

Safety

Your ring will contain handlers of varying experience and dogs of different sizes and temperaments, so it is essential that conditions are kept safe for them at all times. The handler must have complete control of his/her dog at all times. If a handler enters the ring with an obviously unmanageable dog, the judge must excuse that handler on the grounds of his/her own safety and that of the others in the class. Young handlers should be advised against entering the ring with a dog too large or powerful for them to handle. For example, a young child with an unruly Great Dane would not be a very safe situation. The dog could get into a fight with another dog, or hurt the handler unintentionally with its size. Any dog showing signs of aggression or nervous reaction must be excused immediately. Likewise, do not hesitate to excuse any dog from the ring if it is lame, out of control or otherwise ineligible to compete.

The judge should organise the class so that no handler or dog is at risk. Always encourage sufficient space between handlers to avoid crowding. Moving two dogs and handlers simultaneously is a definite no-no, as is expecting handlers to gait their dogs too close to awaiting handlers. When swopping dogs during the Junior and Open Handlers' Classes, always supervise the swop-over and remain in control of the process to ensure that no dog accidentally escapes. (See detailed instructions later)

Bitches in season may not enter showmanship classes.

There are four skills for the judge to evaluate:

1. Appearance and conduct
2. Affinity with the dog
3. Presentation of the dog
4. Knowledge of ring procedures

These skills are evaluated by observing the handlers closely – not only when working with them individually – but also as they stand awaiting their turns or further instruction. While any reasonable judge cannot expect a dog to remain in a stacked position for the whole duration of the class judging, it is the junior handler that maintains contact with the dog, keeping it relaxed and happy and standing neatly (not necessarily stacked), or playing with it without distracting other exhibitors, that deserves to be awarded. Such a considerate handler will probably also remain alert to the judging proceedings and be ready when called upon.

Please don't fault judge!!!!!! The aim of this competition – as in every breed ring – is to find the best performer..... not to eliminate contestants to the last man standing!

1. APPEARANCE AND CONDUCT

a. Appearance

Rather than following latest fashions, the handler should be dressed neatly and appropriately for the event and the weather. Ideally, the handler's outfit should complement (not necessarily match) the dog and should never attract attention away from the dog, eg. skirts too short, slacks too revealing, clothing too loose, etc.

Girls may wear dresses, two-piece suits or slack suits. Tops must maintain an appropriate neckline and preferably no bare midriffs. Boys should be dressed neatly in smart trousers, neat shirt with or without a tie or bowtie. Blue jeans, shorts or tracksuits are inappropriate. Shoes should be practical and suitable for the surface. High heels, sandals or unsafe footwear are not appropriate. Accessories should be limited, if any. Dangling or clinking jewellery is a no-no. Commercial advertising on clothing is not permitted, nor is an identifying kennel or handler logo. Clothing should be neat and comfortable and not restrict the handler's movement or interfere with the judge's view of the dog. Hair should be neatly combed and, if long, may be tied up. Handlers are expected to use good judgement with regard to make-up and hair styling.

b. Conduct

The handler is expected to behave in a sportsmanlike manner in the ring – tantrums must not receive favourable acknowledgement. The judge should look for the handler that maintains a positive, friendly manner and is courteous to the judge, the ring steward, and other exhibitors.

Examine the handler's alertness and attentiveness – the handler must show an awareness of what is happening in the ring and must be in tune with the dog. While it is important for a judge to give clear instructions, it is equally important for a handler to be able to respond properly to the judge's directions. If it is suspected that language may be an issue, and if the judge is able, it is equally courteous for the judge to switch instructions to the handler's first language as far as possible. Be mindful of handlers that genuinely did not hear your instructions and don't show irritation if you are asked to repeat the instruction.

Smiling is good and an indication of enjoyment, but some handlers tend to smile at a judge insincerely and excessively in the hope that it will influence decisions in their favour. Be aware of this and advise the handler against this practice on conclusion of judging. Check that handlers are maintaining an awareness of your actions and observe if they make brief eye contact from time to time as they perform their manoeuvres.

Watch out for over-anxious parents at ringside who may attempt to do some ringside coaching or attracting of the dog. Double-handling is not permitted and if you discover it, the procedure is one verbal warning, after which the handler is excused if it happens again. Conversation in the ring should be limited only to the judge, and it should be minimal. You should not allow chitchat with other exhibitors or spectators to take place while the handlers are exhibiting in the ring.

2. AFFINITY WITH THE DOG

This is a very important aspect of showmanship that needs carefull observation. Look for the handler that has a genuine love of dogs – you can see it in the handler's eyes, in the expression, in the way the handler makes eye contact with the dog, talks to the dog and attracts its attention, plays with it and keeps it focussed and generally shows enjoyment working with the dog. Watch how the handler gaits the dog – does he/she watch the dog's performance, encourage the dog, and keep it alert? Do the dog and handler work as a team?

Watch the dog, too. Is the dog responsive to the handler? Look for signs of happiness and relaxed conformity, an eagerness to work with the handler, a biddable attitude. While it is entirely possible that, during the swop-over in the junior and open handler competitions, the dog may be somewhat wary of the strange handler, but this is a good time to evaluate how successfully the handler can get to know and encourage the strange dog and get it to perform effectively. On the other hand, it would be unfair to penalise a handler who cannot connect with a shy, nervous dog despite several attempts to do so. Most importantly, take note of the handler's reaction when the evaluation is finished. Does the handler praise the dog happily at the conclusion of each exercise, or is the dog yanked back into position without a second glance? Handlers should be alert to the needs of their dogs, realising that the welfare of their dogs is important. Those who exhibit impatience or heavy-handedness with their dogs should be penalised.

3. PRESENTATION OF THE DOG

Handlers will be asked to demonstrate:

- moving the dog with the other exhibits of similar size and gait
- presenting the dog in the standing position proper to its breed
- moving the dog individually in at least one regular pattern

Handlers will be judged on their ability to present their dogs in the same way the dog is properly handled in the breed ring, bearing in mind the following:

a. The appearance of the dog

While the Junior Showmanship judge does not judge the exhibits on their conformation or movement at all, it is very important that the handler demonstrates his/her knowledge of the breed standard by presenting the dog in the correct and best possible way.

The dog should be well groomed with clean, matt-free hair without the use of dyes, chalk, or other cosmetics. Toenails should be cut to the proper length and the teeth cleaned. Its eyes should be clear, and the coat free of tear stains. The ears should be clean and bows or bands may be worn only by appropriate breeds. Handlers will not be evaluated for their quality of grooming, but it should be evident that an effort was made to present a clean, well-turned out dog befitting the competition. Handlers presenting "wet mouthed" breeds should be expected to have a cloth to dry the dog's mouth for evaluation.

b. Stacking the dog

In the initial line-up, the handlers will likely all show their dogs on the floor or ground. Check that they hold a reasonably straight line with no handler claiming prominence by edging closer to the judge. Also make sure that they are properly spaced so that there is no interference with other handlers and dogs.

While stacking the dog, evaluate how quickly and efficiently the handler presents the dog for the first impression and do likewise when they present the dog on the table, the ramp or the floor for evaluation. Handlers should set the dog's front assembly first and you should watch how they place the forelegs under the dog correctly. Observe how the handler positions the rear legs and corrects the positioning if the dog moves a leg. Check that the handler positions the hindlegs neither too far (which makes the dog unstable) nor too close under the body (which does not show the dog to the best advantage).

Table and ramp dogs should be positioned as close to the edge of the table as possible without jeopardising the dog's safety and it must be apparent that the handler is able to lift the dog ably onto the table or lead it effectively onto the ramp.

Supporting the dog's head is an important part of presentation and must be performed according to traditional practices as if in the breed ring. Some breeds have their heads supported with the hand held under the chin, while others may have their heads supported by the collar or chain. If the dog's head is traditionally held up with the lead, make sure that the handler is not stringing the dog up too harshly. Dogs may also be free-stacked, in which case the dog's head may be encouraged up with baiting.

Head supported with the hand

Head supported at the nape of the neck

Head held by the lead

c. Breed presentation

As mentioned, one of the important techniques to evaluate is the handler's ability to present the dog in the proper manner for the breed being presented. Traditional conventions must be followed with regard to the presentation of the tail (eg. Setters have their tails held horizontally) and the angle at which the dog is presented (eg. Chow Chows are presented diagonally). It stands to reason, therefore, that the correct procedures are applicable to the presentation of every breed and these should be familiar to the judge.

