

Do you want an obedient and well trained pet?

Why not try Rally!

What is Rally?

Rally (or 'Rally O' in the USA) is a canine sport derived from the heelwork elements of competitive Obedience. It differs from Obedience primarily in that competitors and dogs attempt a pre-set course along which signs are placed at up to 15 stations (Level 1) along the course, requiring them to perform one of around 50 different pre-set exercises. The selection of exercises and design of course is at the judge's discretion. Each individual round is performed at a 'brisk pace' and takes around three minutes. There is no direction from the judge or steward as in Obedience; the signs are all the guidance competitors receive. At Level 1, the lowest level, dogs compete on lead and a loose lead is emphasised. The handler may give verbal commands and encouragement throughout as necessary. More advanced Levels require dogs to compete off lead. Physical or harsh verbal correction is strictly penalised.

Reasons to take up Rally

- You will have a well behaved and easily controlled pet.
- Impress your friends and family with your dog's new skills.
- Stimulation for your pet – dogs have big brains which need to be kept active.
- Meet new friends – there is a great social scene to be enjoyed.
- Your dog does not need to have a pedigree – all dogs can do Rally.

All you need to know is:

- Your dog must be registered with the Kennel Club (on either the Breed Register or the Activity Register).
- Competitors taking part in any Kennel Club licensed event must familiarise themselves with the Kennel Club Rules and Regulations beforehand. The Rally Regulations booklet is available for download from the Kennel Club website or to buy from the Kennel Club Publications Department.
- Dogs can start competing at six months of age.
- No previous experience necessary so request a list of Rally Clubs today!
- Make sure you buy a Rally Record Book in which to record all your competition wins and scores.

Starting out in Rally

There are six levels of competitive Rally. New handlers will start at Level 1 and progress through to level 6. Progression is based on the scores you and your dog achieve as a partnership, and not on wins or placings.

The exercises range from heelwork, to a recall, control exercises such as a Halt-Sit and Halt-Sit-Walk Around. Level 1 is performed on-lead and consists of 10 – 15 exercise signs. As you progress through the levels the exercises obviously become more difficult. Levels 5 and 6 are performed off-lead and consist of 15 – 17 exercise signs.

Your first step to competitive Rally may be to join a training club. There are numerous Rally competitions held annually by Kennel Club Societies. Details of these competitions are published in the events diary on the Kennel Club's website and in the Kennel Club Journal which can be accessed here – www.thekennelclub.org.uk/our-resources/publications/journal

Whatever competition you choose, your dog will be happier for being trained.

INFORMATION BOX

To find a list of clubs or training classes in your area use the Kennel Club's great online service www.findadogclub.org.uk. The 'Find a Dog Club' tool allows you to search for all types of training classes and clubs by county or region. As well as providing links to club websites it provides contact details for club secretaries so that you can find out more about what activities are on offer.

The events diary can be found in the Kennel Club Journal and on the Kennel Club website. To access the Kennel Club Journal, visit www.thekennelclub.org.uk/our-resources/publications/journal.

To purchase a Rally Rules and Regulations booklet, please contact the Kennel Club Publications Department on 020 7518 1016.

For more information about Rally, visit www.thekennelclub.org.uk/activities/rally

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dog's life the healthiest and
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Making a difference for dogs

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Are you ready for your first Rally competition?

So, you have been attending Rally classes and are now ready to enter your first Rally competition. Here's a run down of what you need to do next.

Entering the competition

- Contact the Kennel Club for a list of competitions in your area. We will send you listings of all the competitions, with the telephone and address details of the club secretaries who are running them.
- When you've decided which competition you want to enter, phone the secretary of the club and request a schedule (these are usually free of charge).
- Once you have the schedule you will be able to select which class or classes you would like to enter and complete the entry form (which is located inside the schedule). You must enter the lowest class you are eligible for (even if your dog can do more advanced) and you can enter one other class if you wish.
- Send your entry form and payment to the secretary before the closing date. Entries usually close at least one month before the competition, so you will need to plan well in advance. Entries received after the closing date will not be accepted.

Before the show

- Groom and prepare your dog.
- Prepare a competition bag containing your leads, treats, water, water bowl, poop scoop etc.
- Remember to take your Competition passes (if appropriate), Rally Record Book, schedule and directions.

At the show

- Arrive at the competition ground/venue in plenty of time to find your bearings.
- It is advisable to 'walk the course' so that you are familiar with the course when it is your turn to compete, but this needs to be done before the class starts. So get there early.
- Keep an eye on the judging and don't miss your level or running order.
- Speak to fellow competitors and learn more about Rally.
- Look around the competition and have a fantastic day!

INFORMATION BOX

Handling your dog

Attending your first Rally competition may cause your dog to behave differently than it does in training. Young dogs in particular can be bothered by crowds and if this is the case you can move a little way from other competitors and officials. Just remember it is a new experience for you and your dog and should you have any concerns there are always Stewards/Officials available to speak to.



Rally Signs

Each station will have a number in front of it. Make sure you go round the course in the correct order or you will be disqualified. In every class you will have the opportunity to 'walk the course' beforehand so you know which route through the stations you and your dog need to take. Make sure you are clear as to the instruction shown on each sign. If in doubt, speak to a steward/official. The signs are available to purchase or download from the Kennel Club website and full explanations are available in the Rally Regulations.

Some example signs include:

