

Beginner Draft Dog

Below is a summary of the new Beginner Draft Dog Title with Youtube demos for most of the exercises. For complete rules and regulations please go to the NCA website. This new title is on leash (loose leash).

Basic Control

Basic Control is done on leash. When directed by the judge, the dog and handler will walk 60 feet in a relatively straight line, turn around, and then walk back to the original marker. Somewhere along the pattern the judge will call a halt.

Principal parts of the Controlled Walking Exercise:

1. The dog will respond to the handler's commands and walk in a controlled manner.
2. The dog will walk within four feet of the handler the majority of the time.
3. The leash must remain loose the majority of the time.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTga6Oy-njU>

Recall

The recall will be performed on leash. The steward will bring you a 15-foot leash to replace the 6-foot leash on the dog. When directed by the judge, you will leave your dog and walk to the end of the 15-foot leash. When directed by the judge, you will call your dog. You may leave the leash on the ground or reel it in as the dog is coming to you.

Principal parts of the Recall Exercise:

1. The dog will remain in place in a sit until called by the handler. "Stay" may be both verbal command and/or signal, but may only be said one time.
2. The dog will respond within ten (10) seconds.
3. The dog will come directly to the handler, but may arc, within four feet of the handler and stop. "Come" may be both verbal command and/or signal. "Come" must only be said one time until the dog's bottom has risen off the ground, then signals and/or verbal encouragement can be offered to the dog.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3lYzKGxY2w>

Beginner Harnessing, Hitching and Equipment Check

After the recall is complete, the steward will return your 6-foot leash to you. You will then harness and hitch your dog to the cart. You must stay within 6 feet of the cart when doing this exercise. You may harness on either side of the cart, or in front. Once your dog is harnessed and hitched, the judges will direct you to move forward at least 20 feet to observe the equipment. Once you arrive at the designated location, the judges will call a "halt" and "exercise finished." The judges will then go over your equipment.

Principal Parts of the Exercise:

1. The dog must be under control and kept on a loose leash, which the handler must hold in their hands. A loose leash is defined as one which has slack when carried by the handler and clipped to the dog.
2. A sense of teamwork and cooperation with harnessing and hitching is required.
3. Handler leaves the dog in a stand, sit or down position (handler's choice) anywhere in the 6-foot area next to or in front of the cart, facing any direction and instructs the dog to stay.
4. As needed, the handler can place the leash on the ground briefly, drape it over the dog briefly, or unclip it briefly to facilitate harnessing. The dog should remain leashed the majority of the time, and the handler should have the leash in-hand when practical to do so. The leash must be picked back up and held once harnessing is complete.
5. Dog cooperates with handler for harnessing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3R70cTQnII>

Maneuvering

Once harnessing and hitching is complete, you move right into the maneuvering course. The course must cover 150 yards and consist of the following exercises.

1. Two 360-degree circular patterns, one in each direction.
2. A minimum of two broad curves, one in either direction.
3. Ninety-degree turns; at least one to the left and one to the right (36 inches wide)
4. A stop
5. Two narrow areas six or more feet long, preferably one low to the ground (e.g. logs) and one solid narrow area a minimum of three feet high (e.g. stacked bales of hay) one of which must be adjusted for each dog. The adjustable narrow areas will be 18 inches wider than each individual cart. The solid narrows will be 24 inches wider than the widest cart/team testing that day.
6. Removable obstacle.
7. A back-up.

Principal Parts of the Exercise:

1. With the dog harnessed and hitched to the draft apparatus, the handler directs the dog to pull through the maneuvering course.
2. The dog follows the handler's instructions to turn, halt, stop and back as directed by the judges.
3. The dog remains on a loose leash through all of the exercises.

Demos of some of the exercises are shown below:

Left 360

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwQnVANO1x0>

Right 360

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-jZwIDbwg8>

Right 90

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnBJiRwcDW4>

Left 90

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iblUKLXVJI>

Stop

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYvq-SfMDXE>

Back up

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2kIJnVuD3U>

Low narrows

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cktkgRNXI-s>

Removable Obstacle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpDu9SQRf68>

One minute stay and freight load

When all dogs have completed the Maneuvering course (with the exception of bitches in season), the judges will announce the time for the first group of dogs to be ready for the One Minute Stay exercise. Handlers should have their dogs harnessed, hitched, and ready by the announced time. The One (1) Minute Stay will be tested as a group exercise, with a maximum of six (6) entrants at a time, as part of the Freight Load Exercise. This exercise is divided into two (2) parts as follows:

- 1) For the one minute stay the judges will direct you to leave your dog. You may leave your dog in a stand, sit, or down depending on your preference. Walk to the end of the leash. Once the minute is complete the judges will tell you to return to your dog. They will then call the exercise complete. Your dog must remain in the position they were left in until the exercise is complete.
- 2) The judges will watch each individual handler, in catalog order, load and secure the freight in the apparatus. The handler must select an appropriate freight load for the apparatus and the dog within the following guidelines:
 - Five to ten (5-10) pounds for a travois.
 - Five to fifteen (5-15) pounds for a sled or toboggan.
 - Ten to twenty (10-20) pounds for a wheeled apparatus.

After the judges have observed each handler load and secure the freight in the apparatus, they will watch the dogs and handlers move individually in catalog order, on leash, to the beginning of the distance freight haul area as they watch for balance and shifting of freight load.

Principal Parts of the Exercise

1. The handlers leave their dogs, harnessed and hitched to an apparatus, and go to the end of the leash for one (1) minute. The leash should remain loose for the duration of the exercise. "Stay" may be both verbal command and/or signal, but may only be said one time.
2. The handler selects a comfortable working load for the dog and apparatus.
3. The handler loads and secures the weight in the apparatus.
4. Judges observe that the freight load is balanced and secured safely during movement.

Freight haul

The Distance Freight Haul is a group exercise with a maximum of six (6) handlers per group. Each dog will haul a loaded apparatus on a course that is at least one-half (1/2) mile in length. Each handler and dog will start the course in catalog order with an assigned steward. As the dogs begin the trail, judges may allow the dogs and teams to find their position within the group according to each handler

and dog's working speed. Each handler and dog must be within sight of at least one judge at all times.

The course may have natural obstacles (bends in the trail, trees, potholes, etc.) that are native to the test area, including wildlife. Each dog will pull the freight that has been loaded and secured during the Freight Load Exercise. As long as the dog works, there is no time limit. If the dog stops pulling at any point along the test route, the handler has thirty (30) seconds to get the dog moving again while keeping the leash loose.

Principal Parts of the Exercise

1. Dog hauls a loaded draft apparatus a distance of at least one-half (1/2) mile on a loose leash, with the handler, in a group of two to six teams of dogs and handlers.
2. Dog must be under handler's control and remain behind the lead stewards.
3. Dog cooperates with its handler for unhitching from the apparatus.

Now it's time to go out and practice!!!!

If there are any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.