Holding head and tail - kneeling

Holding head and tail - standing

Supporting head - kneeling

Supporting head - kneeling

Supporting head - standing

Supporting head - standing

Holding lead – kneeling in front

Free-stacking

Free-stacking

d. Showing the bite

The handler will be expected to show the dog's bite on instruction from the judge and according to the requirements of the breed standard. While doing so, the handler should not release hold of the lead and should avoid obstructing the judge's view of the mouth during the evaluation by folding himself/herself over the dog's head. Ensure that the handler performs this examination gently and does not obscure the dog's nostrils to affect breathing. Flat-nosed breeds such as Pugs, Griffons and Pekingese do not have their bites examined or the thumb may be gently used to feel the bite.

Handlers should be expected to properly display the mouth to the judge as it correlates to their respective breed:

- Bite – with one hand closing the dog's mouth and supporting it under the chin, the other hand gently lifts the lips in the front (optionally, two hands for large dogs, one hand for small dogs)
- Teeth – as above, lifting the lips in the front and each side, turning the head gently to facilitate the judge's view of all the teeth
- Mouth – as above to show the front, side teeth and open mouth to enable the judge to see the pigmentation inside
- Thumb exam – thumb is used to feel bite; the mouth is not to be prised open; the flat of the thumb is carefully run over the front of the mouth to feel for the very slight undershot bite without blocking the nasal passages. Handler should demonstrate or describe technique.

Showing the bite of a large dog

Showing the bite of a small dog

e. Lead control

Watch how the handler makes effective use of the lead without it becoming a hindrance in his/her performance. The handler should have full lead control of the dog at all times, yet he/she should try to keep it inconspicuous, keeping it coiled inside the hand. When presenting the dog, the handler should not allow the end of the lead to hang loosely. Certain Gundogs traditionally have the lead loosened around the neck to drop to shoulder level or the lead may be removed and placed on the handler's wrist. These practices should only be permitted in Junior and Open Handler classes where a certain level of competence and control has been achieved.

f. Economy of motion

One of the main techniques of successful showmanship is economy of action. A handler who "disappears" is a handler worthy of top awards. Showmanship is about attracting attention towards the dog, not the handler. This means that any exaggerated or excessive motions, gestures, or behaviour should be faulted. A Junior Showmanship judge needs to find the handlers that show a "hand for dogs". These are handlers that neither over nor under handle their dogs; they are able to gait their dogs at a collected, appropriate speed, never distracting or interfering with the judge's view of the dog.

g. Gaiting

Observe the manner in which the handler moves his/her dog. Movement should be smooth and unexaggerated, paced at the correct speed for the dog's size and breed, and the requested pattern. Most of all, the handler should not attract attention away from the dog.

Check that the handler has an appropriate lead for the dog and that it is positioned correctly during gaiting. While it is acceptable to keep a lead fairly taught while gaiting some breeds, it is never acceptable to string up a dog since this can not only affect the dog's gait, but can cause painful muscle tension. Most breeds can and should be shown on a reasonably loose lead, while still remaining in control. While gaiting, the handler should coil excess lead into the palm of the hand and make sure that no part of the lead is left dangling distractedly. At all times, the handler should ensure that the dog is encouraged to gait freely and naturally.

A handlers should maintain good posture when gaiting his/her dogs and should constantly be aware of the dog, the route, and the position of the judge. It is not expected for the handler to smile and look at the judge all the time – an occasional quick glance and a little smile is sufficient to demonstrate that the handler is being attentive.

Never assume that because a dog is moving well or stands like a statue, it is being well handled. Always check the handler of a well-moving dog, he may not be doing as much for his dog as the handler working hard on a mediocre dog.

4. KNOWLEDGE OF RING PROCEDURE

The judge needs to evaluate the ability of the handler to follow directions, use space wisely, and execute the requested gaiting patterns. Handlers need to appear "ring wise,'' be alert to the judging progression and be prepared for changes in the judging routine.

a. The Golden Rule

The golden rule every handler must learn = ***never come between the judge and the dog***. This is rather obvious – the aim of presenting a dog to a judge is so that the judge can observe the whole dog all of the time. You will need to evaluate the handler's awareness of this throughout the judging of the class, but not to the point of exhibitionism or at the cost of sensible practice. In some countries, the obsession with the golden rule is becoming considerably more relaxed and under no circumstances should a judge go to great lengths to trick a handler into making the error of breaking this rule. While gaiting the dog, for example, the handler should make every effort to keep their dogs between themselves and the judge, but it is not a train smash if the handler momentarily blocks the judge's view while making turns in gaiting patterns. There is, after all, nothing more insincere and distracting than a handler making unnatural manoeuvers to avoid breaking the golden rule.

Shadowing is the action of moving out of the way of the judge while the dog is being circled by the judge**.** This technique is related to the Golden Rule in that the handler should never mask the view of the dog, but evaluating this should be done during normal observation of the dog and should never cause the handler to have to step or jump over the dog in the process. Always be fair in your evaluation and never turn your judging into a dramatic performance of weaving figure-eights between the handlers and their dogs with the aim of tricking them.

b. Performing turns

Many difficulties are experienced with turns so the judge needs to be alert with regard to the handler's performance. The three most common turns are:

- the ***show turn:*** the handler moves in an accommodating arc around the dog so that the dog turns on itself and returns immediately to the straight line of sight. The judge should observe that the dog and the handler do not collide into each other and that economy of movement is used to ensure neatness
- the ***inward turn:*** the dog and the handler stay on their respective sides and turn inwards towards each other, the handler changing the hand that holds the lead. The judge should observe that the lead change-over occurs smoothly and the dog is controlled smoothly back into the straight line.
- the ***courtesy turn:*** some handlers like to make a turn at the start of a pattern to ensure that the dog is properly aligned with the judge and the path to be followed. This small turn is also called "honouring the judge".

c. Gaiting patterns

The aim of requesting handlers to perform a gaiting pattern is to evaluate how successfully the handler is able to gait and control the dog. It is NOT an opportunity to trick the handler by requesting obscure and complicated patterns! In most competitions, and especially for child handlers, the simpler patterns more regularly used in the breed ring are best, saving the more complicated patterns for senior competition.

On finishing a gaiting pattern, you should also ask the handler to either free-stack the dog in front of you or set it up in a hard stack. In a hard stack at the end of the individual gaiting pattern, when the handler gets within a few feet from the judge, the handler should bait and present the dog. The dog should be presented in a natural stance without holding the head or tail. The handler should check to make sure the dog is stacked properly, first in the front, then in the rear. If a leg is out of position, the handler should reposition that leg. The handler should move smoothly and quickly, and present the dog to the judge to show proper expression. If preferred, the judge may request a free stack on completion of the exercise, in which case the handler adjusts the dog's position using only the leash, bait, or voice commands.

It is important to give very clear instructions about what you want the handlers to do and it is advisable to follow the same patterns for each handler to ensure consistency. Always remember that judging showmanship classes is about far more than simply executing a pattern flawlessly!

Each judge will follow their own preferred judging procedure, but by way of example, the following is a suggestion:

Entering the ring

After deciding where you will want to examine the dogs individually, where the handlers should gait their dogs, where they will await their turns and where they will finish, instruct your ring steward of your plans, and make sure the table is ready and firm (covered with a towel or mat if the surface is hot). Then allow the ring steward to call the exhibitors in one at a time to gait their dogs once around the ring, finishing in the desired position. (Entering one at a time avoids a bottle-neck of small and large dogs gaiting into each other and breaking their strides)

First impression

Cast your eye over the line-up and note how quickly and efficiently the handlers stack their dogs and keep them looking good. You can walk down the line to get a closer look and now is a good time to check that the dogs are properly groomed and that grooming in the ring is not excessive or distracting. Bearing in mind that the handlers are likely to be nervous, try to look for genuine signs of enjoyment and love for the dog.

This is also an opportunity to observe the handler's attire, posture, and, in some cases, attitude towards the competition and affinity with the dog. Don't award handlers who reveal too much skin behind skimpy clothing, restricting garments, distracting or flowing robes, shirts hanging out, and inappropriate shoes. Don't award handlers who slouch or carry themselves poorly, and definitely don't award handlers who have bad attitude or no affinity with their dogs.

Check that the handler is in control of the dog – now is the time to excuse a handler if it becomes apparent that he/she is unable to cope with the size and/or power of the dog safely.

Individual examination

Call the first handler into your chosen position and observe how efficiently the handler presents the dog and whether or not is presented in the correct manner. Allow at least 30 seconds for the handler to finish this task – it is not fair to dive right in before he/she has finished setting up the dog. Be patient – especially with first time handlers.

