



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 <https://ccats.co.nz/> for training hints, bulletins, updates & more!
- Our public Facebook page is www.facebook.com/canterburycanineagility
- Our members only Facebook page is CCATS Member's Only Group

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 Brown built 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 at our club need to be 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 'Ccats member's only group'.

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. sausages 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 or harnesses while working, they 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 five heights which determine what height they jump when working in agility.

- 240 - Dogs not exceeding 325mm
- 320 - Dogs exceeding 325mm but not exceeding 380mm.
- 380 - Dogs exceeding 380mm but not exceeding 430mm.
- 500 - Dogs exceeding 430mm but not exceeding 520mm.
- 600 - All other dogs.
-

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. You can have just one measurement from 24 months.

Each club organises measuring clinics.

Code of Practice for training agility dogs less than 18 months of age.

<12 mths: max jump height - carpal (wrist) height, 1 unit for long jump, max 4 weave poles

12 - 16 months: max jump height - elbow height, 240's 1 unit, 320's & 380's 1-2, 500's 2-3, 600's 3-4. Gradually move to 12 poles.

16 months + Gradually increase to competition height and length

Bitches in Season

Do not bring bitches in season to training or competitions

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. It is important to introduce your dog to equipment correctly so their confidence is not affected for the future. 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.

When putting gear away at any time please make sure all pegs are collected. The pegs are very damaging to lawnmowers. Please don't overload our trolleys with more than four sandbags.

Many hands make light work. Anyone can help put out or put away gear. This is so appreciated even though you might feel you don't know what you are doing.

Classes and Graduations

CCATS Wednesday Night Class Structure

Please note, we have used the term 'levels' just to explain the graduation process in this handbook, but won't be using the terms otherwise.

Please remember to get there approximately half an hour before your class starts, help to put out the gear and then warm up your dog. Please ask what needs to stay out for the next class and pack the rest away.

Level 1. Introductory to Agility 7- 7.45pm (set up from 6.45pm)

It is your responsibility to arrive and help set up for this class.

Class Description

A course designed for young dogs from 12months old or dogs new to agility. This course runs on the safe, well fenced, tennis court area and emphasises team building and agility fundamental skills. We will focus on building confidence and having fun with your dog. Dogs are safely introduced to agility obstacles and handling on the flat. This class also includes use of food and toys as a reward. Lots of exercise and games you can use in all aspects of your dog's life.

Level 2. Skills 6.45 - 7.30pm (set up from 6.30pm)

Class Description

Dogs must have completed the Introductory Class. There is no time limit for dogs in this class. The dog will move into the next class when the dogs are ready to progress. The emphasis of this class is to fine tune the skills started in the Introductory Class. Dogs must be reliable off leash.

You will work on jumping and handling skills. Simple crosses and sequences will be introduced. The dogs will work towards jumping to their full height.

Please ask your instructor your dog's height level for jumping.

You will work on the basics of weaves and contacts. We follow and recommend techniques for weaves: two by two weaves technique and contacts: two on two off technique.

The links to training the above can be found on YouTube and also on our **CCATS website under Classes/Homework. You must login first** then you can access information for our club members. If you have forgotten your password just look for the reset password button.

You are expected to go online and look at the steps of teaching the above techniques and have a go at home. Each week we can then assist you to achieve your next steps. You don't need much equipment: a few stakes and a step at first. Please keep off the contacts that our local dog parks provide as your dog will just learn to jump off as they gain confidence and possibly damage themselves

Level 3. Advanced Skills 6.45 - 7.30pm (set up from 6.30pm)

Class Description

You will work on jumping skills at the Starters/Novice level. They will include crosses and sequences that will further develop your skills ready for competition.

Note: If you are competing in Novice/Intermediate you can work in both level 3 and 4. (We have used levels in this document to explain more clearly the class progressions). As class members can work in different classes depending on the dog's 'needs' at the time please be mindful of taking your turn and not accidentally pushing in front of people. Just ask the people that might be waiting.

Level 4. Intermediate/Senior 7.30 - 8.30pm

All participants in this group need to help each other.

LINK Competition Night

The first Wednesday of each month 7.30 - 8.30pm the club hosts NALA (National Agility Link Association) we call it Link.

NALA provides the opportunity for handlers to have their dogs compete against others from all over New Zealand by way of a correspondence competition. Each month, every member club sets up an identical course, which members run and have their score recorded from. This competition provides our club with a course that is carefully placed out, measured, judged and timed. Results are sent to the LINK Association and are recorded. You can watch your dog's progress over the year.

After all the official dogs have had their run, other dogs can come over and have a try. You can just avoid obstacles that your dog needs more time to work on or feel free to stay and watch.

Monday Night Training

Anyone who is competing, at any level, are welcome to come to Monday Night Training. There is no instructor as we all help each other. Watch the Facebook CCats Members Only Group notifications to check if this class is on.

We hope this helps you with how our club operates with class structure. There can be changes to our classes depending the availability of instructors and the weather.

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 'Cats Members Only Group' as this is where we communicate most.

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.

When the call is made for help, please give a couple of hours of your time.

