

SUPPLEMENTARY DOG DANCING RULES MALAYSIA 2025

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Malaysian Kennel Association (MKA) Dog Dancing Rules & Regulations

PREAMBLE

The Malaysian Kennel Association (MKA) has approved the adoption of the Rules and Regulations For FCI International Dog Dancing Competitions (December 26, 2024). These FCI Rules & Regulations will replace the Rules For The Conduct of Dances With Dogs (Freestyle and Heelwork to Music), which was adopted on 1st January 2012. This initiative aligns with our commitment to advancing the skills and capabilities of our canine community in Malaysia, whilst reflecting the standards set by the Federation Cynologique Internationale (FCI).

To ensure uniformity and consistency in the standard of Dog Dancing, the MKA has decided to adopt the FCI Rules and Regulations completely. However, as provided for, each country still retains its own rules and identity, but for international competition, the FCI provides a common set of rules.

INCORPORATION OF FCI DOG DANCING RULES

MKA's Dog Dancing activities will adhere to the Regulations for FCI Dog Dancing Competitions. This will include:

- Management, Participants and Judging of Dog Dancing Competitions
- Practical Arrangement and Equipment
- General Rules, Disqualifications, Score Sheets
- Heelwork To Music & Freestyle
- International Titles

MODIFICATIONS FOR MKA

The following are the modifications for Dog Dancing adopted by the MKA to suit the local context and environmental conditions in Malaysia. The MKA reserves the right to modify the rules to suit the country's standard for non pedigree dogs.

2. Heelwork To Music (HTM)

The dog works off-lead in the heel position, moving at any pace in the positions as stated in the FCI Dog Dancing Rules.

The dog must move parallel to the handler in the nominated heelwork positions, maintaining the same distance in relation to the handler in all positions, and move at the same pace. A minimum of 75% of the routine should consist of heelwork, during which the dog's shoulder should be reasonably close to the handler's legs; the remaining 25% of the routine will consist of freestyle movements. A dog is not allowed to go more than 2 metres away from the handler during the entire routine. In an ideal HTM position, the distance between the dog and handler is constant and no more than 15cm. Any distance work will incur points deduction. The dog has to walk on all fours in a natural manner.

2.1 Heelwork To Music Positions

The handler chooses their positions from the following list.

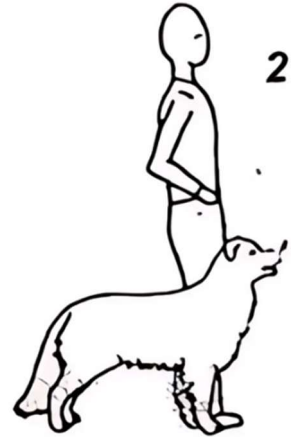
1. Left Side Heel Position

The dog's right shoulder is situated parallel and next to the handler's left leg (left side).



2. Right Side Heel Position

The dog's left shoulder is situated parallel and next to the handler's right leg (right side).



3. Inverted Right Side Heel Position

The dog's right shoulder is situated parallel to the handler's right leg. The dog is looking towards the handler (inverted right side).



4. Inverted Left Side Heel Position

The dog's left shoulder is situated parallel to the handler's left leg. The dog is looking towards the handler (inverted left side).



5. Front Right Side Position

The dog is standing sideways in front of the handler, with its right side towards the front of the handler. The dog's right shoulder is situated at the handler's right leg. This may be on either the inside or outside of the handler's right leg.



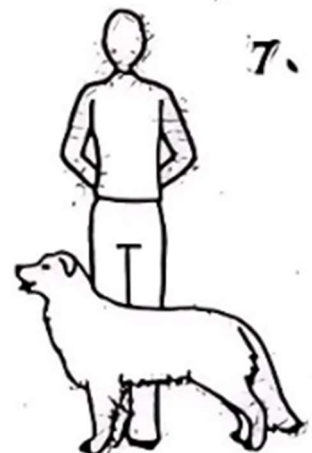
6. Front Left Side Position

The dog is standing sideways in front of the handler, with its left side towards the front of the handler. The dog's left shoulder is situated at the handler's left leg. This may be on either the inside or the outside of the handler's left leg.



