

Starting Agility

Welcome to our Agility class. Starting any class for the first time can feel very overwhelming for you and your dog. Some handlers and dogs take it in their stride and settle in immediately, others will take time. Often it will depend on the previous dog owning experiences for the handler and socialisation for the dog. It doesn't matter if you intend to compete or just attend to have fun and socialise. Our aim is to always make it fun for you and your dog.

If you haven't done agility before then you will have been asked to complete an induction, this session does not mean that you will have learned everything, the process to becoming a competent team working in harmony takes time.

At the induction you and your dog will be introduced to each piece of equipment and reminded of the safety element to using the equipment. When you join the group session for the first time it can be easy to feel overwhelmed but remember some have been coming for a long time, however they had a first time once.

No dog or handler combination is the same and we all learn at different rates.

Arriving at class Please try to arrive at least 10 minutes before class starts, it can be very disruptive to the class when a new dog enters. This is the time to pay your fees and settle in, you can walk the course, so that you know where you are going.

If you are late then please do not enter the training area whilst another dog is going around the course.

Toileting Please encourage your dog to toilet before class and please do not let your dog soil the equipment.

Treats & Toys We use treats and toys to reward and motivate our dogs when training. Please make sure that treats aren't dropped on the ground when completing the course as this can be very distracting for the other dogs.

Equipment If working on lead then a flat collar and a normal lead is best, A good length would be about 1.8cm. You will need footwear with a good grip, designed for running or walking on rough terrain. Clothing should be in layers but not loose.

Be prepared for any weather. If you can get to training we will be running it. If the weather turns bad then we have an indoor training area. If you are not sure please check with Sue on the morning of training.

Warming Up & Feeding! Please do not feed your dog within 2 hours of rigorous exercise, make sure you move your dogs around before jumping to warm their muscles up. I like to do a bit of obedience and trick training in-between goes.

Dog versus Dog One of the reasons dog owners come to class is to socialise their dogs. Some dogs struggle with other dogs in their space and so we keep our dogs on lead when not completing the course. Make sure that you ask before approaching other dogs. If your dog is friendly don't presume others are. You may be asked to muzzle your dog in-between goes.

The Equipment is of competition quality and the contacts are rubber coated.

Contact Equipment ; See-saw; Dog Walk; A Frame;
Other equipment:- Jumps; Tyre; Weaves; Wall; Rigid Tunnels; Pause table and Long Jump.

Please read our Dos & Don'ts on our website for further information.

Happy Training - Sue and team

Agility is run weekly at £8 a session.

Wednesday 6.30 – 7.30 April; to September – Thursday 10.30am -11.30am - Saturday 1pm – 2pm

About Agility

Dog agility is a dog sport in which a handler directs a dog through an obstacle course in a race for both time and accuracy. Obstacles include the following:- Jumps; Rigid Tunnels; Dog Walk; Seesaw; Weaving Poles; Tyre jump; Long Jump; Wall; Table and 'A' Frame.

In competition, dog and handler are required to complete the planned course against the clock clearly. Faults will be given for not completing within the time, for knocking jumps down, refusals, and failing to touch contact points. Faults will be given for handling the dog or touching the equipment. Taking the wrong course can result in elimination. I liken it to Show jumping for dogs.

Agility is a very active sport and will require some running and so please ensure that you and your dog are fairly fit, if unsure please check with your doctor/vet before starting. As with any exercise it is wise to warm up those muscles before starting to avoid injury.

All dogs are born with a need to work. Agility will provide mental and physical stimulation. All breeds large and small are welcome, dogs from 12 months and handlers of any age as long as they are capable of controlling their dog. (Under 16's must be accompanied by an adult)

When you first start the training can be on lead, however basic obedience is essential and it is far easier to run your dog off the lead which can knock the equipment down. Essential commands are, Sit, Down, Wait and Recall. So start practicing now. Find out what motivates your dog, treats, or toys? Do you clicker train? Although these cannot be used in competition they are very useful tools for helping your dog learn Agility.