

Step by step guide to getting the Dog Scout title on your own dog



Step 1. Review the following important material found in this guide:

- How Dog's Learn - Pg 4
- Teaching Dog Scout Behaviors - Pg 10
- Notes from DSA Class (the parent's part of the Dog Scout test) - Pg 35
- Body Language 101 - Pg 43
- The Dog Scout Way - Pg 45
- Recommended Reading List (all should be available from libraries) - Pg 47
- Dog Scout Laws - Pg 48
- Guidelines for the Dog Scout Test (What is allowed and not allowed) - Pg 49
- Handler's Written Test - Pg 69
- Check off list for video of test - Pg 75
- Videotaping tips - Pg 79
- Dog Scout test check-off sheet - Pg 81

Step 2. Contact the Dog Scouts Certification Program Director if you have any questions.

Step 3. Complete the Handler's Written Test on pg 69 (also found on the DSA website)

Step 4. For **video** submissions:

Complete the videotaping of the items on the VIDEO check-off list. Be sure all parts are covered, complete and shown to the DSA guidelines and standards outlined in this guide. If a video or parts of the test need to be re-submitted for further review, there is a \$5 review fee each time, so you want to be sure to try to get it right with the first submission! So be sure to review the info in this guide carefully. *First review of a video per dog, per badge is free.

Example Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2LazYh-Ctg>

Step 4. For testing **in person** with a Scoutmaster:

Be sure to bring the in-person check-off sheet and completed badge form with you to the testing session. Perform the components on the check-off sheet as directed by the Scoutmaster evaluating you. If the Scoutmaster needs you to repeat a segment, he/she will let you know. If you pass, your badge form will be signed upon completion of the test. If not, then you can re-try the test on a future date. The test does not all have to be completed on the same day. The Scoutmaster must observe you and your dog on at least three different days, so you can do parts of the test each of those times. The Scoutmaster will let you know if the written handler's test should be submitted for his/her review or if the Scoutmaster will be quizzing you verbally on the questions from the written test.

Step 5. For **video** submissions (skip to step 7 if your testing was done in-person): Contact the Certification Program Director (email address found on the “contact us” page of the website). Most DSA departments are in different states, so be sure to get the right address. The Director will give you the name and address of the Scoutmaster that will be reviewing your video. Submit the following items to that person for evaluation:

- a. **Completed written test**
- b. **Completed video and video check off list** with dates of completion filled in next to each item.
- c. **Completed Dog Scout badge form** (all blanks except the Scoutmasters section have to be filled in. Incomplete badge forms cannot be signed by a Scoutmaster.)
- d. **Appropriate fees if any** (\$5 review fee for re-tries for a badge) First submission per badge per dog is free. **The \$35 badge fee does NOT go to the Scoutmaster! (see step 7)**

Step 6. After review of your video and written test, you will be advised if there are any parts of your submissions that did not pass or were not shown correctly and need to be resubmitted; or if you and your dog passed the review and are an official Dog Scout & proud parent of a Dog Scout!

Step 7. Upon passing, the signed badge form will be returned to you. Submit the following to the address on the badge form:

1. **Completed badge form (bottom half only)** Keep the top part for your records and as proof of passing if there is any question on that later
2. **Badge fee of \$35** (Check or Money Order made payable to D.S.A.)
3. **Picture of dog's** head and shoulders only (see example below), with the dog looking at the camera. A non-cluttered background is best. This is for the dog's ID card and can be submitted electronically if you prefer. You'll find the email of the Recognition Program Director on the “contact us” page of the website. Let her know who that picture is so she can save it till your paperwork arrives in the mail. Most DSA departments are in different states, so be sure to get the correct email address.

Step 8. When you have submitted the items above, you will receive:

- A laminated photo ID for your dog
 - Official Dog Scout neckwear (DSA bandanna)
 - Dog Scout badge (patch)
- You also have the ability to use the letters DSA after your dog's name and your dog is eligible to earn the specialty badges.

Example of a good ID photo:



Step by step guide to getting the SCOUTMASTER title on yourself (OPTIONAL)

A DSA Scoutmaster is a person certified to evaluate others for the Dog Scout test and title.

1. Review all of the material in this guide and the info on the DSA website that pertains to the Dog Scout badge and positive training.
2. Contact the Dog Scouts Certification Program Director if you have any questions. This person's email can be found on the "Contact us" page of the DSA website.
3. Complete the Scoutmaster's Written Test (available on-line on the Dog Scout website on the Certification Program page.)
4. Video the items on the Dog Scout badge check-off list showing yourself putting others through the test and giving your critique of their performance. Be sure all parts are covered, complete and shown to the DSA guidelines and standards outlined in this guide (include how you plan to test the handler for their knowledge as required on the test).
5. Submit the following items to the Director of the Certification Program for evaluation:
 - a. Completed Scoutmaster written test
 - b. Completed video (if you didn't verbalize on the video what you thought of each segment of the dog and handler's performance, please provide a written evaluation stating which parts passed and which parts didn't and why.) If it's not easy to tell the dogs on the video apart, please say their name on the video each time they are shown for testing.
 - c. Completed Dog Scout badge form for each dog that you feel passed the test (all blanks except the Scoutmasters section have to be filled in by the dog's handler. Badge forms that have any open blanks (other than for the Evaluator's signature) cannot be signed by a Scoutmaster.)

NOTE: The Scoutmaster Trainer that reviews your video to evaluate your skills as a potential Scoutmaster will also be evaluating the dogs/handlers on the video for their Dog Scout title and will sign their badge forms if he/she agrees that they passed. You may NOT sign badge forms until the Scoutmaster Trainer has informed you that you are a certified Scoutmaster. If you sign forms prior to being certified, you could be denied certification or certification could be revoked.

6. After review of your video and written test, you will be advised if there are any parts of your submissions that could not be certified or were not shown and need to be resubmitted; or if you passed the review and are an official DSA Scoutmaster!
7. Upon passing, the signed badge forms you submitted on behalf of the people you put through the test will be returned to you. See steps 7 and 8 on the previous page to tell your students/troop members what needs to be submitted to DSA.

Once you are certified as a Scoutmaster, you will be able to do the testing of others without the need to submit a video and you will sign the badge forms for the people/dogs you test. But this cannot be done until you are certified, so the dogs on your video submission(s) will actually be evaluated for their Dog Scout title by the person who is also evaluating you for your Scoutmaster certification.

The steps above will need to be repeated for each badge you want to be certified to evaluate.

Note that in most of the following text in this manual, the term “parent” is used to describe the owner, handler, etc. This is because DSA believes that raising a dog takes responsible parenting skills to help the dog become a welcome and well mannered member of society. This guide will teach you those skills if you don’t already possess them.

How Dogs Learn – Operant Conditioning



You may be asking “Why do I need to know about Operant Conditioning when what I really need to know is how to get my dog to sit or stay or walk on a lead without pulling. In reality, knowing how to use the “Laws of Learning” to your advantage will make all the training you do much, much easier. If you are using clicker training, you are using Operant Conditioning, even though you may not fully understand WHY it works.

Consequences

Dogs (and anything with a brain, for that matter) learn based on the consequences of their actions. They learn early on that if they bite mom too hard, mom will bite back. They learn that chewing on bones feels and tastes good and that chewing on their brother can be dangerous. All actions have consequences and those consequences affect future behavior. There are three kinds of things that happen in life: Good, Neutral and Bad.

Good consequences will cause behavior to be repeated. For example: When you eat at a good restaurant, you are likely to go back. If your dog finds tasty morsels in the trashcan, he’s likely to look in the trash again in the future. If you go somewhere and the service is horrible, you may try going back once more, but if service is bad again, you probably won’t return. When a puppy tastes something awful, he may try it again, but rarely a third time. There are few truly neutral events. Neutral events have neither a positive or negative affect on future behavior.

Control

If you control the consequences, you control behavior. You have more control over the good stuff and bad stuff than you might think. You just aren’t aware of what the good stuff and bad stuff are on a conscious level and you may even be using them inadvertently in ways that create exactly the opposite behavior from what you really want, as well as also missing good training opportunities. You might even feel your dog is controlling you! This is because the same laws and principles govern your behavior. You want good stuff to start and bad stuff to end. You also want to avoid ending the good stuff and avoid starting the bad stuff.

Rewards = Repetition

Your actions in response to your dog’s behavior can create situations where the dog IS controlling your actions. The dog learns what works. If, when he drops a ball in your lap, you throw it, the ball in the lap behavior will be repeated. If he scratches at the back door and you let him out to chase squirrels (even if YOU think you are letting him out to potty), the scratching behavior will be repeated. If you are doing something the dog doesn’t like, such as clipping his nails, and you stop when he makes a fuss, guess what, his fussing will be repeated because the prior ‘reward’ for that behavior was an end to something the dog perceived as bad. Now, we just have to look at how we can turn this thing around to benefit us!

Reward Acquisition

You have (or should have) control of your dog's access to everything he wants in life: food, the outside world, attention, other dogs, smells on the ground and play opportunities. You can make toys come to life by throwing them or playing tug. You have opposable thumbs that open doors and food packaging. Most people don't make good use of these abilities. Some people have it backwards. They think that because they provide all this good stuff, the dog should be well mannered in return. But it only works if the dog has to hold up his end of the bargain first. You must make it appear to the dog that, if he wants you to provide his dinner or open the front door, or to continue on the walk, he must do something first (like something YOU want him to do.) The dog will see manners as a way to get what he wants, rather than something that is interfering with his enjoyment of life.

Selective Rewards

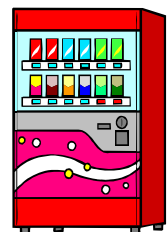
It's been called the "No free lunch" program, or "nothing in life is free" and whether you use this to your advantage or not, keep in mind: You are always rewarding something when you open doors, put down his dinner bowl, start a play session or go for a walk. All you are going to do now, is become aware of the process and select a behavior to reward, rather than simply rewarding whatever the dog happens to be doing when he realizes the good thing is going to happen. You must, however, be prepared to withhold the reward if the dog doesn't respond correctly. Otherwise, the dog has no motivation to comply. If you are going to let him out regardless of whether he sits or not, why should he sit?

Generalizing

Humans learn to recognize situations and contexts in which a given consequence is likely to happen (either good consequence or bad) and can easily generalize those consequences to other places where those situations are present. (Examples below) Dogs also learn to recognize various situations, but may take a bit longer to understand the generalizations.

Environmental cues let you know when a behavior is likely to be successful (or not.) Putting money into a drink machine usually gets you a drink, putting money in a mail slot doesn't. Putting money into a slot machine usually gets you nothing, but occasionally gets you something and on rare occasions, gets you something REALLY good. So... humans put money into drink machines, don't put money in mail slots and get addicted to slot machines.

Your ability to recognize a drink machine regardless of whether it is indoors, outside or has a different shape or picture on it allows you to 'generalize' the coin inserting behavior to various places so that you can get a drink. Your ability to discriminate between a drink machine and a mail slot enables you to be successful with your coin inserting behavior.



Behavior + Reward = Repetition of Behavior

Being "successful" in animal learning terms means that the behavior was reinforced/rewarded. This means either something good happened, or something bad ended. Behaviors that are rewarded get stronger and will be repeated. This is a law that applies to all living/breathing things. It is the essence of training, so memorize it. All that you have to do is to let the dog know what actions will be rewarded and how to predict a strong likelihood of that reward. We do this with a reward marker (often a clicker) and cues. Using this law of learning,

amazing things have been taught to all types of animals from insects, goldfish and pocket pets to zoo, farm and wild animals.

Cues = greater chance of reward

An important thing to understand is that the dog is probably not working this out logically in his head: “Hey, maybe if I do this... that will happen” but at times, it sure looks as if they are! The dog just does what works (gets him what he wants) and stops doing what isn't working.

No Reward = No Behavior

Dog behavior is like a never-ending experiment. When a behavior dies from lack of reward, it's called extinction. Most extinctions happen so fast, people aren't even aware that it happened. If a dog rushes up to a mailbox and it doesn't flee, the behavior wasn't rewarded, and the dog isn't likely to rush up to another mailbox to get it to run. If the dog stares at the fridge and nothing happens, he's likely to move on to another behavior (Some dogs, Golden Retrievers in particular, may take a bit longer to figure this out 😊 They seem to believe that if they stare at something long enough, it will come to them.)

Extinction Burst

No animal would survive if it wasted time repeating dead-end behaviors. However, if a behavior has been getting a reward, and it stops being rewarded, the behavior will get stronger before it dies. This is known as an “extinction burst.”

Think of what happens when you put money into a drink machine, you make your selection and nothing happens. Putting money in the machine has always worked in the past, so you push the button harder, then you push it several times. You may even try putting more money in the machine, before you finally move on to another machine.

What you were experiencing was an “extinction burst.” If your dog has a behavior that it's been doing, and you want the behavior to stop. You need to be aware of a few things.

- First, the fact that the behavior was repeated means that it was reinforced in some way.
- Second, if you don't remove the reinforcement the behavior will continue.
- Third, the behavior will get worse before it gets better because of the extinction burst.

The “Desire To Please” Myth



A common fallacy people have about dogs is that they have a “desire to please” us. Some people think that our love and praise is all a dog needs as a motivator. Your dog doesn't have a desire to please you; he only has a desire to please himself. If making you happy brings good things to him, I guess this could be construed as a desire to please, but most dogs aren't willing to work for just praise, when there are other things in the environment that are higher on the reward scale.

Praise

If your dog seems to be responding to praise only while learning a new behavior, then there could also be the desire to avoid a punishment too. Or perhaps the dog spends so little time with you that being with you and keeping you happy so you continue to spend time with the dog is rewarding. Praise is, however, a good way to let a dog know he's on the right track

to getting a reward of some type. And once the dog fully understands a behavior that you want, praise can be used in your repertoire of rewards. But if you think your dog will be obedient just because it makes you happy, you need to accept the fact that your dog doesn't think you are God and instead, love your dog for the thinking being that he is.

Your training will be much more pleasant for your dog and much more rewarding for you, if you use the known laws of learning to your advantage. Using these laws, you can get your dog to willingly and happily do the things you ask without the need for the threat (or use) of a punishment. Instead, he will be doing things because you might give out a reward.

Hard Wired or Acquired

Another thing that it helps to understand is that dogs have different types of behavior. Some is "hard wired" and some is installed or acquired.

Hard wired behaviors require almost no learning to be carried out to their fullest and can be stronger in some breeds than in others. Without any training, dogs chase moving objects, distress vocalize when alone, go for any available food, protect what they feel is theirs, pee away from their sleeping area, etc. etc.

The rest of their behaviors are the product of contingencies in the environment. People have nearly total control of their dog's environments: where they live and sleep, if and when they may go outside, what limited pockets of the universe they may visit, when and where they eat, even if they live or die. Anyone who feels controlled by his or her dog needs to understand this. You have total control; you just haven't demonstrated it to the dog.

It just so happens, that most of the behaviors we don't want, come hard wired and we must counter condition, finesse, or redirect things like digging, distress vocalizing, chewing, eating whatever is in reach, chasing, and rough play. Also, most of the behaviors we DO want don't come with the package. Sit, Down, Stay, Come and Heel, on cue, from the perspective of these social predators, are useless, silly and irrelevant behaviors. Unless, you make it worth it for them to respond!

Motivation

To make a dog want to do something, you need motivation. Think of some things that your dog wants in life (examples could be: attention from humans, food, access to outside, other dogs, and squirrels). All these things can be used as motivators (some you may need to be more creative with than others).

Imaginary Scale of Importance

All of these things also fall into an imaginary scale of importance. Chasing squirrels is much higher on the scale of motivators for most terriers than food, and the food is higher on the scale than getting a belly rub.



Also be aware that punishments have a scale of importance. If your dog finds a yummy morsel in the trash, and you yell at him, grab him by the collar and put him out of the room, it's likely that he **will** look in the trash in the future. This is because the reward is stronger than the punishment. Also, the reward happened first and can't be "taken away" by use of a punishment. Behaviors that are rewarded will be repeated.

If instead, you caught the dog starting to lift the lid of the trashcan and he received the same punishment, the punishment would have a greater effect, provided the dog had never

gotten any reward from the trash in the past. Food can be a great motivator and the easiest solution for trashcan trashing is to keep the can out of reach or to not put anything in the can that has food on/in it. I put any trash that smells like food, in a bin in my freezer. So, my dogs don't look in the trashcan at home.

However, when my dog is at the training center, he does look in the trashcans, because he's found tasty treat wrappers in there in the past (because I failed to manage his environment and prevent him from trashcan surfing there and I didn't teach him an acceptable alternative behavior.) So, the only way to stop the behavior is to be sure it's not rewarded (move the trash out of reach or more closely supervise the dog) or reward an alternate behavior the dog can't do while trashcan surfing (such as giving me eye contact or lying down.) Punishment for trash surfing and other behaviors where the dog can reward himself will only cause fear of you. It teaches the dog that it's not safe to do that rewarding behavior *while you are present*. If you or the punishments are not there, the behavior will continue.

O.K., we understand motivators, what they are and why they work. Now, we need two things in this order:

- 1) A way to communicate to the dog how he's doing in his quest to get the reward and
- 2) names for all the different things the dog might be asked to do (also known as cues.)

Dogs Learn in Spite of Our Miscommunications

In traditional training, it is done absolutely backwards and dogs show tremendous skill in learning in spite of all the miscommunication. First, the behavior is named, but the dog has no idea what the word means. It would be like someone telling us to do something in a foreign language that we don't understand.

Then the dog is moved around into various positions that have no meaning for him and he has no motivation to stay there or repeat that position yet. The parent gives him praise and a pat on the head for what the person believes is the sit, but the dog happens to be watching the activities in the near-by class when he gets rewarded.

After a few manipulations of his body by the parent, the dog is expected to perform this behavior on his own, and gets a "correction" (meaning a bad thing) if he gets it wrong or does nothing. Eventually, the dog will learn how to get a reinforcement (avoiding the bad thing) and will make a connection to the word that is used for the behavior. If you were the dog, would you want to learn new things?

When the dog is told to sit, he first has to process what the word means to him (if anything) and then, if he understands the cue, he works out the odds that complying with the cue will be beneficial to him. Dogs are most likely not working these things out in their heads, but they do behave as though they were.

Sit = Click

Let's look at another dog being trained to sit. The dog is with the parent, in training class or at home. He saw the owner pick up a bag of treats and she's holding that clicker thing. This 'situation' has been known to bring good things to the dog in the past. So already the dog is somewhat motivated because of the higher likelihood of good things.



Now, the parent is looking at him, just looking and giving the dog's brain a chance to work. No human chatter that the dog has to process to pick out what words he knows. The

dog sniffs the ground, that gets nothing, the dog takes a step forward, that gets nothing, the dog sits - BINGO! The dog hears that sound that he learned means good things are on the way.

Sit = Click = Reward = Repetition

Now all he has to do is figure out what caused the click (which brought good things.) He tries some behaviors and finds the sit causes the click again. So, he's figured out that sit is causing the click! Now he sits as fast and as often as he can because the more he sits, the more good things he gets. A reward history is being created.

Cue = Sit = Click = Reinforcement = Repetition

Now, the human says something right before the dog sits. The first few times, the dog may not pay attention to it, but soon he realizes that the word is heard right before he sits each time and sit is bringing him good things. The word begins to predict the behavior that's getting him the treats. If he hears the word and lies down, it doesn't work. If he hears the word and stands, it doesn't work. But, when he hears the word and sits, Bingo! The word becomes associated with the known behavior and becomes a cue for a specific behavior.

Cue = Greater Chance of Reinforcement

All known cues then let the dog know that if he does what the cue suggests, good things are likely happen. By using this sequence, it is easy for the dog to learn and make the connection between the cue and the behavior.

Shaping Behaviors From Simple to Complex

For some of the more complex behaviors, you will need to break the behavior into easier steps the dog can understand (known as *shaping* a behavior). If you are trying to get the dog to do something he won't offer on his own, you may have to find a way to help the dog perform it at first so that the behavior can be associated with a reward.

Positive Consequence = Repeated Behavior

No Positive Consequence = No Behavior

I'll say it again; dogs will do what brings them good things and **avoid doing** what brings bad things. This is operant conditioning in a nutshell. Whenever you want to teach your dog to do something, simply look at how you can get the dog to offer the behavior so you can click to let him know that the behavior is rewarding. Once the dog is doing the behavior in a way that you can anticipate, start to add a cue just before the dog does the desired behavior. Using these principles, you can teach the dog anything he is physically able to do!



How to Teach the Dog Scout Certification Behaviors

The following sections are arranged based on the *Dog Scout Class Outline* found in the “Scoutmaster/Evaluator” section of the Dog Scout website. The classes and their order are suggestions only and are shown in the order that they are presented at camp.

This page also assumes that you understand the basics of clicker training and that you have your clicker and rewards ready when you start these exercises. If you do not understand clicker training, please first read “*How Dogs Learn*” on the previous pages and look at the example videos (links in the text below).

Need more hands? If you find that holding the treats, clicker and leash is too much, try stepping on the leash or using a leash around your waist. You can also use a treat pouch to hold the treats. Both the waist leash and treat pouch are available from the DSA store.

A note about treats: Use real food. Use something your dog really, really loves. Things like pieces of hot-dog, pieces of cooked chicken, cheese, soft cat treats like Pounce, etc. You will get faster results if you use a motivator (treats) that the dog has a strong desire to obtain. You also don’t need to use large treats. Pieces about the size of a pea work well with all size dogs. If your dog does not like food treats, use a toy that the dog gets really excited about and only gets to play with during training sessions. If your dog doesn’t like food or toys, talk to a Scoutmaster about how to train your dog to be motivated by toys or food.



General Dog Scout certification requirements:

Treats are allowed and encouraged for training, but they are not allowed on you during the “check-out” part of the certification process. You are also not allowed to make the dog think you have a reward (luring) to get the dog to perform a behavior. See the section on “Variable Schedule of Reinforcement” below to learn how to “phase out” the use of treats.

Leash Corrections (Jerking) is not allowed at any time, during training or the “check-out.” Harsh tones of voice, verbal corrections or physical threats are also prohibited.

You are allowed to talk to your dog and encourage them during any portion of the “check-out” and multiple cues (within reason) are also allowed.

For more detailed requirements based on each exercise, see the “**Dog Scout Certification Requirements**” on page 45 of this guide.

CLASS #1 (Leave It and Heeling)

LEAVE IT training:

Having a dog that will respond to a “Leave It” cue can save the dog’s life! The Dog Scout certification requires that you be able to show that your dog understands and responds to a “Leave It” cue. It also requires that it be demonstrated with both really tempting food and another type of animal the dog wants to see. This is because there are many dangerous situations your dog might face. Being able to call the dog away from these situations can help you avoid embarrassment, having people see your dog as rude or needing a trip to the vet.



Some of the situations your dog could get into in which you could use “leave it” include:

- Trying to steal a child's snack
- Raiding the garbage cans as you walk down the street or visit a friend's house
- Finding a baited hook on a beach or shoreline
- Going for dropped medication (yours or that of a nursing home patient you might be visiting with your therapy dog)
- Trying to visit someone that is afraid of dogs
- Finding a dead animal carcass or other things dog's like to roll in
- Seeing an animal run across your path in front of you (cats, squirrels, chipmunks, etc.)
- Coming across a skunk or porcupine (they usually don't run, because they don't have to!)
- Approaching a less than friendly dog
- Any time the dog's eyes lock onto something they can't have for more than 3 seconds
- This list could go on and on!

