

# Drill Team Canine Freestyle

## Ohio 4-H/Ohio State Fair Rules for Participation



# 2025



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



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# Drill Team and Freestyle Rules for Ohio 4-H/Ohio State Fair Participation

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# County-Use of Ohio 4-H/OSF Dog Rules and Regulations

County usage of all Ohio 4-H/Ohio State Fair Dog Show Rules and Regulations is recommended for consistency and continuity in the 4-H dog programs throughout the state. However, counties may adapt The Ohio 4-H/Ohio State Fair Dog Show Rules and Regulations for county level evaluations to allow for a more positive experience for youth.

Some examples include:

- *Adding, deleting or modifying classes offered to accommodate entry numbers or experience, such as dividing Pre-Novice into Pre-Novice A and Pre-Novice B classes*
- *Adding "C" classes when needed.* At the Ohio State Fair, except for certain advanced obedience classes, youth are required to move to a higher level if winning. However, depending on the size of classes at the county level, it may not be feasible for a youth to move to a higher level after winning. They may be the only youth in the class or may not be ready as a team to move to the higher level. Therefore, either permitting youth winning first place to repeat a class or creating a "C" class for certain obedience classes, allows that youth to continue training at the same level to become successful and not get discouraged, dropping out of the dog project.
- *Adapting age divisions for participation.* For example, Showmanship and You and Your Dog are divided into Junior, Intermediate, and Senior classes at the State Fair. Counties may offer Junior and Senior classes, or even just one Showmanship class, depending on numbers.
- *Combining A and B classes.* Counties may combine an A and B class into one class provided the class exercise requirements are the same. However, record-keeping is required to ensure that youth/dog teams who are inexperienced "A" teams, are recognized as such so that they are not excluded from participating at the "A" level at the Ohio State Fair in the same 4-H year, if applicable.

## 2025 General Dog Show Rules for Ohio 4-H/Ohio State Fair Participation

Note: Changes and/or additions for 2025 are underlined.

### Preface

Below are the rules for participating in the 2025 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show. It is your responsibility to read, understand, and follow these rules. Please refer to the *County-Use of Ohio/OSF Dog Rules and Regulations* at the beginning of this section to find examples of how these rules can be modified for county use.

1. Prior to participating in 4-H dog activities with a dog (which includes the Ohio State Fair Dog Show), a *2025 Permission to Participate in Ohio 4-H Dog Activities Disclosure and Release of Claims* form **MUST** be signed by the 4-H member and a parent or guardian for this year's 4-H dog projects. **This form for the current year must be on file in the county Extension office for each youth before they can participate in the Ohio 4-H Dog Program activities with a dog.**
2. Individuals who violate any rule and/or exhibit poor sportsmanship during the Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show will be disqualified from showing.
3. Any dog exhibiting unsafe or threatening behavior *at any time before, during, or after exhibition* **MUST** be removed from the fairgrounds and will not be permitted to return at any time throughout the Dog Show. Determination of the show committee and/or judge will be final.
4. A dog that snaps, bites, or attempts to bite while in the ring must be immediately excused from the ring and then removed from the Fairgrounds for the remainder of the Dog Show.
5. Individuals are not permitted to have any discussion with judges at any time throughout the Dog Show. (This does not include discussions or questions during Agility or Rally Briefings or Walkthroughs.)
6. Determinations of the Show Committee and/or Judges are FINAL.
7. Judges' judging and scoring decisions are FINAL.
8. Individuals with concerns must express them in writing, give them to Show Personnel, and those concerns will be discussed at the fall Ohio 4-H Dog Advisory Committee meeting. Confrontations with judges and/or show personnel may result in disqualification of exhibitor and removal of individuals from the Fairgrounds.
9. Ohio State Fair Dog Show information can be found at <http://go.osu.edu/osfdogs>.

### Project Eligibility

1. Youth must be enrolled in 4-H, and ages 8 and in the third grade, or 9 years old and older regardless of grade level, as of January 1, 2025, with the last year of eligibility, or participation, in 4-H being the year in which the individual turns 19.
2. Youth must be enrolled in the correct dog project to show in classes at the State Fair as follows:
  - *You and Your Dog*, Project No. 201D – to show in You and Your Dog classes;
  - *Obedience*, Project No. 201O – to show in Beginner Novice, Pre-Novice, Novice, Graduate Novice, Open, Graduate Open, Utility, Brace, Team, and Rally classes;
  - *Showmanship*, Project No. 201S – to show in Showmanship classes;
  - *Performance Dog*, Project No. 201P – to show in Agility, Drill Team, Freestyle, and Scent Work;
  - *Working Dog*, Project No. 201W – to show in the Assistance Dog classes;
  - *4-H PetPALS*, Project No. 230 - to show in the 4-H PetPALS class (Youth do not need to enroll in the Working Dog project to participate in 4-H PetPALS at the State Fair.)
  - 4-H members can be enrolled in any 4-H Dog Project to participate in the Poster Contest; and
  - Any 4-H member, regardless of 4-H project, as well as FFA members, can participate in the Dog Skillathon.

3. FFA members are eligible to show provided they meet school FFA dog project requirements, as well as the *2025 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show Rules* and entry requirements. This includes ownership requirements.
4. Project eligibility and class or classes entered must be determined at the county level, based on the experience and ability of the handler/dog team. Extension 4-H educators must verify the youth is a member in good standing in their county to be able to participate at the Ohio State Fair.
5. Prior to showing at the Ohio State Fair, the exhibitor is expected to understand and agree to follow the *2025 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show Rules*, including the exercises to be performed for the judge, and to be able to perform those exercises prior to the Ohio State Fair Dog Show.

### **Dog Eligibility**

1. Only domestic dogs can be shown. Wolf and wolf hybrids are not permitted.
2. All dogs exhibited must be **six months of age** by the date of the show. **This includes Pilot Dog puppies and other assistance dogs. Dogs exhibited in Agility must be 18 months or older on or before the first day of the agility trial.** Proof of age is the burden of the exhibitor or exhibitor's immediate family. Dogs not meeting this age requirement cannot be shown.
3. Dogs shown at the Ohio State Fair Dog Show must be the same project dogs taken by 4-H members at the county level.

### **Ownership Requirements**

1. Dogs participating in the Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show must either be owned by the junior fair exhibitor or the exhibitor's immediate family.
2. Ownership of Assistance Dogs is respective of each applicable organization.
3. Dogs must be in the continual care of the junior fair exhibitor for the duration of the project.
4. *The date of ownership must be no later than April 1, or earlier as the date specified by the exhibitor's county.* Proof of ownership is the burden of the exhibitor and exhibitor's family.
5. Hardship cases will not be considered for State Fair participation.
6. Leasing a dog is not permitted for State Fair Dog Show participation. If counties have a leasing program, leased dogs are not permitted to exhibit at the State Fair.
7. Sharing a dog at the county level is not permitted for State Fair Dog Show participation, except for You and Your Dog. Siblings will be permitted to share a dog in the You and Your Dog class at the Ohio State Fair. Dogs cannot be shared in Obedience, Showmanship, Performance or Working events. If two youth share a dog at the county level in classes other than You and Your Dog, neither youth is eligible to show that dog at the Ohio State Fair, including 4-H Agility competition and 4-H PetPALS.

