

# Showmanship Guidelines



Pima County 4H Dog Project  
Rev. Oct. 2018

Showmanship gives each 4-H member the opportunity to show their dog and **their** self to their best ability. This is exemplified by a handler working as a team with his dog, so the dog appears posed, alert and under control, while at the same time the handler appears confident and in control. Judging is based on the 4-H member's ability to groom and show a dog by breed standards. Conformation of the dog is not evaluated in showmanship.

## **General**

### ***Leads***

A showmanship lead is preferred, but no deduction shall be made for obedience leashes. Regardless of which lead is used, the handler must be in control of the dog and the lead shall be held and used neatly. Deductions shall be made for leads hanging down or flapping about the dog. The handler's lead should be ready at all times and deductions shall be made for time spent wrapping leads and getting ready to move out.

### ***Bait***

In the 4-H showmanship classes the exhibitor may use bait. If a handler uses bait (food or toys), it must be used discreetly, with no deliberate baiting near other dogs. If the bait is dropped in the ring and not immediately picked up by the handler, or is used to deliberately distract other dogs, the handler may have points taken away. Squeaky toys that could be distracting to other dogs are not allowed in the 4-H showmanship classes.

### ***Clothing***

Judges should be aware of the appearance of the handler and dog. The dog handler shall wear clean, appropriate clothes (as described in the show rules). Neatness of attire is to be considered by the judge.

### ***Grooming Tools***

The dog should be well groomed before entering the ring. Excessive grooming of the dog in the ring to gain the judge's attention should be faulted. Use of a brush or comb to replace matted coat is acceptable but should be done very discreetly.

### ***Procedure (Breed)***

No consideration shall be given to the breed of the dog. The handler should know the breed (crossbreed) and show the dog to that breed's standard. (Exception – German Shepherd/shepherd crosses may be stacked in either a square stack or in the "Shepherd" stance.) The dog shall be well groomed and kept. 4-H'ers showing crossbreed dogs should determine which breed their dog most closely resembles and show the dog and answer questions from that point of view.

### ***Judges***

Judges shall remember at all times that the 4-H showmanship ring is not the AKC showmanship ring. 4-H members are trained to show their dogs to the best advantage and not to use unnecessary showy techniques. The judge shall remember that the quality of performance is directly related to the quality of judging and that this show could be the handler's first or only ring experience.

The judge shall examine and evaluate the 4-H showmanship class on five basic areas: proper type presentation, skill of individual's presentation of their dog, knowledge of ring procedure, appearance and conduct, and knowledge.

The judge should consider the following questions when evaluating the handler/dog teams for individual skill:

1. Is the dog responsive to the handler? Do they work as a team?
  2. Does the dog appear posed or interested at all times?
  3. Is the dog under control?
  4. Is the dog moved correctly to the best of its ability?
  5. Do both the dog and handler appear relaxed?
  6. Is the dog presented with an economy of motion that gives the appearance of ease and minimum effort used to present the dog?

Showmanship should provide 4-H'ers with a meaningful competition in which they can learn, practice and improve in all areas of handling skill and sportsmanship. It is important for judges to teach by example. Judges should be prompt, courteous, patient and properly attired. Judges should be impartial, eliminating any bias for or against the breed handled, any past or future competitions, knowledge of 4-H'ers past accomplishments or knowledge or assumption of prior training or preparation.

Judges should be consistent in the initial examination of each 4-H'er, using the same gaiting patterns, the same procedural requests and allowing approximately the same amount of time. Judges shall utilize patterns and procedures commonly used when judging 4-H showmanship classes (see usual ring procedures).

Judges should evaluate the general conduct of the 4-H members in the showmanship ring. Handlers should appear prepared, confident, and attentive. They should be courteous to both the judge and fellow exhibitors. Handlers are expected to handle their dogs without distracting other member's dogs. A handler who crowds or disturbs other dogs must be faulted. Handlers who exhibit impatience or heavy handedness with their dogs should be penalized.

A main principal of 4-H Showmanship is to learn the spirit of competition. Judges shall be aware of sportsmanship in the ring and serious deductions shall be made for deliberate rudeness or un-sportsmanlike conduct. Winning is important but secondary to the development of sportsmanship during competition. Judges who reward un-sportsmanlike conduct or action compromise the very premise of 4-H showmanship!

