

# AKC Scent Work Judge's Guidelines

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KENNEL CLUB®**

AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB'S  
MISSION STATEMENT

The American Kennel Club® is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its Registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Founded in 1884, the AKC® and its affiliated organizations advocate for the purebred dog as a family companion, advance canine health and well-being, work to protect the rights of all dog owners and promote responsible dog ownership.

# AKC SCENT WORK JUDGE'S GUIDELINES

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## CHAPTER 1- GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are supplemental to the *Regulations for AKC Scent Work*, elaborating on the policies and practices therein. Judges are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the guidelines in this booklet. Failure to comply with these guidelines subjects a judge to possible disciplinary action.

**Remember, You Make it Work!** As an AKC Scent Work judge, you are an essential part of the sport. The Scent Work trial system needs your dedication and expertise to function properly. You should be thoroughly familiar with these guidelines, as well as all of the AKC rules, regulations, and policies if you:

- Are an approved or provisional judge
- Have accepted match or non-regular class judging assignments
- Are a visiting judge accepting assignments at AKC events
- Plan to apply for provisional judging approval

This book cannot cover all situations; nor can it substitute for common sense. Whenever you have a question about judging procedure or conduct, do not hesitate to contact the AKC Scent Work Department.

### YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A JUDGE

**Responsibility to Exhibitors.** Each exhibitor has paid an entry fee for the purpose of competing and having their dog's performance evaluated. Judges are expected to be friendly and courteous to all who enter the search area. Without exhibitors, there would be no trials. For every experienced exhibitor there are many newcomers. The future of this sport is in the hands of the novice.

**Responsibility to Spectators.** Spectators form their opinion of the sport through seeing the actions of the judge, the handler, and the dog. Care must be taken to avoid any action that might reflect poorly on the sport. Judges should work to maintain spectator appeal in the sport while keeping foremost in mind the welfare and convenience of the exhibitor and the dog.

**Responsibility to the Sport.** Approval to judge carries with it the full endorsement of the AKC. Whether judging at a licensed trial or sanctioned match or engaging in any dog-related activity, judges must be cognizant of their responsibility to the sport.

Judges must never ignore or condone any type of abuse of a dog at any time. All judges are expected to take appropriate action when witnessing such conduct.

As a judge, you are required to meet these key criteria:

- **Knowledge.** Through experience and continuing study, you must demonstrate sound knowledge of the searches that you judge. Good judges never stop learning about the sport of Scent Work.

- **Procedure.** You must demonstrate sound judging procedure and search area control, plus a thorough knowledge of the *Regulations for AKC Scent Work*, and the *AKC Scent Work Judge's Guidelines*. Proper procedure is essential. With it, a judge will inspire the confidence of exhibitors and spectators.
- **Impartiality.** It is essential that exhibitors have full faith in the impartiality and competence of judges. There is no room for even the suggestion that anything other than the work of the team in the search area is involved in your decisions.

**Judges' Certifications.** As an AKC Scent Work judge you must adhere to the certifications made when you signed your application to become an AKC judge. These certifications are restated below:

I HEREBY submit my application to the AKC Scent Work department of the AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB for its consideration and make the following certifications:

I certify that I am occupationally eligible to judge under *AKC Rules Applying to Dog Shows* and will adhere to the restrictions, if applicable, outlined in the Occupational Eligibility Addendum clarifying Chapter 7, Section 1.

I certify that I am familiar with the American Kennel Club's Rules, Regulations, Policies, and the *Regulations for AKC Scent Work* and agree to abide by them.

I certify that if granted provisional or regular judging status, I fully understand that my judging eligibility is conditional and, therefore, reviewable by the AKC Scent Work department at any time subsequent to the date the status was initially granted.

I certify that upon review, AKC's Scent Work department may relieve me of continued judging eligibility.

I certify that I understand and acknowledge that if I am charged with cruelty, inhumane treatment of animals, or similar offense involving inhumane or cruel treatment of dogs, or charged with any crime involving moral turpitude, especially as it concerns dog-related activities, the AKC may temporarily place my judging privileges on referral while the charges are pending. Further, after receiving notification of the referral, I am prevented from judging or from accepting assignments to judge. When the charges are resolved and AKC's inquiry into the matter determines that no action will be taken by the AKC to cause a suspension of my judging privileges, the temporary judging referral will be removed.

I certify that I understand that once I am accepted as an AKC Scent Work judge, my actions, including conduct in public forums and social media, will be viewed as representative of the AKC, and that should such actions bring embarrassment to the AKC, I may be subject to disciplinary action, which may affect my judging privileges.

I certify that I am in good standing with the American Kennel Club, 21 years of age or older and that all information in this application is truthful and accurate.

## ETHICS – TRAINING AND EXHIBITING

Most judges start in the sport as exhibitors and trainers. It is natural to want to continue these activities after becoming a judge. The AKC understands this. It is acceptable to exhibit or have your dogs exhibited at trials for the classes that you are not officiating.

Many judges combine exhibiting and judging without causing complaints. The reason is simple: They are prudent in how and when they exhibit, and they demonstrate the utmost in decorum and sportsmanship. Judges who exhibit should expect to be subject to special scrutiny. The AKC will evaluate all complaints concerning judges who exhibit on an individual basis. Whatever steps are deemed necessary will be taken in each particular situation.

**Exhibiting.** Members of the same household as the officiating judge may not compete in the classes in which they are judging.

## ACCEPTING ASSIGNMENTS

**Written Invitations Encouraged.** Consider requiring all clubs to send you written invitations for assignments. Their requests should clearly specify the classes you are being asked to judge. Promptly acknowledge all invitations, again in writing, and keep accurate records of assignments you accept. Formal contracts are an option, but are not required by the AKC.

**Avoid Conflicts.** It's your responsibility to acknowledge judging invitations promptly. Careful record keeping and prompt acceptance (or refusal) of invitations helps eliminate unnecessary confusion and conflicts for both judges and trial-giving clubs.

**Assignment Limitations.** A judge will not be approved to judge the same Scent Work class at all-breed events within 30 days and 100 straight-line miles of each other, with the following exceptions:

- A judge may accept assignments to judge the same classes for two Scent Work trials that fall on the same day at the same site.
- A judge may accept assignments to judge the same classes at four (4) Scent Work trials over the course of a cluster of no more than five (5) consecutive days at the same site or within a local geographical area as determined by the AKC.
- A judge may accept an assignment to judge the same classes within 30 days and 100 straight-line miles of another assignment only on an emergency basis.

There are no such restrictions on non-regular classes. Assignments to judge the same class or classes at two different breed specialty or group Scent Work trials are not considered to be in conflict unless the two specialties or group trials are for the same breed or group. Breed specialty Scent Work assignments or group shows are not in conflict with an assignment to judge the same class(es) at an all-breed Scent Work trial.

