

SO YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT ENTERING YOUR DOG IN A SHOW?

The sport of purebred dogs is thrilling, competitive, educational, and rewarding. But, like any sport, it takes discipline and hard work to succeed, and you need to know some basic rules before jumping into competition.

Here are some questions and answers to help get you started.

Q Is my dog eligible to enter?

A A dog is eligible to compete in a dog show if it is registered with the American Kennel Club, is at least 6 months old, hasn't been spayed or neutered, and measures up to its breed standard.



Q How do I know my dog is a show-quality dog?

A The breed standard is the official guide by which dogs are judged at dog shows. Each breed of dog recognized by the AKC has its own standard. The standard may specify everything from the curvature of a dog's tail to the color of its eyes. It even stipulates the temperament certain dogs should have. You can find the standards for all AKC-recognized breeds on the AKC web site at www.akc.org as well as in *The Complete Dog Book*. After you study your dog and the standard, seek some expert advice. Ask an experienced dog handler or reputable breeder to evaluate your dog. Your local dog club should be able to provide you with a list of respected breeders and knowledgeable dog handlers who may be willing to help. The AKC can provide you with a list of the dog clubs nearest you.

Q What if my dog doesn't measure up to its official breed standard or isn't eligible to enter a show?

A If your dog doesn't meet the requirements set out in its breed standard, then breeding and showing your dog probably aren't for you. But don't lose heart! The AKC has plenty of programs and events you and your dog may participate in and enjoy like the Canine Good Citizen Program; a variety of tests, trials, and events including obedience trials, agility trials, field trials, hunting tests; and much more! The AKC has plenty of programs and events you and your dog may participate in and enjoy!

For more information, please contact your local kennel club and see *Getting Started Showing Your Dog* (GEVNT4) and *A Beginner's Guide to Dog Shows* (GESHW1), complimentary brochures available from the American Kennel Club, (919) 233-9767.



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