The Set Up:

If your dog doesn't know a "Leave it" cue, it is fairly simple to teach it. The table on the following page outlines one method and demonstrates how tiny to break down the steps so the dog can understand them. Count out 10 tiny treats for each line of the table. Work through each line, only progressing if the dog does the behavior quickly and correctly for at least 8 of the 10 treats. If more mistakes than that are made, then repeat the line with another 10 treats until your dog does it correctly for at least 8 of the 10 treats.

When you reach a bold line in the table that is your cue to work through the section above it in a new location to help the dog learn that the behavior still “pays off” regardless of where you are located (known as “generalization”). When you reach the bold line again, pick a third location and repeat the section a third time. Once you have done the section in 3 different locations, you can pass the bold line and start the process with the next section.

While it looks like a lot of steps, once the dog has a basic understanding of the desired behavior, the training will progress quickly. This process helps people avoid some very common training mistakes:

1. Assuming too soon that the dog understands the desired behavior
2. Not doing enough repetitions of correct behavior, thus not having a stable base upon which to build the behavior.
3. Not breaking down the complex behaviors into easy to understand and achieve steps, which frustrates the dog and trainer.
4. Not knowing exactly what behavior to click, this confuses the dog. If YOU don't know what behavior you want, how is the dog supposed to know? ☺

If the dog is “getting it” then it doesn't hurt to practice 10 repetitions or more of the desired behavior. If he's NOT getting it, then you certainly don't want to advance and make things even more difficult until you have a solid base of understanding to work with and build upon.

Don't be in a hurry to rush the process. This break-down of the steps helps reduce the dog's frustration and speeds learning. Expect the first section of the training chart to be the slowest, especially with dogs that are new to clicker training. Sticking to this type of chart will help keep you focused on EXACTLY what behavior you are looking for and should click. This will help the dog understand what you want. This high success rate keeps both the dog and trainer motivated.

Location

Behavior: **LEAVE IT**

1 2 3

			Play the eye contact game (explained on the next page.) Click your dog when he looks away from the treat & gives you eye contact.
			Dog maintains eye contact for 1 second
			Dog maintains eye contact for 2 seconds
			Dog maintains eye contact for 3 seconds
			Dog maintains eye contact for 5 seconds
			Add "Leave it" cue right <i>before</i> you hold your hand out to your side.
			Dog maintains eye contact for 7 seconds
			Dog maintains eye contact for 10 seconds
			Dog maintains eye contact with hand/food moving
			Food in a shallow lid/container in your hand: no cue, dog maintains eye contact for 1 second
			Food in container in hand: dog maintains eye contact for 2 seconds
			Food in container in hand: dog maintains eye contact for 3 seconds - then add cue just before you present the object during next steps -
			Food in container in hand: dog maintains eye contact for 5 seconds
			Food in container in hand: dog maintains eye contact for 10 seconds
			Food in container in hand: dog maintains eye contact for 20 seconds
			Container/lid attached to a stick so you can place it on the floor, but still have control. Dog maintains eye contact for 1 second.
			Lid on stick on floor: dog maintains eye contact for 2 seconds
			Lid on stick on floor: dog maintains eye contact for 5 seconds
			Lid on stick on floor: dog maintains eye contact for 10 seconds
			Container on floor no stick: dog maintains eye contact for 1 second
			Container on floor no stick: dog maintains eye contact for 2 seconds – add cue for next step
			Container on floor no stick: dog maintains eye contact for 5 seconds
			Container on floor no stick: dog maintains eye contact for 10 seconds
			Food loose on floor foot over/near it: dog maintains eye contact for 1 second
			Food loose on floor foot over it: dog gives eye contact for 2 seconds – add cue for next step
			Food loose on floor foot over/near it: dog gives eye contact for 5 seconds
			Food loose on floor foot over/near it: dog gives eye contact for 10 seconds
			Food on floor, one step away: dog maintains eye contact for 1 second
			Food on floor, one step away: dog maintains eye contact for 2 second – add cue
			Food on floor, one step away: dog maintains eye contact for 5 second
			Food on floor, one step away: dog maintains eye contact for 10 second
			Food on floor leash length away: dog maintains eye contact for 1 second
			Food on floor leash length away: dog gives eye contact & steps away from food to handler.
			Food on floor, approach a leash length away from the food, give cue: stop until dog gives eye contact click and walk past as treat is delivered from your hand
			Food on floor, approach leash length away, give cue: Progress ½ way past food with eye contact upon cue click and treat as you continue to walk past.
			Food on floor, 1/2 leash length away, give cue: Progress past food with eye contact
			Food on floor, within easy reach, give cue: progress past food with eye contact
			Add variable schedule of reinforcement and multiple locations
			Repeat steps with other desirable objects

Get 8 correct responses out of 10 in a row before progressing. Repeat series of behaviors between the darker lines in new locations before progressing. Do your very best not to let the dog get the food/object

Eye Contact is key:



Getting your dog to look at you can solve many problems. You also need to have your dog's attention before you can teach him anything! The problem we run into is that in dog language, direct eye contact is a threat. They have to learn to accept it from humans as a non-threatening gesture. You also want them to be comfortable giving you direct eye contact and you should never use direct eye contact if you choose to scold your dog.

Teaching Eye Contact- There are a number of ways to teach your dog that looking you in the eyes is a good thing. My favorite method also teaches the dog the concept of indirect access. By teaching your dog eye contact as the first clicker exercise, it will become the dog's "default" behavior. This means that if he's not sure what you want him to do, he'll try the first thing he learned. If you have already taught other clicker behaviors, that's OK too.

Example VIDEO:

Eye Contact: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBMTYOV0-f8>

Leave It part 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13Hm059Qt-c>

Leave-It" part 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fx1PJxKc2-c>

Set up: Start by holding a treat or favorite toy in your hand. Hold your hand away from you to your side, as though you are pointing to your left (or right.) With some persistent dogs, you might want to rest your hand on the edge of a table or chair so your arm doesn't get tired ☺. Have your dog on a leash to keep him in the general area (you can step on the lead or attach it to your belt to keep your hands free.) In the hand that doesn't have the treat/toy, you will have a clicker. Keep telling yourself that you are not going to say ANYTHING to the dog! It's a puzzle that the dog has to figure out on his own (to get the treat or toy.) The more you talk, the more his brain has to stop thinking about the puzzle to process your words. The reward you have in your hand should be something the dog really wants. If it's not rewarding enough to keep the dog interested in how to get it, try a higher value item. Now you are ready to start training.

Timing is the key here. What you are watching is only the dog's eyes. It doesn't matter at this point what the rest of his body is doing. You are going to be watching for that half of a second glance in your direction, when the dog takes his eyes off the prize. When his eyes move away from the prize and toward you, click and give him the prize. What you are trying to teach him is that it is looking at **you** that gets him the reward, not looking at the toy or treat. This is called indirect access because the dog has to look AWAY from the prize to get the prize. This is in conflict with the dog's natural behavior of "see something I want – drag the human until I can get it- dive on desired item." This training is the start of teaching the dog some self control because he will learn the direct route is not always the most rewarding.



If it has been several minutes and your dog has excellent focus on only the reward, try making a noise with your mouth (not a word, but maybe a kissing sound) to try to get the dog's attention toward you.

Be ready to click and quickly deliver the prize if he takes his attention away from the prize and toward you. Now repeat the exercise, but try not to make any sound if you can. Again, watch the dog's eyes for a quick glance in your direction and click when it happens. Try to time the click so that you click *during* the look at you instead of as the dog is looking back at the reward.

Little Bit Longer- As you continue to repeat this exercise and reward the dog for the glances, you will very gradually require the dog to look at you for a bit longer before you click and reward. At first, click the quick glances, but as the dog starts to look at you faster (stays focused on the reward for less time when it is presented), you can start to wait with your clicks until the dog keeps his attention on you for an extra half second. You will be building the behavior slowly, gradually waiting for longer and longer looks in your direction.



Shape it into eye contact- If your dog is only looking in your general direction, after several repetitions of this, withhold the click and see if he will look at your face. Often when something that HAS been working to get the dog what he wants, suddenly stops working, the dog will be a bit confused and will look at your face to try to get a clue what to try next. Be ready to click that glance to your face.

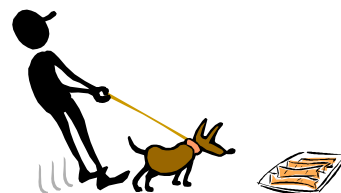
Lots of repetitions- Be sure to contain your excitement and do lots of repetitions at each step to build a strong foundation you can build on and add difficulty to. If you rush things too fast, the dog may get frustrated and give up. So do several repetitions of quick glances to your face before expecting a full second of eye contact.

Once you are getting eye contact, work through the steps of the “leave-it” training table on the previous page.

Another method for teaching “Leave It”:

Video Example: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjTHxPU-zwc>

- 1) Count out several piles of treats, with ten treats in each pile. This will help you keep track of the repetitions you have done so you only need to count the mistakes. If it's more than 2 per pile, repeat that step with a new pile of 10.
- 2) Place a desired object on the floor. How close the dog is to that object depends on how much he wants the item. The more desire there is, the further away the dog starts. You want the dog to remain in thinking mode and not go into “lizard brain” (focusing only on the desired item.)
- 3) Once the proper distance is found, you will be a **post SILENTLY** holding the leash. You could also use a leash attached around (or to) your waist. You stand still, not pulling back on the leash, while the dog looks at, paws at or pulls toward the object. If the distance is correct, this will only happen briefly. If the dog is not stopping, you're too close. Back up a bit and try again.



- 4) Be ready to click when the dog turns his head away from the object AND his body language indicates that he is “giving up on” the object (even if it's only briefly.) When you see this and click, take a step or two away from the object as you get the dog's reward (one of the 10 treats) and deliver it to the dog.
- 5) Build on this by gradually expecting the dog to look more in your direction until the dog is giving you eye contact instead of just turning his head away. This may take several repetitions of each expected level/distance of head turn in your direction, depending on the dog. You are still staying silent.
- 6) Now build on the duration of the eye contact – up to 5 seconds- building in 1 second increments (8 correct out of 10 reps before expecting an extra second) Yes, it's a lot of reps, but that's a good thing! You want the dog to think this is easy! And to practice lots of correct responses.
- 7) Repeat (moving the object a few feet to a new spot every few repetitions) until the dog gives you immediate eye contact when you reach that particular distance. Once this happens **8 out of 10 times**, then you can decrease the distance to the object. Make sure you do this at least 10 more times AFTER you think the dog understands it. It won't hurt to practice correct responses that are now easy for the dog, but if you progress too fast because you *think* the dog understands what you want, you no longer have a strong foundation to build on. You are still staying silent.
- 8) When you are a leash length away and getting correct responses 8 out of 10 tries, then start to add a single step parallel to the object (as though you are going to walk past it.)
- 9) When the dog can maintain eye contact while you take that step for 8 out of 10 repetitions, then add a second step. (2 steps parallel to the object while expecting eye contact) Don't forget to move the object around every few tries.
- 10) As the dog is performing correctly 8 out of 10 tries for the current number of steps, add another step and repeat the process.
- 11) When you have added enough steps that you are able to approach the object and walk all the way past it while the dog maintains eye contact, **NOW you are ready to add the cue.**
- 12) As you are approaching the desired object that the dog wants and knows is there, say leave it just before the dog gives you eye contact. You want the timing to be:
 - a. Dog looks at the object (might need someone to be moving it to get this step)
 - b. You say leave it as you start to walk toward the object

- c. Dog gives you eye contact and maintains eye contact until you are past the object and tell him what a great dog he is.
 - d. Repeat multiple times.
- 13) Once you have reached this point, the dog has had many, many successful repetitions and clearly understands exactly what the cue "Leave It" means for that object in that location. You should also be able to pass over top of the desired object without the dog attempting to get it and with only the briefest breaks in direct eye contact with you. Now you just need to practice these steps (starting at the beginning) in new places and with new objects.
- 14) Because your dog has had a long reward history, fully understands, without a doubt, what leave it means because you have practiced in many locations with many different objects, you should be able now to do this off leash. Just be sure to have someone ready to cover or remove the desired object on the first few passes, just in case. You want to practice correct responses and set the dog up for success! ☺

Really learning the behavior

If you use a positive training method and let the dog know that it is OK for him to try to figure things out on his own (to truly learn), then he will first try what he already knows. This is why he will progress through the steps faster each time. He will soon figure out that it doesn't matter where he is, or what the bait is, or who's walking by...when mom or dad says "leave it" it means something specific.



If you progress through the steps as outlined, your dog will know the cue means to leave alone what ever it is that has caught his or her attention. It is also likely that the dog will look at you when you give the cue. That's an added benefit and another opportunity to reward eye contact. Also, by rewarding the dog for leaving the item, he has no reason to try to sneak it when you aren't looking! If a dog is punished for trying to get something he wants, he will simply wait for the punisher to go away. Reward the choice of not diving on the item!

Don't add a cue too soon!

You want to be able to predict when the dog will do the desired behavior before you add a cue. If you start saying "Leave it" when the dog is staring intently at the desired object, guess what behavior the dog associates with the "leave it" cue? It will mean "stare intently at the object!" It could also develop into a cue that means "good things are near-by that you should look for" because the dog only hears the cue right before he sees something he wants and then he stares at that object. By waiting to add the cue, you know the dog will more easily pair the cue with the correct behavior.

Variable Schedule of Reinforcement

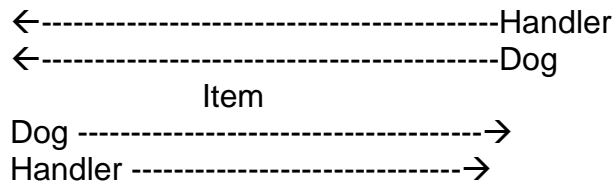
Once your dog has a solid understanding of the "Leave it" in a given situation, start giving a treat for only 3 out of 4 correct responses. Since you have a choice of which ones get a treat, why not pick the faster responses? You can then progress to only giving a treat for 2 out of 4. Just remember to keep it on a random schedule. Always let the dog know that he has done something you want, by using a verbal marker or the clicker, but vary his reward. Sometimes he gets a food treat, sometimes he gets his favorite toy, sometimes he gets verbal praise only, other times he gets something else he likes, sometimes he just gets to move on to the next cue.

Make the behavior stronger

It is proven that this "Variable Schedule of Reinforcement" will cause the greatest amount of drive and speed in the dog's responses. You will also not need to always have food in order for your dog to respond to you. If you have enough other things that your dog really likes, you won't need to have food at all (once the dog learns the behavior.)

Good luck! Remember to keep it positive! Let the dog's actions decide when you need to progress -- don't push it!

TESTING NOTE: For the “Leave it” section of the Dog Scout test, the handler needs to show that the dog has definite interest in the item he will be asked to leave. Then the dog will need to correctly pass by the tempting food or “critter” at least 3 times in a row, on a leash that stays completely loose at all times, passing close enough to easily get the object, but choose not to get it. The handler can use any cue to mean “don’t touch that, look at that or molest that” but for the test, the dog may not be under a formal “heel” cue. The dog needs to know the item is there and needs to actually WANT to get or investigate the item. The test simulates being out for a walk on a loose leash and coming across a tempting item or fearless critter. During the pass-by, the handler should maintain pace (not slowing or speeding up). If the leash goes tight or the dog tries to get the item (or gets it) that is not a correct pass-by of the item. For each incorrect pass, the dog must pass the item correctly 3 additional times.



“But my dog has no interest in that”:

If the dog shows no interest in food no matter how tempting the treat, you must show this by offering the dog many different food/treat items that would normally be very tempting to a dog. Place the items on the floor with the dog off-leash and able to get the items if he should choose to do so as well as dropping food/treats next to the dog.

If the dog has no interest in the critter being used or is afraid of the critter, you may need to try a few different critters. Some possibilities are: a dead animal carcass (don’t get hit by a car yourself!), pocket pets/birds at nose level in a pet store, cat toy that looks like a mouse and is made of real fur moved by a bit of fishing line that’s been attached at the nose, a real cat in a crate (as long as it doesn’t traumatize the cat), livestock or anything that is visually hard to distinguish from a real animal AND that smells real to the dog (has real feathers/fur or has taken on the scent of the real animal it portrays.)

If the dog is highly toy motivated but lacking in motivation for the food or critter, you can demonstrate the “leave-it” with a favorite toy in addition to showing the behaviors above to prove the dog has no interest in food or critters. As a last resort, anything the dog REALLY wants can be used to demonstrate the dog’s understanding of “leave-it” (another person, an open car door, the door to the training center, etc.) But you’ll first have to really prove that the dog has no interest in the standard items beyond a doubt.



Heeling on Lead:

What is heeling? Heeling for obedience competition requires that the dog stay next to the handler’s left side, with the dog’s shoulder even with where a pants seam would be. The dog should be looking at the handler and remain in position regardless of where or how the handler moves.

The Dog Scout certification does not require the “glued to the leg” precision of obedience competition. But it does require that the dog clearly understands

where heel position is and chooses to stay there, on a loose lead, even when the person makes turns and stops. Multiple cues or encouragement is allowed to keep the dog in position, but pressure on the dog's collar from the leash is not. Leash "corrections" are prohibited.

Auto Sit: Another component of competition heeling is that the dog automatically sits (in heel position) when the handler stops. For the Dog Scout certification, the dog needs to sit when the handler stops, but cueing the sit (with either verbal or hand signals) and sloppy sits (out of heel position) are allowed.

Note: Several of the things mentioned in the following section can be found in more detail on the "[How Dog's Learn](#)" page. Please be sure you have read that before continuing.

Basics of heel:

Why dogs pull on leads (leashes): You know that dogs do what "works" for them (Whatever gets them what they want.) You also know that a rewarded behavior is one that will be repeated. Since dogs repeat pulling on the lead often, it must be getting rewarded. The reward is forward motion, which gets the dog new sights and smells.



How to stop the pulling: You learned that if a behavior fails to get a reward, the dog won't repeat it. So what you need to do is remove the reward (forward motion) when the dog pulls on the collar (the behavior you want to end.) You can attach the ends of the leash to both the collar and to a harness, so if you don't mind the dog pulling, he can do so on the harness.

More indirect access: Working through the post method of "Leave-it" training before working on a loose leash helps the dog. This loose leash walking is another form of indirect access, which is easier for the dog to grasp if he has already learned that the direct route may not be the best way to get what he wants. In this case, it's indirect access because the dog has to REFRAIN from pulling forward in order to get forward movement.

The Set Up: To begin, you will mark a "start line." It can be a real mark on the ground, or simply any point that you can easily find again. About 15-20 feet away from the start line should be something the dog really wants. This can be a person encouraging the dog to come to him or her (without using your come cue), or it could be food or a favorite toy, or it could be the door to the outside world when the dog wants to go for a walk.

No reward mark: It is helpful for this exercise if your dog understands a "No Reward Mark" (an NRM). This is a sound that lets the dog know that the behavior he just offered will not be getting a reward. It could be equated to the "cold" signal given in the "Hot-Cold" game you may have played as a child.

Waist Leash: It is strongly recommended you use a waist leash for this exercise that is adjusted to give a loose leash if the dog is close to "heel" position but tight enough that if the dog gets a bit ahead of you, he reaches the end of the leash. The reason for this; everyone tends to want to either pull on the lead or "help" the dog by giving more leash (or both.) People also don't keep the leash length the same during the exercise which can confuse the dog. By using a waist leash that you don't hold with your hands, the dog gets to learn on his own, without your "help" (which isn't really helping the dog learn.) It is also very clear to you exactly when the dog gets out of position because the leash will get tight. You can



use a piece of rope of the needed length to form the correct length waist leash if a standard leash won't work (large waist, toy dog, etc.) Simply make a handle/loop at one end and attach a snap to the other end. Put the handle end around your waist and pass the snap through the handle. Then attach the snap to your dog. If your dog is a strong puller or tends to lunge, you might want to put some "pipe insulation" around the leash or rope to add some padding. You could also get a piece of elastic from a craft store, create a loop by tying the ends together and put it between the leash and the dog's collar by adding an extra snap. This will provide some "give" when the dog hits the end of the line. If the leash is the correct length, the dog's won't have a chance to gain too much momentum before he reaches the end of the line. Another option for serious pullers is to attach the leash to the chest ring of a "Sure Fit" (tm) harness instead of the collar. These are also in the DSA store.

Object of the game: Of course, is to get the dog to walk by your side, in heel position, all the way from the start line to the desired object.

Working on that goal: Start with yourself and the dog behind the start line. Be sure that the dog sees what is waiting for him at the other side. You can start with the dog either sitting or standing at your left side, your choice. Begin by walking toward the object that the dog desires.



"Oops, try again" – No Reward Mark

Of course, as soon as you take a step or two, the dog is likely to pull out ahead of you. You need to have a clear picture in your mind of exactly where "too far in front of you" is located (this is where the waist leash really helps!) Know where that imaginary line between "heeling" and "not heeling" is located. As soon as the dog crosses the line, you mark the point of no reward with your No Reward Mark (NRM) and get back to the start line AS FAST AS YOU CAN! A good NRM would be "oops" or "too bad" or "try again" (pick one.)

Start over FAST

The timing of the NRM and a quick re-start are critical to the dog's understanding of the game. To help your dog understand the unwanted behavior (moving ahead of you) and the consequence (having to start over) you need to make the timing of the two as close together as possible.

If you delay your move back to the start until the dog has stopped pulling on the lead and is looking at you; guess what he will associate with having to start over? He will think that not pulling, and looking at you was the unwanted behavior! If instead, you go back to the start as soon as the dog moves past heel position (even before the leash gets tight); it will be much clearer to the dog what behavior caused the NRM and consequence. Just be patient with him and he will begin to understand.

Motivation

The more motivated the dog is to get across the game field, the faster he will try to figure out what is causing the delay. If the dog takes a few steps in heel position, be sure to "catch him in the act" of doing the proper behavior and praise it.

Notice I didn't say click

A click means that the dog has done what you want (which he has), but it also says the behavior is over (which it isn't) and he gets his reward (which he hasn't reached yet.) Praise lets the dog know he's on the right track without ending the behavior. If you were to click half

way to the prize, you would have to be able to ensure that the dog didn't pull (and then get rewarded) before he gets to the other side of the game field.

If praise causes pulling ahead

If you praise your dog for being in the proper position and that causes him to surge ahead, give a No Reward Mark and go back to the start. The dog simply has not learned that praise means "keep going, you're doing it right." The NRM will not remove the reward of the praise; it will simply help clarify for the dog what the praise means. The praise is important to let the dog know that he's doing it correctly.

Most dogs get it quickly

Most dogs are able to quickly figure out what is going on if your timing is clear. You should be able to see improvement in as few as 10 repetitions (going back to start). Once the dog figures out the "rules of the game", most are able to then get almost completely across the field while staying in heel position.

Don't give in too soon

A common problem occurs, as the dog is just about to get to the other side. They just can't contain themselves any longer and make a quick burst across the finish. This also means they left heel position too early and should not get rewarded (be sure he can't get rewarded)! Don't give in too early; it doesn't help the dog. Just be ready for the burst and the need to make the move for the start line as soon as the dog breaks out of heel position. It will only take another try or two before the dog isn't "cheating" at the end.



He made it!

When the dog finally makes it all the way across the game field while maintaining his self control and staying in heel position, pile on the rewards! It's a big accomplishment and should be treated as such.