**Travel Between Assignments.** Judges should understand that upon acceptance of an invitation, they are committing themselves to the trial-giving club for the entire day. Their travel plans should not be predicated on arriving late or on leaving early to get transportation home. Judges should not ask clubs to arrange classes to accommodate their travel plans.

**Expenses.** When you accept an invitation, clearly inform the club officials what your expenses and fee, if any, will be, so they will not be surprised by a larger than anticipated bill on the day of the trial. This is a contract between you and the club. The more specific details you and the club include in the contract, the less the potential for misunderstanding. This is an important consideration and courtesy to clubs. If you sign a contract provided by the club, you and the club are responsible for abiding by its conditions.

## SICKNESS AND FITNESS TO JUDGE

**Fitness to Judge.** A Scent Work judge must be capable of performing the functions necessary to properly judge the search.

This means judges must have:

- The maneuverability to negotiate a search area, indoors and out, with or without medical assistance, i.e., a wheelchair, crutches, or a cane.
- The dexterity to move at a sufficient speed to adhere to the schedule of the trial-giving club and AKC policy.
- Normal vision (correctable by eyeglasses or contact lenses), i.e., be able to judge dogs at a distance.
- The capability to complete all necessary paperwork.

**Sickness.** Judges are expected to be physically fit. If you find you cannot fulfill an assignment because of illness or other serious occurrence, immediately notify the trial secretary and the trial chairperson by telephone, overnight letter, telegram, e-mail, or fax. If you become ill while judging and it becomes necessary to find a replacement, you will not be allowed to continue your assignment later in the day. If you are delayed en route to a trial, make every effort to contact the trial secretary immediately.

**Change of Address.** Judges are responsible for promptly notifying the AKC Scent Work Department of any change in mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number(s). The change will be automatically reflected in the AKC Judges Directory.



## CHAPTER 2 – THE SCENT WORK JUDGE’S RESPONSIBILITIES

The following make explicit the role of the judge in the AKC Scent Work trial.

### DESIGNING SEARCHES

It is the responsibility of the judge to design the searches for the classes that they are judging.

**Laying out Search Boundaries.** The judge is presented by the club with a general area inside which to plan the search. It is up to the judge to determine the exact boundaries, including what surfaces and objects are and are not in play (i.e., whether the surface or object can be used for a hide). Boundaries can be indicated in a variety of manners:

- Natural surfaces, such as the side of a building.
- Artificial objects, such as cones, flags, ring gating, caution tape, or duct tape.
- Obvious furniture or easily recognizable landmarks (ex: from the tree to the edge of the sidewalk).

The size of the search area must conform to the requirements laid out in the *Regulations for AKC Scent Work*. It is suggested that judges carry a tape measurer with their trial equipment, to ensure the size requirements are met. It is understood that many search areas, being of unconventional shapes, may not be amenable to an easy calculation of area size. The required search area sizes specified in the class descriptions should be approximated to the best of the judge’s ability, but is not expected to be exact in all situations.

**Setting the Start Line.** The judge must indicate a threshold over which the handler and dog must pass to begin the search. The start line should be no smaller than the width of a doorway, and no larger than five (5) feet across. The start line should be easily recognizable by the handler. The start line should be positioned such that a dog would not accidentally cross while the handler is preparing them for the search.

**Determining the Spectator Area.** Spectators are strongly encouraged in AKC Scent Work. If the space allows, the judge should set aside a dedicated spectator area. It is not required that this area be physically delineated by boundary markers, but it is encouraged. During the handler’s briefing you should specify what the spectator area is, and the required etiquette for spectators (view the searches quietly, no obvious reactions that could cue the team, only coming and going between search teams).

If the search area is very small, you can choose not to allow spectators for that particular search. This decision should be made based on the comfort of the searching teams. For example, teams should not have to step around spectators to enter or exit the search area, or be hampered by spectators near the start line.

You may encounter teams that request that the spectator area be cleared for their search. This is not permitted.

**Search Designs by Class Level.** To ensure continuity of difficulty by level, the following guidelines must be followed when designing searches:

### NOVICE

- **Goal:** A basic search in which the dog detects the odor within the search area and works the scent cone back to the strongest concentration of odor, which will be an accessible location. Novice is intended to test the dog for basic odor obedience and understanding of driving to source. This level is not intended to present complex odor challenges or to try to “trick” the dog or handler. This level should be straightforward.
- **Competitors should NOT encounter** significant air movement resulting in eddying odor, complicated hide placement, significant pooling, significant channeling, or hides that are difficult to access.

### ADVANCED

- **Goal:** A basic search with two relatively simple hides. The increased challenge at the Advanced level is that the dog is presented with odor from two different locations. This level is intended to test the dog on simple multiple hides. Converging odor should be minimized. Airflow puzzles should be fairly simple as the challenge of multiple hides increases the difficulty of the search naturally. Scent puzzles should be fairly straightforward.
- **Competitors should NOT encounter** complicated converging odor.

### EXCELLENT

- **Goal:** A complex search with at least one difficult hide. This level is intended to begin to challenge the handler with the start of unknown number of hides (interiors) and with solving more complicated scent puzzles. The dog will encounter a more complicated search. Inaccessible hides are introduced. Basic converging odor and elevation may be tested. If three hides are converging, the puzzle should be uncomplicated.
- **Competitors should NOT encounter** extreme converging odor with hides in very close proximity, deep inaccessible hides, nor should they encounter blank search areas in interiors.
- **Competitors MAY encounter** converging odor, eddying odor, and basic elevation challenges.

### MASTER

- **Goal:** A complex search with an unknown number of hides. The Master level is intended to test the teamwork of the dog and handler.

The handler is expected to read the dog and determine when areas are completely cleared of hides even in the presence of complicated odor problems. Time management and efficiency will be challenged in this level.

- **Competitors should NOT encounter** more than one blank area in interiors or hides that are indistinguishable from each other given current air flow and scenting conditions which may cause the handler to double call a hide or assume that two hides are in fact one hide.
- **Competitors MAY encounter** converging odor, pooling odor, eddying odor, channeling odor, and inaccessible hides.

### THE DETECTIVE CLASS

- **Goal:** A complex search with the added challenge of a large search area incorporating interiors and exteriors. The Detective Class is intended to provide an ultimate challenge for the handler and dog. The handler will experience unknown number of hides, large search areas, and complicated odor problems. This level is intended to showcase the team's teamwork.
- **Competitors should NOT encounter** hides that are indistinguishable from each other which could cause double calls or the handler assuming that the two hides are one.
- **Competitors MAY encounter** challenging odor problems with converging odor, elevation, eddying, pooling, channeling, etc.

**Selecting the Hide Locations.** The judge is responsible for choosing the location of the hides within the searches. Clubs cannot overrule you on your chosen hide locations, even if the trial chair or trial secretary is also an AKC Scent Work judge. The only person who can overrule a judge on the hide location is an AKC Representative, or AKC Scent Work Contractor, however, these individuals will not interfere unless they have serious concerns.

