

Welcome, Rookie Triallers!

Your Agility Trial Starter Guide

Read this first before diving into the full Trialler's Handbook.

First of all — congratulations!

If you're holding this booklet, it means you've taken a huge step into the world of agility trials — and we couldn't be more excited to have you here.

We know your first trial can feel overwhelming: new rules, unfamiliar routines, lots of dogs and people. Don't worry — every experienced handler started exactly where you are now.

This quick intro is designed just for **first-timers**, to help you feel prepared, supported, and confident going into your run.

How to Use This Handbook

You've received the full **Trialler's Handbook**, which covers the official rules, expectations, and procedures.

As a rookie, you don't need to memorize everything on Day 1 — but you do need to:

- Read through the **Before the Trial**, **On the Day**, and **Prohibited Behaviour** sections carefully
 - Pay special attention to **Course Walking**, **Measurement**, and **How to Start Your Run**
 - Ask questions! The community is friendly and supportive — we've all been there
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Rookie Checklist (Quick Reminders)

Before you leave home:

-  Dog is healthy, fit, and wearing a flat collar or no collar
-  Pack water, cooling gear, crate, leash, poop bags, and trial essentials

- 🐾 If this is your first trial, make sure your dog will be measured by a judge (check the schedule)

At the venue:

- 💬 Check in with the SKC admin team when you arrive
 - 📏 Be on standby for height measurement if required
 - 📖 Make sure you get a **SKC and/or FCI Trial Record Book** from the SKC admin team
 - 🧑 Attend the **briefing** — listen carefully!
 - 🚶 Walk the course (7 mins for triallers, 2 mins for non-triallers)
 - 🏁 Wait for the judge's signal — and then enjoy the run!
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Rookie Tips From Fellow Handlers

- 😓 **Breathe.** You'll be more nervous than your dog — and that's okay.
 - 😬 **Don't panic if you make a mistake** — everyone does, even experienced teams.
 - 🗑️ **Double-check your dog's crate is secure** — especially in busy environments.
 - 🧠 **Be kind to yourself** — today is about learning and celebrating progress.
 - 🛠️ **Have a plan for mistakes** — decide in advance how you'll respond so you can recover calmly and keep your dog confident.
 - 🎉 **Celebrate little wins** — did your dog stay with you? Focus? Finish the course? That's a win.
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One Last Thing...

Remember: Your Dog Doesn't Care About Ribbons. Whether your run is clean or chaotic, your dog is going to think you're the best person in the world — and they'd be right.

So smile, cheer for others, enjoy the atmosphere, and make memories with your dog. You've already won by showing up. 🏆

We're cheering for you.

See you in the ring!

— The SKC Dog Sports Committee 🐾✨



Trialler's Handbook

Procedures, Expectations & Conduct for Agility Competitors

Organised under Singapore Kennel Club (SKC) & FCI Guidelines



BEFORE THE TRIAL



Eligibility & Entry

- Dog must be healthy, fit, and ≥ 15 months old for SKC Trials and ≥ 18 months old for FCI Trials.
- All handlers must have a valid SKC membership.
- Bitches in heat are permitted but must follow designated guidelines.
- Only registered dogs are allowed at the trial venue.
- After registration closes, no late entries will be entertained.
- Trial fees are strictly non-refundable and non-transferable. If a valid MC is produced, the trial fees can be credited to future trials. An admin fee of \$10 will apply.



What to Bring

- Trial Record Book
- If this is your first time taking part in a FCI trial, please bring along the original pedigree or breed certificate
- Crate and leash (dogs must be crated when not running)
- Cooling gear, water, and waste bags
- Poop bags and cleaning materials



Dog Measurement

- Measurement must be completed by an FCI-approved judge prior to the run.
 - Height categories:
 - **S (Small):** under 35 cm
 - **M (Medium):** 35–42.9 cm
 - **I (Intermediate):** 43–47.9 cm
 - **L (Large):** 48 cm and above
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VENUE ACCESS & DOG MANAGEMENT

- Only participating dogs and handlers may enter the venue.
 - Dogs must be crated or leashed at all times, except when in the ring.
 - Dogs should not be tied to chairs, fences, or objects, nor left unattended.
 - All dogs must be in good health and on external parasite prevention.
 - Dogs may not wear pinch, prong, or electrical collars (even dummy ones) anywhere on trial grounds.
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ON THE DAY OF THE TRIAL



Check-In & Briefing

- Report to the Trial Secretary or SKC Dog Sports Committee Admin Team upon arrival.
- Attend the briefing session by the Trial Manager.
- For new entrants requiring measurement, please refer to the agenda for the dog measuring time slot and ensure that you and your dog are on standby.
- Measurement must be signed off by a judge and recorded in the SKC and/or FCI booklet prior to the first run.



Course Walking

- **Triallers of the Run:** 7 minutes (no dogs allowed, no coaching permitted in the ring).
- **Non-Triallers of the Run:** 2 minutes (after Triallers have completed their course walk).
- Coaching is not allowed in the ring during course walking. Coaching is permitted outside of the ring before the handler is at the start line.