Add a release cue

You won't want your dog to be the one to decide when the heeling game is over once he understands the cue. Now he needs to learn the cue for "Alright, you can resume your normal doggie life." Common "release" cues are: all done, you're free, finished, go play and "Okay." I don't recommend using "okay" because the dog is likely to hear it often. It can be any word you are likely to remember as a cue that tells your dog he is "released" from the behavior. This cue can also be used to release your dog from a "stay" cue. You will be adding the cue you choose just before the dog gets to the reward. Later, you will use it to signal when the dog no longer needs to maintain heel position.

Try it again

Now you need to repeat the exercise because your dog still doesn't know how to heel. What he does know is that to get from the start line to the finish line, he has to walk by your side. He will not generalize that behavior to other situations yet.

Put it on cue

Once the dog is reliably walking across the game field without having to go back to the start, you can add the verbal cue. You will give the "Heel" cue just before you leave the start line (not AS you leave it). Practice the exercise several more times to help make the association between the behavior and the cue.

Generalization

The next step in the training is to get your dog to realize that walking by your side is beneficial to him, regardless of the circumstances. Start by setting up the above game again in a new location with a new reward but don't use your heel cue at first. The dog has not really learned that the cue means the same thing in this new situation. If you add the cue before the dog is doing the correct behavior, you will be pairing the cue with an undesirable behavior. It's normal to have to do some re-starts when you move to a new location or use a new object. Once the dog is "getting it" again, you can add the verbal cue just before you leave the start.

Now you will need to get the dog to understand that even if you are just walking down a street or trail, heel means heel. When you are walking with your dog, he is in it for the sights and smells and (in most cases) socialization with any other being he meets. If you want to practice heel, just make an imaginary start line and play the game above. Don't forget to use your release cue to let the dog know when he can go back to being a dog that is just out for a walk.



No more leash pulling

You will find that once your dog fully understands the "heel" cue, you will no longer have a dog that drags you around by the leash. This is further reinforced if you practice the "tight leash means look at me" exercise below. When the dog forgets his manners, just stop (removing the reward of forward motion.) When the dog remembers that it's a loose leash, not pulling that gets him what he wants (forward motion), you can proceed.

Some VIDEO examples of methods to teach heel and/or walking politely on a leash:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sFgtggiAKoQ> (Loose leash Kikopup)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkXuKTHhV6g> (loose leash/heel w/lab)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsvNvK8T1z8> (Teaching dog to pivot into heel)

<http://www.cyberagility.com/politewalking.html> (Handler doing the pivoting)

Tight Leash = Look at me



Another helpful behavior is to train the dog that tension on the leash is a cue to look at you. This can get you out of numerous "sticky" situations and will result in a much better behaved dog. This training is often a side effect of the method used to teach a dog not to pull on the lead or to "leave it". But here, we will be focusing on a specific reaction to a tight leash.

The set up: Put the dog on a leash, have either an exciting environment or a favorite toy or food some distance away. The distance will be determined by the dog's focus on the attention-getting item or activity. For really exciting things, you might have to start in a location where the dog can barely see it. Less exciting things could be just a few feet away. The object is to create a situation where the dog wants to pull on the lead to strain toward the object or activity but not be so focused that he is not be able to take his eyes off of it. Again, you are not going to say anything to the dog. If you have worked through the "post method" for teaching leave-it and the heel method above, your dog might be reluctant to pull on the leash, that's good thing! Try taking the dog for a walk in a new environment to get a pulling behavior you can work with. Or, when the dog is not pulling, YOU can add pressure to the leash, treating it as though the dog has added the pressure himself as you work through the steps below.

The Cue- For this exercise, the tight leash will become the cue. Once you have the set up ready, let the dog pull on the leash and you are going to be just a “post” that holds the leash. Anytime the dog chooses to look *in your direction*, click and reward with several tiny treats in quick succession. Using several treats in a row encourages the dog to keep looking toward you instead of taking the treat and going right back to pulling. He never knows if it’s going to be 2 treats or 5 or anything in-between.

Little Bit Longer- After a few repetitions of that criterion, you will now require that the dog look *directly at you* before you click and give a reward. This is a variation on the eye contact game; it just has a different cue (a tight leash instead of the reward held out to your side.) As the dog starts to figure out the game, move closer and closer to the desired object or activity. You can also practice this when you are out for a walk. If the leash goes tight, just stop and wait for the dog to look at you before you click. You can use resuming the walk as the reward. Be sure to vary the amount of time you require the dog to maintain the look before you click.

Watch me – even if I’m not paying attention to you

Many dogs, once they learn the above behaviors are willing to give you eye contact if you return the favor. However, we can’t always be focused on the dog, but we might still like the dog to be focused on us. This is a learned behavior that is fairly easy to teach (especially if you have already worked on the above training which creates a strong reward history for eye contact.)

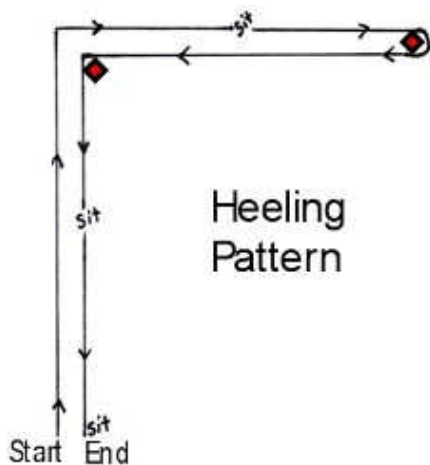


Create Motivation- Basically, you have to give the dog a reason to look at you, even when you are not looking at them. Up to this point, from the dog’s point of view, if you are not paying attention to them, the likelihood of rewards from you is probably zero. Why would the dog pay attention to you with these odds? What you need to do is learn to be aware of where your dog’s attention is even if you are not looking directly at him.

To practice put your dog on lead and sit in front of a boring TV show. Be sure the dog is positioned so that you can see out of “the corner of your eye” where he is looking. Now simply go back to the first eye contact game, but instead of intently watching your dog’s eyes, you will be noticing him from your peripheral vision. You can also practice it while you are talking with friends, on the phone, walking down the street, etc.

The Verbal Click- A “verbal clicker” such as “Yes!” is helpful in these situations so that you don’t always need to have your clicker ready to click. Just say “Yes!” in place of the click. You can also choose a foreign word instead of “yes”, so the dog is less likely to hear it everyday conversation and get confused. In fact, it doesn’t even need to be a word. It could be a certain sound: “Psst”, a click noise, a whistle, whatever.

TESTING NOTE: For the Dog Scout test, the dog needs to show an obvious understanding of a “heel” cue by maintaining proper heel position on a leash that stays loose while the handler moves through a standard obedience test pattern or its equivalent:



It is the dog's job to stay in position next to the handler, not the handler keeping the dog in position. The handler should be walking a straight line, not “weaving” to make up for the dog's lack of heeling skill and handler needs to maintain a constant normal walking pace during the pattern (not speeding up or slowing down). Slowing slightly for the turns is ok as long as it's not done just to keep the dog in position. The sits can be cued (verbal and/or hand signal) and the dog does not have to sit in perfect heel position (crooked or out of position still passes).

Note that a Scoutmaster can ask for any pattern that shows 90 degree turns to both the left and right, an about turn (can be to the left or right - handler's choice), at least 80' of straight line heeling (20' per “leg” of the pattern illustrated) and 2 sits somewhere on a straight line part of the pattern (not on a turn) and at the end.

CLASS #2 (Sit, Down, Stay)

Sit Happens

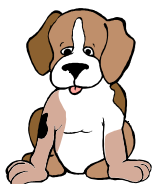
For the Dog Scout certification, your dog will have to demonstrate that he understands and responds to a sit cue (either verbal or hand signal) and will respond while the leash stays loose.

Set up: Even if your dog knows the sit cue, work through these steps. Get your clicker and treats ready, your dog should be ready to work with you when he sees these, if not, you can clip on a leash and stand on the end of it just to keep him in the general area you want to work.



Just wait: Now, you wait him out. You don't say or do anything, just watch him and wait for him to offer a sit. Ignore all other behavior. If his attention wanders, try increasing the value of the reward you are using (he should know what you have to offer.) The dog should want the reward so much, that he is willing to try everything he can think of to get it.

A little help- Most dogs that quit trying or lose interest in their handler are lacking the proper motivator. Try a different treat or toy to see if the dog will work for the new item. If the dog just isn't getting it, you can use the reward to “lure” the dog into the sit. Start with the reward in front of the dog's nose, and slowly move it over his head toward his back. If you hold it too high, the dog will jump up, but if it's held where the dog can reach it (but in a closed hand) the dog should sit. Be ready to click as soon as his butt hits the floor and jackpot (see below)! Do away with the lure as soon as you can and go back to just waiting for the dog to offer the behavior. If you lure too often, the dog is simply learning to follow the treat instead of learning the behavior you want.

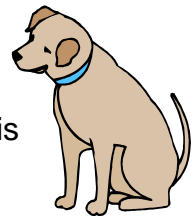


Jackpot! As soon as his butt hits the floor, you are going to click and give him a big reward party for being the smartest dog on the planet. You should have treats that you can break into very tiny pieces and give him several tiny pieces one at a time (not all at once) while telling him how wonderful he is. To a dog, one handful is the same as one small treat. Giving him several treats in rapid succession is more rewarding, regardless of the size of the treat. When the dog takes a “lap of faith” and tries something new (that happens to be correct) you can use the jackpot to encourage the dog to try new things. This can especially help dogs that have previously been trained with punishment based methods.

Try again. If he hasn’t gotten up from the sit, encourage him to do so by taking a small step and then wait him out again. As soon as he sits, click and treat (holding the treat out so that he has to stand up to get it.)

Quick and quiet repetitions- It should take less and less waiting as the dog figures out what behavior is causing the click/treat. By using this method, you are letting the dog actually learn - which is what makes the behavior “stick” in his brain.

Shh, don’t say a word. You should not be saying or doing anything to “help” your dog figure out this puzzle, just let him work it out (the patience and silence is the hardest part for some people.) Talking to the dog interrupts his thinking process as the brain shifts it’s focus from the task to trying to figure out if any of the words you just said mean anything to him or not.



Learned helplessness- If you are too quick to jump in and “help” the dog too often, you can create a condition called learned helplessness. The dog is smart enough to figure out that if he waits long enough without acting, you will jump in and do his thinking for him. You don’t want to make the “puzzle” (of what the dog has to do to get the reward) too hard, but don’t jump in with luring, verbal or physical help too soon. If the dog doesn’t seem to understand what you want, try to change the “clickable criteria” by breaking down the behavior into easier steps before you jump in with help.

Add duration. Once the dog understands that it’s putting his tush on the floor that causes the click, you’ll need to add duration. Otherwise, sit will really mean “bounce!” ☺ Add duration gradually by waiting a half second longer than before *then* click the sit. Some dogs get so good at the bounce, you really have to be patient with the click till you get a sit that is a half second longer than the previous ones. You can do a few repetitions of each duration before you progress and make it more difficult by expecting another half second longer. Once the dog’s brain registers that it’s duration you are wanting, he will be willing to sit for longer and longer.

Alright, now add a cue. Once the dog is sitting rapidly and repeatedly for several seconds, you can add a verbal cue or hand signal. Right before you think he’s going to sit, give the cue... just once, then wait (NOTE: Don’t say “Sit down”, or you will confuse the dog once he understands that down means to lay down.) Also, don’t use “sit, sit, sit” unless you want THAT sequence to be your cue! If you have to repeat yourself, you have tried to add the cue too soon. As soon as he sits, click and give him a treat.



Generalizations- Since dogs don’t generalize, you now need to change things a bit and try this in a different room or location. Go back to not saying anything until the dog will sit rapidly and repeatedly again. Then add the cue just before the behavior again. Each time you practice this in a new location, repeat these steps

and each time you are in a new place, the progression will go much faster.

Practicing in many different situations is an important step most people leave out. They think that because the dog knows what the cue “Sit” means at home, that he should know it everywhere. But to a dog, sitting at home on cue and sitting while on a walk on cue, are two different behaviors. You need to teach him that sit means sit regardless of where he is or what you are doing.

Hand signals- If you would like to add the hand signal to this behavior, the formal obedience cue is an upward “scoop” of your hand with the palm up. It starts with your hand by your side and ends with you holding your hand out like you are “asking” for someone to give you something. But if you don’t plan to compete with your dog, the hand signal can be any motion you want.

Adding new cues- Anytime you add a new cue to a behavior, it needs to be presented a second or two prior to the old cue. If you give two cues at the same time, the dog will only see or hear the one he knows and will disregard the new cue. Example: To teach the dog a hand signal for sit after he has learned the verbal cue; Give the hand signal, wait a second or two, then tell the dog “Sit” -- click/treat when he does. By putting the new cue first, the dog will notice it and start to anticipate the cue he knows. Soon, the new cue will have the same meaning.

Body Language- Dogs are very good at reading our body language and any subtle cues we give with our hands or body. What they have more trouble with is learning verbal cues. When teaching the dog a new behavior, you may actually teach him a hand or body signal without even realizing it. Luring motions often become cues to the dog. How you stand or even how you hold your head can also turn into cues. For this reason, remember to give any new cue prior to any previously used cue. You should also practice the behaviors while you are standing, sitting and you can even practice while you are lying on the floor! Just to be sure the dog doesn’t get the idea that the cue is only valid if you are standing and facing him. When you add some distance later, this belief can show up in the dog’s behavior.

Distractions- Now you can add distractions and start “proofing.” You can make it harder for the dog by changing location, adding distractions, varying your distance from the dog, changing handlers, etc. You use these variations to teach the dog that everything is irrelevant to his getting the reward except the cue and his response to it. He needs to know that no matter where he is or what he’s doing, if he hears or sees the signal for “Sit” he needs to do it to get the reward.

TESTING NOTE: The dog will need to demonstrate an obvious understanding of a sit cue by responding quickly and correctly at least twice for the Scoutmaster to witness. The leash must stay loose the entire time (not be part of the cue) and the dog needs to maintain the sit for a reasonable amount of time to show understanding of the behavior. The cue can be a verbal and/or hand signal. A cue can be repeated, but not to excess.

The Down:



Lying down is something dogs do naturally, but you now want to be able to get the behavior on cue. This will be similar in progression to the sit cue. Start the way you did for sit, except; you are going to wait for the dog to lie down.

Ignore all sits and other behaviors. Some dogs take awhile to offer a down and others try it quickly. If your dog takes awhile to offer it, you can pull up a chair and wait. You could also go to the “lure” method for a few repetitions.

Luring the down- Start with the dog in a sit. Put the reward in front of the dog’s nose and slowly move it straight down to the floor. As the dog crouches, move it along the floor away from the dog. As the dog follows the reward with his nose, the rest of his body will go into the “down” position. As soon as the dog lies down, click and reward him with the item you used as a lure. For dogs that are really resistant to the down, you can sit on the floor (or for small dogs, put them on a table) then bend your knee till your leg creates an arch. For small dogs on a table, you can use your arm instead of your leg. With the dog on one side, put the treat on the opposite side of your leg or arm. Put the food low enough that the dog is encouraged to try to go under the obstacle. You might need to start with a high obstacle the dog barely needs to duck under and gradually lower the obstacle until the dog HAS to lie down to get far enough under it to get the treat. Voila! The dog is doing a down! After several repetitions of this, see if you can raise the obstacle a bit and still get the dog into a down. Gradually move the obstacle up until it’s no longer needed.

Repeat- Get him back into a sit or stand, and wait again. Just as with the sit, each time will take less and less waiting. You are also teaching the dog that you want him to repeat the behavior that you clicked, because this will make the training of new behaviors go much faster in the future.

Add duration- Just as you did with the sit, build duration of the down.

Add the cue- Once the dog will offer the down rapidly and repeatedly, you can add the verbal cue right before he is going to lie down. Then, just as you did with the sit, vary the location and do some “proofing.”

Discrimination- When the dog knows multiple cues, he will need to learn to discriminate between those cues so that he gives the proper response to each different cue. If the dog offers several behaviors before he offers the correct behavior, he doesn’t understand what the cue means. You need to go back to the basics and then add the cue just before the behavior is offered and do lots more repetitions. Only reward when the dog gets it right on the first try. Dogs tend to have a hard time learning cue discrimination if the cues weren’t added at the proper time during the training phase or weren’t practiced enough.



They will tune in to the fact that you gave a cue, but will then try all the behaviors they know till they get it “right.” If you usually give the cues in a certain order, such as sit/down/roll over/play dead, that’s the order in which the dog will offer the behaviors to guess which cue you just gave him.

Variation is the key. If they “guess” wrong, you have a few options.

- A) You can mark his choice as wrong (with your No Reward Mark) and give the cue again then reward the correct response.
- B) You can mark it wrong with the NRM and pause the training session for a few seconds or walk away before starting again. Only a correct response on the first try gets rewarded.
- C) Mark the incorrect response with the NRM, re-cue, but withhold the reward (only the correct response on the first try gets rewarded.)
- D) The fourth option is to just wait. No mark, no reward, no re-cue, nothing... then start over after the pause.

Which option should you choose? Try them all. See what works best for your dog. Some need more encouragement than others to keep them from giving up on the effort.

TESTING NOTE: The dog will need to demonstrate an obvious understanding of a down cue by responding quickly and correctly at least twice for the Scoutmaster to witness. The leash must stay loose the entire time (not be part of the cue) and the dog needs to maintain the down for a reasonable amount of time to show understanding of the behavior. The cue can be a verbal and/or hand signal. A cue can be repeated, but not to excess.



Stay

Stay can be a very useful behavior to teach your dog. Once your dog understands what “Stay” means, you will find that you use it quite often.

Your dog should understand a No Reward Mark (NRM) before beginning this exercise. A NRM can be any sound that lets the dog know he's chosen a behavior that won't be rewarded. It is also recommended that you read through the sit and down training to get an idea of the proper training progression. Once your dog is reliable with sit and down, you can work on the stay.

What do you want- Before you can teach the dog a behavior; you have to know exactly what behavior you desire. For this exercise, we will start by trying to get the dog to remain in the chosen position for one or two seconds. Gradually, as the dog learns what is required, that will be increased to a much longer time requirement. Distractions and your distance from the dog will be worked on separately.

Video Example of training stay: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bJqTtsfbhU>



Teaching Stay- Put the dog in a sit or down position. Reward the dog with “good dog” (a keep doing what you are doing signal) and a few treats while he maintains the stay position. Then, hold a treat in your hand at the height of his nose only slightly out of reach. If he makes a move for the treat, say your NRM as you pull the treat out of his reach. Get the dog back into position and repeat the exercise.

Jackpot! The dog will soon figure out that if he stays in place for a few

seconds, he gets the reward marker (the click and then a treat.) Another form of indirect access- not going for the treat gets him the treat.

Release cue- You will need to use your release cue (see the “Heel” section above) to let the dog know when he no longer has to stay in place. By introducing it early, the dog will learn that he has to wait for your cue before he can move.

Repeat- Continue to repeat this exercise while gradually increasing the number of seconds that the dog has to remain in place and not trying to get the treat prior to the click.

Add the cue- Once he is staying in place for 30 seconds, introduce the cue. Tell him to sit (or down), and cue him to stay. Use a conversational tone. Dogs have excellent hearing; yelling won’t make this new word any more understandable.

Little Longer- Now all you have to do is to gradually extend the amount of time he has to wait before he gets the treat. Use the treat to tempt him to move, so that if he does, you can let him know it was not correct to move (with the No Reward Mark and no treat.) This will help clarify that it’s the remaining in position and ignoring the treat that gets him what he wants.

Make it more difficult- Distance. Distance is hard for dogs to accept. Knowing they aren’t supposed to move while you move away and leave them unprotected can be intimidating. So be sure to add distance gradually and do lots of repetitions and rewards for each small distance increase.

The following chart outlines the steps for teaching a reliable stay:

Location

Behavior: **STAY** (2 pgs.)

1 2 3 (Dark line means to repeat the section above it in new a location)

			Choose a sit or a down. Repeat these steps a second time when you have completed the first position chosen. (I'll use sit for this explanation) The dog should have a solid understanding of what the cue sit and/or down means first.
			Cue sit and require the dog's butt be on the floor for 1 second before click
			Cue sit and require the dog's butt be on the floor for 2 seconds before click
			Cue sit and require the dog's butt be on the floor for 4 seconds before click
			Cue sit and require the dog's butt be on the floor for 6 seconds before click
			Cue sit and require the dog's butt be on the floor for 10 seconds before click
			Cue sit, add "stay" cue and require the dog's butt be on the floor for 15 seconds before click
			Cue sit, add "stay" cue and require the dog's butt be on the floor for 20 seconds before click
			Cue sit, add "stay" cue and require the dog's butt be on the floor for 30 seconds before click
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 1 step for 1 second
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 1 step for 2 seconds (click when you return to the dog for all the next steps.)
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 1 step for 4 seconds
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 1 step for 6 seconds
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 1 step for 10 seconds
			Cue sit, add "stay cue," require stay while you step away from dog 1 step for 15 seconds
			Cue sit, add "stay cue," require stay while you step away from dog 1 step for 20 seconds
			Cue sit, add "stay cue," require stay while you step away from dog 1 step for 30 seconds
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 2 steps for 2 seconds
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 2 steps for 4 seconds
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 2 steps for 6 seconds
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 2 steps for 10 seconds
			Cue sit, add Stay cue, require stay while you step away from dog 2 steps for 15 seconds
			Cue sit, add Stay cue, require stay while you step away from dog 2 steps for 20 seconds
			Cue sit, add Stay cue, require stay while you step away from dog 2 steps for 30 seconds
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 4 steps for 2 seconds
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 4 steps for 6 seconds
			Cue sit, require stay while you step away from dog 4 steps for 10 seconds
			Cue sit, add Stay cue, require stay while you step away from dog 4 steps for 15 seconds
			Cue sit, add Stay cue, require stay while you step away from dog 4 steps for 20 seconds
			Cue sit, add Stay cue, require stay while you step away from dog 4 steps for 30 seconds
			Work through the above "steps away" again, this time turning your back to do the steps, starting with briefly turning your back right in front of the dog and working through the steps up to 4 steps, then face the dog and wait 30 sec before returning to him to click.
			Continue adding steps away and building duration till you can cross the room
			Cue sit, stay, take one side step for 1 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take one side step for 2 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take one side step for 4 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take one side step for 6 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take one side step for 10 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take one side step to the other side for 2 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take one side step to the other side for 4 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take one side step to the other side for 6 sec, return to front and click

			Cue sit, stay, take one side step to the other side for 10 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 2 side steps for 2 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 2 side steps for 4 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 2 side steps for 6 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 2 side steps for 10 sec, return to front and click
			Repeat steps to the other side
			Repeat with 3 steps on each side
			Repeat with 4 steps on each side
			Cue sit, stay, take 1 step toward the side of the dog for 1 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 1 step toward the side of the dog for 2 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 1 step toward the side of the dog for 4 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 1 step toward the side of the dog for 6 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 1 step toward the side of the dog for 10 sec, return to front and click
			Repeat on other side of the dog
			Cue sit, stay, take 2 steps toward the back of the dog and turn to face the dog for 1 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 2 steps toward the back of the dog and turn to face the dog for 2 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 2 steps toward the back of the dog and turn to face the dog for 6 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, take 2 steps toward the back of the dog and turn to face the dog for 10 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, go to the back side of the dog (near his tail) for 1 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, go to the back side of the dog (near his tail) for 2 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, go to the back side of the dog (near his tail) for 4 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, go to the back side of the dog (near his tail) for 10 sec, return to front and click
			Cue sit, stay, go around the back side of the dog return to front on opposite side and click
			Cue sit, stay, go around the back side of the dog into heel position on opposite side and click
			Cue sit, stay, go around the back side of the dog into heel position on opposite side, hold for 2 seconds and click
			Cue sit, stay, go around the back side of the dog into heel position on opposite side, hold for 4 seconds and click
			Cue sit, stay, go around the back side of the dog into heel position on opposite side, hold for 10 seconds and click
			Cue sit-stay, jump up and down in front of the dog for 2 seconds
			Cue sit-stay, jump up and down in front of the dog for 4 seconds
			Cue sit-stay, jump up and down in front of the dog for 10 seconds
			Cue sit-stay and toss a toy away from the dog introduce release word and then click
			Build duration of stay after the toss by delaying use of release word/click
			Cue sit-stay and toss a treat away from the dog, release word, click
			Build duration of stay after the toss by delaying use of release word/click
			Cue sit-stay and have other dogs playing near-by, release word, click
			Build duration of stay before dog is released to play
			Use stay in very short duration every chance you get and build duration slowly in the current situation in which you have asked your dog to stay.

