

The Total German Shepherd- Activities you can do with your dog

The Breed is so intelligent and learns so readily that it has been used as a sheepdog, guard, in police work, as a guide for the blind, in search and rescue service and in the military. The German Shepherd also excels in many other dog activities including Schutzhund, tracking, obedience, agility, flyball, ring sport and much more. His fine nose can sniff out drugs and intruders and alert handlers to the presence of underground mines in time to avoid detonation, or gas leaks in pipes buried 15 feet underground. The German Shepherd is also a popular show dog and family companion.

Conformation

Showing in Conformation is showing your German Shepherd Dog (GSD) to a Canadian Kennel Club (CKC) or American Kennel Club (AKC) licenced Judge against other GSD's in age grouped classes. The judge compares all GSD's in the classes to a [Written Standard](#). They are judged on temperament, standing (or stacked) and how they move. The winners of the classes all compete at the end to win points to add to their Championship or other Titles. This venue is excellent for breeders to show the quality they are producing.

The GSDCC website will list Specialty Shows (only GSD's). There are also All Breed Shows (all CKC registerable breeds) presented by the CKC of which you can find more information here.

More Information: <http://www.canadasguidetodogs.com/clubs/conformation.htm>

Obedience

Showing in Obedience is fun and can be hard work, but it is worth every second. To have such a well mannered and obedient large dog is exhilarating. There are many All Breed Training Facilities which lead to Shows to show off your special dog. You are not really competing against others in these classes, as your win is based on your score in how you and your dog behave in each level of class. Your qualifying score is what allows you to move on to High in Trial. The fun is that you are marked on your mistakes also, so you have to know how to work yourself, which makes it even more challenging. Even the handicapped can get involved.

More Information: <http://www.canadasguidetodogs.com/clubs/obedience.htm>

Rally-O

Rally-O was developed by Charles L. Kramer as a less-formal alternative to regular obedience. Instead of a set pattern of exercises, the judge creates a course by placing signs at different stations. Each sign tells the handler which exercise is required at the station. The judge has a number of exercises to choose from and they can be in any order. Most of the formal

obedience exercises are included, plus some movements from Freestyle and agility, such as weave poles and 360-degree turns.

Handlers are allowed 10 minutes to walk the course without their dogs, to become familiar with the layout and get instruction or clarification from the judge. Once they start the course, the judge does not give any other instruction; dog and handler are on their own. Each team starts with a set number of points and has points deducted for mistakes.

Rally Obedience was recognized by The Canadian Kennel Club in 2007 and is open to all dogs eligible for registration with the CKC. The Canadian Association of Rally Obedience allows all dogs to participate, mixed or purebred. The American Kennel Club refers to the sport as “Rally” and restricts entry to dogs eligible for registration.

The cool thing about Rally-O is that handlers are allowed to talk to and encourage their dogs during the trial. Rally-O is all about the positive relationship between dog and handler; attitude is more important than precision. The CKC rulebook says, “There should be a sense of teamwork between the dog and handler both during the numbered exercises and between the exercise signs; however, perfect ‘heel position’ is not required.” In all versions of Rally, points are deducted for “bumping” or moving signs, but the CARO rules actually state, “There will be no deductions for dogs that knock over or bump the sign/cone with their wagging tails.”

Rally-O can be an end in itself or an excellent stepping stone into other dog activities such as formal obedience, Freestyle or agility, and it’s a fun sport for keeping an older dog active and involved.

More Information: <http://www.canadaguidetodogs.com/clubs/rally.htm>

Herding

Herding is dogs working with people to control livestock, moving them from place to place, rounding up strays and keeping the herd together.

Herding is a great way to have fun and keep your shepherd's instincts strong. A great way to make new friends and exercise too!

Dogs working with shepherds is one of the oldest partnerships between canine and human. Without dogs to help control the herds, it’s safe to say the fabric of our civilization would have been radically different.

" Herding behaviour is truncated hunting behaviour. The

dogs round up or gather, chase or drive the stock using predatory moves that never result in an attack.

Dogs are used to herd all sorts of livestock, all over the world, working with human partners to bring stock in from pasture, separate an animal from the herd, hold groups still or drive them into pens. Without the dogs' speed and agility, moving stock would be much more difficult, if not impossible."

From the work that dogs do have come trials and competitions to see whose dog does it best. Herding

trials use set courses to test the dog's ability to move stock, stop and settle stock, and get around or through obstacles ending with the stock in the pen. A complex language of whistles, hand gestures and words is used to direct the dog.

