



GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG CLUB OF AMERICA TRIAL RULES & REGULATIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

All trials are subject to the principles of good sportsmanship. The trial rules and regulations stated in these guidelines are binding for all parties involved. All participants must comply with the same performance requirements. The events are open to the public. The GSDCA membership must be informed publicly of the location and the time the event starts.

Trials are held only on Friday, Saturday or Sunday with exception for National Events or Special Attractions. Trials may also be held on Thursday and Friday in conjunction with a breed survey and show. The final authority for approval of all trial applications is the responsibility of the GSDCA SV/WUSV Programs Committee.

A valid training title is earned by successfully completing the attempted trial level. The titles are to be recognized by all GSDCA member organizations.

Trial Season

Trials can be held throughout the entire year if weather permits and the health and safety of the participants and dogs are not put at risk. Otherwise, the event cannot be held. It is the trial judge that makes the decision as to whether or not to proceed with the trial.

Trial Chairperson

The trial chair is responsible for organizing the event. He/she handles or supervises all tasks necessary to prepare for and conduct a trial, insures that the trial is run in an orderly fashion, and must be at the judge's disposal throughout the entire event. The trial chair must be a current member in good standing of the GSDCA.

The trial chair is not allowed to show a dog or take on other duties and is responsible for:

- Obtaining all necessary event authorizations.
- Providing suitable (in accordance with the trial regulations) tracking fields for all trial levels.
- Making arrangements with the owners of the tracking fields.
- Getting experienced volunteers: Helpers for the protection phase, tracklayers, people for the group, etc.
- Securing the trial date and trial site.
- Confirming the judge's acceptance and availability for the selected trial dates.
- Submitting the Application for Club Event and required event and judge release fees to the GSDCA SV/WUSV Programs office.

- Upon approval of the judge, providing him/her with the trial location, start time, directions to the site, type of examinations and number of dogs entered.

Trial Secretary

The trial secretary is not allowed to show a dog or take on other duties.

Prepare and have available at the event all required forms:

1. Bewertungsliste
2. The Exceptions to SV/WUSV Rules for Working Dog Examinations must be presented to the judge for signature prior to the start of the trial.
3. Judges Sheets for all trial levels.
4. Have available scorebooks, registration papers, and proof of vaccination. Note: When entering titles and awards in scorebooks and on the SV registration papers, you must spell out your club's name and include the event location. It is suggested that you acquire a rubber stamp of the club's full name and your state.

Trial Judges

The officers of the hosting club are responsible for inviting a judge or judges who are authorized to conduct IPO/VPG. The club shall determine how many judges shall be requested. One judge may judge a maximum of thirty (30) individual parts per day:

- BH – two parts
- IPO VO – two parts
- IPO1, IPO2, IPO3 – equals three parts each
- FH1, FH2 – equals three parts per track
- FPr (Tracking Degree), Level 1-3 – equals one part each level
- OB Degree Level 1-3 – equals one part each level
- StP (Random Article Search) Level 1-3 – equals one part each level
- WH and RTP (Rescue Dog Suitability Test) – equals two parts each level

The judge is not permitted to evaluate dogs that are owned by him or that he has in his possession or in his keep.

The judge is not permitted to evaluate dogs that are owned by, in the possession of, or in the keep of a person living in the same household with him.

The judge is not allowed to evaluate dogs that are shown by a person living in the same household with him.

Two separate clubs may submit applications to host two separate one-day trials on the same weekend with the same judge officiating at both.

Positive identification is required for all dogs participating in GSDCA performance events regardless of breed or proof of pedigree. Positive identification includes a legible tattoo or microchip. It is the owner's responsibility to provide the proper reader for his/her dog.

To be eligible for entry all purebred, registered German Shepherd Dogs must be presented with original registration/pedigree documentation with positive identification certification.

German Shepherd Dogs that were born in the United States must have their tattoo or microchip number noted on their original 4-generation AKC pedigree. AKC pedigrees that have been tattoo or microchip certified by USCA will be accepted at all GSDCA events.

