

What Activities Can I Do With My Dog?

Dog Shows.

There are two main types of Dog Shows. A Championship Show is an exhibition of registered dogs at which Challenge Certificates are awarded. A Challenge Certificate evidences the number of points awarded at the fixture towards the title Australian Champion. At these shows only qualified Judges officiate.

An Open Show or Parade is an exhibition of registered dogs at which no Challenge Certificates are awarded, but dogs which have been awarded the title of Australian Champion may compete. At these shows Trainee Judges officiate and it is considered the training ground for all young dogs and owners.



Dog Obedience Benefits

In this day and age it is more important than ever to consider some form of obedience training for our canine companions. Whether your dog is big or small, hairy or smooth coated, old or young, all dogs and their owners will benefit from the pursuit of obedience training. The CAWA can advise dog owners of the location of their nearest Obedience Dog Club.

Many people who join Obedience Dog Clubs to learn basic obedience skills with their dog progress through the classes and compete in club competitions where they are able to demonstrate the level of skill achieved with their canine companion. A further step from here is to join the Canine Association of Western Australia and compete in Obedience Trials, which are held on most weekends of the year all over the State. This is an opportunity to meet other owners and their dogs as you compete to achieve passes at various levels which will enable you to achieve obedience titles. "The idea of Obedience Trials is to demonstrate the usefulness of the dog as the companion of man not the ability of the dog to acquire facility in the performance of mere tricks. A dog that has been granted the title of Australian Obedience Champion has demonstrated its fitness for a place in our modern scheme of living" (ANKC Rulebook).



Starting off as a beginner you can compete in Encouragement then Novice Classes progressing through to the highest level of Utility Class. Along the way you can be awarded the titles of Companion Dog (CD), Companion Dog Excellent (CDX) and Utility Dog (UD). The highest title of Obedience Champion is only awarded to a few dogs each year and it is a very admirable achievement. These canine companions and their owners have developed a strong bond as the path of obedience has been pursued.



Natural Tracking Ability. The dog's ability to track is well known. Man has utilised this ability for centuries. Dogs have helped the hunter to find game and food and in France dogs hunt for exotica like truffles. Tracking dogs can be a competition sport where dogs compete for ANKC titles.

Dogs have also been used by police to hunt criminals and by search and rescue workers to find lost people. Tracking is something that all dogs can do. It is a natural instinct for a dog to use his sense of smell. The dog's tracking ability is extremely acute and we still don't fully understand the dog's capabilities in this area. We don't have to teach a dog to track, we use their natural instinct to teach them that we want them to follow a certain track or scent. All types of dogs of varying breeds compete in these trials from Cavalier King Charles Spaniels to German Shepherd Dogs.



Agility is a fun sport

What is Agility? Show jumping for horses involves a set course of prescribed jumps, horse and rider, electronic timing and a Judge and Steward. A course is built to each individual Judge's specifications, a rate is set for the horse to complete the course and the competitors take numbered turns. After the first round the slower horses and horses with more than the limit of faults are relegated to perform another day. The above exactly describes Agility with one minor adjustment. The competitors are dogs and the handlers run beside the dog directing it over, under and through obstacles. This sport is not for the faint hearted or the unfit.



Agility in Australia is growing in popularity as more handlers are turning to this fun exciting sport that involves teamwork, precision, speed and a faultless performance. This is a very exciting mixture and is not easy to obtain. The balance between dog and handler must not be one of fear as this reflects in the willingness of the dog to co-operate. It must not be one of over-excitement, as control between the partnership, under pressure, can be unstable. The excitement of watching excellent performance dogs is matched by the excitement of tabulating scores and trying to decide who is the winner before the Judge's announcement.

Agility is a dog competition open to all dogs and brings out the competitor in us all. This desire to be the best must always be tempered with a care for the welfare of the dog. A dog that is overweight should never be allowed to start basic training. The idea is to have dogs negotiate various colourful obstacles to assess and enhance their intelligence and ability. It is educational and sporting, an activity intended to improve the dogs' integration into society. The sport requires a good rapport between dog and handler. Competitors therefore must be familiar with elementary training. Whilst speed of the dog is to be desired, steadiness of work is essential to a faultless performance of the course.

Test of the Toughest. Why did you get a dog? Perhaps one of the reasons may have been for companionship or perhaps the idea of having a companion to go for walks with on a daily basis and thus enjoy a bit of exercise together. Well here I got news for you!

Dog Obedience Clubs in conjunction with the CAWA conduct Endurance Tests for dogs. Your time spent in conditioning yourself and your dog in preparation for an Endurance Test is a healthy and enjoyable time. One or two months preparation will ensure a positive result. Your dog must be between 2 and 7 years of age in order to compete and must pass a vet check 14 days prior to the test. The test is over 20 kilometres carried out in three stages, 8 kms, 6 kms and 6 kms. Before the test there is a preliminary vet check and a simple obedience exercise.



Between each leg is a short rest break during which time your dog is vet checked. After the last leg and a 15 minute rest there is a final vet check and the simple obedience exercise is repeated. At the conclusion all successful dogs will be awarded the title Endurance test and be able to have the letters ET proudly included at the end of their registered name. You and your dog will have the satisfaction of knowing you have created a deeper and more meaningful bond during your training and competing in the Endurance Test.

Gundog Trials. The ability and intelligence of well bred and well trained Gundogs is remarkable. The CAWA and various affiliated clubs conduct competitive trials in the field for registered Gundogs. These events are designed to test the various breeds in the type of work for which they were developed over hundreds and even thousands of years. They provide breeders with the opportunity to test the natural working instincts of their dogs and therefore the chance to select breeding stock on the basis of appropriate temperament and for preservation of their invaluable working instincts. These trials provide the opportunity for owners to experience the pleasure of working closely with their dogs in a fascinating range of competitive field sports. Championship titles and minor titles are available based on performance. These events are conducted in the field under natural conditions but with simulated game and while a shotgun is fired there is no shooting of game.



There are two types of trials conducted in WA.

Retrieving trials where any registered Gundog is required to retrieve articles of fallen game with varying degrees of difficulty according to the level attained from beginner through to national Championship.

Field Trials for Pointers & Setters and also for **Utility Gundogs** where dogs are assessed on their ability to find and point game and retrieve in the case of Utility Gundogs. Here again are varying degrees of difficulty according to the level attained.

For further information, contact the Canine Association of Western Australia Inc.

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