When selecting the hide locations, the judge must ensure that the hides are 1) appropriate for the difficulty level of the class (taking into account the way odor will move and collect in the environment), 2) not visible at any natural angle, 3) steady, and will not be knocked askew by searching dogs, and 3) stable, meaning that the odor is not likely to saturate nearby areas, thus making a larger area "correct;" a stable hide will remain consistent throughout duration of the trial and not change as the trial progresses. Judges must also be aware of odor movement within the search area. The odor must be accessible within the search area (just because the hide is inside the search area, does not mean that the odor is). Judges must also think about the composition of the object or surface on which the hide is to be placed (keeping in mind that some materials absorb and hold odor more than others).

When determining whether a potential hide location is acceptable, it is suggested that the judge test the location with a cold scent vessel (a scent vessel that has never contained odor). This allows you to ensure that the hide will stick with your chosen adhesive and is not visible, without risking contamination.

Judges need to be considerate of other sport participants when placing hides. Hides should not be placed on Agility equipment, or in cones that belong to a training center. It could cause a significant issue if a scent work-trained dog encounters unexpected odor while participating in Agility, Rally, or another sport.

**Hide Placement.** It is the judge's responsibility to choose the location for the hide, and also to ensure that the hide is carefully placed and there is no contamination. The judge may choose to physically place the hide(s) themselves, or may designate another individual to do so in their presence and with their supervision. Judges may set hides for multiple elements/trials prior to the trial and throughout the trial as long as the odor will not interfere with active search areas. In general, set hides as soon as is practicable so there is plenty of time for the odor to set. (Note: Hides may not be placed prior to the day of the trial.) It is also the judge's responsibility to ensure that anyone handling odor takes the necessary precautions and does not contaminate the search area, or any other object or surface at the trial site. You should be confident of the choice of your hide location (after testing with a cold scent vessel), prior to bringing out the odor. Anyone handling odor must wear gloves and must not touch anything—someone else must open doors, drawers, and cabinets for them, when that is necessary.

**Recording the Hide Location.** After the hides are set, it is recommended that you create a basic search map and record the location of each hide. This map should be carefully handled so that no competitor inadvertently sees it (ex: remains inside an envelope, or folded, and on the judge's clipboard). This map is an emergency failsafe in case you forget the location of the hide. For the Handler Discrimination classes, it is recommended that judges utilize a laminated sheet of paper. The course map can be drawn on with "transparency pens" which can be removed with water. The hide locations can be marked with dry erase marker such that they can be easily rubbed off and change as the hide location changes for each competitor.

**Setting Distractions.** Many classes include one or more required distractions. Distractions are objects or events that vie for the dog's attention and test their willingness to continue searching in the face of other interesting stimuli. They are not intended to be disturbing or frightening to the dog or handler. The judge must choose which distractions to utilize and determine their placement within the search area. You are able to use multiple items of the same distraction category within the same search, but variety is encouraged.

In order to be considered one of the distractions required by the Regulations, the distraction must be something apart from the environment, placed in the search area specifically to be a distraction. For example, a search taking place in an arcade may have video games that make noise periodically: this is a feature of the environment and cannot be considered one of the intentional distractions.

Distractions can be inside a container or “loose” in the search area but may not be closer than 1 foot from the hide. Food distractions must always be contained such that a searching dog cannot ingest the food, and food containers must be large enough that they cannot be ingested whole. No essential oils may be used for distractions.

Care must be taken to ensure that distractions are uniform for all competitors. If an intermittent auditory or visual distraction is used, it should be triggered either at a specific time in the search, or when the dog reaches a specific location in the search area. Toys that make noise when approached are a good example of an acceptable intermittent auditory distraction.

In deference to those who compete in multiple venues, distractions may not be related in any way to any odor used in any other Scent Work organization. For reference, these “prohibited” odors include vetiver, myrrh, lemongrass, pine, wintergreen, and red thyme.

Either you or the club can provide the distraction items, but this should be discussed beforehand, including the number and type of distraction items that are needed, if the club is to provide. You should arrive at the site with a good idea of what your distractions will be for your classes.

**Inappropriate Box Construction.** It is the responsibility of the club to provide the boxes if they are offering container classes. However, if the boxes that are provided for a Novice container class are of an inappropriate construction (if they do not sufficiently allow odor to escape), the judge should modify them as necessary. For example, if the boxes have no seam on the top, the judge can choose to poke holes in the boxes, or leave the lids cracked open.

**Inadequate Search Areas.** If the judge finds that the area that they are presented with is not adequate for the searches, per the *Regulations for AKC Scent Work*, the judge must bring that concern to the attention of the Trial Chair. In such a case, you and the club must work together to find an agreeable solution. Possible solutions can include choosing an alternate area on the site, or altering the class order, if able. In the end, the club has the final say on what areas are to be used. If you encounter any issues with poor or inadequate search areas at a trial that you are judging, these must be reported to the AKC on the Judge’s Report.

## RUNNING THE DEMO DOG

The purpose of the demo dog is to evaluate how the search works in practice. Even the most knowledgeable judge cannot be one-hundred percent sure about how odor will move in every situation. The demo dog encounters the conditions as they are, and helps the judge determine whether the odor is behaving as they expected, and therefore, whether the difficulty of the search is as planned. The demo dog is also useful for helping the judge set the time limit for the class.

**A Trusted Search Dog.** The demo dog should be an accomplished search dog, not a novice. With an accomplished search dog, you will be able to read the movement of the odor by watching the dog. The demo dog should be a dog that is familiar to you and trusted by you. It is permissible and encouraged for you to use your own dog as a demo dog.

Using the first dog in the running order as a demo dog should be a last resort. If there is no other option than to use an entered dog, the judge should work with the club to adjust the running order so that a trusted competitor dog is the first to run.

**When to Run the Demo Dog.** After the hides are set, they should be left to stand a reasonable time before the demo dog is run, to allow the odor to permeate through the area. How much time is reasonable is up to the judge.

**If the Demo Dog Encounters Difficulty.** If the demo dog encounters difficulty or is unable to find the hide, the judge should seriously consider relocating the hide. It is also permissible to run additional demo dogs to further evaluate the search.

**Relocating the Hide.** If the hide must be relocated, the original hide location should be wiped with white vinegar diluted with water (1 part vinegar to 3 parts water) to remove any residual odor. Once the hide is placed in the new location, it must once again be left to stand a reasonable time, and the demo dog must be run again to evaluate the new hide location.

**No Demo Dog for Handler Discrimination.** Because the hide location moves between competitors for the Handler Discrimination classes, there is no demo dog. The time limit must be set prior to the running of the first dog.