### **Definitions of Ownership**

1. *Immediate family* is defined as the junior fair exhibitor's father, mother, legal guardian, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, grandfather, or grandmother, including the corresponding step and half relations, or by a member of the exhibitor's household.
2. *Continual care* is defined as the junior fair exhibitor being responsible for and involved in the feeding, cleaning, and caring of the project.
3. *Hardship cases* are defined as dogs that replace the original project enrolled by the exhibitor after the county's enrollment deadline, or no later than April 1.
4. *Ownership – Registered dogs:* The exhibitor's name, or a member of his/her immediate family's name, must appear on the registration certificate of a dog registered by AKC, UKC, individual breed registries, herding dog registries, etc. Co-ownership of a dog is permitted provided the exhibitor's name, or a member of his/her immediate family's name, is listed on the registration certificate. It is recommended that a copy of the registration certificate be on file in the county Extension office.

5. *Ownership – Non-registered purchased dogs:* A non-registered dog purchased from a private owner, pet shop, humane society, dog rescue, etc., must have the exhibitor’s name or a member of his/her immediate family’s name, on the bill of sale. It is recommended that a copy of this bill of sale be on file in the county Extension office.
6. *Ownership – Dogs found/gifts:* If a dog was given to the exhibitor or immediate family, or found by the exhibitor or immediate family, the exhibitor or a member of his/her immediate family receiving or finding the dog should verify the date received or found by use of veterinary records, dog licenses, and other forms of records, and write a statement as to the definite or approximate date the dog was received as a gift or found. It is recommended that a copy of this statement be on file in the county Extension office.

### **Training**

1. Lessons, instruction, and advice for the exhibitor are encouraged. As long as the exhibitor is present in the learning situation and handles or trains the dog the majority of the time present, such assistance can include occasional handling or training by another person. Only the exhibitor can train the dog at any type of training class *on or after April 1, 2025*.
2. The judge will not permit an exhibitor to train or practice any exercise in the show ring at any time.

### **Showing**

1. **No one other than the junior fair exhibitor** is permitted to show the project dog(s) at any type of dog show, including agility, field trials, rally trials, etc., as well as fun matches, *on or after April 1, 2025*. (Excluding You and Your Dog if siblings share a dog.)
2. **No one other than the junior fair exhibitor** is permitted to take the project dog(s) on animal-assisted activities (pet therapy) visits, *on or after April 1, 2025*. Any exceptions must be approved by the State 4-H Dog Advisory Committee.
3. Eligibility for showing in an “A” class is defined as “no training or showing experience for the handler and/or dog prior to the county’s current project year.” (A new “project year” typically begins following the exhibitor’s county fair, or State Fair if after the OSF exhibitor’s county fair, or county’s 4-H awards program. Check with your county Extension office for your county’s policy.) Handlers and/or dogs not meeting this requirement **MUST** show in a “B” class. Refer to “A” class information in the rules for each show discipline.
4. Junior Fair exhibitors in respective activities and classes are expected to perform in those events and demonstrate those skills which are listed in these *2025 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show Rules*, in the *Ohio 4-H Dog Resource Handbook*, *Ohio 4-H Dog Project and Record Book*, and on the various 2025 dog 4-H judging score sheets.
  - a. Score sheets used in judging are posted under Resources at: [go.osu.edu/dog](http://go.osu.edu/dog). **Counties MUST use these score sheets for evaluating 4-H dog projects.** *Note:* All applicable score sheets will have 2025 at the bottom of the score sheet.
  - b. Any additional information pertinent to the State Fair Dog Show will be posted on the website at [www.go.osu.edu/osfdogs](http://www.go.osu.edu/osfdogs).
5. **ONLY** dogs shown by junior fair exhibitors are permitted on the Fairgrounds. Exceptions can be made for Ohio State Fair show personnel, judges, and volunteers, if requests are made to the State Fair Dog Show Director prior to the first day of the show. **ALL** dogs must comply with the 2025 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show health requirements.

## **Safety and Sportsmanship**

### **Permission to Participate in Ohio 4-H Dog Activities Disclosure and Release of Claims:**

1. ALL youth enrolled in 4-H dog projects are required to sign the *2025 Permission to Participate in Ohio 4-H Dog Activities Disclosure and Release of Claims* document. A parent or guardian is also required to sign the document.
  - a. This document must be signed each year a youth enrolls in a 4-H dog project and a copy **MUST** be kept on file at the county Extension office.
  - b. Exhibitors and parents/guardians verify they have this signed document on file at their county Extension office and understand and agree to information provided in this document, when signing the *2025 Ohio State Fair Dog Project Identification Form and Vaccination Certificate*.

### **Misbehavior and Excusals for Dogs on the Fairgrounds, Show Area, or in the Show Ring**

1. Any dog exhibiting unsafe or threatening behavior *at any time before, during, or after exhibition* **MUST** be removed from the fairgrounds and will not be permitted to return at any time throughout the Dog Show. Determination of the show committee and/or judge will be final.
2. The judge or show officials *will immediately* excuse from the ring any dog exhibiting unsafe or threatening behavior.
  - a. The judge will *immediately* excuse any dog that appears dangerous to other dogs or exhibitors.
  - b. Any dog that snaps, bites, or attempts to bite any person or dog while in the show ring will *immediately* be excused.
  - c. If a judge determines that a bitch in the ring is in season or appears to be so attractive to males as to be a disturbing element, the bitch is *immediately* excused. The judge shall not obtain the opinion of the health check officials.
3. Any uncontrolled behavior such as barking, running away from its handler, etc., will be penalized according to the seriousness of the misbehavior, whether it occurs during or between exercises, or before or after judging.
4. Any dog not under its handler's control may be excused from competition.

### **Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

1. Any exhibitor or other person(s) abusing a dog will be removed from the fairgrounds.
2. The judge or show officials will dismiss from the ring any exhibitor abusing the dog, which *will* result in disqualification of exhibitor *and* removal from the Fairgrounds.
3. Judges and/or show officials have the right to deduct points from the Sportsmanship category on the exhibitor's score sheet if unsportsmanlike conduct is displayed at any time throughout the 4-H dog show prior to or during judging.
4. Judges and/or show officials have the right to disqualify any participant exhibiting poor sportsmanship at any time throughout the 4-H Dog Show from showing, participating in activities, or from receiving any awards.
5. Any handler who willfully interferes with another competitor or that competitor's dog will be excused from competition.
6. Exhibitors, parents, volunteers, and other individuals verbally and/or physically abusive or threatening to show personnel will be removed from the Fairgrounds, and exhibitors will be disqualified.
7. Show officials have the right to order the removal from the Fairgrounds anyone showing unsportsmanlike conduct.
8. *Exhibitors must check in at their show ring within 15 minutes after being called to their ring. Exhibitors who do not check in at their show ring within 15 minutes after being called will have sportsmanship points deducted on their score sheets.*



