

GUIDELINES FOR FREESTYLE ROUTINES – ALL CLASSES

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The following guidelines have been developed as a starting point for individuals and groups interested in DWD. These documents, however, **have NO OFFICIAL STATUS**. They have been drafted by one of our members and input has been provided by others. However, **they are not definitive or authoritative documents** and DWDQ takes no responsibility for their content.

DWD competitions, including Freestyle classes, provide handlers and their dogs with an opportunity to demonstrate a skilful, choreographed routine, performed to music. All DWD routines must be worked off-lead. The emphasis is on the handler and dog working as a team and more specifically on the dog; the handler's moves should complement and enhance but not overshadow the dog's performance.

There is considerable latitude in the range of moves and 'tricks' which can be used in Freestyle routines. It is expected that the number and degree of complexity of the moves will increase as the dog progresses through the classes.

The following are **indicative guidelines** only, designed to assist competitors to structure their DWD routines at an appropriate level. Listing of a move etc at Starters level does not preclude its use at a more advanced level, and listing a move at a more advanced level does not preclude its use at a lower level. The list of moves, positions etc is not intended to be exhaustive, but provides examples only.

All positions and moves should be considered having primary regard to the breed, build, physical limitations and age of the dog and should in no way compromise its safety.

Action	Starters	Novice	Intermediate	Advanced
PACES				
Normal pace Slow pace Fast pace	Most of routine at normal pace, with some variation	Most of routine at normal pace, but with a greater extent of variation than for Starters and at least one change of page	Some demonstration of all paces could be expected, and some changes of pace would be appropriate	Some demonstration of all paces could be expected, and several changes of pace would be appropriate
Elevated/collected gait			*	*
Creep			*	*
LOCATIONS AND ORIENTATIONS				
Heel (D at H's left) facing forward	*	*	*	*
Heel (L side), facing backwards			*	*
Right side (D on H's right) facing forward	*	*	*	*
Right side, facing backwards			*	*
D across front of H, facing right		*	*	*
D across front of H, facing left		*	*	*
D behind H, facing right		*	*	*
D behind H, facing left		*	*	*
D in front of H facing H		*	*	*
D in front of H facing forwards (facing away from H)				*
D behind H, facing forwards				*

(facing same direction as H)				
D behind H, facing backwards (facing away from H)				*
D working close to H	*	*	*	*
D working at a distance from H			*	*
POSTURE				
D on 4 legs	*	*	*	*
D in sit position	*	*	*	*
D in drop position	*	*	*	*
D crawling			*	*
D on hind legs (depending on breed, size, age etc)		*	*	*
MOVES				
Moving forward at H's side (L or R)	*	*	*	*
Moving backward at H's side (L or R)	*	*	*	*
Forwards in front of H			*	*
Backwards in front of H			*	*
Forwards across front of H		*	*	*
Backwards across front of H			*	*
Forwards across back of H			*	*
Backwards across back of H				
Sideways to left		*	*	*
Sideways to right		*	*	*
Circles and related moves				
Circle H, H stationary	*	*	*	*
Circle H, H moving in same direction	*	*	*	*
Circle H, H moving in opposite direction		*	*	*
Reversing in a circle		*	*	*
Wide circles around H			*	*
Circle prop (eg cane) close to H		*	*	*
Circle prop at distance from H			*	*
Spin clockwise	*	*	*	*
Spin anti-clockwise	*	*	*	*
Weave forward while H moves forwards	*	*	*	*
Weave forward while H moves backwards		*	*	*
Weave in reverse		*	*	*
POSES AND OTHER ACTIONS				
Bow		*	*	*
Beg		*	*	*
Dead dog		*	*	*
Wrap (cane, leg)			*	*
Cross legs			*	*
Roll over			*	*
Hand/foot touch	*	*	*	*
Paw lifts		*	*	*
Retrieving a prop		*	*	*
Jumping (depending on breed, size, age etc)		*	*	*

FREESTYLE STARTER CLASS

Duration

It is suggested that routines at this level should be of approximately 1 minute to 1 minute 30 seconds in duration.

Overall expectation

Routines should present a dog and handler combination that demonstrates a competent performance of positions, actions and moves together with musical interpretation which come together in a fairly balanced routine in which the dog and handler work as a team.

Routine content (20 points)

“The routine should be varied with no excessive repetition of moves, befitting the category entered. Degree of difficulty in respect of the type of moves. Teamwork displays harmony, a strong relationship and enjoyment between dog and handler.”

It is suggested that Starter class routines should include, **as a minimum** –

- (a) (i) At least one change of pace; or
- (ii) At least two positions or moves/directions, selected from positions and moves listed in the guidelines above.
- (b) Good use of the ring¹.
- (c) Attention and teamwork between the dog and handler (evident approximately 65% of the time).

Technical merit (20 points)

“Accuracy of the moves and the dog’s speed in responding; a smooth flow from one move to the next by both handler and dog. The quality of moves and extent of mistakes and/or refusals. The dog works in a natural and willing manner.”

At Starter level, the overall standard expected should be at a level at least equivalent to that expected in Community Companion Dog (CCD) obedience (but performed off-lead).

