

CANINE GOOD CITIZEN TEST

What is the Canine Good Citizen Program

The Canine Good Citizen (CGC) program, established in 1989, is an American Kennel Club program to promote responsible dog ownership and to encourage the training of well-mannered dogs. A dog and handler team must take a short behavioral evaluation of less than half an hour; dogs who pass the evaluation earn the Canine Good Citizen certificate, which many people represent after the dog's name, abbreviating it as CGC; for example, "Fido, CGC". Certification is often required for therapy dogs.

What are the requirements to take the CGC Test?

Dogs do not have to be registered with the AKC to earn a CGC, nor do they have to be purebred or registered with any canine organization. **The goal is to promote good citizenship for all dogs.**

There is no age limit for the CGC test and adult dogs of any age may take the test. Puppies that have received all of their vaccinations may be tested, however, since behavior is a constantly changing trait, puppies that pass the CGC test should be re-tested as adults.

Do Dogs Need Special Training to take the CGC Test?

Although dogs don't need formal competition obedience in order to take the Canine Good Citizen Test, they must be attentive to their owners and possess some basic skills to be successful. Please read over the ten test items for more information. The Humane Society of Missouri and Greater St. Louis Training Club offer classes to help prepare your dog for the exam. Dates, times and locations for the classes are listed on our web site.

What Equipment is Allowed and Can I Use Treats?

Test Equipment

All tests must be performed on leash. Dogs should wear well-fitting buckle, martingale or slip collars made of leather, fabric, or chain. **Special training collars such as pinch collars, head halters, etc. are not permitted in the CGC test.** We recognize that special training collars may be very useful tools for during the learning part of training. However, by the time a dog is ready to take the CGC test, the dog should be using a regular collar.

The owner/handler should bring the dog's brush or comb to the test.

Treats, Praise and Toys

Owners/handlers may use praise and encouragement throughout the test. The owner may pet the dog between exercises. **Food and treats are not permitted during testing,** nor is the use of toys, squeaky toys, etc. to get the dog to do something. We recognize that food and toys may provide valuable reinforcement or encouragement during the training process but these items should not be used during the test.

What Does My Dog Need to Know for the Canine Good Citizen Test?

Below you will find the list of ten skills that the dog/owner team must successfully complete in order to satisfy the CGC requirements. **All of the test items must be successfully completed in order to pass.**

Test 1: Accepting a friendly stranger

This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to approach it and speak to the handler in a natural, everyday situation. The evaluator walks up to the dog and handler and greets the handler in a friendly manner, ignoring the dog. The evaluator and handler shake hands and exchange pleasantries. The dog must show no sign of resentment or shyness, and must not break position or try to go to the evaluator.

Test 2: Sitting politely for petting

This test demonstrates that the dog will allow a friendly stranger to touch it while it is out with its handler. With the dog sitting at the handler's side, to begin the exercise, the evaluator pets the dog on the head and body. The handler may talk to his or her dog throughout the exercise. The dog may stand in place as it is petted. The dog must not show shyness or resentment or jump on the friendly stranger.



Is Your Dog A
Canine Good
Citizen?

Test 3: Appearance and grooming

This practical test demonstrates that the dog will welcome being groomed and examined and will permit someone, such as a veterinarian, groomer or friend of the owner, to do so. It also demonstrates the owner's care, concern and sense of responsibility. The evaluator inspects the dog to determine if it is clean and groomed. The dog must appear to be in healthy condition (i.e., proper weight, clean, healthy and alert). The handler should supply the comb or brush commonly used on the dog. The evaluator then softly combs or brushes the dog, and in a natural manner, lightly examines the ears and gently picks up each front foot. It is not necessary for the dog to hold a specific position during the examination, and the handler may talk to the dog, praise it and give encouragement throughout.

Test 4: Out for a walk (walking on a loose lead)

This test demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog. The dog may be on either side of the handler. The dog's position should leave no doubt that the dog is attentive to the handler and is responding to the handler's movements and changes of direction. The dog need not be perfectly aligned with the handler and need not sit when the handler stops. The evaluator may use a pre-plotted course or may direct the handler/dog team by issuing instructions or commands. In either case, there should be a right turn, left turn, and an about turn with at least one stop in between and another at the end. The handler may talk to the dog along the way, praise the dog, or give commands in a normal tone of voice. The handler may sit the dog at the halts if desired.

