

# IT'S NOT IN THE STANDARD!

*Information for Judges on Etiquette and Ringcraft*



Original Authors: Shaneen Bendixen & Pamela Carpenter. ©

Additional material: H. Field & V. Spence.

Revised by S. Bendixen – November 2023

Not to be copied/alterd without permission from the original author/s  
For Judges Training Program

# Index

## **SECTION 1: CONTRACTS and PRIOR TO SHOW DAY**

### **CONTRACTS & TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS:**

(Local/Interstate/ Overseas, including FCI Shows.)

Accommodation	4
Behaviour Prior to Show	6
Critiques	5 - 6
Details	3
Fees	3
Inability to Fulfil a Judging Appointment	5
Other Points to Remember	4 - 5
Travel	3 - 4
When Completing Your Contract	5
Travelling	6

## **SECTION 2: DAY OF JUDGING APPOINTMENT**

### **JUDGING REQUIREMENTS:**

At the Ring	7
At the Show	6 - 7
Coats	8 - 9
Final Assessment and Placings	9
Judging	7 - 8
Judging Individual Breeds	8
Movement/Gait	9
Opening a Dogs Mouth and Checking Dentition	8
Problems You May Encounter While Judging	9
Suitable Attire	6
Withholding Challenge Certificates and Awards	10

## **SECTION 3: ETHICS and RULES/REGULATIONS**

### **DOGS QUEENSLAND – RULES**

General Rules Relating to Judges	194 - 203
Judges Code of Practice	Section Four
Judges Licences	184 - 192
Procedures at Exhibitions	213 - 248
Rules Relating to the Appointment of Judges	204 - 212

### **References:**

## **SECTION 1: CONTRACTS AND PRIOR TO SHOW DAY**

### **CONTRACTS & TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS:**

Complete the contract carefully and return to club secretary as soon as possible within the specified time. (Usually 14 days.)

#### **Details:**

- Ensure that your name, address and contact details are correct and that the club secretary's name and phone number is on the contract.
- Complete all sections of the Judge's Contract including other contracted appointments.
- When signing contracts ensure that you are not infringing the time and distance guidelines as set out in the Dogs Australia/DQ Regulations.
- Make sure that you are eligible to the judge a particular Class or Property Class. (e.g. Sweepstakes)
- Judges are required to advise the Dogs Queensland Office of any overseas appointments. Some overseas countries may request a letter from the D.Q. Office confirming that you are eligible to judge the relevant breeds/groups.
- Open Show judges are reminded that different time/distance rules apply for Open Show judging appointments.

**Note: Neither Clubs nor individual judges may alter or disregard the rules of Dogs Queensland.  
Check that you have no other judging appointments for identical breeds within the time and distance as set out in the Dogs Australia and/or each State's rules and regulations.**

#### **Fees:**

Check with your Mentor Judge or other Senior Judges regarding current judging fees. While many judges have a set fee for judging a championship group in a major centre, they may charge a lesser fee for a small country show even if they are judging all or part of the show. We suggest that you always charge a fee. You can always donate it back if you feel you have been particularly well looked after by the Club concerned.

"Charity or Benefit Shows" may be judged at a reduced rate or no fee at all by mutual agreement between the judge and the organization concerned.

#### **Contract - Travel:**

- *Be specific!* (e.g. Preferred Airline, Airfares - Direct/Return Flights, Economy etc).
- Advise preferred flight times. (You may need to be a little flexible)
- Include Airport Parking or travel to and from your Airport, and write it on your contract.
- Note who is responsible for arranging the booking.

- If driving, state whether you will use a private or hire car and include petrol, accommodation and meals while travelling.
- Include all “Airport Taxes” if travelling overseas.