All dogs entered in GSDCA trials must have a scorebook. Registered German Shepherd Dogs must have a GSDCA, SV, USCA or other FCI recognized club issued scorebook. Scorebooks for unregistered German Shepherd Dogs, other breeds and mix breeds are available through the GSDCA SV/WUSV Programs Office.

The judge is not permitted to evaluate dogs at a trial hosted by the club where he/she is a member with the exception of the BH and AD.

The performance judge is not permitted to distract or influence a dog's performance through his behavior. The judge is responsible for the compliance with and correct application of the valid trial regulations. The judge is entitled to terminate a trial if the trial is not conducted in compliance with the trial regulations and his instructions are ignored. In such a case the judge must submit a report to the GSDCA SV/WUSV Programs Office.

The judge is authorized to dismiss a dog from the trial, even without the handler's consent, if the dog is injured or exhibits diminished ability to perform, otherwise incapacitated. If a handler pulls a healthy dog from a trial, the scorebook will be marked "DQ Unsportsmanlike-because of quitting". If a handler pulls his dog because of an obvious injury or a letter from a veterinarian is presented as proof, the scorebook will be marked "pulled due to illness" or "pulled due to injury". The judge is authorized to disqualify and dismiss a handler from the trial for unsportsmanlike conduct, carrying any type of motivational articles/objects (i.e. food, toy, etc. during a trial performance), violations against the trial regulations or animal protection laws and against good manners. In any case, an entry in the scorebook must be made for premature termination of the examination giving the reason for the premature dismissal from the trial. In case of a disqualification, no points earned are entered in the scorebook/all awarded points will be taken away.

The judge's decision is final and incontestable. Any form of criticism regarding the judge's evaluation or judge's decision can lead to dismissal from the trial and may eventually be followed by disciplinary actions. In justified cases, regarding a violation of the trial regulations by the judge and not a judge's decision based on facts, a complaint may be filed within eight days. The complaint must be submitted in writing, signed by the complainant and at least one witness, via the host club trial chairperson/secretary. No right of revision of the judge's decision derives from the acceptance of the complaint. The GSDCA Board of Directors is responsible for making a decision regarding the complaint, after review by the GSDCA Performance Judges Committee.

In justified cases, regarding a violation of the trial regulations on the judge's part and not a judge's decision, a complaint is to be submitted in writing, signed by the plaintiff and at least two witnesses, via the trial secretary to the GSDCA SV/WUSV Programs Office within five (5) days of the trial. The acceptance of a complaint does not automatically lead to a revision of the judge's evaluation. A decision shall be made by the corresponding committee of the GSDCA Performance Judges.

Trial Participants

The trial participants must meet the entry deadline for the trial event. Once the entry form has been submitted, the participant is obligated and agrees to pay the entry fee. In the event that the participant cannot participate in the trial for whatever reason, he/she must immediately contact the trial chairperson/secretary.

The trial participant must comply with any local veterinary and animal protection regulations.

Trial participants must follow the instructions of the judge as well as those of the trial chairperson/secretary.

At the beginning of the trial, each of the participants must, when called, with the dog either on leash or off lead in the basic position report to the officiating trial judge in a sportsman-like manner, and announce to the judge his name and the name of his dog. The participant must follow the instructions of the judge as well as those of the trial chairperson/secretary. A handler must show his dog in all phases of the trial, regardless of the outcome in any one phase. The trial ends with the announcement of the final scores (award ceremony) and the return of the scorebooks.

The handler must carry a leash throughout the entire trial. This includes that the dog must wear a simple, single-row, loose-fitting chain collar (fur saver) in the neutral position (dead ring) at all times. Any additional collars such as flea and tick-collars are not permitted during the trial. The collar may not have sharp points, prongs or other hooks. Leather, nylon, spike, pinch or remote training devices are not permitted. The leash can be carried out of the dog's sight or the handler can put the leash over his shoulder from top left to bottom right.