## THE HANDLER'S BRIEFING

Although a representative of the Club is welcome to conduct a general briefing at the start of the trial, the judge who is assigned to that class must be the one to conduct the Handler's Briefing. The purpose of the Handler's Briefing is for the handlers to see the search area and to ask any questions that they may have about the search, as designed.

**What to Discuss.** It is suggested that judges have a routine prepared for the briefing for each class. Make sure to welcome the teams to the trial and be friendly during the briefing.

Topics that should be discussed:

- Search area boundaries
- Spectator area
- How many hides there are, if it is a known search
- How many hides there may be, if it is an unknown search (e.g., 1-3)
- What odors may be used
- The maximum time for the search
- Whether there is an off-leash option
- The location of previous hides, if the area was previously used for odor on the same day

**Exhibitor Questions.** It is likely that exhibitors will have questions during the briefing, and it is your responsibility to answer all questions promptly and correctly. Keep a copy of the Regulations with you during the briefing, in case a question is raised that you are unsure of the answer. The most common questions that you will encounter will be whether certain areas, surfaces, or objects are “in play.”

**The Handler’s Briefing is Required.** Handlers are not required to attend the briefing, but the judge is required to conduct one.

## JUDGING THE SEARCH PERFORMANCE

The Judge’s most visible duty at a Scent Work trial is to judge the team’s search performance. This includes assessing faults, determining whether or not the dog has found the hide, determining whether or not the handler has correctly called the hide, and excusing teams, if necessary. Chapter 3 of the Judge’s Guidelines go into detail about judging the search.

## ISSUES WITHIN THE SEARCH AREA

The Judge has authority over everything that goes on inside the search area. This includes dog aggression and handler misconduct, when it occurs inside the search area.

**Improper Equipment.** If the handler approaches the search area with improper equipment on their dog (as defined in the Regulations- head halter, prong collar, no-pull harness, etc.), the judge must stop the handler and require them to remove the improper equipment from the dog before beginning the search. If the handler refuses to remove the improper equipment, the team must be excused. If the judge does not notice the improper equipment until the team is searching, the judge should permit the team to complete the search and inform them afterwards that the improper equipment cannot be used in the future. No fault or other consequence should be given for improper equipment.

**Dog Aggression.** If dogs behave in a threatening or menacing way, or if they attack a person in the search area, the judge must deal with the situation. If the dog has been threatening or menacing, you must excuse the dog. This means that the dog is asked to leave the search area immediately. It is your decision whether or not the dog can compete further on that day or trial weekend. You have the authority to excuse a dog from the rest of the trial weekend. There is no official definition of what is “threatening” or “menacing” behavior; it is your call based on the situation at hand. The threatening or menacing behavior can be directed toward someone inside the search area, or outside the search area—as long as the dog’s actions occurred during a search, the situation is your responsibility. See Chapter 11 of the *Regulations for AKC Scent Work* for details on required procedure and paperwork in these situations.

**Dog Attack.** If a dog attacks a person in the search area and it causes injury, and you believe that the dog presents a hazard to others, it is your responsibility to disqualify the dog. See Chapter 11 of the *Regulations for AKC Scent Work* for details on required procedure and paperwork in this situation.

**Handler Misconduct.** Issues of handler misconduct that occur in the search area are also handled initially by the judge. Handler misconduct includes abuse of the dog, misconduct directed at a judge (such as abusive or foul language, physical contact with the judge), and unsportsmanlike conduct (throwing down a ribbon, leaving the search area without permission, failure to follow a judge’s instruction). If handler misconduct occurs, document the situation immediately and bring it to the attention of the Event Committee. The Event Committee will take over and will investigate and dole out punishment if it is warranted.

**Issues Outside the Search Area.** Situations of dog aggression or handler misconduct that occur outside the context of the search are not the responsibility of the judge. If you witness a situation that you believe should be addressed, bring the situation immediately to the Event Committee.

## OTHER

Class scheduling, volunteer positions, and other details involved in the running of the trial are the club’s responsibility. Judges can make suggestions, and the club can choose to use the judge as a resource when planning the trial, but judges have no authority to dictate on these matters. Judges should not be expected to organize and run the event themselves—it should not be left to the judges to determine class order, running order, or flow.



## CHAPTER 3 – JUDGING THE SEARCH

The Judge is responsible for evaluating each team's search performance and determining whether it qualifies to count toward a title. A qualifying performance is one in which the team finds and calls all hides correctly, within the time limit, without committing any Non-Qualifying faults. The judge must also assess faults and excuse teams when necessary.

### JUDGING POSITION

**Judging Position.** Judges must move around the search area as much as is necessary to keep the teams in view. You want to ensure that you are able to observe all aspects of the search but be cautious not to crowd the team. You must also take care not to telegraph the location of the hide by your body positioning—if a team proceeds to the far side of a large object where they are out of your view, your decision not to follow them can communicate to the handler that the hide is not in that area.

**Maintain Focus.** It is important to remain focused on the search performance at all times. Other than quickly tallying finds or faults, you should not be engaged with the score sheet while a team is searching. Handlers can call alert at any moment, and you must be aware of the circumstances when they do so, in order to determine whether or not the alert is correct.

**Timing by the Judge.** Clubs must provide an Official Timer for each class. If one is not provided, it is permissible for judges to temporarily time classes themselves. However, each instance that you glance down at the timing device is a moment in which you are not observing the search team. Be aware that this is a potential distraction.

### FAULTS

The purpose of faults is twofold: 1) to ensure that the best-performing team places first (not merely the fastest-finishing), and 2) to provide useful feedback to the handlers that they can use to improve their performance in the future. It is useful to mention the purpose of faults in the briefing so that handlers are not upset if they are assessed a fault.

**Categories of Faults.** There are three categories of faults: 1) handler error, 2) safety concern, and 3) mildly compromising the search area. A multitude of behaviors can fall into each of these categories.

**Handler Error.** The fault for handler error is given when the handler makes a mistake during the search that affects the team's performance. Be careful not to fault a specific handling style. If you aren't sure whether the behavior is an error or a conscious choice based on handling style, do not issue the fault.

Behaviors that SHOULD be faulted:

- Handler not recognizing when a dog is in odor, and pulling them away
- Rough handling that does not match the dog's intensity (is excessive)
- Handler calls alert on a hide for which they had already called Alert (this does not include choosing to reward a dog again at an already found hide)

*A Note on Double Calls:* If the handler calls "Alert" on a hide that they had already located and called, the judge should inform the exhibitor that they had already found that hide (ex: "Yes, you have already called that hide," or "You found that already, please move on.").