## Other

1. An exhibitor disciplining a dog in the show ring will be excused from further competition in that class.
2. The judge will not permit any handler to use excessive verbal commands or to move toward the dog to correct it.
3. Exhibitors are totally responsible for their dogs while on the Fairgrounds.
  - a. Dogs must be kept on leash while on the Fairgrounds, except when participating in the ring during judging.
  - b. Dogs must be kenneled in designated areas.
  - c. Exhibitors must clean up after their dogs.
  - d. Dogs are not permitted outside agility show venue and the Buckeye Sports Center except to load, unload, and use the marked Exercise Areas.
  - e. Dogs must not be left unattended.
4. Dogs are not permitted to wear any type of muzzle, prong/pinch collar, or electronic collar while on the fairgrounds.
  - a. Exhibitors will be disqualified if their dogs are seen wearing muzzles, prong/pinch collars, or electronic collars.
5. Only the exhibitor's dog, exhibitor, and show officials are permitted in the show ring area at any time throughout the show.
6. **Judges' decisions are final.** Exhibitors, parents, volunteers, and other individuals **are not permitted** to talk with judges at any time during the Dog Show, except during Agility or Rally briefings and walkthroughs.
  - a. Discussion and/or confrontation with judges may result in disqualification of exhibitor and removal of individuals from the Fairgrounds.
7. Judges, show staff and 4-H Dog Committee reserve the right to withhold class placements.
8. Dogs are not permitted to be dyed or colored in any way. If coat or nails show any evidence of dye or coloring, the score sheet will reflect a major point deduction.

## License Requirements

1. Junior Fair exhibitors must list their dogs' license tag numbers on the *2025 Ohio State Fair Dog Project Identification Form and Vaccination Certificate*. Exception: Assistance Dogs licensed through their respective organizations.

## Health Requirements

1. The **2025 Ohio State Fair Dog Project Identification Form and Vaccination Certificate** completed and signed by a licensed veterinarian **is required for exhibition**. The **2025 County Dog Project Identification Form and Vaccination Certificate** is also permitted for use at the Ohio State Fair Dog Show and Ohio State Fair Agility Trial provided the vaccinations are current through the last day of the 2025 OSF Dog competition. **THESE ARE THE ONLY CERTIFICATES THAT WILL BE ACCEPTED AT HEALTH CHECK. HEALTH CHECK CERTIFICATE MUST BE IN PAPER FORM. ELECTRONIC COPIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** These certificates must include **ALL** information requested in the Identification Form section, completed, signed, and dated by the exhibitor, and signed by the parent/guardian. The administering veterinarian must complete the information requested in the Vaccination Certificate section and may modify it as per Rule 3 in this section. **Other certificates of vaccination, computerized vaccination records, pet record cards, or kennel records will not be accepted. It is the exhibitor's responsibility to make sure all health requirements for State Fair are met.**
  - a. These certificates can be downloaded at: [go.osu.edu/osfdogs](http://go.osu.edu/osfdogs).
  - b. The use of the *2025 County Dog Project Identification Form and Vaccination Certificate* must be

approved by the county 4-H professional and must be used consistently throughout the respective county.

2. **ALL** dogs must have current Rabies vaccinations, administered by licensed veterinarians. Veterinarians must document on the *2025 Ohio State Fair Dog Project Identification Form and Vaccination Certificate* or *2025 County Dog Project Identification Form and Vaccination Certificate* whether the exhibitor's dog's rabies vaccination is current by filling in the "date expires" blank.
3. ALL dogs must be vaccinated for Distemper, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Parainfluenza, and Parvovirus by licensed veterinarians. If the veterinarian does not administer certain vaccinations, those vaccinations must be noted by the administering veterinarian, either on the vaccination form or letterhead. *The Ohio State Fair Dog Show officials will accept the veterinarian's protocol for their client/patient. For the Ohio State Fair Dog Show and Ohio State Fair Agility Trial, all vaccinations must be current through the last day of the dog competition 2025.* (Note: Vaccination deadlines for county fairs may differ.)
4. *Bordetella* vaccination is recommended, but not required. Consult with your veterinarian.
5. Dogs **CANNOT** be shown at the Ohio State Fair if vaccinations are given by anyone other than a licensed veterinarian.
6. Any dogs exhibiting abnormalities or symptoms of sickness, disease, or parasite infestation as determined by the health check officials will be eliminated from the show and must be removed from the Fairgrounds. If a dog is under veterinary care for a health condition that is not infectious or contagious, the exhibitor must bring a health certificate from the attending veterinarian verifying the condition and treatment. **Decision of the health check officials is final.**
7. ***Bitches showing ANY signs of heat are not permitted on the Fairgrounds. They are not permitted to show!*** Each dog must go through a health check **each** day shown, where all females will be checked for signs of heat. If a bitch shows **any** signs of heat, she will be eliminated from the show and must be removed from the Fairgrounds. Any bitch, which appears so attractive to males as to be a disturbing element, will be eliminated from the show and must be removed from the Fairgrounds. **Decision of the health check officials is final.**
8. Pregnant and/or lactating (nursing) bitches are not permitted on the Fairgrounds and may not be shown.
9. Any male or female dog that is a disturbing element to other dogs will be eliminated from the show and must be removed from the Fairgrounds.
10. Before going to Registration, exhibitors must bring their dog(s) and *2025 Ohio State Fair Dog Project Identification Form and Vaccination Certificate(s)* to Health Check **each day** they are showing.
11. Incomplete or falsified information on the *2025 Ohio State Fair Dog Project Identification Form and Vaccination Certificate* or *2025 County Dog Project Identification Form and Vaccination Certificate* is grounds for dismissal.
  - a. Correction tape or other forms of correction used to cover errors on the ID/Vaccination Certificates is NOT permitted.

### **Scores and Score Sheets for Ohio State Fair Dog Show**

1. Scores will be posted within a reasonable amount of time after each class has been judged. Exhibitors who are tied for the top fifteen places in their respective classes should remain until all classes in the same category are judged, in case of further ties. Failure to stay could mean forfeiture of a possible placing.
2. No one other than show management and judges may view exhibitors' score sheets during the State Fair Dog Show.
3. Score sheets will be returned to the county Extension office about two weeks following the closing day of the State Fair. Score sheets will not be returned during the State Fair Dog Show.

4. Ohio State Fair Dog Show will require minimum scores for placements. Scores falling below the minimum score will not be eligible for placement. The scale is as follows:
  - Rally classes must score 100 points out of a possible 130 points.
  - You and Your Dog, Showmanship must score 190 points out of a possible 230 points.
  - Beginner Novice, Pre-Novice, and Preferred Novice obedience classes must score 190 points out of a possible 230.
  - Novice, Grad Novice, Grad Open, Open, and Utility obedience classes must score 180 points out of a possible 230.

### **State Fair Championship Title**

Exhibitors showing their dogs at the Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show may apply for titling by recording State Fair achievements during their 4-H careers. The junior fair participant, their parent/guardian, and 4-H advisor must document achievements. The Ohio State Fair Championship Title is for the handler, regardless of the number of dogs shown.

### **Requirements**

1. 4-H member may earn one Title per year regardless of the number of dogs shown;
2. 4-H member must accumulate 30 points to earn a Title;
3. Points will carry over from one year to the next;
4. Subsequent Titles will be awarded for each additional 30 points;
5. Points are recorded for the handler; and
6. All State Fair Dog Show participation rules apply.