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 our two Champ shows we host in January and November. Please donate prizes for each show. You can bring items in any time of the year to go into the raffle collection. Vouchers from businesses are always welcome. 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 (not food) and use the run as training, must ask the judge before competition starts. They normally allow this but your run becomes unofficial.

NALA Link

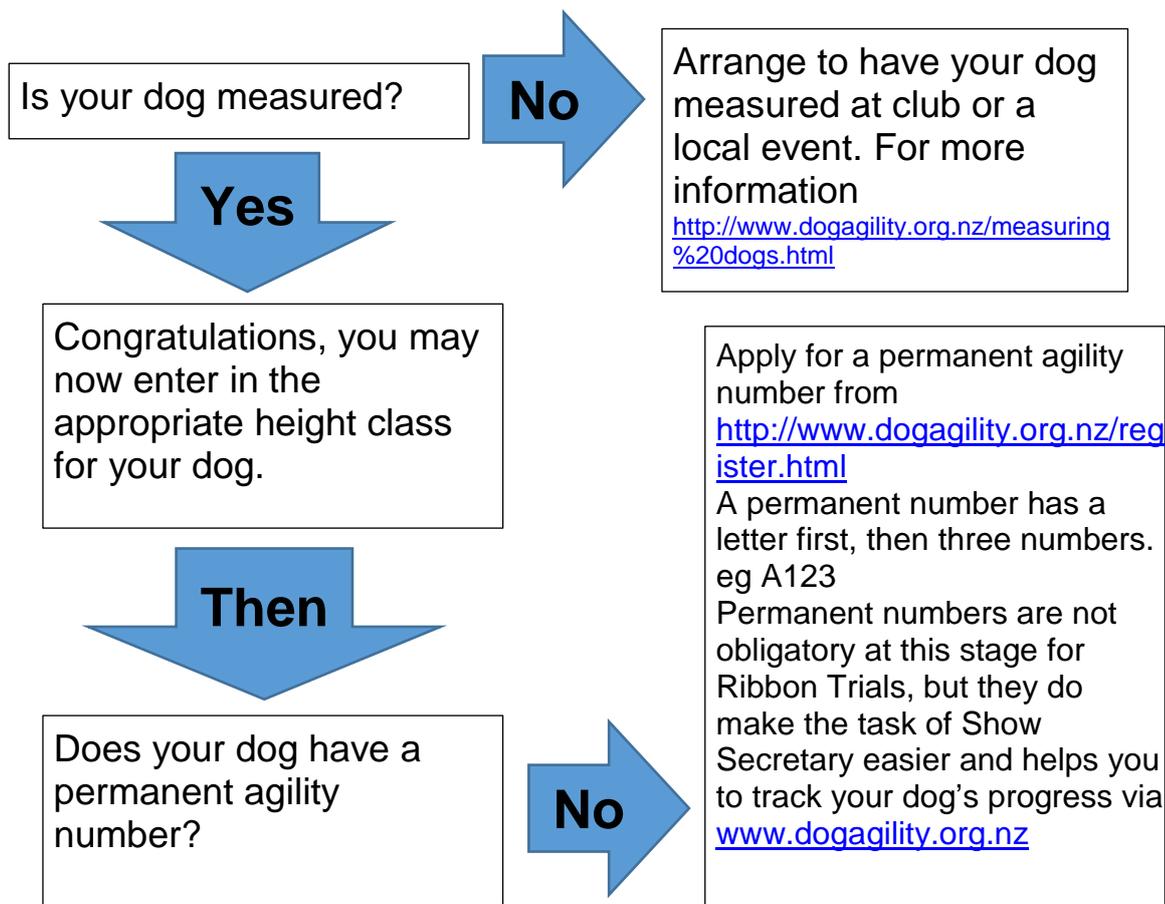
LINK is a NZ wide competition where each month all clubs throughout NZ run a set course and the results are entered on a national register. There are both team and individual events. We would like more CCATS members to participate as it is a great opportunity to run a full course and test your skills. Those handlers who are currently competing please consider joining it is approximately \$16 for the year - cheapest national competition fee ever. Just ask someone who participates in LINK how you join.

For all official information about competing in ribbon trials and championship events it is highly recommended you check out the following link <http://www.dogagility.org.nz/information.html>

Ribbon Trials

These are official competitions that are run by clubs and are open to any agility handler. You can enter any ribbon trial, whether our club or another. These are run similarly to Championship shows (see below) however you **DO NOT** need to be a **DogsNZ** member to enter. All you need is your dog measured to be able to compete at a ribbon trial.

What you have to do BEFORE entering a Ribbon trial



Once you are ready ask your instructor to help you find a measuring clinic to have your dog measured.

Ribbon Trials 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 B/A Jumpers C (jumps and tunnels) and Starters (if your dog can weave). 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 at <http://www.dogagility.org.nz/eventinfo.html>

Elementary A & B

Elementary B – Open to new handlers who are handling new dogs. A new handler is defined as the handler never having won an Elementary on a clear round, placed 1st to 3rd in any other standard agility class on a clear round or attained the title of AD or JD with any dog.