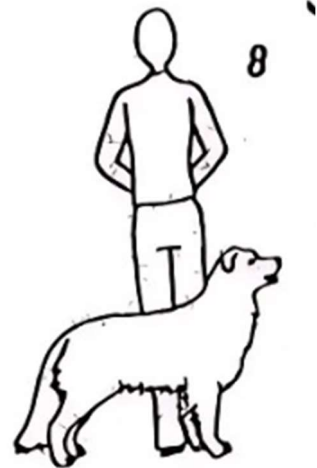
7. Rear Left Side Position

The dog is standing behind the handler, with the dog's right shoulder at the handler's left leg.



8. Rear Right Side Position

The dog is standing behind the handler, with the dog's left shoulder at the handler's right leg.



9. Between Legs Forward Position

The dog is situated between the handler's legs and looking in the same direction as the handler. Its shoulders are at the handler's legs.



10 . Between Legs Backward Position

The dog is situated between the handler's legs and looking in the opposite direction to the handler. Its shoulders are at the handler's legs.



3. CLASSES & TITLES

The following will be the classes and titles available in Dog Dance Malaysia.

3.1 HEELWORK TO MUSIC (HTM) Division

3.1.1 Heelwork To Music Fun Class

a) Puppy Fun Class - 6 to 12 Months

- Non Ranking - No Qualifications - Non Titling - Judges critics provided. Motivators allowed.
- No Jumps, No Crawl, No Walking on 2 legs, No Backwards movement.
- Music 1-2 minutes.

b) Open Fun Class - above 12 Months

- Non Ranking - No Qualifications - Non Titling - Judges critics provided. Motivators allowed.
- Music 1-4 minutes.

3.1.2 Heelwork to Music 0 (HTM 0)

This class is non-titling. Rankings are provided, however, qualification towards titles is not awarded at this level. To encourage participation, motivators are permitted in the ring. Participation is limited to a maximum of three entries per team; participants can only remain in the class for a maximum of 3 times. Teams are not allowed to complete in the HTM 0 and must move up to HTM 1. Entry into HTM 0 is optional (not mandatory). The required routine duration is between 1.30 - 2.30 minutes.

3.1.3 Heelwork to Music 1 (HTM 1)

This class is titling. **Motivators are not allowed** in the ring. Teams may enter HTM 1 directly, without having first competed in the optional HTM 0 class. To qualify for the HTM 1 title, the team must achieve 2 Qualifying Certificates in this class. Teams that earn the HTM 1 title are eligible to move up to HTM 2. However, progression to HTM 2 is mandatory once a team has earned a total of 4 Qualifying Certificates in HTM 1. The required routine duration is between 1.30 - 2.30 minutes.

3.1.3 Heelwork to Music 2 (HTM 2)

This class is titling. Eligibility is restricted to teams that have qualified from HTM 1. To earn the HTM 2 title, the team must achieve 3 Qualifying Certificates in this class. Teams that successfully earn the HTM 2 title are then eligible to move up to HTM 3. The maximum number of times a team can remain in this class is 5.

The required routine duration is between approximately 2.15 - 3.15 minutes.

3.1.4 Heelwork to Music 3 (HTM 3)

This class is titling. Eligibility is restricted to teams that have qualified from HTM 2. To earn the HTM 3 title, the team must achieve 3 Qualifying Certificates (QCs) in this class, under at least two different judges. Teams that successfully earn the HTM 3 title are then eligible to compete for the HTM Champion title. The required routine duration is between 3.00 - 4.00 minutes.

