

Beginner's guide to... Bloodhound trials



Has your Bloodhound got what it takes to track the human scent?

What are Bloodhound trials?

A Bloodhound trial is a challenging exercise for your Bloodhound, hunting a specially laid scent over vast areas of land. Bloodhound trials require the dog to identify the human scent. The procedure is that a 'runner' leaves an article with their scent on it attached to a flag at the start. They then 'walk the line' predetermined on a map which is up to three miles long. The hound is then required to follow the line and find and identify the runner who waits at the end of the line.

Why should you take part in Bloodhound trials?

- If you love the great outdoors you will love Bloodhound trials
- Enjoy being out in nature with your dog
- Develop what your dog was bred to do
- There's a great social scene to be enjoyed

Great for fitness with your dog!



All you need to know

- Your dog must be a pure bred Bloodhound and must be registered with The Kennel Club
- Competitors taking part in any Kennel Club licensed event must familiarise themselves with The Kennel Club rules and regulations beforehand. The working trial and Bloodhound trial regulations booklet is available to buy from our publications department
- Dogs can start competing at 12 months of age

Handling your dog

Attending your first Bloodhound trial may cause your dog to behave differently than it does in training. Your Bloodhound can be bothered by crowds or by the fact that he is travelling in a convoy. If this is the case, you can move away from other competitors to help settle your dog, but don't lose sight of the convoy. Bloodhounds should be kept under good control at all times, both whilst waiting to compete and during the trial. You should always be aware of how your dog is reacting and what it is doing. All Bloodhounds should be trained and worked using plenty of encouragement.

If for any reason you become aware that your dog is not working well, you should ask the judge's permission to withdraw, and for the sake of your dog, ask the route of the line so that the dog can be walked in and meet up with his runner. His reward is finding his runner.



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

Beginner's guide to... Bloodhound trials



Bloodhound trials: top tips

Stakes

Levels of competition

Each hound at a trial has its own line, if possible starting somewhere near to where the previous line finished. The ground used for a Bloodhound trial may be agricultural land, moorland, woodland or open hill country. Hounds need to be able to negotiate a variety of terrain and to be able to deal with fences, hedges, ditches, water, road crossings and stone walls. Distractions encountered can include farm workers, tractors, crop spraying, muck spreading and livestock, and of course natural hazards such as game, deer, foxes and hares. A good hound will ignore all other scents and not change from the scent of the 'runner'. For a successful Bloodhound trial approximately ten thousand acres of land is required.

Bloodhounds work using air scent ('hunting'), rather than following a line of disturbance on the ground ('tracking'), as most other breeds do. This frequently enables them to work at a faster speed than tracking dogs.



Dogs compete at ascending levels called 'stakes'. In order, the stakes are:

Novice stake

Working a line one mile long and at least half an hour cold; once a hound has won a 1st or 2nd place in a novice or junior stake, or 1st in an intermediate or senior stake, it can no longer compete in a novice stake.

Junior stake

Working a line two miles long and at least an hour cold; hounds must have won a 1st or 2nd place in a novice stake to enter. They can no longer enter a junior stake after winning a 1st or 2nd in a junior stake or 1st in an intermediate or senior stake.

Intermediate stake

Working a line two and a half miles long and at least one and a half hours cold; hounds must have gained a 1st or 2nd place in a junior stake to enter. They can no longer enter an intermediate stake once they have won 1st place in an intermediate or senior stake.

Senior stake

Working a line three miles long and at least two hours cold; hounds must have won 1st place in an intermediate stake to enter, and must have been stock tested so that they can be hunted free (off leash).



Are you ready for your first Bloodhound trial?

Visit thekennelclub.org.uk/bloodhoundworkingtrials or email workingtrials@thekennelclub.org.uk to find all you need to know about entering a trial.

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