

Agility Course Test (ACT)

It's not primarily about the ribbons and titles but about forging a closer, more fulfilling bond between dog and owner. But let's face it: After all that time and effort, adding an official title to your dog's name can be awfully satisfying. Let's take a look at the latest ways the AKC has enabled you to put an official title on your dog.

Get into the ACT

You don't take your first swimming lesson in the deep end of the pool. And you wouldn't learn much about tennis by facing the 122 mph serve of Serena Williams your first day on the court. In any sport it's best to start at the ground floor, learn the fundamentals, and work your way up to high-level competition.

That's why this summer the AKC Agility department rolled out the Agility Course Test, containing two new entry-level agility classes. The classes provide shorter courses than those at regular agility events, and they utilize basic obstacles appropriate for dogs and owners just getting into agility. Handlers are encouraged to have their dogs jump at the height they think best.

ACT is open to dogs 15 months of age or older. As in all AKC companion events, mixed-breed dogs are welcome—even dogs not yet AKC-registered or -listed may participate.

ACT can be used by clubs and trainers as the graduation exercise for their classes. It is offered at club-sponsored AKC Agility trials or as a standalone event at training centers. Holding ACT classes at a training facility provides dog-and-handler teams a familiar, low-stress setting for their first AKC event.

“This innovative program provides a bridge for new exhibitors to easily become involved with AKC Agility,” AKC Vice President Doug Ljungren says. “The foundation skills learned prepare a dog and owner for future success in agility and many other sports. We are excited about working together with the AKC training clubs and training facilities to introduce future generations of dogs and owners to AKC sports.”