

Official Dogdance-Rules of Dogdance International e.V.



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www.dogdance.info

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List of abbreviations:

DDI = Dogdance International e.V.

FS = Freestyle

HTM = Heelwork to Music

2. General Information & Regulations

The Association Dogdance International e.V. and the International Dogdance Rules

The association Dogdance International e.V. is the organisation behind the set of rules presented here.

The rules and regulations offer the structure and bases for the organisation of and participation at Dogdance competitions. The main goal here is: As simple as possible, but as detailed as needed.

The rules and regulations are identical in all countries. Transitional rules apply for countries using the DDI regulations for the first time. These apply for 2 years from the first tournament under DDI regulations. For example, judges may be trained during this period even though they do not have a one-year membership. Requests for further exceptions within these 2 years must be submitted in writing to the Executive Board.

The rules and regulations must be followed to its entirety to get the competition listed as an official DDI e.V. competition. Exemptions must be applied for and granted by the DDI board.

The members of the Dogdance International e.V. can shape the rules and regulations actively by entering their proposals at the annual membership-meeting. All proposals can be entered prior to the annual general meeting and will then be discussed and voted for by the membership meeting. The membership fee is 30 euros per year.

3. Definition Dogdance

3.1. In General

Dogdance is a dog sport where dogs and handlers together rehearse different moves from tricks to heelwork and then link them together to a routine that is suited to the music.

This makes Dogdance on the one hand a great and teambuilding activity and on the other hand also a presentation sport with show character for the spectators.

The abilities and talents of the teams are highlighted in a positive manner. The focus should always be on the dog and its qualities.

The Dogdance International e.V. promotes a fair and friendly environment for dogs and handlers within the Dogdance community. This includes training as well as competitions.

The moves and combinations that are chosen should never impair or compromise the health or mental welfare of the dog.

There are no compulsory moves.

The choice of music as well as the individual musical and conceptual interpretation is completely free for each team.

The handler should be dressed appropriately for the routine. The costume can aid in the presentation and interpretation of the presentation, but should never distract from the dog or interfere with his movements.

It is forbidden to dress up the dog. The dog may only wear a slightly decorated collar.

The dog must not be dressed up. He wears a lightly decorated collar at the most during the dance. (Only exceptions: Muzzle, if desired and/or required by law, and only in the Senior and Handicap class veterinarian prescribed aid such as a wheelchair).

Dogdance is divided in two independent categories:

- Dogdance Freestyle (FS)
- Dogdance Heelwork to Music (HTM).

3.2. Definition Dogdance Freestyle

In the category Freestyle, the team can choose from all tricks and heelwork positions to build their routine. There are no restrictions or specific requirements regarding the moves.

3.3. Definition Dogdance Heelwork to Music (HTM)

In the category HTM the dog should remain at least 75% of the routine in one of the 18 defined heel positions. Within the heel positions there are no compulsory positions as such. The goal in a HTM routine is a dog that is working as closely to his handler as possible.

The content of the maximum of 25% freestyle moves is completely free. Distance work is allowed, too. Transitions from one heel position to the next or back into the same heel position are counted as freestyle moves. Crawling, limping, jumping, walking or standing on hind legs are always counted as freestyle moves, even if they are shown in a heel position. A heel position is only counted if the handler is standing or walking upright. Dance steps are allowed.

The heel position are defined as follows:

- The position can be identified clearly.
- The distance between dog and handler is as small as possible, but no contact is necessary.
- The positions are counted standing, in each direction and in every tempo.
- Within a heel position there should be as much constancy as possible. This applies to the lateral distance between dog and handler's leg, the dog walking in the same tracks with his foreleg and hind legs as well as the position of the dogs shoulder in relation to the position of the handler.

4. General rules for Competitions

Dogdance competitions held under the rules and regulations of the Dogdance International e.V. offer dogdance teams around the world a platform for their training and the presentation of their choreographies within many different competition classes.

4.1. Requirements for participants

Any dog can participate at a Dogdance competition which is held under the rules and regulations of the Dogdance International e.V. and can therefore also win any national and international DDI e.V. titles. There is no breed pedigree necessary.

Any dog and handler can become a Dogdance-Team.

To compete there is no other test or exam necessary (such as entry tests, Trick certificate, Obedience results, etc.).

The minimum age to compete on the day of the competition is:

- Fun class = 6 months
- Official Class = 15 months
- FS 3 / HTM 3 = 3 years

To compete in an official class 0, 1, 2,3 and Senior/Handicap a licence booklet from the Dogdance International e.V. is required **as well as a starting authorization. Non-members must purchase the starting authorisation at the beginning of the year; it is valid for 1 year. Paying members receive the starting authorisation automatically, after paying their membership fee.**

Special rules about competing with dogs in season or dogs with puppies can be found in the chapter special rules (see chapter 11).

4.2. Rules for competitions

The handler is responsible for the actions of his dog(s) at any time. The handlers are expected to act in a prescient and considerate manner.

Entries at competitions are binding and the entry fee is owing to the organizer even if the handler does not turn up at the competition day.

At a dogdance competition any use of repressive tools (such as prong, choke or E-collars) as well as unfair treatment of the dog is strictly forbidden. The use of any of the above leads to an immediate exclusion from the competition.