Verbal commands are brief orders given in a normal voice, consisting of one single word. The command may be given in any language. However, the same command must be used for the same task at all times. (This applies to all trial phases.)

A handler may not show more than three (3) dogs per sanctioned trial and may only participate in one trial per day.

A dog may only participate in one level during a single trial (excluding AD). However, during a multi-day trial, a dog may participate in a BH on one day and, if successful, attempt the IPO1 the next day.

Physically Disabled Handlers

Handlers who are physically disabled and as a result are unable to heel their dog on the left side, may heel the dog on their right side. In such a case, the trial regulations described rules for the heeling on the left side are analogous to the right side.

Muzzle Constraints

Laws concerning the handling of dogs in public, issued by the Federal Government or by individual States, must be observed. Handlers and their dogs that fall under these restrictions may show the dog with a muzzle; for example during the traffic test of the BH Examination.

Entry Requirements

On the day of the trial the dog must have reached the required age.

Prerequisite for participation, in accordance with the national VDH Trial Regulations, is proof of a successfully completed Companion Dog Test, BH (Begleithund Examination) with Temperament Test (BH/VT).

BH – IPO-VO	15 months	TR2	19 months	FH1	18 months
FPr1-3	15 months	OB2	19 months	FH2	20 months
StP1-3	15 months	IPO2	19 months		
AD	16 months	TR3	20 months		
TR1	18 months	OB3	20 months		
OB1	18 months	IPO3	20 months		
IPO1	18 months	RTP	15 months		

All dogs, regardless of their size, breed or proof of pedigree are allowed to participate in a trial. The dog must be able to fulfill the requirements of the IPO/VPG.

A dog may only be shown in one trial per day. A handler is only allowed to show in one trial per day.

A minimum of four (4) dogs is required. A single participant trial is not permitted.

Should an entered dog be unable to compete due to injury and is pulled, then the rules governing pulling a dog prevail and the trial is valid as it had four dogs entered and present.

A dog may only participate in one level during a single trial (excluding the AD). However, during a multi-day trial, a dog may participate in a BH on one day, and if successful, attempt an IPO1 the next day.

Each degree level can be repeated as many times as desired. The examination levels are to be completed in sequence (level 1-2-3). A dog may only be shown at the next higher level upon passing the previous lower level. To obtain a passing score, a minimum of 80 points must be achieved in phase "C". The age limit must be taken into consideration. The dog must always be shown in the highest degree it has earned. An exception can be made in trials that are not connected with a ranking process or qualification.

Bitches in season may participate in all events. However, they must be kept apart from the rest of the participants. They are shown according to schedule in phase "A" of the trial, (*Explanation: Bitches in season are not required to go last in tracking. They will track according to draw number.*) In all other phases they will be placed at the end of the starting order. They will be shown at the end of the trial. Visibly pregnant or nursing females are excluded from a trial.

Sick and contagious animals are excluded from all events.

TEMPERAMENT TEST

General Provisions

Prior to the start of any trial, preceding the start of the first examination phase, the dogs must undergo an impartiality test (temperament test) by the judge. Part of the temperament test is the identity inspection (examination and verification of the tattoo number, microchip, etc.). Dogs that do not pass the temperament test are excluded from further participation in the trial and must be disqualified. Owners of dogs that are microchipped are responsible for providing the necessary equipment for the identity check of their dogs.

The judge will continue to evaluate the impartiality (temperament) of the dog throughout the entire trial. When detecting temperament faults, the judge is obligated to immediately disqualify the dog. An entry must be made in the scorebook, explaining the temperament fault. Dogs that were disqualified due to temperament faults must be reported in writing to the GSDCA.

Conducting the Temperament Test

- The temperament test must be conducted under normal environmental conditions in a neutral location for the dog.
- Each and all participating dogs must be presented to the judge separately.
- The dogs must be presented to the judge on a regular leash. The leash must hang loosely.
- The judge must avoid any type of provocation. The judge is not allowed to touch the dog.

