

Guideline for walk tests

Approved by the Board of the Finnish Kennel Club on 15.12.2016, updated by the board 19.8.2021. Valid as of 1.1.2022.



This guideline complements the Programme to combat hereditary diseases and defects (Council 30.11.2008) and the Guideline for the programme to combat hereditary diseases and defects (PEVISA guideline, Board 28.8.2008).

1 General regulations

Dog's exercise tolerance and the ability to breathe normally are evaluated by means of the walk test and the clinical examination included in it. The Kennel Club approves as official tests that are carried out in accordance with this manual.

A walk test should be carried out in the dog owner's home country or in Finland.

For imported dogs, foreign breeding dogs as well as imported sperm, the Kennel Club accepts the test results according to a separate decision. An accepted test certificate must show that the dog has been identification marked at the time of the test.

2 Right of participation

The walk test is intended for short-nosed (brachycephalic) breeds, showing symptoms caused by upper airway stenosis. The breeds for which the walk test is considered as an official health test are listed in the detailed test instructions (Organisation of a walk test).

Right to participate in a walk test is given to dogs which are at least 18 months of age and identified and vaccinated in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Kennel Club. The dog's identification number is always verified at the time of the test. A test done for a dog under two years old is valid for one year.

Not allowed to participate in the walk test are

- dogs with breathing problems or suggestive symptoms
- dogs whose respiratory tracts have been surgically repaired
- sick dogs
- bitches less than 30 days before whelping or less than 75 days after whelping.

The Finnish Kennel Club's antidoping regulations, as well as the general rules regarding incompatibilities are followed in the tests.

3 Test procedure

The Finnish Kennel Club names the veterinarians familiar with the test and authorized to supervise the walk tests approved by the Kennel Club. A supervising veterinarian should always be present during a test.

The supervising veterinarian decides on the basis of an initial clinical investigation whether the dog can take part in the test. The veterinarian may also interrupt a dog's test on humane grounds. However, the dog is always tested at the owner's responsibility.

Walk tests are conducted following the detailed test instructions (Organisation of a walk test) approved by the Scientific Commission of the Kennel Club. Test procedure in brief:

1. Measurement of the dog's heart rate and body temperature, evaluation of general condition
2. 1000 meter walk on a leash
3. Assessment of the dog after the recovery time: heart rate, body temperature, general condition.

The dog must spend the recovery time in the same room as where the walk was carried out. The dog should not be cooled down otherwise than by supplying it with water (except for humane reasons, which result in a failed test).

Clinical data related to the test and the actual test results are recorded on a Kennel Club walk test form, which is delivered to the Kennel Club.

4 Results of the walk test and repeating the test

The result of the walk test depends on the dog's level of performance and / or clinical examination, based on the decision of the supervising veterinarian:

Result of the test	Definition
Approved	The dog walks / trots 1,000 meters within the required time, and recovers sufficiently from the walk within the recovery time.
Failed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dog is, based on the initial clinical examination, showing signs of serious respiratory symptoms (including also severe hyperthermia). • The supervising veterinarian interrupts the test due to the dog's respiratory symptoms. • The dog cannot perform the test and / or recover sufficiently within the required time.
Discontinued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supervising veterinarian detects any other visible illness, which completely prevents the dog from taking part in the test or prevents the continuation of the test. • The test is interrupted by the dog's owner or handler

Results of the walk test, the possible cause of the interruption as well as dog's clinical BOAS (brachycephalic obstructive airway syndrome) classification will be displayed in the Kennel Club's breeding database.

If the supervising veterinarian observes an excessive distraction in the test session, the test is interrupted, and no result is recorded for the dog.

A failed test can be repeated once.

A discontinued test can be repeated twice.

5 Exceptional cases

The Scientific Commission of the Finnish Kennel Club is entitled to grant an exception from the regulations presented in this guideline, if there are very compelling reasons to do so in a one-off exceptional case.