Note: Get 8 correct responses out of 10 in a row before progressing.

Only raise one criterion at a time- the stay may seem like a fairly simple set of requirements for the dog. If he stays in place, he gets a reward. If he moves he doesn't get a reward. However, it can be more difficult than that, depending on what is happening around the dog. The three parts to raising the difficulty are:

- First, work on duration- How long the dog has to stay
- Next, work on distance-How far you get from the dog
- Finally, add distractions- What is happening around the dog while he stays

As you work on each of the above three, remember to go back to very easy requirements on the other two. For example, if you are trying to increase the amount of time the dog will stay, don't work on distance at the same time. When you add a difficult distraction (like someone bouncing a ball nearby): don't start with a long duration or with you across the room. Work up to the more difficult situations gradually, taking it one step at a time as indicated in the chart. Distance is the most difficult requirement for most dogs. Dogs don't like their parents to leave them, especially when complying with the stay cue may make them feel vulnerable. Work on adding distance slowly to keep the dog is comfortable.

Only one cue- It is very important to give cues only ONCE! It is the dog's job to remember what he's doing. If you keep reminding him with, "Stay...Stay...Staaaayy", he never learns to keep his mind on the work at hand. He will also think that he only needs to respond when you keep repeating the cue. To a dog, "Stay" and "Stay, Stay, Stay" are two separate things.

TESTING NOTE: The dog needs to demonstrate an obvious understanding of a stay cue by remaining in the position chosen as the handler walks at least 20 feet away and then returns to the dog twice. The handler does not need to return to heel position or walk around the dog. The dog must not change position or get up or move from the spot where he was placed on the stay between the time when the handler cues the stay and the time the handler returns to the dog and get close enough to touch the dog's collar. The dog may be released from the stay position between and re-set for each demonstration of stay. If the dog moves, the stay will need to be repeated 2 extra times. The stay is tested separately from the come/recall.

CLASS #3 (come when called and friendly with people)

Come! (Recall)



This is another cue that can save your dog's life. All dogs should have an immediate response to a recall cue. Unfortunately, many people use "Come" without expectation of a response from the dog. Or worse, the person calls the dog and then does something the dog doesn't like (bath, nail clip, end of play time, etc.).

How does your dog feel? Your dog should have feelings of excitement and happiness when he hears the recall cue. It should always be associated with good things. He should get the same feelings for the recall cue that he has for "Want to go for a walk?" and "Want a cookie?" Many dogs, however, have learned to associate "Come" with negative things.

Humans make the same associations. How do you feel when you hear the word “virus”? Anyone that has a computer or has been sick with the flu probably doesn’t get warm and fuzzy feelings from the word. How do you feel about the word “reward”? Most people like getting good things. If your dog thinks your current recall cue might possibly mean “evil things are about to happen,” or your dog has run the other way when he hears the cue, you will need to teach your dog a new recall cue. You want the cue to only have a positive association with no “baggage” about what has happened in the past when he has heard it.

Yo, Rover- To teach a recall cue that your dog can’t wait to respond to, you need to take it back to the beginning. Starting over with a new cue is the best way to achieve this. Pick a word that you can yell loudly (in case the dog is far away.) You should not use the dog’s name as the recall cue. The dog hears his name all the time, but doesn’t have to come to who ever is saying it each time. The word “here” is often used as a new recall cue. You could even use a foreign word as your cue such as “ici” (pronounced E-C) which is French for “here” or a certain sound like “Yahoo!” or “Whoo Hoo!” which has the added benefit of reminding you that the cue means great things are about to happen for the dog.

Only for recall- Regardless of the word you choose, it should only be used:

- To call the dog when you know the dog will respond (as the dog learns the cue, this will be likely more often)
- When you have good things for the dog

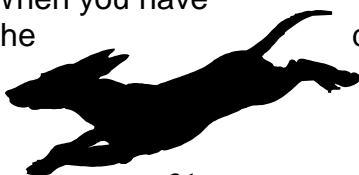
Avoid negative associations- your new recall word should never be used to call the dog for anything **he** doesn’t like. If you need to trim his nails, give him a bath or end his off-lead play session, go and get him; don’t call him to you.

Start at the beginning- If we want to dog to have positive associations with a word, we need to pair it with something the dog likes. What you will do is say the word, then pull out an extra special treat and give it to the dog. You will keep saying the word, followed by a treat that comes from a hidden location. You keep the treat hidden, so that the dog doesn’t associate getting the treat, with seeing the treat (or seeing your hand move toward the treat.) They will hear the word and after several repetitions will start to anticipate the treat that it predicts.

Don’t skimp- you should be using the dog’s favorite treats for this (but still use really tiny pieces.) You want to be sure to make the associations of the word and positive things as strong as possible. Don’t use kibble; pull out the bits of leftover steak! But if your dog really enjoys dinner time, you can use the recall word and then give him his dinner bowl.

Make it mean something- Once your dog is anticipating the treat when he hears the word, it’s time to pair it with an action. With the dog on a regular length lead, say the cue and take a few steps quickly backwards. When the dog comes with you, click and reward. Repeat this many times in many different locations.

Get Help- Now you are ready to have the dog go a bit farther. For this, you’ll need someone to hold the dog while you go a short distance away. I don’t recommend putting the dog on a stay for this exercise because he may start to anticipate the recall cue during the stay. It sets the dog up for failure in the stay. When you have the helper holding the dog, that person also has the job of getting the dog excited. You want your dog to think this is the most fantastically fun game in the world!



Restrained recall- The helper is going to hold the dog by the collar and say things in a very excited tone of voice such as “Where’s she going? Can you get her? Watch her! Ready!?” During the pep talk the caller walks a short distance away. When the caller is ready, he or she will call the dog. By the time the dog gets the recall cue, he should be practically turning himself inside out with excitement. The caller will reward the dog for responding.

Increased distance and difficulty- Gradually, increase the distance the dog has to travel to get to the caller. If played indoors with family or friends, you can have the caller move out of sight to call the dog. Don’t make it hard for the dog to find you at first. As the dog learns the game, the caller can get more and more hidden. The caller should always have lots of praise and high value treats ready for the dog. Each member of the family can take turns hiding and calling the dog. You want the recall word associated with FUN and favorite things.



Recall with distractions- with such a strong foundation for the recall cue, it shouldn’t be much of a problem for the dog when you add distractions as long as it’s done correctly. You will again need the help of an assistant or two. This will be easiest with someone to hold the dog (getting him excited), someone to hold the distraction and someone to call the dog.

Only one helper- A possible solution if you can only get one helper: You will have to find the right location to play this game. What you need is a long rope that is strong enough to hold the dog, but not too heavy for him to drag. The rope will be connected to the dog and then run around a solid object with the other end going to the caller. The rope is simply to keep the dog in place without having to use a stay cue. Please be sure the rope will not snag or get caught on anything after the caller releases it. If the rope gets caught after the dog starts toward the handler, he will get a “leash correction” for going to the caller (definitely something you want to avoid). To use this method, the caller will be the one getting the dog excited prior to giving the recall cue and releasing the end of the rope.

The distraction- Your helper will be holding a toy or treat that the dog needs to run past to get to the caller. The helper is NOT going to let the dog get the distraction item, but will be trying to entice the dog to stop and investigate.

Ready, Set, Go!- When everyone is ready, the caller gives the recall cue. As the dog passes, the holder of the distraction tries to get his attention. If the dog passes right by and goes to the caller, lavish him with praise and rewards. If he gets distracted, the person holding the distraction takes it out of the dog’s reach/view and does nothing. The caller also does nothing until the dog makes the choice to leave the distraction. Once the dog starts toward the caller, he should be praised and encouraged, then rewarded for making the right choice.

Try it again- you should continue with the trials until the dog is completely ignoring the distraction, regardless of what the distraction might be.

Calling away from a distraction- now that a strong reward history and good feelings have been established, it’s time for the hardest part. It was easy for the dog to fly by the distraction, but now he will be expected to leave one that has his full attention.



The distraction- Start with the helper feeding the dog a low value treat such as his normal dog food. The caller should have the dog's favorite treat.

The recall- When the dog is happily eating, say his name in a cheerful tone (to hopefully get his attention) and give the recall cue. If the dog responds right away, great! Reward him for being such a smart dog and repeat this several more times. Then raise the criteria by giving the helper a little higher value treat.

Did you mean me? If the dog does not respond to the recall cue, the caller should go and get the dog, gently lead him by the collar to the place where he was supposed to respond and let him sniff what he missed. Then try the exercise again. If he doesn't respond right away, lessen the value of the distraction item and raise the value of the reward for several more repetitions. You want to set him up to succeed, not practice ignoring you.

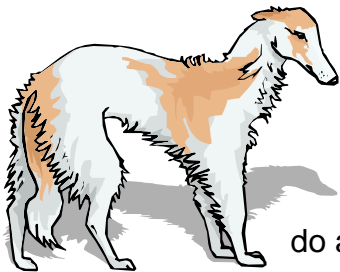
Practice makes perfect (or at least reliable) - You should practice using the cue anytime you can practice in such a way that the dog has a high likelihood of responding (and you have a high value reward). Even if it's just short recalls from the end of a standard length lead. The stronger you can make the "reward history", the more likely it is that the dog will respond promptly when you really need him to listen.

TESTING NOTE: The dog needs to demonstrate an obvious understanding of a recall cue by going directly to the handler (no detours) when the handler gives the recall cue from at least 20 feet away from the dog. This should be demonstrated twice. While a solid stay is best, the dog may change position or be held by a helper on a loose leash or light collar hold until the handler cues the recall. The dog must get close enough to the handler when called that the handler can touch/hold the dog's collar. A verbal and/or hand signal can be used as a cue. The stay is tested separately from the come/recall.



Safe with people:

Most dogs don't have a problem with this part of the certification. The ones that do have trouble are likely the shy dogs. The friendly with people is not a test of the dog's manners. They are not required to sit for the greeting (but it's so nice for the person greeting them when they do.) This part of the certification is to make every attempt to be sure that a dog that has earned the title of Dog Scout has a temperament that welcomes or tolerates human attention, and does not pose a danger to the public.



Shy Dogs- If your dog is shy around people, there are some things you can do to help him come out of his shell.

Control the humans- Most issues arise when people that know nothing about dogs try to greet your shy dog. Those people tend to do all the wrong things and only make matters worse.

Teach them the golden rules of dog greetings:

- Never touch a dog unless it has touched you first
- Respect a dog's space. If the dog backs away, don't follow. Just wait for them to come back to you.

- Avoid direct eye contact. The dog may have learned that eye contact from humans is safe, but when frightened, the dog is not thinking. Frightened dogs revert to instinct and instinct tells them direct eye contact is dangerous.
- Crouch down or sit on the floor. Dogs know you can't move as quickly when you are sitting and it makes them feel safer.

Work on socialization- If you meet someone that is willing to properly help you socialize your shy dog here is what you can do:

- If the dog will take food from the person, use that as a first step. Use treats the dog really likes and have the person help teach the dog that strangers can be treat dispensers too! It helps to have the dog do known simple behaviors for the treats.
- Any touching of the dog should be done to the less threatening parts of their body. These are the neck, shoulder, and under the chin.
- If the dog is not comfortable taking food from the person; have the person throw treats near the dog (not AT the dog!) Try to have the treats land so that the dog has to move away from the person to get the food. This makes the dog more comfortable. Between each toss, the stranger waits for the shy dog to look in his or her direction. With repetition, the dog may feel safe enough to get closer to the stranger.
- For really shy dogs, the stranger may need to sit down with his/her back to the dog and toss the treats or hold them in an open palm without looking at the dog.
- Be sure that you talk confidently and in a friendly tone with anyone you want your dog to meet. This lets the dog know that you are comfortable with the person.
- Never force a dog to meet someone. Let all greetings go at the pace the dog feels is safe.
- Control every interaction your dog has with people. If you can't control the actions of the person the dog is meeting, remove the dog from the situation.
- You need to be extra vigilant that your dog does not get into a situation where he feels he needs to defend himself. Once dogs learn that aggressive displays make scary things (people and other dogs) go away, they will use aggression again. The more times that aggression is rewarded (by the scary thing moving away) the stronger the aggression will be. The best remedy is to socialize the dog in such a way that he doesn't feel the need to use aggression.



TESTING NOTE: To show safe with people/dogs, the dog should be shown both on-leash and (if possible) off leash around people and dogs that are not family members with at least one person/dog that is not known to the dog. At least 3 people should greet the dog politely. The dog does not need to sit to greet as in the manners badge, but should not jump on the person, mouth them or show any signs of aggression. Fearful dogs need to show they will willingly approach a person (this can be cued) and allow at least brief contact with no signs of aggression.

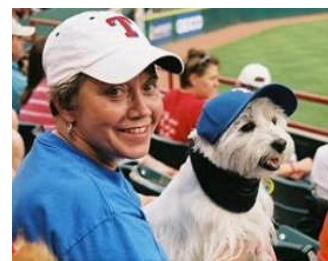
The Dog Scout title can be revoked if at any point your dog's temperament changes such that aggression may be likely or if there is a serious bite. Please do not identify your dog as a Dog Scout if they are likely to act in an unseemly manner. Your scout's behavior reflects on all other Dog Scouts. A Scoutmaster has the right to refuse the title to your dog if he/she feels their general behavior (even if not during the test) is not representative of a proper Dog Scout and the observations of others may also be taken into consideration.

Notes from Dog Scout Class (a.k.a. the handler's part of the test)

The Dog Scout test is not just for dogs:

The test is for the handlers too! DSA strives to expand the understanding between dogs and humans, thus increasing their bond. The less miscommunication you have with your dog, the better your relationship can be. We also want you to be good ambassadors of responsible dog ownership and that takes education. Please feel free

to share this knowledge with everyone you meet! The following pages are intended to cover the owner's requirements for the Dog Scout test along with some of the things you need to know to better understand the "Dog Scout Way." These pages assume you have a basic understanding of how positive training works. If that is not the case, please first read "How Dogs Learn."



Stewart, DSA
enjoys a ball game

Training doesn't happen overnight:

While the use of positive training can help dogs learn behaviors at an amazing rate, it doesn't happen overnight. This is especially true at the beginning of the training process when the dog is still learning to learn.

Keep it Short and Fun- Training sessions don't have to be formal, long and tedious. You can practice a behavior a few times throughout the day or as situations for practice present themselves. Training should always be fun for both you and the dog. As you spend time with your dog, make mental notes about what his favorite things are in life, his favorite foods, toys and activities. All of these things can be used as rewards. Praise is OK, but don't rely on it too heavily. Dogs do what works for *them*, not what makes *you* happy. If they don't see any benefit to doing something, most will abandon the behavior.

Have patience and if your dog doesn't seem to be "getting it," perhaps you need to change the puzzle or try a different approach. It's also possible you progressed too quickly and just need to back up a few steps in the learning process. As long as things are presented clearly for the dog and the dog has positive motivation to learn, he will learn quickly and retain the knowledge much more easily.

Eye Contact is key:



Getting your dog to look at you can solve many problems. You also need to have your dog's attention before you can teach him anything! The problem we run into is that in dog language, direct eye contact is a threat. They have to learn to accept it from humans as a non-threatening gesture. You also want them to be comfortable giving you direct eye contact and you should never use direct eye contact if you choose to scold your dog.



Read through the "Teaching Dog Scout Behaviors" to learn how to teach your dog that giving you eye contact is a very good thing.

The Verbal Click- A "verbal clicker" such as "Yes!" is helpful in certain situations so that you don't always need to have your clicker ready to click. Just say "Yes!" in place of the click. You can also choose a foreign word instead of "yes", so the dog is less likely to hear it everyday

conversation and get confused. In fact, it doesn't even need to be a word. It could be a certain sound: "Psst", a click noise, a whistle, whatever.

Do I always have to have a clicker?

Keep in mind that for many reasons, using a clicker to teach new behaviors is more effective than using a verbal "click", but the verbal click of your choice (listed above) can be used to easily reinforce any behaviors your dog already knows. In other words, you can teach behaviors with the clicker, then switch to a verbal "click" for everyday life.

Do I always need treats?

It is also recommended that when your dog is learning a new behavior, you use rewards that are of very high value to the dog (preferably ones you can deliver rapidly and in quick repetitions.) For most dogs, this means food. The good news is that once the dog fully understands a behavior and will do it on cue, regardless of the situation, then you can start to use non-food rewards.



This could mean play time with a toy, praise, or "life rewards" like opening a door to let the dog go outside or going for a ride. Be sure to mix in some of the treat rewards on occasion to keep motivation high. You will also be able to get many different behaviors (like a full Obedience routine) for a single reward once the dog is taught that it may take multiple behaviors to get a reward. You need to work up to that point slowly so the dog doesn't quit trying.

Note: The following section titles are listed on the Dog Scout test check off sheet. This test requires that the handler understand or be able to demonstrate their portions of the test. If you take a dog through that test, you may be asked to tell the Scoutmaster what is meant by the underlined titles that follow.

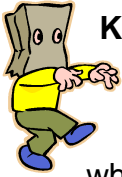
Parent manages the dog's environment and keeps the dog out of trouble:



By this, we mean that the parent understands that they are responsible for watching the environment around the dog for signs of trouble and taking any steps necessary to keep the dog safe and in a calm state of mind. If you know your dog is afraid of kids, then it is your job to be sure that kids don't get close enough to make your dog feel he has to react defensively. If your dog can't handle the exuberance of puppies, it is your job to be on the lookout for puppies and to be sure they don't get in your dog's comfort zone. The dog should feel you are in control of every situation so that he doesn't get into trouble by dealing with things the only way that dogs know (barking, growling, biting, etc.).

Awareness: To do this, you will need to practice being aware of what is happening around your dog. People and dogs should not be able to "sneak up", you should see them approach and if necessary, move your dog away or ask them to stop. Being able to read your dog's body language properly can go a long way towards a better understanding on how he is feeling in a given situation, especially since those feelings can change quickly based on a slight change in the dynamics of the situation.

Be ready to act: The dog might be fine with the child petting his shoulder, but when the child reaches for the dog's ears, he gets frightened. Before the dog reacts any further (to get himself out of the frightening situation), you have to react to get the child away from the dog. See Body Language 101 for more details.

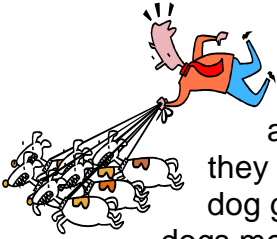


Kids and Dogs: Children and dogs can be a lovely sight or it can be a nightmare waiting to happen. Kids are grossly inappropriate around dogs and seem to do all the things that make them more likely to get bitten. Sadly, it's the dog that gets blamed for defending himself. You will need to be extra vigilant when children are around your dog. See the "*Dog Bite Prevention for Parents*" page on the DSA website for things you need to know about safe interactions.



Parent has mastered the phrase "please get your dog back":

You should understand that these are not fighting words and you should not take offense if someone says them to you. Using this phrase (or anything similar) is part of your contract with your dog that says you will handle all situations. No one should have to use this phrase with you, because you should be aware of where your dog is and what your dog is doing at all times when they are in public with you. You should understand how to encourage proper dog greetings and will ask permission from other dog parents prior to letting the dogs meet.

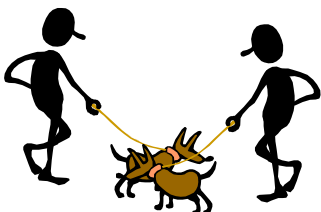


Don't Wait- Don't be hesitant to use this phrase if a dog is getting "in your dog's space." By using these words before the other dog gets in your dog's comfort zone, your dog won't feel pressured to use defensive tactics to get the offender away. For more detailed information on this subject, please read the article called: "*He Just Wants to say Hi*" by Suzanne Clothier found at: <http://www.flyingdogpress.com> (It's worth the hassle of the free membership to read this article!!)

Parent knows how to encourage proper greeting behavior between dogs:

Dogs communicate a tremendous amount by body language before they get close enough to touch or sniff each other. By allowing or encouraging your dog to display non-confrontational body language, you can avoid conflicts when two dogs meet. You should understand how to encourage proper dog greetings:

- Always ask permission from the other dog's parent prior to letting the dogs meet.
- Allow the dogs to perform an arching approach (or help them to do so.)
- Don't tighten the leash anytime that two dogs are within (or approaching) bite range of each other. Tightening the leash can cause your dog to say things with body language that they probably don't mean. A tight leash can cause stiffness or a raised posture. Both of these body language signals can trigger aggression. An alternative is to teach the dog that tension on the leash is a cue to look at you mentioned in the training section.
- The dogs should spend very little time nose to nose (a confrontational posture) and should move to the "doggie handshake" (nose to butt) position quickly. It's OK if they circle a bit; just keep the leads from tangling.
- They should not stay in this position more than a few seconds (about the time it takes for a human handshake.) It's a greeting, not a full exam.
- If tension or stillness develops in either dog, it is a pre-aggression signal.
- Don't panic, but get the dogs apart peacefully as quickly as possible.



- Inform the other parent that they need to call their dog and as the person does, call your dog to come to you.
- If one dog “turns tail” to leave or is called away from the other dog, the remaining dog may see it as an opportunity for a “cheap shot” (bite) at the rear of the dog that is leaving. If you need to move your dog away from another dog, call him... don’t use the leash. You could also walk right between the dogs confidently. This is something adult dogs do with younger dogs and it’s a clear and understandable signal for the dogs.

Recall (Come) Practice



Your dog should have a strong recall (“come”) response. This is taught through practice. See the page on “*Teaching the Dog Scout Certification behaviors.*” Practice calling your dog away from things that catch his interest. The best reward for these situations is a small treat before allowing the dog to go back to the item he’s interested in (if it’s safe.) This

teaches him that coming to you does not mean an end to his fun, but rather a reward and a return to the fun. If you have to (and your dog is not food aggressive) you can “lure” him away from a dog by putting food right in front of his nose and using it to lure him to you. If you have called the dog and he ignores you, go get him and then try a call-reward-return sequence a few times.

Parent knows proper leash handling techniques to discourage aggression:

By keeping your leash slack and using your voice to call your dog away from another dog, you can avoid forcing your dog to display aggressive body posture. A dog straining/pulling on a leash tends to be “up on its toes” and this is a very confrontational posture. They also are stiff and tense rather than relaxed because of leash tension. A tense body in your dog, along with other signals, can tell an approaching dog that your dog is ready to fight (even if he is not.)