3.1.5 Heelwork to Music Champion (HTM Ch)

This is a titling class. Eligibility is restricted to teams that have obtained the HTM 3 title. To qualify for the HTM Ch title, the team must achieve an additional 3 Qualifying Certificates subsequent to earning the HTM 3 title, with a minimum average score of 22 points.

3. 2 FREESTYLE (FS) Division

A Freestyle routine includes a minimum of 75% FS Moves and a maximum of 25% HTM. All moves are allowed, unless the move jeopardises the dog's health.

“Ideal: freestyle consists of a great variety of different moves. The moves should be incorporated into the routine fluently, following the changes in the music.

3.2.1 Freestyle Fun Class (FS Fun Class)

a) Puppy Fun Class - 6 - 12 months

- Non Ranking - No Qualifications - Non Titling - Judges critics provided. Motivators allowed
- No Jumps, No Crawl, No Walking on 2 legs, No Backwards movement.
- Music 1-2 minutes

b) Open Fun Class - above 12 months

- Non Ranking - No Qualifications - Non Titling - Judges critics provided. Motivators allowed
- Music 1-4 minutes

3.2.2 Freestyle 0 (FS 0)

This is a non-titling class. Ranking is available, but there is no qualification for progression. To encourage participation at this level, **motivators are permitted**. The maximum number of times a team is allowed to participate in this class is three, after which the participant must move up to Class 1. This class is non-mandatory. The required routine duration is approximately between 1.30 - 2.30 minutes.

3.2.3 Freestyle 1 (FS 1)

This is a titling class. Motivators are not allowed. Participants can start at this Class 1 level without competing in Class 0. To qualify for the FS Class 1 title, the team must achieve 2 Qualifying Certificates in this class. Teams that have obtained 4 Qualifying Certificates in Class 1 must move up to Class 2. The maximum number of times a team can remain in this Class 1 level is four. The required routine duration is approximately between 1.30 -2.30 minutes.

3.2.4 Freestyle 2 (FS 2)

This is a titling class. Eligibility is restricted to teams that have qualified from FS Class 1. To qualify for the FS Class 2 title, the team must achieve 3 Qualifying Certificates in this class. Teams that have obtained 3 Qualifying Certificates in Class 2 will move up to the next level, FS Class 3. The maximum number of times a team can remain in this class is five. The required routine duration is approximately between 2.15 - 3.15 minutes.

3.2.5 Freestyle 3 (FS 3)

This is a titling class. Eligibility is restricted to teams that have qualified from FS Class 2. To qualify for the FS Class 3 title, the team must achieve 3 Qualifying Certificates in this class. Teams which have obtained 3 Qualifying Certificates in Class 3 will then be eligible to participate in the FS Champion title class. The required routine duration will be approximately between 3.00 - 4.00 minutes.

3.2.6 Freestyle Champion (FS. Ch)

This is a titling class. Eligibility is restricted to teams that have obtained 3 Qualifying Certificates in FS Class 3. To qualify for the FS Champion title, the team must achieve an additional 3 Qualifying Certificates subsequent to obtaining the Class 3 title, with a minimum average score of 22 points.

3.3 Qualifying Certificate for HTM and FS classes.

- A dog that has obtained a Dog Dance qualification in an MKA sanctioned Dog Dance competition will be allowed to use the qualification so obtained for titling purposes.
- An MKA registered dog that has obtained the required qualifying certificates to gain a title in that class must apply to the MKA for the title before it can take part in the next level.
- To be awarded a Qualifying Certificate, a score of 20.5 out of a maximum of 30 points is required.

4. Judging Criteria

4.1 Composition of Judging Panel

Each class in a Dog Dance competition will be judged by a Judging Panel which may consist of one to three judges.

