

Let's Talk About Which Test Might Be Right For You!

Each of the tests has their own advantages and challenges, so please set your particular dog up for success! My own girl is very, very excited about meeting new people and new dogs so the Canine Good Citizen test is far too challenging for her. However, the APDT CLASS test is just right. So, let's look at the two tests so that you can make the right decision for your dog.

1. The Canine Good Citizen test from the American Kennel Club

This test seems to have originated from skills that are important in the show ring and other things that make a dog a good "citizen." If you have a fairly calm dog, an older dog, or a dog who has already had a fair amount of training then this test might be right for you. If you have a dog who is new to training, is overly excited about people or reactive to other dogs or who is uncomfortable being away from you, this may not be right for you at this time. No treats are allowed during the test; however, you are allowed to talk/cue your dog freely.

Here are the test items included:

1. Accepting a friendly stranger
2. Sitting politely for petting
3. Appearance and grooming
4. Out for a walk (walking on a loose lead)
5. Walking through a crowd
6. Sit and down on command and Staying in place
7. Coming when called
8. Reaction to another dog
9. Reaction to distraction
10. Supervised separation

You can get more info on what is included in each of the skills from AKC.com at <http://www.akc.org/cgc-pledge/>

The Canine Good Citizen test has been around a long time and is recognized throughout the country. There are some apartment complexes that require it for dogs and there are some dog

sports that require you to have passed the CGC prior to registering for their classes. Finally, if you are interested in doing therapy dog training then the CGC is for you.

2. C.L.A.S.S. (Canine Life and Social Skills) from the Association of Professional Dog Trainers - BA Level Skills (Bachelor)

This test is not as widely known as Canine Good Citizen but in my opinion I think that it is a more reasonable and workable program, especially for dogs who are new to training. Treats can be given during warm up time and between all of the test items. However, leash tension and vocal cues are counted more precisely which can result in a “Needs Work” score.

Here are the test items included:

1. Wait at the door
2. Come and leash up
3. Loose leash walking
4. Meet and greet
5. Leave it
6. Wait for the food bowl
7. Stay
8. Settle
9. Give and take
10. Two bonus items if you wish to pass “with honors”

For more information on the C.L.A.S.S. program and the skills involved, click here:

<https://mydoghasclass.com/about/default.aspx>

Many people elect to do both tests as their dog’s skills improve.