Fighting “words” = Aggressive Cycle

Causing your dog to display body language that says he is ready to fight, will cause other dogs to be on guard and much more likely to react aggressively. This causes a bad behavior loop. Your dog is giving improper signals without knowing it, which causes almost every dog it meets to act aggressively or defensively, so he starts to act defensive because he is anticipating the other dog’s reactions. Before long, you have a dog that is “dog aggressive” on leash. Teaching your dog a strong recall response away from the distraction of another dog or that leash tension means to look at you can go a long way toward breaking this cycle of aggression.

Get Positive Help- If your dog has aggression issues, practice getting your dog to look at you (and reward that choice) when he is in the presence of whatever “sets him off.” Please seek the help of aggression experts that use positive methods. The use of punishers to “correct” aggression can make it much worse.

The Other Parent

By asking for permission before your dog meets another dog, you avoid surprising other people. You can also assess their competence by observing their reactions. If a person significantly shortens his or her dog's leash, don't let your dog greet. If they let their dog's lead go slack, you do the same and let the dogs communicate.

Ending the meeting- A greeting should only take a few seconds. If both dogs want to play, fine, keep the leads loose. If either dog decides the meeting is over, both dogs should be called away from each other at the same time.

Your mission, should you choose to accept: Learn to read your dog's signals and then take the initiative to react to them before situation gets out of hand.

Parent understands that aggression is normal dog "language", but also understands how to encourage the dog to make other choices:

People are not expected to love every other human being on the planet, but for some reason people expect their dog to love all other dogs. We have to realize that dogs are individuals and are allowed to dislike another dog or a dog's behavior.



Pests and Punks- Most commonly, dogs have little tolerance for pests and punks. If we are bothered by a pest or punk, we will usually try to leave, or try to get the other person to leave. Your dog will do the same. If he is on a leash or confined by a room or yard, he knows he cannot leave. His only other option is to try to get the pest or punk dog to leave him alone.

Normal dog language- He does this by showing teeth, growling, barking, snapping or biting. This is normal dog behavior and should not be punished. If your dog does this to another dog, ask yourself:

- 🐾 Why you were not paying attention to the situations developing around your dog
- 🐾 Why you didn't take actions to prevent your dog from feeling the need to defend himself.

Punishment = No Ticker in the Bomb

If these warning signals are punished, you are telling the dog that bad things happen to him if he gives warning signals. He will likely associate the punishment with the signals he was giving (or with the presence of other dogs.) This essentially takes the ticker out of the time bomb. His feelings in those situations and about the other dog won't change (and may get more defensive.) He just won't let you know until he "snaps" for "no apparent reason." He would have given you plenty of warnings about his intentions and feelings if he hadn't been punished for showing them. It's a very bad cycle that dogs and people get into simply because of miscommunication between two very different species (dogs and humans.)

A Better Way- Instead of punishing the dog for being a dog, you will need to take a proactive role in keeping your dog from feeling like he has to defend himself, his space, his toys or you. This is where you can use the phrase "please get your dog back" if the other dog continues to be a pest or punk.

If your dog is on the receiving end of the "please get your dog back" request, call him away from the dog he was pestering so that the



communication (signals) from the dog he's bothering don't have to escalate to a stronger level. By watching your dog's interaction with other dogs and calling him back BEFORE it gets out of hand, you can teach your dog to recognize signals that mean it is time to move away from another dog. You can also help him show calming signals (see below.)

Dogs can be good teachers

If your dog just doesn't seem to be "getting it", don't be afraid to let other dogs teach your dog "manners" using normal dog language such as growling or snapping. The key to picking the right dog as a "teacher" is to pick a dog that has had lots of experience playing off lead with other dogs.

Bite Inhibition- It is during these off lead play times that dogs learn "bite inhibition." This means they learn just how powerful their jaws are and they learn to control (inhibit) their bites so they don't do any damage. It is very rare for an injury to occur during these "lessons" unless the "teacher" dog has not had the opportunity to learn bite inhibition by playing off lead with other dogs.

Off lead play needs proper supervision

Off lead play between dogs that is supervised by someone who is good at reading dog body language is a great way for your dog to learn to understand "dog language." Dog daycare is usually perfect for this; dog parks are sometimes the worst for this.



Dog Daycares should have staff that is experienced in reading dogs' body language as it changes during play and interaction with others. Daycare dogs should also be screened for temperament prior to their entry.

At dog parks, you likely have people who, if they are even paying attention to their dogs, do not have a clue what they are seeing. They correct the dog for normal behavior and let rude or obnoxious behavior go unchecked.

Choose playmates carefully: Your dog can have one bad experience with another dog and take years of work to get over it-- if ever. This is especially true if your puppy is in a "fear period" (a developmental stage during which fearful situations can create life long fears and phobias. Choose your dog's playmates very carefully and always watch what they are saying to each other through vocalizations and body language.

Stop problems before they start: If two off lead dogs stiffen or lock eye contact that is your signal to break them up. The most effective way to do that is to firmly say to them "knock it off" as you physically walk between them. You are then using body language they can understand without causing improper body language in the dog (as you would by grabbing a collar.) If the staring continues, you will want to separate the dogs till they can "play nice" without "cussing" at each other with eye contact. The book "*Aggression in Dogs*" by Brenda Aloff (ISBN: 1-59196-073-8) is a fantastic, "must have" book that will teach you everything you would want to know (and more) about handling and preventing all types of aggression issues. "*Click to Calm*" by Emma Parsons is another great book, with many helpful exercises and information, and a bit easier to read than Brenda's book for those not in love with reading about behavior modification.

Resource Guarding- Be aware of whether or not your dog sees you as an object to keep away from the other dogs. If your dog stands by your side and dares another dog to approach,

or as another dog is approaching you, your dog “cuts them off” by walking or standing between you and that dog, you might have an issue. In that case, your dog could also be a “resource guarder” that gets into fights over toys, food or personal space. This situation is covered in the book by Brenda Aloff that was just mentioned or you could read the book “*Mine!*” by Jean Donaldson (ISBN: 0-970629-4-2) for information that is specific to resource guarding.

Parent understands the use of calming signals:

Calming signals is a fancy name for the body language that dogs use to tell other dogs that they are not a threat. In a sense, they are saying “calm down, I mean you no harm.”

Examples of calming signals are:

- Arching approaches (putting a slight curve in their approach)
- Averting gaze (Looking away)
- Relaxed body posture with the tail in a neutral, mid-level position or wagging normally
- Crouching or rolling on the back



Improper body language that needs to be interrupted, changed or redirected to an acceptable behavior includes:

- A direct, strait line approach of one dog to another (this is very assertive behavior)
- Direct eye contact with another dog held for more than 3 seconds regardless of how close the dogs are to each other (this is similar to a human that gives another human an inappropriate hand gesture. If the dog that is being stared at gives it back, a fight will start when the dogs get close enough)
- Stiff or tense body posture with the tail held high (Assertive body language)
- Standing “tall on the toes” is very assertive and can be caused unintentionally by a tight leash

You can affect or cause your dog’s signals

The previous signals can be aided or inhibited by you and your leash handling. Other calming signals that your dog may exhibit are: licking his lips, scratching his neck, yawning, and sniffing the ground. These signals might be given to you if your dog is nervous or feeling confused. This is especially true in dogs that have been punished by a human.

Parent understands the value of making dogs “choose”, using indirect access:



Helping your dog learn that charging toward or leaping on everything they want is not necessarily the best way to get it, will teach the dog self-control. Indirect access means that the dog has to do something that *indirectly* gets the dog what it wants.



Indirect Access = Self Control

Using indirect access exercises has the value of teaching dogs self-control. They will exhibit less “out of control” behavior. This behavior can be expanded to many areas of the dog’s learning. The more *self-control* the dog has, the better behaved he will be and the less *you* have to do to control his behavior. An example of this is when a dog looks at the parent to get food that is being held out to the parent’s side (direct access would be getting food for

staring at the food). Dogs that learn that they have to sit to get attention from humans have learned self-control through indirect access (direct access would be jumping up on people.)

Self controlled greeting of a human

To teach a dog to sit for a greeting, the person holding the leash acts as a “post” that doesn’t let the dog past a certain line. Anyone that approaches has to follow one simple rule; If the dog is sitting, it can have all the attention it wants-- If the dog jumps up, the person has to move out of reach till the dog sits again (this is where having the “post” helps by letting the greeting person know where “out of the dog’s reach” is.)

More self control- Additional examples of having the dog “choose” to behave (rather than being forced to do something) include the “Choose to heel” exercise and the “Leave it” where the dog chooses to look or move away from the food or other tempting item. These are more fully explained on the training pages for the dog’s Dog Scout test requirements.

Dog Body Language 101

Signs of a happy/content dog:

Head up or in normal position

Tail relaxed/wagging (full range of motion)

“Grin” on face (mouth open with corners of the mouth wrinkled)

Ears in relaxed/normal position

Able to sleep/eat

Playing with or chewing on toys

Eyes move freely (not focused on any one subject for more than a few seconds)

Signs of a fearful or stressed dog:

Head down/held low (may be turned away from other dogs/people)

Tail low or tucked between legs (may wag weakly)

Mouth closed/may see wrinkles at corners of mouth

Ears held back/low (if tall ears: they may stick out to the sides or be folded against the head)

Hair on the back may be raised (esp. near the tail)

May roll on his back with belly exposed

May urinate while crouching or on his back

May “freeze” and be stiff all over/glassy eyed or will show body tension and stiff movements

May try to run away (usually with tail tucked and head low)

May growl, snap, show teeth or whine

May repeatedly bark with a short, high-pitched yap or yelp

May be constantly moving, restless or have decreased activity levels

Won’t sleep or rest

May try to hide in or behind things

Quick yawning (looks nervous, not tired)

Excessive drooling, “ropes”

Trembling

Feet sweaty (leaves paw prints that evaporate quickly)

Disinterested in food

Shallow or rapid breathing

Excessive and/or sudden hair loss

White rim of eye showing more than usual

Muscle ridge visible around the eyes or mouth

May show calming signals like lip licking, ground sniffing, shaking (like when wet) or scratching (like he has an itch).

Signs of a yielding dog:

May try to lick the face or mouth of a more assertive dog

May paw gently at the face of a more assertive dog

Head down/low (may be turned away from assertive dog/person)

Tail low/tucked (may wag weakly)

Ears held back/low

May roll on his back with belly exposed

May urinate while crouching or on his back (common for puppies)

Dog Body Language 101

Signs of an assertive dog:

Whiskers flared forward
Head held high
Tail held high and stiff (may wag stiffly or just at the tip)
Mouth closed
Ears up/forward
Direct eye contact
Hair on the back may be raised (but not usually near the base of the tail)
Movements may be stiff or jerky
Looks like he's standing up on his toes
May growl
May try to put his head and/or paws over another dog's back or shoulders
Mounting another dog

Signs of an aggressive dog:

Head and tail held high and stiff
Stiff body movements
Direct eye contact
Lips curled/ teeth showing
May growl or bark menacingly (deep and throaty)
Hair on back may be raised (but not usually near the base of the tail)
Shoves, throws or pins another dog to the ground while growling
Bites & shakes another dog's neck or shoulders while giving a serious growl (not a play growl)
(not to be confused with playing where the dog's body will be supple & relaxed)

Signs of a playful dog:

Play bow (front legs on the ground, butt up in the air, tail wagging)
* Pushing/nudging another dog with his nose while tail is wagging
* Wrestling silently or with play growling
* Playing chase/tag
* Tug-o-war
* Barking at each other in a playful tone
* Pulling on another dog's collar**

NOTE: the above playful situations marked with a "" can quickly turn into aggression. Learn to watch body language for changes and stiffness and listen to the dog's vocalizations

**** This can be dangerous & life threatening if the dog being held by the collar lies down & rolls over. This action can cause the jaw of the 'holding' dog to get wrapped/trapped in the collar. It usually causes one dog's airway to be cut off, while panicking the other because he's trapped by his jaw. If they cannot be properly 'flipped' back into position to untangle the collar, one dog can suffocate & the other may break his jaw. Discourage any collar grabbing or remove the collars during play or when dogs are together**

The Dog Scout Way

The Dog Scout Way encompasses so much! It is the basis of the Dog Scouts organization and covers all the stuff that we, as “the smart end of the leash” need to know.

Parting comments from Dog Scout Camp, summarizing “the Dog Scout Way”:

The Dog Scout Way is something that you have to learn and practice to understand. Hopefully, after a week at camp, everyone has an idea of what we’re talking about.

As a Dog Scout parent, I hope we have shown you how to be the “thinking” end of the leash. You give your dog the attention and protection he deserves, and you are not afraid to tell another parent to get his or her dog back from your dog. You handle any situations so that your dog doesn’t have to. That’s the covenant you have with your dog. You are aware of the environment and the changing situations around your dog. You know your dog well enough to know what types of situations will make your dog nervous. You do everything you can to manage, control or avoid those types of situations. When your dog sees that he or she no longer has to be ‘on guard’ for developing situations (because you have taken on that job), the dog will be able to relax more and will be less reactive.

You have learned to have your dog look at you on cue, which alone can get you out of potentially sticky situations. When your dog is looking at you, they are not making direct eye contact with another dog (a threat in dog language.) It also appears to other dogs as if your dog is ‘looking away’, which is a calming signal and will help other dogs around you be less reactive with your dog. A dog that is paying attention to you is not ‘surfing the environment’ for better and more interesting things. He knows that you are the giver of wonderful things and that his good behavior is what gets him access to the smells, sights and interaction in the environment. By making the dog responsible for his own behavior management, you have to do less asking for good behavior (sit, don’t pull, leave it, don’t jump on that, etc.), which gives you more time to just enjoy your dog and be proud of how smart he or she is.

You know how to conduct yourself in public. You are a good representative of a responsible dog parent. You clean up any messes your dog leaves behind (feces, urine, vomit, hair, half chewed rawhides, etc.) so that you will not be the cause of a ban on dogs (in a hotel, park, or other public place.) You obey all laws and rules regarding your dog and keep them on leash or under excellent verbal control to keep them safe. You don’t allow your dog to harass people or interfere with their right to enjoy a public place. You set a good example that shows the joys of the human-canine bond. Your dog is under control and well behaved, showing people what is possible with positive training. You know that if we, as dog parents, are to keep from losing any more privileges, we must act responsibly, and must lead by example in our communities. We must always pick up our own dog’s poop, and when possible, pick up a few extras to keep dog parents from getting a bad reputation because of a few irresponsible people.

You treat your dog with kindness, knowing that while he or she may not be “perfect,” your dog is PERFECT at being a dog. Unlike Pinocchio, your dog will not magically wake up one morning a “real boy.” He will always be a dog, and we, as parents, have to respect the differences in our species. You have taken it upon yourself to learn as much as possible about those differences and how to bridge the communication gaps.

You know that punishment creates fear, and no learning can take place where there is fear. Your dog is not afraid to offer behaviors, worried that he might be “wrong” and get punished. I hope you both have learned that “wrong” is not “bad,” it is only information, and nothing to be afraid of. If incorrect behavior does not get rewarded, it makes the correct behavior (that does get rewarded) more clear to the dog. Punishment is not needed for the dog to understand when he has made the ‘wrong’ choice.

As a parent, I hope you also realize that being wrong is just feedback from your universe, and that success can often be a 1000-step process, with many wrong answers and dead-ends along the way. When Thomas Edison created the light bulb, it is said that he had 1000 trials that ended in no light bulb. A reporter asked him if he felt like a failure because he had ‘failed’ 1000 times. Edison replied that he was not a failure, he created the light bulb, it was just a 1000 step process. Don’t be discouraged if a behavior you want to teach your dog becomes a 1000 step process, there is a light at the end of that tunnel. As a dog trainer, you must have a lot of patience and be willing to keep trying, even when you are not seeing instant results.

You realize that dogs will work better for positive reinforcement, and that the problem with punishment training is that you must always have the threat of punishment looming over your dog’s head to get him to perform. He will never do what you ask because he “wants” to—he is only performing to escape an aversive. You also know that punishment inhibits ALL behaviors, so if you punish for one behavior, the dog will be afraid to perform any behaviors for fear it will result in punishment. You know that for this reason, crossover dogs will take longer to learn to trust that you will not punish them. (Note- crossover dogs are dogs that started their training with a punishment based training method, but now have a trainer that uses all positive training).

Knowing what you now know, we hope you will go home with this information and spread it like a disease, infecting everyone everywhere you go with responsible dog parenting and positive training methods. Like a pebble dropping into the water, the ripples reach out far from the original point of entry. We hope you will become involved in community service and public education in the communities where you live, because you WILL have an impact on those around you, even if it is just by letting people observe the joy of having a well-mannered dog and being a responsible parent. That is the Dog Scout Way.

The following DSA web pages (from www.dogscouts.org) and links cover the topics referred to above.

- Notes from DSA Class
- How Dogs Learn
- The book- [Culture Clash](#) by Jean Donaldson ISBN: 1-888047-05-4
- Article- “He just wants to say Hi” by Suzanne Clothier
<http://www.flyingdogpress.com/sayhi.html>

Recommended Reading

The following books and websites are highly recommended reading for all people with dogs, but especially Dog Scout parents, Troop Leaders, Scoutmasters and Dog Scout Evaluators.

Note: The Scoutmaster written test and the Dog Scout Handler's written test have questions based on info that might only be found in the recommended books! Most libraries should have these books or be able to order them for you. **Some of these may be needed for the written test.**

The Culture Clash, by Jean Donaldson (ISBN: 1-888047-05-4)

This book is an eye opening way of understanding the relationship between humans and dogs. It gives a keen insight into the dog's mind in terms everyone can relate to and understand. If you could only have one dog book, this should be it!

The Other End of the Leash, by Dr. Patricia McConnell (ISBN: 0-345-44679-8)

This humorous, well-written book tells us what to do and what to avoid based on years of studying dogs and their primate parents. Written with clarity, insightfulness, charm and humor it is a must read for everyone that holds a leash.

The Power of Positive Dog Training, by Pat Miller (ISBN:0-7645-36095)

Learn all about positive training from the very basic first steps, through a six-week training course. Both beginners and experienced trainers will find this an invaluable resource.

Video: Clicker Magic, by Karen Pryor (ISBN# 1-890948-01-2)

Karen Pryor teaches you all the techniques and essentials you will need to have your pet Clicker Trained in no time! There are 20 live demonstrations by Karen with dogs, cats, a mule and even a fish! Long considered the standard, Clicker Magic, provides a solid introduction and inspiring, fantastic footage. Running time 55 minutes

Website- <http://www.ClickerTraining.com>

This site has an incredible amount of info and lots of links to other all positive information and articles.

Website- www.DogScoutTroop107.com has pages about how to train a dog for the Dog Scout test and general manners using positive training. Also allows you to see what one troop is doing to keep busy.

Website - www.DogScouts.org Of course! This site has almost all the answers to the various written tests needed for certification through DSA. The "helpful articles" page is a treasure trove of valuable information all for free!

All Dog Scout parents should uphold the following laws. All members of DSA should strive to uphold these laws.

The Dog Scout Laws:

1. My dog must be safe with people and other dogs. I will always be courteous when I am with my dog in public. We will set good examples of a responsible parent and a well-trained dog. I will socialize my puppy and continue the socialization through out his or her life so that he or she will not fear novel stimuli, strange people or new dogs.
2. My dog must be well mannered, so that he or she will be accepted in public places. I understand and accept responsibility for teaching my dog proper manners using non-abusive methods like positive reinforcement training.
3. My dog should not be allowed to eliminate in an unseemly manner. I will refrain from letting my dog urinate on buildings, statues or other people's things, and I promise to always carry plastic bags and clean-up supplies to pick-up fecal matter. In an effort to reduce the negative impact of irresponsible dog parents, I will make attempts to educate, provide clean-up bags to and clean-up dog waste left by those less educated in responsible dog parenting.
4. I must obey leash laws and other rules when accompanying my dog to a park, business or other place where dogs are allowed. In an effort to reduce the number of places that refuse admittance to dogs, I will not let my dog be a nuisance and will keep my dog under control at all times. I will not allow my dog to harass wildlife. I will be familiar with and obey any laws regarding my dog such as license requirements, travel safety and vaccination documentation. I will not represent my Dog Scout in a way that will mislead the public regarding his or her right to accompany me in public places.
5. My dog should be helpful whenever he or she can be and I will utilize my dog's skills to allow the dog to assist with certain tasks and become more helpful. I promise to have my dog learn all that he or she can.
6. My dog should never be tied up and left unattended. I understand that I am unable to protect my dog from harm if he or she is tied in place where people and animals can harass him or her. I also understand that attaching a dog to a fixed object can cause location guarding and increase the chances of a person being bitten. I promise to never leave my dog in a vehicle unattended if there is any chance he or she could get hot, cold or be harassed or injured by humans or other animals.
7. I will always show kindness and caring toward my dog, so that others can observe the joys of responsible and loving dog parenting and appreciate the bond between my well-behaved dog and myself.
8. I will provide basic care for my dog. I will strive to feed my dog the best food I can afford and to educate myself about why some dog foods are better than others. I understand that keeping my dog at an optimum weight will reduce the chances of disease and injury. I will provide the maintenance that my dog needs to be healthy and comfortable. I will keep my dog clean and well groomed, including nail trimming. I will make my dog a member of the family and not subject him or her to living alone outside full time. I will create at least a basic emergency care plan for my dog in case I am hurt or otherwise unable to care for my dog. My dog will always have some form of identification.
9. I will strive to travel safely with my dog contained in a crate that is attached to the vehicle or in an accident rated seatbelt designed for dogs. This will help keep the dog safe during travel, will reduce the distractions I have while driving and could save my dogs life in an accident.
10. I will strive to live by the Dog Scout Parent's motto: "Our dog's lives are much shorter than our own, let's help them enjoy their time with us as much as we can." I will help my dog uphold the Dog Scout motto: "Let us learn all that we can, so that we may become more helpful"

Guidelines for the Dog Scout test

(Anyone taking or giving the Dog Scout test needs to know these things)

The Dog Scouts do not have a pledge, or a salute or secret handshake. They do, however, have a set of "laws." Dog owners should, whenever possible, try to carry out the Dog Scout laws, and exemplify a good canine citizen and responsible parent. Note how the certification items below relate to the Dog Scout laws.

Understanding the dog's titles:

- **"Troop Member"**: For dogs that haven't passed any DSA tests yet.
- **"Cadet Scout"**: Means you have paid the record keeping fee to DSA to get the collar tag and title and agree to uphold the Dog Scout laws. This is done on the "membership" webpage.
- **"Dog Scout"**: Passing all the certification requirements will qualify your dog to wear the DSA bandanna, get the title of DSA after his/her name and represent DSA in public. Only when you and your dog complete all the requirements of the Dog Scout test to a certified Scoutmaster's satisfaction, do they earn the title of Dog Scout.
- **"Honor Scout"**: The highest level of achievement. It is a great honor and testament of the dog's high level of training.

For the Dog Scout test, the Scoutmaster needs to have observed your dog on at least three different days prior to the dog being tested (some testing can take place on each of those days as well). So if you are videotaping the test, at least three different days will need to be shown. You can do different parts of the test on each of those days.

To become a full fledged Dog Scout (with the title of DSA) and to wear the red, official Dog Scout bandanna/uniform, the Dog Scout certification needs to be passed by you and your dog. This can be done in-person at a troop meeting when the Scoutmaster is doing testing or at Dog Scout Camp in Michigan or by submitting a video of you and your dog completing the requirements. Dog Scout tests can only be evaluated by a DSA certified Scoutmaster. The components of the certification do not have to all be completed at one time, but all components need to be passed within a 6 month time-frame. In other words, you can show the Scoutmaster that your dog has basic obedience at one check out and show the 'leave-it' and/or heeling later when you have had more time to practice it.