The dog can be led into the ring on a leash and a collar / harness / head halter / with a muzzle. Leash, harness and head halter must be removed prior to the start of the routine and must be placed outside the ring. At most, a slightly decorated collar and a muzzle (not decorated) can be remained on the dog during the routine.

Maximal amount of starts per dog per day:

- Until the age of 15 months → maximal 1 start per day
- From the age of 15 months → maximal 2 starts per day

The handler should always consider the amount of starts per day in the best interest of the dog.

4.3. Competition ring

Floor & barriers

- The flooring of the ring should be dogfriendly and as anti-slip as possible.
- Grass or sandy grounds should be as even as possible
- The ring is clearly defined and if possible, the barriers are non-transparent.
- The ring is completely enclosed if possible. If that is not possible, the entry and exit of the ring are clearly marked with a line. With this line, the ringsteward controls if the dog is leaving the ring.

Ring size

- The minimal size of a Dogdance competition ring is 8 x 10 meter.
- For official classes a ring size of 12 x 15 meter or bigger should be aimed for.
- For National Championships / International and National Opens the ring must be at least 12 x 15 meter or bigger.
- If there are multiple applications with similar conditions to organise a Titling Competition or Qualification the competition is granted to the applicant with the bigger ring size.

Additional information

- The judges always sit on the longer side of the ring.
- There is a distance between the spectators seating and the ring barrier.
- Within the first row around the ring no dogs are present.
- Within the first row around the ring no food should be consumed.

Preparation area

- The competing teams are provided with an area, where each team can prepare itself for their start without being disturbed.
- Ideally the flooring in the preparation area is the same as in the competition ring.
- The organiser must provide a direct and undisturbed access from the preparation area to the competition ring.

5. Competition Classes

To provide for the individual needs of the teams, there are fun classes as well as official classes.

5.1. Fun classes

5.1.1. General Rules

Minimum age:

6 months on the day of the competition

Age-related restrictions:

Until 15 months the following moves are forbidden:

- Jumps
- Tricks on hindlegs
- Crawling
- Backwards moves.

Entries Fun / official classes:

Every team can enter an unlimited number of times in one of the fun classes.

It is possible to enter parallel in fun classes and official classes.

An entry in the class Beginners is voluntary.

Use of rewards / motivational aids:

In all fun classes the use of any motivational aids, rewards and training aids are allowed and welcome.

This includes: Food, Toys, Clicker, Targets, etc.

Judging:

The teams receive a verbal feedback directly after their routine in the ring.

They also receive a written feedback during or at the end of the competition day. In the fun classes there is no judging by points.

The teams are not compared with each other and there is no ranking.

Teams can choose feedback appropriate to a particular class.

e.g., if a team competes in FS2, they can choose whether they want a general feedback or a feedback based on the level of class 2.

5.1.2. Possible Fun classes (FS and HTM):

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Beginner | First entry of a team in the chosen category (FS or HTM) |
| Open | For all teams independent from their level |
| Lucky Dip | The music for each team will be drawn at the registration on the day. After that, the team has time until his starting time to prepare a choreography and/or improvise a routine |
| Training class | The teams will receive their feedback specifically on the topics they selected |

5.1.3. Possible Fun classes (no differentiation between FS and HTM):

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Trio | 1 handler with 2 dogs |
| Quartett | 2 handlers with 2 dogs |
| Groups | More than 2 teams |
| Senior / Handicap | Voluntary for dogs from the age of 8 Voluntary for big dogs over 35 kg from the age of 6 Voluntary for dogs with physical handicaps |

The organizer can always offer additional fun classes.

They must define the classes clearly and communicate those definitions when they announce their competition.

5.2 Official classes

5.2.1. General rules

Minimum age:

Minimum age class 0/1/2: 15 months on the day of the competition

Minimum age class 3: 3 years on the day of the competition

Use of rewards / motivational aids:

The carrying of rewards/motivational aids and training paraphernalia is not permitted in the ring at any time during official classes, except in Class 0. This rule applies to both:

- Props set-up time
- Sound check in the ring
- Entering the ring with dog

Under rewards/ motivational aids/ training utensils are included the following:

- Food
- Food bag (whether full or empty)
- Toys
- Clicker
- Targets that are only used as targets and are not part of the choreography
- Jackpots, etc.

All rewards/ motivational aids/ training utensils must be deposited and used outside the ring.

Entries in official classes:

- The official classes 0-3 have specific entry rules (see chapter 5.2.4.)
- The entry in the class „Senior / Handicap“ is voluntary. If a dog has been entered for the first time in the official class Senior / Handicap (in the category HTM or FS), it can not move back out of that class and enter in the classes 1-3 of that category. [The division specified in the licence booklet applies here.](#) Entries in the classes Trio or Quartett are however still possible.
- The class Senior / Handicap is the only class, where the judges are allowed to incorporate their previous knowledge of the physical or mental handicaps of the dog into their judging. The competitors can give information such as age and/or handicaps on a information sheet, which will be given to the judges prior to the start of the class. A veterinary certificate of necessity must be submitted for any aid worn/used by the dog in the ring.
- In order to compete in any of the classes 0, 1, 2, 3 and Senior / Handicap [a starting authorization](#) and a licence booklet for the category (HTM or FS) is required.
- Entries in the class „Juniors“ is voluntary. Juniors can switch to the regular classes at any time. In those regular classes the moving-up rules will apply and a licence booklet is required.

