



## Dog Scouts of America Evaluation Criteria

### Parkour 1

**PURPOSE:** Parkour is an activity enjoyed by humans and canines alike as it serves to make walks more active and interesting and helps to improve the bond between the two members of the team. In order to properly do Parkour, the human partner must be focused on the environment and the dog (and not, for example, a phone) and the dog naturally benefits from this extra attention. Additionally, when taking the dog's abilities in mind, Parkour is an excellent activity for senior dogs when done safely as it stretches them cognitively and helps to keep them engaged with life.

**DOG REQUIREMENTS:** Dog must demonstrate all of the required behaviors with confidence, showing a willingness to participate in Parkour activities. Though a dog may hesitate when asked to perform a known behavior on an unfamiliar obstacle, he should be able to complete the action confidently even if it takes repeating the maneuver. The evaluator may ask an action to be repeated anytime she feels that the dog is not demonstrating confidence and willingness. The dog should move with fluidity when demonstrating behaviors, particularly when performing multiple behaviors in succession.

**HANDLER REQUIREMENTS:** Handler must demonstrate a solid understanding of the safety measures needed for Parkour. It's not enough for the handler to be able to recite proper safety protocols, these must be clearly demonstrated throughout the evaluation process.

**EQUIPMENT NEEDED:** Dog must wear a good fitting, non-restrictive harness with a maximum 6-foot leash attached to the back. Dog must remain on leash for the entire evaluation with the exception of when the dog is sent to or around an obstacle. If the environment is safe, the dog may demonstrate these behaviors off leash, or if in a high traffic area, a long line may be used for these. All obstacles should be found in the environment rather than being introduced into it whenever possible. Agility equipment is strongly discouraged for Parkour except in rare situations where there is nothing in the environment appropriate for use and the equipment is used in a non-traditional and novel manner. The handler should not bring his/her own obstacles to the evaluation as this usually indicates that the dog can do the required behavior on THAT obstacle, but not any other. As such, the handler should make sure that Parkour is practiced in as many different places as possible and on many different obstacles.

**PROCESS:** Generally, the evaluator will begin the process by asking the handler to discuss safety considerations for Parkour. Then they will begin to take a walk with the dog in the woods, in a park, or in another suitable area. The handler should be able to identify obstacles along the way and let the handler know that the dog can demonstrate one of the required behaviors on that obstacle. If the handler is not identifying obstacles, it is likely that they don't have a good understanding of Parkour. Once the walk has concluded if there are behaviors that still need to be demonstrated, the evaluator will either use obstacles that she has brought to the site or will discuss what is needed to complete the badge.

#### ALLOWED:

- Treating the dog after the behavior
- Long line where noted
- Multiple, but not excessive cues

#### NOT ALLOWED:

- Luring
- Off leash behaviors except where noted
- Any behavior or action that defies safety protocols or demonstrates the handler's unwillingness to follow them