Cues may be evident.

The dog should be under a fair level of control, and moves and positions should be fairly precise (eg approximately 65% of the time).

The dog should respond on the first or second cue. Reductions will be incurred for inaccurate work, mistakes and refusals.

Musical Interpretation (20 marks)

“Interpretation of the music, reflecting rhythm and phrasing of the music in changes and moves. Movements are complementary to the routine’s concept. Choreography is apparent and flowing. The routine includes balance, structure, design and makes best use of the available space. Costume is appropriate to and enhances the routine.”

Both the handler and the dog should move in time with the music.

Choreography must be evident, and the routine must interpret the music and reflect the rhythm of the music, for instances, through turns, changes of pace, changes of position, inclusion of other moves (see guidelines above); obedience-type positions (heelwork, sits, drops, stays, recalls) can be used, and indeed heelwork can be very important in facilitating the overall flow, but all such moves/positions must also be complementary to the music, its flow and interpretation.

¹ The “available ring space” is defined as approximately 50 to 75% of the total ring space. The expectation of the amount of space utilised will depend on the size of the dog, with smaller dogs being at the 50% end, and larger dogs at the 75% end of the scale.

Changes of positions, directions, moves etc should be reasonably smooth, and movements should be fairly synchronised with the tempo and rhythm of the music.

While some music selections lend themselves more to thematic costumes than others, there should be evidence that the handler has attempted to dress in a manner appropriate to the music and the theme of the music and routine. Some matching decorative/co-ordinated neck collar or scarf on the dog adds to the overall presentation.

FREESTYLE NOVICE CLASS

Duration

It is suggested that routines at this level should be of approximately 1 minute 30 seconds to 3 minutes in duration.

Overall expectation

Routines should present a dog and handler combination that demonstrates a strong level of performance of positions, actions and moves, together with musical interpretation which come together in a nicely balanced routine in which the dog and handler work as a team.

Routine content (20 points)

“The routine should be varied with no excessive repetition of moves, befitting the category entered. Degree of difficulty in respect of the type of moves. Teamwork displays harmony, a strong relationship and enjoyment between dog and handler.”

It is suggested that Novice class routines should include, **as a minimum** –

- (a) At least one change of pace, with a moderate proportion able to be performed at normal pace;
- (b) At least one pose and at least two positions/moves in at least two directions, selected from positions/moves listed in the guidelines above.
- (c) Good use of the ring².
- (d) Attention and strong teamwork between the dog and handler (evident approximately 75% of the time).

Technical merit (20 points)

“Accuracy of the moves and the dog’s speed in responding; a smooth flow from one move to the next by both handler and dog. The quality of moves and extent of mistakes and/or refusals. The dog works in a natural and willing manner.”

At Novice level, the overall standard expected should be at a level at least equivalent to that expected in Companion Dog (CD) obedience.

Some cues may be evident, but less evident than at Starter level.

The dog should be nicely controlled and there should be nice precision of moves and positions (approximately 75% of the time).

The dog should respond on the first cue most of the time. Reductions will be incurred for inaccurate work, mistakes and refusals.

Musical Interpretation (20 marks)

“Interpretation of the music, reflecting rhythm and phrasing of the music in changes and moves. Movements are complementary to the routine’s concept. Choreography is apparent and flowing. The routine includes balance, structure, design and makes best use of the available space. Costume is appropriate to and enhances the routine.”

Both the handler and the dog should move in time with the music.

Choreography must be evident, and the routine must interpret the music and reflect the rhythm of the music, for instances, through turns, changes of pace, changes of position, inclusion of other moves (see guidelines above); obedience-type positions (heelwork, sits, drops, stays, recalls) can be used, and indeed heelwork can be very important in facilitating the overall flow, but all such moves/positions must also be complementary to the music, its flow and interpretation.

² The “available ring space” is defined as approximately 50 to 75% of the total ring space. The expectation of the amount of space utilised will depend on the size of the dog, with smaller dogs being at the 50% end, and larger dogs at the 75% end of the scale.

Changes of positions, directions, moves etc should be smooth, and movements should be nicely synchronised with the tempo and rhythm of the music.

While some music selections lend themselves more to thematic costumes than others, there should be evidence that the handler has attempted to dress in a manner appropriate to the music and the theme of the music and routine. Some matching decorative/co-ordinated neck collar or scarf on the dog adds to the overall presentation.

FREESTYLE INTERMEDIATE CLASS

Duration

It is suggested that routines at this level should be of approximately 2 minutes to 3 minutes 30 seconds in duration.

Overall expectation

Routines should present a dog and handler combination that demonstrates a very strong performance of positions, actions and moves, together with good musical interpretation which come together in a well balanced routine in which the dog and handler work as a team.

Routine content (20 points)

“The routine should be varied with no excessive repetition of moves, befitting the category entered. Degree of difficulty in respect of the type of moves. Teamwork displays harmony, a strong relationship and enjoyment between dog and handler.”