Judges may excuse any dog out of control, injured (healed injuries that do not cause the dog pain are excluded), or showing aggression toward other dogs or people.

Any callbacks will be done at the Judge's discretion.

## **Explanation of Usual Ring Procedures**

Individual judges vary their judging routine, and the following components may be mixed in any order. More challenging variations could be used as tie-breakers or in the final judging of a class.

### **Scoring:**

The scoring system shall be the same for each class:

1. Gaiting	15 pts.
2. Stacking (posing) the dog	15 pts.
3. Smoothness of Presentation	15 pts.
4. Grooming of dog	10 pts.
5. Knowledge (questions)	20 pts.
6. Sportsmanship	10 pts.
7. Attentiveness to Judge	10 pts.
8. Grooming of handler	<u>5 pts.</u>
Total	100 pts.

### **Gaiting:**

During group gaiting, ring traffic will normally move counter-clockwise unless the judge directs otherwise. Gaiting is usually done around the perimeter of the ring with dogs on the left side of the handler. A judge may ask for variations such as going down a diagonal, down the center or reversing direction to go clockwise. The dog is to be kept between the judge and handler at all times. During group gaiting the handler will be judged on the ability to present the dog to its best advantage at a trot. It is important that handlers leave space between themselves and the dogs in front (for safety and to give the judge the best view of their dog). Passing should never be done except at the judge's request.

The judge should be aware of proper spacing and movement of the handlers. Crowding other dogs or gaiting in front shall be serious faults and deductions shall be made accordingly. Passing another handler and dog in the 4-H showmanship ring is not allowed and appropriate deductions shall be made. Judges, to the best of their ability, shall arrange the class so all dogs may gait at a comfortable pace.

Judges should, to the best of their ability, arrange members in order of gaiting speed of dogs or size to avoid crowding. Judges shall admit only as many handlers to the ring as the ring can safely hold. If necessary, the judge may divide the class. Members will then return to the ring together for a final examination and determination of placements.

### **Stacking:**

Stacking dogs should be done when the class stops gaiting around the ring. It should be maintained while the judge is doing individual examinations of other dogs in the class. (Except when the judge gives directions to relax a dog due to large class size, etc.)

In the 4-H showmanship ring, handlers whose breed of dog is customarily shown in the AKC ring on a table may stack or pose their dog on the table if trained to show in that

manner. Otherwise, the exhibitor may stack their dog on the ground. Handlers shall never use the tail to lift all four feet of the dog off the floor at the same time (as is done with some breeds in the AKC ring). Handlers may lift from underneath the chest or mandible and hips to “drop” a dog into a stack. (See 4-H Showmanship Styles by Breed Type, Terrier Section, for description of the type of “dropped stack” allowed in 4-H.)

Handlers may kneel on one or both knees or stand depending on the breed they are showing. No deduction shall be made for the handler’s position, providing it is correct for their breed of dog. Deductions shall be made for any handler who is not able to move gracefully and quickly around the dog. Serious deductions shall be made for crawling on both knees. As the judge moves to various locations in the ring, it is important that the handler keep the dog between themselves and the judge while maintaining a correct pose.

It is each 4-H’er’s responsibility to find out how their breed is customarily stacked. Most (but not all) breeds are stacked with all four feet square and hocks at right angles to the ground. (See 4-H Showmanship Styles by Breed Type.)

While stacking the dog, handlers will be evaluated on the correct pose for the breed (feet square, topline correct, ears up or down, etc.), if the space around the dog is sufficient, control of the handler over the dog, speed and ease of stacking, whether the handler blocks the view of the dog from the judge (hands on tail, hands over muzzle, feet placed by leaning over dog), etc.

The judge may request that handlers change positions. If this happens it is important to be able to turn the dog gracefully (without lifting all four feet off the floor at the same time) and to re-stack the dog quickly.

### ***Individual Examination:***

Individual examinations will be conducted for each handler, usually from the group stack. The judge may look at the dog from a few steps back and then move forward to examine the dog. While the judge is doing this, the handler should be out of the judge’s way as much as possible while maintaining full control over the dog.

Some judges may ask the handler to show the bite (teeth) of the dog at this time. The handler should show the front teeth for most breeds (there are some breeds that show the side teeth also—check your breed standard). The handler should pull the dog’s lips back so the judge has a clear view of the dog’s teeth. Be careful not to get hands or head in the way of the judge. The judge should be able to see the teeth with the dog’s mouth closed.

