

Your Dog's C.A.R.E. Passport



Table of Contents

What is C.A.R.E. Passport

Skills the Dogs Learned and
Their Purpose

Training Methods

Training Procedures

Resources

What is C.A.R.E. Passport?

The Canine Adoption Readiness and Education Passport was created to provide a bridge between the shelter's work with the dogs and the adopter bringing the dog into their homes. Many shelters spend time working with dogs in their care to teach them skills that can help them in their new homes. Our mission is to bridge the gap between training in the shelter before adoption and the follow-up training in their new homes to prevent dogs from being relinquished back to the shelter.

Each dog that goes through this program is evaluated on ten skills and then given a passport that shows what the dog has learned. There are two levels of testing for their evaluation. The first level allows for food to be given after each skill. The second level means that the dog understands to do the behaviors and food rewards can be delayed until the end. It is our belief that dogs are always learning and may need a little more help depending on circumstances and it is more important to provide that rather than demand obedience.

Each adopter will get this report and after filling out the form on the website will be able to get an updated digital version with the dog's new name and the adopter's name. Use this e-book to learn about the skills your dog learned and how to continue working with them in your home.



C.A.R.E. Passport

Canine Adoption Readiness
and Education Passport
Pilot Program



Dog's Name

Adopter's Name

Shelter Name

Dogs were trained and tested on the following skills:

Foundation skills

Loose-leash walk – Walk 30 ft through everyday distractions (people, dogs, food).

Settle on a mat – Go to a mat/bed/crate and stay 10 seconds until released.

Wait at Doorway – Wait at an open door until released.

Recall/Collar Grab – Hold a stay at 20 ft, then come when called and allow a collar grab.

Social/Movement skills

Parallel walk – Walk 20 ft alongside another dog/handler team.

Send out and return – Go out 5 ft, around a cone, return past distractions.

Targeting – Put 2, then 4 paws on a platform; do a nose touch on cue.

Tolerance skills

Vet hold – Tolerate a veterinary-style exam hold (ears, paws, back).

Muzzle acceptance – Hold nose in a cone/muzzle.

Reaction to door – Stay calm through knocking or doorbell sounds.

How your new dog was assessed

Level 1 (with food) ☐

Exercises

Loose Leash Walk

Settle on Mat

Wait at Doorway

Recall to Collar Grab

Parallel Walk

Distraction Recall

Targeting

Vet Hold

Muzzle Acceptance

Reaction to the Door

Level 2 (without food) ☐

Excelled

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More Training

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Level 1 means the dog was given food after each exercise.

Level 2 means the dog was able to try all ten exercises and only got food at the end of the assessment.

This passport shows the training this dog has completed so far, along with skills that may need extra practice.

Use it as a guide to continue their training at home, training history of adoptable dogs.

You can find out how to continue training your dog at

www.powerpupstraining.com/CARE

Skills the dogs learned and their purpose

Your dog learned and was evaluated on ten skills. These skills prevent nuisance behaviors that can make living with a dog difficult. While we can't guarantee that you will never have a problem with your dog or that your dog will perform all these behaviors perfectly every time, we can help set you up for success.

1. Loose leash walking around a distraction – If dogs are constantly pulling toward something that they want, it can make walks difficult and possibly dangerous.

Checks ins around distractions and being able to walk with you can keep you and your dog safer and make walks more enjoyable.

2. Going to a mat and settling on it for at least 10 seconds
– Dogs tend to be underfoot right when it's inconvenient.

Giving dogs a space to go that is theirs can prevent problems from excitement when people come over or getting into the kitchen while you are preparing food or eating.

3. Waiting at an open doorway – Dogs that don't understand the boundaries at thresholds are more likely to run out and get lost.

Dogs can learn that an open doorway does not mean that they can go through it. This can prevent running out, getting hit by a car, getting into an altercation with someone or another dog.

4. Recall into a collar grab – If a dog does get loose, they may not be willing to let someone reach for their collar, even if they are willing to come back when called.

Dogs who are taught to associate a collar grab with something good will be more likely to let anyone bring them into safety.

5. Walking near another dog and handler in a parallel walk – When dogs see another dog out walking near them, they may react by barking or lunging and make the walk distressing.

