



## Canine Good Citizen • Week One

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### Canine Good Citizen

Obtaining a CGC title for your dog recognizes that you have a well-trained dog demonstrating good manners and obedience at home and within the community. As a pet parent, you are responsible for your dog's health needs, training, and quality of life. See *"Responsible Dog Owners Pledge."*

Beyond having a well-trained pooch and a strengthened bond with your dog, there are several benefits for your dog to become a Canine Good Citizen. Obtaining a CGC for your dog is the first step for future goals such as therapy work or sports activities. Strut your stuff! Even if discounts may not be provided, show off your dog's CGC award to Homeowner insurance companies, landlords, and hotels – they will be impressed and delighted to know one of their dog residents is a good citizen!

### Rules During CGC Test

**Equipment** – No chain/choke collars or head halters. Harnesses are allowed during the test as long as it does not restrict the movement of the dog.

**Verbal Praise Only** – Treats and toys are NOT allowed during the test. Instead, verbal praise and affirmation is allowed and encouraged throughout the test.

#### **Test Items Covered This Week:**

Test Item # 1: Accepting a Friendly Stranger

Test Item #2: Sitting Politely for Petting

Test Item #3: Appearance and Grooming

Test Item #4: Sit and Down on Command

If your dog stayed relaxed during the introduction today, you are on the right track! Part of being a good citizen shows that your dog can remain relaxed for a short period of time. Before taking your dog to happy hour or a coffee shop, practice a similar situation at your home. Ask your dog to settle (sit or down) by your feet and read the newspaper or a chapter out of your book. (For younger generations, have your dog lie down by your feet while checking social media)

## Rewards

**Wean your dog off those treats!** Begin expecting more out of your dog and ask for several commands before a reward. Dogs will quickly lose motivation when you completely stop the treats so make sure you are being spontaneous with your treat delivery. Remember to find other ways to reward your dog beyond treats. It should be easy to replace your treat reward with verbal praise such as “Great job!” or physical praise. Make sure you have a hand signal for each command.

## Impulse Control While Sitting

While out on a walk, if you see a person approaching in the distance, move/lure your dog off to the side and ask for a Sit & Watch. If your dog breaks position, lure them back into position again until the person passes. If your dog sits while the person passes, immediately release and jackpot with praise! The “sit” should only be a short duration of approximately 5-10 seconds. If you are practicing in a busy area where passing people are frequent, minimize the Sit & Watch to one person per walk. Attempt this task with one or two persons (that are not walking with a dog) passing by before practicing with a group. This helps teach your dog that not every person passing by will stop to greet them. It also helps for great focus and a default behavior of eye contact when someone or something is approaching.

**Practice saying *Hello* to an imaginary person.** Occasionally ask your dog to sit, then mock a typical greeting shaking hands with an imaginary person. Make sure to say things like, “Hello! Great to see you!” or “Hi! How are you?!” in an upbeat voice. Even though this may sound silly, this will help teach your dog to sit and remain calm while hearing verbal greetings.

## Appearance/Grooming

At the end of the day when your dog is tired, occasionally handle his front paws and look inside their ears. If you notice any sensitivity (i.e., moving away quickly) in certain areas, make sure to pair any touch with lots of treats until they become more accepting. Try the “Treat and Sneak” method as demonstrated in class. They should be able to do this without a treat (and with a stranger!) by test time so make sure you practice this daily especially if your dog is showing any sign of concern.

**Tip:** *If your dog is uncomfortable with his/her paws being handled, it may help to teach your dog a “Shake” (or “Paw”) for this test item. Make sure to ask one of your trainers if you are unsure on how to teach this trick!*

**Familiarize your dog with different types of brushes.** Your dog may prefer one over the other. During the test you have the option to bring a brush of your own, or use one provided. Make sure to practice with this certain brush and bring it with you for the test!

*For additional information on Canine Good Citizen refer to [www.akc.org/cgc](http://www.akc.org/cgc)*