Avoid excessive conversation with the handler and never ask questions to test the handler's knowledge of the breed. Simply say "Good morning" and ask if you may go over the dog. Every good judge will know that this is the 'opening key statement' that gives a dog the go-ahead to accept you touching him. You can also ask the age of the dog and request the handler to show you the dog's bite. While the handler does this, observe the handler's control, confidence and efficiency.

Proceed to go over the dog very briefly (remember, you're not judging the dog's conformation) and, while doing so, observe the stance of the handler. Does the handler keep control of the dog and quietly replace a leg or hair that moves out of place? Does the handler stand back to allow the judge to examine the dog unimpeded? Does the handler remove the bait and bunch the lead out of the way? Does the handler talk to the dog softly to reassure it? Does the handler show confidence?

Gaiting exercise

Having decided beforehand which gaiting pattern(s) to request, observe the handler carefully as these patterns are executed. Is the handler's focus mainly on the dog, while also maintaining awareness of the judge? Does the handler follow clearly stated-directions properly? Are the patterns executed correctly and smoothly? Does the handler maintain control of the dog and gait it to display its movement effectively? Does the handler stay calm if the dogs acts up or misbehaves? Is the handler able to bring the dog back into control? Does the handler avoid distracting the dog or interfering with its action? Does the handler move at the correct pace for the dog? Does the handler use the adequate space to move the dog? Does the handler adjust gaiting speeds to best show the dog's movement (ie. away and back, in profile).

Avoid requesting the handler to gait their dog towards the exit or toward other dogs. Some dogs may be distracted by other dogs or handlers and some may be keen to exit the ring to their owners.

Only request common gaiting patterns that are seen in the breed and Junior Showmanship rings. Do not make up your own patterns and avoid obscure and overly difficult patterns such as the "figure eight" or the "reverse L". These are totally unnecessary and simply focus on tricking the handler.

On the handler's return, you may prefer the handler to finish the pattern neatly by moving the dog into a profile position – either free stacked or hard stacked. Whatever your preference, it is a good idea to give clear instructions to that effect.

Repeat each individual examination in the same way with the same clearly-delivered instructions till each handler has been examined equally.

Some judges prefer to call the next handler into position so that they can watch the setting-up process, while others prefer to have the dog properly stacked and in position when the judge turns around from observing the previous handler's gaiting exercise. Whichever method you prefer, make sure you inform the handlers and ring steward on commencement of judging.

Line of vision

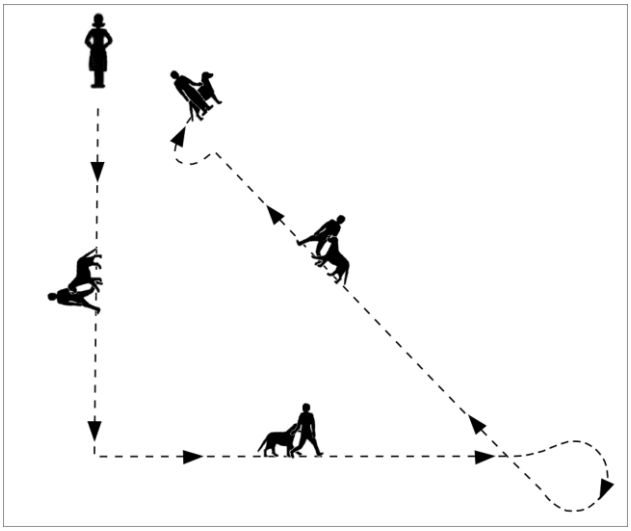
This refers to your view of the dog as it moves out into a gaiting pattern. You should be mindful where you position yourself for the start of certain patterns, particularly the L, the T and the triangle.

- For an L-pattern: it is best to position yourself close to the corner on the right side of the ring – this will allow a good line of vision for the away and back action and it gives the handler sufficient space to complete the left leg and return

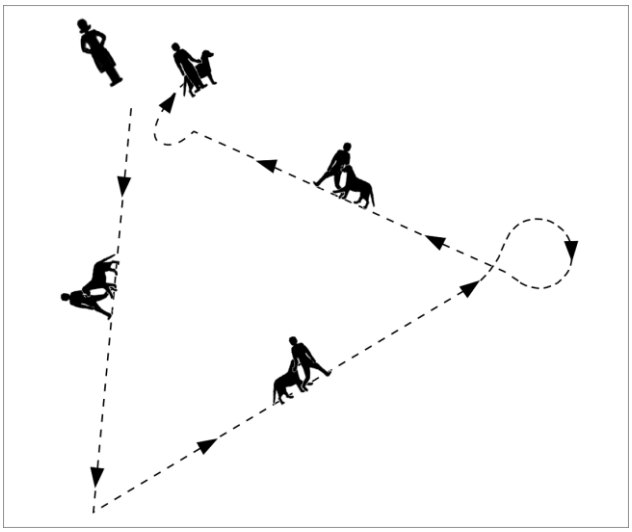
- For a T-pattern: position yourself centrally on the near side of the ring facing towards the rest of the ring – this will allow a good line of vision for the whole pattern and will allow the handler sufficient space to perform each leg equally

- For a triangle: you may position centrally so that the handler may easily move to the two corners of the ring and straight along the ringside for the profile gait. This is particularly useful for novice handlers following a simple triangle pattern.

  For more experienced handlers, you may wish to position yourself elsewhere, then point out a triangular shape that does not necessarily follow the ringside borders (this is to avoid a dog being moved into a far corner not necessarily in profile and out of the judge's line of vision)



If the judge is positioned in the corner of a ring, sending a handler off on a triangle along the ringside edges will result in a distorted view



Instruct the handler to perform the triangle along a route you describe, eg. "go to that corner, then towards the red gazebo, then back to me".

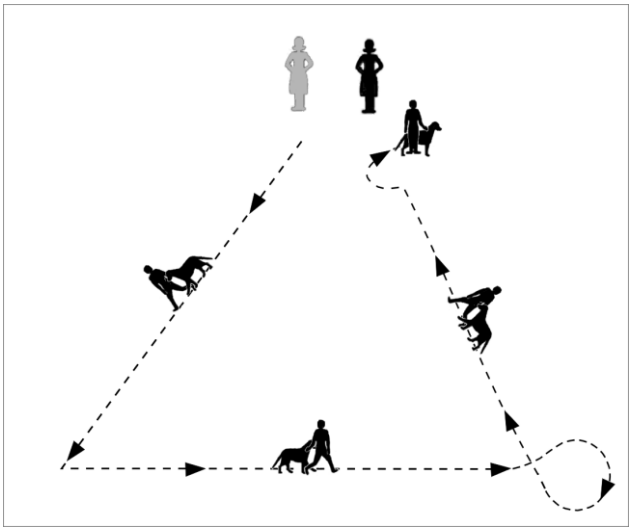
Changing position

Handlers are taught to keep an eye on the judge while performing a gaiting pattern; they are taught to head straight back to the judge on completion of the pattern, and most importantly, they are taught to complete the pattern as close to the starting position as possible.

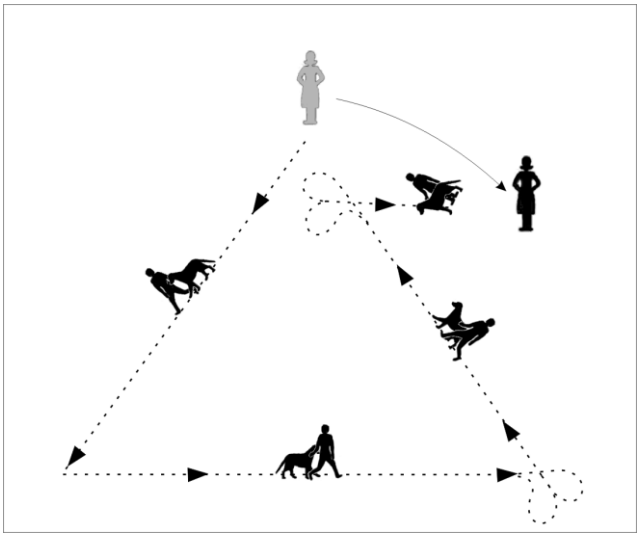
However…..

- if the judge changes position slightly – say by one or two steps – after the handler has begun the pattern, the handler should note the judge's new position and return along the new line of vision
- if the judge changes position considerably during a gaiting exercise, the handler should complete the pattern to the original starting point, then move the dog to the new line of vision

Bearing this in mind, is it a good idea to change your position after a handler has started the exercise? It's not advisable for novice handlers. Changing position may amount to trickery or fault-judging, which may also put an inexperienced handler at a disadvantage. Use this technique at your discretion only with experienced handlers if you feel you have to.



