

What is Rally?

AKC Rally® is all about teamwork and provides an excellent introduction to AKC Companion Events for new dogs and handlers. The dog and handler move through a course with signs displaying different skills to perform together at their own brisk pace. There are 10-20 signs per course, depending on the class level, and the courses are designed by the Rally judge. The signs display various types of turns and skills, such as sit, down, stay, etc. Rally was designed with the traditional pet owner in mind, but it can still be very challenging for those who enjoy higher levels of competition for them to strengthen their skills. Unlimited communication from the handler to the dog is to be encouraged and perfect heel position is not required, but there should be a clear sense of teamwork and enthusiasm both during and between the numbered signs as they go through the course together. While touching isn't allowed, you can use verbal commands, clap your hands, pat your legs and use hand signals to praise and encourage your dog.

Scoring in Rally is less rigorous than in other competitions like traditional obedience. You begin with a perfect score of 100, with points deducted along the way. If you retain a score of at least 70 points, you will qualify toward earning a title. As you qualify the required number of times, you will move on to the next level.



Rally Signs

The signs may be any color and they include descriptions as well as directional arrows. Signs are numbered to make it easy to find the next station when navigating the course. Signs should be placed to the right of the handler's path unless otherwise stated in the Regulations. The signs are large enough to be easily recognized when going through a course. Performance of the signs must be near the designated sign.

The rally signs will display skills for the dog to perform, such as: sit, down, heeling fast or slow, right and left turns, 360 degree circles in either direction, and coming when called in the lower level classes – to jumping, ignoring distractions and moving into the down position while heeling at the upper levels.

Rally is fun and energizing to perform with your dog and a joy to watch as a spectator.

Levels of Rally Competition

There are five levels of competition in AKC Rally®:

NOVICE – This is the first level for those just getting started in competition.

- All exercises are performed with the dog-on leash.
- There is a requirement of 10 to 15 signs to complete, with a maximum of five stationary exercises.
- The exercises performed vary from turning 360 degrees to changing paces during the course.
- Handlers may clap their hands, talk to the dog, and pat their legs through the course.

INTERMEDIATE – This is an optional class to enter as an introduction to the Advanced class signs, with the exception that all of the exercises are performed on-leash and there are no jumps at this class level.

- All exercises are performed with the dog on-leash
- There is a requirement of 12 to 17 signs to complete, with a maximum of seven stationary signs.
- Handler may clap their hands, talk to the dog and, pat their legs throughout the course.

This title is not required to move from Novice to the Advanced class, but is optional to enter if the dog is not ready to work off-leash.

ADVANCED – This class level includes more difficult exercises throughout the course and requires a dog to jump once.

- All exercises are performed with the dog off-leash.
- There is a requirement of 12 to 17 signs to complete, with a maximum of seven stationary exercises.
- Handler may clap their hands, talk to the dog, and pat their legs throughout the course.

EXCELLENT – This is the next class level and is very challenging, but fun for the handler and dog.

- All exercises are performed with the dog off-leash.
- There is a requirement of 15 to 20 signs to complete, with a maximum of seven stationary exercises.
- There are two required jumps in this class.
- Handlers are only allowed to encourage their dogs verbally, physical encouragement, such as patting their legs, is not allowed at this level.

MASTER – This is the fifth and highest level of AKC Rally®.

- All exercises are performed with the dog off-leash.
- There is a minimum of 15 to 20 signs to complete, with a maximum of seven stationary signs.
- One jump is required in the class.
- Handlers are only allowed to encourage their dogs verbally in this class too.

Qualifying Performance

A qualifying performance indicates that the dog has performed the required skills according to the *AKC Rally® Regulations*. Each performance is timed, but times are only utilized as a tie breaker if two dogs earn the same score. All dogs and handlers begin with a perfect 100. A dog and handler team is awarded a qualifying score if it retains at least 70 points after the course has been completed.