Judging:

- The teams will be judged within each class by points.
- The average of all judges points will be used to decide the ranking.
- The individual marks of each judge will later be published with anonymised judges.
- If two competitors have the same total points, the higher points in teamwork will decide the rank. If there still is a tie, the competitor with the higher points in Flow, then Dynamism, then Execution, Concept, Content, Choreography and Difficulty will be used to decide.

5.2.2. Possible official classes (FS and HTM):

| | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| Class 0/1 | From 15 months |
| Class 2 | From 15 months |
| Class 3 | From the age of 3 |

5.2.3. Possible official classes (without differentiation between FS and HTM):

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Trio | 1 handler with 2 dogs |
| Quartett | 2 handlers with 2 dogs |
| Juniors | Kids until the age of 16 |
| Senior/ Handicap | Voluntary for dogs from the age of 8 Voluntary for dogs over 35 kg at the age of 6 For dogs with physical handicaps |

5.2.4 Entry- and Moving-up rules in the official classes / Licence booklets

Entry class 0/1-3

Every new competitor in the official classes 0/1-3 starts at the lowest level in the official class 0 or 1. This can be decided by the starter himself.

Exception 1:

Competitors that have already competed in class 3 of one category (FS or HTM) but have not yet competed in the other category can choose the entry level in that category.

Exception 2: Competitors that have so far competed under different rules and compete for the first time under the rules of the DDI can choose their entry level in each category once. The first time competing in the chosen class cannot be a Qualification or Titling competition.

As soon as the team has competed for the first time in the chosen class, the normal moving-up rules apply. This applies to both of the above exception rules.

Moving-up classes 2 and 3

Every team is collecting moving-up points in the classes 1 and 2.

If a team gained the 2nd moving-up point the team **can** move up to the next higher class.

If a team gained the 5th moving-up point the team **must** move up to the next higher class.

Exception: Class 0, here the starter must move up after 2 promotion points

Exception:

As the minimum age for competing in class 3 is, a team with a younger dog will remain in class 2 until the dog has reached the proper age, even if they have gained the **5th moving-up point** beforehand.

A moving-up point is given to each team, that has reached 150 points or more in their class.

Entry class Juniors, Trio & Quartett

Any team can register at any time in the official junior, trio and quartet classes. No licence booklet is required for these classes. When starting in the official classes Juniors, Trio & Quartet, the team is free to start in parallel or alternately as often as desired in another official class (with the corresponding licence booklet). **Results for the Junior class can be entered at the end of the licence booklet.**

Entry class Seniors/ Handicap

Every dog can be entered in the class **Senior / Handicap** as stated in the special rules for this class.

Once a dog has been entered for the first time in the class Senior / Handicap this entry is binding. **The licence booklet submitted at the first start in the senior class is decisive.** The dog can not go back competing in that category in the classes 1-3. However the dog can still remain in the classes 0/1-3 in the other category.

5.2.5. Licence booklets

- To compete in any of the official classes 0, 1, 2, 3 and Senior/ Handicap the team **must** have a licence booklet and a **starting authorization** from the DDI e.V. for the category they would like to compete in. To enter in any other class no licence booklet is needed. All moving-up points and changes of classes will be documented in the licence booklet according to the actual rules. Starts in any other class do not need a licence booklet.
- **Non-members must purchase the starting authorisation for the official classes at the beginning of the year. This is valid for 1 year. One starting authorisation must be purchased per person.**
- If the team cannot present his licence booklet **and a starting authorization** on the day of the competition, it can not compete in any official class 1, 2, 3 or Senior/ Handicap.

- There is a licence booklet for each category (HTM or FS) needed. If a team still has an old licence booklet with entries from both categories, the HTM-results need to be transferred into a newly ordered HTM licence booklet by an official judge.
- The licence booklet is valid for a team handler & dog. That means if two handlers compete with the same dog, each dog & handler constellation needs a separate licence booklet and collects its own moving-up points. So it could be possible, that the same dog is competing in two different classes with each handler.
- **Ordering the licence booklet:** The licence booklet must be ordered well in advance of the first competition in an official class (plan 3-4 weeks for ordering and postage). The booklet can be ordered directly over the website www.dogdance.info
Paying members receive their starting authorisation automatically after receipt of the annual fee. Non-members must purchase the authorisation at the beginning of the year.
Members of the DDI e.V. will receive all their licence booklets free of charge. If a team is not member of the DDI e.V. the licence booklet costs one time 40 Euros for the booklet, registration and postage. If a booklet is lost, members also pay the current price for a replacement booklet.
- **Entries into the licence booklet:** The organiser of a competition will fill in the results of the classes 0, 1, 2, 3 and Senior/ Handicap into the licence booklet. Only results that have been achieved and judged under the official rules can be entered into the licence booklet. To be valid, the entries must be controlled and signed by one official judge accredited by the DDI e.V.

It is the responsibility of each competitor to make sure that they are eligible for the class they have entered. They can check the actual set of rules of the DDI e.V. if they are unsure.

