



WAG IT!
GAMES
SHADOW SKILLS
NOVICE LEVEL HANDBOOK

Shadow Skills classes and games are offered by licensed Wag It Games Instructors. Training and exercises to enhance connection, build loose leash and off leash skills.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

ELIGIBLE DOGS

- Purebred and mixed breed dogs are all welcomed to participate.

RESTRICTIONS

- Dogs that exhibit signs of pain, stress or discomfort may not participate.
- Dogs in estrus are eligible at the instructor's discretion.
- **Safety First – Aggressive dogs, reactive dogs and dogs under warning or banned in any venue may only be tested in a private setting and at the discretion of the instructor.**

LEVELS

Wag It Games offers three participation levels.

- Novice Level - Entry level
- Skilled Level - Intermediate level
- Proficient Level - Advanced level

TESTS

- Each test consists of one course performance.
- Dogs must be registered with Wag It Games for tests to be used to earn titles. Testers may offer up to a week after the test for dogs to become registered.
- Tests are offered by licensed Wag It Games instructors.
- Test fees are at the discretion of the instructor.
- Ribbons or certificates shall be presented for passed tests to registered dogs.

RETRY POLICY

- Courses may be retried. The number of retries is at the discretion of the tester and may also be limited by time.

JUDGING

- All tests are judged pass/fail.

VIDEO TEST REQUIREMENTS

- The entire course must be complete and without any edits.
- The dog, handler and all equipment required must be visible.
- The handler's voice must be clearly audible.

RESULTS

- Email notifications of test results are sent out automatically. Results will appear in the dogs' record, which may be viewed in the member area of the Wag It Games website.



GENERAL INFORMATION

TITLES

Dogs must be registered with Wag It Games to earn titles. Registration is done on the Wag It Games website and is good for the life of the dog. The tester will submit successful tests to Wag It Games to be recorded towards titles. Once a month titles are automatically updated and will appear in the dog's record. Email notification of titles earned are sent with directions to access your personalized title certificate.

- Wag 1 Shadow Skills requires three different novice course performances.
- Wag 2 Shadow Skills requires three different skilled course performances.
- Wag 3 Shadow Skills requires three different proficient course performances.
- Advanced titles are also available. Advanced title information is available on the Wag It Games website.

DOGS WITH PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS – HEART DOGS

Dogs with physical limitations may have the performance requirements adjusted to accommodate their needs. The handler may select Heart Dog status any time in the dog's online record. Heart Dog is a permanent status. "Heart Dog" is added to the dog's titles.

Heart Dog status must be selected prior to performing a test with modifications. Modifications must be confirmed with the tester prior to any test. Modification Example: Replacing downs with stands to accommodate a dog missing a limb.

HANDLERS WITH PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS - EXTRAORDINAIRE HANDLERS

Handlers with disabilities may have the performance criteria adjusted to accommodate their needs. Handlers may select Extraordinaire status any time in their online records. Extraordinaire is a permanent status. "Extraordinaire" is added to titles.

Extraordinaire status must be selected prior to performing a test with modifications. Modifications must be confirmed with the tester prior to any test. Modification Example: Having an assistant read each sign to accommodate vision impairment.

LEASHES AND COLLARS

The novice level is performed on leash. The skilled and proficient levels are performed off leash.

- Collars may be flat buckle, snap or limited slip style.
- Training/correction type collars and head halters may not be used.
- Harnesses are allowed but may not be of a design to reduce pulling.
- Leashes in the novice level may be 6 - 8 feet long (180-240 cm).
- Retractable leashes are not allowed.

CUES

- The handler may offer unlimited cues, encouragement etc.

REWARDING

Handlers are encouraged to communicate with and praise their dogs during the course.

Food rewards are allowed in the novice and skilled levels only. Handlers may only carry food concealed within their pockets. Treat pouches are not allowed to be worn in the ring.

Luring or acting in a manner that gives the appearance that the handler has food is not allowed.

- Handlers may only offer rewards at the completion of a stationary exercise.
- The handler must come to a complete stop and the dog must remain stationary while rewards are given.
- **If rewards are delivered in any other manner the course will be judged as unsuccessful.**

CORRECTIONS

- No corrections are allowed during the course performance.
-



THE COURSE PERFORMANCE

THE COURSE

- The course will be set with numbers and signs for the handler to follow.
 - The goal is to be successful. Courses may be practiced and repeated.
-

COURSE FAMILIARIZATION

The tester shall brief all handlers and answer questions prior to the test. Handlers (without their dogs) will be offered time to become familiar with the course prior to the test. Testers may offer training and/or practice of the courses prior to tests. A map of the course may be offered.