Dogs who are taught to ignore other dogs walking near them can be much safer and much easier to walk.

6. Send out around a cone and recall past a distraction – Dogs may get out a distance away from you and not be able to resist something near them when you are further away.

Teaching a dog to go out away from you and come back to you past something tempting, can build confidence, impulse control, and independence.

7. Target 2 feet and 4 feet on platforms and a nose touch to a hand – Dogs who aren't comfortable getting on things or moving close to a human hand can make vet and grooming visits difficult.

Teaching a dog to step onto platforms and follow a hand target makes it easier to get on a scale or table or into position for exams and grooming, creating less stress for everyone.

8. Accept a veterinary or grooming restraint – Dogs that can't be held by a veterinarian or groomer struggle to get the proper care they need.

Teaching dogs to accept common holds to get vaccinations, blood draws, vitals taken, or getting trims can set those dogs up for getting all the care they need while making visits safer, and in some cases, cheaper.

9. Put nose in muzzle or small sports cone – Dogs who are in pain or have a hard time being around people who need to work with them in close range can become a bite risk.

Teaching a dog to allow a muzzle over its nose can drastically reduce injury to the person and to the dog and can make a potentially stressful, dangerous situation much easier to work with.

10. Settles quickly or doesn't react to doorbells or knocking on a door – Dogs can become overly excited or over aroused when people come to the door. Sometimes dogs don't want anyone else in their home. It can make become an uncomfortable situation if a dog can't calm down after hearing someone at the door.

Giving the dog a cue that can let them know that everything is ok and that they can settle down can calm the situation and make things easier for everyone.

Training Methods

Since training is not a regulated industry, anyone can call themselves a trainer and use training methods that may not be ethical or kind to the dog. Power Pups and Puppies for Parole both advocate in using humane methods that are outlined by the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior. Handouts about what they recommend are available for free at <https://avsab.org/resources/position-statements/>.

Our philosophy is that dogs learn the best through being taught what to do instead of what not to do. We set up the environment to try to get the dog to do what we want. Many times, this involves luring the dog with food or with our hands. When the dog does what we want, we mark the behavior we like and then give the dog a piece of food.

Marking a behavior is typically done with the word, "yes", or a click of the tongue or a clicker that you can get at a pet supply store. Mark for what you want to see and then immediately reward to make the association between the behavior and the reward.

Management is heavily employed to prevent unwanted behavior. This means to take time to dog-proof your house. Many dogs enjoying chewing on people's personal items. If you keep these things out of reach, the dog won't be able to rehearse the behavior of chewing. If you leave food out on the counter and the dog can reach and manages to get something from time to time, it will reinforce his decision to keep checking out the counter.

Set your dog up for success by managing his environment so that he learns to make good choices.

Training Procedures

1. Loose leash walking

a. Start with your dog standing still next to your leg. Bring food down your side into their mouth, and reward heavily for staying in that spot.

b. Toss a treat away to break position, then lure or cue them back into place beside you.

c. Once they understand the position, add a cue word (like "heel," "with me," or "close").

d. Add movement. Cue, take a step or two, then mark and reward.

e. Gradually add more steps, more distractions, and less frequent rewards.

f. Build up to 30 feet of continuous walking. Your dog doesn't need a formal heel, but just needs to stay close enough to keep the leash loose.



2. Go to a mat and settle

- a. Set out a mat and show interest in it yourself. Reward any interest your dog shows too.
- b. Toss a treat away from the mat, then wait to see if your dog returns on their own. Reward on the mat when they do.
- c. Once they're returning reliably, add your cue before they head back.
- d. Vary how long they stay by mixing short and long durations so it doesn't feel like it's always getting harder.
- e. Build duration first (up to 10 seconds), then add distance (up to 10 feet away, 30 seconds).



3. Wait at an open doorway

- a. Choose a door you can open and close easily.
- b. Say "wait" and open it a crack. If your dog pushes forward, close the door.
- c. Reset and try again. reward calm waiting.
- d. Gradually open the door wider as your dog succeeds and use a release word occasionally so they know waiting will end.
- e. Once your dog waits reliably with a fully open door, try it without saying the cue at all. Just open the door a crack and close it if they move. They'll quickly learn the same rule applies.
- f. Start to give a release word that means it is ok for them to go through.