Course Protocol

- Wait for the judge's signal before starting your run.
- Dog must be off-leash and collar-free inside the ring.
- Handler must not be in possession of – food, toys or gadgets when running the course.
- No touching of dog or obstacles; verbal cues and body language only.
- A variety of verbal commands and signals are allowed.
- Handler must not pass between the start/finish poles (will incur a fault).
- Time stops when the dog crosses the finish obstacle.
- Time is recorded to the nearest 1/100th second.
- Non-Competition Run (NCR): Handlers who wish to convert their run to an NCR must obtain approval from the Trial Manager prior to the run.
- Dog needs to be leashed up before leaving the ring after the run.



ROLES OF OFFICIALS

- **Trial Manager:** Oversees smooth conduct of the event and may disqualify on grounds of rule violation. The Trial Manager may decide on matters that are not specifically covered in the Rulebook. His/her decision on such matters shall be final.
 - **Judge:** Has full authority in the ring and may allow re-runs in exceptional situations (e.g., equipment failure).
 - **Stewards:**
 - *Gate Steward* (lines up competitors)
 - *Ring Steward* (maintains equipment)
 - *Scribe* (records timing and faults)
 - *Timekeeper* (official timing)
 - *Ring Crew* (sets up course)
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PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

Immediate elimination for:

- Failure to respond by the third call
- Use of abusive language, indecent gestures, or intimidation toward officials, volunteers, or other participants (may also result in disciplinary action or suspension)
- Reprimanding, shouting, or rough handling of dogs
- Starting without the judge's signal
- Dog fouling in the ring
- Training on course before or after your run
- Taking obstacles out of order or in the wrong direction
- Wearing a collar or leash during the run
- Using physical aids or holding items in hand
- Ignoring the judge's instruction or re-placing the dog after the start line
- Touching or coaching from outside the ring during the run



SCORING & FAULTS

General Rules

- Each class is judged on a single round.
- Refusals must be corrected. Failure to do so results in elimination on the next obstacle.
- Dogs that relieve themselves in the ring are immediately disqualified.
- Any dog that attacks another dog or person during their time in the ring will be disqualified, possibly permanently.



Standard Course Time (SCT)

- SCT = fastest clear round time + 15%, rounded up **OR** time specified by the judge.



Faults & Elimination

The below are some examples of the faults & elimination. Please refer to the rulebook for the detailed and comprehensive list of faults and eliminations.

Faults (5 points each)

- Knockdowns (e.g., pole, wall unit)
- Refusals (e.g., stopping, running by, backing out)
- Missed contact zones
- Touching dog or obstacle
- Incorrect weave entry

Elimination

- 3 refusals
- Wrong course
- Unsafe behavior (dog or handler)
- Equipment destruction
- Unapproved reattempts or assistance



TRIAL RESULTS

- Provisional results will be posted at the trial premises after each run.
- Any dispute regarding trial results must be raised **immediately** with the Trial Manager or a Dog Sports Committee member on the **day of the trial**.
- All disputes must be raised **before** the judge signs off on results for that class.
- Once signed, results are **final** — no appeals will be entertained after.
- Records of qualification must be entered in the SKC or FCI Trialler's Booklet and signed by the judge.
- Final results will be posted on the **SKC Website**.



CONDUCT & SPORTSMANSHIP

Expectations

- Respect judges, volunteers, officials, and fellow participants.
- No aggressive or disruptive behavior from dogs or handlers.
- Intimidation, cyberbullying, or public complaints on social media targeting judges, volunteers, or SKC may lead to disciplinary action.
- Disruptive behavior or verbal/physical interference with others is strictly forbidden.
- Good sportsmanship is expected within and around the trial venue.
- SKC reserves the right to suspend any handler for up to 3 trial days following disciplinary review.

On-Site Courtesy

- Clean up after your dog – bins and bags are provided.
- Keep noise and movement controlled around the ring.
- This is a competition, but also a celebration of the dog-handler bond.



DOG WELFARE & SAFETY

- Ensure dogs are hydrated, warmed up, and cooled down appropriately.
- Report any signs of distress or injury (yours or another dog's) to officials.
- The safety of dogs and handlers takes **top priority**.



FEEDBACK & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- A feedback form will be posted on the **SKC Dog Sports Facebook Group** post-trial.
- Please submit within **24 hours** for your input to be considered.
- Your feedback helps us raise the bar at every trial!



LIABILITY & RISKS

- Participation is at your own risk.
- Handlers agree to assume full responsibility for injury or damage caused by themselves or their dogs.
- Organizers are not liable for personal injury, dog injury, or third-party claims.

Thank you for being a part of our vibrant agility community.

Whether you're stepping into the ring for the first time or aiming for your next clean run, we're thrilled to have you on this journey with us. Each trial is not just a test of speed or precision — it's a celebration of the unique bond between you and your dog.

So run with heart, cheer for one another, and let's make every trial an experience to remember.

See you in the ring! 🐾✨