

PREPARATION

Preparation for a show varies greatly from breed to breed. Some dogs require clipping or trimming, most require bathing, others require specialist shampoos or equipment. A good thing to do when thinking of showing your dog is to ask your dog's breeder for some advice. Alternatively, contact your breed club and ask about show preparation, they will be able to point you in the right direction.

AT THE SHOW

On arriving at a show first obtain a catalogue, each dog attending a show is allocated a number and the number will be entered in the catalogue. You will need to find out which ring you are due to show in, and collect your numbers at these at the exhibitors' tent prior to your class entering the ring. All numbers must be worn whilst in the ring.

Once your breed is due to be shown the ring steward (the judge's aid) will call the classes, he informs exhibitors which class is next due in the ring. The usual procedure to showing in a class is as follows:

1. All dogs are 'set up' (made to stand correctly) so that the judge can make an initial assessment of them,
2. The dogs will then be asked to move round the ring...once or twice,
3. Each dog is then examined by the judge, small breeds usually stand on a table, large breeds on the ground, the judge will inform the exhibitor exactly what he requires them to do. The dog is then asked to move up and down the ring so the judge can assess movement.
4. The dogs are then all set up again and the judge will make his placing, usually from first to fifth.
5. If you wish to withdraw from a class you should inform the ring steward before your class starts.

Each class is judged in turn. At championship shows the dogs and bitches of each breed have separate classes, once all the classes have been judged the Challenge Certificates are awarded first to the dogs then the bitches. A challenge certificate or 'CC' is an award given by a judge to a dog or bitch considered to be worthy of the title 'Champion'. If a dog wins 5 CC's from 5 different judges he is permitted to use the title Champion in front of his name. In order to award the CCs the judge calls the unbeaten dogs back into the ring and chooses the best dog from the class winners, this dog is then awarded the CC. The second best dog is then awarded the reserve CC. The procedure is then repeated for the bitches. The dog and bitch CC winners then compete for the overall winner, this is called the 'Best of Breed'. All unbeaten puppies compete for the title of 'Best Puppy' in breed.

Each best of breed then competes in its group for the title of 'Best in Group'. There are 7 groups. These are:

- Hound
- Terrier
- Pastoral
- Working
- Gundog
- Utility
- Toy

Each breed is classified under one of the groups.

Once all the groups are judged the 6 group winners compete for the title *BEST IN SHOW*.

Confused? It's not really that complicated. There are exceptions to that which normally takes place at most championship shows, not every breeds will have classes at all shows, those breeds that do have classes may not award CC's.

Open shows do not award CC's at all but otherwise go through a similar procedure to Championship shows.

Win or lose it should be done gracefully. A polite 'well done' and a handshake are always well received and lets face it hopefully one day the tables may be turned and the gesture returned.

It is always better to keep ones opinions to ones self....bitchiness beside the ring makes for a bad atmosphere and a less enjoyable day for all. If your opinion is asked for be polite and tactful....treat people the way you would wish to be treated.

It is not 'the done thing' to speak or approach the judge whilst in the ring. Any questions should be kept till after judging is completed and then should be polite and courteous, after all the judge is only giving his opinion on the dogs present even if it doesn't agree with yours.

If you feel you have need to complain it is always best to approach the shows secretary, however please try and remember that it's a fun day out and taking things too seriously takes away the pleasure...things always look different after a goods night sleep.