4.2 Judge's Marking Criteria.

The judges shall mark according to the following four sections:

Presentation - Maximum: 9 Points

| |
|--|
| Cooperation between handler and dog |
| Flow of the routine |
| Responsiveness |
| Clarity and subtlety of commands/signalling |
| Overall presentation on the day |
| Execution of moves |

Comments / deductions : Excessive Barking

Content - Maximum : 9 Points

| |
|--|
| Focus on the dog |
| Use of the ring (e.g., balanced coverage, comprehensive use of space) |
| Variety of Moves |
| Difficulty of Moves |
| Transition / Links between Moves |

Comments / Deduction : *Incorrect number of required freestyle or heelwork moves, Music exceeding the time limit, Inappropriate dressing/costuming of the dog, Props introduced but not utilised effectively*

Artistic Interpretation - Maximum : 9 Points

| |
|--|
| Structure of the routine |
| Visualisation of the routine's concept or story |
| Music selection suits the dog's pace and movement patterns |
| Punctuating (notion in the music) |
| Appropriate handler movement which enhances the dog's performance |
| Routine effectively reflects the mood and emotions of the music |
| Proper usage of music (interpretation of music) |

Comments / Deductions : Props disconnected from the music / routine not suitable

Partnership & Animal Wellbeing - Maximum :3 Points

| |
|---|
| Routine emphasises qualities of dog (Breed, Personality, Physical & Mental Abilities) |
| Health & Safety of dog |
| Partnership |

Comments / Deductions – Improper or harsh handling techniques observed, Inconsiderate or unsafe use of props concerning the dog

4.3 Tie-Breaking Rules

If two or more teams have the same total score, the tie will be broken as follows:

4.3.1 The team with the highest score in the **Partnership & Animal Wellbeing** section will be placed higher.

4.3.2 If the teams are still tied:

- **For Heelwork to Music (HTM):** The tie is broken based on the highest score in **Content**, then **Presentation**, then **Artistic Interpretation**.
- **For Freestyle (FS):** The tie is broken based on the highest score in **Presentation**, then **Content**, then **Artistic Interpretation**.

4.4 Score Sheets

Score sheets detailing the marks awarded will be provided to competitors after the judging is complete.

See sample Score Sheet.

4.5 Penalties / Deductions

Point deductions may be applied by the judges within the relevant marking categories for issues such as:

4.5.1 Presentation:

- Excessive or disruptive barking

4.5.2 Content:

- Incorrect number of required Heelwork (HW) or Freestyle (FS) moves
- Music exceeding the allowed time limit
- Inappropriate dressing or costuming of the dog
- Props brought into the ring but used minimally or ineffectively

4.5.3 Artistic Interpretation:

- Props used are not connected to the routine's theme or music
- The overall routine is unsuitable (e.g., inappropriate theme)

4.5.4 Partnership & Animal Wellbeing:

- Improper handling of the dog (e.g., harsh commands, rough physical guidance)
- Inconsiderate or unsafe use of props concerning the dog

4.6 Disqualification

A team may be disqualified from the competition by the judge(s) or competition management for any of the following reasons:

- **Dog urinates or defecates** in the ring during the performance.
- **Dog is deemed out of control or leaves the ring** boundary during the performance
- **Handler physically touches the dog excessively** merely to keep it under control or in position
- **Harsh handling** is observed.
- **Substituting** the registered handler or dog
- Attempt to **mislead the judge(s)**
- Any form of **cheating**.
- **Bringing food, toys, or other training aids/motivators** into the ring during the competition performance.
- **Violation of any anti-doping regulations** applicable to the event.
- **Handler explicitly turns the performance into an obvious training session**, disregarding the performance aspect.
- **Dog wears a leash or collar** during the competition performance
- **Dog shows aggression or attacks** another dog or person at the event.
- **"Double handling"** occurs (e.g., receiving commands, signals, or assistance from anyone outside the ring during the performance).

5. General Rules

5.1 Size of Ring

The competition ring must be a minimum of 10 metres x 12 metres.

5.2 Surface

For indoor competitions, the floor within the ring must be covered with a suitable non-slip surface.

5.3 Perimeter

A spectator-free safety zone of at least one metre must be maintained around the outside of the ring perimeter. This area, including the designated judging area, must be clearly cordoned off from spectators.

