

Some games for troop meetings

For Tic Tac Toe (works on sits/ downs and stays):

Split into two teams.

One team is "sits" and the other is "downs". In other words, in order to be a marker for the team on the large tic-tac-toe board, the dog from the sit team has to remain sitting in the desired spot/square and a dog from the down team has to remain laying down.

To mark the Tic-Tac-Toe "board" on the floor, you can use tape, string/rope or hula hoops to mark the "squares"

Where the handler is in relation to the dog can be flexible. Beginner dogs can have the handler right next to them. Dogs with more practice can be left in the spot while the handler steps away. Treats and repeated cues are allowed as well as hand signals.

To throw in an extra twist, you can add these rules:

If a "sit" lays down, they become a marker for the other team

If a "down" gets into a sit, they become a marker for the other team

If any dog stands after getting into the team's position, they have to give up their space.

First team to line up three dogs in their position wins. If it's a non-winning game, you can either wait the dogs out to see if any will move or allow distractions from the people that are not in place on the board to see if they can get any of the current "markers" to change position.

Musical chairs (works on down and stay):

Put out one less chair than the number of players you have. People walk in a circle around the chairs with the dog on the outside (heel position). When the music stops, the dog has to lay down BEFORE the person's butt can go for a chair. If the dog gets up, the handler has to get up!

In the advanced version, distractions by the person without a chair are allowed. This can get a bit cut-throat at camp :-)

Recall race (also practices stays):

Have everyone put their dog on a stay along one side of the room - can be a sit stay or a down stay) then at the same time, the handlers walk to the other side of the room. If a dog gets up, the dog and handler are excused. Once the handlers reach the other side of the room and the playing field is clear, the handlers are instructed to call their dogs and the first dog to sit in heel position by it's handler wins (or you can choose to have all the dogs sit in front of their handlers. Dogs can be divided into size classes or ability levels with the more novice dogs not required to heel/sit and with the owners much closer. For really novice dogs, the owners can go to the end of an 8' leash.

Simon says:

Works on all the cues. Just like in the kid's game there is one person calling out what everyone has to do (sit, down, forward, about turn, etc.) and the cue from the caller is only valid if he/she says "Simon Says" first. In other words, the caller might say: "Simon Says heel around the room with your dogs" then "Simon says use a slow pace" then "halt." If anyone stops, they are out of the game because the caller didn't say "Simon Says" first. It's a process of elimination to get to the winner. To make it more difficult, the cues can start to be given in rapid fire sequence. Or, you can require that the dog has to comply within a certain amount of time to the cue or the dog/handler are out.

Red Light/ Green Light:

Works on heel and fast sits. Handlers heel their dogs around the room when the caller says "green light." When the caller says "red light" everyone has to stop and sit their dog. The last dog to sit

is out. Process of elimination to the dog with the fastest sit. For expert handlers/dogs you can do elimination based on crooked sits or improper heeling or add in some distractions like tasty food on the floor or a bouncing ball.

C.A.T.

This game allows people to be creative and show off anything they have taught their dog. Break into two teams that have an even mix of experience level in the handlers/dogs.

Team 1 will start by selecting a team member to demonstrate a trick or behavior they have taught their dog

Team 2 has to select a team member that can duplicate the trick/behavior Team 1 just showed. If they cannot, they earn the letter C.

Now Team 2 gets to select a team member to demonstrate a trick or behavior that Team 1 has to duplicate.

The game goes on until one team has not been able to duplicate three tricks/behaviors and has progressively earned the letters that spell CAT or until you run out of time to play :-). This game can get really long :-)

Additional rules to consider:

- A dog/handler cannot be selected to duplicate or demonstrate a trick twice in a row or more than once out of every 3 rounds.
- If a dog/handler is advanced, they cannot be used to duplicate a trick/behavior offered by a novice on the other team. (But if the trick is offered by an advanced player, anyone on the other team can attempt to duplicate it.)
- Judging regarding whether or not a trick was duplicated satisfactorily is done by the team that did the trick originally if no impartial "judges" are available.

If you have fun games that you know of and would like to add, please let me know.

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