

# OBEDIENCE - PURE FUN, PURE SPORT

Dogs have many career opportunities open to them such as:

- showing, hunting, searching, rescuing, detecting, protecting, earth-dogging, pulling, guiding, assisting, tracking, herding, plus many other activities for which they were developed.
- they can be seen trialling in obedience, agility, endurance and many other activities and competitions.
- above all, most dogs are loving and loved companions.
- many are multi-skilled and can be seen doing one or several of the above in their busy lives. All need basic skills to get started.



## How do you start?

All of the above activities need a dog which has basic obedience to a certain extent and a set of commands which go with the actions, commands which it understands and which it will need to carry out its work.

It is well-known today that the sooner baby puppies get out and meet the world, the better they will be as adult dogs, getting on well with people and other dogs. This often starts with attending a puppy pre-school for

puppies 8–12 weeks old, often run by a local veterinary clinic or the local obedience club.



Once the puppy has had its first permanent vaccination at around 12 weeks, it can join a puppy class, which many of our affiliated obedience clubs run. These classes teach good manners and the basic obedience every dog needs to fit in with the world. They are the first step towards more formal classes which some owners wish to go on with and maybe eventually end up entering their dog in obedience trials.

A friendly warning should be issued here: many unsuspecting owners have joined up with puppy in tow, only to find out obedience is fun, trialling is a great team sport, and many lovely friendships will be made along the way. Trialling may just possibly become an addiction involving whole families who then go on to explore other avenues with their dogs, like showing, tracking, earthdog, etc. Maybe puppies should come with a warning label!

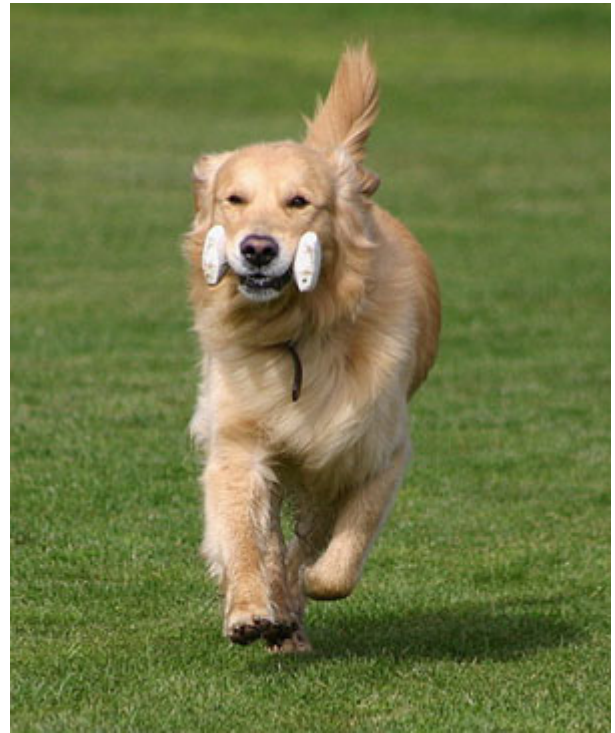
Training dogs has changed a lot in recent years, with a huge emphasis on positive methods. The dog learns by being rewarded - play, toys, food, pats - for its efforts. Most traditional methods of training by correction have been replaced because the end product of positive training is a much happier, more willing dog who keeps asking for more, more, more.

### **Obedience Trialling**

Trials are held in the ACT and throughout Australia during most of the year. To compete you need a trained dog that is registered with a controlling body – in the ACT it is DOGS ACT – and you must be a member too. Any dog can trial regardless of its parents, purebred or not. Dogs without registration papers trial as associates and all dogs compete together.

All the exercises are based on useful things dogs can do for us and which make for a better companion.

There are five levels of obedience in Australia, they become progressively more challenging. The dog has to attain one title at a time to get to the next level. A title is completed when the dog has three passes at that level. At each level the dog must pass every exercises and gain an over score of 170 points or more out of 200. The exception is the entry class of Community Companion Dog which requires 75 points out of 100.



If you want to know more about the training and competition side of obedience trialling, contact one of the dog training clubs in the ACT:

ACT Companion Dog Club  
[www.actcdc.org.au](http://www.actcdc.org.au) ph: 02 6295 7764

ACT German Shepherd Dog Association  
ph: 02 6230 2456

Belconnen Dog Obedience Club  
[www.bdoc.asn.au](http://www.bdoc.asn.au) ph: 02 5105 0992

Tuggeranong Dog Training Club  
[www.tdtc.asn.au](http://www.tdtc.asn.au) ph: 02 6293 4122

### **Further information**

Further information about DOGS ACT activities including getting involved in Obedience, can also be found at [www.dogsact.org.au](http://www.dogsact.org.au) OR call our office and speak to our staff during Business Hours, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday – 9.30am to 2.30pm on 02 6241 4404.