

ASSOCIATION OF PET DOG TRAINERS



GOOD COMPANION AWARDS



APDT UK
ASSOCIATION OF
PET DOG TRAINERS



Guidelines

for dog guardians

INTRODUCTION

The APDT Good Companion Awards are awards that can be achieved by pet dog guardians together with their dog. Guardians will be assessed on their dog training skills, knowledge of dog welfare, behaviour and all-round good companionship. Your dog will be assessed on their ability to achieve what is asked of them by you.

Designed to be non-competitive, the guardian and dog will work together as a partnership to reach set criteria in life skills. These life skills enable dogs to become well-mannered members of society; they are open to all breeds no matter their age. There are currently four levels that may be offered by your instructor.

Any full member of the APDT can assess your partnership, whether that be as part of a course they offer in class or on a one-to-one basis. Your instructor will give you details of how they intend to work. You can be confident that the standard you reach can be achieved using only kind, fair and effective methods.



CONTENTS



1

General guidelines



2

Puppy awards



3

Foundation awards



4

Improver awards



5

Intermediate awards



6

Advanced awards



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**GOOD
COMPANION
AWARDS**



1

General guidelines

The APDT Good Companion Awards have been carefully designed to help dog guardians to attain an award for being a good companion to their dog, and their dog as a good companion to them.

Your assessor will be a current full member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers in the UK, and as such they will abide by the code of practice by which the association is bound. If you wish to look this up, it can be found here:

Link to APDT Code of Practice - [click here](#)

You should have poo bags and your dog should be wearing a legal ID tag, which includes the name and address of the owner.

These exercises can be assessed at any time during the training course and can be attempted as many times as is deemed appropriate within a six-week limit. The assessor will ask questions throughout; details of the areas of knowledge that will be drawn upon can be found in the 'Guardian Information Pack'.

There are currently four levels of award that can be assessed. The level one award has two slightly different curricula, either for Puppies under the age of seven months at the end of the assessment, or Foundation for dogs over six months of age, but new to the awards/training.

It is intended that there is a progression through the award stages, so a guardian/dog combo is unable to move onto the next level until the previous one has been passed satisfactorily. In the more advanced awards, there are some elements of choice of exercise. This may be at the discretion of your instructor, or you may be given your own choice.



Puppy - Violet



Foundation - Indigo



Improver - Blue



Intermediate - Green



Advanced - Yellow



2

Puppy award



The Puppy award is suitable for all puppies under the age of seven months at completion. Your instructor will go through each of the exercises listed below. You may be assessed over a period of up to six weeks, either during your one-to-one sessions or during your usual classes. Your instructor will explain how they plan to do this for you.

There will be questions asked throughout the assessment on the material provided in the 'Guardian Information Pack'.

This is not a formal examination, but enables your instructor to see your level of understanding.

All assessments must follow the APDT Code of Practice, which may be found [here](#)

EXERCISE	GOAL
Legal ID	Your assessor will check that your puppy is wearing the correct identification as required by law.
Response to name or touch	You will be asked to say your puppy's name, who should show a clear response to you. Hearing impaired dogs will need to respond to a signal or gentle touch.
Recall	You will recall your puppy to you from a distance of approximately five metres – your puppy may be gently held by the instructor or an assistant before being recalled.
Handling	Your puppy should be comfortable with you gently touching them all over, including eyes, ears, nose, teeth, tail area, belly, paws etc. Treats will be permitted where appropriate throughout handling exercises.
Positions - Sit, Down, Stand	You should ask your puppy to move into one of these positions from another, e.g. stand to a sit, sit to a down. The cue may be verbal or visual. You should give the cue only once and allow the puppy 4-5 seconds to respond, and an appropriate reward given when complete.
Settle	The puppy should be able to settle next you for a minimum of ten seconds. A mat may be used to help the puppy settle.
Lead Walking	Your puppy should be comfortable having its lead attached and removed. You should demonstrate the ability to encourage the puppy to walk on a loose lead for at least 3-4 of your strides.
Self-Control - door	Your puppy should demonstrate self-control going through a crate door, or a gateway/door with you. You may use a verbal/visual cue to assist.
Self-Control - food	Your puppy should demonstrate self-control when taking low-value treats/toy from your open hand. You should put a bowl containing food down, and your puppy show self control before eating.
Play	You should demonstrate appropriate play with your puppy, with or without toys. Your puppy should play with good manners.
Drop/Give	You should demonstrate how to take an item from your puppy on cue without confrontation.
Question	You will be asked a question on puppy welfare, as taken from the information pack.