BEGINNING THE COURSE

SIDE DETERMINATION

- Teams will begin with the dog on the handler's left.
 - The dog will heel on each side of the handler, switching back and forth per the exercise descriptions.
-

MULLIGANS

One mulligan is available per course. The mulligan offers the handler the opportunity to repeat one unsuccessful exercise. The exercise must be repeated completely and immediately after the unsuccessful performance. The handler must verbally announce "mulligan" before retrying an exercise.

DOG ETIQUETTE

The dog is expected to be well mannered. Repeated jumping on the handler, excessive barking etc. are not allowed.

JUDGE ETIQUETTE

The tester may converse during practice runs but may not converse with the participant during a test performance.

PAUSING DURING PERFORMANCE

- The handler may pause for the dog if the dog stops to scratch, cough, sneeze etc.
-



POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

SIT

The dog with his/her rear on the ground, chest off the floor and front legs in an approximate vertical position.

DOWN

The dog lying as if at rest on the ground.

STAND

The dog standing and stationary for the period of time as defined by the exercise description.

STAY

The dog holds both the position and location defined by the exercise description.

- During stands dogs may not move more than two paws.

BRIEF PAUSE

Holding a position for one to three seconds.

- During stands dogs may not move more than two paws.

HEELING

Heel position requires the dog be at the handler's side moving in unison with her/his head close enough to be under the handler's outstretched arm.

CENTER

The dog faces the center of the handler with his/her head close enough to be under the handler's outstretched arm. Sit, down or stand are determined by the exercise description.



SIDE

The dog is beside the handler facing the same direction with his/her head close enough to be under the handler's outstretched arm. Sit, down or stand are determined by the exercise description.



SWING

The dog will move from center towards the handler's side, turn towards the handler and step into the side position. The dog may not cross behind the handler.





NOVICE COURSE REQUIREMENTS

LEASH REQUIREMENTS

- The novice level is performed on leash. A 6-8 foot (180-240 cm) leash is allowed.
 - The leash must remain loose and may not be used to direct the dog in any way.
-

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 8 -10 Exercises. Changed from a limit of 8.
- 1 Novice stationary exercise.*
- 1 Novice stay exercise.*
- 1 Novice Distraction exercise.
- Minimum 1, maximum 3 side changes. Changed from a maximum of 2.
- Minimum of 2 exercises on each side. Changed from a minimum of 3.

*When one exercise is both a stationary and a stay exercise it can be used to satisfy the course requirements for both. Example - Sit & Switch - This exercise is both a stationary and a stay exercise.

Distances between exercises should be enough to allow comfortable performance.

Adjusted in 2024

NOVICE DISTRACTIONS

The novice level distraction items will be items that might generate only minor interest from the dog. At least one point during the exercise the dog will pass next to and within 8 feet (240 cm) of the distraction. Distraction Examples: Cones, upside down buckets or similar items.



NOVICE EXERCISE LIST

New in 2024. Adjusted in 2024.

| STATIONARY EXERCISES | MOVING EXERCISES |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sit 2. Sit - Down 3. Sit - Stand 4. Windshield Wipers - Sit 5. Sit - 90° Pivot Right - Sit 6. Sit - 90° Pivot Left - Sit 7. Center Sit - Swing Sit | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Right Turn 2. Left Turn 3. 180° Right 4. 180° Left 5. 270° Right 6. 270° Left 7. 360° Right 8. 360° Left 9. Circle the Handler 10. Figure 8 11. Spin 12. Center Sit - Swing Forward 13. Fast 14. Slow 15. Back Away 16. Back Away - 90° Right 17. Back Away - 90° Left 18. Front Cross 19. Flip |
| <p>STAY EXERCISES Exercises with * are also stationary</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sit - Switch* 2. Sit - Walk Around* 3. Center Sit - Walk Around* 4. Sit - Leave Dog - Return* 5. Sit - Down - Leave Dog – Return* 6. Center Sit - Handler Turns* 7. Center Sit - Handler Turns – Change Sides* 8. Sit - Handler Center - Swing Forward 9. Sit - Handler Center - Swing Forward - Change Sides | <p>DISTRACTION EXERCISES Adjusted in 2024</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Weave 2. Figure 8 3. Pass a Stationary Person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right, Left 180, 270 or 360 Turns |



NOVICE STATIONARY EXERCISES

N, 1. Sit

- The handler will halt and cue the dog to sit at side.
 - The handler's feet will remain still from the halt until the dog has performed the sit.
-

N, 2. Sit – Down

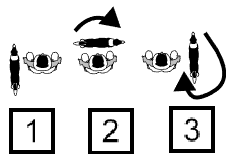
- The handler will halt, cue the dog to sit and then lie down at side.
 - The handler's feet will remain still from the halt until the dog has performed the down.
-

N, 3. Sit – Stand

- The handler will halt, cue the dog to sit, then stand and pause at side.
 - The handler may step forward with one foot as a part of cuing the dog to stand.
-

N, 4. Windshield Wipers – Sit (Change of sides exercise)

- The handler will halt and cue the dog to sit at side. The dog will then pass in front of the handler, move to the opposite side position, and sit.
- The handler's feet will remain still from the halt until the dog has performed the second sit.



