

GUIDELINES FOR HEELWORK TO MUSIC ROUTINES

EXTENDED DESCRIPTION OF HEELWORK REQUIREMENTS – 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 HTM 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 movements.

There are eight formally described heelwork positions in the Rules for the Conduct of Dances with Dogs Competitions (DWD Rules). **The key feature is that the dog's head must be reasonably close to the handler's leg and the dog and handler move in the same direction.** If the dog falls out of that position, then the portion of the work occurring while the dog is out of position (ie the dog's head is not reasonably close to the handler's leg) cannot be counted as part of the 60% of the routine required as heelwork, in order for it to qualify as a Heelwork to Music (HTM) routine.

A dog must not move in two tracks during heelwork, except during sideways movements. If a dog two-tracks (ie the back legs do not follow in a straight line with the front legs), depending on the degree of non-alignment it may either not count as part of the 60% heelwork, and/or be penalised for lack of accuracy (both under technical merit).

If a HTM routine does not include at least 60% of the work/duration with the dog in one of the heelwork positions with the dog accurately having its head close to the handler's leg, then the competitor cannot gain a qualifying score. A routine may be packed full of tricks performed brilliantly to the music, but if it does not include at least 60% in heelwork positions, it cannot gain a qualifying score in the HTM class.

The eight heelwork positions set out in the DWD Rules can be described more fully as in the table below. The positions listed can be executed at any pace, including moves on the spot.

	Position		Direction of movement
1.	Dog on handler's left, dog and handler facing forwards	1.1	Dog and handler move forwards
		1.2	Dog and handler move backwards
		1.3	Dog and handler move sideways/laterally to the left
		1.4	Dog and handler move sideways/laterally to the right
		1.5	Dog and handler move in a circle on the spot
2.	Dog on handler's right, dog and handler facing forwards	2.1	Dog and handler move forwards
		2.2	Dog and handler move backwards
		2.3	Dog and handler move sideways/laterally to the left
		2.4	Dog and handler move sideways/laterally to the right
		2.5	Dog and handler move in a circle on the spot

3.	Dog on handler's left, dog facing handler	3.1	Handler moves forwards, dog moves backwards
		3.2	Handler moves backwards, dog moves forwards
		3.3	Dog and handler move sideways/laterally to the handler's left
		3.4	Dog and handler move sideways/laterally to the handler's right
		3.5	Dog and handler move in a circle on the spot
4.	Dog on handler's right, dog facing handler	4.1	Handler moves forwards, dog moves backwards
		4.2	Handler moves backwards, dog moves forwards
		4.3	Dog and handler move sideways/laterally to the handler's left
		4.4	Dog and handler move sideways/laterally to the handler's right
		4.5	Dog and handler move in a circle on the spot
5.	Dog across front of handler, facing right	5.1	Handler moves sideways to the right, dog moves forwards
		5.2	Handler moves sideways to the left, dog moves backwards
		5.3	Handler moves forwards, dog moves to its left
		5.4	Handler moves backwards, dog moves to its right
		5.5	Handler and dog move in a circle with handler on the spot
6.	Dog across front of handler, facing left	6.1	Handler moves sideways to the left, dog moves forwards
		6.2	Handler moves sideways to the right, dog moves backwards
		6.3	Handler moves forwards, dog moves to its right
		6.4	Handler moves backwards, dog moves to its left
		6.5	Handler and dog move in a circle with handler on the spot
7.	Dog across back of handler, facing right	7.1	Handler moves sideways to the right, dog moves forwards
		7.2	Handler moves sideways to the left, dog moves backwards
		7.3	Handler moves forwards, dog moves to its left
		7.4	Handler moves backwards, dog moves to its right
		7.5	Handler and dog move in a circle with handler on the spot
8.	Dog across back of handler, facing left	8.1	Handler moves sideways to the left, dog moves forwards
		8.2	Handler moves sideways to the right, dog moves backwards
		8.3	Handler moves forwards, dog moves to its right
		8.4	Handler moves backwards, dog moves to its left
		8.5	Handler and dog move in a circle with

		handler on the spot
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The following are examples of non-heelwork positions. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but merely provides some examples:

- Dog in front of handler, facing towards or away from handler and moving in any direction (excludes positions 3 and 4 above).
- Dog behind handler, facing towards or away from handler.
- Dog executing moves/tricks at a distance from handler.
- Dog circling handler (forwards or backwards). (Note: If the dog and handler describe an on-the-spot circle together, with the dog in one of the positions listed in the table above, then that constitutes heelwork.)
- Dog in 'middle' position, between handler's legs (facing forwards or backwards).
- Dog in crawl position (even if it is one of the heelwork positions listed in the table above).
- Dog on its back legs (even if it is one of the heelwork positions listed in the table above).
- Dog circling or otherwise interacting with a prop (eg circling a cane; standing on a prop etc).
- Handler moving around stationary dog.
- Spins, twists, jumps, weaves, roll-overs.
- Dogs executing other moves which mean its head is not close to the handler's leg and/or it is not moving in the same direction as the handler.

