

Beginners Class Checklist

Marker Words <i>Equivalent marker words accepted. No clickers in class.</i>	“YES” Terminal bridge to food/toy reward that you’re holding. (“YES” <i>ENDS the behaviour, and ALWAYS results in a tangible reward from you.</i>)	
	“GOOD” Duration mark, intermittent reward (<i>This marker tells the dog to keep doing the behaviour, and we sometimes reward.</i>)	
	“OK” Release marker, no tangible reward. (<i>This marker releases the dog from a behaviour; we don’t reward them.</i>)	
	“Get it” Terminal bridge to food/toy reward AWAY from you. (<i>This marker ENDS the behaviour, always results in a reward not from your hands.</i>)	
	“NOPE” No reward marker. (<i>This marker tells the dog that they need to try again if they want their reward.</i>)	
Engagement & Motivation	Dog offers sustained engagement with their handler in class, or the handler can effectively manage/work their dog in a distracting environment.	
	Dog will work reliably for food and/or toys in class setting	
Luring Skills	Handler can hold a food reward so that the dog targets it correctly and consistently.	
	The handler can lure the dog into heel, R.S. heel, middle and front.	
	The handler can use a lure to have the dog sit, down and stand from front, heel, and R.S heel position.	
Reverse Luring	Dog understands to move away from a closed fist	
	Dog can switch between luring and reverse luring	
Touch Pads	Dog will stand on a touch pad with their 2 front feet until released	
	Dog can pivot with its rear legs around the touch pad in either direction, to get into/stay in heel & right-sided heel position (aided by a lure)	
Position Box	Dog understands to keep all 4 feet on the position box	
	Dog can perform a lured sit from stand, down from stand, and stand from sit on the position box	
	Dog can perform the above changes of position in heel, right-side heel and front positions (on position box)	
Rear Targeting/contacts	Dog will stand/pause with its back legs on the rear touch pad	
	Dog will perform a ‘kick-back stand’ and target the rear touch pads in doing so (reverse lured)	
Cone Wrapping	Dog will run around a cone in a clockwise direction from the LEFT heel position	
	Dog will run around a cone in an anticlockwise direction from the RIGHT heel position	
Positions <i>All lured, no verbal cue All performed on position box</i>	Dog will sit from a stand position in front, left heel & right heel positions	
	Dog will down from a stand position in front, left heel & right heel positions	
	Dog will stand from a sit position in front, left heel & right heel positions	
	Dog can be lured between a sit -> stand -> down in front, left heel & right heel positions	
Collar Grabs	Handler can grab dog’s collar without dog moving away	
Recall	Dog shows a rapid response to handlers verbal recall cue (in a class setting; with mild distractions)	
	Dog will recall away from a moderate distraction	
	Dog will recall into ‘middle’ position	

Our Beginners Class is a 5-week course (\$100) designed to teach the foundation skills required for our Introduction to Rally & Obedience and Introduction to Agility classes. These skills are essential, as they are not re-taught in later classes. Instead, Rally and Agility lessons assume a solid understanding of the Beginners material and build on those skills from the outset.

This checklist outlines the skills and behaviours that graduates of the Beginners Class should be confidently demonstrating before progressing.

The Beginners Class is a prerequisite for Rally and Agility.

The only exception is for handlers who have trained elsewhere and whose dog can confidently demonstrate the majority of the skills listed here. To skip Beginners, you should be able to honestly tick off approximately **95%** of the checklist items.

While the Beginners Class does include elements of basic obedience, its primary purpose is to ensure all dogs entering Rally and Agility have the same foundation skills, communication, and understanding of training mechanics. For this reason, it is very unlikely that completion of puppy classes, or a general basic or intermediate obedience class elsewhere, will be sufficient preparation on its own.

If you are unsure whether your dog meets the requirements, please reach out before enrolling. We are always happy to help you choose the class that will set you and your dog up for success.