3

Foundation award



The Foundation award is suitable for all dogs over the age of six months at the start. Your instructor will go through each of the exercises listed below. You may be assessed over a period of up to six weeks, either during your one-to-one sessions or during your usual classes. Your instructor will explain how they plan to do this for you.

There will be questions asked throughout the assessment on the material provided in the 'Guardian Information Pack'.

This is not a formal examination, but enables your instructor to see your level of understanding.

All assessments must follow the APDT Code of Practice, which may be found [here](#)

EXERCISE	GOAL
Legal ID	Your assessor will check that your dog is wearing the correct identification as required by law.
Response to name or touch	You will be asked to say your dog's name, who should show a clear response to you. Hearing impaired dogs will need to respond to a signal or gentle touch.
Recall	You will recall your dog to you from a distance of approximately five metres – your dog may be gently held by the instructor or an assistant before being recalled.
Handling	Your dog should be comfortable with you gently touching them all over, including eyes, ears, nose, teeth, tail area, belly, paws etc., while remaining reasonably calm. Treats will be permitted where appropriate.
Positions - Sit, Down, Stand	You should ask your dog to move into one of these positions from another, e.g. stand to a sit, sit to a down. You should give the cue only once and allow the dog 4-5 seconds to respond, and an appropriate reward given when complete.
Settle	Your dog should be able to settle next you for a minimum of 30 seconds. A mat may be used to help the dog settle, you may reward intermittently.
Lead Walking	Your dog should be comfortable having its lead attached and removed. You should demonstrate the ability to walk the dog on a loose lead for 30 - 60 seconds.
Self-Control - door	Your dog should demonstrate self-control going through a crate door, or a gateway/door with you. You may use a verbal/visual cue to assist.
Self-Control - food	Your dog should demonstrate self-control when taking low-value treats/toy from your open hand. You should put a bowl containing food down, and your dog show self control before eating.
Play	You should demonstrate appropriate play with your dog, with or without toys. Your dog should play with good manners.
Drop/Give	You should demonstrate how to take an item from your dog on cue without confrontation.
Question	A question will be asked on welfare, taken from the owner information pack.



4

Improver award



Improver award is available for all dogs who have successfully completed the Puppy or Adult Beginners award. Your instructor will go through each of the exercises listed below with the goal being a pass as shown in the table. You may be assessed over a period of up to six weeks, either during your one-to-one sessions or during your usual classes. Your instructor will explain how they plan to do this for you.

There will be questions asked throughout the assessment on the material provided in the 'Guardian Information Pack'. This is not a formal examination, but enables your instructor to see your level of understanding.

All assessments must follow the APDT Code of Practice, which may be found [here](#)

EXERCISE	GOAL
Recall	Your dog will return to you from a distance of up to ten metres in the vicinity of other people and/or dogs.
Full Examination	You will conduct an all over body examination while your dog remains reasonably calm. Additionally you should demonstrate two of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present paw for nail trim • Stand still on grooming table/target mat on floor • Chin target for kennel cough or vaccination • Bucket game/ game of choice for sensitive areas
Positions - Sit, Down, Stand	You should ask your dog to move into three of positions of your choice from another, e.g. stand to a sit, sit to a down, stand to a down, sit to a stand etc. You should give each cue only once and allow the dog 4-5 seconds to respond, and an give appropriate reward when complete.
Settle	Your dog should settle next to you for one minute in the presence of distractions, such as you eating and drinking or people and/or dogs walking by. A mat may be used to help the dog settle.
Lead Walking	You should demonstrate the ability to walk your dog on a loose lead with frequent direction changes for at least one minute in the vicinity of other people and/or dogs.
Door/gate safety	With your dog on-lead, approach a door/gate and your dog should wait while you walk through, and then re-join you on cue and remain calm while the door/gate is closed.
Greeting Behaviour	With your dog on lead they should remain calm when someone approaches, and talks to the you for up to 30 seconds. In addition, your dog should behave appropriately when given eye contact and spoken to.
Vehicle safety	You should have your dog under control getting in and out of a vehicle. The assessor should be able to move around and hold a quiet conversation with you while the dog waits in the car.
Leave	Your dog will leave (on cue) a treat or toy in place on the floor within range of the lead, while walking past on a loose lead.
Hand target	On cue, your dog will target your hand with it's nose or paw.



5

Intermediate award



The Intermediate award is suitable for all dogs who have successfully completed the Improver award.

Your instructor will go through each of the exercises listed below with the goal being a pass as shown in the table. You may be assessed over a period of up to six weeks, either during your one-to-one sessions or during your usual classes. Your trainer will explain how they plan to do this for you.

There will be questions asked throughout the assessment on the material provided in the 'Guardian Information Pack'.

This is not a formal examination, but enables your instructor to see your level of understanding.

There are two sections to the award, the first section is compulsory, the second lists a number of exercises from which you choose three to attempt, in consultation with your instructor.

All assessments must follow the APDT Code of Practice, which may be found [here](#)

COMPULSORY EXERCISE	GOAL
Recall - distraction	Your dog will, off lead, be called away from two separate moderately interesting items which have been placed on the floor.
Emergency stop	Your dog shall stop on cue at a distance of at least two metres from you.
Full Examination	Your dog should allow you to put on a muzzle. You should demonstrate that you can use appropriate body covering or suitable collar to prevent access to wounds.
Positions - Sit, Down, Stand	Your dog should be able to perform three different position changes as chosen by the assessor e.g. stand to a sit, sit to a down, stand to a down, sit to a stand etc. You should give the cue only once and allow your dog 4-5 seconds to respond, and give an appropriate reward when complete.
Settle	Your dog should be able to settle next to you in position for two minutes, and remain in position for 30 seconds while you moves away to a distance of five paces. A mat may be used to help the dog settle. You will be asked to engage in conversation with the assessor for at least 30 seconds during that time.
Lead Walking	You should demonstrate the ability to walk your dog on a loose lead, with frequent direction changes for at least two minutes in the vicinity (within three metres) of other people and/or dogs. They should also be able to walk calmly beside a road with traffic.
Off-Lead Walking	You should demonstrate the ability to walk your dog off-lead in close proximity, with frequent direction changes, for at least one minute in the vicinity of other people and/or dogs.
Door/Gate safety	With your dog off-lead and in close proximity, you will approach a door/gate; your dog will wait while you walks through it, and re-join you on cue, remaining calm while the door/gate is closed.
Greeting Behaviour	On cue, your dog will target your hand with it's nose or paw.
Send to bed	The dog will on cue, without hesitation, go to a settle mat at a distance of approximately five metres



5

Intermediate award continued

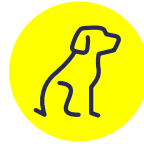


In consultation with your instructor you should be assessed on three of the options shown in the table below.

These exercises are tasters of fun activities you can do with your dog.

All assessments must follow the APDT Code of Practice, which may be found [here](#)

OPTIONAL EXERCISE	GOAL
Gun dog exercise	Your dog will retrieve a thrown toy, return to you and drop or give the toy cleanly when given the release cue.
Scent work exercise	Your dog will indicate a 'Find' object which is hidden from view e.g. under cups, plant pots, markers as if indicating a find in search and rescue work.
Agility exercise	Your dog to go over a couple of jumps and through a tunnel when cued.
Hoopers exercise	Demonstrate that your dog can run around an obstacle placed at least one metre from you, from both left and right positions.
Rally exercise	While walking at heel you and your dog will stop at a sign and you will cue your dog to stand in front of you.
'Trick' training exercise	Your dog will demonstrate giving a paw or presenting a high-five on cue. You will also ask your dog to cross paws while lying down.
Assistance dog exercise	On cue, your will open a door or drawer.
Heelwork to music	Your dog will, on cue, complete two complete circuits around you.
'Obedience' exercise	Your dog should walk to heel with you, off-lead, for at least ten paces in a straight line, then make a right turn and continue for a further ten paces.