5.3. Music lengths (FS and HTM)

Fun classes

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Beginner: | Maximum 2:00 minutes |
| Open: | Maximum 4:00 minutes |
| Trainee: | Maximum 4:00 minutes |
| Senior/ Handicap: | Maximum 2:30 minutes |
| Trio: | 1:30 – 3:00 minutes |
| Quartett: | 1:30 – 3:00 minutes |
| Groups: | 1:30 – 4:00 minutes |
| LuckyDip: | No limit, but should not exceed 4:00 min (The handler can decide to stop the music at any point up to the maximum time). |

Official classes

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Class 0 | 1:30 – 2:30 minutes |
| Class 1 | 1:30 – 2:30 minutes |
| Class 2 | 2:15 – 3:15 minutes |
| Class 3 | 3:00 – 4:00 minutes |
| Class Trio | 2:00 – 3:00 minutes |
| Class Quartett | 2:00 – 3:00 minutes |
| Class Senioren/ Handicap | 1:30 – 2:30 minutes |
| Class Juniors | 1:30 – 2:30 minutes |

6. Judging

6.1. Scoring (Points are only given in the official classes)

Artistic merit **max. 100 points**

Teamwork (→ counted **double** in the class Senior / Handicap) **max. 25 points**

- Presentation handler
- Presence & motivation dog
- Working as a team

Dynamism **max. 25 points**

- Dancing expression of the handler
- Rhythmic variations/ Accentuations/ Speed changes
- Musical interpretation

Concept **max. 25 points**

- Choice of Music (→ in Lucky Dip this does not apply)
- Idea
- Realisation

Choreography **max. 25 points**

- Composition & Structure
- Ring use / Balance
- Positioning/ Orientation

Technical merit **max. 100 points**

Flow (→ counted **double** in the class Senior / Handicap) **max. 25 points**

- Constancy of the dog
- Timing of cues
- Transition

Execution **max. 25 points**

- Signalling
- Reactions to the signals
- Execution of the moves

Content (→ **not judged** in the class Senior / Handicap) **max. 25 points**

- Moves (Heel positions in HTM) & Combinations
- Balance of Tricks & Moves
- Variations

Difficulty (→ **not judged** in the class Senior / Handicap) **max. 25 points**

- Moves
- Combinations
- Interactions/ Signalling

6.2. Deductions of points

6.2.1. Barking and sounds (max. 20 points)

- Points will be deducted for barking, whining, squeeling or any other type of sounds from the dog. „Silent barking“ or snapping air will also be counted in that category. Deduction: 0.1 points per countable sound. If not individually countable - time in relation to the length of the music (e.g. 1 minute of vocal expression in 4 minutes of dance = 5 points deducted).

6.2.2. Health of dog (max. 20 points)

- It is the responsibility of every competitor to make sure the welfare and health of the dog is not in danger at any time.
- Points can be deducted if:
 - During the execution of a move physical impairments are visible, for example the dog is stopping a move early, tries to avoid additional repetitions of the same move, buckles, is taxing a move, etc.
 - The dog shows problems or impairments after a move, for example having difficulty to restart a move, is moving in an irregular way or is even limping.
 - Jumps are not adapted to the conditions (for example the floor is slippery) and the dog has trouble with landing after the jump, is slipping or falling.
 - Props are dangerous and the dog is slipping off, falling down because it was wobbly, etc.
- In the class Senior / Handicap the judges will incorporate the information about the handicaps of the dog into their judging. If a dog shows problems in the movement, but they remain consistent, they will not lead to deductions in the class Senior / Handicap.
- But if the dog shows a visible deterioration of the existing problems due to the moves that are shown, the judges can deduct points even in the class Senior / Handicap.

6.2.3. Incorrect use of costume and/or the props (max. 20 points)

- Not all objects and props are incorporated in the routine.
- There is no clear connection between props and/or costume and the choreography visible.
- It is not clear, if the handler is in control over when and how the dog is interacting with the props.
- The dog is playing with or chewing on the props / the costume or is even destroying them.
- General information about props can be found in chapter 6.4.

6.2.3. Incorrect music lengths (1 point per second)

- There is no tolerance on the lengths of the music.
- The time that is shown on the CD-player / the computer / the music playing device is binding.
- Per second over or undertime 1 point will be deducted.
- The music length will be checked by the DJ or by any other person designated by the organiser. Ideally this happens in advance. The judges will then be informed by the DJ about the over- or under-time.
- The competitors are responsible to make sure the length of the music is correct for the class they are entered. The organiser is not obliged to inform the competitors about an incorrect music length.

6.2.5. Misconduct in the ring (max. 20 points)

The following misconduct will lead to deductions. They are counted from the time the team enters the ring until it leaves the ring:

- Verbal-aggressive behavior: harsh, unfriendly or severe signalling
- Mental pressure: Using severe eye contact with the dog, blocking the dog with unfriendly body language, using intimidation, correcting the dog
- Touching the dog in a manipulating way: Moving / pushing the dog into a position, limiting the dogs movements
- Leaving and re-entering the ring before the start of the music or after the end of the routine by either the dog or the handler will lead to points being deducted. This rule applies from the moment, the team has entered the ring for the first time. The exception to this rule is, if the judges have signalled to the team, that it can leave the ring (for example if there are problems with the music, etc.)
- One point will be deducted for each second that the set-up time is exceeded.

6.2.6. Active touching of the dog (max. 20 points)

- From the time the music starts until the end of the music:
Any active touching (initiated by the handler) leads to a deduction.
This includes: Helping the dog with the execution of a move, holding the dog, securing the dog, stroking the dog, manipulating, etc. The list is not closed!

- From ring entry to start of the music and from end of the music until leaving the ring: Friendly touching or interactions between handler and dog are allowed if they seem positive for the dog.
Carrying the dog into the ring prior to the routine or carrying the dog when exiting the ring is allowed.