The route the handler should follow if the judge moves very slightly



If the judge moves considerably, the handle must adjust by performing inward turns and lead changes to finish the pattern, then transfer to the judge

Swopping dogs

Under no circumstances may you permit swopping of dogs in the Child Handler classes, but you may request this in the Junior and Open Handling class. Since it requires a fair bit of control and management, it is best not to do this in a large class of more than four exhibitors. Rather shortlist a large class down to four finalists and then manage the swop-over as follows:

Take the first exhibitor's dog from him/her, ask the dog's name, and step back from the 'empty' handler. Instruct the handler to take the dog from the next handler in line, and repeat the process to the end of the line. Give the last 'empty' handler in the line the dog you are holding and tell the handler the dog's name. Part of the evaluation process is to check that, during the swopping process, the handlers remember to ask the new dog's name. Remember to do so yourself, or you shall not be setting a good example! Allow a couple of minutes for the handlers to acquaint themselves with the new dogs, then proceed with your judging.

It may only be necessary to observe how the handler manages to stack the new dog and move once around the ring individually. Check how easily the handler 'connects' with the new dog and manages to present it effectively. Be somewhat lenient with this stage of the evaluation and never base your final decision on effective (or ineffective) swopping.

Supervise the swopping back in the same manner, maintaining alertness in case a dog should break free.

Final decision

You may wish to allow the handlers to gait their own dogs once around the ring again, ending in a final stack. As before, do not move all dogs around together if they are of different sizes and gaiting speeds.

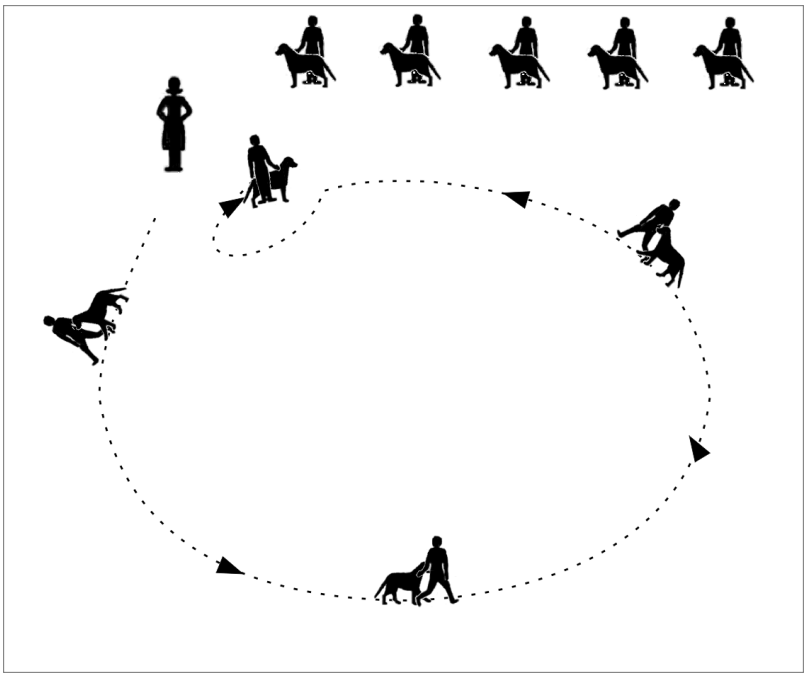
Consider all the virtues of all the performances and make your decision based on the sum of all virtues, rather than eliminating faults. A score sheet may be used to score each handler, but this is entirely optional and you need not follow your score sheet slavishly – sometimes gut feeling and general impression is the best. If the class is large, you may wish to shortlist four or six or no more than eight. You may want to request a different gaiting pattern or to swop dogs to help you make your final choice.

If you want to place them in order, pull a handler out of the line-up to move forward, but never move a handler back down the line.

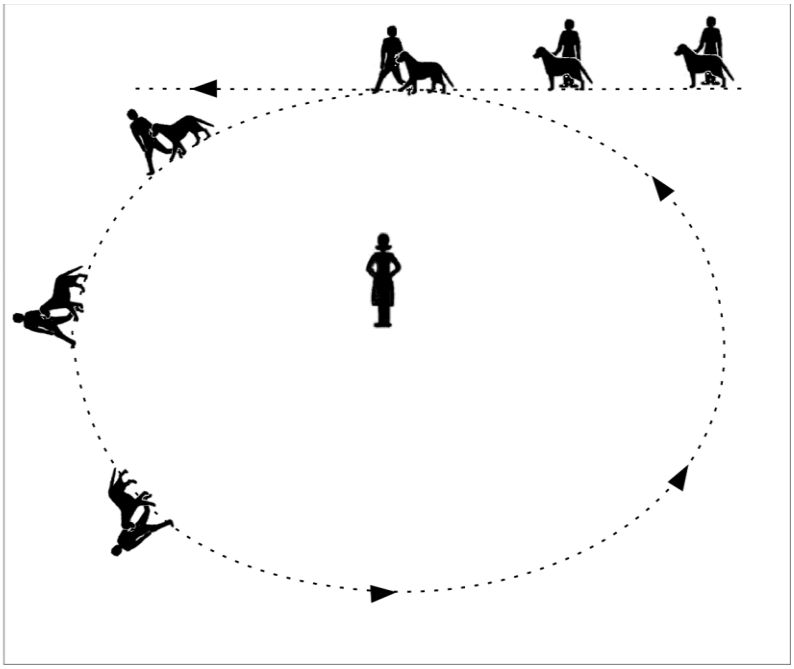
With the help of your ring steward, the winners may be announced in reverse order and, if so desired, you can have a word with the handlers afterwards and offer advice and encouragement.

In closing, remember that you are dealing with incompletely-formed emotional structures with fragile egos. A young person never accepts losing lightly, so the disappointment needs to be softened with mention of outstandingly-performed manoeuvers and try to mask problem areas in an advisory, rather than critical, manner, eg. "I was very pleased with the way you held your dog's tail and head at the same time. Next time, you can also try to bunch the lead up in your hand so that it doesn't hang in front of the dog's chest and spoil the outline. I'm sure, with just a little more practice, you will become an outstanding handler." Also remember to credit the handler for grooming and good manners.

Do award the handler whose technique shows economy of motion and understatement	Don't award those who use exaggerated motions and gestures – like grinning excessively – that attracts attention towards themselves rather than the dog
Do award the handler whose technique is like a frame on a work of art – enhancing the appearance of the dog	Don't award fidgeting or distracting movement
Do award the handler who stands back to allow the dog to be examined without losing control and attention of the dog	Don't award crowding, obscuring or standing over the dog during examination
Do award the handler who, while gaiting the dog, is aware of the judge's position and brings the dog in effectively and straight	Don't award a handler who moves out of the gaiting pattern and returns way out of line
Do award the handler who gains and maintains the attention of the dog – using bait judiciously, if necessary	Don't award feeding of large chunks of food – especially while dog is being examined – or excessive use of squeaky or large toys
Do award the handler who possesses a 'hand for dogs'	Don't award those who over-handle or under-handle
Do award the handler who has an affinity with the dog	Don't award those who are heavy-handed, impatient
Do award the handler who is able to minimise the dog's shortcomings and accentuate the good points, without exaggeration	Don't award the handler who displays no knowledge of the breed characteristics and fails to notice unflattering posture
Do award the handler who maintains control of the dog at all times	Don't award failed attempts to bring the dog into control
Do award the handler who is relaxed and confident	Don't award nervous behaviour that affects the dog's presentation
Do award the handler who correctly follows clearly given instructions	Don't award lack of concentration or the inability to listen and follow through
Do award the handler who is dressed appropriately	Don't award revealing or distracting clothing, overstated jewellery, inappropriate foot attire
Do award the handler that is aware of other exhibitors in the class	Don't award handlers who run up behind an exhibitor in front of them, stack their dogs out of line, crowd or obscure other dogs and handlers
Do award the handler who is courteous and displaying good sportsmanship, and is aware of other exhibitors in the ring	Don't award bad manners, temper tantrums if things don't go according to plan, selfish behaviour
Do award the handler who concentrates on presenting the dog to the best all the time	Don't award slack behaviour where the dog is permitted to present badly
Do award the handler who is poised and self-assured	Don't award 'ballet' movements or poor posture
Do award the handler who holds back a fast-moving dog during a combined go-around then paces the dog correctly when there is sufficient space.	Don't award the handler who runs up behind a handler in front to the point of distracting the dog ahead of them; don't award a handler who overtakes another dog and handler on the inside.
Do award the handler who moves unobtrusively out of the way when the dog is to be examined.	Don't award the handler who bends over the dog or masks it with any part of his/her body; don't award the handler who jumps out of the way or over the dog, causing the dog to startle.
Do award the handler who can relax the dog and keep it happy, but can, at the judge's glance, pull it back to perfection.	Don't award the handler that seems to lose concentration and forget about the dog while awaiting his/her turn.
Do award the handler who controls the lead well and keeps the end coiled in the hand out of view.	Don't award the handler who carries the lead in both hands or is clumsy with it.