**Other Travel Advice:**

- Most Tickets are “E Tickets” so ensure that you carry photo identification and arrive at the Airport with sufficient time to check in and go through the necessary security checks.
- Nowadays with computers, iPads and Smart phones, you can either print your Boarding Pass beforehand or have it on your phone.
- Also you are now able to book your own luggage through at the Airport with the different Airline Companies. Note -
- If you have multiple flights, check that your luggage is checked through to your final destination.
- Confirm from which Terminal your flight departs.
- Check time differences if travelling interstate or overseas. (Judges have been known to miss their flights because of time differences!)
- Allow yourself sufficient time if you need to go from one Terminal to another Terminal to catch a second flight.
- *Ask for the name and mobile phone number of the person who will be meeting you at the Airport* (Sometimes Clubs will ask you to catch a Shuttle Bus or a Maxi Taxi). You will need to know this beforehand.
- Arrange Travel Insurance if necessary. Some clubs may include this when booking your flight. If you travel frequently, it may be more economical to take out a yearly travel insurance which covers you for both domestic and overseas travel.

**Contract - Accommodation:**

- Motel with Single Room unless you agree to share.
- Good quality room.
- Number of nights.
- All meals to be provided.
- Ask for the name and phone number of your Motel before leaving. Leave this information and the contact number for the Club Secretary at your home address or with a family member.
- Carry the phone number of your Motel and the Club Secretary with you in case of any unforeseen circumstances. (e.g. You are not collected at the Airport or your flight has been delayed)
- Remember to take your copy of the judging contract with you in case you need to query anything.

**Note: Occasionally a club may ask if you will stay privately. This is not recommended unless it is with family or friends who are not exhibiting.**

**Other Points to Remember:**

- It is your responsibility to maintain a complete record of your judging appointments.
- It is also worthwhile keeping a current resume and photo as Clubs sometimes ask for this to include on the Website or in their Schedules.

- Keep up do date with any alterations to the Breed Standard, or any changes to judges' rules and regulations.
- Current "Breed and Extended Breed Standards" can be downloaded from the Dogs Australia or Dogs Queensland website.

#### **Inability to Fulfil a Judging Appointment:**

- Under Dogs Australia/Dogs Queensland rules, you must honour a contract once you have signed it. You are not permitted to withdraw from a judging appointment to accept any alternative judging appointments. (**Refer Dogs Queensland Rule Book – Section Four –“ Judges Code of Practice.”**)
- If you are unable to fulfil a contract because of accident or ill health, you must advise the Club concerned as soon as possible.
- If you could supply the Club with names of possible replacement judges it will generally be appreciated.

#### **Judging Procedures:**

- Check any differences in interstate or overseas rules. If travelling overseas it is wise to check whether judging procedures differ from those we have here. If they do then ask for the relevant information.
- Ensure you have the current ANKC Breed Standards, or Overseas/FCI Standards if necessary, and review them well before the show date.
- Have a copy of the standards with you and look it up if you are unsure of anything.
- When you have been advised what breed numbers you will be judging plan your judging rate accordingly.
- If you have a large entry please don't hesitate to ask for a competent Steward.

**Note: Allow time, preferably the day before judging if possible, to check into your motel so that you do not have to rush from the Airport to the Show.**

**It is a good idea to check the "Mini Bar" on arrival to ensure that it is complete. Judges in the past have been billed for missing items. Before leaving the motel always pay for any facilities that you use (e.g. Phone calls, laundry or any mini bar items) and obtain a receipt of payment to show the Club Secretary.**

**Often the Club Committee Members will take the judges to dinner the evening prior to the show. Try to avoid "private" Pre-Show Functions.**

#### **Critiques:**

- Be prepared. Have a small recorder, a suitable notebook and pen.
- Read critiques of experienced judges and get the "feel" for concise, constructive and informative notes.
- Always be positive! It is much more professional to say, "I preferred the coat on my first place winner" rather than to say, "The second dog had a dreadful coat!"

### **Behaviour Prior to Show:**

- Do not stand at ringside and watch the Breed or Groups which you will be judging prior to your judging appointment.
- Do not denigrate other judge's opinions.
- Do not solicit for appointments or entries.