As the judge moves, the handler should move around the dog, so the dog stays between the handler and the judge, while keeping the dog under control.

### ***Knowledge/Questions:***

Questions will be asked by the judge. A 4-H handler should be prepared to answer questions about general dog knowledge and specific questions about their breed of dog. Judges will vary their questions, but most judges will ask about dog anatomy, health information and general care. Specific breed questions could include questions such as

country of origin, dog's intended use, AKC group, or breed standard questions. Questions should be determined before the show by the Show Committee with or without input from the judges.

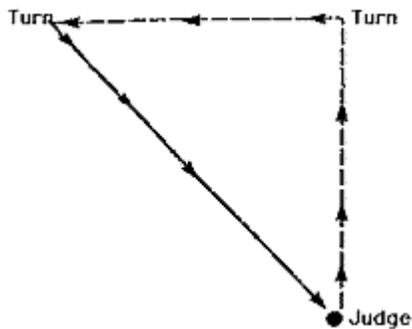
### **Grooming of dog:**

Dogs in showmanship should be free of mats and clean (including ears and nails). 4-H'ers are allowed assistance from a professional groomer in clipping and scissoring prior to the show, but are strongly encouraged to learn these skills as they advance in experience. No bows or other decorations are allowed other than those customary to hold the hair out of the eyes (of those breeds requiring same).

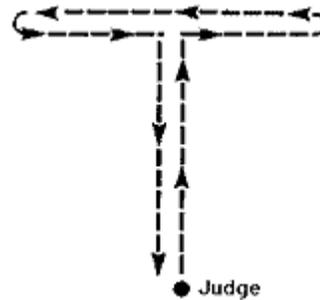
### **Individual Gaiting Pattern:**

Individual gaiting patterns will be selected from:

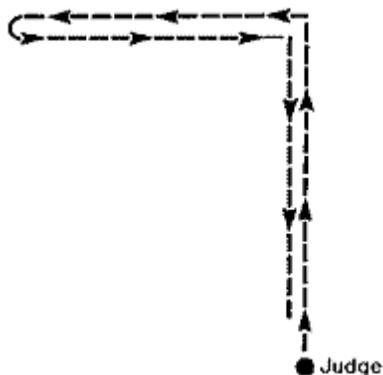
1. Straight out and back
2. "L" pattern
3. Triangle
4. "T" pattern (most judges will request a "T" pattern for only advanced classes)



"Triangle" Pattern



"T" Pattern



"L" Pattern

It may be necessary in some patterns to switch the lead from one hand to the other to insure the dog is always between the judge and the handler. These changes should be done

gracefully at the corners of the patterns only as necessary to be sure the judge has an unobstructed view of the dog.

It is customary for the judge to have the handler stop a few steps back from the judge. Most breeds should stand with all four feet square and the handler should avoid moving the dog's feet by hand.

During individual gaiting, 4-H handlers will be judged on their ability to follow the judge's instructions, proper speed on the gait for their dog, dog on appropriate side of handler, and smoothness.

### **4-H Showmanship Styles by Breed Type**

The purpose of this document is to assist the 4-h exhibitor in the proper way to present their dog. This guide will give rough explanations of the styles of the different groups without going into unnecessary detail on each breed. Please keep in mind that there are varying degrees of correctness.

#### **Sporting Group:**

Works the hunting field with a handler to point, flush or retrieve game.

Includes purebreds or mixes that appear to be:

Brittany's	Pointers
Pointers (German Shorthaired)	Pointers (German Wirehaired)
Retrievers (Chesapeake Bay)	Retrievers (Curly-Coated)
Retrievers (Flat-Coated)	Retrievers (Golden)
Retrievers (Labrador)	Setters (English)
Setters (Gordon)	Setters (Irish)
Spaniels (American Water)	Spaniels Clumber)
Spaniels (Cocker)	

Three varieties:

Solid Color Black, Including Black and Tan

Any Solid Color Other Than Black

Parti-color

Spaniels (English Cocker)	Spaniels (English Springer)
Spaniels (Field)	Spaniels (Irish Water )
Spaniels (Sussex )	Spaniels (Welsh Springer)
Vizslas	Weimaraners
Wirehaired Pointing Griffons	

Most of these breeds are normally presented to give the impression of being alert, athletic dogs anxious for the hunt. The handler holds the dog's head erect by holding the lead at the throat or the flews and the tail is "presented" so it is level (or just above level for those with longer tails). Breeds with flag tails, such as the setters or the golden, should be presented by holding the tip of the tail, to keep from interfering with the graceful flow of the feathering on the tail. Stub-tailed breeds should be presented by holding the tail

level (horizontally), as an extension of the backbone. Cockers may be dropped into the stack. (See Terrier section for description of the proper 4-H dropped stack of short legged terriers.)

