



Club Handbook

Welcome to the Canterbury Canine Agility Training Society (C.C.A.T.S.)
This booklet will help to inform you about our club but always feel free to ask questions at any time of your membership.

Feel free to contact us:

- Our club email is canterburycats@hotmail.com
- Visit our website at www.ccats.co.nz for training hints, bulletins, updates & more!
- Our Facebook page is www.facebook.com/canterburycanineagility

History of CCATS

The club was started in late 1987 in Christchurch by a handful of people. After a meeting called by Alan Harris the then Zone Four Rep, it was agreed that Christchurch should have an Agility Club and that there were enough people willing to form a committee. It was also agreed that the club should be stand alone, i.e. not be affiliated to an Obedience Club. For a long time CCATS was the only All-Breed Agility Club in the country. The other clubs had all be formed as part of an existing Dog Obedience Club. The Club's first newsletter was published in November 1987 and the first agility event run by the club was 5th December 1987.

The first training sessions were conducted at the Kennel Centre, McLeans Island and the trailer was towed out there each Monday evening. Everybody was learning so there were no instructors as such and everyone had their own ideas as to how to make things work. Thanks to several items on TV from Crufts etc. quite a few people knew about dog agility and the club started with some very enthusiastic members. We soon outgrew the Kennel Centre and moved from there to Addington Showground's where we used the Fletcher Brownbuilt building. By this time our gear was growing and we were able to keep it at Addington which was a big help. We stayed at Addington for a few years but it started to get quite inconvenient. Our membership was growing steadily and we were cramped for space, also several times Addington was used for other events and we were unable to train. So, we looked around and were lucky enough to be able to train at Linwood High School on Edmonds Park. Unfortunately, the trailers and equipment had to be towed there each Monday and we also had to find somewhere to store the trailers during the week. Andrew Haythorne offered the use of his yard and this proved invaluable. Linwood High School was great during the summer and daylight saving but in the winter months gave a real headache, until we found Manchester Street Car Park. The Council were great and let

us use the car park every Monday night. It was sometimes a bit draughty but it was always dry and allowed us to train right through the winter months.

All this time we were trying extremely hard to find a permanent place for the Club. It just was not fair to members to keep changing the training times and places and we desperately needed somewhere we could find training room and also somewhere to store the agility gear as it was becoming a burden for those members who were continually towing the trailers. Then Mairehau High School happened. We had originally approached Linwood High to see if they would give us permission to put up a Skyline Garage for our equipment and they were unable to do so. Mairehau, when approached, were only too pleased to help and you all know the result of our negotiations with them. The Club pays Mairehau lease per year, in the first two-three years at Mairehau the club house was built and lights were installed while also keeping the equipment up to scratch and continually adding pieces.

Age of Dog

You can start training your dog working on those essential basic commands when they come home as puppies. We think the most important things/commands to learn are: ***come when called, wait, stay, walk confidently on the lead and to be confident around other dogs and people.*** There is plenty of training to do before your dog gets to touch any official equipment.

All dogs training in agility must be at least 12 months old to start working on very low hurdles etc and once reaching 16 months they can then learn full height equipment. When your dog reaches 18 months you can both compete if you wish to.

All dogs will love the time spent learning with you and developing that wonderful working and bond together no matter what level you reach in our sport.

Children

Children aged 14 years and under must have an adult present at all times when at training.

Before coming to training

- For the dog's health, please ***do not to feed your dog*** before training, both to increase motivation and ensure the dog is not running on a full stomach.
- If you suspect training might be cancelled due to weather, please check your email or our Facebook page www.facebook.com/canterburycanineagility

What to bring

- Your **dog** 😊
- **Shoes with great grip**, such as turf running shoes
- Fabric or leather collar and lead (no slip chains)
- A cup of **soft yummy treats** in a container e.g. cheerios or cheese, cut up very small (you will use lots!)
- **Favourite toy** that can be tugged e.g. soft toy or rope or possum-tail
- **Poo bags**
- Dogs should not wear jackets while working, jackets can catch on the equipment. Wearing them before and after working is fine.

After you arrive

- Leave the dog in the car while you help set up the equipment. It's a good idea to arrive early to exercise your dog, but do this away from equipment.

Dogs are classified into four heights which determine what height they jump when working in agility.

- Micro Dogs – Dogs not exceeding 325mm
- Mini Dogs 1 – Dogs 325mm to 380mm.
- Mini Dogs 2 – Dogs 381mm to 430mm.
- Medium Dogs - Dogs 431mm to 520mm.
- Maxi Dogs - Dogs 521mm to 650mm.

To compete, all dogs must have a Certificate of Measurement. The first measurement is at 18 months of age, this called an Interim Measurement. The second, final measurement is after 24 months of age and determines the dog's Permanent height class for jumping..

Each club organises measuring clinics several times a year.

Bitches in Season

Please do not bring bitches in season to training.