Fees:

There is a processing and materials fee (\$35) for the DSA certification that is sent in with the proper forms after the test is passed. This covers the patch, bandanna and official photo ID for your dog, the entering of your information and the dog's information in the DSA database and when your scout passes on he/she can get a free plaque on the Rainbow Bridge Troop memorial at Dog Scout camp if you advise DSA of the dog's date of birth (or best guess) and death.

Other Badges:

Your dog must have the title of Dog Scout prior to sending in badge forms for any of the specialty badges. This doesn't mean your dog cannot work on learning these specialty behaviors till he's a scout, you just can't send in certification forms until then. There are fees for each badge certification and only certified Dog Scout Evaluators can do the testing. To see the badge requirements, visit the "Dog Scout badges" page of the website.

TRAINING:

The previous pages of this guide include "How-to" positive training information for each of the dog's requirements. If you need help teaching your dog any of the behaviors, just ask the nearest Scoutmaster or the Certification Program Director. Positive training methods are required for all the behaviors on the test. If you have not been using reward-based training methods (if you have used punishment for incorrect responses from your dog when given cues for the test behaviors) then you will need to re-train those behaviors using only reward-based methods so that both you and your dog have a firm understanding of the methods DSA supports. This will also help your dog enjoy responding to your cues and working WITH you instead of FOR you.

GEAR:

The use of head collars, prongs or front attach harnesses during the certification is only allowed if there is a physical safety need (Ex: large dog with a frail or disabled handler) but can only be used as a "safety net", not to control the dog for the test behaviors. Choke chains are not allowed and should not be worn by any Dog Scout (wearing them for conformation showing without using them to correct or train the dog is the only exception.) Buckle collars and limited slip collars that are properly adjusted are allowed (this means the collar is only snug around the dog's neck when it's in the tightest position and cannot constrict into the dog's skin/muscle.) Have the parent try the requirements without these training aids (on a flat buckle or limited slip collar.) The parent should be working on obtaining the dog's compliance without the need of training aids. A standard harness (not a training aid) with the leash attached over the dog's back is also allowed.

The leash can be of any material (leather, nylon, cloth) and can be any length that gives enough slack to maintain a loose leash (no tension in the leash between the dog and handler) and that is not so long as to be a tripping hazard.

CUES (some call them commands):

Multiple cues are permitted in most cases as long as repetition is not excessive but where noted, are seen as a need for further training (see leave it.) Cues should be given in a normal tone of voice and not imply any threat or be overly loud. Raising the tone a few octaves to get the dog excited is allowed.

REWARDS:

To pass each requirement, a dog must perform as directed and when directed by his parent. No food or other reward items are permitted on the parent or in the immediate area where the certification is taking place. The dog may be rewarded between exercises (when the exercise is completely finished and no longer being evaluated.) The use of rewards during training is encouraged, but once you reach the level of the test the rewards should not need to be on you. You are allowed to praise the dog and use encouraging words at anytime during the testing but should not be acting like you have treats/rewards to get the behaviors.

PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

To get the DSA title, the parent needs to show they understand their responsibilities as the parent of a Dog Scout. This can be done through the use of the written handler's test found in this guide. To become a Dog Scout, each parent and dog must pass various requirements that will show that the parent has taught the dog basic manners and that the scout's companion is a responsible dog parent. The parent must do a good job of controlling the dog, and the dog must display a sound temperament at all times (this is evaluated even when not testing in front of the Scoutmaster and the Scoutmaster can refuse to pass any dog or handler they feel need

more work in these areas.) The Scoutmaster should be able to list specific incidents that illustrate his/her hesitation to certify the person and/or dog. Reports of incidents made by others may also be taken into consideration.

RE-TRIES:

This is a pass/fail certification, based on performance that is either acceptable or unacceptable. However, if the dog/parent team cannot complete a certain requirement, they may try that component again after some practice or additional training. The certification will be held after the Scoutmaster has had several days (at least three) to observe the person and dog interacting with people and other dogs and after the parent has received training on how to calm his dog and prevent aggression (read the notes from Dog Scout class.)

WHO IS CERTIFIED:

The certification for the Dog Scout title is for the dog. Each dog that a handler has will need to get his/her title separately. However, for programs like "Dog Scouts Welcome" only the handler that went through the testing with the dog and is listed on the dog's ID card is eligible to accompany the dog. So if multiple people want that privilege with the same dog, they will need to all be tested at the same time (written test and physical handling skills with the dog) and all their names will need to be put on the dog's badge form so they can be added to the ID card. Only one badge fee needs to be paid. Names cannot be added later without additional fees to cover the cost of a replacement ID card and written verification of the testing from a Scoutmaster (Do NOT turn in a second badge form on the same dog for a badge the dog has already earned!) A scoutmaster can choose to waive the written handler's test for a parent that has submitted it previously with another dog.

Guidelines for each test component:

1. Dog is safe and comfortable with strangers in normal circumstances with handler support and management. Dog can demonstrate an appropriate greeting of a human.

*(Related DOG SCOUT LAW #1: My dog must be safe **with people** and other dogs.)*

A friendly stranger will greet the parent and then the dog; the kind of stranger you might meet on the street that wants to pet your dog. He or she will bend down and talk sweetly to your dog, and try to pet your dog. The test is mainly about the person greeting the dog, but greeting the handler first is encouraged. The leash should stay loose.

To pass, the dog must accept or remain neutral to the stranger's advances. A dog that shows undue panic or unfriendliness with body posture, vocalizations or aggressive displays is not suitable to take in public near other people.

This is NOT a test of the dog's manners (like with CGC or the manners badge) but a polite greeting is nice. The dog should greet in a safe way- not jumping up or bouncing -which could knock over an elderly person or cause a sore nose if the person bends over and gets "bopped." The sole purpose of this test is to weed out potential fear biters or unsafe dogs. Parents with over exuberant dogs should be advised to read the section on teaching the dog self control and a polite greeting. Training for a proper greeting is explained in the training steps for the "Manners" badge.

Scoutmaster Note: The Scoutmaster can be the friendly stranger, they can designate someone to be a friendly stranger or if video taping for your own dog's Dog Scout title, you can

use people met randomly at a store, training facility, café, etc. Family members and members in your household cannot be the friendly stranger. It should be someone the dog doesn't know well, but doesn't have to be a totally new person to the dog. If you have a choice, choose people for this that know how to read dogs, and know how to safely approach dogs. If no such persons exist in your group of assistants, you must SHOW the assistants PRECISELY how to behave to keep the dog feeling safe, based on your knowledge of dog behavior, calming signals and dog social signals. If you are being evaluated for advancement in Scoutmaster Training, you will be evaluated on how and what you instruct your assistants and the parent to do.

Here are some pointers for the friendly strangers if they can be briefed before the meeting (also a good way for you to meet an unknown dog):

- *Have the assistant approach obliquely (from an angle, not a direct front approach), and speak directly to the parent, before looking at the dog.
- *A good thing for the stranger to say is "Hi! What a pretty dog, what's his name?"
- *Hearing the friendly voice will help put the dog at ease.
- *The assistant should wait until the parent talks back to him before looking at the dog.
- *The dog will base his reaction on the parent's reaction. The stranger knows that if he can get the parent to speak FIRST, the dog will see that the stranger is not a threat.
- *After the parent speaks the dog's name, and shakes the hand of the friendly stranger in a pleasant way, the stranger can move his attention to the dog.
- *Now that he knows the dog's name, he can say, "Oh, Sparky! What a pretty dog you are! Are you a nice puppy? Can I pet you?"
- *At this time, if the stranger senses any nervous "vibes" from the dog, he can turn sideways, and squat down (calming signals), not looking the dog in the eye.
- *Stranger should ask the parent for permission to pet the dog (to get the parent to speak some more...). Then the stranger can hold out his/her hand in offer to stroke the dog under the chin, and maybe on the shoulder.

THE DOG MUST APPROACH THE STRANGER and allow at least brief contact.

Some dogs are not shy or fearful—they just don't appreciate being touched by strangers. Use your judgment as to whether the dog can take the pressure of a greeting or not. You should know, from having been around this dog for a while.

As your dog's protector, it's your job to STOP the stranger greeting your dog if they are about to or are doing something foolish or invasive, especially if the dog looks like he is not up for a visit. The dog doesn't have to love it, but should at least tolerate the visit showing relaxed body language and be willing to approach the person and allow contact. Do not let the stranger follow a dog that is attempting to retreat. If the dog is trying to put space between themselves and the stranger, you need to respect that and help your dog communicate his/her wishes. Kids are the worst offenders for moving into the space of a retreating dog.

Parents:

You are evaluated on your ability to control the interaction a stranger has with your dog so that your dog feels safe and the person greeting your dog stays safe. As the parent of a Dog Scout, you are expected to do this EVERYTIME your dog greets a new person, not just for the test!

Additional Info:

Dog should accept the presence and touch of a friendly stranger. We're testing his or her tendency to be friendly with humans and not to threaten, bite them, run away or greet them in a dangerous way. The dog does need to move toward a stranger on his own or with prompting/cue on a loose leash.

- *Dog does not have to be "overly friendly" and Scoutmaster must realize that some dogs are standoffish.
- *"Stranger" should be well skilled or instructed in dog communication and handling and know how to use calming signals, if needed for shy dogs. Parents must do everything they can to help and support their dog.
- *The stranger should not try to touch a dog that has not touched him/her first (allow the dog to approach.) Remain as non-threatening as possible.
- *The stranger should ask the parent the dog's name as he or she approaches.
- *Dog must not be overly fearful (refusing to allow contact with the stranger at all or urinating from fear and not just excitement or a submissive temperament.)
- *Dog must not be aggressive (trying to ward off the stranger's approach with threat displays.)

Allowable:

- *The smart end of the leash can tell the tester his or her dog's name, and any other hints that would make the dog more receptive to handling, and would be well-advised to speak to the stranger first as he or she approaches, to allow the dog to see that the parent is friendly toward the stranger, too.
- * The parent can also give the dog cues, like "go say Hi", to let them know it is ok to approach the person.
- *Dog can be in any position for this test, and does not need to maintain a sit or stay.

Not Allowable:

- *Use of loud or threatening voice to intimidate the dog
- *Leash corrections (jerks on the leash)
- *A dog whose greeting can cause bruises, a loss of balance, etc. to the tester.
- *Physically forcing the dog to make contact with the stranger
- *Any aggression or threat of aggression toward the stranger or other humans
- *Any shy or fearful reaction to the stranger from which the dog will not recover and again approach the stranger or other humans

2. Dog is safe and comfortable being near other dogs on leash and off leash if handler feels it is safe and manages the environment

*(Related DOG SCOUT LAW #1: My dog must be safe with people and **other dogs.**)*

This part of the test makes sure that the dogs are not unjustly reactive (aggressive displays or overly fearful) when they are near other dogs both on-leash and off-leash. The dog being tested should tolerate the close proximity of other polite and friendly dogs both while the dogs are all on-leash and then all off-leash in a safe area. Parents are evaluated on their ability to protect their dog and keep the dog from feeling the need for a display or showing other signs of fear as well as preventing their dog from being a pest to another dog or human.

Parents should be honest with themselves about the dog's readiness to represent Dog Scouts if their dog has shown reactivity (barking, snapping, lunging, etc.) at other dogs. Handlers that have such good dog management skills that others that know the dog would be surprised to learn the dog sometimes has "issues" with other dogs may pass. But dogs that frequently "go off" on other dogs need to learn better coping skills while the handlers need to learn better management skills. There are several excellent resources for this information like the Dog Scout website, Control Unleashed book and Click to Calm book to name a few.

Scoutmasters can verify this part of the test by having several parents stand together with their dogs on loose leads. The dogs should not be under any 'cue', but rather simulate meeting and talking to these other people as if you had just met up in public. Parents will be expected to keep their dog from being a pest to any other dog and the parent should not ignore any 'pre-fight' body language. Leashes should be loose allowing the dog to show normal body language.

You should also observe the dog with other dogs while off-lead in a safe and contained area with or without the parents. Good areas for this are a dog park, a fenced yard or at a Dog Daycare. If these are not available, any fenced or contained area where the dogs are allowed to be will work. For video submission, video of your dog at doggie daycare will work.

To pass, the dog must not show any unwarranted aggression toward passive dogs. Some growling would be acceptable if being pestered by another dog. It's OK for a dog to say to another dog, "Leave me alone!" but that warning should stop as soon as the other dog responds. Overly friendly or assertive dogs should be prevented from pawing, mounting or "bullying" other dogs, so that those dogs are not forced to reply with a snarl, which could escalate to something else. These displays do not necessarily mean a dog is inherently aggressive. The behavior of the dog in its interactions with other dogs all week at camp or while being observed by the Scoutmaster over the three-day (or more) period prior to the certification will also be taken into consideration. Dog Scouts of America reserves the right to refuse to certify any handler and dog based on these or other observations. Titles can also be revoked if the dog's temperament changes for the worse or the parent does not do their best to prevent the dog from feeling the need to show an aggressive display. Keep in mind that if your dog is known to be a Dog Scout, their behavior (and yours) is a reflection on the organization. Scoutmasters should keep this in mind when determining if the dog is a good candidate for the Dog Scout title. People who don't know the dog should feel "I want my dog to be like that one" when they meet or see a Dog Scout.

Scoutmaster Note: Choose a location where none of the dogs are likely to act "territorial" and remove any toys that might be an issue. Choose other dogs that are "socially adept." This doesn't mean they necessarily have to be interactive and playful, but the dogs should be good at reading and giving appropriate body language signals. They can be neutral toward the other dogs, and ignore the other dogs, which is actually a good way to judge the reactivity of the dog(s) being certified. If you have observed 'issues' in a dog prior to the certification, you should advise the dog's parent to get some remedial training to work out the dog's (or parent's) issues. You are not obligated to put your dog in a situation with strange dogs of unknown temperament or to provide the remedial training if you don't feel qualified. This is one very important reason why we do not do "walk-in" tests. Dogs do not have to like all other dogs, but they should tolerate their presence without an excessive display. Dogs being tested or observed should not show excessive fear about being around other dogs.

Parents: It is your job to always try to keep your dog feeling safe enough that he/she doesn't need a threat display to cause others to get farther away. If this means you don't get to do certain activities with your dog or that you need to hang out farther away from the action, then that is part of being responsible. Don't put your dog into situations that you know will cause him/her to react and if you see a reaction, remove your dog from the situation so he/she can calm down. Do not advertize your dog as a Dog Scout (bandanna, uniform, "proud parent of a Dog Scout" shirt, etc.) if you know your dog is likely to act in a manner unbecoming of a well mannered scout.

Additional Info:

- *This requirement is to make sure a dog is safe around other friendly dogs and will be seen as a good ambassador.
- *Dog must be observed having normal interactions with other dogs
- *Dog should show an understanding of dog-to-dog communication and social signals
- *If dog lacks communication skills, parent can install various behaviors to help the dog avoid confrontations
- * Scoutmasters should make sure that none of the dogs that are together try to do anything that would incite a riot or an aggressive move by one of the other dogs
- *The smart end of the leash should know when it is inappropriate to let his or her dog play with other dogs (such as a timid dog in with an assertive dog that is bullying, when the dog is overly excited/stimulated/ in lizard brain, if there are guarding issues that could cause problems, etc. (remove any object being guarded if possible.)

Allowable:

- *A dog can growl or snap at another dog that is being rude, if it is interpreted merely as a "please get back" signal
- *Parent should use own good judgment as to which dogs he or she wishes to allow his or her dog to interact with.
- *The dog can pass this portion of the criteria without going off the leash, if deemed appropriate for the certification and with the reasons explained to the Scoutmaster, but the dog must tolerate reasonable proximity (a foot or two) to other leashed dogs while on a loose leash (and prove that he or she will show appropriate behavior in normal situations.

Not Allowable:

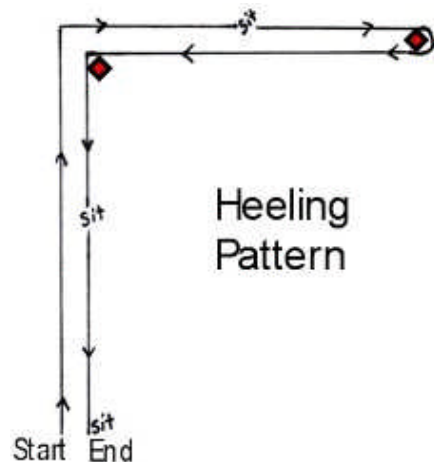
- *Use of loud or threatening voice to intimidate the dog
- *Leash Corrections (jerks)
- *Rough handling of dog
- *A dog must not make an aggressive move toward any other dog(s) that was unprovoked (see allowable)
- *A dog must not try to "lock on" with offensive eye contact with other dogs
- *The parent must not be intimidating the dog so that he will not attack the other dogs (the dog has to be nice on his own)

NOTE: The Scoutmaster reserves the right to not pass any dog that displays any signals, eye contact or other form of communication that would lead the Scoutmaster to believe the dog may be ready to bite. The certification does not have to proceed with any dog if there is any question as to whether it will be friendly or not.

3. Dog demonstrates an understanding of heel position and a heel cue and will choose to maintain heel position keeping the leash loose during a heeling pattern of a distance of at least 20 feet for each “leg” of the L that includes a left, right and U-turn, and 2 sits.

(Related DOG SCOUT LAW #2- My dog must be well mannered, so that he or she will be accepted in public places. I understand and accept responsibility for teaching my dog proper manners using non-abusive methods like positive reinforcement training)

For the Dog Scout test, the dog needs to show an obvious understanding of a “heel” cue by maintaining proper heel position on a leash that stays loose while the handler moves through a standard obedience test pattern or its equivalent:



It is the dog's job to stay in position next to the handler, not the handler keeping the dog in position. The handler should be walking a straight line, not “weaving” to make up for the dog's lack of heeling skill and handler needs to maintain a constant normal walking pace during the pattern (not speeding up or slowing down or walking extra slow). Slowing slightly for the turns is ok as long as it's not done just to keep the dog in position. The sits can be cued (verbal and/or hand signal) and the dog does not have to sit in perfect heel position (crooked or out of position still passes). However, the leash cannot be used to cue the sit, it must remain loose.

Note that a Scoutmaster can ask for any pattern that shows 90 degree turns to both the left and right, an about turn (can be to the left or right - handler's choice), at least 80' of straight line heeling (20' per “leg” of the pattern illustrated) and 2 sits somewhere on a straight line part of the pattern (not on a turn) and at the end.

WALK AT HEEL:

This exercise is more of a Novice level “Heel on Leash” than a Canine Good Citizen (CGC) walk on a loose leash. The dog has to show a clear understanding of where heel position is and be willing to maintain it as the handler moves through the test pattern. He must also sit when the handler stops (additional cues for the sit are permitted.) However, it is not judged like a Novice heeling pattern. Changes of pace and figure 8's are not necessary, but a right and left turn and an about turn (or U-turn) are needed to get the basic idea of how well the dog walks on a leash. Multiple cues are allowed as long as they are not to excess. This should be demonstrated TWICE to be sure the first time was not a “fluke.” An “L” shaped pattern is recommended:

Additional Info:

- *Heeling is on leash that should remain loose throughout the exercise to show that the dog knows where heel position is located and will stay in position during the entire pattern (no flexis/retractables and no guiding, dragging, luring or helping the dog)
- *Heeling off leash can be demonstrated if preferred, but dog is evaluated the same as if he were on-leash.
- *Performance does not have to be “obedience trial” caliber, but is much more than a simple loose leash walking performance (it must be real heeling with full sits at the

stops)

- *Pattern is up to the Scoutmaster, but should demonstrate that the dog can heel when turns in both directions are made, and will stop and sit when the parent stops (include TWO sits, not including the start and end point, please)
- *Leash needs to stay loose for at least 95% of this exercise. Brief tightening of the leash BY THE DOG is allowed but should only happen on 5% or less of the whole pattern.

Allowable:

- *Multiple cues and/or signals to heel, and/or to sit at the stop
- *Talking to the dog encouragingly and or patting your leg
- *Repeating an exercise or a portion of an exercise (will need to show 3 correct performances to make up for each incorrect performance on the day of the attempt)
- * Parents that must use head halters, prong collars or front attach collars for safety if they have a disability like weak hands or balance issues or a very large dog vs. a small person/child but we want to see the dog choose to comply. These aids can ONLY be used as a safety back-up, not as a means of getting the dog to perform the required skills.

Not Allowable:

- *Use of food or pretending to have food (or other items) so the dog will obey
- *Use of loud or threatening voice to intimidate dog
- *Leash corrections (jerks)
- *Rough handling of the dog
- *Whining (the handler) -- If the DOG is whining, you need to find out why
- *Touching the dog's body or leash to force or "hint" the dog into position
- *Choke Chains or improperly fitted (too tight) limited slip collars.
- *Training aids other than the parent's voice and leash/collar. No lures or aids for guiding the dog (leash around the dog's waist, use of dowel rods, head halters, prong collars or front attach collars without an obvious need for safety of the handler.)
- *Excessive barking (dog is not under control)

Scoutmaster Notes: Set up the heel portion of the test so that it is easiest for you to observe and evaluate. Some people are not used to following "directions" (as in an obedience trial), so try to make the pattern for the course "fool proof." Either have them follow along from one cone to the next, or follow a line on the pavement, or follow along the edge of a paved or carpeted area. This makes it easier for the people being tested. Using an "L" shaped pattern that starts at one end, follows the shape, includes a U-turn and re-traces the shape will show a left, right and about turn as required (see diagram on previous page.)

4. Dog will sit at least 2 times in response to a verbal cue or hand signal while not heeling and leash must remain loose

SIT ON CUE:

The dog will need to demonstrate an obvious understanding of a sit cue by responding quickly and correctly at least twice for the Scoutmaster to witness. The leash must stay loose the entire time (not be part of the cue) and the dog needs to maintain the sit for a reasonable amount of time to show understanding of the behavior. The cue can be a verbal and/or hand signal. A cue can be repeated, but not to excess.

The dog should be able to assume the sit position indicated by the parent. Multiple cues are allowed, but dog must respond to the cue given, and not just fortuitously sit because it was bored or tired or guessing which behavior is being requested. Having the parent show these behaviors twice each will show if the dog understands the cue as opposed to having it be an “accident.”

Additional Info:

This is tested separately from the other parts of the Dog Scout test. Dog’s butt must be on the ground. Dogs with medical or structural issues can get an exemption or modification if performing these positions is impossible or causes pain.

Allowable:

- *Multiple cues and/or hand signals to sit (within reason)
- *Repeating an exercise or a portion of an exercise (will need to show 3 correct performances to make up for each incorrect performance on the day of the attempt)

Not Allowable:

- *Use of food or pretending to have food (or other objects) so the dog will respond
- *Use of loud or threatening voice to intimidate dog
- *Leash corrections (jerks) or tightening of the leash as a cue
- *Rough handling of dog
- *Serendipitous action of dog, not in response to the cue (dog finally gets tired of the nagging and sits or was guessing)
- *Whining (the handler) -- If the DOG is whining, find out why
- *Touching the dog’s body or tightening the leash to force or “hint” the dog into position.

5. Dog will lie down at least 2 times in response to a verbal cue or hand signal and leash must remain loose

DOWN: The dog will need to demonstrate an obvious understanding of a down cue by responding quickly and correctly at least twice for the Scoutmaster to witness. The leash must stay loose the entire time (not be part of the cue) and the dog needs to maintain the down for a reasonable amount of time to show understanding of the behavior. The cue can be a verbal and/or hand signal. A cue can be repeated, but not to excess.