Evaluation

- Positive response of the dog: During the examination the dog is (for example) to be neutral, self-confident, sure, energetic, impartial.
- Still acceptable borderline cases: The dog is (for example) somewhat unstable, slightly nervous, slightly insecure. Such dogs can still pass the temperament test but must be kept under close observation throughout the entire trial.
- Negative response of the dog or temperament faults: The dog is (for example) shy, insecure, nervous, gun-shy, gun-sensitive, out of control, bites, aggressive (disqualification).

Scores

The performance is evaluated in ratings (qualification) and points. The ratings (qualification) and corresponding points must reflect the quality of the performance.

Points

Maximum Points:	Excellent (V)	Very Good (SG)	Good (G)	Satisfactory (B)	Insufficient (M)
5	5.0	4.5	4.0	3.5	3.0 – 0
10	10.0	9.5 – 9.0	8.5 – 8.0	7.5 – 7.0	6.5 – 0
15	15.0 – 14.5	14.0 – 13.5	13.0 – 12.0	11.5 – 10.5	10.0 – 0
20	20.0 – 19.5	19.0 – 18.0	17.5 – 16.0	15.5 – 14.0	13.5 – 0
30	30.0 – 29.0	28.5 – 27.0	26.5 – 24.0	23.5 – 21.0	20.5 – 0
35	35.0 – 33.0	32.5 – 31.5	31.0 – 28.0	27.5 – 24.5	24.0 – 0
70	70.0 – 66.5	66.0 – 63.0	62.5 – 56.0	55.5 – 49.0	48.5 – 0
80	80.0 – 76.0	75.5 – 72.0	71.5 – 64.0	63.5 – 56.0	55.5 – 0
100	100.0 – 96.0	95.5 – 90.0	89.5 – 80.0	79.5 – 70.0	69.5 – 0

Percentages

<u>Rating</u>	<u>Awarded Percentage</u>	<u>Deduction</u>
Excellent (V)	= minimum 96%	or up to minus 4%
Very Good (SG)	= 95 to 90%	or minus 5 to 10%
Good (G)	= 89 to 80%	or minus 11 to 20%
Satisfactory (B)	= 79 to 70%	or minus 21 to 30%
Insufficient (M)	= under 70%	or minus 31 to 100%

Only whole points shall be given in the overall rating of each complete phase. Partial points may be given for individual exercises. When adding the points upon completion of each phase and the end result does not consist of a whole number, the points awarded may be rounded up or down, depending on the overall impression of the trial phase.

In case of a tie, the highest score in phase “C” prevails. Should there still be a tie, the points in phase “B” determines the winner (the points in phase “B” shall prevail.) Scores that coincide in all three phases shall be listed as an equal placing.

Disqualification

Should the judge notice temperament faults of the dog, unsportsmanlike conduct of the handler (for example: Alcohol consumption, carrying of motivational objects and/or food), offenses against the trial regulations, offenses against animal protection laws or offenses against the moral code, then the team is to be disqualified from the remainder of the trial. All points given up to the time of disqualification will be taken away (this includes points given in other phases). No ratings (qualifications) or points are entered in the performance documentation.

If the dog is not under control of the handler (for example: in the side or back-transport; the dog leaves the handler during the examination, or leaves the field and does not return to the handler upon receiving three (3) commands; the dog does not out or engages other parts of the helper's body than the protective sleeve) the team is also disqualified from the remainder of the trial.

In this case all points awarded up to the time of disqualification in this particular phase will be taken away. No ratings (qualifications) or points are entered for this phase in the performance documentation.

Evaluation

A degree can only be awarded if a dog achieves at least 70% of the total points in each phase of a trial. However, a dog may only be shown at the next higher level upon passing the previous lower level with a minimum of 80 points in phase "C".