- Starting the search before the judge's instruction
- Dog interaction with a distraction that lasts more than 5 seconds or requires physical redirection (see section below on Reactions to Distractions)
- Other behaviors, at the judge's discretion

Behaviors that should NOT be faulted:

- Presenting areas for the dog to search
- Choosing not to call Alert when the dog gives an obvious Alert
- Repositioning a dog to help them catch the odor from a different direction
- Momentarily tight leash, or tight leash as a style of handling
- Testing the dog's obedience to odor (ex: pulling lightly on the leash after the dog alerts, or otherwise attempting to redirect an alerting dog)
- Restraining a dog from disrupting the search area (ex: holding back a dog who has a tendency to pounce on boxes)
- Allowing the leash to momentarily touch the ground, without disrupting the search area

**Safety Concern.** The fault for safety concern is given when the handler creates a situation or allows a behavior by their dog that could potentially lead to accident or injury.

Behaviors that SHOULD be faulted:

- Allowing or encouraging a dog up on a surface that is unstable
- Allowing or encouraging a dog up on a surface that is excessively high
- Creating an unsafe situation by poor leash-handling
- Allowing a dog off-leash in an on-leash only search

**Mildly Compromising the Search Area.** The fault for mildly compromising the search area is given when the dog or handler disrupts the search area such that significant reset is necessary prior to the next competitor, or when the handler moves items without the judge's permission.

Behaviors that SHOULD be faulted:

- Handler moving an item in the search area without the judge's permission
- Handler dropping food, even if subsequently picked up
- Any behavior or contamination that requires changing a box (with the exception of saliva)

Note: A dog should not be faulted if they further damage an already damaged box such that it now requires replacing (i.e., a dog should not be penalized for providing the "*coup de grace*"). If the behavior itself—done to a pristine box—would not require a replacement, the dog should not be faulted.

- Handler allowing a dog to disrupt boxes or other items, with no attempt to stop them (this does not include a dog who scatters boxes while searching)
- Dog sitting on a box in a Container search
- Handler allowing the leash to drag the ground causing disruption to objects in the search area
- Dog pawing a Buried container, resulting in some substrate being spread on the floor
- Handler not attempting to prevent a dog from disrupting Buried containers
- Dog dislodging the scent vessel from the hide location in the Odor Search Division
- Dog dislodging the scent article from the hide location in the Handler Discrimination Division

Behaviors that should NOT be faulted:

- Movement of boxes by a dog (knocking into them while walking, pawing gently)
- Light scratching on a box
- Accidental movement of an object by the handler (bumping into something)
- Dog gently pawing the screen over a Buried container
- Dog gently pawing a Buried container, resulting in no substrate being spread on the floor (no disruption)

**Discussing Faults with Handlers.** If time permits and the situation allows, the judge should take a moment to discuss any faults that were assessed with the handler. Many handlers who leave the search area unaware of faults will ask the judge after the scores are posted for clarification. By this point, it is likely that you will not remember the situation in detail, which is why discussion of faults at the end of the search is encouraged. However, many handlers reward their dogs and quickly leave the search area. It is not the judge's responsibility to pursue handlers to inform them of faults. A useful practice is to remind handlers during the briefing to ask about faults at the end of the search ("any faults?" as they turn to leave, for example).

**How Often Faults Can Be Assessed.** Each category of fault can be assessed multiple times within the same search.

## NON-QUALIFYING FAULTS

Behaviors that result in a non-qualifying performance are non-qualifying faults. If any of these behaviors are committed by the team, the search is over. The non-qualifying faults are:

1. The handler calls “Alert” on the incorrect location.
2. The handler calls “Finish” before all hides in the area have been located.
3. The maximum time for the class is exceeded.
4. The handler is not able to point to the location of the find when asked by the judge.
5. Any harsh handling or harsh corrections by the handler.
6. The handler allows the dog to disrupt the search area unduly.

**Failure to Call “Finish.”** If the handler leaves the search area without calling “Finish” in a search for which the Finish call is required, the consequence will vary depending on the class. For a class for which the number of hides is known (Advanced and Excellent classes in the Odor Search Division), the team will be assessed a fault, and the maximum search time will be recorded for the team (because the “Finish” call is required to stop the time). For a class in which the number of hides is unknown (Interior Excellent, Master classes and the Detective class in the Odor Search Division), leaving the vicinity of the search without calling “Finish” is an NQ fault.

The handler is not required to be within the search area boundaries when they call “Finish.” Because there is no penalty for crossing boundaries during a search, there is no requirement that the “Finish” call be made from inside the search area. If the handler forgets the “Finish” call and leaves the vicinity with their dog, the judge should instruct the Official timer to stop the search time, and the judge shall record the appropriate penalty (either a fault and maximum time or an NQ) for the team. What defines the “vicinity” of the search is up to the judge and will vary based on the physical features of the area (ex: walking six feet and through a doorway might be considered leaving the vicinity, but fifteen feet away within a field might still be considered in the vicinity).

**Judges May Not Cue the Handler to Call “Finish.”** Judges may not assist handlers to remember to call “Finish” at the end of their search. The “Finish” call is a required component of the search and judges cannot and should not by their behavior aid the team’s performance. Cuing behavior can include coughing, clearing of the throat, asking the handler if they have anything else to say, prompting the handler with “...and?”, or physically blocking the handler from leaving the area. The judge may wait in awkward silence if the handler has not yet given the “Finish” call, but must record the penalty once the team leaves the vicinity.

**Recuing a Search After “Alert” Call.** If a handler calls “Alert” and the judge asks “Where?” the handler is not permitted to re-cue the dog to search or pinpoint the location to them (such as by saying “show me!”). Once asked “Where?” the handler must answer promptly.

**Harsh Handling.** The judge has the ability to give a team an NQ if the handler engages in harsh handling of the dog. It is your call as to what is “harsh handling,” but this NQ fault should be reserved for serious situations.

**Undue Disruption of the Search Area.** If the handler or dog engage in behaviors that significantly disrupt the search area, you can give them an NQ fault. Most behaviors though will be considered mild disruption and only a fault should be assessed. The NQ fault should only be used if the behavior is extremely egregious, and the handler could have chosen to stop the behavior, but did not.

If the dog or handler knocks over a container of substrate in the Buried classes the team should be given an NQ fault for undue disruption of the search area.

## EXCUSALS

An excusal is when the search is interrupted by the judge, and the team is asked to leave the search area without completing the search. This is different from an NQ Fault, in which the search itself concludes due to a behavior by the team (such as an incorrect call).

**Circumstances Requiring Excusal.** The following circumstances require the judge to excuse the team.

1. The dog is not under the handler’s control.
2. The dog or handler stops working or performs disruptive behavior for 10 or more seconds after warning from the judge.
3. The dog eliminates (urinates, defecates, or vomits) in the search area.
4. The dog shows signs of extreme stress or fear.
5. The handler receives assistance from a spectator or another handler.
6. The handler requests to be excused, for any reason.
7. Other reasons, at the judge’s discretion.

**Purpose of Excusal.** Excusals are not intended to be a punishment. Excusals are sometimes required due to the state of mind of the dog (extreme stress or fear), to ensure safety (if the dog is not under control), to safeguard the search area (if a dog eliminates), or to move along the administration of the trial (if a dog cannot return to work). Any time that the search is interrupted it is labeled an excusal, but excusal itself should not have a negative connotation—it is the reason for the excusal that is important.

