THE CANINE GOOD CITIZEN TEST

The American Kennel Club defines its Canine Good Citizen test:

> *At the AKC, we believe that all dogs can be good dogs, and all owners can be great owners. All it takes is a little bit of training, lots of love, and, of course, plenty of praise along the way.*
>
> *That is why we created the Canine Good Citizen® (CGC) program: an expert-made training program designed to help you and your dog be the best you can be–together.*
>
> *Canine Good Citizen is a 10-skill test that teaches good manners to dogs and responsible dog ownership to their owners.*

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The AKC has become more pet-dog friendly in recent years, adding titles like Trick Dog (with multiple levels) and Fit Dog, in case you and your dog exercise together. You do need to register your dog (there are choices). There is a fee for testing and certifications, but their goal is good dogs and good dog owners, and none of us can argue with that.

I have been an AKC CGC Evaluator for over 20 years, and I remind people that the test is NOT competitive, nor is your dog expected to be perfect. He is expected to be a nice dog with good manners.

Did you click on the link? Do you want to know what the ten skills are? Here you go: sit, down, heel, stay, come, meet a stranger, meet a stranger with a dog (no dog greeting), be petted by a stranger, be handled by a stranger, stay with a stranger for three minutes. Think about it, your dog already does many of these things, at the vet's office, if nowhere else.

Training builds the relationship with your dog, whether he is new to your family or has been sleeping on your couch for years. A dog with good manners is a wonderful thing, and the training for that may be lifelong. A trainer associate of mine reminds us that dog training ends when you, or your dog, reach room temperature.

Some of us need something to strive for, a goal to set. How hard would it be for you and your dog to pass a little test and bring home a certificate to brag about to your friends? Who knows, after you pass this test, you may go on to Trick Dog titles!

AKC.org has all the information you need.

Karen Oliver
Bring Rover Over
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