### **Point System – Regular Classes**

A 4-H member may use multiple dogs the same year to earn points toward an OSF Championship Title provided the dogs are shown in different events. However, in one given year at the Ohio State Fair Dog Shows (2025), youth can receive no more than the following points per event, regardless of the number of dogs exhibited or classes entered in that event:

One (1) point will be awarded for participation in any of these State Fair events:

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Freestyle        | 9. Pre/Advance Team |
| 2. Drill Team       | 10. Brace           |
| 3. Rally            | 11. 4-H PetPALS     |
| 4. Scent Work*      | 12. Assistance Dog  |
| 5. Showmanship      | 13. Poster Contest  |
| 6. You and Your Dog | 14. Agility         |
| 7. Skillathon       | 15. AKC CGC*        |
| 8. Obedience        | 16. AKC Trick Dog*  |

An additional 5 points for earning a gold medal or placing 1<sup>st</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup> will be awarded per event, per year, regardless of the number of dogs entered in that event. For example: placement in ONE obedience class, regardless of the number of obedience classes exhibited = 5 points; placement in ONE rally class, regardless of the number of rally classes exhibited = 5 points; placement in ONE agility class, regardless of the number of agility classes exhibited = 5 points. Exhibitors must meet all the criteria according to the score sheet to receive 5 points for the 4-H PetPALS class. Exhibitors must meet all of the expectations according to the score sheet to receive 5 points for the Assistance Dog class.

\* For Scent Work, Trick Dog and CGC classes, exhibitors may earn points for participation only. An exhibitor may earn 1 point for participation in ONE Scent Work, ONE Trick Dog and/or ONE CGC class.

**Awards:** A pin and T-shirt will be presented to each exhibitor receiving his/her first Title at the Ohio State Fair during the Ohio State Fair Dog Show. Exhibitors receiving second titles, third titles, etc. will receive an award depending on sponsorship.

#### **4-H Exhibitor Versatility Award**

The purpose of the 4-H Exhibitor Versatility Award (EVA) is to: (1) encourage youth to participate in several classes (including Skillathon and Poster) at the Ohio State Fair Dog Show, and (2) award youth for achieving excellence in the classes in which they are showing or participating. To earn a 4-H Exhibitor Versatility Award, exhibitors must place in FIVE (5) classes as follows: (1) receive a gold medal in Agility; (2) meet all of the expectations according to the score sheet in the Assistance Dog class; (3) meet all of the criteria according to the score sheet in the 4-H PetPALS dog class; (4) place in the top five in all classes receiving placings, including the Skillathon and Poster Contest. Youth violating any of the *2025 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show Rules* or with points taken off for poor sportsmanship will not be eligible for this award. An exhibitor must show in five (5) classes and earn one placing as described above per class, with one dog in each of those classes. The 4-H Exhibitor Versatility Award is based on the number of classes, not number of dogs per class (i.e. for agility and rally). An exhibitor may earn one 4-H Exhibitor Versatility Award a year.

**4-H Exhibitor Versatility Award Forms:** Exhibitors must request an EVA form from the registration table. The exhibitor must keep track of their points toward earning the 4-H Exhibitor Versatility Award on this form. Once enough points have been earned to receive this award the completed form must be turned in at the registration table for verification. After verification that points earned are adequate to receive this award, the award will be presented.

### **Ohio State Fair Entry Information**

#### **Terminology**

1. **Discipline** – refers to a show category. Each of the following is a Discipline: Showmanship, Obedience (including Team and Brace), Rally, Agility, You and Your Dog, Drill Team, Canine Freestyle, 4-H PetPALS, Assistance Dogs, Tricks, and Canine Good Citizen.
2. **Level** – refers to sub-categories within certain disciplines. For example, Novice is a level in the Obedience discipline; Rally Excellent is a level in the Rally discipline.
3. **Class** – refers to the two classes within certain disciplines and/or discipline levels. The letters “**A**” and “**B**” refer to the experience of the youth **and** dog.
  - a. “**A**” classes are for handlers or dogs with **NO** training or showing experience prior to the county’s current project year. “**A**” classes can never be repeated by the same youth, regardless of what dog is shown. “**A**” classes can never be repeated by the same dog, regardless of what youth shows that dog. Refer to “**A**” class information in the rules for each show discipline.
  - b. “**B**” classes can be repeated by the same youth regardless of what dog is shown, and by the same dog, regardless of who shows that dog, provided the youth and/or dog are not the class winners (exception: Showmanship and You & Your Dog). If/when a youth and/or dog wins first place in a “**B**” class, the youth and dog must move to the next level (exception: Showmanship, You & Your Dog, and specified advanced obedience classes). A dog must move to a higher level within a discipline, once that dog begins performing at that higher level. (Refer to each of the show discipline’s rules for rules specific to that discipline.)

## **Eligibility**

Youth may enter any of the disciplines, levels, and classes they are eligible for as outlined in the *2025 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show Rules*. The handler and dog must be able to perform the exercises required of the disciplines/levels/class(s) entered. *Youth may not enter classes without both youth and dogs being prepared prior to the State Fair to perform the required exercises. A zero (0) will be given to any handler/dog team not attempting an exercise, except as provided otherwise specifically in the rules. A zero (0) on the exhibitor's score sheet will result in an incomplete for that class, and therefore the exhibitor will not be eligible for an award, except as provided otherwise specifically in the rules.*

Exhibitors may show one or more project dogs, provided the exhibitors and dogs meet the eligibility requirements of each respective class, as follows (refer to each respective show discipline rulebook for more detailed and complete information).

## **Show Disciplines**

### **1. Agility**

Youth may enter any number of project dogs in Agility and are permitted to enter more than one dog per Agility class. Youth showing in Agility may show the same or different project dog(s) in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements.

### **2. Obedience**

#### **Beginner Novice A**

Beginner Novice A is for the first-year member and first-year dog with no prior show experience.

***Beginner Novice A youth are not permitted to show the same or different dog in any other obedience class.*** This is like any other "A" class and can never be repeated by youth or dog. Youth may show one project dog in Beginner Novice A.

#### **Beginner Novice B and Pre-Novice**

Youth may show two or more project dogs in Beginner Novice B and/or Pre-Novice, provided the youth and dog meet eligibility requirements. A dog cannot be shown in both Beginner Novice B and Pre-Novice in the same year. Youth may show the same dog in other non-obedience classes and/or a different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements. Youth may NOT show the same dog in another obedience class the same year.

#### **Preferred Novice**

Youth may show two or more project dogs at the Preferred Novice Level, provided the youth and dog meet class eligibility requirements. Youth may show the same dog in other non-obedience classes. Youth may NOT show the same dog in another obedience class the same year.

#### **Novice**

Youth may show one project dog at the Novice A level, provided the youth and dog meet class eligibility requirements. Youth may show two or more project dogs at the Novice B level, provided the youth and dog meet class eligibility requirements. Youth may show the same dog in other non-obedience classes and/or a different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements. Youth may NOT show the same dog in another obedience class the same year.

### **Advanced Obedience**

Youth may show two project dogs in each of the following Obedience classes: Graduate Novice, Open, Graduate Open, and Utility provided youth and dogs meet eligibility requirements. Level "A" and "B" in Graduate Novice, Open, Graduate Open and Utility will be combined into single classes, without designation of experience. Classes provided at these levels will be listed as Graduate Novice, Open, Graduate Open and Utility. Youth may show the same dog or different dog in other non-obedience disciplines and/or a different dog in other obedience levels provided they meet those eligibility requirements. Youth may NOT show the same dog in another obedience class the same year.

