

Irish Kennel Club

Good Citizen Test

Revision - 2023

Fees for taking the Irish Kennel Club Good Citizen Test:

Puppy Foundation Award ... €10 per puppy

Bronze Award ... €10 per dog

Silver Award ... €10 per dog

Gold Award ... €10 per dog

Titles:

Successful participants in the Puppy, Bronze, Silver and Gold Tests are entitled to add GCP, GCB, GCS and GCG after the dogs Irish Kennel Club registered name.

Assessors:

- Anyone scheduling a Good Citizen test should avoid any potential conflict of interest when appointing Assessors.
- Assessors should not be involved in coaching or instructing the teams being assessed.
- Assessors should not be directly related to or living in the same house as any of the teams being assessed.

GENERAL INFORMATION – ALL AWARDS

ASSESSMENT

All tests should be non-competitive, but the Assessor should be satisfied that the dog has reached the required standard to carry out the exercises outlined above in a satisfactory manner.

Each Test participant is to be assessed individually, not in groups.

Each exercise will be marked PASSED/NOT READY.

The dog is required to PASS each exercise to qualify for the award.

An application, by post or email, to hold a Good Citizen Test must be made to the Show Department of the Irish Kennel Club CLG., Fottrell House, Harold's Cross Bridge, Dublin 6. W., at least sixty (60) days before the proposed date of the Test.

An Assessor should be proposed by the Club/Organisation/Individual Trainer arranging the Test. Assessors to include all approved Judges on the Irish Kennel Club Obedience, Agility or Working Trials lists, Field Trial Judges, Dog Wardens and any other person approved by the Agility, Obedience and Working Trials Committee of the Irish Kennel Club for this purpose.

The onus is on the Test organiser to provide microchip scanners for each Test.

REQUIREMENTS – ALL AWARDS

Owners/handlers will be required to show that their dog is wearing an identity disc with their contact details or dogs will be scanned for proof that they have been microchipped. Each handler will be obliged to show that they have poop scoop or bags with them and are aware that there is a legal requirement for them to clean up at all times whilst walking their dog.

Handlers must be a minimum of 10 years old, except where the dog is on the Restricted Breeds List.

Dogs on the current Restricted Breeds List should adhere to the rules governing these breeds ie dogs on the List should be handled by a person over 16 years of age capable of controlling them.

Where the puppy/dog is required to walk at heel, the working side may be the right or left side at the discretion of the handler. Once the exercise has commenced the puppy/dog should not change side.

Competition heelwork is not necessary but is acceptable for this exercise.

Dogs to be presented for testing on a flat collar and lead.

Food, toys, physical as well as verbal praise and additional commands can be used throughout.

RESPONSIBILITY AND CARE

At the beginning of each Award training course, a copy of the Canine Care and Responsibility will be made available to each handler so that handlers may familiarize themselves with the document. Copies of this document will be available on the IKC website for access by those not attached to a club or a trainer.

PUPPY FOUNDATION AWARD

THE AIM

The Irish Kennel Club Good Citizen Puppy Foundation Scheme award aims to provide a means of socialising puppies and to lay down a foundation for education and training.

To compete for this award puppies must respond to their handler and the handler must show an awareness of the responsibilities of dog ownership.

The inclusion of play adds an extra dimension to a puppy's life and can be used to make training fun. Constructive play and suitable incentives are encouraged within this puppy training programme.

ELIGIBILITY

This Award is open to all dogs from 14 weeks up to a maximum of 12 months old. The test will be comprised of 10 exercises. A puppy foundation certificate will be awarded when the puppy has reached the required standard to pass each of the exercises. The puppy must not show any aggression towards handler, Assessor or other dogs. Any sign of aggression or undue fear will render the puppy "Not Ready".

Puppies should not reach the maximum age before the completion of this test. Puppies who obtain this award should be encouraged to participate in the Bronze Award Scheme.

ASSESSMENTS

A Good Citizen Puppy Foundation Award will be issued once the puppy has successfully demonstrated an ability to obtain the comment "Passed" for all ten exercises outlined below.

The Assessor will enter the comments "PASSED" or "NOT READY" against each exercise. In each exercise any display of aggression or undue fear will render the puppy "NOT READY".

Each Test participant to be assessed individually, not in groups.

An Assessor should be proposed by the Club/Organisation/Individual Trainer arranging the Test. Assessors to include all approved Judges on the Irish Kennel Club Obedience, Agility or Working Trials lists, Field Trial Judges, Dog Wardens and any other person approved by the Agility, Obedience and Working Trials Committee of the Irish Kennel Club for this purpose.