### **Travelling:**

- Always carry a sufficient quantity of any medication that you normally take.
- On any overseas trips you should carry a list of prescribed medications provided by your Doctor.
- It is also a good idea to have a basic first aid kit with you when judging (e.g. Sunscreen, remedies for upset stomachs, painkillers and band-aids).
- If travelling overseas check with your Doctor or the Government Health Authority regarding recommended vaccinations and medications. It is a good idea to do this well before your departure date. Remember many countries still have Rabies, and Malaria can also be a problem.
- In many countries it is also advisable to drink bottled water ONLY.

## **SECTION 2: DAY OF THE SHOW**

**Note: Your ability and credibility will now be on show.**

### **Suitable Attire:**

- Dress neatly, smartly and wear comfortable closed in shoes.
- Sunglasses. It is now acceptable to wear sunglasses while judging. However if your sunglasses alter colour of objects, it may be necessary to check the coat colours of exhibits.
- Be prepared for wet weather, hot weather or cold weather.
- Ladies do not wear flowing clothes that will blow in the dogs face, very short skirts or jeans.
- Do not wear lots of jewellery especially heavy necklaces or bracelets.
- Gentlemen please use tie pins or a tie clip.
- Be prepared to wear a suitable hat and sunscreen if necessary.

### **At the Show:-**

- Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of show. Allow more time if necessary to sign required paperwork. (e.g. Stewarding Sheets or Judges Books).
- Advise Show Officials of your arrival.
- Ask to meet your Steward and remember their name.

**Note: Check location of toilets especially at Agricultural Shows as they could be quite a distance away.**

**At the Ring:-**

- Be at the ring that you will judging in with sufficient time to check size, surface condition, slope, place markers, entry and exit. (Ask Steward for any “local advice” if necessary)
- Ensure that there is water, soap and a towel or instant hand sanitizer.
- Check for wind direction and position of sun or lights (this will have a bearing on where you place an examination table or stand your class).
- Advise the Steward how you intend judging each class (e.g. Set up in front of the table or once around if more than one in the class)
- Also ask your Steward to have the next class ready to ensure a smooth flow of judging which helps to avoid any possible lapse in concentration.
- Judge efficiently and with consistency.

**Note: Keep in mind that your Steward or Writer could be a trainee judge and may appreciate being able to watch the dogs move.**

**Judging:**

- Commence judging on time.
- Check your judging rate approximately every hour and try to keep to your schedule. It is important to complete your judging in the time frame allotted by the Show Manager.
- Be aware if judging in some countries, you will be given a time table for judging your breeds.
- Examine each dog in the same systematic manner.
- Look relaxed, but alert and confident.
- Watch your “Body Language!” Be decisive; do not stand with your hands in your pockets or with your arms folded.
- Always convey the impression that you are confident and in command.
- Do not engage in unnecessary conversation with Exhibitors. By all means smile and say, “Good Morning!”
- Ask ages of dogs if necessary. However, rules may vary in other states or countries. Always check first!
- It is not wise to be seen socializing with Exhibitors on the day of the show. (Either before, during and after the show) Exhibitor’s especially those who did not win will not be very charitable towards you.
- If you have a very large class (perhaps at a Breed Specialty) and need to split it into two sections, enquire as to how many placings are required. Always retain at least that number from each section.
- When judging Best in Group do not short list a few dogs unless you have been advised that this is standard practice in the particular region in which you are judging.

**Note: Remember “First Impressions” are lasting!**

**Judging Individual Breeds:**

- Some breeds require special handling. Familiarize yourself with these breeds.
- Learn to handle the dogs correctly. Use your hands to feel for correct conformation especially with long coated breeds.
- Try to be thorough when examining an exhibit. Do not push or prod or just ruffle the coat.
- Never kneel in front of a dog, straddle them or stand over small breeds.
- Always approach a dog from the front in particular, sight hounds.
- A good tip is never to approach a dog with your hands raised higher than waist level. Offer a clenched fist for approval. This way there is less risk of injury if a dog does decide to attack.
- Try to always keep one hand on the dog that you are examining. If you “lose contact” re-start from the front again.
- Do not “eyeball” any dog!
- Always return “table dogs” to the table if you wish to re-examine a dog. The Exhibitor will be happy to do this for you.
- Try to avoid having dogs looking directly into the sun.
- Where possible, avoid facing breeds with semi-erect ears into the wind. (e.g. Shelties and Collies). It can change their expression entirely.