Herding instinct tests are a controlled introduction to stock - a few sheep or ducks in a pen. A dog with no previous training is allowed into the pen with an expert trainer and its handler, and the dog is observed for instinct and trainability. It's fascinating to see the instinct wake up in a dog that gets it; you can almost see the light bulb turn on. "Yes! This is what I am meant to do!"

Some people get into herding trials because they have livestock and working dogs. Others come at it the other way - they have a herding breed and want to explore their dog's working potential.

More Information: <http://www.canadaguidetodogs.com/clubs/herding.htm>

Agility

This sport is FAST and FUN! There are different trials you can train for. Dog and master work together to run through an obstacle course in the fastest possible time. The obstacles such as jumps, tire, tunnels, chutes, and weave each receive a different point value. It involves excellent handling skills and real team-work. The

pace is fast and furious with twisted flows and potential chances for off course penalties at every turn.

Team Relay(2 dogs): The course layout is similar to standard agility. It is divided in sections and each dog on the team is selected by the team members to run a specified section. All team members must run clean and under the time allowed. Upon completing their respective section, the handler passes a baton in a specified area to allow the next handler to continue on the next section.

More Information: <http://www.canadaguidetodogs.com/clubs/agility.htm>

Tracking

Training tracking dogs is common work for police or for hunters or even for dog enthusiasts. In fact, there are tracking dog competitions held by various Kennel or Schutzhund clubs. You can also train your dog how to track at home, just for fun. You can even train your dog how to track your children, in case you ever need to find them and get them home for dinner or homework. Because dogs are gifted by nature with such an incredible sense of smell, they can find hidden items quite easily- especially with the right training and motivation.

More information: <http://www.canadaguidetodogs.com/clubs/tracking.htm>

Schutzhund

Recognizing that the German Shepherd was extremely versatile and capable of adapting to all types of functions, a system of standards was adapted in order to identify those dogs considered to be suitable as breeding stock. While conformation shows established correct type and physical structure, these working tests identified the dogs who had the necessary drive, character and overall working ability. It is from these working tests that the sport of Schutzhund evolved.

Schutzhund training concentrates on three areas: Tracking, Obedience, and Protection work. Schutzhund measures the dog's mental stability, endurance, structural efficiencies, ability to scent, willingness to work, courage and trainability. One of the most important qualities of a Schutzhund trained dog is his complete obedience under distraction.

Dog and Handler teams compete for titles at three levels – SchH1, SchH2, and SchH3 – with each being increasingly more difficult to earn. In addition, there are other titles including Advanced Tracking (FH1 and FH2), Endurance Certificates (AD), Police Dog training and Agility work.

A dog trained in Schutzhund is generally an excellent companion in the home as well as a good candidate for police work and search and rescue. The Schutzhund trained

dog has confidence and trust in himself. He is approachable, quietly standing his ground, calm but eager and alert when the situation warrants.

This sport is a lot of work, but it is fun, challenging, rewarding and of course as addictive as any of the others.

More Information: [German Shepherd Schutzhund club of Canada](#)

Search and Rescue

Search and rescue (SAR) dogs are trained to perform many tasks. Knowing what each type of dog can and can't do is important to be able to quickly match the proper resource with the task at hand. While there are no uniform standards at this time, many search and rescue volunteers have common terms and standards that are used. It should be expected that an operational SAR dog will be non-aggressive to other dogs and to people, the dog should also have basic obedience and be under control at all times. The breed of the dog does not matter. It is the standard and training that should be evaluated prior to using these resources.

Many dogs are cross-trained and are able to do several tasks well. There are, however, separate evaluations for each task, it is therefore most effective to use the dog best trained for each specific task. A search effort can be maximized by utilizing the various types of dogs in conjunction with each other. This list identifies the common terms and what you should expect when using a SAR dog.

A Trailing dog is trained for scent discrimination.

An Airscenting dog is given an area (sector) to work with his handler.

A Tracking dog is trained to follow a path of a certain person.

A Disaster dog, (which includes FEMA) is trained to find human scent in a very unnatural environment.

A Cadaver dog has been trained to alert on dead human scent.

A Water Recovery dog is trained to detect human scent that is in the water.

More information: www.canadaguidetodogs.com/dogjobs/wrk_sar.htm

Skijoring

LINK: [SkiJoring](#)



Scootering

LINK: [Scootering](#)



Dock Diving

www.ontariodockdogs.com