Multiple Dogs

You can train as many dogs as you like at no further charge.

Fitness

It is important to keep your dog fit and healthy so it can enjoy agility. Overweight dogs or dogs who are getting older may suffer injuries. Please do not put your dog in this situation.

Doggy Doos

All doggy doos must be picked up and placed in the **club buckets**. Do not place any doos in the school's bins.

Socialising Dogs

Spend some time letting your dog sniff other dogs, if their handler consents. This is dogs getting to know each other. However, please do not use class time to do this. Our lessons are quite short and if you are not ready to train when it is your turn, it holds up everyone else.

If your dog is exuberant, come early and walk around the field a couple of times with some others. Dogs are allowed off lead away from classes as long as they don't interfere with other's training

First Aid

Our first aid kit is kept in the club house and there are ice packs in the freezer.

Smoking

Mairehau High has a non-smoking policy which prohibits smoking anywhere on the school grounds. Please respect this.

Friends and Family

Partners, children and other friends are welcome to come and watch you train. However, experience has proven that when your dog is off lead training, they love to go and see their supporters just to make sure they are watching! If this happens the best idea is for the people watching to ignore or discourage your dog so that it learns that the best place to be is with you and not to run off. Carry extra treats for example or a toy and reward your dog for returning to you.

Dogs On or Off Lead

Dogs are to remain on lead at all times in class, unless actively training on equipment. The exception to this is when exercising your dog on the field. This avoids dog fights, dogs running away and disturbing other classes.

Tying Up Your Dog

To avoid any aggression, do not tie your dog up to the fence on the side with the grass or around the clubhouse, and then leave it unattended. Both of these areas are high "traffic areas". Sitting with your dog is OK. If you want to tie your dog up elsewhere, feel free to get a stake from the clubhouse but don't forget to return it!

Using the Equipment

Please don't use equipment while waiting for your instructor nor try out new pieces that belong to another class. Ask an instructor before taking any piece of equipment out of the clubhouse for personal use. It is your responsibility to make sure any equipment you take, is placed back in the clubhouse.

Let your instructor know if you would like a specific piece of equipment to be used in a training session.

Putting Gear Out or Away

Nothing annoys people more than others who leave before putting the gear away, or turn up just in time to train when everyone else has put the gear out. It is part of being in the club and everyone is expected to do what they can. If you have a medical problem please see your instructor, who will then probably give you the job of putting the bars on the hurdles or something else light!

Classes and Graduations

- Introduction - 7 pm
- Skills - 8pm
- Starters / Novice - 6.30 pm
- Intermediate / Senior - 6.30pm

Graduation between classes is determined by your instructor when certain skill levels are achieved. You may stay a little longer at any level, either to reinforce skills or depending on how your dog is coping with all the new stuff it is learning. It is very common to spend a number of months in each class before moving on.

Homework

If you wish to progress quickly - **do your homework** - this cannot be emphasised enough. The likes of weaving can be the most difficult skill to learn but easy to train at home. Getting your dog to work both sides is also something that can be practised at home.

These are two skills that often hold handlers back in their classes. It is entirely up to you what and how much you do at home, but if you want to move on, then PRACTISE, PRACTISE, PRACTISE is the key!
There are many tips/clips/links to training online. Our CCATS website has great links also.

Blue Ribbon Policy - for dogs who need space!

Some dogs require more personal space than others, this can be for a number of reasons. Two of the most common reasons are:

- Small and/or timid dogs feel intimidated by over friendly noses of more confident dogs.
- Bolshie or quarrelsome dogs of any size may require space to avoid scaring the rest of the class.

In both these cases, a blue ribbon PROMINENTLY displayed on the LEAD or the COLLAR of the dog is required.

Blue ribbons are available in the clubhouse free of charge, for dogs that require them. If your dog needs one, please approach your instructor or help – they are hanging on the club notice board.

Instructors may ask a dog to wear one if they determine it needs space to work confidently.

This is no reflection on either you or your dog, .

Newsletter/Committee Minutes

We don't not have an official newsletter now but we do send out the club's committee meeting notes. Copies are emailed out to all members. Our Facebook page is also another form of communication to our members. Please ask to join our page.

Problems

If you have a problem, see your instructor in the first instance. The Head Instructors may also be able to help if that is more appropriate.

The Future

People join our club for many reasons. As you move through the classes, you will need to decide if you wish to continue using the club as a good night out once a week for your dog, or if you would like to try and compete in shows. We cater for both and it is entirely up to you which road you wish to go down.

Wet Weather

Training is cancelled in wet weather or when ground conditions are unsuitable. If the weather is doubtful please check your email or Facebook. A message about training will be put on by 5.30 pm.

Helping at Shows

All club members are expected to help at our shows. Now that you belong to our club, we really need your assistance on these days. Shows are the life-blood of agility and we require as many helpers as we can get – many hands make light work. There is a lot of people-power required on competition days to ensure smooth running – setting out equipment, picking up hurdles, calling for competitors etc. There are many ways assist and this is an excellent way to learn how things work before starting to compete.