6.2.7 Insufficient HTM

By definition, the dog in an HTM class should be in one of the 18 foot positions 75% or more of the time.

A box is added to the score sheet which says 'too much freestyle'. The judges tick this box if they feel that more than 25% freestyle has been shown.

The deduction itself is then included in the content section. The rule is as follows:

0 % HTM and 100 % freestyle -> The team can receive a maximum of 10 points in content.

25 % HTM and 75 % freestyle -> The team can receive a maximum of 15 points in content.

50 % HTM and 50 % freestyle -> The team can receive a maximum of 20 points in the content.

75% or more HTM -> The team can receive up to 25 points in the content.

Minor overrun -> 0.5 - 1 point deduction in content.

Slightly larger excess 1-5 points deduction for content.

The deductions are made at the discretion of the judges and are an estimate = there is no timekeeping or similar!

6.3. Disqualifications

A disqualification must be unanimous for all judges of that class. It is not disputable!

After a disqualification it is at the judges discretion, if the team can finish their routine as a training round or if they must leave the ring immediately. If the training round is possible, no food can be taken into the ring, a toy however is allowed.

6.3.1. Leaving the ring

- The dog leaving the ring during the routine will lead to a disqualification. If the dog is leaving and re-entering the ring before or after the routine this only leads to point deduction (misconduct in the ring). The points deducted are at the judges discretion.
- All 4 paws of the dog must remain in the ring at all times during the routine. If the dog leaves the ring with one paw, this will be counted as leaving the ring.
- Exception: If the judges have signalled to the team, that it can leave the ring (for example if there are music problems), no points are deducted and no disqualification is given.
- In case the ring cannot be enclosed completely:

The line at the entry / exit will be controlled by the ring steward.

If the dog is on the line, it will be counted as in the ring. If in doubt, the decision will be made in favour of the team.

6.3.2. Use of training aids in the official classes

The carrying of rewards / motivational aids and training paraphernalia is not permitted in the ring at any time during official classes, except in Class 0. This rule applies to both:

- Props set-up time
- Sound check in the ring
- Entering the ring with dog

Under rewards / motivational aids / training utensils run the following:

- Food
- Food bag (whether full or empty)
- Toys
- Clicker
- Targets that are only used as targets and are not part of the choreography
- Jackpots, etc.

All rewards/ motivational aids/ training utensils must be deposited and used outside the ring.

6.3.3. Props

- The dog is pulling or carrying the prop out of the ring.
- After the final pose/final movements, the dog still interacts with the prop, performs a trick with it, plays with it, or similar.

6.3.4. The dog soiling the ring

- The dog is soiling the ring

6.3.5. Grave misconduct towards the dog

- Excessive pressuring, using punishments or similar
- Excessive manipulations (verbal, physical or mental)
- overstressing or endangering the dog's health

6.3.6. Help from outside

- After the ring is free only the competing team may enter the ring.
- Any help from outside the ring (intentional or not) leads to a disqualification.
- If there is a disturbance outside the ring it is at the judges discretion if they allow the team a restart of their routine.

6.3.7 Aggressive behaviour of dogs towards other dogs

- Dog jumps out of the ring
→ Disqualification
- Dog jumps out of ring and attacks another dog
→ Disqualification and exemption from competition. The Judges at table can see and decide if it is an attack or not.
- Dog jumps into the ring
→ Disturbance from outside
The team in the ring gets the option for a rerun right away or at the end of the class.
- Dog jumps into the ring and attacks competing dog
→ Disqualification and exemption from the competition for the attacking dog.
If the competing dog in the ring defends himself and in the course of that hurts the attacking dog, there is NO Disqualification, as it was not the competing dogs fault, that the situation was happening.
- Dog jumps out of preparation ring and attacks another dog – but there are no visible wounds
→ no Disqualification
- Dog jumps out of preparation ring and attacks another dog - with visible wounds (blood, scratch, bite marks) = Level 2 or higher on Bite Scale
→ Disqualification and exemption from the competition
Decision about severity can be made by Bite-Scale

If a dog is exempt from the competition, it can remain in the venue of the competition, but it must be under control and on leash at all times!

6.4. General information about the use of props / costume

General information

- Props and costume never endanger the safety of the dog or the handler.
- Props and costume can be used for moves, for signalling, as targets, etc.
- The use of props / the costume should enhance the presentation and interpretation of the routine.
- All props are used.
- Props and costume are under the control of the handler.
- All props must be set up within 90 seconds, this will be checked by the ring steward, this applies to all starts, no matter if fun class or official class.
- One point will be deducted for each second that the set-up time is exceeded.

Practical process at the competition:

- Set-Up Option 1:
One person (competitor or a helper) enters the ring on his own with all his props. After the props are set up, the handler leaves the ring. After the ring has been given free by the judges handler and dog will enter the ring together.
- Set-Up Option 2:
After the ring has been given free the team (dog & handler) enter the ring together with all the props. The props are being set up and after that the team proceeds directly to the starting position without leaving the ring again.
- Removal Option 1:
The competing team leaves the ring after the routine. A helper then removes all the props from the ring.
- Removal Option 2:
The competitor is carrying the prop or parts of the props outside the ring. Any remaining props will then be removed by a helper. The competitor should make sure the dog is not touching the props before exiting the ring.

