



can you DIG IT?

DIG IT DOG TRAINING – BEGINNERS FOUNDATION

DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISES

AIM

The Beginners Foundation is an 8 week course which aims to provide a means of socialising dogs and to lay down a foundation for education and training. On successful completion of the course dogs will respond to their handlers and the handlers will have an awareness of the responsibilities of dog ownership. The inclusion of play exercises adds an extra dimension to a dog's life and can be used to make training fun. Constructive play and suitable incentives are encouraged within this training programme.

ELIGIBILITY

The Beginners Foundation Course is aimed at dogs over six months of age, whether Kennel Club registered or not, there is no upper age limit. For the Beginners Foundation Course, dogs are not required to have completed a Puppy Foundation Assessment programme or any other formal training.

ASSESSMENTS

No part of the Beginners Foundation Course is competitive and assessments should be carried out in a relaxed and informal manner. Remember that the course should be focused around the progress of a dog and its owner over a period of time and not on the first or one particular meeting. A Beginners Foundation Certificate will be awarded when the required standard in all parts of the assessment have been achieved. The Assessor will enter the comment "Passed" or "Not Ready" alongside each exercise. The dog must receive the comment "Passed" for each exercise in one course in order to receive a Certificate. In any exercise aggressive behaviour from the dog or undue fear will classify the dog as "Not Ready". The class Instructor may act as the Assessor. The organisers of the course must ensure that the Instructor they appoint is competent and able to fulfil the requirements of the course proficiently. A dog may take the Beginners Foundation Assessment without having been awarded a Puppy Foundation Assessment Certificate. Unless otherwise stated practical assessments will be carried out on a lead. Please refer to the Instructor for Guidelines concerning collars, leads and equipment deemed acceptable. Note: Instructors can insist that the handler secures the dog in a safer manner if the equipment used is deemed inadequate. An additional lead could be used in this instance.

Exercise 1 – Responsibility and Care

The object of this exercise is to educate the owner on the basic principles of owning a dog. This exercise should be conducted as a talk or open discussion and dog owners will be encouraged to participate and ask questions. These talks should cover all the basic topics related to owning a dog, but must include the following:-

- a) Cleanliness and identification
- b) Recognition of basic health problems
- c) Health protection for the dog
- d) Teething, chewing and daily routine
- e) House training and separation anxiety
- f) Socialisation with people and other dogs



Exercise 2 – Cleanliness and Identification

Each handler must carry with them some form of “poop scoop” and all dogs must wear a collar and Identification tag complying with the law. The owner should be reminded that they must always remove any fouling caused by their dog and carry with them some form of “poop scoop”. It is a legal requirement to inscribe the name and the address of the owner on the collar or on a plate or disc attached to it. With effect from the 6th April 2016 dogs are required to have a microchip which is registered on a Defra approved database, in the UK (check exemptions). Dogs will be scanned by their owner prior to the completion of the Assessment. Furthermore it is a legal requirement to clean up after your dog in public areas and dispose of the bag in an appropriate bin.

Note: Even if a dog is microchipped, you can be fined if your dog is not wearing the correct Identification. Telephone numbers are not compulsory but can be very helpful in returning your dog back to you in an emergency.

Exercise 3 – Attentive Response to Name

The dog should know its name when spoken and at least pay brief attention. This assessment should be carried out on lead when the handler will call its name.

Exercise 4 – Play with the Dog

The object is to demonstrate that the dog will play with its owner. When invited to do so the owner should commence to play with the dog. Play should be under the owner’s control and if it involves articles they should not be dangerous and should be readily given up by the dog. Play should be appropriate to the dog under assessment but should not include play fighting.

Exercise 5 – Socialisation

With an adult person unknown to the dog:

The dog will be carefully introduced on a lead to a man or woman unfamiliar to them. They should gently make friends with the dog without immediately descending upon it in friendship. Backing off and undue wariness should be classed as “Not Ready”.

With Noise Distraction:

The dog should not be unduly startled or excited by normal day to day sounds and every care should be taken when undertaking this exercise. With the dog on a lead, suitable noises should be made at least several paces from the dog.

Exercise 6 – Handling and Inspection to Maintain Health

Preparatory to grooming, a dog should allow handling of its body and inspection by its owner. Mild fidgeting and avoidance is acceptable. Definite aggressive behaviour should result in the classification “Not Ready”. This exercise will be conducted on a lead.

Exercise 7 – Recall

In an enclosed area handlers should in some way distance themselves from the dog by at least two or three paces. They should recall, praise and secure the dog. If necessary this assessment can be conducted away from the distractions of other dogs. It may involve any reasonable incentive to return and the owner may back away when the dog starts to move. An assistant may hold the lead.

Exercise 8 – Basic Positions

The owner should demonstrate that the dog will stand, sit and go down. Any reasonable incentives and assistance may be used and the order of positions may be at the handler’s choice. Each position need only be very briefly adopted. Any minor movements are acceptable.

Exercise 9 – Walking in a Controlled Manner

With the dog on lead, and without distractions, the owner and dog should walk for approximately 20 paces and include a turn. They should demonstrate that this can be done without undue inconvenience to themselves or others. A tight lead does not necessarily result in classification “Not Ready”.



Exercise 10 – Stay for Approximately Ten Seconds

With the dog on lead and in any position the handler will be invited to tell the dog to stay for approximately 10 seconds. The handler should then move 1 pace away, either to the side or in front of the dog for the 10 second duration. The exercise is completed when the handler moves back towards the dog. This exercise should be used as a foundation for future stay training.

Exercise 11 – Take Article Away from the Dog

Dogs must learn that they should give up articles when required. An article should be given to the dog who should give it up when the handler attempts to take it away. The article will be of the handler's choice and suitable for the type of dog being assessed but should not be food. If the dog refuses to take an article the Instructor may provide an alternative, however if the dog will not take an article it should still be passed.

Exercise 12 – Food Manners

The handler should demonstrate that the dog can take a treat without snatching and in a controlled manner. If the dog refuses to take a treat, the Assessor may provide an alternative, however if the dog will not take a treat it should still be passed.