

AGILITY TRIAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS

If you've never been to an agility trial before, the sign-up sheet might be a little intimidating. If it's your first time helping at a trial, the best and easiest jobs are Ring Crew or Leash Runner. Many people consider Ring Crew the best job since you get to sit in the ring and watch the dogs run. Here are all the jobs in order of difficulty...

Ring Crew: There are usually 3-4 people on Ring Crew per ring and each cover a designated area. Basically the Ring Crew re-sets any bars that are knocked during a run before the next dog is able to go. Then whenever there is a height change, all ring crew go out and set the bars to the new height and adjust any other equipment affected by the height change. For the most part you will be able to sit and watch the runs, only getting up when something needs to be re-set. One person on ring crew will be designated as a **chute straightener**. After each dog runs the standard course, the chute needs to be fluffed or straightened for the next dog. This job is important and easy but can be somewhat physically challenging so it's best to have multiple people rotate from this job as classes change. Don't worry all jobs include free training.

If you like to keep moving, **Leash Runner** would be a good job for you. Once the dog and handler takes off, you pick up their leash and walk it to the designated spot at the finish line so that they are able to quickly get their dog on leash and leave the ring once their run is over. The next dog can't start until the judge sees that the previous dog is on leash. You usually don't get much of a chance to sit and it's a little harder to watch the action since you are walking back and forth but there is no running involved.

Scribe runner is a similar job to leash runner, only you are standing outside the ring near the Scribe who will be handing you scribe sheets for each dog as they complete the course. When you have 3-4 in hand you walk over to the trial secretary's desk and hand him/her the scribe sheets. Then you return to the ringside to wait for more scribe sheets to be ready for delivery. Sometimes you may be asked to run scribe sheets for two rings but it's not that much harder. Just stop at each ring to collect scribe sheets before delivering them to the secretary. Again there really is no running required.

Timer is another job that allows you to sit and watch the action. It might sound intimidating but the timing is electronic. The Timer will push the "go" button when the judge signals with a thumbs up after each dog runs. An electronic voice tells the next handler "ready" or "go" so that they can begin. The dog starts the timer when they go over the first obstacle and stops the timer when they go over the last one. When a dog competes their run, you share the time with the Scribe who is sitting next to you and they write the time on the score sheet. And of course let the judge know immediately after a dog finishes their run if there is an equipment malfunction. It is important to notice that the timer has started correctly and is not interrupted during a run. During height changes the timer checks to make sure the timer eyes are adjusted if needed and that both eyes are still registering on the timer console.

The **Scribe** checks the score sheets to make sure they are in the same order as the dogs listed on the board before each class begins. If a handler writes a 'C' by their dog that means they may have a conflict with running in another ring. Most scribes will turn these sheets sideways in their pile to indicate a possible conflict. The best time to do this is when the handlers are walking the course. Then during each run the scribe watches the Judge as s/he gives hand signals for any faults that occur. Any faults are recorded on the score sheets and then the time is written on the sheet before moving on to the next dog. Physically it's an easy job but mentally you have to be on your toes and you can't really watch the dogs run as your eyes are always on the judge.

The **Gate Steward** is the gate keeper. They make sure that the next 3-4 dogs are nearby and ready to go as it's important to keep things moving. The Gate Steward communicates to the Scribe anytime there is a change in the running order (such as a dog being absent, or if someone is moved within the order). Each time a dog comes to the start line they announce the dog's name and number so that the scribe can hear them as well as the other handlers waiting nearby. So it's important for the gate steward to be loud enough to be heard but not so loud to disturb a dog running the course. Also, the Judge determines when the handlers should go into the ring. For instance, perhaps he wants the handler to set up at the start line when the dog ahead of him takes the A-frame. The Gate Steward will also remind the handler to get to the line at the appropriate time. This is one of the more challenging jobs.

Thank you so much for coming out to help! Remember, we will give you on the job training. It's easy. You will learn a lot, meet new people and it will be fun, we promise! You will also earn doggie dollars that you can use towards food, classes at USDTC and USDTC trial entries.