The onus is on the Test organisers to provide microchip scanners for each Test.

PUPPY FOUNDATION AWARD - EXERCISES 1 to 10.

EXERCISE 1: CLEANLINESS AND IDENTIFICATION

Each handler will be obliged to show that they have poop scoop or bags with them and are aware that there is a legal requirement for them to clean up after their dog. They will also be required to show that their dog is wearing an identity disc with their contact details or dogs will be scanned for proof that they have been microchipped.

EXERCISE 2: ATTENTIVE RESPONSE TO NAME

This exercise should be carried out on lead. The puppy should respond to their name when called and pay at least brief attention. This is not a recall exercise. The puppy is not required to return to the handler but should demonstrate recognition of their name.

EXERCISE 3: PLAY WITH PUPPY

The object of this exercise is to demonstrate that the puppy will play with the handler. When invited to do so the handler should initiate play with the puppy. Play should be under the handler's control at all times. The puppy should readily give up articles when instructed to do so.

EXERCISE 4: SOCIALISATION

A. With a placid dog unknown to the puppy.

The puppy should be carefully introduced to the unknown dog, both dogs to be on lead. The relative size of the two dogs should be considered. Aggressive behaviour or demonstration of undue fear should render the puppy "Not Ready" to pass this exercise.

B. With an adult person unknown to the puppy.

The puppy, on lead, should be carefully introduced to an unknown adult. They should gently make friends with the puppy without being overbearing. Backing off or undue display of fear should render the puppy "Not Ready" to pass this exercise.

C. With noise distraction.

The puppy should not be excited or startled by everyday noises. With the puppy on lead suitable noises should be made several paces from the puppy ie Assessor clapping hands. Undue display of fear should render the puppy "Not Ready" to pass this exercise.

Note: the puppy is allowed to react to a noise. It is the speed of recovery that is important. The puppy should be allowed time to recover and complete the exercise.

EXERCISE 5: PUPPY HANDLING AND INSPECTION

The puppy should allow handling, inspection and grooming of its body, ears, paws, mouth, and eyes, by the handler. Mild fidgeting and avoidance are permissible. This will be done by the handler and the Assessor will observe. This test should be conducted on lead. Undue display of fear or aggression should render the puppy "Not Ready" to pass this exercise.

EXERCISE 6: PUPPY RECALL

This test should be conducted in an enclosed area. It should be conducted in a natural manner and should not be from a static position. The handler should distance themselves two to three paces away from the puppy. They should call, praise and secure the puppy. If necessary, this exercise may be conducted away from the distraction of other dogs. Any incentive to encourage the puppy to return to the handler may be used, eg toy, food. The handler may back away from the puppy once they have called the puppy in the recall.

If the puppy fails to go happily to the handler, it should be rendered "Not Ready" to pass this exercise.

EXERCISE 7: BASIC PUPPY POSITIONS

The puppy should demonstrate that it is capable of understanding basic position commands ie sit, stand, down. Any incentive to encourage the puppy into these positions may be used eg food, toy. Minor movements are acceptable. The puppy will be required to adopt each position only briefly.

EXERCISE 8: WALKING IN A CONTROLLED MANNER

This exercise should be carried out on lead. With no distractions, the puppy will be required to walk approximately 5 metres and turn. The puppy should demonstrate that they are able to walk in a controlled manner without pulling uncontrollably on the lead. Food may be carried in the hand, and given randomly, but should not be used as a constant lure. A tight lead should not necessarily render the puppy "Not Ready" to pass this exercise.

EXERCISE 9: STAY FOR APPROXIMATELY 10 SECONDS

The puppy should be on the lead for this exercise and may carry the exercise out in any position. Changing position during this exercise should be permissible but moving towards the handler will render the puppy "Not Ready" to pass this exercise. The Handler may talk to the dog during this exercise. The distance for this exercise should be approximately 1 metre.

EXERCISE 10: TAKE ARTICLE AWAY FROM THE PUPPY

Puppies should learn that they should give up articles when required. An article should be given to the puppy who should give it up when required to do so. The article should be of the handler's choice but may not be food. If the puppy refuses to take an article from the handler, an alternative article may be provided.

Note: Taking an article away: some puppies may have no interest in a variety of articles. This in itself can be a good thing and the puppy should not be deemed 'not ready' through lack of interest. Any number of articles and methods may be used to encourage the puppy's interest.

