

IRISH
Agility &
Dog Sports



**Competition
Etiquette**

DRAFT - For Review Only

Guideline for Beginners

Everyone has been a beginner and it is very understandable to feel a little unsure at your first few competitions. Remember too that your dog is also experiencing lots of new things at a show. This document will help to provide quick and easy guidelines of basic agility etiquette at competitions. When everyone follows these guidelines, beginners and experienced alike, a positive atmosphere is experienced by all at IADSA Events.

One of the most important things to remember is that our ultimate goal and priority when competing at any competition is always to have fun with our dogs!!

Arrive well before the start time

Arrive early the first day of the Event. This gives you an opportunity to set up your area for the day, walk your dog and review the helpers list.

Check the helpers list

No show can run without the help of all competitors. There are certain jobs that need to be done at the ring so that the competition can run smoothly and efficiently. Everyone entered into the competition is automatically eligible for the following easy jobs:

- Course Building & Packing Up - before and after every show the equipment needs to be arranged on the course and packed away, anyone available is asked to help with these tasks.
- Lead Running - picking up the lead at the ring entrance left by the competitor currently running and moving it to the ring exit so that the competitor can access it quickly once their run has finished.
- Pole Picking - Usually there is one person on each side of the agility ring that watches for any poles that may get knocked. ONLY after the competitor has finished their run and before that the next competitor starts are you allowed to go on to the course and replace the fallen pole into its required place.

The organisers do their very best to arrange the helpers list so that it doesn't conflict with the helpers competition running times. However, this is not always possible and they will ask for everyone to co-operate as the list may get moved around.

Generally the helpers list will be published online before the show but this is not always possible. It will always be displayed at the ring side and it is your responsibility, on arriving at the event, to check this list and arrange your time according if you are listed on it. If you have any issues, you can talk to the ring manager or one of the organisers and they will help you as much as possible.

Important things to remember when it's your time to compete

- Always check the running order and be at the holding area with plenty of time to spare.
- Remember, if there is no one on the start line when a class is called, the judge can close the class.
- Pay attention to what the "Call-Up" person tells you and follow that person's instructions. They will tell you where to stand and when to enter the ring. Set-up and be ready to release your dog as soon as told. If your set-up process is deemed to be excessively long, the judge may eliminate you and ask you to leave the course.
- Don't play ball, Frisbee or use squeaky toys in the holding area as it can upset another dog on the start line.

- If a handler is waiting to run, be understanding if they don't want to join in conversation until after their run.
- If you are running multiple dogs, the show secretary has tried to avoid having you make back to back runs; but again, this is not always possible. If you are running multiple dogs, it is your responsibility to be at the holding area in a timely fashion. If you need to arrange for a volunteer to hold one of your dogs for you at the holding area, please do so well before the start of the class. If you are not on the line when you are supposed to be, there is a possibility you might be scratched.

Your dog must be under control at all times

Dogs are not allowed off leash around the ring area. There will be a specified off lead area designated at every event so please check where this is located. This is extremely important for the health and safety of everyone at an event. At anytime and anywhere (other than the designated exercise area), if your dog is off leash and not under your control, any member of the show organisers or a member of the IADSA Committee may ask you to leave the grounds for the rest of the event.

Also, please be very mindful of your dogs behaviour when on lead and when interacting with other dogs. Remember not everyone's dog wants to play. When you are in close proximity to other dogs please remember this. Accidents can happen even when dogs are on lead.

Never tie your dog and leave them unattended near the ring

This is a serious breach of safety rules and can result in your dismissal from the event.

No food/treats in your pockets! No food/treats on the course!

Food/Treats should not be anywhere near the course/rings. They are not permitted on your person during a run. Dropped crumbs/treats on the ring can cause serious distraction and disadvantage to other dogs and will not be looked on kindly by anyone at an event.

Dog fouling during your run results in automatic elimination from the run

This is a standard rule for dog agility, and there are no exceptions. Make sure to give your dog the opportunity to go to the toilet before your run (please clean up after your dog!) and accept the consequences if "nature calls" your dog during a run! Laugh and make your dog feel wonderful anyway :)

The scrimmers tent is off limits to all handlers – no exceptions.

The scrimmer is the person who is watching the judge during runs and who marks down the score. They need to concentrate fully on this task so as not to miss anything. If you are found to be interacting with the scrimmer while competitors on the course you may be asked to leave the event.

Be considerate towards fellow competitors

- When walking a course, please be considerate of others who are focused on planning their runs and refrain from undue commentary and/or blocking the run path. If you want help planning your run, please step to the side of the course to have a conversation with the person who has volunteered to assist you.
- During your run, leave the ring when asked to do so and remember there is no place on a course for tempers or bad sportsmanship.
- If you have a negative opinion about the person on the course or their dog, keep it to yourself! As a spectator, it is considered rude to stand within earshot of the ring and critique a round in progress and certainly do not do so within earshot of other competitors or the judge.
- Respect the judge at all times. The judge has complete authority on a course, and is to be respected. It is never appropriate to argue with a judge and/or tell them how to do their job. We value and want to preserve the positive relationships that we have established with well-regarded judges and trainers.
- Be considerate of others. You are asked to refrain from any behaviour that might distract, disturb or offend another person or their dog.

Respect

It is very important that when the inevitable glitches occur that you remember that the organisers of the show and those helping on the rings are all volunteers. They are also your friends and fellow competitors so as an IADSA member we expect you to treat them as you would like to be treated.

We expect all IADSA members to treat each other with respect at all times. As a member of IADSA you will have already read the IADSA Code of Conduct document in relation to this.

And finally, enjoy your agility career and never forget to always have fun with your dog!!

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