**Excusals for Aggression.** If the dog exhibits threatening or menacing behavior, in the opinion of the judge, then they are not under the handler’s control and they must be excused. See Chapter 11 of the Regulations for details on this procedure.

## REACTIONS TO DISTRACTIONS

The variety of distractions in AKC Scent Work creates the possibility for a wide variety of reactions from the dog. With all distractions, the dog may observe and/or interact with the distraction without fault, as long as the handler can return the dog to working in a reasonable time.

**No Consequence for Distraction.** If the dog is distracted but returns to work within approximately five seconds using a verbal command, there should be no consequence. The dog can pick up the distraction without fault, as long as they drop it on the handler's verbal command. If the dog approaches the human distraction and greets or investigates them, they should not be issued a fault.

**Fault for Distraction.** If the dog is distracted and takes longer than five seconds to return to working, or must be physically redirected by the handler, they should be issued a fault (physical redirection includes leash correction, physically repositioning the dog, or body blocking). If the dog shows obvious protective or possessive behaviors when the handler tries to pull them away, they should be issued an additional fault.

You may choose to issue a fault for extended casual interest in the distraction if you feel it is interfering with the dog's search performance, but this is your decision.

**Excusal for Distraction.** If the dog is having trouble returning to work, you should issue a warning to the team. The warning should not be given as soon as the dog encounters the distraction—the judge should allow a reasonable time for the dog to explore the distraction and return to work. If after this reasonable time the dog is still unable to return to work, the warning should be given. If a dog is so disturbed by the distraction that they cannot return to working within ten seconds of the warning, the team should be excused.

If the dog barks or lunges at the distraction, after a reasonable time you should issue the ten second warning, after which the team should be excused.

If the dog shows aggression toward any human regarding the distraction (including the handler), the dog must be excused.

If the dog...	Then...
Returns to work within about 5 seconds with verbal command only	No fault
Returns to work after more than 5 seconds or requires physical redirection	Fault
Struggles to return to work	After a reasonable time, issue 10 second warning, then excuse
Reacts aggressively	Excuse immediately

## SEARCH RE-RUNS

**Search Re-Runs.** The judge may allow a team to re-run the search due to “extraordinary circumstances that were out of control of the handler.”

Teams will frequently encounter unexpected situations. However, in order to warrant a re-run, the situation must 1) be caused by the judge, steward, or a spectator, and 2) have caused significant impairment to the dog’s performance. Re-runs should be infrequent; very few situations will be able to satisfy both of these criteria.

If the judge chooses to allow a re-run, but the team became aware of the hide location during their original run, they must be re-run at the end of the class, with the hide relocated to a location that presents a similar challenge. If the impairment occurred before the team encountered the hide, the team should be re-run at the end of the class, but the hide should not be moved.

## JUDGING THE ALERT

**Correct Alert for an Accessible Hide.** In order to find the hide, the dog does not necessarily need to work all the way to the source (to the scent vessel); they need only work to the *strongest concentration of odor*. Due to the way odor moves and is trapped by objects or surfaces, there will be instances where the concentration of odor is the same several inches away from the hide as it is at the scent vessel itself. This is referred to as the “strongest concentration of odor.” The judge must determine what area is the strongest concentration of odor, and an indication on any spot within this area is to be considered correct. You must know what areas you will consider correct and what areas you will consider incorrect prior to the beginning of each search team. If the handler points to a location, you should not have to pause and think about whether or not they are correct.

The “correct” area may change throughout the class. For example, plastic absorbs odor. If the hide is placed in or on a plastic item, the correct area will increase with time. You should not be afraid to call an indication correct, even if it is a location that you called as incorrect earlier in the class.

The team must always locate the strongest concentration of odor to be correct. An alert should not be considered correct just because “odor has drifted there.”

**Definition of Alert Confirmation.** In most instances when a handler calls “Alert,” the judge will be able to say yes or no immediately. If the judge needs to ask the competitor to point to the location of the hide, this is called “Alert Confirmation.”

**When to Ask Where.** If you can answer “yes” to the following two questions, you do not need to ask the handler to point out the location of the hide.

1. Did the dog find the hide (work to the strongest concentration of odor)?
2. Did the dog communicate this location to the handler?

If the dog seems to be indicating on multiple locations, question 1 is not satisfied and you should ask them to point out the hide.

If the handler sounds very unsure when calling Alert (“Alert???”), question 2 is not satisfied, and you should ask them to point out the hide.

**Correct Alert Confirmation for Accessible Hides.** If the handler points to the area that you have predetermined to be part of the strongest concentration of odor, then the alert confirmation is correct.

**Incorrect Alert Confirmation for Accessible Hides.** If the handler points to a spot that is outside the area that is the strongest concentration of odor, then the alert confirmation is incorrect.

**Specificity.** If the handler waves their hand at a large area, you are able to ask them to be more specific. The handler should specify an area of no more than six inches in any direction (a circle or oval with a diameter of six inches).

**Correct Alert for Inaccessible Hides.** Due to the very nature of an inaccessible hide, the dog will not be able to reach the strongest concentration of odor. The area that is considered correct for an inaccessible hide will vary depending on several factors, including what makes the hide inaccessible (whether it is inside of something, or whether it is out of reach due to height).

If the hide is concealed inside of something (such as inside or a drawer or cabinet), the judge must be aware of the seams where the odor could be escaping. If the dog is indicating on any of these seams, the alert is to be considered correct.

If the hide is inaccessible due to height, the judge must be aware of how the odor is drifting away from the hide. Environmental factors such as air movement will affect the size of the area that the judge should consider correct. The height of the hide will also affect this. Dogs will be expected to pinpoint a hide that is just out of reach with greater precision than they will for a hide that is far above their head. With hides inaccessible due to height, there will be several locations that will be “equally correct” because at a certain point, the dog is unable to narrow the location down any further. The judge must decide whether the dog has worked diligently and followed the odor to reach as close as possible to the hide (did the dog work to their limit, or did they quit when there was more to discover?).

**When to Ask Where for Inaccessible Hides.** If you can answer “yes” to the following two questions, you do not need to ask the handler to point out the location of the hide.

1. Did the dog work the odor as near to the hide as possible, given environmental conditions?
2. Did the dog communicate this area to the handler?



Because the location is not expected to be pinpointed with the same specificity as accessible hides, you will not often have to ask a handler “where?” for inaccessible hides.

**Correct Alert Confirmation for Inaccessible Hides.** If the handler points to one of the several locations that you have deemed to be correct based on accessibility of the odor to the dog, the alert confirmation is correct.

**Incorrect Alert Confirmation for Inaccessible Hides.** If the handler points to an area that is not sufficiently close to the hide in the opinion of the judge, the alert confirmation is incorrect.