HTM 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 heelwork movements 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 of heelwork, selected from positions and moves listed in the extended definition 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)

“The quality of moves and extent of mistakes and/or refusals. The accuracy of heelwork. The dog works in a natural and willing manner.”

At Starter level, heelwork should be at a level at least equivalent to that expected in Community Companion Dog (CCD) obedience (but performed off-lead). The requirement of the dog’s head being “reasonably close to the handler’s knee” can be interpreted as being approximately in line with the handler’s knee, and the distance of the dog’s head from the handler’s knee should be reasonably consistent irrespective of the heelwork position being executed. A dog that works very close to the handler would score more highly than one that works in line with the handler but at a greater distance. Again, if the dog is significantly out of the heelwork position which is intended to be being executed (eg lagging, forging), then that portion of the work cannot be counted in the required 60% in heelwork.

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.”

The routine must be more than simply executing heelwork with music playing. 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 (non-heelwork) moves (eg spins, reversing around handler, leg weaves, circles etc); obedience-type

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.

positions (sits, drops, stays, recalls) can be used, but they too must be complementary to the music, its flow and interpretation.

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.

HTM 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 performance of heelwork movements 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 two heelwork positions and movement in at least two directions, selected from positions/moves listed in the extended definition 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)

“The quality of moves and extent of mistakes and/or refusals. The accuracy of heelwork. The dog works in a natural and willing manner.”

At Novice level, heelwork should be at a level at least equivalent to that expected in Companion Dog (CD) obedience. The requirement of the dog’s head being “reasonably close to the handler’s knee” can be interpreted as being approximately in line with the handler’s knee, and the distance of the dog’s head from the handler’s knee should be reasonably consistent irrespective of the heelwork position being executed. A dog that works very close to the handler would score more highly than one that works in line with the handler but at a greater distance. Again, if the dog is significantly out of the heelwork position which is intended to be being executed (eg lagging, forging), then that portion of the work cannot be counted in the required 60% in heelwork.

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.”

The routine must be more than simply executing heelwork with music playing. 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 (non-

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.

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, but they too must be complementary to the music, its flow and interpretation.

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.

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 heelwork movements 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 two and preferably three heelwork positions and movement in at least two and preferably more directions, selected from positions/moves listed in the extended definition 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)

“The quality of moves and extent of mistakes and/or refusals. The accuracy of heelwork. The dog works in a natural and willing manner.”

At Intermediate level, heelwork should be at a level at least equivalent to that expected in Open Dog (CDX) obedience. The requirement of the dog’s head being “reasonably close to the handler’s knee” can be interpreted as being approximately in line with the handler’s knee, and the distance of the dog’s head from the handler’s knee should be reasonably consistent irrespective of the heelwork position being executed. A dog that works very close to the handler would score more highly than one that works in line with the handler but at a greater distance. Again, if the dog is significantly out of the heelwork position which is intended to be being executed (eg lagging, forging), then that portion of the work cannot be counted in the required 60% in heelwork.

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, but they too must 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.

HTM 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 heelwork movements 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;
- (b) At least four heelwork positions and movement in at least two and preferably more directions, selected from positions/moves listed in the extended definition 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)

“The quality of moves and extent of mistakes and/or refusals. The accuracy of heelwork. The dog works in a natural and willing manner.”

At Advanced level, heelwork should be at a level at least equivalent to that expected in Open Dog (CDX) obedience. The requirement of the dog’s head being “reasonably close to the handler’s knee” can be interpreted as being approximately in line with the handler’s knee, and the distance of the dog’s head from the handler’s knee should be reasonably consistent irrespective of the heelwork position being executed. A dog that works very close to the handler would score more highly than one that works in line with the handler but at a greater distance. Again, if the dog is significantly out of the heelwork position which is intended to be being executed (eg lagging, forging), then that portion of the work cannot be counted in the required 60% in heelwork.

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, but they too must 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.