The judge typically does not stand centre for an individual circuit



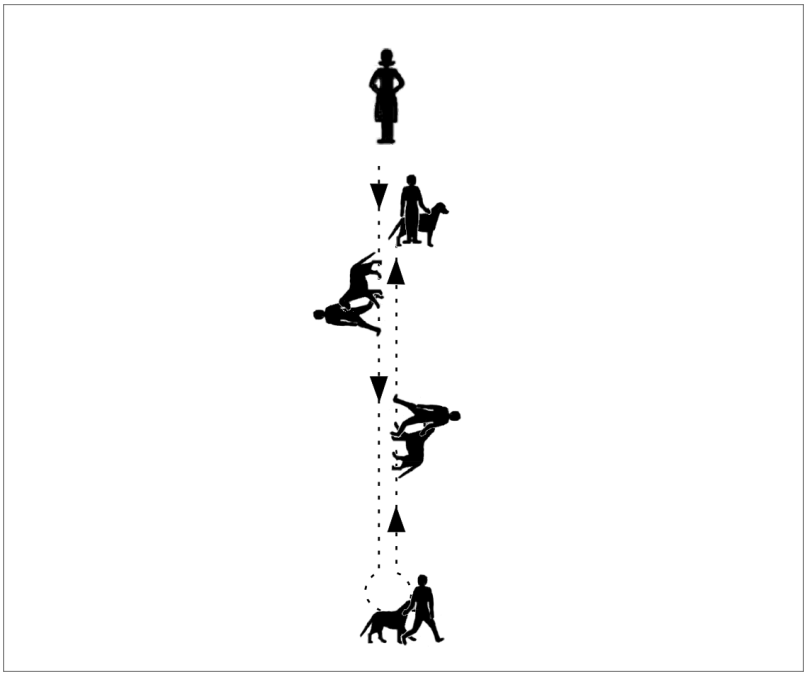
Ensure that you move only dogs of similar size and speed together

Circuit

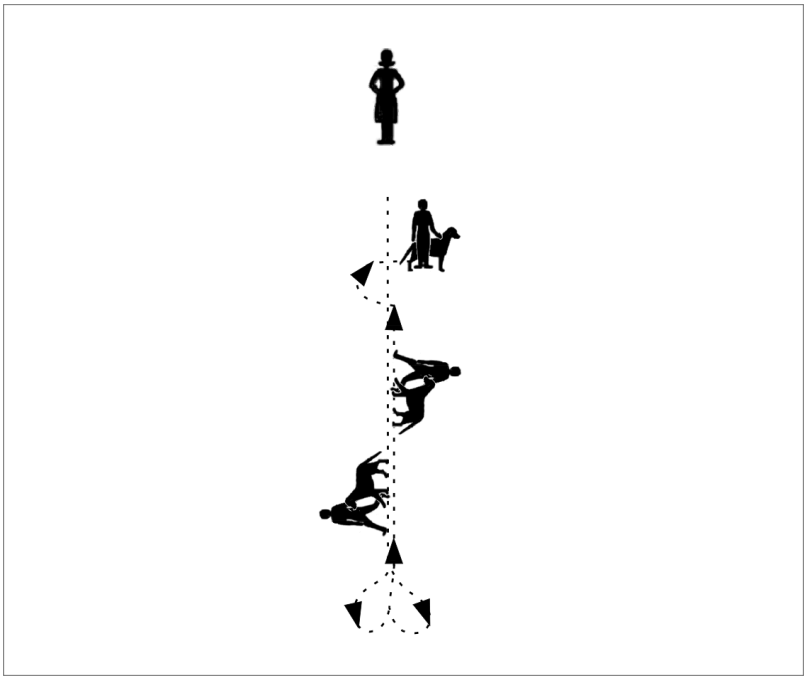
The most basic of movements. The handler keeps the dog on the left and gaits anti-clockwise around the full ring at a speed appropriate for the dog. The judge needs to evaluate control and speed, and whether the handler uses as much of the ring as appropriate. If more than one dog of the same size and speed is gaited in a circuit, observe whether the handler's gaiting interferes with others. If the dog in front is moving slowly and it is difficult to gait at the correct speed, the handler should hold back and make space. As a judge, you should not expect small or slow dogs to gait together with large, faster dogs – this will only lead to a snarl-up.

The aim of this pattern is to evaluate the handler's control of the dog as it negotiates a gentle inward turns. The handler should use the whole ring unless instructed by the Judge.

In the individual gaiting exercise, the handler is required to leave from the judge and go around then return to the judge stopping approximately 2 meters (6 feet) from the Judge and present the dog as per the judge's instructions.



A simple away and back with a show turn at the far side



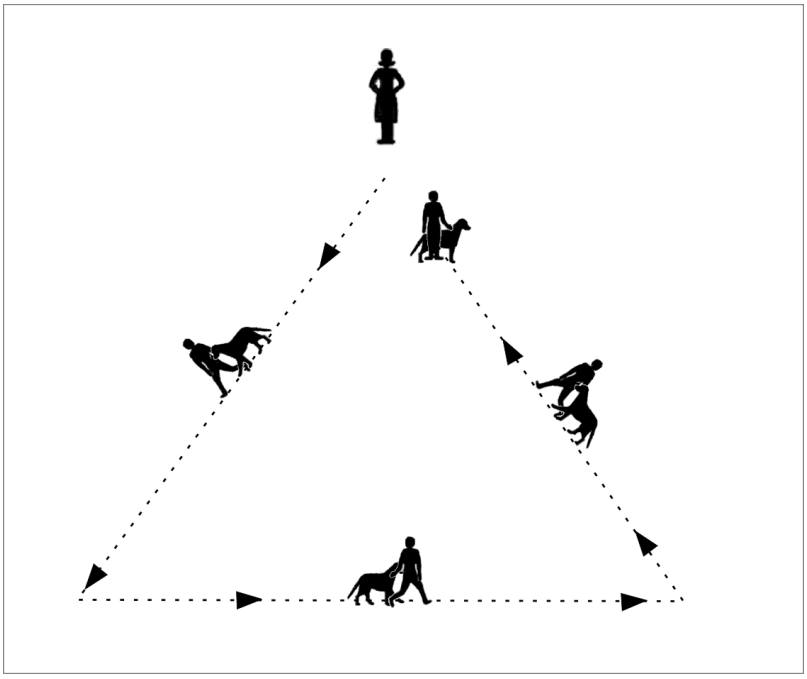
A more complex away and back with an inward turn at the far side and a show finish in front of the judge

Away and Back

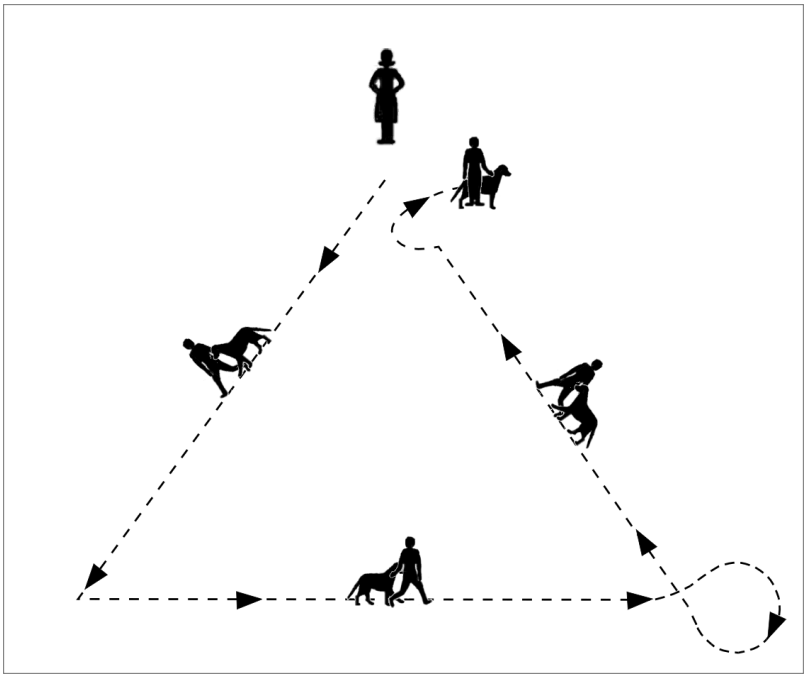
You may wish to indicate in which way you want the handler to take the dog away and back. Watch out that:

- the dog is gaited at a steady pace appropriate for the breed at arm's length to the handler along an imaginary line
- the dog (not the handler) is positioned in the judge's direct line of sight
- the handler gaits the dog in a straight line – no kinks
- on turning at the other end, the handler looks up to confirm the judge's position
- at the turn, the handler may perform the show turn or the inward turn
- the handler returns in a straight line with the dog in the judge's line of sight
- the handler may finish the dog according to your preference

The aim of this exercise is to enable the handler to show the dog's rear movement when going away and to see the front movement when coming back, as if the dog were being shown in a breed class



A simple triangle with left turns at each corner



A *more complex triangle with a courtesy turn at the second corner and a show finish in front of the judge*

Triangle

The triangle can be a lot trickier to perform than it seems.

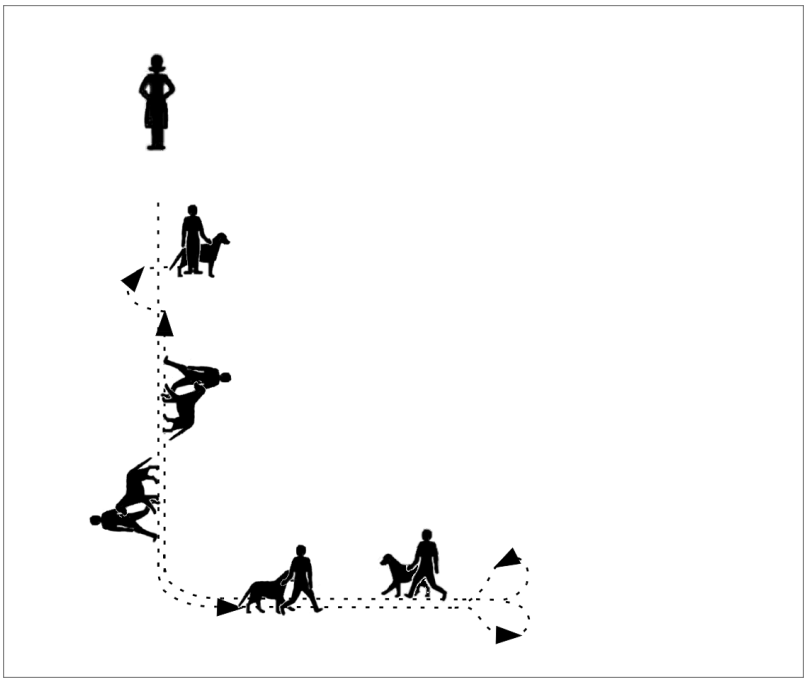
Observe the following:

- the handler should mark the triangle in relation to where you are standing, not in relation to the ring borders and the route must be identified before taking off. So, for example, the profile leg may need to extend diagonally across the ring if the judge is standing in the corner
- if the handler's dog is gaiting rapidly, the handler may prefer to make small courtesy turn at the corner to allow control of the speed and alignment of the dog on the diagonal
- the handler should not rush through the pattern and should preferably use as much of the available space as possible
- either method should be executed with fluid motion.

The aim of this exercise is to enable the handler to show the dog's rear, profile and front movement as if the dog were being shown in a breed class.

The handler and dog move to the first corner, turning toward the second corner. The handler will probably gait the away and back legs of the triangle slightly slower, and speed up the profile leg to accentuate profile movement. The triangle should not be so wide as to be outside the judge's line of vision, nor too narrow, which would make the side view too short.

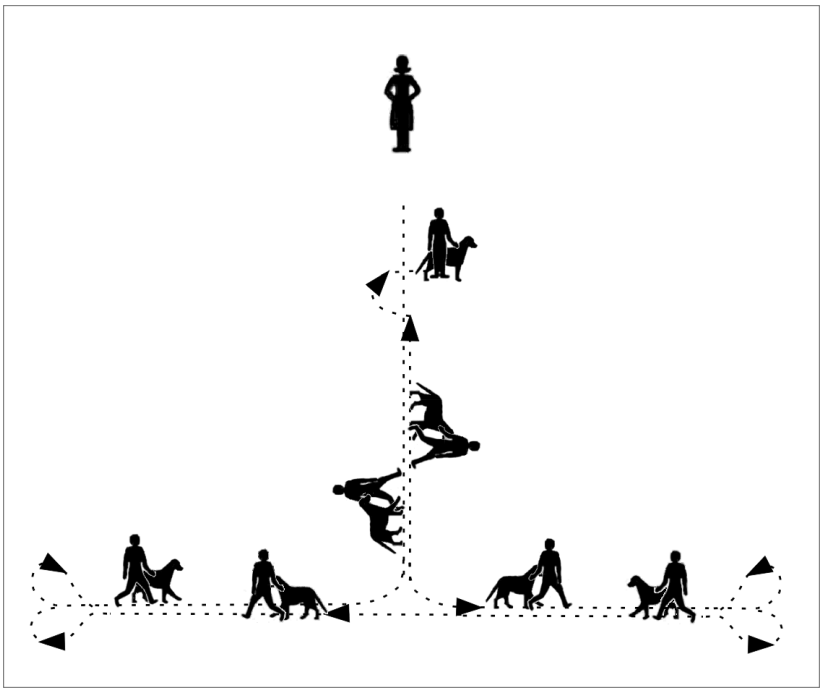
You should watch how the handler lines up the dog to a marker in the required corners so that a well-shaped triangle is formed.



A somewhat complex pattern requiring inward turns and changing gaiting sides

The L pattern

This is one of the more difficult patterns, generally used to test a handler's spatial orientation. The handler moves the dog to the first corner, then turns and proceeds to the second corner. At the far left corner, the handler needs to change the hand holding the lead and swiftly move the dog to his/her right side for the return leg. At the corner, the handler leaves the dog on the right and comes back on the right, the changeover to left occurs at the finish, when the dog is presented in profile. The judge should evaluate the ease with which the handler changes sides and lead, while simultaneously marking the pattern correctly and in a straight line.



A complex pattern involving multiple turns and lead changes

The T pattern

Similar to the L pattern, this pattern tests handlers' spatial awareness and is a very good pattern to showcase a dog. Note the change-overs at the furthest point of the two arms. The judge should observe:

- effortless and effective change-over from left to right, and back to the left
- sharp corners and equal distances in both arms, otherwise the alignment will be compromised

A T pattern may utilize all or part of a ring. Starting in the middle at a position chosen by the judge, the handler moves the dog across the ring. When reaching the end, turn left and go to the corner. Before reaching the corner, the handler switches hands as in the L pattern. After turning into the dog, the handler moves the dog to the opposite corner.

Before reaching that corner, the handler switches hands again, keeping the dog on the left, proceeding back to the middle. In the middle, the handler makes a small smooth circle or turns left, keeping the dog on the left when appropriate while returning to the judge.

This is used to enable the Judge to see the rear, both sides and front movement of the dogs.

MOST-USED TERMINOLOGY

While these terms are probably familiar to Junior Showmanship Judges, it may be useful to be able to explain these terms when providing feedback to the inexperienced handler.

Anti-clockwise	the opposite direction to which the hands on a clock go around.
Clockwise	the way in which the hands on a clock go around.
Coiled, coiling	collecting the lead in one's hand.
Crowding	getting too close to other dogs and handlers.
Dog eye contact	allowing the dogs to look at each other.
Dog's bite	showing the dog's bite, both side views and front.
Free-stacking	allowing the dog to stand naturally, without touching the dog.
Front movement	seeing the front view of the dog coming back to the judge.
Lead dangling	the end of the lead hanging loosely from the hand.
Left about turn	the dog and handler turn anticlockwise and return on the same line.
Line-up	a line-up of dogs and handlers head to tail.
Loose lead	a lead which whilst not tight, still allows control of the dog.
Rear movement	seeing the rear view of the dog going away from the judge.
Relax your dog	allowing the dog to take it easy and not to be in a stacked position.
Ringcraft	the ability to show and handle a dog to its best advantage.
Ring procedure	a variety of skills in the ring related to the efficient presentation of the dog.
Set up / stack	placing the dog in the required body position for that breed.
Stance	the overall look of the dog when it is standing still.
Stringing up	keeping the lead so tight that it causes pain and discomfort for the dog.
Teamwork	talking to the dog and working together as a team.
Tension on lead	pulling or dragging or a tight lead.
Using food	baiting or rewarding the dog with food or treats whilst in the ring.