4. Stay, recall, and collar grab

a. Start on a platform or mat. Cue a stay, wait a second, then reward.

b. Build duration first (about 10 seconds), then start adding distance. Begin with a foot shuffle, then turn around with your back to your dog. When the dog is staying with those distractions, take a few steps, and return each time before resetting.

c. Build up to a full 20-foot stay.

d. Practice the recall separately: say your cue, then reward when your dog comes.

e. Have a helper hold your dog while you call them from a distance, so they learn to come from a stationary position.

f. Practice the collar grab on its own: reach for the collar, mark, and reward. Go only as far as your dog is comfortable and build up slowly.

g. Combine all three: stay, walk 20 feet away, call your dog, and calmly take hold of the collar when they arrive.



5. Parallel walking with another dog

- a. Start with enough distance that both dogs can stay relaxed and focused on their handlers.
- b. Slowly close the gap as long as both dogs stay calm. You can talk to your dog or feed your dog to help them know what they are supposed to do.
- c. Add movement once dogs are comfortable around 12–15 feet apart.
- d. Build up to walking together, 20 feet, staying 12–15 feet apart, with no barking or lunging toward each other.



6. Send-out around a cone with a distraction

- a. Start with the cone (or other object like a trash can) close and no distractions. Lure your dog around it and reward on return.
- b. Add a cue once your dog understands the pattern.
- c. Gradually increase distance to 10 feet. If your dog struggles twice in a row, make it easier again.
- d. Add a low-value distraction (like a covered treat) close by, and reward for completing the send out.
- e. Build up until your dog can go around a cone 10 feet away, past a distraction 6 feet off their path, and return to you.



7. Paws and feet on a platform, plus a nose touch

a. Show your dog a low platform (no more than 12 inches high). Reward any interest, even sniffing, stepping near it, etc.

b. If they don't approach on their own, lure them onto it with a treat.

c. Reward the moment one paw touches the platform. You can feed right there or toss the treat off so they have to step back on to get more.

d. Once they're offering that reliably, add a cue (like "paws").

e. Repeat the same process for all four feet on the platform, using a separate cue (like "feet") if you'd like to be able to ask for either.

f. For the nose touch: hold your hand a couple inches from your dog's face. They'll likely move toward it out of curiosity or habit — the moment their nose touches your hand, mark and reward. If they seem confused, try holding a treat between your fingers at first to guide them.

g. Add the cue ("touch") once they understand the game.



8. Vet and grooming holds

There are two holds you can practice:

- Sitting hold – Your dog sits with their back against your legs. One hand gently lifts the chin, the other rests across the front legs.
- Standing hold – One arm supports under the head (no pressure on the throat), the other wraps around the belly.

a. Start with no touching at all. Get your dog comfortable sitting against your legs or standing calmly next to you.

b. Add quick, light touches, then treat right away. Slowly build up how long you hold and how much pressure you use, going at your dog's pace.

c. Watch your dog's body language. Signs they need a break: pulling away, going stiff and still, licking their lips, or turning their head away.

d. After each touch, let go and watch what your dog does. If they stay relaxed and lean back in, keep going. If they move away or seem unsettled, slow down and make it easier.

e. Put your arm under your dog's head to hold it still for just a second in both instances. Feed immediately.



9. Nose target into a muzzle or cone

- a. Show your dog the muzzle/cone and reward any curiosity or engagement.
- b. If they won't approach on their own, lure with a treat inside or just behind it.
- c. Do lots of short reps. Let your dog back out any time. Never push it toward them.
- d. Once they're eager to go in, start building duration by waiting a beat before rewarding.
- e. If they lose confidence, do an easy rep first (reward even if they back out), then ask for more again.
- f. Build up to 2 seconds, nose in.
- g. You can keep working on this to build up duration and putting straps around the dog's head.