Deductions:

- How deductions are given see chapter 6.2.

Disqualifications:

- How a disqualification is given see chapter 6.3.

7. Organisation of a competition

7.1. General information:

- Dogdance competitions can be organised by: individual persons, groups of persons, clubs, associations as well as businesses. Please note that there may be individual regulations in the individual countries.
- To organise a competition, no membership in the association Dogdance International e.V. is necessary.
- The rules and regulations must be applied in its entirety. To apply for possible exemptions the organiser must send a written application to the executive board, which will then decide.
- To get the competition approved as a DDI e.V. competition, the organiser must enter his competition on the website www.dogdance.info and define a contact person.

- The publication of the competition has to include all information about the circumstances of the competition (competition ring, competition area, judges, organisation, entries, starting classes, definition of the additional fun classes if offered, regulations about dogs in season, etc.). All these things must be applied on the day of the competition.
- The organiser should remain in close contact with the judges, particularly with the head judge during the preparation phase and consult them in case of questions or problems.
- More detailed information about the judges and head judges jobs can be found in the chapter judges (see chapter 8).
- Organisers can find additional and more detailed information on how to organise a competition in the separate organisation handbook that can be found on the website www.dogdance.info

7.2. Offered starting classes at a competition: Package rule and Special Competitions

Package rule

- Organisers must always offer the full package in each category (HTM or FS) if they want to organise an official competition. The package always must include the classes 0, 1, 2, 3 and Senior/ Handicap.
- It is possible to offer only one package (HTM or FS) or offering both the HTM- as well as the FS-package + senior/handicap
- The official classes Trio, Quartett and Juniors can be offered in addition to the package (HTM / FS) if the organiser wants to.
- The fun classes are not affected by the package rule and can be offered as the organiser prefers.
- It is possible to run a doubles tournament if all classes are offered on both days.
- If a class has to be split due to size and is offered on different days, it is not allowed to start for the same class on both days (if no doubles tournament).
- In principle, it is not permitted to compete in the same class with the same dog twice in a single tournament and thus compete against oneself.

Special competitions

Specially themed competitions can be organised if applied for in advance. This offers the organisers the possibility to organise a different type of competition, for example only with certain classes if the time schedule does not allow for a full competition.

The executive board of the DDI e.V. will authorize the competition after having received a written application from the organisation.

8. Judging

8.1. General rules

Legitimation and rights:

- Official judges must be entered on the website www.dogdance.info to be confirmed. Only then, a judge is allowed to judge as an official DDI judge and enter results and signatures in the licence booklet. A list with all official judges is published on the website www.dogdance.info
- From the moment a judge is accredited and is an active judge in the association Dogdance International e.V. he will be exempted from membership fees.

Judging:

- The decision of the judges is final and cannot be disputed.
- With their participation at the competition the competitors accept, that although the judges will judge with maximum care the decisions will always be subjective to a certain extent.

Duties:

- The judges follow the judges Code of Conduct at any time.
- They study and keep educating themselves (music, training, health of dogs, etc.)
- **To maintain judge status, judges must participate in 2 online workshops and 2 judging assignments within 2 years, one of them with official classes (or 1 live workshop) and 4 online discussion rounds.**
- It is also desirable to take part in judges meetings and conventions, to remain up to date and ensure communication and discussions among the judges.
- Participation at events of the DDI e.V. such as membership meetings is desirable.
- Any reprimands and sanctions will be addressed by the judges board.
- **The judges shall wear the judging uniform of the DDI or identify themselves as a judge**

Judges organisation:

- The judges are represented in the executive board by the head of judges in the function of a assessor.
- The judges board represents the judges and their interests as well as the organisation of the judges education. It is also responsible for mediations as well as reprimands and sanctions of any judge. The members of the judges board are voted by the membership meeting. More details on the rights and duties of the Judges' Panel can be found on the DDI homepage under "Judges".
- The judges office aids in the organisation of all topics related to the judges.
- Judges educators offer and present judges workshops in their individual countries. The judges board is in charge of the nominations of the judges educators.
- Judges coaches support the judges aspirants in between the competitions and give advice and help with questions and problems. The judges board is in charge of nominating any new judge. Matching the judges aspirant with the judges coaches is done in accordance with the judges aspirant, the judges coach and the judges educator.
- Candidate judges must be members of Dogdance International e.V. for at least 1 year before becoming eligible.

Booking judges for competitions:

- The organisers contact the judges directly to book them for their competition. Confirming a booking is the personal responsibility of the judges.
- Exception: The choice of judges for **National Opens** and **Qualifications** must be confirmed by the head of judges (see chapter 10)
- The judges will receive an allowance per kilometer (30 Cent/km) as well as food and lodging on the day of the competition paid by the organiser of the competition. The judges do not receive any additional judges fees.
- An accommodation allowance of 20 euros/night can be paid if the organizer does not offer an overnight accommodation option.
- For judges who are self-catering, a meal allowance of 14 euros is paid on the day of arrival/departure and 28 euros for 24 hours.
- It is suggested that the organiser and judges always keep a written agreement regarding all the costs, especially at Titling and Qualification competitions.

8.2. Judges education

Prerequisites:

- There are no requirements regarding the age or a minimum experience level that needs to be presented to achieve the status of an official judges in the Dogdance International e.V.
- It is expected that judges aspirants do have a basic knowledge of Dogdance, the rules and regulations, positive dog training, health of dogs as well as music and dance.
- Candidate judges must be members of Dogdance International e.V. for at least 1 year before becoming eligible.

