

What is a title?

Not just a brag,  
not just a stepping-stone  
to a higher title...  
a title is a tribute  
to the dog that bears it,  
a way to honor  
the dog—  
an ultimate memorial.

—SANDY MOWERY, AKC GAZETTE



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OBEEDIENCE

## What is AKC obedience?

In obedience, the dog must perform a prescribed set of exercises which the judge grades or—as it is called by obedience enthusiasts—scores. Dogs that would be disqualified from the show ring under a breed standard, including spayed bitches and neutered dogs, may compete in obedience trials.

Obedience is divided into three levels, each more difficult than the preceding one. At each level a competitor is working for an AKC obedience degree or title. The three levels and titles are: Novice – Companion Dog (CD); Open – Companion Dog Excellent (CDX); and Utility – Utility Dog (UD). Dogs may also achieve a UDX (Utility Dog Excellent) and an OTCh (Obedience Trial Championship).

Novice work embraces the basics that all dogs should be taught to make them good companions. The six exercises in Novice work are: heel on leash, stand for examination, heel free, recall, long sit, long down. Open work consists of seven exercises: heel free, drop on recall, retrieve on flat, retrieve over the high jump, broad jump, long sit, and long down. Utility work consists of: signal exercise, two scent discrimination tests, directed retrieve, and directed jumping.

To receive an obedience title a dog must earn three "legs." To get credit for a leg, a dog must score at least 170 points out of a possible 200 (the passing score and grand total are the same at each level, although the exercises vary), and get more than fifty percent on each exercise.

A new competition option offered at some AKC obedience trials is "Rally Obedience." In this event, dogs and handlers move continuously and perform exercises indicated by signs at various locations in the ring.

## Find Out More

For a complete set of AKC obedience regulations and to learn about upcoming obedience trials, contact:

AKC Customer Service Department:  
5580 Centerview Drive, Suite 200  
Raleigh, NC 27606-3390  
Phone: 919-233-9767 • Fax: 919-233-3627  
www.akc.org | Email: info@akc.org

Regional clubs which support obedience classes and/or events include:

*Bon-Clyde Learning Center*  
www.bon-clyde.com  
P.O. Box 2208, Sanford, NC 27331-2208  
919-774-6794

*Cape Fear Dog Training Club*  
Contact Kiesha Crawmer  
606 Duncan Rd, Spring Lake, NC 28390

*Carolina Dog Training Club, Inc.*  
Contact Lois Miller  
609 Candlewood Dr., Greensboro, NC 27403

*Charlotte Dog Training Club*  
Contact Tina Whisnant  
616 W. Graham St., Shelby, NC 28150

*Durham Kennel Club*  
7318 Guess Rd, Hillsborough, NC 27278  
www.mindspring.com/~beglane  
Contact Barbara Doermann  
919-644-1421

*Obedience Club of Asheville*  
Contact Eileen H Wilson  
160 Country Club Rd., Asheville, NC 28804

*Winston-Salem Dog Training Club*  
Contact Bonnie Harrington  
7041 Whitby Avenue, Clemmons, NC 27012  
336-924-4211

## Recommended Reading

T. Arnold. *Steppin' Up to Success*, (3 vols.), 2000. Volume I outlines the groundwork of building attention and motivation in your dog. Volumes II and III address specific issues in Novice, Open, and Utility.

D. Bauman. *Behond Basic Dog Training*, 1991. Bauman proposes a variety of strategies to teach your dog to think and learn while training for competition.

P. Burnham *Playtraining Your Dog*, 1980. This text outlines training for formal obedience competition, but is useful for all levels of trainers who are working with "creative" dogs.

G. Dildei and S. Booth *Schutzhund Obedience: Training in Drive*, 1992. Many AKC obedience competitors draw on the exercises in this book to enhance their dog's motivation and enthusiasm.

D. Jecs. *Choose to Heel*, 1996. Jecs uses positive, motivational techniques to teach heeling off-lead.

J. Lewis. *Smart Trainers, Brilliant Dogs*, 1997. This book offers a useful introduction to the use of positive and negative reinforcement in training.

S. Sternberg. *A Guide to the Inducive Retrieve*, 1993. This booklet describes food-based motivational training of the obedience retrieve.

Most of these books are available through Dog Wise (www.dogwise.com). Call for a free catalogue: 800-776-2665