### **3. Brace**

Youth must show two project dogs that are capable of performing the Novice exercises. Youth may show the same dogs or different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements. Youth showing in Beginner Novice or Pre-Novice classes cannot show in Brace.

### **4. Teams**

**Pre-Novice Team:** Youth may enter two or more project dogs in Beginner Novice B and/or Pre-Novice and may enter more than one dog in Pre-Novice team provided the project dogs entered are for different teams.

**Advanced Team:** Youth may show a Novice level or above project dog in the Advanced Team class if having multiple dogs. Youth may participate in a second Advanced Team class provided they use a different project dog. Youth may show the same dog or different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements.

Team alternates must enter online for their respective Team class to be eligible to replace another team member.

### **5. Rally**

Youth may show a maximum of two project dogs per Rally level. A level is Rally Novice, Rally Intermediate, Rally Advanced, or Rally Excellent. Therefore, youth may show two dogs in Rally Novice B, two dogs in Rally Intermediate B, two dogs in Rally Advanced, and two dogs in Rally Excellent. Youth may show the same dog or different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements.

### **6. Showmanship**

Showmanship classes are based on age of youth and show experience of the youth and dog. Therefore, an exhibitor and dog can show in **ONE** Showmanship class only. Youth may show the same dog or different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements.

### **7. You and Your Dog**

You and Your Dog classes are based on the age of youth. Therefore, an exhibitor and dog can show in **ONE** You and Your Dog class only. Youth may show the same dog or different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements. Youth may share one project dog with a sibling for this show discipline only. Both siblings may enter a You and Your Dog class. Refer to *You and Your Dog* rules for completion requirements of the *Dog Project and Record Book* for judging.

## 8. 4-H PetPALS

Youth **MUST** be enrolled in the 4-H PetPALS Project No. 230 to be eligible to enter this class. Youth may show the same dog or different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements. (Note: Youth who have more than one 4-H PetPALS species [i.e. a dog and a rabbit, or dog and cat, etc.] can enter the rabbit or cat, etc. in 4-H PetPALS Day held (Date TBD) in the Youth Center.)

## 9. Assistance Dogs

- a. Assistance Dogs must be 6 months of age by show date. Youth taking Assistance Dog projects may show their Assistance Dogs in You and Your Dog classes. Youth must show in the appropriate age You and Your Dog level.
- b. Youth taking Assistance Dogs may show their Assistance Dogs in one Beginning Obedience level/class (Beginner Novice A, Beginner Novice B, or Pre-Novice) that meets the exhibitor's experience eligibility. Youth showing Assistance Dogs may show a different project dog(s) in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements.
- c. Youth taking Assistance Dogs may enter the Canine Good Citizen class.
- d. Youth taking Assistance Dogs may also participate in the Poster Contest and Skillathon.

## 10. Canine Freestyle

Youth may show one project dog in a maximum of two Canine Freestyle classes, with the following exception: Youth showing in the Sassy Seniors class may NOT show this senior dog in another Freestyle class.

- *To show in a Canine Freestyle class at the Ohio State Fair, youth and their dogs must have practiced a routine and be prepared to perform the routine to the best of their abilities, as a result of training and practice.*

Youth may show the same dog or different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements.

## 11. Drill Team

Drill Team entries must consist of no more than two Drill Team entries per county. The same youth may participate on more than one Drill Team in their county provided they use a different project dog. Refer to the Drill Team rules for cross-county Drill Team eligibility. Refer to the Drill Team rules for the number/size of Drill Teams per county permitted to show. Youth may show the same dog or different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements.

- Drill Team entries must be made online. Drill Team alternates must enter online for their respective Drill Team class to be eligible to replace another team member.

## 12. AKC Trick Dog

Youth may enter AKC Trick Dog classes with the same or different project dog(s) and are permitted to enter more than one dog per Trick Dog class. Youth showing in AKC Trick Dog may show the same or different project dog(s) in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements. AKC Trick Dog classes offered include Novice Trick Dog, Intermediate Trick Dog, and Advanced Trick Dog.

- *To show in an AKC Trick Dog class at the Ohio State Fair, youth and their dogs must have practiced the tricks performed and be prepared to perform to the best of their abilities, as a result of training and practice.*

**13. AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC)**

Youth may enter AKC CGC classes with the same or different project dog(s) and are permitted to enter any number of project dogs in AKC CGC. Youth showing in AKC CGC may show the same or different project dog(s) in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements. *\*To show in an AKC CGC class at the Ohio State Fair, youth and their dogs must have practiced the test exercises and be prepared to perform to the best of their abilities, as a result of training and practice.*

**14. Scent Work**

Youth may show only one project dog in each of the offered Scent Work classes. Youth may show the same dog in another offered Scent Work class(es) or a different dog in another offered Scent Work class provided they meet the eligibility requirements. Youth may show the same dog or a different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements.



## Ohio State Fair Junior Fair and Ohio 4-H Dog Show Rules Drill Team and Canine Freestyle

### Handler's Appearance

Exhibitors should be neat, clean, and well-groomed in appearance. They should wear clothing that is comfortable to handle in and appropriate for dog shows. Clothing should not distract, limit or hinder the judge's view of the dog. Youth with long hair should tie it back to keep it from interfering with handling or the judge's view.

- **Acceptable clothing for Drill Team** classes include that which is appropriate for the performance provided the clothing is not unacceptable as listed in the next paragraph. See page 24 for handler costumes that are permitted in Freestyle competition.
- **Inappropriate clothing for Drill Team and Freestyle** classes includes clothing that is too tight or too revealing, such as short skirts, short shorts, tank tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, low cut blouses or shirts, shorts hanging too low on the waist, or other similar types of clothing. Do not wear shirts with club names or logos, or clothing with lettering and distracting or offensive wording or designs. Do not wear sandals, open-toed shoes, high-heeled shoes, clogs, or similar type footwear. *Exhibitors dressed inappropriately will have points deducted or may be excused from the show ring.*

### Dog's Appearance

Dogs must be clean, well-brushed and in good physical condition appropriate for the dog's age. The coat must be free from mats and loose hair. Dogs are not permitted to be dyed or colored in any way. If coat or nails show any evidence of dye or coloring, the score sheet will reflect a major point deduction. See page 24 and 25 for attire permitted on dogs for Freestyle competition.

### Collars

- **Acceptable collars while in the show ring for Drill Team:** Well-fitting plain buckle or quick release collars, martingales, or slip collars of an appropriate single length of leather, fabric or chain with two rings, one on each end. Flat securely attached tags are permitted on these collars. Nothing may be hanging from the dog's collar
- **Acceptable collars while in the show ring for Freestyle (see pg. 27):** Buckle or quick release collars, non-chain flat martingale collars; undecorated harnesses.
- **Acceptable collars while outside the show ring:** Head halters, fancy collars, harnesses and studded collars are permitted on dogs.
- **Unacceptable collars anywhere on the Fairgrounds:** Pinch collars, collars with prongs or spikes on inside or outside, electronic collars, or any other special training collars, or muzzles. Youth are subject to disqualification from showing and removal from the Fairgrounds if their dogs are seen wearing these collars or devices.

