

# *Puppy Aptitude Test Form*

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puppy (color, sex) \_\_\_\_\_ litter \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

## **SOCIAL ATTRACTION**

Place puppy in test area. From a few feet away the tester coaxes the pup to her/him by clapping hands gently and kneeling down. Tester must coax in a direction away from the point where it entered the testing area.

Degree of social attraction, confidence or dependence.

- 1-Came readily, tail up, jumped, bit at hands
- 2-Came readily, tail up, pawed, licked at hands.
- 3-Came readily, tail up.
- 4-Came readily, tail down
- 5-Came hesitantly, tail down.
- 6-Didn't come at all.

## **FOLLOWING**

Stand up and walk away from the pup in a normal manner. Make sure the pup sees you walk away.

Degree of following attraction. Not following indicates independence.

- 1-Followed readily, tail up, got underfoot, bit at feet.
- 2-Followed readily, tail up, got underfoot.
- 3-Followed readily, tail up
- 4-Followed readily, tail down.
- 5-Followed hesitantly, tail down.
- 6-No follow or went away.

## **RESTRAINT**

Crouch down and gently roll the pup on his back and hold it with one hand for a full 30 seconds

Degree of dominant or submissive tendency. How it accepts stress when socially/physically dominated.

- 1 -Struggled fiercely, flailed, bit.
- 2 -Struggled fiercely, flailed.
- 3 -Settled, struggled, settled with some eye contact.

- 4 -Struggled then settled.
- 5 -No struggle.
- 6 -No struggle, straining to avoid eye contact.

### **SOCIAL DOMINANCE**

Let pup standup and gently stroke him from the head to back while you crouch beside him. Continue stroking until are recognizable behavior is established.

Degree of acceptance of social dominance. Pup may try to dominate by jumping and nipping or is independent and walks away.

- 1 - Jumped, pawed, bit, growled.
- 2 - Jumped, pawed.
- 3 - Cuddles up to tester and tries to lick face.
- 4 - Squirmed, licked at hands.
- 5 - Rolled over, licked at hands.
- 6- Went away and stayed away.

### **ELEVATION DOMINANCE**

Bend over and cradle the pup under its belly, fingers interlaced, palms up and elevate it just off the ground. Hold it there for 30 seconds.

Degree of accepting dominance while in position of no control.

- 1-Struggled fiercely, bit, growled.
- 2 -Struggled fiercely.
- 3 -No struggle, relaxed
- 4 -Struggled, settled, licked
- 5 -No struggle, licked at hands.
- 6 -No struggle, froze.

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## **OBEDIENCE APTITUDE TEST**

### **RETRIEVING**

Crouch beside pup and attract his attention with crumpled up paper ball. When the pup shows interest and is watching, toss the object 4-6 feet in front of pup.

Degree of willingness to work with a human. High correlation between ability to retrieve and successful guide dogs, obedience dogs, field trial dogs.

- 1 -Chases object, picks up object and runs away.
- 2 -Chases object, stands over object, does not return.
- 3 -Chases object and returns with object to tester.
- 4 -Chases object and returns without object to tester.
- 5 -Starts to chase object, loses interest.
- 6 -Does not chase object.

### **TOUCH SENSITIVITY**

Take puppy's webbing of one front foot and press between **\*finger** and thumb lightly then more firmly till you get a response, while you count slowly to 10. Stop as soon as puppy pulls away, or shows discomfort.

**\*DO NOT use fingernail.**

Degree of sensitivity to touch.

- 1 -10 counts before response.
- 2 -7 counts before response.
- 3 -6 counts before response.
- 4 -4 counts before response.
- 5 -2 counts before response.

### **SOUND SENSITIVITY**

Place pup in the center of area, tester or assistant makes a sharp noise a few feet from the puppy. A large metal spoon struck sharply on a metal pan twice works well.

Degree of sensitivity to sound. (Also can be a rudimentary test for deafness.)

- 1 -Listens, locates sound, walks toward it barking.
- 2 -Listens, locates sound, barks.
- 3 -Listens, locates sound, shows curiosity and walks toward sound.
- 4 -Listens, locates the sound.
- 5 -Cringes, backs off, hides.
- 6 -Ignores sound, shows no curiosity.

### **SIGHT SENSITIVITY**

Place pup in center of room. Tie a string around a large towel and jerk it across the floor a few feet away from puppy.

Degree of intelligent response to strange object.

- 1 -Looks, attacks and bites.
- 2 -Looks, barks and tail up.

3 -Looks curiously, attempts to investigate.

4 -Looks, barks, tail-tuck.

5 -Runs away, hides.

## STRUCTURE

The puppy is gently set in a natural stance and evaluated for structure in the following categories:

Straight front

Straight rear

Shoulder layback

Front angulation

Croup angulation

Rear angulation

Degree of structural soundness. Good structure is necessary.

Good -The puppy is correct in structure.

Fair -The puppy has a slight fault or deviation.

Poor -The puppy has an extreme fault or deviation.

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## Interpreting the Scores

**Mostly 1's** A puppy that consistently scores a 1 in the temperament section of the test is an extremely dominant, aggressive puppy who can easily be provoked to bite. His dominant nature will attempt to resist human leadership, thus requiring only the most experienced of handlers. This puppy is a poor choice for most individuals and will do best in a working situation as a guard or police dog.

**Mostly 2's** This pup is dominant and self-assured. He can be provoked to bite; however he readily accepts human leadership that is firm, consistent and knowledgeable. This is not a dog for a tentative, indecisive individual. In the right hands, he has the potential to become a fine working or show dog and could fit into an adult household, provided the owners know what they are doing.

**Mostly 3's** This pup is outgoing and friendly and will adjust well in situations in which he receives regular training and exercise. He has a flexible temperament that adapts well to different types of environment, provided he is handled correctly. May be too much dog for

a family with small children or an elderly couple who are sedentary.

**Mostly 4's** A pup that scores a majority of 4's is an easily controlled, adaptable puppy whose submissive nature will make him continually look to his master for leadership. This pup is easy to train, reliable with kids, and, though he lacks self-confidence, makes a high-quality family pet. He is usually less outgoing than a pup scoring in the 3's, but his demeanor is gentle and affectionate.

**Mostly 5's** This is a pup who is extremely submissive and lacking in self-confidence. He bonds very closely with his owner and requires regular companionship and encouragement to bring him out of himself. If handled incorrectly, this pup will grow up very shy and fearful. For this reason, he will do best in a predictable, structured lifestyle with owners who are patient and not overly demanding, such as an elderly couple.

**Mostly 6's** A puppy that scores 6 consistently is independent and uninterested in people. He will mature into a dog who is not demonstrably affectionate and who has a low need for human companionship. In general, it is rare to see properly socialized pups test this way; however there are several breeds that have been bred for specific tasks (such as basenjis, hounds, and some northern breeds) which can exhibit this level of independence. To perform as intended, these dogs require a singularity of purpose that is not compromised by strong attachments to their owner.

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The remainder of the puppy test is an evaluation of obedience aptitude and working ability and provides a general picture of a pup's intelligence, spirit, and willingness to work with a human being. For most owners, a good companion dog will score in the 3 to 4 range in this section of the test. Puppies scoring a combination of 1's and 2's require experienced handlers who will be able to draw the best aspects of their potential from them.

Important note from Wendy Volhard...regarding the Touch Sensitivity test - *Do not use your fingernail when performing this test.* Press between the finger and thumb lightly then more firmly until you get a response.

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