Process of the judges education:

- At the begin of the judges education the judges aspirant start with theoretical knowledge that is provided in 3 **webinars**, which serve to explain and clarify the regulations and the evaluation, as well as an "online day".
- After that the judges aspirant must participate at an **official judges workshop**. At the workshop the focus lies on the practical application of all the judges topics and working with video judging.
- After the judges workshop the aspirant has to do **shadow judging**:
 - A minimum of 80 routines must be shadow judges under an official judge.
 - A minimum of 50 routines in official classes and a minimum of 30 routines in fun classes must be shadow judged.
 - The 80 routines must be judged at two different competitions or more.

Judges code of conduct and judges accreditation:

- The judges code of conduct takes effect from the moment a person becomes a judges aspirant.
- Once a judges aspirant has successfully completed all three educational steps the accreditation is done in consultation with the judges coach and the judges educator. Once all parties are agreed, the new judge will be published as an official DDI-judge on the website of the DDI e.V.
- Once a judge is listed on the DDI website he can be invited to judge at any competition. From that moment all actual rules and regulations apply.

8.3. Judges at competitions

8.3.1. Number of judges

Minimum number of judges at the judges table:

- In a fun class two judges are necessary at the judges table. Three judges are also allowed.
- In an official class three judges are required at the judges table. There are exemption rules for small competitions (see below) and Championships and Qualification competitions (see chapter 10)

Minimum number of judges per competition day:

- Maximum of 40 routines on a day, and a maximum of 20 official routines = **Special rule for small competitions**
 - only 2 judges necessary
 - If the competition only offers fun classes there is the option to organise the competition with only one judge and one judges aspirant. This exemption must be applied for by the executive board!
- Maximum of 40 routines per day, but more than 20 official routines / or generally more than 40 routines per day
 - The normal rule applies = 3 judges necessary
- These are the minimum numbers of judges that must be invited to organise a competition. It is strongly recommended to invite more judges (for example to allow for breaks and changes in the judges teams at the table). If in doubt the organiser should contact the head judge early to discuss possible solutions.

8.3.2. Invited judges from other countries or different associations

- It is possible to invite judges from other countries or associations in addition to the official DDI e.V.-judges.
- Guest judges must be approved by the judges' panel.
- The invited judges must be briefed in detail in regards to the DDI rules and regulations.
- Per class a maximum of one invited judge can be put at the judges table.
- In return it is also possible for official DDI-judges to be invited to judge under different rules. There are no restrictions and no additional approval is necessary.

8.3.3. Judges allocation

- The judges plan will be done by the head judge in contact with the organiser at least one week prior to the competition in combination with the time schedule.
- After a maximum of 20 routines there must be a break (for example a break or change of judges). If the organiser would like to put more than 20 routines in one block all concerned judges need to agree.
- The schedule of the shadow judges will be done by the head judge. All shadowjudges can contact the head judge until 4 weeks prior to the competition. The head judge will collect all shadow judges and makes sure that each shadow judge has enough support during and after the shadow judging by an official judge.

8.3.4. The head judge

To relieve the organisers and to have a designated contact person on the day of the competition the invited judges will choose a head judge amongst themselves. To do so, the organiser will contact all judges latest 8 weeks prior to competition so they can make their choice. As soon as the head judge is decided he should be published.

Is the head judge not available on the day (breaks, competing with their own dogs or other reasons) the head judge names a temporary replacement that has the authority to make decisions. The head judge should have at least 2 years of judging experience or have judged 10 tournaments.

Duties of a head judge:

- Representation of all decisions of the judges to the competitors, the spectators and the organisers.
- Be the contact person for all judges including the shadow judges, the organisers, the helpers and competitors whenever there are problems, questions and queries.
- Ensuring that each ranking is checked by one of the judges of that class to make sure the results are plausible.
- Making the judges plan (including the shadow judges).
- Creating the time schedules and judges plans in discussion with the organiser, latest one week prior to the competition.

9. Example of a competition day from the point of you of a competitor

- The team enters the preparation ring to get ready for their start.
- The ring steward informs the team, when the props can be placed in the ring without the dog, or when the ring is free to be entered with the dog. The ring steward will accompany the team to the ring entry.
- The team will go into the starting position without long delays.
- The team gives a clear start signal for the music towards the DJ.
- The team shows their routine.
- After the end of the routine in a fun class the team can remain in the ring:
 - The dog can be rewarded in the ring.
 - The judges will give a short verbal feedback directly after the routine.
- After the end of the routine in an official class the team leaves the ring directly.
 - The dog is not allowed to interact with the props in any way after the routine has ended (see Disqualifications).
 - All props can be left in the ring. The props will then be removed from the ring by the ring steward.
 - If the dog has left the ring after the routine, he may not return into the ring (see deduction of points).
- The dog can be rewarded outside the ring. The team should take care that the reward process does not disturb the next team preparing.
- It is desirable that the competitors also attend the price giving ceremony.

10. Qualifications and Championships

10.1. General information

The Dogdance International e.V. is awarding his own titles and supports Championships outside the DDI by organising the Qualification competitions under the rules of the DDI e.V.

The rules of the DDI e.V. unites many countries. To allow for the varied structural conditions and circumstances, the rules and regulations to organise qualification competitions and championships are a basic guideline.