N, 5. Sit – 90° Pivot Right – Sit

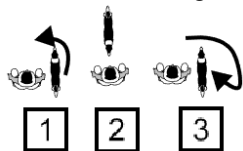
- The handler will halt, cue the dog to sit at side. The handler will pivot 90° to the right and halt. The dog will move with the handler and sit at side when the handler halts.
 - The handler's feet shall remain close together turning using an area approximately the size of a dinner plate.
-

N, 6. Sit – 90° Pivot Left – Sit

- The handler will halt, cue the dog to sit at side. The handler will pivot 90° to the left and halt. The dog will move with the handler and sit at side when the handler halts.
 - The handler's feet shall remain close together turning using an area approximately the size of a dinner plate.
-

N, 7. Center Sit – Swing Sit

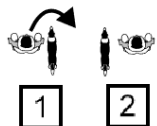
- The handler will back up 3-5 steps while calling the dog to sit at center. The handler will then cue the dog to swing to the original side position and sit.



NOVICE STAY EXERCISES

N, 1. Sit – Switch (Change of sides, stay and stationary exercise)

- The handler will halt and cue the dog to sit at side and stay. The handler will walk in front of the dog to the opposite side and pause briefly.

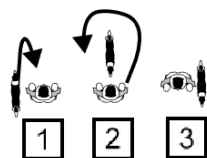


N, 2. Sit – Walk Around (Stay and stationary sign)

- The handler will halt and cue the dog to sit at side and stay. The handler will walk in front of and completely around the dog, return to the original side and pause briefly.

N, 3. Center Sit – Walk Around (Stay and stationary sign)

- The handler will back up 3-5 steps while calling the dog to center and cue the dog to sit and stay. The handler will walk completely around the dog, return to the original side and pause briefly.



N, 4. Sit – Leave Dog – Return (Stay and stationary sign)

- The handler will halt and cue the dog to sit at side and stay. The handler will walk forward approximately 6 feet (180 cm), turn to face the dog and pause. The handler will then return to the original side.

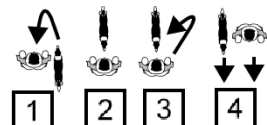
N, 5. Sit – Down – Leave Dog – Return (Stay and stationary sign)

- The handler will halt and cue the dog to sit, lie down at side and stay. The handler will walk forward approximately 6 feet (180 cm), turn to face the dog and pause. The handler will then return to the original side.

New for 2024

N, 6 Center Sit – Handler Turns (Stay and stationary sign)

- The handler will back up 3-5 steps while calling the dog to center, sit and stay. The handler will walk to the original side of the dog and pause. The team will then proceed forward together in the new direction.



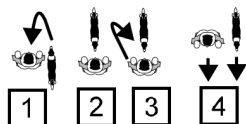


NOVICE STAY EXERCISES

New for 2024

N, 7. Center Sit - Handler Turns - Change Sides (Change of sides, stay and stationary exercise)

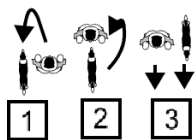
- The handler will back up 3-5 steps while calling the dog to center, sit and stay. The handler will walk to the opposite side of the dog and pause. The team will then proceed forward together in the new direction.



New for 2024

N, 8. Sit - Handler Center – Swing Forward

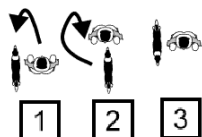
- The handler will halt and cue the dog to sit at side and stay. The handler will walk to center and face the dog. **The handler will then cue the dog to swing to the original side position and proceed forward without sitting again.** (Corrected 3/4/2024)



New for 2024

N, 9. Sit - Handler Center - Swing Forward- Change Sides

- The handler will halt and cue the dog to sit at side and stay. **The handler will then cue the dog to swing to the opposite side position and proceed forward without sitting again.** (Corrected 3/4/2024)





NOVICE MOVING EXERCISES

N, 1. Right Turn

- The team will perform a 90° turn to the right.
-

N, 2. Left Turn

- The team will perform a 90° turn to the left.
-

N, 3. 180° Right

- The team will perform a 180° turn to the right.
-

N, 4. 180° Left

- The team will perform a 180° turn to the left.
-

N, 5. 270° Right

- The team will perform a 270° turn to the right.
-

N, 6. 270° Left

- The team will perform a 270° turn to the left.
-

N, 7. 360° Right

- The team will perform a 360° turn to the right.
-

N, 8. 360° Left

- The team will perform a 360° turn to the left.
-

N, 9. Circle the Handler

- The handler will halt and cue the dog to pass in front of and perform a complete circle around the handler returning to the original side and proceed forward.



