



Dog Scouts of America Evaluation Criteria

DOGa Exercise

PURPOSE: DOGa Exercise combines elements of flexibility, balance and stability to ensure that dogs can develop and remain physically strong for as long as possible. DOGa exercises can be used at all stages of a dog's life. This badge is designed to increase the handler's understanding of DOGa Exercise and the need for a training plan and journal designed for his/her own dog. Additionally, the badge teaches the dog DOGa exercises and builds his confidence as he moves through his custom training plan.

DOG REQUIREMENTS: Guided by the handler, the dog learns to accept and participate in passive and active stretching and becomes proficient at performing DOGa exercises. The dog will gain confidence in using different types of DOGa equipment while moving through his training plan.

HANDLER REQUIREMENTS: The handler will determine his/her dog's body type and will calculate his height/weight ratio. With this information as well as an understanding of DOGa exercises, the handler develops a training plan, keeps a training journal and teaches his/her dog exercises that will help him throughout his life. The handler will gain an understanding of the different types of DOGs equipment and how to use this equipment.

The exercises presented help puppies with physical development, assist in strengthening the canine athlete, and help the senior dog that has lost strength and stability from age related weakness. Additionally, DOGa can play a role in injury rehabilitation but that is **not** the focus of this badge. A veterinary rehabilitation specialist should evaluate any dog that has been injured prior to beginning any type of DOGa exercise program.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: Inflatable platforms including peanuts, balls, discs, bones, eggs, and/or stones sized appropriately for the dog. Safety equipment such as holders for peanuts, balls and eggs must be used with these types of equipment. A Bosu ball may also be used. The handler may find targets useful in teaching the dog proper positioning on the equipment. The dog should always wear a well-fitting, non-restrictive type of harness when performing any DOGa exercises.

PROCESS: The handler must describe the dog's body type to the evaluator and must calculate the dog's height/weight ratio and explain why this information is important to know. The evaluator will observe as the handler takes the dog through at least 3 different DOGa exercise sequences that benefit different muscle groups using the 3-step method on at least 3 different inflatable platforms, including one platform where the dog gets on with all 4 feet. The handler should be able to explain the exercises and how they benefit the dog.

The handler must demonstrate an understanding of safety requirements when doing DOGs exercises, must use all appropriate safety equipment including a harness, and must ensure the dog's safety when performing the exercises. Any unsafe behavior is disqualifying.

Additionally, the handler will provide the dog's individual training plan and training journal to the evaluator for review. The handler should clearly understand and be able to explain the dog's current ability level, future goals, and how the plan is progressive.



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ALLOWED:

- Treats are okay while exercising
- Any written or electronic form for plan and journal

NOT ALLOWED:

- Any unsafe behavior
- Exercising the dog beyond his ability at the time of evaluation
- Any plan that is not customized to the dog's needs