

WORKING DOG (WD) CERTIFICATION

Requirements for the Working Dog (WD) Certificate are designed primarily to test a dog's natural abilities and, therefore, abilities acquired through training are not emphasized. These are pass/fail non-competitive tests.

Handlers should also refer to the *WD/X/Q Handler's Guidelines* for additional information.

Privileges and limitations of the Working Dog Certificate

The receipt of a Working Dog Certificate entitles the owner to indicate his dog's achievement by including the letters "WD" after the dog's name in documents other than those considered "official" by the AKC or other registries. The title "Working Dog" and the so designated letters "WD" are recognized by the ACC but not necessarily by any other organization. **The WD title is a club title only.**

REQUIREMENTS

For land marks, it is recommended to scent the area of the fall prior to the first running dog, so scent is present for the first dogs similar to the dogs that run near the end.

Description of Tests (tests are suggested to be performed in this order)

a. Land Singles. This test consists of two consecutive singles. The first mark should be a dead duck falling 30 yards from the line into light cover. The thrower/gunner should be positioned approximately 20 yards from the line to make the throw and be visible from the line. The throw should be accompanied by a shotgun simulator or blank shot, prior to the throw. (Thrower/Gunner can be the same person or two people who must be standing at the required distance in the field when throwing/shooting). The proximity of the shotguns or shotgun simulator will demonstrate if the dog tends to be gun shy.

The second single should be a live duck shot as a flier landing with a minimum of 100 degrees separation from the first mark. Generally, the gunners should be positioned so that this mark lands about 50 yards from the line and should fall into light cover. Safety for the gunners and participants should always be considered when positioning the gunners. The reason for the second single is to prove that the dog will retrieve a freshly shot duck. This longer mark will demonstrate if a dog can mark and, if it does not immediately find the bird, that the dog is willing to put on an intelligent hunt.

b. Water Singles. This test consists of retrieving two ducks as consecutive singles. The first bird shall be a dead duck, thrown into the water, approximately 30 yards from the line, and accompanied first by shotgun simulator or blank shot prior to the throw.

The second bird shall also be a dead duck. The gunners for this second mark should be approximately 40 yards from the line. The line or starting point should be moved so that the duck will fall in a completely different area from the first fall. The reason for the second single is to prove that the dog is willing to enter the water for a second retrieve.

The tests should be set up so as not to encourage switching or cheating the water (bank running).

Special Points

1. A holding blind is placed behind the line for the handler and dog to wait prior to running a test.

WORKING DOG (WD) CERTIFICATION

2. The dog and handler team is under judgement from the time they leave the last holding blind.
3. The dog may be brought to the line on a leash or slip cord, wearing either a flat buckle collar or a choke chain. (An English all-in-one slip lead is allowed). If a choke chain is used, it must be removed at the line. A flat buckle collar may remain on the dog. Choke chains and leashes must be removed and either placed on the ground behind the handler or placed in the handler's pocket.

Dogs are not required to be steady and may be held on the line by the collar or with a leash loosely wrapped around its neck, or with a slip cord while birds are thrown or shot. When the dog/handler team is ready, the handler must signal the judge for the marks. A dog should not be sent until his number has been called by one of the judges. If held by a leash or slip cord, the device will remain with the handler after the dog is sent. These must be either placed in the handler's pocket or on the ground behind the handler before the dog returns with a bird. After the dog is sent, the handler must stand quietly on the line while his/her dog is working in the field.

WD requirements allow the dog to be held on the line, but it would be a disqualification if the dog went before it is released to retrieve by one of the judges.

4. Once the dog has the bird, the handler may then call him/her with voice and/or whistle. Delivery of a bird within two paces of the handler is acceptable if the dog has brought the bird across the starting line. Hand delivery is not required. The dog should return by a reasonably direct route, showing a willingness to return with the bird.
5. Handling on a mark with whistle, voice, or arm directions is NOT allowed. These are marked retrieves, and it is the dog's responsibility to find the birds without help.
6. Decoys are not to be used.
7. A shotgun blank shot or shotgun simulator shot should be fired before a bird is thrown.
8. Tests should be set up to avoid switching. Handlers and dogs are often inexperienced with little training.
9. All gunners/throwers, on both land and water, must be fully visible to both dog and handler. All birds must be thrown so the dog/handler can watch the bird thrown and see it fall into light cover.
10. A white shirt/jacket must be worn by at least one thrower/gunner at each throwing station.
11. The water tests should not be positioned to encourage cheating the water (bank running) or breaking.