### Leashes

Leashes may be of fabric or leather. Chain leashes are not acceptable. All dogs must be kept on leash except when in the show ring or exercise area and must be brought into and taken out of the ring on leash. Dogs must be kept on leash in the ring when brought in to receive awards, and when waiting before and after the group exercises.

## **Fouling the Ring**

A 25-point deduction will be made for any dog fouling the ring. The exhibitor and their dog are not to be excused from the ring. Judging is to continue once the area is properly cleaned.

Fouling includes urine, feces or vomit. In exceptionally poor ring conditions, judges must confer with the show committee and other judges to determine scoring if fouling should occur.

## **DRILL TEAM**

### **Information from General Rules**

1. Youth entered in Drill Team competition must be enrolled in the Performance Dog Project, No. 201P to be able to participate.
2. There will be only one (1) drill team class offered at the Ohio State Fair consisting of 4-9 members per team.
3. Each county may enter two (2) drill teams consisting of 4-9 members per team.
4. The same youth may participate on more than one Drill Team provided they use a different project dog.
5. Cross-county Drill Teams:  
**ONLY** if a county (not a club) does not have enough members to complete one (1) drill team, or they have one (1) team and would like to enter two (2), they may then enter a cross-county team. For cross-county teams:
  1. Members must represent their county of 4-H enrollment.
  2. Members from one or more additional counties can make up a cross-county team.
  3. Cross-county team members do not need to be from neighboring counties with adjacent borders.
  4. Cross-county team members can also participate in one (1) drill team from their own county provided they use a different project dog.
    - a. Team members participating from another county must provide enrollment documentation in the form of a letter from one Extension professional in their county, on county letterhead. This letter must be emailed to Renee Clark, [clark.471@osu.edu](mailto:clark.471@osu.edu) by the entry deadline.
    - b. One Extension professional from the county in which the team is registered must sign the completed Drill Team entry form that includes enrollment documentation from the participating county members.
  5. Documentation will be confirmed upon receipt of entries.
5. Youth may show the same dog or different dog in any other classes provided they meet those classes' eligibility requirements.

### **Awards**

Medallions will be awarded to the first-place team. Rosettes will be awarded to each team participant placing first through fifteenth.

## Drill Team Classes Offered at 2025 Ohio State Fair

Drill Team (4-9 members)

### Judging Requirements

**Obedience Exercises:** Obedience will be judged using the same criteria as individual obedience classes.

- **Heeling** – The team can do any form of heeling patterns. Heeling patterns must include at least **three (3) sits, one (1) fast and one (1) slow** movement.

### **Required Elements:**

- **Moving Circles** – Every dog and handler team must participate in at least **two (2)** moving circles.
- **Moving Straight Lines** – Each dog and handler team must participate in at least **two (2)** moving straight lines.
- **Team Participation** – All dog and handler teams must participate in the entire routine.

### **Presentation:**

**Overall Presentation/Entertainment Value** – This is a score that will be given for the overall entertainment value or crowd appeal of the presentation. Judges will consider these questions during scoring: Was it entertaining? Did the presentation keep the viewers' attention throughout the **whole** routine? Were handlers and dogs enjoying themselves? Did the routine flow well? Was the flow smooth from one exercise/element to the next?

**Routine Complexity and Element Execution** – This score will take into consideration degree of difficulty and how precise the elements were executed within the routine. Elements with a higher degree of difficulty that were well executed will be given higher point consideration. Routines do not have to be difficult to receive a high score! An easy movement done well will be given higher points consideration than a difficult element done poorly.

**Creativity** – Judges will be granting points based on creativity and originality of individual elements within the performance. They will also look at how the attire contributes to the overall theme. When considering the attire, judges will look at creative use of materials and NOT the amount of money spent to produce an outfit. Props are permitted only as wearable parts of the exhibitor's clothing. *Stationary props are not permitted.*

**Music Appropriate to Routine** – The judge will consider the tempo and genera of music to see if the routine fits the music selection. Judges will look to see if pace of the routine matches tempo of the music.

**Attitude/Enthusiasm** – Points will be awarded for positive attitudes and enthusiasm. Remember, *all team members contribute to this score.*

**Use of Space** – Teams will be awarded points for effectively using the entire show arena. The ring size will be 50 feet x 50 feet. Teams need to stay inside this diameter.

## Penalties

**Animal Respect** – Judges will watch to see that the dog is a respected partner of the team. They may ask themselves these questions: Is the dog a willing participant? Has the dog been “dragged” throughout the routine? Is the handler treating the dog like a prop or like a teammate? Is the handler aware that there is a dog on the leash? Is the dog given inappropriate corrections? Are the elements in the routine appropriate for the dog’s condition and age? If the handler shows lack of respect for his/her teammate, they will incur a **substantial** point deduction per occurrence.

**Disciplining** – The show ring is not the proper place to discipline your dog. An exhibitor disciplining a dog in the show ring will be excused from further competition in that class.

**Fouling the Ring** – There will be a **25-point** deduction for each instance of a dog fouling in the ring. (Refer to Fouling the Ring, page 17.)

**Barking** – Points will be deducted for barking unless it is an obvious part of the routine.

**Dog Leaves the Ring** – There will be a **10-point** deduction for each instance of a dog leaving the ring.

**Unusual Behavior** – Points will be deducted for and not limited to the following: dog aggression, dog displaying dominance, dog visiting spectators, etc. A dog that snaps, bites or attempts to bite will be immediately excused from the ring.

**Inappropriate Music** – Points will be deducted for music that is offensive or has inappropriate language.

**Rules Violations** – Deductions will be taken for violating rules found in the *2025 Ohio State Fair Jr. Fair Dog Show Rules/Show Venue Rules*.

**Time Violations** – **Five (5)** points will be deducted for presentations less than 5 minutes and more than 7 minutes.

## Miscellaneous

1. Prior to the beginning of Drill Team competition, one advisor and the captain from each team must meet at the announcer’s stand for a briefing.
2. Music must be provided in a manner that can be connected to an auxiliary cord or played from a personal device into a microphone. One person must be responsible for the device. No CDs.
3. Points will not be deducted for team captain calling exercises.
4. Only the next team to perform will be permitted on the staging ring floor.

## CANINE FREESTYLE

### Information from General Rules

1. Youth entered in Canine Freestyle competition must be enrolled in the Performance Dog Project, No. 201P to be able to participate.
2. Youth may show one project dog in a maximum of two Canine Freestyle classes, with the following exception:
  - Youth showing in the Sassy Seniors class may NOT show this senior dog in another Freestyle class.
3. To show in a Canine Freestyle class at the Ohio State Fair, youth and their dogs must have practiced a routine and be prepared to perform the routine to the best of their abilities, as a result of training and practice. Freestyle routines are not to be like drill team routines.
4. Youth may show the same dog or different dog in other disciplines/classes provided they meet those eligibility requirements.