## RESETTING THE SEARCH AREA

After the search has concluded, it is the judge’s responsibility to ensure that the search area is reset before the next competitor.

**Tidying Containers.** If containers are knocked askew by a searching team, the judge should ensure that they are realigned, and that the minimum distance between the containers or rows is maintained.

**Replacing Containers.** In Container searches, containers should be replaced if significantly damaged, or if contaminated. The containers do not need to be pristine, but it should not be obvious to the handler which contains the hide, as a result of damage. In the Novice class, which uses identical cardboard boxes, if the hot box is scratched or bent, it is suggested that several of the cold boxes also be scratched or bent, to mimic the damage and camouflage the hide location. This helps preserve boxes and prevents the need to create a large number of replacement odor boxes.

If the hot container is not merely damaged, but also contaminated, the container should be changed (for example, if a dog sits on the hot box, or if a handler drops moist or crumbly food on the hot box).

**Cleaning Contamination.** The judge (or an appointed steward) should inspect the search area before the next competitor comes, to ensure that any contamination such as dropped food or saliva is cleaned.

**Hot Box Steward Cleans the Hide Location Only.** If an area around the hide needs to be wiped or cleaned, the Hot Box Steward is the only person who can do so. If an area away from the hide needs to be wiped or cleaned, anyone except the Hot Box Steward must complete the task (table steward, timer, judge, etc.). The judge must ensure that the Hot Box Steward never touches any cold object or surface in the search area, even to clean.

## CHAPTER 4 – PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED HANDLERS

**Physically Challenged Handlers.** Physically challenged handlers are welcome to compete, provided they can do so under their own power with or without mechanical assistance, i.e., a wheelchair (self-propelled, electric, etc.), crutches, or a cane. In determining if a modification of the requirements of the *Regulations for AKC Scent Work* for physically challenged handlers is acceptable under the provisions of Chapter 2, Section 5, the judge needs only to determine whether the modification fundamentally alters the Scent Work class. If the modification does not fundamentally alter the Scent Work class, it is acceptable.

## CHAPTER 5 – THE SCORE SHEETS

The score sheets are used by the judge to keep track of the team's performance during the search. The score sheets also are used by the trial secretary to input the results into the Results Catalog. It is important that score sheets be accurate, and as neat as possible.

**Be Complete.** The score sheets have been designed to be as simple to use as possible, while still capturing all of the required information. Make sure that your score sheet is complete before you invite the next team into the search area.

**Judges May Create Their Own Score Sheets.** The judge is not required to use the “official” score sheet. If there is an alternate format that you are more comfortable with, you are welcome to use that instead. Whatever form is used, you must be able to record all required information about the search: result (Qualified, NQ, or Excused) and reason (if NQ or Excused), exact number of hides (for Master class), number of finds, number and type of faults, maximum search time, and actual search time.

**Making Corrections.** If you need to make a correction to a score sheet, please cross out the information to be corrected with a single line, write the correct information, and initial next to the correction. Do not scribble or blacken out the incorrect data (it should still be readable).

**Recording Absent Dogs.** At the completion of the class, if any team who was entered did not appear for their search, the judge must record “Absent” on that dog's score sheet. The notation “Absent” should be used even if the judge is informed that the dog has “pulled” from the search (whether told by the competitor themselves, the trial secretary, or another exhibitor). “Absent” is the universal language that means that the team did not appear for the search, for whatever reason.

**Sending the Score Sheets to the Scorer's Table.** Periodically throughout the class, a runner should appear to take completed score sheets to the scorer's table. If no runner comes to collect the score sheets, have the table steward keep them together until the end of the class, at which time you should escort the score sheets to the scorer's table yourself.

**Retention of Score Sheets.** At the conclusion of the trial, after the trial secretary has finished inputting the results, your score sheets will be returned to you. You must keep these in your files for one year, in case questions should arise about a particular search.

# Sample Completed Score Sheet- Novice Search

## Official Score Sheet

Date: 12/13/17 Event #: 2017XXXXXX  
Class: Novice container Arm#: 57  
Call Name: Susie Breed: Border Terrier

Time Limit(s): 2 minutes

# of Hides: 1

# of Finds: 1

Faults (tally as they occur)

Handler error- 1

Safety concern- \_\_\_\_\_

Mild disruption of area- \_\_\_\_\_

Circle Qualified, Not Qualified, or Excused. If NQ or Exc, check reason.

**QUALIFIED**

### NOT QUALIFIED

- Incorrect Alert/Finish call
- Harsh correction
- Significant disruption of area
- Handler unable to point to hide
- Max time exceeded

### EXCUSED

- Dog eliminated in search area
- Dog overly stressed
- Handler Request
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Run Time: 1:03.27

(Not required if NQ or Exc)



# Sample Completed Score Sheet- Master Search

## Official Score Sheet

Date: 1/28/18 Event #: 2018xxxxxx  
 Class: Master Interior Arm#: 15  
 Call Name: Kali Breed: All American

Area 1 / Area 2  
 Time Limit(s): 2 mins / 3 mins

# of Hides: 3  
 # of Finds: H 2  
 ↑ JAK

Faults (tally as they occur)  
 Handler error- \_\_\_\_\_  
 Safety concern- \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mild disruption of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Each search area has a separate time limit in Master Interior. Both must be noted.

Two tallies looked like an eleven, so this was changed to the numeral "2"

Not Qualified, or Excused. If NQ or Exc, check reason.

### QUALIFIED

**NOT QUALIFIED**

- Incorrect Alert/Finish call
- Harsh correction
- Significant disruption of area
- Handler unable to point to hide
- Max time exceeded

### EXCUSED

- Dog eliminated in search area
- Dog overly stressed
- Handler Request
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Run Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Not required if NQ or Exc)

Run time is not necessary if the dog was NQ or Excused.



# Sample Completed Score Sheet- The Detective Class

## Official Score Sheet

Date: 2/14/18 Event #: 2018XXXXXX  
Class: Detective class Arm#: 101  
Call Name: Johnny Joe Breed: Lab

Time Limit(s): 8 minutes

# of Hides: 7

# of Finds: ||||

Faults (tally as they occur)

Handler error- 1

Safety concern- \_\_\_\_\_

Mild disruption of area- \_\_\_\_\_

Circle Qualified, Not Qualified, or Excused. If NQ or Exc, check reason.

**QUALIFIED**

**NOT QUALIFIED**

**EXCUSED**

- Incorrect Alert/Finish call
- Harsh correction
- Significant disruption of area
- Handler unable to point to hide
- Max time exceeded
- Dog eliminated in search area
- Dog overly stressed
- Handler Request
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Run Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Not required if NQ or Exc)



## CHAPTER 6 – AFTER JUDGING

**Posting a Copy of the Search Map.** Once the class has concluded, you may choose to post a copy of the search map (with hide locations and locations of distractions marked) for exhibitors to view. These should be posted near the preliminary results for that class.