THE AWARD

The dog should pass all areas of the Test in order to qualify for the Irish Kennel Club Puppy Foundation Award. This award will consist of a Good Citizen Puppy Foundation Award rosette and Certificate.

BRONZE AWARD

THE AIM

The Bronze Award aims to produce a dog that will walk and behave in a controlled manner.

ELIGIBILITY

There should be no age limit for dogs taking the Bronze Award Test and no requirement for them to have taken the Puppy Foundation Award test in advance of applying. This Award is open to all dogs.

Each Test participant to be assessed individually, not in groups.

REWARDS MAY BE CARRIED IN HAND OR POCKET. THE DOG CAN BE REWARDED AT THE END OF EACH EXERCISE.

BRONZE AWARD - EXERCISES 1 to 8.

EXERCISE 1: CLEANLINESS AND IDENTIFICATION

Each handler will be obliged to show that they have poop scoop or bags with them and are aware that there is a legal requirement for them to clean up after their dog. They will also be required to show that their dog is wearing an identity disc with their contact details or dogs will be scanned for proof that they have been microchipped.

EXERCISE 2: WALK ON THE LEAD

This exercise should be carried out on the lead. The dog will be required to walk on a loose lead and in a controlled manner. The test to include the presence of distractions at a distance of approximately 3 metres - (jogger running past, noise ie clapping of hands)

EXERCISE 3: WALK PASSING ANOTHER OWNER AND DOG

Behave in a controlled manner, on a loose lead, whilst walking past a person walking with a dog on a lead.

EXERCISE 4: MEETING ANOTHER OWNER AND DOG

Behave in a controlled manner, on a loose lead, whilst handler holds a short conversation with a person who has a dog on a loose lead. The handler may command their dog to take the Sit or Down position during the conversation, it is permissible for the dog to change position from the sit to down or down to sit during this exercise, however moving towards the other handler or dog will deem the dog "Not Ready". Duration 1 minute.

EXERCISE 5: SIT/DOWN/STAND STAY

The lead may be left attached to the dog's collar and placed on the ground beside the dog. The handler will leave the dog and walk a distance of 3 metres, turn and face the dog. The handler returns on command. Extra commands may be given. Duration 1 minute, dogs to be tested individually.

EXERCISE 6: GROOMING

This will be done by the handler and the Assessor will observe.

EXERCISE 7: EXAMINING THE DOG

The handler presents the dog on a lead for a cursory examination of coat, teeth, ears and feet, this will be done by the handler and the Assessor will observe.

EXERCISE 8: RECALL OR STOP ON COMMAND

Dog to be released from lead, when the dog is a short distance away the Assessor will instruct the handler to control the dog by either recalling or stopping the dog on command (recall or stop is at the discretion of the handler).

The recall should be conducted in a natural manner and should not be from a static position.

For the recall the dog should rejoin the handler and take the sit or down position in front of the handler and have the lead re-attached.

For the stop on command exercise the dog should take up a stand, sit or down position, the handler then re-joins the dog and attaches the lead.

A toy may be used to gain distance from the handler.

THE AWARD

The dog should pass all areas of the Test in order to qualify for the Irish Kennel Club Bronze award. This award will consist of a Good Citizen Bronze Award rosette and Certificate.

SILVER AWARD

THE AIM

The Silver Award aims to build on the skills learned for the Bronze Award whilst increasing the difficulty. It is a natural progression of practical dog training skills and introduces new exercises such as road walking exercises which are part of everyday life.

ELIGIBILITY

The handlers and dog applying to take the Silver Award Test must already have completed and passed the Bronze Award Test or achieved Beginner Ex or higher in Obedience or C.D.ex or higher in Working Trials or Rally-O Level 3 or higher.

Each Test participant is to be assessed individually, not in groups.

FOOD AND TOY REWARD MAY BE CARRIED IN THE HANDLER'S POCKET.
THE DOG CAN BE REWARDED AT THE **END** OF EXERCISES.

SILVER AWARD - EXERCISES 1 to 8.

EXERCISE 1: PLAY WITH YOUR DOG

The handler should be instructed, on command, to initiate play with their dog. Play forms a very important part of a dog's training and can make training fun. Play should be under the control of the handler and should include articles that will readily be given up by the dog on command. The play exercise should not include a formal retrieve or play fighting.

It is recommended that the Assessor commences this test.

