

Rally For 4-H

(Adapted from AKC Rally: <http://www.akc.org/pdfs/rulebooks/RO2999.pdf>)

Rally is a sport in which the dog and handler complete a course that has been designed by the rally judge. The judge tells the handler to begin, and the dog and handler proceed at their own pace through a course of designated stations (10 – 20, depending on the level). Each of these stations has a sign providing instructions regarding the next skill that is to be performed. Scoring is not as rigorous as traditional obedience. The team of dog and handler moves continuously at a brisk, but normal, pace with the dog under control at the handler's left side. There should be a sense of teamwork between the dog and handler both during the numbered exercises and between the exercise signs; however, perfect "heel position" is not required.

Unlimited communication from the handler to the dog is to be encouraged and not penalized. Handlers **are** permitted to talk, praise, encourage, clap their hands, pat their legs, or use any verbal means of encouragement. Multiple commands and/or signals using one or both arms and hands are allowed; the handler's arms need not be maintained in any particular position at any time. The handler may **not** touch the dog or make physical corrections. At any time during the performance, loud or harsh commands or intimidating signals will be penalized.

Ring Size

The required minimum area for a rally course is 40 x 50 feet, however 40 x 80 feet is recommended.

Signs

Signs must be a minimum of 8-1/2 x 11 inches and a maximum of 11 x 17 inches. All sign holders or signs (not including those for Start and Finish) will be clearly and sequentially numbered on the course, with numbers approximately 3 inches high. Signs with an asterisk (numbers 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19, and 34) may be used multiple times on a rally course. Two of each of those signs must be available for the judge's use. All other signs may only be used once on any course.

Stationary exercises are any signs indicating a "Halt" or no forward motion.

Placement of Signs

Signs will be placed to the right of the handler's path except for those indicating a change in direction, in which case the sign will be directly in front of the handler to aid in that change. Exercises using cones may require entry with the sign on the left.

Course

The course for each class will be posted at the ring prior to the familiarization time. If possible, copies will be given to exhibitors at check-in when armbands are distributed for the class.

Location of Performance in relation to Signs

Except for exercises requiring entry with the sign on the left, exercises are performed near the designated signs, either directly in front, or in front and to the left of said signs.

Familiarization Time

A walk-through **will be** allowed for handlers without their dogs. When the same course is used for **A and B Classes**, the judge may choose to combine the classes for the walk-through time. The judge must be available in the ring during this period to answer any questions the handlers might have. The judge may also choose to brief the handlers on the course during this period.

Judging

The judges' orders will be, "Are you ready?" followed by, "Forward." No other orders are necessary.

Timing

All dogs will be timed. Times will be used only in the event of ties for a placement, as mentioned in Section 9. Timing will begin when the Judge gives the order, "Forward" and will end when dog and handler cross the finish line. In the case of tie scores, the dog and handler completing the course in the least amount of time will receive the higher placement and a plus (+) after the score. The original scores will not be changed. In the event that both the score and time are the same, the dog and handler teams will repeat the course and be timed again.

Scoring

Times will be used only to break ties for placements. Scoring for all levels is based on a maximum score of 100 points. The following deductions shall apply:

1-point deduction for each of the following:

- tight leash
- dog interfering with handler
- poor sits
- slow, delay, or resistance to respond
- touching jump, pylon, post or person
- out of position

3-point deduction for each of the following:

- repeat of a station (a maximum of 2 re-tries allowed)
- pylon/post knocked over on Figure 8, Spiral, and Serpentine
- lack of control
- loud command or intimidating signal
- excessive barking
- hitting the jump

10-point deduction for each of the following:

- incorrectly performed station
- failure to complete the Honor Exercise

1- to 10-point deduction:

- lack of teamwork
- lack of briskness
- handler error

10-point deduction (or NQ) for each of the following:

- minimum requirements not met
- dog unmanageable, or uncontrolled barking
- dog eliminates while in the ring for judging
- station not attempted by handler
- consistently tight lead
- handler error
- knocking over a jump
- bar knocked off the jump uprights
- using jump as an aid in getting over
- walking through or on the broad jump boards
- failure of dog to go over the jump in the proper direction

The table steward is responsible for totaling deductions on the judge's worksheet and transferring them to the official judge's book. Final scores may be recorded in the official judge's book by the table steward; however, the judge must verify the scores and sign the book prior to awarding ribbons.

Rally Novice Class

All exercises are judged on leash, and all dogs must enter and leave the ring on leash. The leash must be made of fabric or leather and needs to be long enough to provide adequate slack.

Rally Novice A and B must have between 10 – 15 stations (Start and Finish not included) with no more than five (5) stationary exercises per class. [*Novice A = Handlers are in their first year of the 4-H Dog Project.*]

Rally Advanced Class

All exercises are judged off leash. All dogs must enter and leave the ring on leash.

Rally Advanced A and B must have between 12 – 17 stations (Start and Finish not included) with no more than seven (7) stationary exercises per class. One jump *must* be used for this class. Height of dog at withers = height to be jumped:
Under 15" = 8", 15" and under 20" = 12", 20" and over = 16"

Rally Excellent Class

All exercises are judged off leash except the Honor Exercise. All dogs must enter and leave the ring on leash.

Rally Excellent must have between 15 – 20 stations (Start and Finish not included) with no more than seven stationary exercises per class.

Unlike in the Rally Novice and Advanced Classes, in Rally Excellent handlers are not allowed to pat their legs or clap their hands to encourage the dog. Verbal encouragement, multiple commands, and/or inaudible signals using one or both arms and hands are allowed; the handler's arms need not be maintained in any particular position at any time. Handlers may not touch their dog or make any physical corrections.

Two jumps must be used for this class. Jumps may not be used consecutively on the course.

The Honor Exercise

Prior to each class, the judge will designate either the sit or the down for the Honor Exercise, as well as the placement in the ring, and will also designate where the handler will stand during the exercise – either next to or facing the dog. The Honor Exercise must not be in the path of the dog and handler team that follows.

Volunteer dogs will be used for both honoring the first dog in the class and as a course run-through when the last dog performs the Honor Exercise. After completing the course, each dog and handler may either re-enter through the finish gate, or they may proceed directly to the honor station. The dog must remain in either a sit or a down position to honor the next dog and handler's entire course. This exercise must be performed on leash. For the Honor Exercise, the ring steward will monitor each team, record the score, and immediately report it to the table steward.