5.4 Other Dogs

Dogs not competing at that time must be kept at least 4 metres away from the competition ring boundary.

5.5 Motivator

No food, toys, or other training aids/motivators may be brought into the ring or the designated assembly/preparation area. Items must not be thrown into the ring by anyone during the competition. Motivators / Treats is only allowed for Fun Class (Puppy & Adult Class) and HTM /FS 0 class.

5.6 Eligibility of Exhibits

Dogs must be at least 12 months of age on the date of the competition.

Spayed and neutered dogs are permitted to compete.

Bitches in season are allowed but must compete last in their class or at the very end of the competition day, as directed by the organisers. They must be kept securely away from other dogs when not competing.

5.7 Handler's Obligations

A handler's obligations under these rules begin upon arrival at the competition venue and end after leaving the venue following the prize-giving ceremony.

All handlers must adhere to these rules, event regulations, and instructions given by the Chief Steward or competition officials.

Handlers are expected to maintain good sportsmanship and appropriate behaviour at all times. Handlers should be suitably dressed for presenting their dog in competition.

Only the competing handler and dog may enter the ring during their allotted time, unless specific permission is granted by an authorised official (e.g., Chief Steward, Head Judge).

5.8 Accessories for Dogs & Props

Dressing the dog in costumes is forbidden, as well as decorating the dog with items such as glitter or hair dye.

The main focus of the routine must remain on the dog's performance.

Props and the handler's costume should enhance the routine but not overshadow the dog.

5.9 Music

The routine music must not exceed 4 minutes (4:00). Exceeding the maximum time will result in point deductions as specified in the judging criteria.

Handlers are responsible for providing their own music. Music should be submitted on a clearly labelled thumb drive (USB stick) with Handler Name, Dog Name, and Class and emailed to the organising committee. Handlers are responsible for checking their music track and ensuring its quality and clarity before submission and the competition.

5.10 Preparation and removal of props

A maximum combined total of 3 minutes is allowed for setting up props before the routine and removing them immediately afterwards (suggested split: up to 1.5 minutes for setup and 1.5 minutes for removal, managed by the ring steward).

5.11 Leash

Leashes are not permitted in the ring during the performance. The handler should give the leash to the ring steward before entering the ring.

5.12 Carrying the dog into and out of the ring.

Handlers may carry their dog (in their arms) when entering or leaving the ring. Carrying the dog within or as part of a prop is not allowed. The dog must be placed on the ground before the official start of the routine (judging commences). If the routine's final position involves the dog being held (e.g., in arms, on back), the dog must be placed back on the ground after the routine has clearly finished (signalled/judged) but before the handler picks the dog up again (if they choose to) to carry it out of the ring.

5.13 Walk Through

Competitors may be permitted a brief walk through of their routine pattern (without their dog) in the ring, typically around 30 minutes before the competition starts.

5.14 Withdrawal of a Dog

A competitor may withdraw a dog before or during the judging but following the withdrawal, the dog will not be able to take any further part in that class of the competition.

5.15 Handling of dog

No harsh handling (physical or verbal) is permitted at any time at the venue. Gentle verbal encouragement during the routine is generally allowed and will not be penalised.

5.16 Judge's Decision

The decision of the Judging Panel is final. Any participant who openly disputes or questions the integrity of the judges' decisions may be subject to disciplinary action, including being barred from further participation in the competition, ordered to leave the grounds, and potentially reported under the rules of the MKA (Malaysian Kennel Association).

5.17 Removal of Dog

The Judging Panel **must** order the removal and disqualification from the competition of any dog that attacks or displays aggressive behaviour towards any person or dog.

The Judging Panel may also order the removal from the competition of:

- Any dog deemed disorderly or unmanageable.
- Any handler who wilfully interferes with another competitor or their dog.
- Any handler whose behaviour is deemed inappropriate