It is essential that you, as a responsible Junior Showmanship Judge, spend time observing and familiarising yourself with the manner in which different breeds are shown, so that you have a working knowledge of particular grooming, presentation, stacking, and gaiting styles of the various breeds. You will be observing and evaluating the young person's observance of these techniques.

BREEDS EXAMINED ON THE TABLE

Gundog breeds

<table>
<tr><td>American Cocker Spaniel
 </td><td>Cocker Spaniel
 </td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lead may be removed or loosened over neck during exam. Ears may be pulled forward to show the neck. If undocked, handler may hold tail at traditional docking point.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Tail may be supported slightly higher or level with topline – never erect.</td><td>Tail may be supported slightly level with topline – not above, never erect.</td></tr>
</table>

Hound breeds

<table>
<tr><td>Basenji
 </td><td>Beagle
 </td><td>Dachshund
 </td><td>Whippet
 </td></tr>
<tr><td>Tail is tightly curled on back – never unfurled.</td><td>Tail may be supported erect – not inclined forward. Gait: walk / fast walk</td><td>Tail not typically supported. No weighing of miniatures necessary.</td><td>Ears attracted forward when alerted only, otherwise relaxed. Tail not supported.</td></tr>
</table>

Herding breeds

<table>
<tr><td>Cardigan Welsh Corgi
 </td><td>Pembroke Welsh Corgi
 </td><td>Shetland Sheepdog
 </td><td>Puli
 </td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Ears attracted forward for expression. Traditionally free-stacked in line-up. Gait: fast walk / slow trot</td><td>Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail typically not held. Usually free stacked in line-up.</td><td>Tail and feathering flipped over back to fall attractively to show side; tail may be supported.</td></tr>
</table>

Terrier breeds

Cairn Terrier	**Norfolk Terrier**	**Sealyham Terrier**	**Border Terrier**	**Manchester Terrier**
Ears attracted erect for expression. Tail may be stroked or supported erect. Gait: fast walk			Tail may be stroked level or slightly above the backline – never horizontal or erect. Gait: walk	Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail may be supported out or slightly below the level of the back.
Jack Russell Terrier	**Parson Russell Terrier**	**Scottish Terrier**	**West Highland White Terrier**	**Cesky Terrier**
Tail may be stroked or supported level or slightly above the backline – never horizontal or erect. Gait: walk / slow trot		Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail may be supported erect vertically or with a slight curve – never held over the back or curled. Gait: fast walk.		Tail may be supported below the level of the back.

Toy breeds

Japanese Chin	**Maltese**	**Havanese**	**Pekingese**	**Cavalier King Charles Spaniel**
Tail and feathering flipped over back to fall attractively to show side; tail may be supported. Bite: Handler to demonstrate or describe thumb exam. Gait: walk	Tail and feathering flipped over back to fall attractively to show side; tail may be supported. May carry brush to neaten coat. Gait: walk		Tail and feathering flipped over back to fall attractively to show side; tail may be supported. May carry brush to neaten coat. Bite: Handler to demonstrate or describe thumb exam. Gait: slow walk	Tail typically not held. No hand-stacking in line-up – free-stack only. Gait: walk
Löwchen	**Papillon**	**Bichon Frise**	**Yorkshire Terrier**	**Chinese Crested**
Tail may be supported over back in tea cup fashion. Gait: fast walk / trot	Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail and feathering flipped over back to fall attractively to show side; tail may be supported. Gait: walk		Ears attracted erect for expression. Tail may be stroked upright. Brush provided to check coat. Gait: walk	Ears attracted erect and upright for expression. Tail relaxed on the stack, carried high on the move. Gait: walk
Affenpinscher	**Griffon Bruxellois**	**Miniature Pinscher**	**Italian Greyhound**	**Chihuahua**
Tail may be stroked upright. Ears attracted forward for expression. Bite: Handler to demonstrate or describe thumb exam. Gait: walk		Tail may be stroked upright. Ears attracted erect for expression (if pricked) or forward (if dropped). Gait: walk	Tail typically not held. Ears attracted forward when alerted only, otherwise relaxed. Gait: walk	Ears attracted erect and upright for expression. Tail may be supported sickle fashion over back. Gait: walk

Pug Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail is tightly curled on back – never unfurled. Bite: Handler to demonstrate or describe thumb exam. Gait: walk	**Pomeranian** Tail maybe supported over back. Typically free-stacked in the line-up. Gait: walk

Utility breeds

Lhasa Apso Tail and feathering flipped over back to fall attractively to show side; tail may be supported. May carry brush to neaten coat. Handler should push fall away. Gait: fast walk / trot.	**Shih Tzu** Tail and feathering flipped over back to fall attractively to show side; tail may be supported, or held position on its own. May carry brush to neaten coat.	**Boston Terrier** Ears attracted forward for expression. Gait: walk	**French Bulldog** Ears attracted forward for expression. Stacked on the diagonal in line-up. Gait: walk	**Miniature Schnauzer** Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail may be stroked erect.
Toy & Miniature Poodle Head may be supported under chin, under right ear. Tail supported at 45º to topline (typically by holding a few hairs in the tail). All coat trims acceptable.	**Schipperke** Ears attracted very erect for expression.	**Shiba** Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail may be supported over back by hand.		

BREEDS EXAMINED ON A RAMP (if available) OR THE FLOOR

Gundog breeds

English Springer Spaniel 	**Welsh Springer Spaniel**
Lead may be removed or loosened over neck during exam. Head held up by lead or hand and tail held elevated but not erect. If undocked, handler may hold tail at traditional docking point.	

Hound breeds

Basset Hound Folds of skin may be pulled over the head during exam. Tail to be supported in sabre fashion. Gait: walk.	**Petit Basset Griffon Vendeen** Tail may be supported in sabre fashion or erect.

Terrier breeds

Bull Terrier (& Miniature) Ears attracted forward for expression. Normally free-stacked. Tail not held. Gait: fast walk	**Staffordshire Bull Terrier** Head supported by the collar. Expression attracted with baiting. Positioned diagonally in line-up**.**	**Skye Terrier** Tail not typically supported. Judge should speak to dog before touching head. Handler should push fall away.

Utility breeds

Bulldog Head normally held by hand under jaw. Front set wide with rear set closer. Stacked front-on in line-up	**Chow Chow** Tail may be held supported over the back. Ears attracted high and forward for expression. Show bite and tongue.	**Shar Pei** Tail may be held supported over the back. Ears attracted high and forward for expression.

BREEDS EXAMINED ON THE FLOOR

Gundog breeds

Golden Retriever 	**Flat-coated Retriever** 	**Gordon Setter** 	**English Setter** 	**Irish Setter**
Lead may be removed or loosened over neck during exam. Ears may be pulled forward to show the neck. Handler may present tail level with back while supporting or baiting head. Typically shown kneeling but may stand.				
Pointer 	**German Short-haired Pointer** 	**German Wire-haired Pointer** 	**Hungarian Vizsla** 	**Weimaraner**
Lead may be removed or loosened over neck during exam. Tail may be stroked or supported. Handler may present while supporting or baiting head. If undocked, handler may hold tail at traditional docking point. Typically shown kneeling but may stand.				

Labrador Retriever May be free-stacked. Lead may be removed or loosened over neck during exam.	**Italian Spinone** Tail may be supported slightly below backline

Herding breeds

Rough Collie Predominately free stacked. Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail typically not held.	**Bouvier des Flandres** Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail may be supported or stroked semi erect. Kneeling not recommended.	**Old English Sheepdog** Presented with relaxed ears. May pull hair away from eyes on approach. Gait: Walk / slow trot	**Samoyed** Ears attracted erect and forward for expression. Tail may be supported over back.	**Bearded Collie** Presented with relaxed ears. Tail typically not held.
Australian Cattle Dog 	**Belgian Shepherd Dog** 	**Australian Shepherd** 	**Border Collie** 	
Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail typically not held.				

