

American Spaniel Club
Working Certificate Tests
Revised 12/20

Introduction

The Working Certificate Test Program is an introduction to field work for both dog and handler. The program is designed to give Cockers and all other Flushing Spaniels the opportunity to test their natural hunting skills in a non-competitive atmosphere. The Working Test Program supports fieldwork, urging owners to train their Spaniels to a hunting companion level. Two awards may be earned.

The WD (Working Dog) certificate for satisfactory work, and the WDX (Working Dog Excellent) is for outstanding work. The ASC encourages the versatility of our sporting cockers in the field. The Working Test Program is viewed as a first step towards entering the AKC hunt test program.

Procedures:

Offering Working Dog Tests

1. A working dog test may be offered by a flushing spaniel club or by a group of flushing spaniel owners.
2. Permission to hold a test must be obtained from the Chairperson(s) of the ASC Field Committee and notification must be sent to the appropriate parent breed club representative.
3. The test chairperson must state the date and site of the test and name(s) of proposed judge(s). The judge(s) must be thoroughly familiar with the work of flushing spaniels in the field. The judge(s) qualifications should be briefly listed on the test application if they are not known to the Chairperson.
4. Breeds for which notification must be sent to parent breed club secretaries include English Cocker Spaniels (ECS), English Springer Spaniels (ESS), Welsh Springer Spaniels (WSS), Field Spaniels (FS), Clumber Spaniels (CS). Breeds that fall under ASC rules and regulations include: Cocker Spaniels and Sussex Spaniels.
5. Field Chairs for the parent clubs of ECS, ESS, FS, WSS and CS will need to be notified by the Chairman/Secretary of the working dog test to request rules/score sheets for those dogs in order for them to participate.
6. Breeds under ASC jurisdiction may participate in working tests offered by any of the above specialty or parent breed clubs and may receive working titles if the judging score sheets are sent to one of the ASC Field Chairpersons. Exhibitors should notify one of the ASC Field Chairs of the test date, site and judges before the test if at all possible. ASC test forms should be used if available. Field Chairperson will send a test form and rules upon request.
7. If a test is given by a group not directly associated with a parent club, the field chairperson may grant working titles after determining the quality of the judging and test procedures.

Score Sheets and Certificates

1. Information on dogs to be tested should be entered on Working Test Judging forms supplied on request by the ASC Field Committee Chair(s) or downloaded on the ASC website. On the form, all information requested on the dog, owner, handler and test chairperson needs to be completed for titles to be issued.
2. The ASC Working Certificate Form should be sent to the Field Committee Chairperson in charge of certificates. Copies should be made and retained by test giving club. The original form will be sent to the ASC Field Chair so that the Certificate can be sent it to the Owner. A copy will be kept on file by the Field Committee Chair.
3. The test chairman is responsible for sending the original form to the ASC Field Chair.
4. The ASC Field Chair(s) shall keep permanent records of every dog that qualifies for a Working Dog (WD) or Working Dog Excellent (WDX) title.
5. The ASC Field Chair(s) shall complete and mail WD or WDX certificates to the owners of dogs that pass working tests. Only one WD and one WDX certificate allowed for each dog.

How Titles are Earned:

Working tests are non-competitive events. There should be no ranking or placing of dogs. A total of three flushing spaniels must run to constitute a valid test. A dog must receive Satisfactory (S) rating in all categories to receive a Working Dog Certificate (WD). A dog must receive Excellent (E) ratings in all categories to receive a Working Dog Excellent Certificate (WDX).

The judge(s) shall determine which title a dog receives provided the decision follows ASC guidelines.

ASC WD/WDX Rules:**Field Site:**

There should be suitable cover, such as stubble, brush, grass, etc., high enough to hide the birds used in the test. The area used must be a safe distance from human habitation so that birds may be safely shot.

Birds:

Each dog should work at least two (2) live birds. More may be used if circumstances require it to give the judge(s) sufficient information on the dog's capabilities. Pigeons, quail, chukar or pheasant may be used and should be planted a minimum of 20 to 30 yards ahead of the dog and/or starting line, and apart from each other.

Gun Safety:

Established safe gunning rules must be followed. A bird that flies over the gallery should not be shot. Another bird should be put down for the dog. A dog must be given a chance to flush and retrieve. If a dog has demonstrated sufficiently that it can find and flush birds, but the birds can't be shot, a dead bird may be thrown, with a shot fired at the same time to allow a dog to demonstrate its retrieving ability.

Field Marshall:

At least one marshall should be appointed to keep spectators, other handlers and dogs in a close group behind the judge(s) or in an assigned area. This is to prevent interference with the work of the dog being tested, to give the gunners a chance to shoot, and to ensure the safety of everyone.

Working Dog Test on State Lands:**Insurance:**

All state hunting department regulations should be followed. A Working Test could fall in the same category as a field trial under state hunting laws. A working test should be covered by insurance just as shows and obedience trials. If the event is sponsored by ASC, contact the Insurance Chairman prior to scheduling the event.

Land Test Requirements:

1. The Dog must sit or stay by handler at the starting line, unleashed, until instructed by the judge(s) to proceed. The handler then sends the dog, walking behind, allowing the dog to work the field and directing when necessary. Dogs are run individually, not braced.
2. Dog must show a reasonable response to whistle and or command, and cover the course with a spaniel type pattern of quartering. The dog must not be completely out of control, although leniency and time would be given for the handler to collect the dog.
3. The Dog is not required to be steady to flush or shot.
4. The Dog must demonstrate sufficient hunting ability and desire to find and produce game in a workmanlike manner, without undo urging, or pottering.
5. The Dog must retrieve birds to hand or deliver within a few steps of the handler, so that the bird can be taken or picked up, without handler chasing dog. Handler may direct a dog to a fall if the dog has not marked it. However, for a WDX the dog is expected to mark an open, direct fall and deliver to hand. For a WD, close proximity is fine.
6. The Dog must not damage birds. No chewing or crushing. Birds damaged by shot do not apply.

Water Test Requirements:

For the water test a dead bird is thrown into the water from shore at a distance of about 10 to 15 yards. As the bird is thrown a shot is fired. The dog must swim and retrieve the bird to shore for both levels. For a WDX the bird must be delivered to hand.

1. The Dog may be held on leash until handler is directed by judge to send dog. For WDX the dog should be steady, BUT may be held with gentle restraint.
2. The Dog must retrieve to shore; delivery should be within close proximity to handler, without handler having to chase the dog. For WDX delivery must be to hand.
3. The Dog must willingly enter the water on its own. If the dog must be urged, it cannot receive a WDX.
4. The Dog must prove its ability to make a water retrieve by swimming a minimum of 10 yards.