Points

Maximum Points:	Excellent (V)	Very Good (SG)	Good (G)	Satisfactory (B)	Insufficient (M)
100	100 – 96	95 – 90	89 – 80	79 – 70	69 – 0
300	300 – 286	285 – 270	269 – 240	239 – 210	209 – 0
200 (VPG A)	200 – 192	191 – 180	179 – 160	159 – 140	139 – 0

Scorebooks

Each participating dog must have a scorebook. The scorebook is issued according to the regulations of the handler's corresponding organization. Only one scorebook may be issued by the GSDCA to a dog. The trial results must be entered in the scorebook under any circumstances. The judge and, if there is a provision made in the scorebook, the trial secretary must check the entry and verify the entry with their signature.

Liability

The owner of a dog is liable for any personal injury or material damage caused by his dog. Therefore, the owner must have adequate insurance. In case of an accident, the handler is liable for himself and his dog throughout the event. The handler follows the instructions given by the judge and the organizer on his own free will and executes the instructions on his own risk.

Vaccinations

Before the start of the trial, at the request of the judge or the trial secretary, the handler must provide proof of proper vaccinations (vaccination certificate), required by law.

Trial Supervision

The GSDCA is entitled to supervise trials and can assign a knowledgeable person to oversee an event.

"TSB" Evaluation

The "TSB" evaluation should serve the purpose of describing a dog's character traits in regards to breeding suitability. The "TSB" rating neither influences the trial result nor does it influence the ranking. A dog must complete at least one defense exercise to receive a "TSB" rating.

The ratings: "pronounced" ("a"), "present" ("vh"), and "insufficient" ("ng") describe the following characteristics: **Triebveranlagung** (instinctive behavior), **Selbstsicherheit** (self-confidence) and **Belastbarkeit** (the ability to cope with stress).

TSB “pronounced”

Is given to a dog that shows strong willingness to work, clear instinctive behavior, purposeful execution of the exercises, presents itself in a self-confident manner, pays undivided attention and has an extraordinarily high stress tolerance.

TSB “present”

Is given to a dog that has limitations concerning its willingness to work, instinctive behavior, self-confidence, attentiveness and stress tolerance.

TSB “insufficient”

Is given to a dog with insufficient willingness to work, insufficient instinctive behavior, missing self-confidence and insufficient ability to cope with stress; i.e. stress tolerance.

Rules of Discipline

The event organizers or chairman is responsible for guaranteeing order and safety within the entire trial or event grounds.

The judge is authorized, in the case of failure to observe the rules or for safety reasons, to suspend or terminate the trial. The judge is entitled to interrupt or terminate the event if offenses against order or safety occur.

Gross violations by the handler against these regulations, against the trial rules, against the animal protection laws and against the rules of common decency can lead to expulsion from the trial.

In this case, the judge must deliver a report to the appropriate association/organization. Following this, a statement will be requested from the parties concerned, which can then lead to a decision about the disciplinary action.

Expulsions must be sanctioned by the corresponding committee of the GSDCA as established in the bylaws. The GSDCA SV/WUSV Programs Office must be notified under any circumstance. The exclusion of a person from the club/organization may be printed in the magazine published by the corresponding association/organization.

The judge’s decision is incontestable. Any form of criticism regarding the judge’s decision can lead to dismissal from the trial field and can eventually be followed by disciplinary actions. In justified cases, regarding a violation of the trial regulations by the judge and not a judge’s decision based on facts, a complaint may be filed. The complaint must be submitted in writing to the corresponding body of the association/club. The complaint can only be submitted via the event organizer and must be signed by the complainant, the president of the club and one additional witness. The complaint must be submitted within eight (8) days after the event. No right of revision of the judge’s decision derives from the acceptance of the complaint. Video recordings are not accepted as evidence.

Special Regulations

The GSDCA is entitled to expand (modify) the general regulations within their domain. For example, entry regulations, veterinary requirements, first-aid regulations may be adjusted to differences in legislation within the country. Verbal commands may be given in the handler’s native language.