



Dog Scouts of America

Tips for Capturing Video

Dog Scout Certification

Passing the Dog Scout Certification by video is no harder than completing the testing in person if you follow the guidelines below. Before uploading your video clips and sending links for evaluation make sure everything the evaluator needs to see is as clear as possible.

- Make sure you are familiar with your camera. Most people find that using their phone is the easiest way to capture video. Others use a small hand-held video camera. Because digital formats are used today the method for capturing video is not as important as the quality.
- It is recommended that you use a tripod for shooting video, even when you have someone working with you behind the camera. Tripods help to reduce shaking and extraneous movement, which makes evaluating the video much easier. Tripods come in all shapes and sizes to accommodate all types of phones and hand-held cameras and can be acquired inexpensively. In some cases, people have found tripods available for sale in deep discount stores.
- Make sure that the action captured on video clearly shows all the requirements. In most cases both handler and dog should be kept in frame at all times. Subjects must be close enough to the camera that the evaluator can easily see all of the action.
- Camera position is important in capturing video. A test run can help make sure the camera is in the best possible position. It can be helpful to mark the edges of the shot with objects such as cones or small marks. This ensures that you will not inadvertently walk out of the shot while filming.
- Reduce visual clutter in the background of the video. This includes any additional people and/or dogs that may be present during filming. Objects in the scene that are not needed can draw the eye away from the action or make evaluation difficult.
- Consider how you and your dog will move in front of the camera. In some cases, such as the stay exercises it is best to place the camera behind the dog so that both dog and handler are captured. In other circumstances its best to move from side to side in front of the camera instead of toward and away from it.
- If working indoors, be sure there is enough 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 keep the sun behind the camera. Shooting into the sun results in poor picture quality.



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- 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 it's easy for the evaluator to see when the dog should be responding.
- Pick areas where it is safe to videotape. Don't shoot near traffic or flying objects (like baseballs or golf balls), or where unfamiliar dogs are in the area.
- Auditory clutter should be minimized as well. The evaluator needs to be able to hear the handler's cues easily in order to evaluate the dog's behaviors. When outdoors wind can sometimes cause auditory clutter as will voices and other errant noises in the environment caused by helpers or bystanders.

Do your best to make sure that everything is as clear and concise prior to sending links for video evaluation. Anything that makes it difficult for the evaluator to clearly see whether or not the requirements are being met can result in a delay in processing the evaluation and may make it necessary for you to capture and send additional video.