Test 5: Walking through a crowd

This test demonstrates that the dog can move about politely in pedestrian traffic and is under control in public places. The dog and handler walk around and pass close to several people (at least three). The dog may show some interest in the strangers but should continue to walk with the handler, without evidence of over-exuberance, shyness or resentment. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise the dog throughout the test. The dog should not jump on people in the crowd or strain on the leash.

Test 6: Sit and down on command and Staying in place

This test demonstrates that the dog has training, will respond to the handler's commands to sit and down and will remain in the place commanded by the handler (sit or down position, whichever the handler prefers). The dog must do sit AND down on command, then the owner chooses the position for leaving the dog in the stay. Prior to this test, the dog's leash is replaced with a line 20 feet long. The handler may take a reasonable amount of time and use more than one command to get the dog to sit and then down. The evaluator must determine if the dog has responded to the handler's commands. The handler may not force the dog into position. When instructed by the evaluator, the handler tells the dog to stay and walks forward the length of the line, turns and returns to the dog at a natural pace. The dog must remain in the place in which it was left (it may change position) until the evaluator instructs the handler to release the dog. The dog may be released from the front or the side.

Test 7: Coming when called

This test demonstrates that the dog will come when called by the handler. The handler will walk 10 feet from the dog, turn to face the dog, and call the dog. The handler may use encouragement to get the dog to come. Handlers may choose to tell dogs to "stay" or "wait" or they may simply walk away, giving no instructions to the dog.

Test 8: Reaction to another dog

This test demonstrates that the dog can behave politely around other dogs. Two handlers and their dogs approach each other from a distance of about 20 feet, stop, shake hands and exchange pleasantries, and continue on for about 10 feet. The dogs should show no more than casual interest in each other. Neither dog should go to the other dog or its handler.

Test 9: Reaction to distraction

This test demonstrates that the dog is confident at all times when faced with common distracting situations. The evaluator will select and present two distractions. Examples of distractions include dropping a chair, rolling a crate dolly past the dog, having a jogger run in front of the dog, or dropping a crutch or cane. The dog may express natural interest and curiosity and/or may appear slightly startled but should not panic, try to run away, show aggressiveness, or bark. The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise it throughout the exercise.

Test 10: Supervised separation

This test demonstrates that a dog can be left with a trusted person, if necessary, and will maintain training and good manners. Evaluators are encouraged to say something like, "Would you like me to watch your dog?" and then take hold of the dog's leash. The owner will go out of sight for three minutes. The dog does not have to stay in position but

should not continually bark, whine, or pace unnecessarily, or show anything stronger than mild agitation or nervousness. Evaluators may talk to the dog but should not engage in excessive talking, petting, or management attempts (e.g, "there, there, it's alright").

If all ten objectives are met, the handler can apply for a certificate suitable for framing and special dog tag from the AKC stating that the dog has earned the CGC.

My Dog can do all of those things. Where can I take the next test?

CGC Testing Schedule

Macklind Headquarters Canine Good Citizen Test Date

Date: Sunday, March 14, 2010
Time: 1:00pm - 3:00pm
Location: Humane Society of Missouri
Lower Level Lecture Hall
1201 Macklind Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63110

Chesterfield Valley Canine Good Citizen Test Date

Date: Monday, June 28, 2010
Time: 5:00pm-7:30pm
Location: Humane Society of Missouri
Pet Training Room
17357 Edison Avenue, Chesterfield, MO 63005

Cost: Registration fee for test at both locations is \$10.00
CGC patch (for dogs that qualify) is an additional \$5.00

Owners must pre-register for the test and will receive a confirmation with their assigned a test time.

For more information about the CGC or to receive a printable copy of the test registration form, e-mail the [obedience department](#) or call 314-802-5709 (Macklind HQ) or 636-530-8200 (Chesterfield Valley).

All evaluators are AKC approved