It is suggested that Intermediate class routines should include, **as a minimum** –

- (a) Some demonstration of slow, normal and fast pace;
- (b) At least one pose and at least two and preferably three positions and moves in at least two and preferably more directions, selected from positions/moves listed in the guidelines above.
- (c) Very good use of the ring³.
- (d) Focussed attention and strong teamwork between the dog and handler (evident approximately 90% of the time).

Technical merit (20 points)

“Accuracy of the moves and the dog’s speed in responding; a smooth flow from one move to the next by both handler and dog. The quality of moves and extent of mistakes and/or refusals. The dog works in a natural and willing manner.”

At Intermediate level, the overall standard should be at a level at least equivalent to that expected in Open Dog (CDX) obedience.

Cues should rarely be noticeable.

The dog should be under a high level of control and moves and positions should be executed precisely (approximately 90% of the time).

The dog should respond on the first cue. Reductions will be incurred for inaccurate work, mistakes and refusals.

Musical Interpretation (20 marks)

“Interpretation of the music, reflecting rhythm and phrasing of the music in changes and moves. Movements are complementary to the routine’s concept. Choreography is apparent and flowing. The routine includes balance, structure, design and makes best use of the available space. Costume is appropriate to and enhances the routine.”

Choreography must be evident, and the routine must demonstrate a high level of interpretation of the music and reflect the rhythm of the music, for instances, through turns, changes of pace, changes of position, inclusion of other (non-heelwork) moves (eg spins, reversing around handler, leg weaves, circles and other more advanced freestyle moves); obedience-type positions (sits, drops, stays, recalls) can be used, and indeed heelwork can be very important in facilitating the overall flow, but all such moves/positions must also be complementary to the music, its flow and interpretation.

³ The “available ring space” is defined as approximately 50 to 75% of the total ring space. The expectation of the amount of space utilised will depend on the size of the dog, with smaller dogs being at the 50% end, and larger dogs at the 75% end of the scale.

Changes of positions, directions, moves etc should be very smoothly executed, and movements should be very well synchronised with the tempo and rhythm of the music.

While some music selections lend themselves more to thematic costumes than others, there should be evidence that the handler has attempted to dress in a manner appropriate to the music and the theme of the music and routine. Some matching decorative/co-ordinated neck collar or scarf on the dog adds to the overall presentation.

FREESTYLE ADVANCED CLASS

Duration

It is suggested that routines at this level should be of approximately 2 minutes 30 seconds to 4 minutes in duration.

Overall expectation

Routines should present a dog and handler combination that demonstrates excellent performance of positions, actions and moves, together with excellent musical interpretation which come together in a very well balanced routine in which the dog and handler become an excellent team producing an outstanding performance.

Routine content (20 points)

“The routine should be varied with no excessive repetition of moves, befitting the category entered. Degree of difficulty in respect of the type of moves. Teamwork displays harmony, a strong relationship and enjoyment between dog and handler.”

It is suggested that Intermediate class routines should include, **as a minimum** –

- (a) Demonstration of slow, normal and fast paces, including multiple changes of pace;
- (b) Two or more poses and at least four positions and four moves in at least three and preferably more directions, selected from positions/moves listed in the guidelines above.
- (c) Excellent use of the ring⁴.
- (d) Focussed attention and excellent teamwork between the dog and handler (evident approximately 95% of the time).

Technical merit (20 points)

“Accuracy of the moves and the dog’s speed in responding; a smooth flow from one move to the next by both handler and dog. The quality of moves and extent of mistakes and/or refusals. The dog works in a natural and willing manner.”

At Advanced level, the overall standard of work should be at a level at least equivalent to that expected in Utility obedience.

Cues should not be noticeable.

The dog should be under full control and moves and positions should be executed precisely (approximately 95 % of the time).

The dog should respond on the first cue. Reductions will be incurred for inaccurate work, mistakes and refusals.

Musical Interpretation (20 marks)

“Interpretation of the music, reflecting rhythm and phrasing of the music in changes and moves. Movements are complementary to the routine’s concept. Choreography is apparent and flowing. The routine includes balance, structure, design and makes best use of the available space. Costume is appropriate to and enhances the routine.”

Choreography must be evident, and the routine must demonstrate excellent interpretation of the music and reflect the rhythm of the music, for instances, through turns, changes of pace, changes of position, inclusion of other (non-heelwork) moves (eg spins, reversing around handler, leg weaves, circles and other more advanced freestyle moves); obedience-type positions (sits, drops, stays, recalls) can be used, and indeed heelwork can be very important in facilitating the overall flow, but all such moves/positions must also be complementary to the music, its flow and interpretation.

⁴ The “available ring space” is defined as approximately 50 to 75% of the total ring space. The expectation of the amount of space utilised will depend on the size of the dog, with smaller dogs being at the 50% end, and larger dogs at the 75% end of the scale.

Changes of positions, directions, moves etc should be very smoothly executed, and synchronisation of movements with the tempo and rhythm of the music should be excellent.

While some music selections lend themselves more to thematic costumes than others, there should be evidence that the handler has attempted to dress in a manner appropriate to the music and the theme of the music and routine. Some matching decorative/co-ordinated neck collar or scarf on the dog adds to the overall presentation.