### **Hound Group:**

Bred to work in packs trailing game. There are two types of hounds — those that trail by a strongly developed sense of smell, known as “scent hounds,” or those that chase down game using fast speeds and good eyesight, known as “sight hounds.” There is a massive difference in size from the largest to the smallest breed within this group, ranging from 11 to 150 pounds.

Includes purebreds or mixes that appear to be:

Afghan Hounds*	Basenjis*
Basset Hounds	Beagles
Two varieties:	
Not exceeding 13 inches in height	
Over 13 inches, but not exceeding 15 inches in height	
Black and Tan Coonhounds	Bloodhounds
Borzoi*	
Dachshunds	
Three varieties:	
Longhaired	
Smooth	
Wirehaired	
Foxhounds (American)	Foxhounds (English)
Greyhounds*	Harriers
Ibizan Hounds*	Irish Wolfhounds*
Norwegian Elkhounds	Otterhounds
Petits Bassets Griffons Vendeens	Pharaoh Hounds*
Rhodesian Ridgebacks	Salukis*
Scottish Deerhounds*	Whippets*

\* Sight hounds.

Sight hounds are normally presented to look sleek and graceful. They are shown without presenting the tail and only the Whippet, Basenjis and Ibizan are encouraged to have their ears pricked during stacking. The Afghan is the exception in that the tail may be held out.

Scent hounds are normally presented to look alert and athletic. There is some variation between breeds as to whether the tail is presented or not. Beagles, Coonhounds and dogs of similar body style are shown with their tail held up in a slight arch. The dachshund may have the tail held level with the back. The remaining breeds typically are shown with the tail not presented.

### **Working Group:**

Developed for a specific task—they are the dogs that work for mankind pulling loads, protecting people and herds, rescuing people, etc.

Includes purebreds or mixes that appear to be:

Akitas	Alaskan Malamutes
Bernese Mountain Dogs	Boxers
Bullmastiffs	Doberman Pinschers
Giant Schnauzers	Great Danes
Great Pyrenees	Komondorok
Kuvaszok	Mastiffs
Newfoundlands	Portuguese Water Dogs
Rottweilers	Saint Bernards
Samoyeds	Siberian Huskies
Standard Schnauzers	

Because of the wide variety of body styles and types within the working group, there are several distinct “looks” that a handler may want to achieve. The sled dog breeds are to have pricked ears and tails held up or curled tightly and naturally over the back. The breeds with cropped tails and ears are to appear alert, so they are shown with pricked ears and may need to have their tails pushed up. Examples are Dobermans, Boxers, etc. The large bodied breeds like the Saint Bernard’s, Newfoundland’s, etc., are shown with a relaxed tail and ears, as are most of the remaining working breeds.

### **Herding Group:**

Developed for their skill in herding and controlling livestock, these dogs were split from the working group in the mid-1980s.

Includes purebreds or mixes that appear to be:

Australian Cattle Dogs	Australian Shepherds
Bearded Collies	Belgian Malinois
Belgian Sheepdogs	Belgian Tervuren
Bouvier Des Flandres	Briards
Collies	
Two varieties:	
Rough	
Smooth	
German Shepherd Dogs	Old English Sheepdogs
Pulik	Shetland Sheepdogs
Welsh Corgis (Cardigan)	Welsh Corgis (Pembroke)

Herding dogs are normally shown to appear alert and responsive to the handler. They are shown with their ears pricked forward and the tail naturally held. The correct stack for all, except the German Shepherd, is all four feet square under the body. The German Shepherd may be stacked so that the hind leg farthest from the judge is placed slightly set back from the body. The appearance of the hind legs is that the dog is taking a step forward, however,

the front legs are lined up flush with each other. The exhibitor may determine if their shepherd will be shown in a square or “shepherd” stack.

### ***Terrier Group:***

Developed primarily on the British Isles to control rodents and other unwanted small animals around farm yards, hunt aggressive game that may dig itself underground, and to protect the farm house.

Includes purebreds or mixes that appear to be:

Airedale Terriers	American Staffordshire Terriers
Australian Terriers	Bedlington Terriers
Bull Terriers	Border Terriers
Two Varieties:	
Colored	
White	
Cairn Terriers	Dandie Dinmont Terriers
Fox Terriers (smooth)	Fox Terriers (wire)
Irish Terriers	Kerry Blue Terriers
Lakeland Terriers	
Manchester Terriers	
Two Varieties:	
Standard, over 12 pounds and not exceeding 22 pounds	
Toy (toy group)	
Miniature Bull Terriers	Miniature Schnauzers
Norfolk Terriers	Norwich Terriers
Scottish Terriers	Sealyham Terriers
Skye Terriers	Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers
Staffordshire Bull Terriers	Welsh Terriers
West Highland White Terriers	

There are two basic types of terriers - long legged and short legged. All terrier breeds are ideally shown to look so alert they give the appearance of a tense energy. Ears are pricked and tails presented by pushing up from the underside, near the base of the tail.

The short legged breeds may be stacked in one of two ways. One - each leg set on the standing dog by the handler; or two - a handler may pick the dog up, by supporting the chest or mandible and the underside of the pelvic region, and dropping it one to two inches to the floor into the stack. The process is called dropping the dog into the stack. In the AKC ring this is done by supporting the jaw and grasping the tail. There is some concern in the 4-H ring that there would be some “copy catting” with breeds that do not have the tail structure for this. In order to prevent this potential problem, dropped stacks must be done by supporting the underside of the dog’s body.

Long legged terriers are generally too large to drop into the stack, but some handlers may lift the front end from the chest and then the back end from the pelvis or set each foot separately.

Note: It is never appropriate in the 4-H ring to “spar” terriers. This is defined as bringing two to four dogs together, to face each other, in the center of the area. This is done to show that they will become alert and demonstrate terrier spirit. There is too much potential for a dog to get away from a young handler if this were done in the 4-H ring.

### **Toy Group:**

Small dogs bred to be companions to the lords and ladies, kings and queens of past history. Now they are household pets of a very small size.

Includes purebreds or mixes that appear to be:

Affenpinschers	Brussels Griffons
Chihuahuas	
Two varieties:	
Long Coat	
Smooth Coat	
Chinese Cresteds	
English Toy Spaniels	
Two varieties:	
Blenheim and Prince Charles	
King Charles and Ruby	
Italian Greyhounds	Japanese Chin
Maltese	
Manchester Terriers	
Two varieties:	
Standard (in Terrier Group)	
Toy, not exceeding 12 pounds	
Miniature Pinschers	Papillion
Pekingese	Pomeranians
Poodles	
Three varieties:	
Miniature (in Non-Sporting Group)	
Standard (in Non-Sporting Group)	
Toy, not exceeding 10 inches	
Pugs	Shih Tzu
Silky Terriers	Yorkshire Terriers

These dogs are typically shown with their natural tail and ear carriage. The exception is poodles, which should have an erect tail that may be pushed from the base.

### **Non-Sporting:**

These dogs have no common characteristic such as intended use, size or skill. They are dogs that did not fit into other groups. Most of these dogs were bred for a purpose other than hunting (sporting or hound group), protection or work (working group). They were too large to be in the toy group, so they were loosely described as non-sporting dogs.

Includes purebreds or mixes that appear to be:

Bichons Frises	Boston Terriers
Bulldogs	Chinese Shar-Pei
Chow Chows	Dalmatians
Finnish Spitz	French Bulldogs
Keeshonden	Lhasa Apsos
Poodles	

Three varieties:

Miniature, over 10 inches and not exceeding 15 inches

Standard, over 15 inches

Toy (in toy group)

Schipperkes	Shiba Inu
Tibetan Spaniels	Tibetan Terriers

Because of the variation between the breeds, there is no easy description of the showmanship. Dalmatians are shown with a presented tail, held level. The poodles are shown with an alert tail pushed up from the base. The rest are basically shown with a natural tail and relaxed ear carriage.