**Verify the Results.** After the results have been input and the results catalog has been printed, the judge must verify that the catalog is correct. Each page should be compared against your score sheets. Be sure to check that each class has the max time recorded, and that for each dog the result (Q/NQ/Exc), the time, and the placements are correct. Also ensure that if a team was excused, the reason is written in the catalog. If there are errors, bring them to the attention of the trial secretary. If there are no errors, initial the page. Every page of the catalog containing results from your classes must be initialed (not merely the last page).

**Obtain Copy of the Complete Results.** The judge is required to be given a copy of the complete results catalog before they leave the trial site. This can be given to you either in hard copy or electronically. If the catalog is e-mailed to you, you must ensure that it has been received in your e-mail inbox before leaving the trial site.

**Award Ceremony.** The club is not required to do anything formal to distribute awards, but if they do it is nice to provide some comments on the class and/or compliments to competitors before giving out the awards for classes that you judged.

**Award Pictures.** Many competitors want to get pictures of themselves, their dog, and the judge, posing with their awards. You are encouraged to make yourself available for award pictures at the end of the trial.

**Remain Available for Questions.** AKC occasionally has questions for judges when processing trial results. Please check your e-mail frequently in the weeks after the trial, and keep your score sheets available. If you are contacted with a question, please respond as soon as possible.

## APPENDIX A: JUDGE'S TRIAL CHECKLIST

### Pack Your Bag:

- Odor Kit, unless you are absolutely sure the club will provide proper scent/vessels
- Distraction items
- Stopwatch, tissues, suntan lotion, chap stick, glasses, high protein snack (granola or nuts), – not all clubs will remember to feed you
- Copy of your contract. Clubs may not have handy when ready to pay you.
- Contact phone number and print out of premium list
- Aspirin or Tylenol
- Water bottle

### Pre-Flight (before the class begins):

- Judge's Briefing
- Supplies – chair, shade, extra pens, scoresheets, water, stickers or tape, walkie talkie or megaphone
- Judge's Cheat Sheet with fault/NQ/class descriptions and *Regulations for AKC Scent Work*
- Clean up supplies – for accidents + white vinegar to clean up old hides
- Correct # of hides for level? (write down where hides are) Is odor available in search area for dog?
- Correct # of distractions for the level? (write down where distractors are)
- Containers – Hot Box setter, Cold Box setter
- Boundaries – tape or cones to identify
- Staging – out of sight/earshot
- Is hide and search area safe for handler and dog?
- Good Flow in and out of search area
- Run Demo dog OR have a familiar dog run first. If necessary, change hide placement

\*\*\*repeat Pre-flight for the next Class



**Landing (immediately following judging):**

- Are all score sheets complete with same time format?
- Score sheets to secretary
- Remove the hide—if the area is to be reused, remove the object that the hide was on or clean with vinegar and mark with tape or stickers

**Post Flight (after judging concludes):**

- Compare Score Sheets to Marked Judges Catalog – check Q/Time/Faults for accuracy
- Pictures with exhibitors
- Award High in Trial, debrief exhibitors
- Submit expenses to club. Receive payment
- Complete Judges Report and e-mail to AKC

**APPENDIX B: ODOR HANDLING GUIDELINES**

**Before the Trial:**

- Determine who will provide the odor kit
- Ensure that the scent aids are made according to AKC standards: 2 drops of oil per scent aid (a scent aid is ½ a q-tip), place in a glass jar for at least 24 hours prior to use (only 1 scent aid per hide!)

**At the Trial:**

- Select appropriate scent vessels for each hide
- Test the location with a blank scent vessel prior to setting the hide
- Glue dots MAY be more effective than putty
- If at all possible place the hide 1 hour before the class starts
- Run the demo dog to ensure that the hide is working as intended
- Ensure the scent kit is stored in a safe location away from search areas
- Put out warmup boxes

**After the Trial:**

- Collect all used scent aids and store in a plastic bag
- Count your scent aids to make sure you didn't leave any behind
- Do NOT reuse scent aids for new hides or another trial
- Dispose of used scent aids offsite, including hot boxes and containers

**Tips for Judges:**

- Be confident in hide placement BEFORE you set the hide; you should use an empty scent vessel to ensure that there are no visibility or adhesive issues
- If there is any issue with the hide stability, choose another location
- Place a hide in a location that is obvious to YOU so you can remember the hide location

**Tips for Hide Setting:**

- Make sure that there are plenty of gloves available
- Place odor in the scent vessel ahead of time so that you don't accidentally contaminate the search environment
- Do NOT reuse gloves
- Do NOT touch anything, including surfaces, with a gloved hand.
- Do NOT place an odor kit onto a surface in the search area.
- Do NOT bring an odor kit into the search area

**Dealing with Contamination:**

- The hide setter should reset the hide
- Wipe down the surface with white vinegar
- Allow the vinegar to dry for a minimum of 10 minutes before the next search

## AKC Code of Sportsmanship

*PREFACE: The sport of purebred dog competitive events dates prior to 1884, the year of AKC's birth. Shared values of those involved in the sport include principles of sportsmanship. They are practiced in all sectors of our sport: conformation, performance and companion. Many believe that these principles of sportsmanship are the prime reason why our sport has thrived for over one hundred years. With the belief that it is useful to periodically articulate the fundamentals of our sport, this code is presented.*

- Sportsmen respect the history, traditions and integrity of the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportsmen commit themselves to values of fair play, honesty, courtesy, and vigorous competition, as well as winning and losing with grace.
- Sportsmen refuse to compromise their commitment and obligation to the sport of purebred dogs by injecting personal advantage or consideration into their decisions or behavior.
- The sportsman judge judges only on the merits of the dogs and considers no other factors.
- The sportsman judge or exhibitor accepts constructive criticism.
- The sportsman exhibitor declines to enter or exhibit under a judge where it might reasonably appear that the judge's placements could be based on something other than the merits of the dogs.
- The sportsman exhibitor refuses to compromise the impartiality of a judge.
- The sportsman respects the AKC bylaws, rules, regulations and policies governing the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportsmen find that vigorous competition and civility are not inconsistent and are able to appreciate the merit of their competition and the effort of competitors.
- Sportsmen welcome, encourage and support newcomers to the sport.
- Sportsmen will deal fairly with all those who trade with them.
- Sportsmen are willing to share honest and open appraisals of both the strengths and weaknesses of their breeding stock.
- Sportsmen spurn any opportunity to take personal advantage of positions offered or bestowed upon them.
- Sportsmen always consider as paramount the welfare of their dog.
- Sportsmen refuse to embarrass the sport, the American Kennel Club, or themselves while taking part in the sport.

Complete text of booklet available at:  
[www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)

To order booklet(s), contact AKC at:  
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