### Cross-county Freestyle Pairs Requirements

**ONLY** if a county (not a club) does not have enough members to complete a Freestyle Pairs team, they may then enter a cross-county team. For cross-county teams:

- a. Members must represent their county of 4-H enrollment.
- b. Members from one additional county can make up a cross-county Pairs team.
- c. Cross-county team members do not need to be from neighboring counties with adjacent borders.
- d. Team members participating from another county must provide enrollment documentation in the form of a letter from one Extension professional in their county, on county letterhead. This letter must be emailed to Renee Clark, [clark.471@osu.edu](mailto:clark.471@osu.edu).
- e. Documentation will be confirmed upon receipt of Extension professional's letter and team entries.

### Awards

Awards for Canine Freestyle include a trophy for each class winner and 1<sup>st</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup> place rosettes for each class.

### Canine Freestyle Classes Offered at 2025 Ohio State Fair

Canine Freestyle Singles

Canine Freestyle Pairs

Canine Freestyle Sassy Seniors

### Note: Refer to the Appendix for a complete set of Canine Freestyle Rules

#### Canine Freestyle Singles

The first-place winner can repeat this class with the same or different dog. The dog of a first-place winner can repeat this class. If an exhibitor and/or dog places in this class at the Ohio State Fair, they can repeat this class at state provided the county requirements have been met. The team should move to the beat of the music. The routine may be on or off leash. They will be judged on: how many moves the dog and handler successfully complete; the variety of moves; how the dog and handler are interacting; and control of the dog by the handler. The routine should cover 50% of the ring space. The handler and dog should appear to be having an enjoyable experience. Judges must look to see if the handler has control of their

dog. The routine length must be within 1:30 and 2:15 minutes (plus or minus 15 seconds allowed for recording and playback device speeds). \*Note: Youth with dogs ages 9 or older as of date of show may enter the Sassy Senior class instead of Canine Freestyle Singles, but cannot show in both classes with the same dog.

### **Canine Freestyle Pairs**

This class is for two handlers and their dogs. The team should move to the beat of the music and may be on or off leash. They will be judged on: how many moves the dogs and handler successfully complete; the variety of moves; how the dogs and handler are interacting; and control of the dogs by the handler. The routine should cover 50% of the ring space. The handler and dog should appear to be having an enjoyable experience. Judges must look to see if the handler has control of their dog. The routine length must be within 1:30 and 2:15 minutes (plus or minus 15 seconds allowed for recording and playback device speeds). \*Note: Youth with dogs ages 9 or older as of date of show may enter the Sassy Senior class instead of Canine Freestyle Pairs, but cannot show in both classes with the same dog.

### **Canine Freestyle Sassy Seniors**

This entry is for any youth with a **dog nine years old or older as of date of show**. The team should move to the beat of the music. The routine may be on or off leash. They will be judged on: how many moves the dog and handler successfully complete; the variety of moves; how the dog and handler are interacting; and control of the dog by the handler. The routine should cover 50% of the ring space. The handler and dog should appear to be having an enjoyable experience. Judges must look to see if the handler has control of their dog. The routine length must be within 1:30 and 2:15 minutes (plus or minus 15 seconds allowed for recording and playback device speeds). \*Note: Youth who enter this class with their "senior" dogs, may not enter any other Canine Freestyle class with the same dog.

## **APPENDIX**

### **4-H CANINE FREESTYLE RULES**

#### **MUSICAL FREESTYLE (MF)**

1. Any move is allowed, as long as it does not endanger the dog or handler.
2. Distance work, weaves, jumps, send-outs, and/or innovative new moves are encouraged.
3. Moves may be performed from any position.

#### **MUSICAL INTERPRETATION AND MOVEMENTS OF HANDLER AND DOG**

In the MF style, the movements of the handler/dog team should be in time with and match the style or theme of the music being played. In some cases, the movements will be in the form of dance steps and body positions. In other cases, as in a theatrical or story-telling routine, the team will be performing interpretive movements, moods, and/or expressions to match the music selected. With each higher level of competition, the team will be expected to perform a higher quality/level of interpretive movements in their routine.

## SCORING SYSTEM

### TECHNICAL MERIT (TM) Score

(50% of Total Score) (1.0 lowest/10.0 highest):

**1. Content** (amount, variety of moves, fullness of routine) – **3.0** points maximum.

Also includes:

- Different positions the dog is worked on in relation to the handler (within 360-degree radius of the handler).
- Different body positions/movements (with arms, legs, head, feet, etc. – handler and dog)
- Main moves and Transitional moves (moves used as transitions between the main moves).

**2. Precise Execution** of All movements by dog(s) and handler(s) – **2.0** points maximum.

Also includes:

- How “Precise,” synchronized, and together the handler(s) and dog(s) are throughout.
- How effective handler’s cues are, how quick and well dog responds.
- Consideration of mistakes and/or refusals.
- How well the handler disguises cues to the dog.

**3. Flow** of movements from one to another by dog(s) and handler(s) – **2.0** points maximum.

Also includes:

- Consideration of set-ups, starts and stops, and breaks in routine.
- Flow of main and transitional moves.
- Flow of the overall routine.

**4. Difficulty of Routine** (intricacy of steps, different paces, difficulty of handler(s) movements with dog(s) movements) – **2.0** points maximum.

Also includes:

- Difficult use of different handler and dog body positions/movements.
- Control of handler's body and movements with dog's movements.
- Complex and/or new, innovative moves and combinations.

**5. Stepping in Time to the Music** - staying with the beat – **1.0** point maximum.

- Includes using the entire body, upper and lower (arms, legs, head, etc.).

**TOTAL TECHNICAL MERIT (TM) Points Possible = 10.0**

### ARTISTIC IMPRESSION (AI) Score

(50% of Total Score) (1.0 lowest/10.0 highest):

**1. Animation, Attitude, Attention, and Harmonious Interaction (Bonding)** of dog(s) and handler(s) – **2.5** points maximum.

- Also includes: Concentration, and readiness of handler(s) and dog(s) throughout.

**2. Quality and Creativity of Choreography**, layout of routine - **2.0** points maximum.

- How creative and well all movements are arranged and laid out in the routine.

**3. Use of 50% Ring Space** - **1.5** points maximum.

- How fully, completely, and balanced the 50% ring area is covered by the handler(s) and dog(s).

**4. Coordination of Routine with Music, Musical Interpretation** – **1.5** points maximum.

- How well the routine matches the music and/or theme that is/are presented.
- 5. Costume Coordination with Music and Routine – 1.5 points maximum.**
- How well the handler's costume and the dog's adornment match and/or complement the music, theme, and routine presented.
- 6. Spectator Appeal - 1.0 points maximum.**
- How well the spectators appreciate, enjoy, and respond to the routine.

**TOTAL ARTISTIC IMPRESSION (AI) Points Possible = 10.0**

\* Consideration is given to both handler(s) and the dog(s) on all scores.