EXERCISE 2: WALK AT HEEL

A. Walking at Heel

The dog should be required to walk on a loose lead, at normal, slow and fast pace. Each change of pace, fast and slow, to be in a straight line for approximately 5 metres. Normal pace to include a right turn, a left turn and an about turn. The test should include walking past a distraction at a distance of approximately 3 metres (jogger, dog walker, cyclist) and weave through cones (maximum of 3 cones which are 2m – 3m apart).

B. Controlled greeting

The Assessor should act as if they are meeting out on a walk. The dog should greet in a controlled manner ie should not jump up. If the dog does jump up, the handler should command the dog and bring the dog back under control. The dog will pass once it is evident that they are under control.

EXERCISE 3: RECALL

Leaving the dog in a sit, down or stand position, (at the Handler's discretion). The handler to walk approximately 10 paces and while moving forward, on the instruction of the assessor, the dog is called to heel. The dog and handler will continue forward until instructed by the assessor to halt. Minor anticipation will be allowed but the dog should remain in position until called. The test is finished when the lead is re-attached.

EXERCISE 4: VEHICLE CONTROL

For this exercise the dog should be taken to a stationary vehicle on lead. On command the dog should be put into the vehicle (either by jumping in willingly or with assistance from the handler). Once the dog is in the vehicle, the handler and Assessor should get into the vehicle and the engine should be turned on for at least 15 seconds. At all times the dog should remain calm and under control. The dog should wear an appropriate restraining device as required by law eg. travel harness etc. The use of a cage or partition for travelling will also be acceptable for this exercise. At the end of the test the dog should be taken from the vehicle in a controlled manner remaining calm at all times.

EXERCISE 5: COME AWAY FROM DISTRACTIONS

The dog is to be taken by the handler to a group of other handlers with their dogs on lead. The dog should then be taken off lead and allowed to run towards or follow a distraction (eg Assessor with toy). The handler should walk or run away calling the dog to heel. The dog should leave the group immediately on command and return to the handler. The dog should sit close to the handler until the lead is re-attached. Only dogs of sound temperament should be allowed to carry out this exercise

EXERCISE 6: SIT/DOWN/STAND STAY

This exercise should be conducted for two minutes. On instruction of the Assessor the handler will leave the dog and walk 10 paces. The dog will be required to stay whilst something/someone moves quickly past the dog at a distance of 3 – 5 metres. Handler to return to dog, re-attach the lead, and release when time is up.

Dogs to be tested individually.

EXERCISE 7: FOOD MANNERS

A. Behaviour around the handler's food

The dog should behave in a controlled manner whilst the Assessor/Stranger eats or handles food. The dog should be taken within 1 metre of the food but should react in a controlled manner ie not begging or jumping up.

B. Behaviour around the dog's food

The Handler approaches the dog's bowl which contains some food and lifts the bowl. The dog should show no overt aggression or ideally should move away from the food source. This exercise is to demonstrate the dog has no problems around food where people are concerned. The handler provides the food and bowl.

EXERCISE 8: EXAMINATION OF THE DOG

The dog will be required to undergo an examination of their mouth, teeth, throat, ears, eyes and feet as may be required during a visit to the vet. The dog should remain calm and offer nothing more than very mild resistance to the owner/handler during this exercise. This will be done by the handler and the Assessor will observe.

THE AWARD

The dog must pass all areas of the Assessment in order to qualify for the Irish Kennel Club Silver award. This award will consist of a Good Citizen Silver Award rosette and Certificate.

GOLD AWARD

THE AIM

The Gold Award aims to build on the skills learned for the Silver Award whilst increasing the difficulty. It is a natural progression of practical dog training skills and introduces new exercises such as sending the dog to bed, stop the dog from a distance and relaxed isolation.

ELIGIBILITY

The handlers and dog applying to take the Gold Award Test must already have completed and passed the Silver Award Test, or achieved Beginner Ex or higher in Obedience or C.D.ex or higher in Working Trials or Rally-O Level 3 or higher.

Each Test participant to be assessed individually, not in groups.

FOOD AND TOY REWARD MAY BE CARRIED IN THE HANDLER'S POCKET.
THE DOG CAN BE REWARDED AT THE **END** OF EXERCISES.

GOLD AWARD - EXERCISES 1 to 9.

EXERCISE 1: RECALL

A: Recall to heel.

