

Rules HTM & Freestyle

General Rules

- All dogs must be registered in a kennel organisation approved by FCI.
- All dogs are shown at the exhibitor's own account and risk. The organizer cannot be held liable for damages caused by dogs or exhibitors.
- Dogs must be vaccinated against distemper and parvovirus. Foreign dogs must also be vaccinated against rabies according to Austrian legislation.
- In Austria all cropped or docked dogs born after 1 January 2008 cannot compete (regardless of the dog's country of birth). The prohibition also includes dogs that have been docked for veterinary reasons, irrespective a veterinary certificate is presented.
- The participation of dogs with tortured breeding characteristics (for example dogs with difficulty in breathing, hairless dogs with a strong tooth outnumbered or toothless) is prohibited!
- Dogs competing must be at least 18 months old on the day of the competition.

In the ring

- No activity should be conducted which may injure the dog.
- Once a dog has entered the ring to compete, no further practise is permitted.
- The team is under judge's orders from entering the ring to leaving it. All requests from the judges must be followed.

Judging:

- The competition will be judged by 3 judges. One judge will be from England, the others from 2 different countries.
- The judge's points will be added, then divided by 3 – in other words the average points of the 3 judges will be the final score.
- The judge's decision cannot be appealed.
- One judge is appointed "head judge". This judge will have the final word when agreement cannot be reached.
- In any case of doubt, the head judge will have the final word.

In case of equal points:

- **Heelwork to music:**
 - If 2 dogs have equal points in the Heelwork to Music competition, the dog with the highest points in "Presentation" wins.
 - If they still have equal points the dog with the highest points in "Degree of Difficulty" wins.
 - If they still have equal points, the head judge will decide the winner.
- **Freestyle:**
 - If 2 dogs have equal points in the Freestyle competition, the dog with the highest points in "Music an Interpretation" wins.
 - If they still have equal points the dog with the highest points in "Presentation" wins.
 - If they still have equal points, the head judge will decide the winner.

Competition rules:

- Information about ring size and where the judges will be seated must be available to competitors at the least 2 month prior to the competition.
- Before the handler and dog begin their routine, the handler must acknowledge the judges at the table by bowing, curtseying or “nodding”. The dog can do a quick move, but this should not take more than a few seconds to complete.
- The dog is not allowed to be in costume or fancy dress. A decorated collar is permitted. If you are in doubt of what is allowed, ask at the briefing before the competition commences.
- The dog must be off lead in the ring.
- No food or toys are allowed in the ring.
- Props can be used if they are appropriate to the choice of music and incorporated in the routine. It is the handler’s responsibility to bring a helper that will place the prop in the ring prior to the competition.

Bitches in season:

- Bitches in season are allowed to compete but must be kept away from the competition area until all the other routines are completed.
- Bitches in season compete at the end of the competition.
- The organisers must be notified that a bitch is in season as soon as possible and no later than at the morning briefing.

Music:

To avoid errors and misunderstandings regarding the music, the following rules will be adhered to:

- Must be send to us with the entry form.
- It is the handler’s responsibility to hand in a CD, which only contains the track/version of the music they to perform to.
- It is the handler’s responsibility to bring a back-up CD in case there is an error on the original CD.
- If a handler competes in HTM and Freestyle, the handler must hand in a CD for each discipline (one CD for each routine).
- If a handler competes with several dogs, a CD for each dog and class must be handed in.
- If the music is longer than the routine, the music will be stopped when the handler CLEARLY signals the routine is completed.
- Is the music stops during a routine the competitor must be given the opportunity to complete the routine. The handler’s back up CD may be used and/or alternative equipment, if this was the reason for failure. The judges will continue marking from the point at which the music stopped.
- If the music stops during a routine, the handler can choose not to complete the routine and be judged solely on the part of the routine performed prior to the music stopping.
- The length of the music may be up to 4 minutes.

