

Are You Ready to Compete

Are you and your dog ready?

This is the first thing to consider and discuss with your trainer. Ask yourself the following questions?

- Is your dog under verbal control?
 - Many venues are not fenced, you need to be able to keep your dog with you during a run for safety and to complete a qualifying run. Your dog must be able to complete a full course off lead without running off and come to you at the end of the run.
- What does your trainer say?
 - In other words, does your trainer think you're ready?
- Is your dog able to complete all of the obstacles safely, off lead?
 - Your dog's safety must come first.
- Is your dog comfortable in new, different places?
 - It's always a good idea to get to your trial early to get you and your dog familiar with the venue.
- Is your dog aggressive to other people or dogs?
 - Think hard about whether agility trials would be more stressful than fun if you have an aggressive dog.



Tip: Enter a Fun Run or Show and Go Match before entering a registered trial to see how your dog, and you, handle different sites and different obstacles. These are similar to a regular trial, in a more relaxed setting and smaller crowds. Your local agility groups are a good source for these events.



Tip: Observe and help out at a trial or two before you 'exhibit' your own dog. Besides learning a lot, you'll find clubs are almost always shorthanded and many of the helpers are running dogs in trials and their jobs may need to be filled when they are competing. Take heart that even that dogs and handlers in the higher levels occasionally blow it.



Tip: When you finally enter a trial, consider entering for only one day to get introduced to trials without overwhelming your dog or yourself. You can always volunteer to help on your 'off' day. Make your first trial a local one – your stress level will be much lower.

What venue do you enter?

You will need to decide what venue of agility you will be entering. There are many groups sanctioning agility trials in the United States and four main ones in our area. You will need a

registration number from the sanctioning organization in order to compete in the trial. In the case of USDAA and NADAC, you can list 'pending', but AKC and CPE require you to have the number prior to entering a trial.

- AKC – American Kennel Club: www.akc.org
- NADAC – North American Dog Agility Council: www.nadac.com
 - Sometimes NADAC trials are dually sanctioned with AMBOR (American Mixed Breed Obedience Registration): www.amborusa.org
- USDAA – United States Dog Agility Association: www.usdaa.com
- CPE – Canine Performance Events: <http://www.k9cpe.com/>

	AKC	NADAC	USDAA	CPE
Registration requirements	Purebred with AKC or ILP number	Mixed breed and purebred allowed NADAC number	Mixed breed and purebred allowed USDAA number	Mixed breed and purebred allowed CPE number
Course differences	Tighter (less distance between obstacles) More faults	Looser Fewer faults Less time	Some may allow you to walk your dog on lead during the walk-through period	Looser courses, lower jump heights, lots of games



Tip: Go to the websites and get copies of the agility rules or regulations from the venue you are entering. The websites are the best location for venue specific information and to learn more about faults, run qualification, titling, classifications, and height requirements. At the end of this guide is a quick comparison of the three venues.

If you think you are ready to compete and you want to know more about signing up for a trial see out document titled “Entering Your First Agility Trial” for tips and instructions on how to sign up.