This is tested separately from the other parts of the Dog Scout test. The dog’s elbows need to be on the ground/floor. Dogs with medical or structural issues can get an exemption or modification if performing these positions is impossible or causes pain.

The dog should be able to assume the down position indicated by the parent. Multiple cues are allowed, but dog must respond to the cue given, and not just fortuitously lie down because it was bored or tired or guessing which behavior is being requested. Having the parent show these behaviors twice each will show if the dog understands the cue as opposed to having it be an “accident.”

Allowable:

- *Multiple cues and/or hand signals to lie down (within reason)
- *Repeating an exercise or a portion of an exercise (will need to show 3 correct performances to make up for each incorrect performance on the day of the attempt)

Not Allowable:

- *Use of food or pretending to have food (or other objects) so the dog will respond
- *Use of loud or threatening voice to intimidate dog
- *Leash corrections (jerks) or tightening of the leash as a cue
- *Rough handling of dog
- *Serendipitous action of dog, not in response to the cue (dog finally gets tired of the nagging and lies down or was guessing)
- *Whining (the handler) -- If the DOG is whining, find out why
- *Touching the dog's body or tightening the leash to force or "hint" the dog into position.

6. Dog will stay in either a sit or a down position, while handler walks about 20' away and returns to the dog close enough to put a hand on the collar (walking around dog to heel not required)

STAY:

The dog needs to demonstrate (twice) an obvious understanding of a stay cue by remaining in the position chosen (sit or down) as the handler walks at least 20 feet away and then returns to the dog. While away from the dog, the handler should mill about, show the Scoutmaster they have two clean-up baggies or briefly interact with another person. The handler does not need to return to heel position or walk around the dog. The dog must not change position or get up or move from the spot where he was placed on the stay between the time when the handler cues the stay and the time the handler returns to the dog and gets close enough to touch the dog's collar. The dog should be released from the stay position and re-set for each demonstration/repetition of stay. If the dog moves, the stay will need to be repeated 2 extra times. The stay is tested separately from the come/recall.

Additional Info:

The dog needs to remain in the chosen position until the parent gets all the way back to the dog. Upon return, the parent does not need to circle the dog into "heel" position. Leash can stay on or be removed – parent's choice.

Allowable:

- *Non-threatening encouragement to stay ("good dog", "good stay", etc.)
- *Repeating an exercise or a portion of an exercise (will need to show 3 correct performances to make up for each incorrect performance on the day of the attempt)
- *Parent can choose sit or down position for his or her own dog, dog needs to remain in the position chosen.
- *Asking the parents to show that they have at least two baggies while their dogs are on the stay or engaging in brief conversation or getting a handshake while they are away from their dogs.

Not Allowable:

- *Use of food or pretending to have food (or other objects) so the dog will stay
- *Use of loud or threatening voice to intimidate dog
- *Leash corrections (jerks) or anyone holding the leash of the dog (the end of a 20' long line can be held by a person that is not near the dog.)
- *Forcing into position
- *Rough handling of dog
- *Shouting, using a threatening tone or repeatedly chanting, "STAY!"

*Use of a mat, target, agility table or other indicator not likely to be found while out for a walk with your dog.

*Whining (the handler)-- If the DOG is whining, find out why

7. Dog will come directly to the handler 2 times when called from a distance of at least 20'. It is the handler's choice whether the exercise is performed on or off leash. If on leash the dog can be on a long line and drag the line with the evaluator holding the line.

COME WHEN CALLED:

The dog needs to demonstrate an obvious understanding of a recall cue by going directly to the handler (no detours) when the handler gives the recall cue from at least 20 feet away from the dog. This should be demonstrated twice. While a solid stay is best, the dog may change position or be held by a helper on a loose leash or light collar hold until the handler cues the recall. The dog must get close enough to the handler when called that the handler can touch/hold the dog's collar. A verbal and/or hand signal can be used as a cue. The come/recall is tested separately from the stay and other parts of the Dog Scout test.

Additional Info:

*Leash can stay on or be removed – parent's choice. But removal of the leash is recommended to prevent the dog from giving himself a leash jerk if the leash gets stepped on

*Dog should happily proceed directly to parent when cued (no side trips)

*A formal "front" is nice, but not required, but dog must come to parent (close enough to be held by the collar)

*A formal "finish" to heel position is not required

Allowable:

*Multiple cues and/or signals to come (within reason)

*Holding the dog until parent calls (dog does not need to be called out of a stay)

*Repeating an exercise or a portion of an exercise (will need to show 3 correct performances to make up for each incorrect performance on the day of the attempt)

*Parent can grab, hug or otherwise catch onto the dog when he arrives, and then put the leash on

Not Allowable:

*Use of food or pretending to have food (or other objects) so the dog will respond

*Use of loud or threatening voice to intimidate dog

*Leash corrections (jerks)

*Rough handling of dog

*Serendipitous action of dog, not in response to cue (or responding before called)

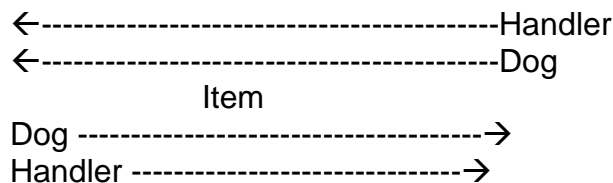
*Whining (the handler)-- If the DOG is whining, find out why

8. Handler understands and agrees that the "leave it" cue is something they must work on the dog's entire life. For the test, the food and "other animal" needs to be something the dog clearly shows he/she really wants to get. If the dog demonstrates no interest in food or other animal, two other objects the dog desires such as toys, dogs, people, etc can be used. The two items should be tested separately. The dog will pass close enough to easily get the item and the leash must remain loose. Each of the items needs to have 3 passes that meet the above criteria or a ratio of 3 correct passes for each incorrect pass.

(Related Dog Scout Law #4 - In an effort to reduce the number of places that refuse admittance to dogs, I will not let my dog be a nuisance and will keep my dog under control at all times. I will not allow my dog to harass wildlife.)

LEAVE IT:

For the “Leave it” section of the Dog Scout test, the handler needs to show that the dog has definite interest in the item he will be asked to leave. Then the dog will need to correctly pass by the tempting food or “critter” at least 3 times in a row, on a leash that stays completely loose at all times, passing close enough to easily get the object, but choose not to get it. The handler can use any cue to mean “don’t touch that, look at that or molest that” but for the test, the dog may not be under a formal “heel” cue. The dog needs to know the item is there and needs to actually WANT to get or investigate the item. The test simulates being out for a walk on a loose leash and suddenly coming across a tempting item or fearless critter. During the pass-by, the handler should maintain pace (not slowing or speeding up). If the leash goes tight or the dog tries to get the item (or gets it) that is not a correct pass-by of the item. For each incorrect pass, the dog must pass the item correctly 3 additional times on that day of testing or try again for 3 correct passes on a different day.



“But my dog has no interest in that”:

If the dog shows no interest in food no matter how tempting the treat, you must show this by offering the dog many different food/treat items that would normally be very tempting to a dog. For video submissions, place the items on the floor with the dog off-leash and able to get the items if he should choose to do so as well as dropping food/treats next to the dog.

If the dog has no interest in the critter being used or is afraid of the critter, you may need to try a few different critters. Some possibilities are: a dead animal carcass (don’t get hit by a car yourself!), pocket pets/birds at nose level in a pet store, cat toy that looks like a mouse and is made of real fur moved by a bit of fishing line that’s been attached at the nose, a real cat in a crate (as long as it doesn’t traumatize the cat), livestock or anything that is visually hard to distinguish from a real animal AND that smells real to the dog (has real feathers/fur or has taken on the scent of the real animal it portrays.)

If the dog is highly toy motivated but lacking in motivation for the food or critter, you can demonstrate the “leave-it” with a favorite toy in addition to showing the behaviors above to prove the dog has no interest in food or critters. As a last resort, anything the dog REALLY wants can be used to demonstrate the dog’s understanding of “leave-it” (another person, an open car door, the door to the training center, etc.) But you’ll first have to really prove that the dog has no interest in the standard items beyond a doubt either to the Scoutmaster in person or putting the demo of disinterest on video.

To pass, the dog must choose not touch the item that the dog has seen and is within reach of the dog after the parent has told him to “Leave it.” It is preferred that the dog look at and maintain eye contact with the handler once told “leave-it” but a dog showing avoidance of the

forbidden item can pass without looking at the handler. Several passes (at least 3) by the food and the animal are required (test these separately), so that you are confident it was not a fluke or an oversight that the dog complied with the cue. Three correct passes in a row, with no failed pass attempts during that testing session will be considered a "passing grade" on this part of the test.

If the dog completely avoids the item on a pass-by, the item should be moved to a new location at least 3' away before the next pass. Putting the item in a different spot can often make it "new" and possibly available as far as the dog is concerned.

The food must be in the open, and not held in the hands of a distracter, or anything of that nature for the test. I have found it useful to use a rib bone with a little meat left on it as the decoy food. The dog can't swallow it, and even if he does try to pick it up, you can take it away from him (make SURE he can't swallow it—pick a size that is un-swallowable!) A pan with left over, baked on bits of lasagna or casserole or a plastic jar of baby food (meat) or plastic peanut butter jar also works well, but the leave-it food can be anything that is highly tempting to the dog (homemade tuna treats, open can of tuna, hotdogs, pile of squeeze cheese, etc.)

For video tests: Be sure the leave-it items are VISIBLE on the video! You may need to put the food item on a plate, especially if testing in grass with a handful of small treats or lay a bright leash around the item. Don't forget to move the item before the next pass each time the dog shows strong avoidance.

Parents: Handler should demonstrate for the Scoutmaster the methods they used to train their dog to "leave-it" on cue.

Scoutmaster Notes: If you are not sure whether the dog was intentionally ignoring the food, or if he just didn't see it, have the parent make another pass or move the object while the dog is watching. The dog should be able to walk almost directly over the food, and choose to ignore it. Any signs of harsh punishment, like the dog cowering when he hears the "Leave it" cue from the parent or a harshly given cue should be an indication that a method not approved of by DSA was used to train this dog. You should suggest a more pleasant method of getting the same reaction (like teaching the "walk away game") and invite the person to re-test after he/she has worked on it. We don't want dogs in public looking like their parents have clobbered them, especially if they're going to be Dog Scouts. **The title is representative of the relationship between the parent and the dog, and NOT just the performance of the dog for the test.**

During training, it is imperative that you make it clear to the parents that they must not let their dog reach the item. If the dog gets rewarded for disregarding the parent, it makes training much more difficult.

Note of caution: If the parent doesn't feel that they can wrestle the item away and take it from the dog's mouth without being bitten by the dog, then there's something wrong with the parent/dog relationship to begin with. A dog that would not allow his parent to take food from him is not a dog that can become a Dog Scout. The parent has to work on some indirect access exercises, "trade" exercises and handling of the dog.

So, it would be a good idea to explain to the people that if the dog accidentally gets the food, they will be required to get it back from the dog (just as you would if you found your dog eating

something harmful!) If they don't feel that they can, or fear for their safety in doing so, don't proceed with the certification.

For the decoy animal, we have used everything from a live large lake turtle (non-dangerous), to a caged rat, to a crated cat that likes dogs and doesn't mind barking. You could use any animal, really, that you can prevent your dog from getting to and harming. Be sure the animal will not be stressed by the actions of the dogs. A goat behind a fence (up close), or a cat (that is tolerant of dogs) on a leash or in a crate could be used. If a live animal is not possible, try one of the fake mouse cat toys that have real fur on them that is put on a thin string or fishing line and dragged around in jerking motions in view of the dog before the testing. If you are walking with the dog (like on a troop hike) and find road kill or an animal carcass, that can be used to test the "leave it" as well. The animal used should be real if at all possible, or if the animal is fake, it needs to look *and smell* real. The dog has to be interested in the animal, but must leave it on cue, and choose to walk away from it without getting close enough to get bitten or scratched (if the decoy animal could or can do that.) If the dog is fearful of the animal, you'll need to test with a different animal the dog wants to investigate.

You should also use another dog for this requirement; preferably one the dog has not yet met on the day of the certification. It is imperative that the dog will respond quickly and fully to the leave it or recall cue especially when greeting another dog. But you will also have to use an additional animal (or very realistic facsimile as described above) to complete the test.

Take every precaution to insure the safety of the decoy animal. Do not cause any undue stress to the decoy animal. What you are looking for in this test is the point when the dog actively chooses to leave the decoy alone and listen to the parent. If it is not obvious, feel free to repeat the test several times. Just as with Leave it with food, the dog/parent will need to show at least 3 correct responses to the cue in a row and an additional 3 correct responses for each incorrect or delayed response (such as when the dog stops to stare at the object or tightens the leash to pull to the object.) If the dog has done some practice passes on the item (food or animal) then the item needs to be moved at least 3' to a new spot before doing the passes for the test when the parent doesn't have rewards or a treat pouch on them.

The dog will need a much higher percentage of good passes than bad ones. If he doesn't show that he understands the parent's cue the first few times, they may need to try again later after more practice. If the parent has worked the dog through the training steps without progressing too fast and by doing the training steps in several areas, the dog should not be ignoring the parent for this cue.

Additional Info:

- *After noticing the food and other animal, dog must refuse to sniff, try to get or ingest the decoy food, and the decoy animal, once he or she is instructed to leave it by the parent.
- * The "leave it" cue should be given in a happy, non-threatening tone that is not too loud as soon as the dog looks at the item.
- *The leash has to stay visibly loose (without even brief tension) for the entire pass-by.
- *This is testing a response to a cue, not to a tight leash.
- *A food item highly desirable to the dog, and visible to the dog must be used
- *A plate can be used under the food to help the dog spot it
- *Another dog should also be used for the leave it with another animal. Preferably one the dog has not yet met on the day of the certification and has a desire to meet.
- *This exercise is performed on leash for this particular badge. But several of the

specialty badges require an off-leash leave it. If the parent wants to do this off-leash with their dog, they may. Several of the badges require the “Leave it” to be shown again, so it’s worth perfecting.

- *If a ‘fake’ decoy animal is used, it needs to look and smell real to the dog. It is preferred that the decoy moves (with a motor or fishing line) or makes a realistic sound as well. The decoy animal can also be a dead animal carcass provided the dog has an interest in it.
- *The dog needs to walk by the decoy, not just approach and back off.
- *The dog, while walking by, HAS to be close enough to get to the food/decoy and CHOOSE not to get the item.
- *Putting food on or near a dog on a stay does not count as a leave it.
- *The dog needs to pass by the food/decoy as they would a trash can on the street or past an animal burrow next to the trail.
- * The cue used by the handler needs to be specific to a “leave it” behavior. The use of the cue “heel” or one to mean “heel” cannot be used in order to keep the dog from looking at the item. We need to see that if the dog sees something it wants, the handler can cue the dog to leave it alone and that the dog clearly understands the meaning of that cue.

Allowable:

- *Repeating an exercise or a portion of an exercise (the ratio of 3 correct responses for each failure is used)
- *“Implied” leave it (dog can automatically refuse the food and the other animal without the cue) but needs to demonstrate that they are interested in getting it or investigating it at some point. An implied or well trained leave-it can make it difficult to determine if the dog really has any interest in the item or not.
- *Cues that mean the same thing as leave it, such as “on by”, “off” and “Don’t touch” are acceptable.

Not Allowable:

- *Multiple cues to “leave it” if the dog stops; each additional cue must be counted as a failure, and a new trial of this exercise begins. Each new trial begins with the approach, and ends with the “walk away” of the dog to the opposite side of the object. Stops between the approach and walk-away are considered a failed pass.
- *Use of food or pretending to have a reward or if the dog thinks you have a reward so the dog will leave the decoy food alone.
- *Use of any cue such as “Heel” or “Look at me” while approaching the decoy for the purpose of keeping the dog from seeing the decoy. The dog has to know that the item is there and where it is located. If that’s clear, the “Leave it” cue can cause the dog to give the parent eye contact.
- *Use of loud or threatening voice
- *Leash corrections (jerks.) The leash has to remain visibly loose and tension free for the entire pass by
- *Rough handling of dog (or the decoy animal)
- *Serendipitous action of dog, not in response to cue (dog finally gets tired of trying and gives up—that’s how we teach this, that’s not a passing response for the test)
- *A tight leash-- Dog must **choose** to leave the food on his own, without any physical help from the leash or parent, to count as a correct response.
- *Too far from the decoy—the dog must be close enough to easily reach the decoy and choose to leave it

9. Handler will have at least two plastic bags to clean up after their dog at all times when a dog is with them

(Related Dog Scout Law # 3: My dog must not be allowed to eliminate in an unseemly manner. I will refrain from letting my dog urinate on buildings, statues or other people's things, and I promise to always carry clean-up bags and clean-up supplies to pick-up fecal matter and/or vomit. In an effort to reduce the negative impact of irresponsible dog parents, I will make attempts to educate, provide clean-up bags to and clean-up dog waste left by those less educated in responsible dog parenting.)

The owner must demonstrate proper clean up of his or her dog's waste or another dog's waste.

To pass, the handler must have clean-up bags and demonstrate the proper use of them. I prefer NOT to remind the people ahead of time. I just suddenly say to the group, "Who's got clean up bags? Show me your clean up bags!" Everyone should have at least two (on them or the leash); one for their dog, and one to loan to a bag-less friend. They already KNOW they are supposed to always have clean up bags with them; it should not be an unfair "shock" that they would be required to produce clean up bags during the test of responsible dog parenting. You could also ask the person to show their bags while their dog is being tested for the Stay behavior.

It is their responsibility to be sure they leave the house with enough clean up bags to ensure that they will always have at least two on them. Keeping two bags that are only for emergencies is recommended. Other bags are carried and used on a regular basis. If they need to use one of the two they carry, it will need to be replaced as soon as possible to meet this requirement.

Then, for anyone who you have not personally witnessed in action being a responsible dog parent and picking up their dog's waste or waste of another dog (on the hiking trail or during the testing period, for instance), you will need to see a simulated version (demonstrated with some chunks of hot dog, rocks or other "faux poo")
Since some people have an aversion to cleaning up real dog waste, seeing that demonstrated is preferred.

Additional Info:

- *Parent always has at least two clean up bags on his or her person when they are in public with their dog and is willing to promise to always clean up after the dog
- *Parent has been observed to regularly pick up after his or her dog, and if observation has not been possible, will do a simulated waste pick-up

10. Parent's portion of the Dog Scout test

The Dog Scout test is unique in that it also requires a certain level of knowledge and skill in the dog's handler about dog behavior and training using reward based methods. This level of knowledge is tested using the written "handler's test" found in this guide and on the Certification Program page of the DSA website.

Scoutmasters are encouraged to use this test for each person they evaluate, but verbal quizzing is allowed as long as all the questions are covered. In addition to the written test, the

parent's knowledge and skills must be demonstrated on a regular basis, not just for the test. If a Scoutmaster observes a handler acting irresponsibly on a regular basis or not safely managing their dog, the Scoutmaster may refuse to test or pass the dog for the Dog Scout title. Unlike most other titles a person can get on their dog, Dog Scout titles can also be revoked if the handler fails to keep their dog safe enough to prevent repetitive aggressive displays or a serious dog bite or if the handler fails to provide basic care for their dog (such that the person could be charged with animal cruelty) or is found to be using harsh punishment training methods.

Additional Info:

- *Parent knows the principal parts of the Dog Scout Laws (need not recite them verbatim, just know them in general)
- *Parent must show care and concern for his dog's well being and safety, and the safety of others
- *Parent must be gentle and kind with his or her dog, and reflect the attitude of a positive trainer

This certification is never to be performed as a "walk-in," and the dog/parent must be observed over a period of time (at least three different days) so that the Scoutmaster can observe the dog and parent in real-life situations. If submitting the test via video, the recording needs to show three or more different days. As an example, this could include Day 1: Demonstrate Sit, Down, Stay, Come. Day 2: Demonstrate Friendly with people and "leave its" Day 3: Demonstrate friendly with other dogs and waste clean-up.

Allowable:

- *The word baggies is not meant to designate a brand name, or particular size or shape of clean-up bag. Any suitable plastic (or other) bag is acceptable, as long as it does the job.
- *Asking the parent to show the clean up bags during any part of the "dog's performance" portion of the certification or at any time during the observation days.
- *Repeating an exercise or a portion of an exercise providing the team is able to show more correct responses than incorrect responses on a 3 to 1 ratio.

Not Allowable:

- *Use of loud or threatening voice
- *Leash corrections (jerks)
- *Rough handling of dog

The Dog Scout Way-

Dog Scout Law #7- I will always show kindness and caring toward my dog, so that others can observe the joys of responsible and loving dog parenting and appreciate the bond between my well-behaved dog and myself.

- *Parent must have an understanding of the Dog Scout way, and know the Dog Scout laws.
- *Parent knows how to be the smart end of the leash and has installed default behaviors that do not involve barking, aggression, or other inappropriate behaviors
- *Parent understands calming signals, how to use them and teach them to his or her dog.
- *Parent understands proper dog greeting behavior and knows how to facilitate it

- *Parent understands indirect access and impulse control and the importance they play in everyday life with a well-mannered dog
- *Parent is able to re-direct the dog's attention and focus it into good eye contact or other desirable behaviors.
- *Parent understands that dogs can't become human, but they are perfect at being dogs
- *Parent has an agreement with the dog to look out for his well-being, so that the dog doesn't have to take it upon himself
- *Parent realizes how important Leave it is, and continues to work on it FOREVER
- *Parent is not afraid to use the phrase, "Please get your dog back."
- *Parent understands that if we are going to keep from having more of our freedoms taken away by restrictive dog laws, it is up to us RESPONSIBLE parents to set an example for others
- *Parent will share with others and pass on information he or she has learned to become an even more responsible dog parent
- *Parent knows that operant conditioning is the key to the universe, and with it the dog can be taught anything
- *Parent is kind and respectful to his dog as well as to other people

Allowable:

- *Parent does not have to be able to recite the Dog Scout Laws verbatim. It is enough that they know what they contain, and can give you their own version. They need only to look at the certification requirements to be able to remember the Dog Scout laws.

If the parent does not have a firm grasp on the Dog Scout Way, he or she will need to attend a "Dog Scout Class" or similar training taught by a Scoutmaster that fully understands all of the components involved or read through the materials in this guide. The parent should be able to answer the questions found in the written test for Dog Scout Parents. This can be done verbally to you or in writing. If submitting a video, the written test needs to accompany the video or the questions need to be verbally answered on the recording.

Notice how the parts of the test equate to the Laws?

The people you evaluate should have a thorough knowledge of the Dog Scout laws. Make sure they have been provided with a copy to study. You may even require them to name the laws, but at the very least, they should be able to describe the laws in general.

The summary of the Dog Scout Test is to determine that you have an **educated, responsible parent on the other end of the leash of a well-mannered and controlled dog**. This doesn't happen overnight, and it is not something you can judge upon just meeting someone for the first time, walking into a test.

This certification may be given a little at a time. At camp, we spread out the certification over a 5-day period and test for various portions each day. If the entire certification is not given on the same day (after at least two other days of observation,) it should be completed within a 6-month period (both the dog and parent portions.)

In a non-camp setting, the Scoutmaster may be the only 'educator' available to teach the parent his or her parts of the test. The Scoutmaster can cover it a bit at a time during troop meetings or can hold "Dog Scout Classes" in which he/she covers the "smart end of the leash" info. In the case of a separate class, Scoutmasters are allowed to charge a fee for this

instruction, but the testing should be free. This info is also found in this guide, on the DSA website and in the recommended reading (Books: "Culture Clash" by Jean Donaldson and "The other End of The Leash" by Patricia McConnell) Regardless of the method chosen, the parent has to get the info and prove they understand it prior to the submission of the Dog Scout badge form.