10. Calm around doorbells/knocking

a. Use a neutral noise at first (knock on a table, drop a book).

b. Feed immediately after the sound, no matter what your dog does. Barking is fine at first.

c. Repeat with different sounds in different places so your dog generalizes.

d. Watch for stress signs (lip licking, looking away, tucked tail) and don't push past what your dog can handle.

e. Once your dog gets excited (not alarmed) by hearing random, transfer it to a real doorbell or knock.

f. Start to ring the doorbell, and then feed your dog. Don't let the dog see the food first.

g. The dog will associate the knock or doorbell in practice with food that is coming.

h. You can add a cue to mean stop barking like "all done" before you give them food. It's hard to bark while they are eating in most cases.



Resources

If you find yourself struggling with your dog, we have put together a list of resources for you.

If you decide to find a trainer to help you, please follow the guidelines in this graphic from AVSAB. They also have an entire article on how to find a trainer on their website.

Look for These = Green Flag	Avoid These = Red Flag
Rewards- treats, toys, praise	Prong or shock collar, push, pull, poke, hit, leash jerks, roll dog onto their back, twist ears/lips, rattle can, water spray bottle
Communication, cues, building a relationship or strong bond	Boss, alpha, pack leader, dominant/submissive, respect, obey, command
Clicker training, force free, positive reinforcement	Balanced training
Prevent unwanted behavior and teach a replacement behavior	Punish/correct unwanted behavior
Upbeat tone of voice and friendly body language	Harsh tone of voice, yelling, stomping, or threatening body language
Promotes outlets for normal dog behavior, choice and overall well-being	Shut down normal dog behavior, limit choice, and demand control over the dog

Books

"Meet Your Dog: The Game-Changing Guide to Understanding Your Dog's Behavior" by Kim Brophey.

"The Power of Positive Dog Training" by Pat Miller.

"Culture Clash" (2nd Edition) by Jean Donaldson.

"Don't Shoot the Dog!" by Karen Pryor.

"The Other End of the Leash" by Patricia McConnell.

"Perfect Puppy in 7 Days: How to Start Your Puppy Off Right" by Dr. Sophia Yin.

"Dog Training and Behavior: A Guide for Everyone" by
Shay Kelly

"Canine Enrichment" by Shay Kelly

"Puppy Nurture" by Shay Kelly

"Living With Kids and Dogs...Without Losing Your Mind"
by Colleen Pelar

"Raising Puppies and Kids Together: A Guide for Parents"
by Pia Silvani and Lynn Eckhardt

YouTube Channels

<https://www.youtube.com/@kikopup>

<https://www.youtube.com/@DogsThat>

<https://www.youtube.com/@happyhoundsdogtraining>

Common Cues

CUES		
Behavior	Physical Cue	Verbal Cue
Attention from the dog	Finger or hand target near where you want the dog to look	Dog's name or Ready
Nose touch to hand	Hold your hand flat in front of the dog's face	Touch
Sit	Arm bent at the elbow and raise your hand to your shoulder	Sit
Stand	Present a hand touch target to get the dog up out of a sit or down	Stand
Down	Point to the ground	Down
Collar Grab	Hand outstretched toward dog's neck	Here
Recall	Arm outstretched in front of you and then bring your hand into your chest	Come
Heel - Left side	Hand by your left thigh as a target	Heel
Heel - Right side	Hand by your right thigh as a target	Side
Leave it	N/A	Leave it
Chin Rest	Hand cupped near your dog's chin	Chin
Muzzle	Muzzle or cone in hand in front of your dog's face	Muzzle
Mat/Place	N/A (You can point to the mat but that can be ambiguous)	Place
Restraint	Depending on the restraint you are using, get down to the dog's level and hold your arms where you want the dog to be.	Get in
Around a cone	Sweeping movement with your full arm to encourage movement around the cone	Around
2 Feet on Platform	Tap the platform/Presence of the platform	Paws
4 Feet on Platform	Tap the platform/Presence of the platform	Feet
Wait at doorway	N/A	Wait
Stop Barking	Make an X with your forearms and move your arms away from each other	All Done
Release cue from waiting at door/on place/in muzzle	N/A	Ok
Loose leash walking cues		
Wait for handler to catch up	Stop movement so the dog has to stop	Wait
Stop	Stop movement so the dog has to stop	Stop
Come back to handler	Tap leg	Here
Turns	N/A	Turn (means watch me to see which way)
Leave a thing alone	N/A	Leave it