**Note: Ask on breed lecture nights the correct way to approach and handle individual breeds.**

**Opening a Dogs Mouth and Checking Dentition:**

- Learn to do this competently.
- Avoid covering the dog’s eyes.
- Remember in some breeds, dog’s with incomplete dentition can be a disqualification.
- If you are experiencing difficulty in examining a dog’s mouth it may be wise to ask the Exhibitor to open the dog’s mouth

**Coats:**

- There are many types of coats and coat textures. (e.g. **Textures:** fine to medium, harsh, oily, silky, wiry, woolly etc... **Coats:** Dense, distinctive, double coated, glossy, no undercoat, water repellent, weather resistant to name a few).  
Learn from breed lectures if there are any breed specific ways of checking that breeds coat.
- Be aware that markings can be very deceptive, and often can create optical illusions.



### **Movement/Gait:**

- Moving dogs is done for a good reason and is not part of the “routine” just to fill in time.
- Once you have moved the dogs and they have returned to the line-up do try to remember each dog’s movement.
- Most dogs should work at a trot on a loose lead

### **Do study books and videos on movement and learn what to look for:-**

- Rear Movement: Crabbing, moving too close or too wide behind etc...
- Front Movement: Crossing over, toeing in, too wide or too narrow in front.
- Side Movement: Check for length of stride, does the dog have good extension front and rear? Is it pacing or overreaching?
- Is the movement correct for the individual breed? (e.g. Bulldogs, Pekingese and Pugs)
- Does the top line remain in the correct position for a particular breed?
- Only move each dog one at a time out and back. It is hard enough watching four legs at one time let alone watching eight or more. By moving more than one dog at a time you can be sure that they will not move at the same pace nor will they all move in a straight line!

### **Final Assessment and Placings:**

- Try to mentally place the class as you are judging each exhibit. This will save time and you will appear more efficient.
- Class numbers permitting, your place getters should then be of a similar type.
- As a judge it is your responsibility to ensure that the winners are placed on the markers in the correct order. Be clear and precise when placing your class. Do not wave vaguely and hope that your Steward gets it right!

### **Problems You May Encounter While Judging:**

- Be aware of what may be happening in or near your ring.
- Double Handling: Quickly try moving the position of the class.
- Exhibitor’s placing their dog too close to another exhibit or moving to a position that masks another exhibit.
- Dealing with Exhibitor’s who interfere with, upset or let their dogs interfere with other exhibits: In many instances this is caused mainly through a new Exhibitor or a young unruly dog. Sometimes unfortunately it is quite deliberate. Do not tolerate this type of behaviour. Move that person or dog to the end of the line.

**Note: If any situation cannot be resolved simply and quickly, call the Show Manager. Do not become involved in an argument!**

**Withholding Challenge Certificates and Awards:**

- Check with Dogs Queensland (DQ) or Dogs Australia or the overseas country concerned regarding “Disqualification” procedures.
- An animal that is favouring any leg during movement may be excused from the ring.
- Do not state, ”Your dog has hip dysplasia (HD)” or “Your dog is deaf or has entropion” etc... These matters are only in your opinion, you have no proof, and you are not qualified to make a diagnosis regarding any such matters.
- If you find a male dog that is not entire you must advise the Exhibitor then act in accordance with the rules by reporting the fact.
- Tell the Exhibitor yourself. Do not leave it to your Steward or simply ignore it. Do it kindly as this may be that Exhibitor’s first show dog.
- Be familiar with the procedures for aggressive dogs and once again act in accordance with the rules.
- After judging, answer any Exhibitor’s queries politely but avoid entering into a lengthy debate.
- At the end of the day be absolutely sure that you have judged the dogs to the very best of your ability.

**Note: A quote from English Judge, the late Tom Horner, “A Judge must be able to live with his decisions and the only way to do this is to place the dogs in their exact order of merit as he sees it!”**

ENJOY YOUR JUDGING!