Open to dogs that have never won an Elementary class on a clear round, placed 1st to 3rd in any other standard agility class on a clear round or attained the title of AD or JD.

Dogs winning Elementary B on a clear round are eligible for Elementary A.

Elementary A – Open to any handler with a dog that has never won an Elementary A class on a clear round, placed 1st to 3rd in any other standard **agility** class (does not include jumpers C) on a clear round or attained the title of AD or JD.

Dogs may not be entered in both Elementary B and Elementary A.

Dogs entered in Elementary B or A may not also be entered in the Novice class or AD at the same event.

Championship Shows

These are very similar to ribbon trials with the same classes to enter, except

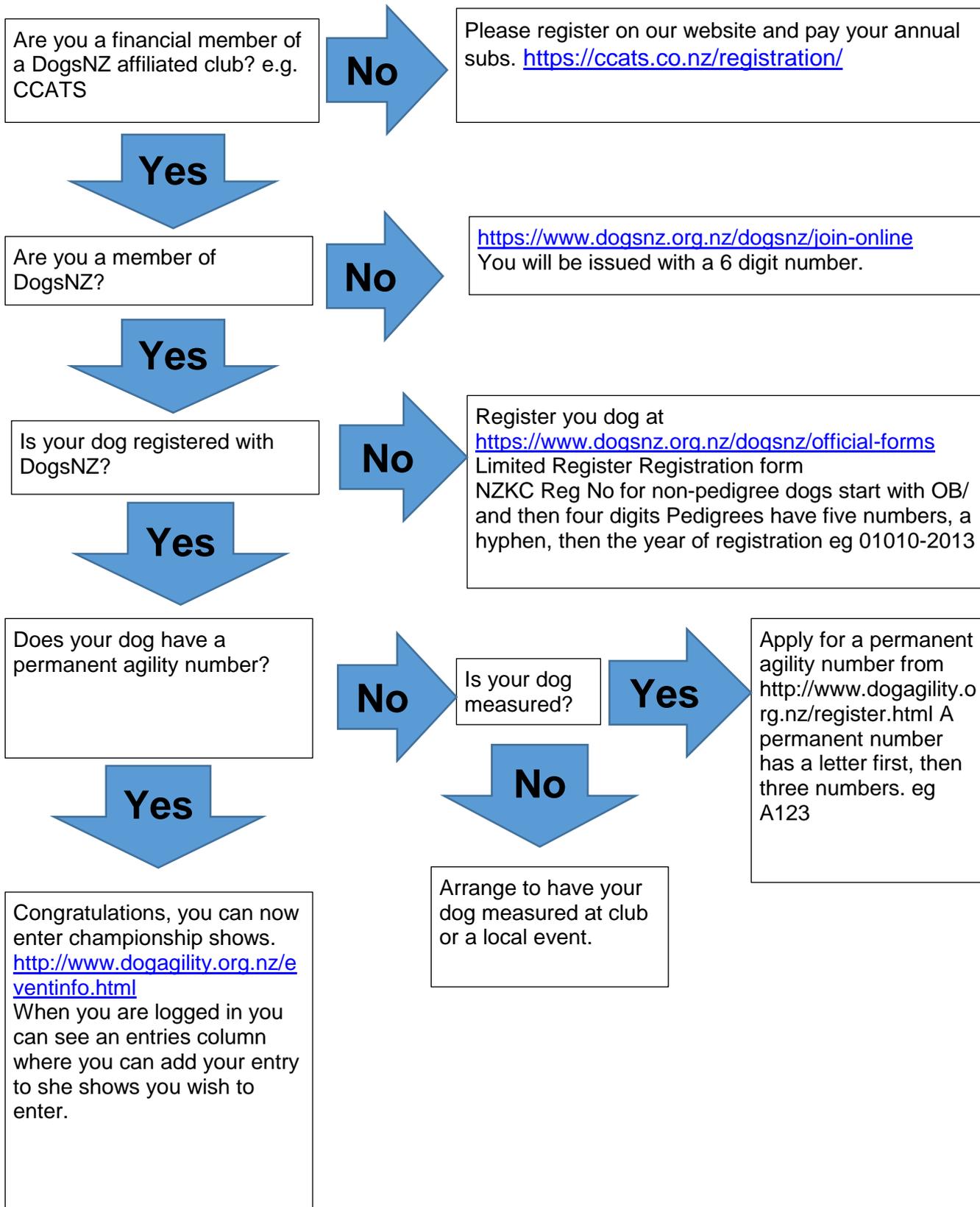
- Elementary is not normally offered.
- You and your dog **MUST** be a member of DogsNZ
- Entries are done online 4-6 weeks prior to the event date.
- Entry fees are usually \$5.50 per class
- Shows are usually held over two days in a weekend but you can enter either or both days and as many classes as you are eligible for.

Any questions about these shows please ask your instructor

If you are a Junior Handler please check out the information for you:

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

Before you can enter and compete at a Championship Show:



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

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

<http://www.dogsnz.org.nz/home/home>

The Equipment

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

