

Beginner's guide to... heelwork to music



Could your dog be a star?

What is heelwork to music?

Heelwork to music (HTM) is a competitive activity in which participants devise routines of up to four minutes, set to music, and perform the routines with their dog.

There are two categories of competition; heelwork to music where two thirds of the routine must be heelwork and the remainder choreographed as you wish, and freestyle where, as the name implies, the routine is entirely of your devising! Heelwork to music requires many dog training skills and those taking part usually have had backgrounds in other training activities, although this is certainly not a prerequisite for the discipline. Competitors are judged over three sections; content and flow, accuracy and team performance and musical interpretation, each allocated a maximum of ten marks. Events are held around the country, usually starting with classes for starters up to advanced.

Why should you do heelwork to music?

- Meet new friends – there is a great social scene to be enjoyed
- Impress your peers with your dog's new talent – "HTM", as it is known, has even been a great success on talent shows
- Discover your creative side by choreographing exciting routines for you and your dog
- Your dog will love the chance to learn new skills and moves
- Your dog does not have to be a pedigree – all dogs can do heelwork to music
- You do not have to be musically talented to be able to do heelwork to music – anyone can do it



All you need to know

- Your dog must be registered with us on the Breed Register or the Activity Register
- Competitors taking part in any Kennel Club licensed event must familiarise themselves with The Kennel Club rules and regulations beforehand. The heelwork to music regulations booklet is available from our publications department
- Dogs can start competing in heelwork to music from 12 months and freestyle from 18 months of age
- No previous experience is necessary so request a list of **heelwork to music clubs** today

Register your dog on the Activity Register using form 5 online at thekennelclub.org.uk/activityregister



Handling your dog

Attending your first heelwork to music show may cause your dog to behave differently than it does in training. Young dogs in particular can be bothered by crowds and if this is the case you can move a little way from other competitors and officials. Just remember it is a new experience for you and your dog and should you have any concerns there are always Stewards/Officials available to speak to.

| Possibility of taking part at Crufts!

| Suitable for both pedigree and crossbreed dogs

| Clubs all over the UK

Get started today!

To find a list of clubs, training classes or competitions near you, use the 'Find a Club' and 'Find a Show' services available on thekennelclub.org.uk

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Dancing your routine: top tips

Content and flow

To design the best routine, the dog's movements should have greater emphasis than the handler's. The routine should have lots of different movements with no excessive repetition, otherwise points may be lost.

Accuracy and team performance

This will test how smoothly your dog moves and how promptly it acknowledges the cues which are given.



Musical interpretation

Have you and your dog produced a flowing choreographed routine? Has your interpretation of the music and rhythm been apparent? Has your routine been balanced and well structured? This is what the judges will be marking you on, so make sure you practise those steps.



Are you ready for your first heelwork to music show?

Visit [thekennelclub.org.uk/heelworktomusic](https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/heelworktomusic) or email htm@thekennelclub.org.uk to find all you need to know about entering shows and the next steps to becoming a heelwork to music star!

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