

TIPS from Nancy vonKoehnen & Sandra Davis  
K9Dressage Created by Sandra Davis

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Each sequence has “principal parts”, which are the more difficult moves within the sequence. The principal parts of a sequence will carry more weight than the other moves in the sequence. The judge may need to move around the ring to be at the best vantage point for observing these principal parts. While the judge should stay a discreet distance away from the dog and handler, handlers should expect and train for a reasonable amount of movement by the judge when performing.” *Sandra Davis*

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NOTE also: The judge is scoring execution of EACH move as well as transitions (connecting movements between principal moves) against a standard of perfection.

Transitions are up to the handler as long as they are subtle and do not disrupt the flow the sequence.

**SCORING**

100 points total score maximum                      6 sequences scored separately

Each has max points for perfection based on difficulty

NQ marked on scoresheet if:

1. NO BOW
2. OR if not receiving MORE THAN 50% of the total point value in EACH sequence on (on a 10 point value, 5.5 must be earned to pass that sequence. 20 point value requires 10.5 to pass). Failing any one sequence or BOW earns an NQ for the class.

ZERO given if dog

1. Is out of control
2. Leaves ring
3. Relieves itself in ring

PENALTIES are ranked in ½ point increments

½ to 3 point penalty for minor faults

ie deviation from heel, poor transitions, uneven moves

3-5 point penalty for substantial faults ie poor execution of substantial move, assisting dog, restarting move

TOTAL Point Value is deducted if sequence is not performed in its entirety

Penalties include: Helping with leash, Pace not brisk, Adapt pace to dog, Excessive loud cues, Dog stops during moves, Dog anticipates move, Dog barking, Inconsistent speed, Not covering distance between markers, Being too far from markers, Not conforming to dress code

### **DRESS CODE**

Handler wears: White long sleeve shirt, dark slacks AND shoes ie brown, black, navy & Scarf – ascot any color tucked into neck of blouse/shirt. Blazer optional

Dog wears: a collar and leash at the Novice Level. Only a collar at the intermediate and advanced levels

Additional notes:

Everyone starts on leash

Title is earned upon completion of each class level

YOU NEED: 3 passing scores

By 2 different judges

At 3 different shows

### **HELPFUL HINTS**

BEFORE trying this sport, it is highly recommended that handlers practice & memorize the sequences so they are VERY familiar with them. At the Beginner level, the judge will read the entire sequence before the competitor completes the sequence. However, listening to the sequence while in a state of stress as is usual for most competitors is not the time to try to remember a sequence in its entirety. TRANSITIONS are judged & penalties will apply if they are not smooth or they disrupt the flow of the sequence.

Memorize the ring letter station locations

Judge should ask before each sequence if competitor is ready. Competitor should respond (similar to obedience)

Formally hold halt position at the end of each sequence until released by the judge. This is similar to what is done in obedience. Halt position is judged until 'End Sequence' is given.

Release & praise dog (keeping it under control), then set dog up FORMALLY for next sequence after the End Sequence command from the judge is given. (Similar to obedience competitions).

Pace of handler to be BRISK unless indicated! Make sure to have a definitive change of pace from normal to slow where indicated.

PRACTICE SO THAT DOG IS COMFORTABLE WALKING, SITTING, STANDING ON THE "X" marker in the middle of the ring!! (Use various kinds of 'Xs': chalk marks, masking tape, & duct tape to practice dog sitting and standing on top of)

Paws on – dog's right is first, then left (NOT handler's right/left). MAKE sure that dog is close enough to handler so that dog COULD touch handler's leg if requested. Handler should not hold dog's paws. Dog controls entire paw lift.

Handler cannot physically touch dog except in Paws On (where dog touches handler). Penalties will be taken if you must give 2 or more cues to get your dog to lift a paw.

Side Pass – IN comes before OUT & MUST take 3 distinct steps EACH way. No baby steps allowed except for tiny dogs that have a small reach.

Train so that dog is accustomed to having a judge in the ring with them during judging

*"Break down the sequences and work on the individual parts and transitions. When you are backing up (especially with the dog in front coming towards you) use the letters across the ring as a guide to know where the letter behind you is. Be careful you are not too far from the lettered targets when doing any required behaviors.*

*Take advantage of the fact you may cue and talk to your dog..." from Mark Criste*

A verbal 'Wait' may be used just before starting a new behavior mid-sequence. Of course, you would give the new command for the new behavior

"A course should take between 5 and 7 minutes. That's approx one minute per sequence with probably 1/2 a minute to release and praise the dog and set up for the reading of the next sequence. This equates with the utility class in obedience competitions where you have six exercises and you get to praise between each exercise, but you DO NOT get to talk to your dog during the exercises as you do in K9D. Talking should help to keep the dog focused. In the K9D training process, timing should be factored in to the training. I use a kitchen timer when training my dogs, and we get to the point where the dog can work non-stop for 10 minutes before praise or treat breaks. They even get better and faster toward to the end of the time because they know that a treat is coming, due to their internal clocks and the context of the performance." Sandra Davis