N, 10. Figure 8

- The team will move in a figure eight pattern beginning in either direction.



NOVICE MOVING EXERCISES

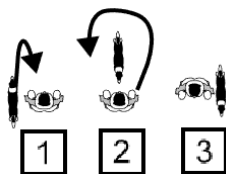
N, 11. Spin

- The handler will cue the dog to perform a 360° circle at the handler's side. The handler may pause briefly or keep moving forward while the dog is turning.



N, 12. Center Sit - Swing Forward

- The handler will back up 3-5 steps while calling the dog to sit at center. The handler will then cue the dog to swing to the original side position and proceed forward without sitting again.



Adjusted for 2024

N, 13. Fast

- The team will noticeably increase their speed for a distance of approximately 8 -10 feet (240 - 300 cm).

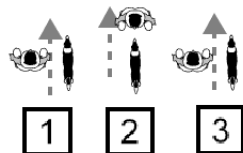
Adjusted for 2024

N, 14. Slow

- The team will noticeably decrease their speed for a distance of approximately 8 -10 feet (240 - 300 cm).

N, 15. Back Away

- The handler will pivot to face the dog and back up 3 – 5 steps. The dog will move forward facing the handler. The handler will then pivot back to the original side and proceed forward.
- The dog may pause while the handler pivots to face the dog.

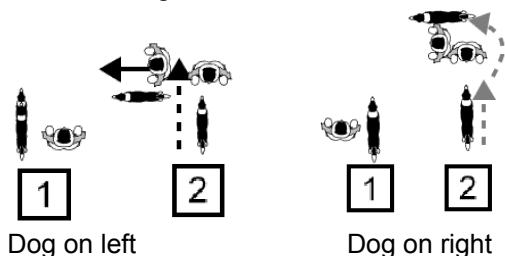


NOVICE MOVING EXERCISES

New for 2024

N, 16. Back Away 90° Right

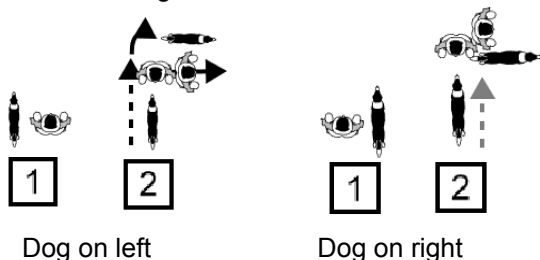
- The handler will pivot to face the dog and back up 3 – 5 steps. The dog will move forward facing the handler. The handler will turn to the right while directing the dog to the original side position.
- When the dog begins in the same side position as the turn the dog will pass behind the handler while the handler is making the turn.



New for 2024

N, 17. Back Away 90° Left

- The handler will pivot to face the dog and back up 3 – 5 steps. The dog will move forward facing the handler. The handler will turn to the left while directing the dog to the original side position.
- When the dog begins in the same side position as the turn the dog will pass behind the handler while the handler is making the turn.



N, 18. Front Cross (Change of sides exercise)

- Both dog and handler will in unison perform a 180° turn towards each other.



N, 19. Flip (Change of sides exercise)

- The handler will perform a 180° turn towards the dog while in unison the dog performs a 180° turn away from the handler.



NOVICE DISTRACTION EXERCISES

Adjusted for 2024

The novice level distraction items will be items that might ordinarily generate minor interest from the dog.
Distraction Examples: Cones, upside down buckets or similar items.

Adjusted for 2024

N, 1. Weave

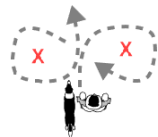
- The team shall weave back and forth between the items approximately 8 feet (240 cm) apart



Adjusted for 2024

N, 2. Figure 8 With

- The team will pass between two distraction items and proceed performing a figure eight pattern to the right or left around the two items 8 feet (240 cm) apart.



Adjusted for 2024

N, 3. Pass a Stationary Person

- The team shall walk past a stationary person standing approximately 8 feet (240 cm) away.
- The dog will be on the side towards the stationary person.



Adjusted for 2024

Right and Left 180, 270, 360 turns and Figure 8

- These exercises may be used as distraction exercises by adding two distraction items approximately 8 feet (240 cm) apart.

