

Obedience training FAQs

1. What age can puppies start classes?

There is no age limit on when puppies can start classes, but they have to have completed their puppy vaccinations before attending. Your puppy can start classes one clear week after their last shot. Vaccination certificates need to be brought to the first week of class.

2. What level is it best to start on?

This will depend on what training you have already undertaken with your dog, how old your dog is and whether you would like to progress through the Kennel Club Good Citizen Scheme. As a general rule we accept dogs into the puppy classes until approximately 9 months of age. The Foundation course is for dogs from 9 months onwards that have done little or no training so may be a better option for you if you have an adolescent dog. In order to book onto a Bronze, Silver or Gold course you will need to have completed either a Puppy Foundation or a Foundation course or can demonstrate you have undertaken equivalent training elsewhere.

3. If I miss a week can I attend another session?

Generally each course starts in different weeks so, for example, week 1 on a Monday might be week 7 on a Tuesday and so on and therefore the course material would not be in sync with what you are learning in your current course. Your instructor will provide detailed homework for each session of your course. If you only miss one week it should be very easy for you to catch up by practicing the exercises at home. Once dogs are settled working with each other in one class it can be upsetting for all for a new dog to join for just for one class.

4. I work shifts can I attend multiple days?

Unfortunately this is not possible due to the reasons outlined in question 3. above.

5. Why do I need to pay up front/can I pay weekly?

Dig it Dogs is an incredibly busy club, we have multiple enquiries for courses every day and our courses are often over subscribed. Previously we have held places for people who have filled their booking forms in on the trust that they would pay nearer to the start, or on the first week of their course and have turned other bookings away on the basis that the course was fully booked. However, we have experienced people starting a course paying weekly and drop out. We have also had people change their minds at the last minute and not show up at all. Therefore we have ended up turning other people away unnecessarily. It is for these reasons we can no longer accept bookings without payment up front.

6. Can my daughter/son do the training?

We welcome members of the family attending and helping to train your dog. We do however have a policy on children attending class, which you need to refer to when considering bringing children to the obedience hall. The policy can be found at:

<http://www.digitdogs.co.uk/training/obedience-training/>

Scroll down and look on the right of the web page for the “children guidelines” PDF document.

7.Can other members of my family come to train?

We welcome members of the family attending and learning to train your dog. We would ask that only one person handles the dog at one time as otherwise it can be very confusing for your dog.

8.What should I bring with me?

This slightly depends on what at level you are training, but as a general rule please make sure you have the following items with you each week:

- Plenty of very high value treats such as a variety of freshly cooked meats or cheese and a mix of lesser value treats such as kibble or biscuits.
- A variety of toys for your dog but preferably not ones that squeak, as these can drive other dogs a little crazy!
- A mat for your dog to settle on or work with (for example a piece of vet bed or a flat mat will do).
- A flat lead and collar with your dog's tags with correct legal information inscribed on it. Please see the following link for the legal requirements of your dog's identity tag (this will also be required if you would like to take any of the Kennel Club Good Citizen Assessments). <http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/training/good-citizen-dog-training-scheme/information-for-dog-owners/dog-identification-tags/>
- If you have any other equipment you normally walk your dog in, such as a head collar or harness, please bring it with you and discuss it with your instructor on your first week.
- Some poo bags to clear up after your dog should they need a poo.

9.How long are the sessions/course?

All the Kennel Club Good Citizen courses are eight weeks long with the option of taking the assessment (Bronze, Silver or Gold) in the ninth week. The Kennel Club Puppy Foundation and Foundation courses are also eight weeks long and continuous assessment is undertaken during the course of the eight weeks.

10. My dog doesn't always like other dogs. Can they still attend?

This does not necessarily need to be a problem as our classes are well managed. However it would be best if you emailed obedience@digitdogs.co.uk to discuss your particular circumstances with one of our team who can then offer you the best advice.

11.I want to train my dog but don't want to undertake the test.

That is absolutely fine, you can still undertake the training and just miss the ninth week's assessment. Your instructor will be best placed to advise you as to whether your dog is ready to progress to the next level of training should you wish to continue training after your initial course.