



Dog Scouts of America
Merit Badge Check-Off Sheet

K9 Fitness

Items **bolded** below are requirements that must be demonstrated to the Evaluator. Non-bolded items are training steps that may be introduced in class and are helpful for achieving the requirements. All behaviors must have been taught or re-taught to the dog (preferably using a new cue), using only positive reward-based methods.

- Handler can describe the importance of fitness and regular exercise for the dog's health**
- Handler can describe the exercise plan they have for the dog, why the plan is appropriate for the dog, and how they taught the dog to perform the exercises safely**
- Handler can explain how to warm-up and cool down the dog before and after exercise**
- Handler can discuss exercises logged, including using appropriate gear for the activity, appropriate safety considerations and showing that the dog is trained and fit for the level of activity performed**
- Handler can describe the early warning signs of exhaustion or overheating and can explain how to respond in a developing emergency situation**
- Handler can list 3 signs of fatigue and explain what should be done if a dog displays these signs and the reasons for these actions**
- Handler keeps the dog appropriately hydrated during exercise**
- Dog demonstrates an acceptance of handling his paws, inspecting his pads and checking his gums**
- Dog demonstrates an acceptance of handling for massage and passive stretching**
- Dog has been properly trained for and can demonstrate at least 2 behaviors for active stretching**
- Dog has been properly trained for and can demonstrate at least 1 behavior for improving body awareness (proprioception exercises)**
- Dog has been properly trained for and can demonstrate at least 1 muscle building exercise**
- Dog participates in all exercises willingly and safely without the need for lures or bribes**
- Dog does not create a disruption and is not a danger to himself or others while participating in the selected exercises**
- Dog is at a normal, healthy weight**
- Dog has logged at least 2.5 hours of aerobic/cardio exercise per week for a minimum of at least 6 weeks out of an 8-week period, with exercise being logged at least 3 days per week for periods of 15 minutes or longer**