Any help is greatly appreciated and a good way to get to know us.

Committee

Every March / April we hold our AGM and elect a committee who do the usual jobs that most committees do. We hold meetings once a month. We are always looking for and will welcome any volunteers.

Raffles

We hold a raffle at each of the two shows we host, these are in January/February and November. Members are asked to donate the prizes, vouchers from businesses are always welcome. Please leave your donations on the table in the clubhouse. This is a significant fundraiser for our club and proceeds are used to purchase, repair or replace equipment that all members use.

Instructing

The club is reliant on its instructors every training night and we need a lot of them. Anyone can be an instructor (or an assistant) with just a little experience. New volunteers are paired with experienced instructors, you can generally choose which level you feel comfortable taking. Instructors and assistants pay a reduced membership sub, in recognition of their extra service.

You do need to be reliable and commit to turning up most weeks. It is OK for instructors work in with others, taking turns. You learn lots of training/tips by helping others – the fast way to learn is to teach!

You do not need to be a top handler or competing, just a willingness to help.

Types of Competitions

There are three types of competitions that you can enter in New Zealand

- NALA Link
- Ribbon Trials
- Championship Shows

Dogs are allowed to wear a collar but not with any tags

The handler is not allowed to carry any toy or food into the ring.

If you wish to carry a toy and use the run as training, must ask the judge before competition starts. They normally allow this but your run becomes unofficial.

NALA Link

This is a national competition that is held every month at our club. Every member of NALA in New Zealand competes on the same course at their respective clubs and the scores are sent to a central score sheet.. NALA membership is a relatively cheap introduction to competition as membership is inexpensive.

You can join NALA LINK as soon as your dog can do contact equipment. Once you have move into the 7pm training class you should think about joining as it is good practise for competing. Subs are only around \$2.25 a month on a club rate. .If you wish to join then ask your instructor how to join.

Ribbon Trials

These are official competitions that are run by clubs and are open to any agility handler. You can enter any ribbon trial, wither our clubs or another. These are run similarly to Championship shows (see below) however you DO NOT need to be an NZKC member to enter. They are usually advertised by email or on Facebook, so make sure you have given us your correct email address if you are not already receiving any emails from us.

Most ribbon trials are held on Saturday mornings. New handlers can enter Elementary* A or B and Starters. Both of these courses do not have any contact gear so are ideal for even people in the beginner's classes as long as the dog is easily controlled off lead. Each class costs approximately \$2.50 to enter, which is paid on the day at the clubhouse. This type of show is very informal and most people are willing to help our new people with any questions. All clubs hold Ribbon Trials and all members from other clubs are encouraged to enter. A list of available Ribbon trials local and NZ wide can be found on the events bar by going to www.dogagility.org.nz

Elementary Classes at Ribbon Trials

- **Elementary B** is for handlers and dogs that are new to agility. It is open to handlers and dogs where neither the handler nor the dog have previously won an elementary class, achieved a clear round and placed 1st to 3rd in any other standard class, or achieved any other agility title.
- **Elementary A** is for experienced handlers, with a dog that is new to the sport. For the dog, the same criteria applies.

You cannot officially enter Elementary A and B with the same dog.

Elementary A and B are normally run on the same course with minor tweaks.

Heights are lower than in the main classes, courses are shorter and easier than a standard Starters course. These are excellent introductory courses for agility!

Championship Shows

These are exactly the same as ribbon trials with the same classes to enter, bar Elementary. Before you can enter and compete at show:

- You need to be a member of the NZKC (New Zealand Kennel Club)
- Your dog must be registered for competition and issued with a unique number.

Your instructor can advise how to complete these steps.

Once you are ready to enter shows, entry fees are usually \$5.50 per class.

Championship shows need to be entered online through www.dogagility.org.nz Follow the instructions online to register.

Champion show entries have close-off dates somewhere between four and six weeks prior so keep an eye out Shows are usually held over two days in a weekend but you can enter either or both days, and as many classes as you are eligible for.

For any questions about these shows ask your instructor

For further information check out the following websites or talk to your instructor.

<http://www.nzkc.org.nz/>

<http://www.dogagility.org.nz/index.html>

<http://www.ykc.org.nz/>

The Equipment

<p>Hurdle (H)</p> 	<p>Wing Jump</p> 	<p>Long Jump (LJ)</p> 
<p>Brush Jump (BJ)</p> 	<p>Tyre/Hoop (TY)</p> 	<p>Weave (W)</p> 
<p>Flexi Tunnel (FT)</p> 	<p>Collapsible Tunnel (CT)</p> 	<p>Crossover (X)</p> 
<p>Dog Walk (DW)</p> 	<p>A Frame (AF)</p> 	<p>See-Saw (SS)</p> 

