



Dog Scouts of America
Evaluation Criteria

Urban Hiking

PURPOSE: This badge demonstrates that owner and dog can be model citizens when hiking through populated areas, respecting the environment and ‘leaving no trace’ while the dog is hiking on-leash. Dog and handler will hike a total of 6 miles, including one 2-mile hike. For this badge an urban area is an area with obstacles such as cross walks, traffic lights, traffic, pedestrians, businesses, etc.

DOG REQUIREMENTS: The dog must demonstrate proper manners while completing at least 6 miles of on-leash urban hiking. The dog must have a reliable and instant recall and must not dart after wildlife, other dogs, humans, horses or vehicles encountered on an urban hike. While on-leash the dog safely negotiates common urban obstacles as directed by handler cues. Dog must remain under control (no pulling) when crossing a street. When cued to greet friendly strangers the dog is not required to hold a specific body position as long as the greeting is controlled and acceptable to both the dog and the friendly stranger. The dog should also be comfortable wearing boots so they can be used if required for safety.

HANDLER REQUIREMENTS: The handler must keep safety and the physical and mental well-being of his/her dog as a top priority. Handler should carry water for both handler and dog, a bowl, clean up bags, spare collar & leash, identification, cell phone, and map if the area is unfamiliar. The handler is required to log the miles hiked. The handler must always practice the ‘leave no trace’ principles.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: Other than the supplies the handler is required to carry little is needed to earn this badge, just a collar and a leash on the dog. The dog may wear a backpack to carry the required supplies if desired but it is not required for this badge. The handler must be familiar with paw protection that may be needed depending on the area and weather conditions. Handler should also be familiar with local legislation regarding leash laws, breed specific legislation (BSL) and possible muzzle requirements. Handler needs to be able to describe how to teach the dog to be comfortable with both paw protection and muzzles. The hiking for this badge must be done in an urban area.

PROCESS: The evaluator must have some way to verify the mileage hiked. The evaluator may hike with the dog/handler team or the team may provide a screenshot of an exact map of the hike with mileage from a hiking app. (We recommend using Wooftrax and logging miles for your favorite non-profit for example DSA.) The evaluator will have the dog demonstrate a reliable ‘leave it’ using DSA methods and done to the same standards as testing for the Dog Scout badge including 3 successful passes. Dog will be required to demonstrate other required behaviors on the check sheet if the behaviors are not observed during the hike.

ALLOWED:

- Handler may have treats on their body to reward the dog
- Dog can choose not to visit with the friendly stranger.
- Allowances for disabled handlers
 - Alternative handler
 - Bike, power chair, etc.
- Alternative paw protection, i.e., Musher’s Secret.
- Multiple dogs being walked by one handler as long as all dogs are under control.

NOT ALLOWED:

- Using treats as a lure
- Crossing a street without waiting for the light or utilizing crosswalks if available. (Jaywalking)
- Dog tangling other people in the leash
- Dog causing a disturbance or harassing other people, animals, or businesses
- Any rough handling of the dog
- No flexi-leads or longlines.
- Eliminating in an improper manner / failure to clean up after the dog.