Optimally, if you are part of a troop and you are a Scoutmaster, you would be checking out the members of your troop on an ongoing basis. For example, if you're planning a hike, you could ask that each person have his or her dog "heel" during a section of the hike that includes the turns needed. Or, if you're planning a picnic, you could work on the stays or the leave it. If you're having "game night" you can observe the people having their dogs sit and lie down and come on cue. So by the time you're actually officially certifying the dogs, they may have most or all of the requirements completed, observed, and checked off on their sheet. You may waive portions of the test that have already been checked out, or you can perform them again for formality. It's up to you. Formality scares some people.

It is recommended that you test each parent and dog individually, rather than in a group, when you are starting out and when doing the videotaping for your certification as a Scoutmaster. But if you feel confident enough to test multiple people, you may do so on the same tape or on separate tapes.

Questions:

If you are going to take the certification and have questions about the certification requirements, you should contact your nearest Scoutmaster or Chris Puls

DogScouts@hotmail.com

Dog Scout Handler Written Test

The purpose of this test is to be sure that everyone that is a handler of a Dog Scout has the same high level of training and understanding as well as the ability to spread the missions of DSA in the most positive and productive way.

This is difficult to measure without face-to-face observation. However, Dog Scouts of America is no longer only in America. The ripples created by the start of DSA have spread across the borders and the oceans. We encourage people to help their dogs become all they can be, to start troops and become both Scoutmasters and Evaluators, but the need for worldwide travel to get the word out is prohibitive. For this reason, this written test was developed for use in conjunction with the in-person evaluations done by a Scoutmaster.

It is preferred that everyone who achieves the title of Dog Scout with their dog is able to answer the questions below.

There is no time limit for this test and you may use the materials and references that are recommended and listed in the "Start a Troop" section of the Dog Scouts of America website (<http://www.dogscouts.org/leadership/22recommendedreadinglist.pdf>). Some questions cannot be answered without the knowledge available in these recommended resources.

You are encouraged to review your answers with your local Scoutmaster (if one is available). Please don't feel you have to limit your response to the space allowed. If you need to, feel free to add more paper and number the continuation of your answers to match the number of the question with which that answer relates. (Example: If you need to continue your answer for question 14 on another sheet of paper, start your continuation with 14)

You may take this test for your own edification (if you have already achieved the title of DSA), or it can be instituted by a Scoutmaster to verify that you have the knowledge needed to pass the handler portion of the Dog Scout certification.

You are very important to the mission of spreading Dog Scouts wisdom far and wide. Thank you for your interest in this organization.

Please print legibly (if you print this out) or return the following in electronic format to your local Scoutmaster or (if no Scoutmaster is available) to the certification Program Director:

DogScouts@hotmail.com

The Dog Scout Mission and the Dog Scout Way:

1) What are the missions of Dog Scouts of America?

2) How does DSA affect the lives of dogs and their owners, particularly those dogs that would end up in shelters?

3) List at least 5 things the handler needs to know to be “the smart end of the leash.”

4) Name 5 obvious calming signals that owners can watch for in their dogs.

5) List 4 examples of behaviors you can teach a dog that help him learn self control.

6) What would you say to someone that doesn't use clicker training to convince him or her to change to clicker methods? (Can use additional paper to continue your answer)

7) What is the covenant (agreement) owners should have with their dogs to prevent aggression?

8) How can the use of punishment make aggression worse?

9) In your opinion, what are the three most important behaviors a handler can teach the dog and why?

Training/Teaching:

10) What causes the dog to do as the handler requests? How do you get that?

11) How can someone break his or her dog's cycle of aggression toward other dogs?

12) How do owners affect (both positively and negatively) the body language their dogs show? (Give several examples)

13) Explain when and how a verbal cue for a new behavior is added and why?

14) When teaching the dog a new cue for a known behavior, explain when and how the new cue is added and why? (Example: Teaching the dog a new hand signal in place of a known verbal cue for a particular behavior).

15) Do you think people have to show the dog who is boss or be the Alpha?

16) What is socialization (give examples) and why is it important?

17) What is the best way to teach a dog or puppy to give you something they have and want?
(Example: Puppy steals a food wrapper from the garbage)

18) What is a Gorn?

19) What is Positive Punishment and why does it not work in most cases?

20) List at least 4 of the ways we use our language in ways that can confuse our dogs.

21) List at least 4 of the reasons a dog may show very different behavior or reactions in various environments or with different people.

The Dog Scout test:

22) What types of collars are allowed on the dog when taking the Dog Scout test?

23) Why should you always have at least two clean up bags with you when you are with your dog?

24) For the Dog Scout test, it is required that you show you have taught your dog to walk by your side in heel position. Assuming that you do not plan to enter your dog in an obedience competition, why would this behavior be useful?

25) During the “friendly with other dogs” portion: If Rover greets your dog in a rude manner and your dog snaps at Rover, is this acceptable behavior from your dog? Why or why not?

26) What is the purpose of the “Leave It” exercise?

27) List at least 6 possible situations in which the “Leave it” cue can protect the dog from harm.

28) Describe how a dog should be taught the “Leave It” cue using DSA approved methods.

Spreading the word:

29) List 5 situations in which having a well mannered dog can help show the general public the joys of having such a well mannered dog.

30) Define Responsible Dog Owner in your own words

31) If your dog relieved himself in front of a crowd of people, what would you do?

32) If you saw someone training their dog using very harsh methods (severe leash corrections, yelling, etc.) what would you do?

33) How do you plan to spread the word about DSA, positive training and the human/canine bond?

34) A child is running toward your dog to greet him/her, assuming your dog loves kids, what do you do?

34a) What if your dog was not fond of kids, what would you do?

Click and Treat yourself for finishing!

Check List for Dog Scout Certification Video

The following items **all** need to be shown on the videotape, but do not have to be recorded in any particular order. If you do not pass one or more of the items below, you will be asked to submit a new tape showing those particular behaviors again, performed in a way that is in accordance with the Dog Scouts of America guidelines.

The videotaping should cover at least three different days so we can get a better feel for the dog's personality and don't have to worry that it may have just been a "good day" for the dog 😊 The videotaping should not take more than a 6 month time frame, but the taping of the various elements below should not all be done on the same day and can be as spread out in time (within the 6 months) as you wish. Items with a red ♦ would be best if video taped by a person rather than a stationary camera.

Passing this test is not meant to be easy, but rather something for which you can be proud! Not all dogs can be Dog Scouts and those that want to hold the title need to prove that they have sufficient training and the proper temperament to represent Dog Scouts of America. The humans need to prove they will be responsible parents that understand how to be "the smart end of the leash." In most of the situations below, both the dog and the parent's actions are being evaluated.

Certification behaviors need to be performed in accordance with the Dog Scouts of America **guidelines** set forth for the Dog Scout test. These guidelines spell out what is allowed and not allowed during the testing phase. Be SURE to review these guidelines before starting your videotaping.

Training behaviors need to show that the parent understands and used acceptable methods to train their dog and that the dog understands those methods. Information on how to train each of the behaviors using acceptable methods is contained in this guide and available on the DSA and Troop 107 website. www.DogScouts.org and www.DogScoutTroop107.com

_____ **Certification behavior:** Dog is shown greeting at least three people, preferably people the dog has not met before. This could be at a dog park, at a pet supply store, at a local park, training facility, etc. It should be at least three people that are as diverse as possible (Examples would be: man, woman, child, person in a wheelchair or using a walker or crutches, person in a uniform, person with a hat and glasses, happy/bubbly person, more 'matter-of-fact' greeting style, person with a characteristic that makes them unique from others the dog has been shown greeting.)

_____ **Certification behavior:** Parent is shown encouraging a proper greeting between his/her leashed dog and another leashed dog. The dog being greeted can be known to the dog being tested, but greeting behavior needs to be shown (the dogs ignoring each other won't work.) It cannot be a dog that lives in the same household as the dog being tested.

_____ **Certification behavior:** ♦ Dog is shown interacting **off lead** with other dogs. This can be in a yard, in a house, at a dog park, in a day care or any safe and secure location where it is not against any rules or laws for dogs to be off lead.

_____ **Certification behavior:** Parent shows and explains what they would do during a meeting between their leashed dog and another leashed dog if their dog or the other dog started showing signs of aggression. The dog being tested and another dog should be present

for this “set-up”, but signs of aggression should not be present. Just pretend that one or both of the dogs is showing aggressive signals and show/explain on the tape what you would do to prevent further escalation of the situation. It is the parent being evaluated in this exercise, more than the dog (but the dog needs to respond to the handler.)

_____ *Training Behavior:* Demonstrate the training steps used to teach the dog a “Leave it” cue for food on the floor. Include the use of a clicker or other “marker” signal (like a verbal “yes”) so it can be seen that you understand the proper timing of the signal. If your dog already has a solid response to this cue: set-up the “training” scenario to the best of your ability and be sure to use a food item the dog wants. It needs to be shown that the dog responds to the clicker or other signal during this exercise. Rewards can be used.

_____ *Training behavior:* You will need to show that the dog can be cued to “leave it” and make the choice to turn and move away from food he wants and is looking at while the parent remains stationary and does not use the leash as a cue (only a verbal cue.) Be sure to review the guidelines for the leave it exercise before submitting them for review. The dog should do three correct responses in a row with no stopping of the tape without treats on the handler.

_____ **Certification behavior:** The dog should also demonstrate that it will respond quickly and correctly to a “Leave it” cue while walking past food that it wants and knows is on the floor. It is helpful if the food is first given to the dog to show they want it and then put on a plate to make it easier to see on the video. BE SURE to read the testing guidelines for the Leave-it. This is the number one thing most people demonstrate incorrectly!

_____ *Training Behavior:* Demonstrate the training steps used to teach the dog a “Leave it” cue with another animal as the distraction. Include the use of a clicker or other “marker” signal (like a verbal “yes”) so it can be seen that you understand the proper timing of the signal. If your dog already has a solid response to this cue: set-up the “training” scenario to the best of your ability using an animal the dog wants to investigate. It needs to be shown that the dog has a definite interest in the other animal and responds to the clicker or other signal during this exercise. Rewards can be used. The other animal should not be a fake animal unless it looks and SMELLS real and shouldn’t be another dog. It can be a crated cat, caged ferret, caged bird, contained rodent, contained farm animal, or a fresh wild animal carcass (killed by a predator or by traffic). It could also be a furry cat toy shaped like a mouse (with real fur on it) that is put on fishing line and pulled across the floor to simulate live movement before it is stopped for the dog to pass by. This test should not take place on a roadway (if road kill is used move it off the road.) It should not put undue stress on the animal being used for the leave it. If you are unsure if a particular animal qualifies, please contact the Certification Program Director prior to taping.

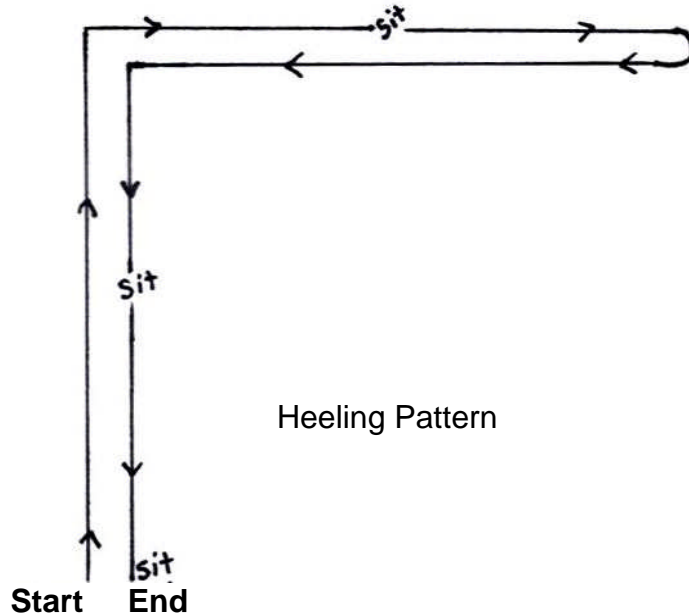
_____ **Certification behavior:** The dog should demonstrate that it will respond quickly (this means before close inspection or contact is made with the other animal) and correctly to a “Leave it” cue to be called away from interest in another animal. The animal used for this test needs to follow the same guidelines as listed above in the training step. The dog should show definite interest in the other animal, and clearly show a choice to leave it when cued without help from the leash. Please show both walk by’s and stationary leave it’s. Be sure to review the guidelines for this before submitting it for review! The dog should do three correct leave it’s in a row without stopping the tape.

_____ **Certification behavior:** Parent demonstrates three different “indirect access” exercises that the dog has learned using positive training methods. Parent should explain and show how each behavior was taught. Please list your indirect access behaviors here:

_____ *Training Behavior:* ♦ Parent demonstrates and explains the method(s) used to teach the dog to heel. Rewards can be used.

_____ **Certification behavior:** ♦ The dog demonstrates that it understand the heel cue by remaining in heel position after being given the cue, while the parent demonstrates the following movements in this sequence (based on diagram below); 20' in a straight line, right turn, 10' in a straight line, stop and cue the dog to sit (cue not required), 10' in a straight line, about turn or 'U' turn, 20' in a straight line, left turn, 10' in a straight line, stop and cue the dog to sit (cue not required), 10' in a straight line, stop and cue dog to sit (cue not required). Distances can be longer, but should be at least as long as those listed above. This should be an “L” shaped pattern with a right turn, about turn (or “U” turn), a left turn and three sits -ending with the handler back at the starting point. Then repeat the pattern again after a short break.

Please review the guidelines for this prior to taping. The entire pattern should be shown without a stop in the tape. Leash should remain visibly loose for this whole exercise, meaning obvious slack in the leash between the parent's hand and the dog's neck with the dog remaining in heel position. It needs to be shown the dog understands what “heel” means and where heel position is located without luring (acting like you have a treat.) Sits do not have to be in heel position and can be cued. Talking to and encouraging your dog is allowed.



_____ *Training behavior:* Parent demonstrates the methods used to teach the dog the sit cue. Treats can be used.

_____ **Certification Behavior:** Parent demonstrates that the dog will sit on cue at least twice without any tightening of the leash or any collar pressure.

_____ *Training behavior:* Parent demonstrates the methods used to teach the dog the down cue. Treats can be used.

_____ **Certification Behavior:** Parent demonstrates that the dog will lie down on cue at least twice without any tightening of the leash or any collar pressure.

_____ *Training behavior:* Parent demonstrates the methods used to teach the dog to come when called. Treats can be used.

_____ **Certification Behavior:** ♦ Parent demonstrates that the dog will come when called on cue from a distance of at least 20' at least twice. Dog & parent both need to be in the frame during this exercise. Have dog stay close to the camera and then go to the handler 20' away.

_____ *Training behavior:* Parent demonstrates the methods used to teach the dog what stay means while in either a sit or a down. Treats can be used.

_____ **Certification Behavior:** ♦ Parent demonstrates that the dog will stay on cue while the parent walks at least 20' away from the dog, stops and faces the dog, shows that they are carrying two clean up bags, and then returns to the dog. A formal "finish" (walking behind the dog) is not required. Keep both the dog and handler visible on the video. This should be repeated at least once, but the second demo does not need to include the showing of the baggies unless it's done on a different day.

_____ **Certification behavior:** Parent demonstrates that they know how to clean up dog waste. Actual dog waste should be used and disposed of properly.

_____ **Certification Behavior:** Parent should be able to state on camera, in their own words, how each of the Dog Scout laws relates to the items required for the Dog Scout test OR submit the written test with their video.

Tips on how to get acceptable video coverage for your Dog Scout Certification

If you are not familiar with your camera, please be sure to do some test filming and check it for quality prior to taping for the test. This is especially true for rented or borrowed video cameras. If you need a camera, check the phone book under "Video" for rental places or ask friends and family if they have a recording device you can use. Acceptable formats include ONLY the following: standard DVD and on-line video such as a "YouTube" video.

The use of a tripod is recommended, even when there is someone behind the camera controlling where it is pointing and using the zoom function. The tripod will help reduce shaking and prevent the Scoutmaster from getting a headache while reviewing it ☺

Be sure that you get all of the action on the tape (for example: all of the dog's body and the parent's entire body during the heeling pattern using the zoom function and a friend operating the camera to follow the action.)

Be sure to fill the frame with the subjects. If you appear to be too far away on the tape, I may not be able to see what I need in order to evaluate it. It is always best to have a helper do the filming if possible. Be sure they know how to work the "zoom in" and "zoom out" functions to keep the screen full as the subjects move toward or away from the camera but don't crop out any part of the dog or person.

Figure out the best position for the camera prior to hitting record. Have a helper look through the eye piece to be sure all action will be captured and that the subjects do not appear to be too small. During the stay exercise, for example; the camera will likely be behind the dog and show the parent leave, display baggies and return. In this case, the camera would not get zoomed, because both the dog and parent need to stay in the shot. Just be sure the parent does not walk out of the picture ☺ If you have to work alone, place items at the edges of the picture (so you know what area can be seen and where you leave the picture).

Do your best to reduce any visual clutter in the background. The best is a simple and monotone background such as a solid color wall. But I know that is not always possible. Greenery such as bushes, a large expanse of lawn, or distant trees make an excellent backdrop.

For motion shots, do your best to move from side to side in front of the camera instead of toward and away from it. The stay and recall exercises would be the exception to that because the parent gets separated from the dog and both need to stay in the picture while 20' apart. For the stay and recall, the dog will be closest to the camera so I can see if he/she moves.

If you wear glasses, be sure to use them when you set up the focus on the camera. Then if you wish, your glasses can be removed and the eye piece adjusted to the focus of your eye. Otherwise, the whole video may be blurry.

If working indoors, be sure there is sufficient light to see the details without harsh shadows. Dog training centers usually are well lit and may allow you to rent some ring space to do the filming. You can also use local parks, a tennis court or someone's yard. If you have a choice, pick overcast days when outside. A bright overcast allows for maximum light while minimizing the dark shadows. If you are taping under sunny conditions, do it when the sun is directly over head. Otherwise, keep the sun behind the camera. Never shoot into the sun, the picture quality is poor and you can damage the light sensors in your camera.

Be sure items related to the exercise are easy to see on the tape such as the food on the ground/floor during the leave it. Placing the food on a plate that contrasts with the floor/ground will make it easy for me to see where it is located so I can tell when the dog should be responding. If you turn out to be too far away for me to see your clean up bags during the stay, simply show them again when you return to your dog.

Pick areas where it is safe to videotape. Remember, if someone has their eye to the camera, they have a very limited view of their surroundings. Do not videotape near traffic or flying objects (like baseballs or golf balls for example.)

Please remove the date stamp and/or counter from the picture. Keep in mind that some cameras require you to do this each time you start taping. The date stamp may cover critical actions that need to be seen and evaluated. If you need to do this, check the manual for the camera. If you no longer have the manual, many are now available on-line.

Be sure your camera/tri-pod is set up in a way that gives it maximum protection from moving objects (like dogs, dragged leashes, moving people etc.) It is a bad feeling when you see your camera about to go splat and you can't save it.

Use good quality tapes or disks that are new (not taping over a previous video), it does make a difference. Your tapes or disks will not be returned unless you include a request and return postage/packaging.

It is recommended that if you have the option of using plug-in power, you use it. It eliminates the chance that you will run out of battery power at an inopportune moment. If you need to use battery power, having a fully charged back up battery is recommended.

Keep the camera and tapes/disks away from any magnetic fields. Be sure to mark them "VIDEO- DO NOT SCAN" when you send them to help prevent the postal X-ray equipment from damaging your tape. There have been cases where a tape was not viewable due to whatever happened to it during mailing.

If going from indoors to outside when there are distinct temperature differences, it is a good idea to give the camera at least ½ hour to adjust and prevent condensation within the camera (which can cause it to shut down or lenses to fog.)

Audio can be important in most cases. I need to be able to hear your cues to the dog and (during the training parts) the clicks (or verbal marker). Keep in mind that slight breezes can sound like hurricane force winds on the video. Also, if someone is taping for you, their comments and other noises close to the camera will be heard loud and clear. If you have the option of a wireless microphone you can clip on yourself that would be excellent!

Good Luck! If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Certification Program Director DogScouts@hotmail.com

Dog Scouts of America

Dog Scout Badge Check off/test (for in-person testing)

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 use verbal cues and hand signals when checking off on the DSA badge.

NOTE: The DSA Badge is not a “walk-in” testing situation. Evaluator must observe the dog on 3 different days to complete the DSA badge. It is the evaluator’s responsibility to ensure that the dog meets all of the requirements listed below before checking them off on this badge.

- ☐ **Handler has reviewed the above paragraphs, the training info and the Evaluation Criteria**
- ☐ **Handler manages the dog’s environment to keep the dog feeling safe**
- ☐ **Handler can explain when to use the phrase, “please get your dog back” or “please stay back”**
- ☐ **Handler can explain how to encourage a proper greeting behavior between dogs**
- ☐ **Handler understands that aggression is normal dog “language”, and can explain how to help the dog make other choices (attention to owner)**
- ☐ **Handler can explain proper leash handling techniques to discourage aggression**
- ☐ **Handler understands the use of and can name 3 calming/negotiation signals**
- ☐ **Handler promises to pick up dog’s waste and dispose of it properly**
- ☐ **Handler can explain the Dog Scout laws in their own words and promises to uphold them**
- ☐ **Handler can explain the value of helping the dog make good choices using indirect access**
- ☐ **Handler can list two indirect access exercises**
- ☐ **Handler understands and agrees that the “leave it” cue is something they must work on the dog’s entire life. For the test, the food and “other animal” needs to be something the dog clearly shows he/she really wants to get. If the dog demonstrates no interest in food or an other animal, two other objects the dog desires such as toys, dogs, people, etc can be used. The two items should be tested separately. The dog will pass close enough to easily get the item and the leash must remain loose. Each of the items needs to have 3 passes that meet the above criteria or a ratio of 3 correct passes for each incorrect pass.**
- ☐ **Leave it with Food**
- ☐ **Leave it with an animal (not a dog) that looks and smells real**
- ☐ **Handler will have at least two plastic bags to clean up after their dog at all times when a dog is with them**
- ☐ **Dog is safe and comfortable with strangers in normal circumstances with handler support and management. Dog can demonstrate an appropriate greeting of a human.**
- ☐ **Dog is safe and comfortable being near other dogs on leash and off leash if handler feels it is safe and manages the environment**
- ☐ **Dog demonstrates an understanding of heel position and a heel cue and will choose to maintain heel position keeping the leash loose during a heeling pattern that includes a left, right and U-turn, for a distance of at least 20 feet for each “leg” of the L.**
- ☐ **Dog can sit when handler stops at least 2 times during the heeling pattern (leash tightening is not part of the cue). These sits should be demonstrated on a straight part of the pattern and not at a turn.**
- ☐ **Dog will sit at least 2 times in response to a verbal cue or hand signal while not heeling and leash must remain loose**
- ☐ **Dog will lie down at least 2 times in response to a verbal cue or hand signal and leash must remain loose**
- ☐ **Dog will come directly to the handler 2 times when called from a distance of at least 20’. It is the handler’s choice whether the exercise is performed on or off leash. If on leash the dog can be on a long line and drag the line with the evaluator holding the line.**
- ☐ **Dog will stay in either a sit or a down position, while handler walks about 20’ away and returns to the dog close enough to put a hand on the collar (walking around dog to heel not required)**