**FOR ALL ROUTINES**

1. Prior to the beginning of Canine Freestyle competition, each exhibitor must meet at the announcer's stand for a briefing.
2. *Music must be provided in a manner that can be connected to an auxiliary cord or played from a personal device into a microphone. One person must be responsible for the device. No CDs.*
3. Music checks will be available immediately before each competitor's routine to ensure the volume is at the competitor's preferred level prior to the performance. It is recommended competitors use the music checks conscientiously, as placement of the speakers may be different at each event and may affect the dog's performance. Toys and/or training aids (other than food/food treats) may be used in the ring during music checks.
4. No food (animal or human), treats, bait, or training aids are allowed in the ring while a routine is being judged. Violations will result in the routine being disqualified.
5. The routine will be performed in an area approximately 50' x 50'.
6. In the instance of a sound system failure, show coordinators will ensure that each competitor receives a fair, complete, and uninterrupted performance of their routine. The music can either be restarted from the beginning or from the point of interruption, and the exhibitor can either restart the routine or continue from the point of interruption.
7. The routine must start, continue, and finish within the confines of the ring area.
8. Use of Ring Space: The goal with this, for all routines, is for the dog(s) and handler(s) to cover as much of the total ring area as possible, presenting moves in various areas of the ring and balancing the routine throughout the ring space. At least 50% of the total ring area should be used during a routine.
9. All movements of the dog(s) should appear natural and safe for the dog to perform. There should be no intentional held or forced movement of the dog(s) by the handler(s).
10. In the "Pairs" division, the handler and dog teams may switch partners with other members in the routine, at any time during the routine.
11. With On Leash entries, the leash must not be dropped more than 25% or the routine will be disqualified.
12. On Leash and Off Leash exhibitors will be judged by the same criteria, except for the specific 'tight leash' and 'dropping of the leash' rules for On Leash competitors.
13. In division levels where exhibitors are given choice to do their routine either On or Off leash, all On and Off leash competitors of each division level, together, compete for placements.
14. The judging time of the routine will start when either the dog or handler begin to move (not when the music starts). The time will stop when both the dog and handler have stopped moving/the ending pose of the routine, or when the 15-second overtime is reached, whichever comes first.



15. Audience applause and feedback is always welcome and expected at all events. An exhibitor or his/her associate must not request that the spectators hold applause during and/or after performances.
16. Canine freestyle is a team sport, with handler(s) and dog(s). In all divisions, the **handler and dog** will be judged and scored as one unit.
17. Music should portray the relationship between the dog and handler and show personality of dog. Discretion should be used in selecting music. Music must show good taste and should not be offensive or suggestive in language. *Points will be deducted for music that is offensive or has inappropriate language.*
18. Freestyle routines are different from Drill Team routines.
19. Recommended ring size is 50' x 50'

## HANDLER COSTUMES AND DOG ATTIRE

### HANDLERS

- Handler costumes are permitted and should be suited to the theme of the music. If the music does not have a theme, costuming is at the discretion of the handler.
- Costumes must be neat and presentable. Glitz, sequins, etc. may be used where appropriate.
- Costumes must not be offensive or sexually suggestive. A violation of this will result in the routine being disqualified.
- Costumes should be done in good taste showing the theme of music and routine. Inappropriate clothing includes clothing that is too tight or too revealing, such as short skirts, short shorts, tank tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, low cut blouses or shirts, shorts hanging too low on the waist, or other similar types of clothing. Do not wear shirts with club names or logos, or clothing with lettering and distracting or offensive wording or designs. Do not wear sandals, open-toed shoes, high-heeled shoes, clogs, or similar type footwear. *Exhibitors dressed inappropriately will have points deducted or may be excused from the show ring.* Costumes should not distract, limit, or hinder judge's view of dog.

### DOGS

All dogs **may** wear:

- Decorative/Coordinated Neck Collar or Scarf.
- Decorative/Coordinated Buckle Collar (snap or regular).
- Non-chain Flat Decorative/Coordinated Martingale Collar.
- Un-decorated Harness, with no added adornments to it.
- Decorative/Coordinated Ankle Bands – on any number of the four legs, placed low near each foot, covering no more than 1 ½" of each ankle.

Drop-Coated dogs may wear Decorative/Coordinated Hair Bands, Bows, or Barrette, provided they are specifically for tying the hair away from the eyes.

\*No other adornment than the above is allowed on dogs.

Dogs **must not** wear:

- Glitter, Paint, Hair Dye, or Nail Color
- Different/abnormal hairstyles or shaves
- Any kind of Prong, Pinch, Choke or Slip Collars (made of chain or any other material)
- Snoods
- Head Halters
- Tab/Training Tab

\*Any violation of any of the above will result in the routine being disqualified.

### **PROPS AND OTHER ITEMS**

- Props may be stationary or movable.
- Dogs and/or handlers may carry or retrieve a prop.
- Dogs and/or handlers may carry and/or retrieve a stationary prop or other item. However, a prop or other item may not be thrown or tossed with the intent that it be immediately retrieved.
- Props must be an integral part of the routine and must be used by the handler and dog team. A violation of this will result in a deduction of 1.0 point from the Total Technical Merit (TM) score and 1.0 point from the Total Artistic Impression (AI) score.
- Time allotment for set up and taking down of props is 30 seconds and must be done by the handler only. A violation of this will result in a deduction of 1.0 point from the Total Technical Merit (TM) score and 1.0 point from the Total Artistic Impression (AI) score.
- No human or animal props are allowed in competitive divisions. A violation of this will result in the routine being disqualified.
- A prop or other item should not aid the dog and/or handler in the execution of a move. Ring gating, barriers, or other items should not be used to aid movement(s) in the routine.
- When a prop or other item is used/presented in the routine, the dog's demeanor and/or drive should not change markedly. The dog's eyes or head should not follow a prop/item significantly. A violation of either of these will result in the routine being disqualified.

### **MISCELLANEOUS DEDUCTIONS**

- For excessive talking during the routine, a deduction of .1 to .3 (depending on severity) will be taken from the Artistic Impression (AI) – Animation/Interaction score.
- For excessive barking during the routine, a deduction of .1 to .3 (depending on severity) will be taken from the Artistic Impression (AI) – Spectator Appeal score.
- If there is physical manipulation of the dog (i.e. grabbing of collar, tight leash, pushing, pulling, tapping, holding, prodding, etc.) and it is done less than 50% of the routine, a deduction of .3 will be taken, for each instance, from both the Technical Merit (TM) – Precise Execution and the Artistic Impression (AI) – Animation/Interaction scores.

### **PENALTIES**

- A routine will be penalized for any of the following:
- Fouling/Eliminating in the ring. (25-point deduction) (Refer to Fouling the Ring, page 18.)
- Leaving the ring (dog and/or handler at any time during the routine)
- Food/treats/bait/training aids in the ring

- Using/presenting a prop/item that causes marked change in the dog's drive and/or demeanor
- Dog's eyes and/or head following prop/item significantly
- Any additional humans or dogs (outside of competition definitions) in the ring at any point during the routine
- Any violation of dog attire or adornment
- Costume, Music, or Routine offensive or sexually suggestive in language or presentation
- Routine too short or too long
- Dropping of leash over 25% of routine in any On Leash entry
- Abusive behavior toward dog, referee, judge(s), or ring steward will result in disqualification of exhibitor, dog, and removal from the Fairgrounds in accordance with the *2025 Ohio State Fair Dog Show General Rules*.
- Physical manipulation of the dog (i.e. grabbing of collar, tight leash, pushing, pulling, tapping, holding, prodding, etc.) done forcefully or over 50% of routine

### **Contact Information**

**Websites:** [www.go.osu.edu/dog](http://www.go.osu.edu/dog)      [www.go.osu.edu/osfdogs](http://www.go.osu.edu/osfdogs)

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