Disqualification - a handler and dog will be disqualified if:

- The dog is on lead in the ring.
- The handler has food or a toy in the ring.
- The handler practises harsh handling.
- The dog relieves itself in the ring.
- The dog is out of control in the ring.
- The dog leaves the ring before routine is completed.

Other things that will reduce points:

- If the dog barks continuously or for the greater part of the routine. If the barking disturbs the presentation of the routine.
- If the handler physically manipulates or holds the dog in a position/move.

In general, the rules from the Austrian Kennel Club must be followed.

HEELWORK TO MUSIC

The maximum time limit for the duration of the routine is 4 minutes.

Heelwork to Music is, as the name suggests, "Heelwork to Music". The routine must therefore consist of least 75% heelwork.

The dog must stay within 2 metres of the handler at all times.

Heelwork

The following positions are considered to be heelwork in HTM:

The dog has his right shoulder parallel with the handler's left leg.

The dog has his left shoulder parallel with the handler's right leg.

The dog has his right shoulder parallel with the handler's right leg facing opposite the handler. The dog has his left shoulder parallel with the handler's left leg facing opposite the handler.

The dog between the handler's legs with both shoulders parallel to the handler's legs.

In front of, with his side to the handler.

Behind, with his side to the handler.

These positions must be kept the same in movement – the dog must not jump/bounce or "crab" to keep the position by the handler.

The dog's body should be straight, and parallel to the handler.

The dog must not move in 2 tracks during heelwork, sideways movement is the exception to this rule.

The dog must keep the same distance in relation to the handler in all positions.

The dog must move in the same direction as the handler.

The dog must follow the handler's choice of place.

FREESTYLE

The maximum time limit for the duration of the routine is 4 minutes.

There is no requirement to heelwork or other specific moves in the freestyle competition, however it should be clear to the judges that it is a freestyle routine and the amount of heelwork should not exceed 25% of the routine.

Moves are defined as anything that is heelwork (for a definition of heelwork, see above).

Points are given according to the following:

Presentation – MAXIMUM SCORE: 10 points

- Cooperation and coordination between dog and handler – The routine should clearly demonstrate the dog's and handler's attentiveness to each other – so the coordination/cooperation in the routine is as fluent as possible.
- Presentation – The routine flows naturally without abrupt breaks/stops, the dog and handler are confident in their performance and know their routine. The handler/dog makes the performance seem easy.
- Signals – The signals between dog/handler are discrete to they are put into the choreography so they do not distract from the routine.
- Focus on the dog – The routine is performed so the focus is on the dog or teamwork. It is not the handler who should attract attention.
- Show quality – The team has appeal and performs an excellent routine that appeals to the judges and the audience. The handler's performance is appropriate for a family audience.
- Any other items which may be relevant to the performance and content of the routine.

Degree of difficulty (Technical Merit) – MAXIMUM SCORE: 10 points

- Amount of moves or heelwork – The number of moves and contents of the routine is appropriate to the music – not too many in a short period of time, or too little to “fill” the time.
- Quality and degree of difficulty of heelwork or moves – The more precise, difficult and the higher the quality of the moves or heelwork the higher the points.
- Choreography – The choreography is designed so the heelwork and moves have no abrupt stops but are integrated smoothly – and the routine is made to suit the dog and its movement. The choreography varies so the routine is interesting.
- Use of available ring space – Routines should make a good use of the available ring space.
- Any other items which may be relevant to the degree of difficulty and technical merit of the routine.

Music and interpretation – MAXIMUM SCORE: 10 points

- Interpretation of the music – The music is interpreted. Steady/emotional presentation to emotional music – enthusiastic/powerful presentation to music with more power.
- If the music tells a story, it should be incorporated in the routine.
- Is the routine suited to the music? The routine is in harmony with the music. All the moves are based on the music and the inspiration from the music. The routine is created and presented so the dog's movement, the handler's movement and music become one.
- Is the music suited to the dog? The music is suited to the dogs speed, movement and enthusiasm.
- Any other items which may be relevant to the degree of difficulty and technical merit of the routine.