Hound breeds

Borzoi 	**Greyhound** 	**Irish Wolfhound** 	**Rhodesian Ridgeback** 	**Saluki**
No need to attract expression. Stacked four-square. Head held up by lead or hand and tail not supported. Handler standing or kneeling.				
Afghan Hound Head held high by lead or hand. Tail held high with hand or on its own. Brush permitted to tidy coat. Gait: fast trot.				

Terrier breeds

Airedale Terrier 	**Irish Terrier** 	**Kerry Blue Terrier** 	**Soft-coat Wheaten Terrier** 	**American Staffordshire Terrier**
Tail may be stroked upright. Ears attracted forward for expression				Ears attracted forward for expression.

Utility breeds

Standard Poodle Head may be supported under chin, under right ear. Tail supported at 45º to topline (typically by holding a few hairs in the tail). All coat trims acceptable. Gait: fast trot	**Dalmatian** Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail may be supported as extension of spine.	**Xoloitcuintle** Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail relaxed.

Working breeds

American Akita Tail may be supported over back. Attracted forward to accentuate arch of neck and ears. Kneeling not recommended.	**Alaskan Malamute** 	**Boxer** Traditionally baited forward to accentuate arch of neck and alert with expression. Tail may be stroked into angled position.	**Dobermann** 	**Russian Black Terrier** Attracted forward to accentuate arch of neck and ears. Kneeling not recommended.
Bernese Mountain Dog 	**Newfoundland** 	**Saint Bernard** 	**Bullmastiff** 	**Giant Schnauzer** Ears attracted forward for expression. Tail may be stroked erect.
Head and expression emphasised. Kneeling not recommended. Tail relaxed.				
Schnauzer Headpiece and tail accentuated. Tail may be stroked upwards.	**Siberian Husky** Ears attracted forward and erect for expression. Tail relaxed.	**Pyrenean Mountain Dog** Head supported with hand, ears and tail relaxed.	**German Shepherd Dog** Ears attracted erect for expression. Rear set up – right leg forward, left leg back. Tail typically not held.	**Boerboel** Head held up by lead. Head and expression emphasized. Kneeling not recommended
Great Dane Ears may be held up for expression. Tail not supported.	**Rottweiler** Head and expression emphasised. Show bite and open mouth. Kneeling not recommended			

JUNIOR SHOWMANSHIP SCORESHEET

GOOD	FAIR	POOR	APPEARANCE AND CONDUCT
			Neat, tidy, clean, well-groomed
			Appropriately dressed
			Sportsmanlike behaviour
			Alert and attentive to instructions
			Courteous, friendly response to judge
			Positive attitude
			Posture
			Confidence
GOOD	**FAIR**	**POOR**	**AFFINITY WITH THE DOG**
			Genuine love of dogs
			Eye contact with dog
			Ability to attract and maintain dog's attention
			Shows encouragement
			Praise on completion of exercise
			Ability to coax a difficult dog
			Remains calm if dog misbehaves
			Dog is responsive to handler
			Dog and handler appear to work as a team
GOOD	**FAIR**	**POOR**	**PRESENTATION OF THE DOG**
			Dog well groomed appropriate to breed
			Touch-up grooming effective but not excessive
			Appropriate lead for the dog, correctly positioned
			Correct spacing and position in the line-up
			Correct presentation of the dog in the breed-specific manner
			Correct process of stacking the dog – front and rear
			Speed of setting up the dog correctly
			Dog's head appropriately presented/supported
			Keeping the lead inconspicuous
			Effectively making corrections if the dog moves
			Correct use of bait
			Picking up bait afterwards
			Effective showing of the bite; knowledge of correct technique
			Economy of motion
			An apparent "hand for dogs"
			Avoiding "grand-standing", exaggerated actions
			Gaiting the dog smoothly without clumsy or jerky actions
			Gaiting the dog at the appropriate speed
			Effective lead control; minimal jerking on the lead
GOOD	**FAIR**	**POOR**	**KNOWLEDGE OF RING PROCEDURES**
			Apparently "ring wise"
			Observance of the Golden Rule
			Unobtrusive shadowing where necessary
			Awareness of the route to follow in the gaiting exercise
			Awareness of the judge's position
			Effective turns
			Successful execution of gaiting exercise
			Effective finishing of gaiting exercise
			Effective 'connecting' with swopped dog
			Effective coaxing of swopped dog

REGULATIONS FOR THE HANDLER CLASSES

1. LICENSING AND SHOW REGULATIONS

The regulations relating to licensing and all other matters to do with Championship Shows, Schedule 3, and Non-Championship Shows, Schedule 4, of the Constitution of the Kennel Union of Southern Africa shall apply to Handler Classes in so far as they do not conflict with specific terms of this Schedule 5K.

2. SCOPE OF THE LICENCE

2.1 All Breeds clubs may offer all Handler Classes.
2.2 All other clubs may offer Handler Classes.

3. ELIGIBILITY FOR COMPETITION

3.1 Child Handler Class

For persons eight (8), but under eleven (11), years of age. In the calendar year in which the person turns eleven (11), the person may elect to remain in the Child Handler Class for the remainder of that calendar year or elect to move to the Junior Handler Class. Once moved, he/she may not revert to the Child Handler Class.

3.2 Junior Handler Class

For persons of eleven (11), but under eighteen (18) years of age.

3.3 Open Handler Class

For persons of any age therein provided for.

3.4 For Handler Classes at Championship Shows the official Kennel Union Show Entry Form shall be used and entries submitted on any other form shall be invalid. The Entry Form for any entrant under 18 years of age shall be accompanied by proof of age, in the form of either a copy of a birth certificate, the first page of an identity document or passport. All Handler Class entries must be on a separate Entry Form from the one used for the breed entry of an exhibit. Any dog that is to be used for handling must be registered on the Breed Register.

3.5 It is not permissible for a handler to handle a bitch in season in any Handler Class.

3.6 It is not mandatory for any exhibit handled in any Handler Class to compete in any Breed Class at the show where it will be handled.

3.7 It is permissible for a handler to handle a neutered dog in any Handler Class

4. JUDGING

4.1 When judging Handler Classes the Judge shall consider inter alia:

- 4.1.1 The exhibit is not “blocked” from the judge’s view at any time i.e. the Handler should not come between the exhibit and the judge.
- 4.1.2 Any exaggerated handling is to be discouraged.
- 4.1.3 The ability of the Handler to control the exhibit.
- 4.1.4 The ability of the Handler to ‘set up’ the exhibit.
- 4.1.5 The ability of the Handler to ‘gait’ the exhibit at a desirable pace for the proper assessment of movement.
- 4.1.6 The ability of the Handler to present the exhibit to best advantage.
- 4.1.7 Only standard Handler Ring Patterns are allowed. (Addendum available on request from the office)
- 4.1.8 The dress, grooming and ring demeanour of the Handler, taking weather conditions into account.

4.2 The quality of the exhibit shall not be taken into consideration by the judge.

4.3 Under no circumstances should questions be used as a means of testing a Handler’s knowledge. A judge should limit conversation with Handlers.

4.4 Handlers who exhibit impatience or heavy handedness with their exhibits must be penalised.
4.5 If it is apparent that a Handler cannot control his/her own exhibit, the judge must excuse the Handler and exhibit from the ring.
4.6 A judge may request competitors to swap exhibits provided that it becomes apparent that the Handler is capable of controlling/handling his/her new exhibit. However should unruly behaviour occur, the exhibit should be returned to the original handler without penalty.
4.7 Swapping of exhibits by Child Handlers is not permitted.
4.8 If an exhibit shows signs of aggression the Handler and exhibit shall immediately become liable to be excused from the ring, at the discretion of the judge.
4.9 Any Handler not present after three calls by the Ring Steward would be regarded as absent.

5. JUDGES

5.1 Judges shall be expected to have a genuine interest in and understanding of competitive handling.
5.2 Foreign domiciled judges shall either be qualified as specialist Junior Handler (Junior Showmanship) judges in their own countries, or be approved by KUSA to judge Best in Show in this country.
5.3 Persons wishing to become Junior Showmanship Judges need to meet the qualifying criteria and requirements for qualifications as laid out in Schedule 10. Reg.4.

6. HANDLER CERTIFICATES

6.1 A KUSA Qualifying Certificate will be awarded at any Championship Show to the winner of each Handler Class.

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ISBN 0-9584208-1-5
27.09.2005/AA/F 05-05/
Fedco 05-2013/NP/Updated 27.06.2013
Most recent changes to this Schedule has an effective date of 01.07.2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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