6

Advanced award



The Advanced award is suitable for all dogs who have successfully completed the Intermediate award.

Your instructor will go through each of the exercises listed below with the goal being a pass as shown in the table. You may be assessed over a period of up to six weeks, either during your one-to-one sessions or during your usual classes. Your instructor will explain how they plan to do this for you.

There will be questions asked throughout the assessment on the material provided in the 'Guardian Information Pack'. This is not a formal examination, but enables your instructor to see your level of understanding.

There are two sections to the award, the first section is compulsory, the second lists a number of exercises from which you choose three to attempt, in consultation with your instructor.

All assessments must follow the APDT Code of Practice, which may be found [here](#)

EXERCISE	GOAL
Recall - distraction	Your dog will recall to you, on cue without hesitation, past a small group of people and on-lead dogs, from a minimum distance of ten metres. The dog should sit close to you and have the lead attached before returning to the group together.
Emergency stop	Your dog will stop on cue at a distance of approximately five metres, when returning to your side while you are within a small group of people.
Full examination	Your dog should allow the assessor to conduct a brief all over body examination while remaining reasonably calm.
Positions - Sit, Down, Stand	Your dog should be able to perform three different position changes as chosen by the assessor e.g. stand to a sit, sit to a down, stand to a down, sit to a stand etc. While giving the cue, you should be a minimum of five metres from your dog, or have your back turned to your dog.
Wait	Your dog should, on cue, be able to wait in a position chosen by you, at a distance of up to 10 metres, for sufficient time to take a photograph.
Lead Walking	You should demonstrate the ability to walk your dog on a loose lead with frequent direction changes for at least two minutes in the vicinity of other people and/or dogs. Within that time you will pick up and carry an umbrella, carry a tray with drinks and push a buggy/wheelchair.
Off - lead Walking	You should demonstrate the ability to walk your dog off-lead with frequent direction changes for at least one minute in the vicinity of other people and/or dogs.
Off-lead greeting	Your dog, while off-lead, should behave in an appropriate manner when approached and greeted by the assessor. Your dog should remain in the position chosen by you, throughout the exercise. The assessor should approach from a distance of at least four metres.
Leave on cue at distance	Your dog will leave (on cue) a treat or toy dropped from the hand of the assessor onto the floor within range of the lead, while walking past on a loose lead.



6

Advanced award continued



In consultation with your instructor you should be assessed on three of the options shown in the table below.

These exercises are tasters of fun activities you can do with your dog.

All assessments must follow the APDT Code of Practice, which may be found [here](#)

OPTIONAL EXERCISE	GOAL
Gun dog exercise	Memory retrieve - you will walk out together with your dog and drop an article on route, then send your dog back to retrieve the item from out of sight.
Scent work exercise	Your dog should indicate a scented 'Find' object from among two similar decoys which are hidden from view.
Agility exercise	You should direct your dog around a course of one tunnel and two jumps. You will cross behind, rather than in front of your dog. You will also send your dog around the back of a jump, so the dog takes the jump from the opposite side to you.
Hoopers exercise	Show your dog can complete a figure of eight through at least eight hoops, while you remain stationary. The choice of position relative to the hoops, is down to you. The hoops must be set to allow a smooth, gentle curve for your dog.
Rally exercise	You will cue your dog to move from facing you to your right, around behind you and into the heel position as you continue forward for a distance of at least 5m. Your dog does not sit in the heel position.
'Trick' training exercise	Your dog should pick up an object on cue and place it through a hoop or put into a designated 'toy box'.
Assistance dog exercise	Your dog will nudge you on cue to alert them to a sound (e.g. to a doorbell) or nudge a button as if at a road crossing. The nudge may be using the muzzle or paws, as appropriate.
Heelwork to music	You and your dog should perform a one minute routine incorporating heelwork in at least two positions and at least four other identifiable other moves (this might include spins, circles, leg weaves, reversing, high fives, waves, paws up, hide your eyes, bow roll over). Props can be used in this routine if desired. Music is optional.
'Obedience' exercise	You and your dog must compete at least one minute of heelwork (off lead) under the direction of the assessor. This must include two changes of pace (normal and slow pace), about turn to the right, 90 degree turn to the left and right, a circle and a straight line.



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