Any interested party or organiser can apply to organise a qualification competition or a National Open. The application must be sent to the executive board of the DDI which will then decide between all the applications handed in. **The application and announcement should be made by 30 June of the previous year. The board decides on the award.**

The application must include the venue/date/ring size and judges (previously approved by the judging committee). If the date cannot be determined exactly due to trade fairs etc., an approximate time period will suffice.

10.2. Possible Titles:

International and National Opens (for example Italian Open, etc.).

At International or National Open the competitors are ranked by the points they have achieved. The nationality of a competitor does not matter.

In addition, it is possible to have a separate ranking of all national teams in class 3 from the organising country (HTM and FS will be counted separately).

The definitive modalities for any national titles being awarded must be confirmed and decided between the executive board of the DDI and the organiser. They will then be published with the announcement of the competition.

National titles can be awarded by the national clubs or the DDI e.V.

Qualifications for international Championships (for example OEC) / National teams

In some countries, there are qualifications for competitions outside the DDI. The qualifications will be held under the rules of the DDI e.V. even if the later competition will be held under a different set of rules. The national team will be selected using the ranking of the qualification competition.

Only starters in FS3 and HTM3 can be take part at the qualifications

The organiser of the qualification can announce the ranking at the end of the competition. The official nomination of the teams however is always done only by the DDI e.V. which will also be in charge of any later nominations for example due to teams cancelling.

The team leader for each international competition (for example the OEC) is also officially nominated. The executive board of the DDI e.V. (or it's national sub-association) can choose the nominee from the teams that have qualified. But there is also the option to choose another

person to become the team leader (which is not linked to a start at that competition). People interested to be the teamleader for a specific event can apply directly at the executive board of the DDI e.V. after all the competing teams have been nominated.

This list is not closed and can be added to in the future by the executive board.

10.3. Special rules when organising a Qualification or an Open Championship

Special ring size:

- For International and National Opens a ring size of 12 x 15 meters is required. A ring size of 16 x 20 meters or bigger should be aimed for.
- At Open Championships and Qualifications the applicant with the bigger ring size will be chosen.

Number and selection of judges:

- All Qualifications class 3 (HTM and FS) must be judged by 4 judges.
- All Open and national Championships class 3 (HTM and FS) must be judged by 3 judges.
- The choice of the judges at a Qualification or an Open Championship must be approved by the head of judges.
If there are any disagreements on the choice of judges, the final decision will be made by the head of judges. To allow for a smooth process, the head of judges supports the organisers by checking the selection of judges in a timely manner – this means approval or refusals will be done within 14 days from the time of the application. If there is no answer within that time frame, the approval of the selected judges is given tacitly.

Starting order:

- The starting order for Qualifications and Open Championships will be done by draw.
- The placement within the starting order of competitors competing with multiple dogs will be done with common sense.

11. Special rules

11.1. Competing with bitches in season

- At fun competitions bitches in season can compete at the end of the competition.
- At official competitions bitches in season can compete at the end of their class. They have to wear a fresh panty.
- If a competitor does not inform the organiser that he has a bitch in season and competes normally, he can be disqualified until end of the competition.
- The organisers immediately inform all starters that a bitch in heat is present and also informs which starter it concerns. They shall also inform them where the bitch in heat will be at the venue and where the car with this bitch is parked.
- In consultation with the dog owner, the main judge and organiser will try to find the best possible solutions for all competing teams, therefore it may not be possible to accommodate the dogs in break areas in the hall if space is limited.
- If a starter cancels due to a bitch in heat, it is his personal decision, no entry fee will be refunded and no other start, e.g., in Fun, has to be made available, but the organiser can offer this if he wishes. (Applies to starters with male dogs, as well as to starters who do not wish to start their bitch in heat).
- If participation of bitches in heat is explicitly not allowed according to hall regulations or regulations of the venue, this must be published in the announcement. Then an entry of intact bitches is at own risk. In this case, the venue regulations must be proven and published with the announcement.

11.2. Competing with dogs having puppies

Dogs that will be having puppies within 4 weeks from the competition and dogs that have had puppies less than 8 weeks before a competition will not be allowed to compete at a DDI-competition.

12. Speciality class 0

Since August 2020 it is possible to offer the new class 0 at any DDI e.V.-competition.

The new class 0 is part of the official classes and comes before FS1 or HTM1.

The official name of the class is: Freestyle 0 (FS 0) and Heelwork to Music 0 (HTM 0)

The test phase will be running until the end of 2021, or until the yearly membership meeting in 2022.

At the general meeting 2022, it was decided to officially include class 0 in the regulations.

General rules

- Rewards (food, toys) are allowed in the ring at any time.
- The dog can be rewarded before, during and after the routine as many times as the competitors feels right for the dog.
- Toys and rewards must not be thrown/handed into the ring from outside.
- The use of the rewards should help the dog to stay focused and remain concentrated and keep working constantly.
- The routine will be judged like an official class (point system) and the use of the rewards will be incorporated in the categories flow and teamwork.
- The same rules apply as for a start in the FS1 and HTM1 classes
- Participation in class 0 is voluntary, the teams can either start in class 0 or go directly to class 1.
- Maximum of 7 starts in that class are possible.
- With 2 promotion points, the team must move up into class 1

13. Graphic of the possible heel positions