Leaving the dog in a sit, down or stand position, (at the Handler's discretion). The handler to walk approximately 10 paces and while moving forward, on the instruction of the assessor, the dog is called to heel. The dog and handler will continue forward until instructed by the assessor to halt. Minor anticipation will be allowed but the dog should remain in position until called. The test is finished when the lead is re-attached.

B: Recall from distractions.

The dog should be taken by the handler to a group of other handlers with their dogs on lead. The dog should be taken off lead and allowed to run towards or follow a distraction (eg Assessor with toy). The handler should walk or run away calling the dog to heel. The dog should leave the group immediately on command and return to the handler. The dog should sit close to the handler until the lead is re-attached. Only dogs of sound temperament should be allowed to carry out this exercise.

EXERCISE 2: WALK AT HEEL - ON LEAD

A. Walking at Heel

The dog should be required to walk on a loose lead, at normal, slow and fast pace. Each change of pace, fast and slow, to be in a straight line for approximately 5 metres. Normal pace to include a right turn, a left turn and an about turn. The test should include walking past a distraction at a distance of approximately 3 metres (jogger, dog walker, cyclist) and a weave through cones (maximum of 3 cones which are 2m – 3m apart).

B. Controlled greeting

The Assessor and handler should act as if they are meeting out on a walk. The dog should greet in a controlled manner ie should not jump up. If the dog does jump up, the handler should command the dog and bring the dog back under control. The dog will pass once it is evident that they are under control.

EXERCISE 3: WALK AT HEEL - OFF LEAD

A. Walking at Heel

The dog should be required to walk off lead at normal, slow and fast pace. Each change of pace, fast and slow, to be in a straight line for approximately 5 metres. Normal pace to include a right turn, a left turn and an about turn.

The test should include walking past a distraction at a distance of approximately 3 metres (jogger, dog walker, cyclist) and a weave through cones (maximum of 3 cones).

B. Controlled greeting

The Assessor and handler should act as if they are meeting out on a walk. The dog should greet in a controlled manner ie should not jump up. If the dog does jump up, the handler should command the dog and bring the dog back under control. The dog will pass once it is evident that they are under control.

EXERCISE 4: DOWN STAY IN AND OUT OF SIGHT

The handler will be required to place the dog in the down position. The handler will take approximately 30 steps and stay in sight for one and a half minutes. Then go out of sight for half a minute. The dog should remain calmly in the down position throughout. The dog will be required to stay whilst something/someone moves quickly past the dog.

Dogs to be tested individually.

EXERCISE 5: SEND THE DOG TO BED

The handler should have a bed, blanket, item of clothing, or similar to use as the dog's bed, this will be placed approximately 7 paces away from the dog. On command the handler should send the dog to bed. The dog should go calmly to the bed area and remain there in any position ie sitting, standing or down until released.

EXERCISE 6: STOP THE DOG

With the dog approximately 10 paces away from the handler and moving, the handler should stop the dog in any position. As soon as the dog has taken up the stop position he/she can be recalled or the handler can re-join the dog. The dog should remain still in this position until recalled or re-joined by the handler.

EXERCISE 7. RELAXED ISOLATION

The dog can be tethered where it's safe to do so, however, if there are any safety concerns a crate suitably sized for the dog can be used.

The isolation period shall not exceed 2 minutes. The handler/owner should leave the room/area and go out of sight. The dog should remain calm and controlled throughout the test and upon the owner/handlers return. A mild level of excitement upon the owner/handlers return will be permissible but jumping up will be penalised and render the dog "Not Ready"

EXERCISE 8: EXAMINATION OF THE DOG

The dog will be required to undergo an examination of their mouth, teeth, throat, ears, eyes and feet as may be required during a visit to the vet. The dog should remain calm and offer nothing more than very mild resistance to the owner/handler during this exercise. This will be done by the handler and the Assessor will observe.

EXERCISE 9: FOOD MANNERS

A. Good manners around the handler's food

The dog should behave in a controlled manner whilst the Assessor/Stranger eats or handles food. The dog should be taken within 1 metre of the food but should react in a controlled manner ie not begging or jumping up.

B. Good manners around the dog's food

The Handler approaches the dog's bowl which contains some food and lifts the bowl. The dog should show no overt aggression or ideally should move away from the food source. This exercise is to demonstrate the dog has no problems around food where people are concerned. The handler provides the food and bowl.

THE AWARD

The dog should pass all areas of the Assessment in order to qualify for the Irish Kennel Club Gold award. This award will consist of a Good Citizen Gold Award rosette and Certificate.