

The Daycare Games Sponsored by The Dog Gurus



The Daycare Games is an annual competition of off-leash dog play attendants and pet centers. Through the competition you can demonstrate your dog leadership skills that make your off-leash dog playgroups safe and fun.

The Daycare Games is a great way to:

- recognize your staff that excel in safe off-leash dog play management,
- challenge staff to improve skills in a fun competition,
- show clients and prospects in your market what sets your operations apart,
- benchmark your center and staff 's proficiency against top industry peers across the world,
- earn bragging rights on your standings for a year!

The Competitors

The Daycare Games competition is open to all members of The Dog Gurus online community that currently offer off-leash dog playgroups. Dog group size should be a minimum of 5 dogs.

Step 1: Members register for the competition by class reflecting the total number of staff members you have working in leading off-leash playgroups.

- **Small Class** – single owner/operators up to 3 employees who work with playgroups
- **Medium Class** – 4 to 7 employees who work with playgroups
- **Large Class** – 8 employees or more who work with playgroups

Step 2: Register each employee that leads your off-leash playgroups and will participate in the Daycare Games. Each employee will be categorized based on their level of experience so they are competing against others with similar skill levels.

- **Novice** – new employees or owner/operators still in training to be off-leash dog playgroup attendants
- **Intermediate** – employees or owner/operators that have completed training at your center and have 1 year or less experience leading dog playgroups
- **Advanced** – employees or owner/operators that have over 1 year experience leading dog playgroups

The Events

The competition events are leadership exercises The Dog Gurus recommend be used daily in managing dogs in off-leash playgroups. Through The Daycare Games competition you will determine how your skills compare to competitors in your own class and employee experience level.

Event 1: Dog Recall

Document the percentage of dogs in the playgroup that come to you when called. You will call each dog to you individually using your come or recall cue. A successful recall is when a dog that is at least 6 feet away from you responds to your cue within 3 seconds and comes close enough to you that you can pet the dog easily.

Staff teams working very large groups of dogs need to subdivide the dogs and assign each person an equal number of dogs to recall. (For example 3 staff are supervising 43 dogs in one play area. From your list of dogs assign staff 1 – the first 15 dogs, staff 2 – the next 14 dogs and staff 3 – the last 14 dogs on the list).

To challenge advanced staff members get your staff together and create a list of your dogs that are “hard” to recall prior to starting the competition. Advanced staff members will need to have success recalling a “hard” dog as part of their competition. Be sure to work as a team and create your list prior to starting the competition and have all staff agree on the list of “hard” dogs.

Calculate your recall percentage:

Number of dogs with a successful recall *divided by* total number of dogs in playgroup (or total assigned to staff member from the group).

Example:

Joe had 12 dogs in his playgroup and successfully recalled 9; his recall percentage is 75%.

Event 2: Group Sits

Document the number of dogs in the playgroup that will sit at the same time on cue. Count the number of dogs that have their rear touching the ground at the same time for 2 – 4 seconds (time to hold sit varies by staff experience level as noted in the event goals chart).

Event 3: Managing the Gate Boundary

Good leaders control the three feet of space from the playgroup entry door or gate by keeping dogs out of this space on cue or with body blocking. Document the number of dogs that you have waiting calmly at the boundary line of your entry door/gate. Dogs can be in a sit or standing position. Also document position of gate and staff's body position.

Event Goals

	Master	Leader	Apprentice	Variable
<u>Recall</u>				
Novice	70%	60%	50%	None
Intermediate	80%	70%	60%	None
Advanced	95%	80%	70%	Achieve 100% on some shifts
<u>Group Sit</u>				
Novice	5	4	3	2 seconds
Intermediate	6	5	4	3 seconds
Advanced	7	6	5	4 seconds
<u>Gate Boundary</u>				
Novice	7	5	3	Closest dog 2 feet away (Gate closed) (Body positioned in middle)
Intermediate	9	7	5	Closest dog 3 feet away (Gate partially open) (Body partially blocks gate)
Advanced	11	9	7	Closest dog 3 feet away (Gate fully open) (Body at side of gate)

Competition Guidelines

- All dog management tools used during the competition events must be positive (e.g., body blocking, praise, verbal cues). Positive methods preclude the use of prong collars, choke collars, electronic shock collars, muzzles, and

physical manipulation to handle dogs in off-leash play. Dog body language during the events should be green with minimal stress signals.

- No food or treat lures or rewards can be used
- Dog playgroups must be “as is” (e.g., you cannot put the hard dogs on a rest period during the event)
- The Dog Guru Community Honor Code is followed by honestly and accurately reporting starting benchmarks and event scores for individual performances
- Submit each individual’s starting benchmark and best event score during the competition week by the reporting deadline
- Late or no entry of results for an event will disqualify the center from the competition
- Take photos and share through social media and with The Dog Gurus
- Use #DaycareGames when you tweet on your success

Recognition & Awards

General:

- Press releases sent by The Dog Gurus to media mentioning the Daycare Games
- Draft press releases you can use by your business to local media and clients to highlight your participation in the Daycare Games
- Highlights of The Daycare Games on The Dog Gurus Website as well as on Robin and Susan’s personal blogs which you can share with others to publicize your company/staff participation
- Bragging rights on your own website and in your community!

Weekly:

- Individual gold, silver & bronze medal winners by experience level (Novice, Intermediate & Advanced) listed on The Dog Gurus website
- Total number of medals won by center by class size (Small, Medium & Large) listed on The Dog Gurus website
- Gold medal individual winners announced on The Dog Gurus Facebook page
- Top 3 Pet Centers with highest medal counts by class announced on The Dog Gurus Facebook page

The Daycare Games Closing Ceremony

- Individual All Around by experience level winners (i.e., those with highest medal count earned in the 3 events combined) listed on The Dog Gurus website and printed certificate emailed to pet center
- Pet Center in each class winning the highest medal count (i.e., those with most gold, silver and bronze in the 3 events)

Registration and Event Reporting

Registration:

- Complete The Daycare Games registration form
 - Register for your competition class defined by number of employees
 - Register each individual employee in your center that will be competing in The Daycare Games individual event competitions as a Novice, Intermediate or Advanced competitor.
 - Provide email address for The Dog Gurus to contact you during the competition

Event Reporting:

- Each event week post scores of each staff person competing by due date listed on the website.
- Specific posting procedures will be provided by email after registration of your center
- **IMPORTANT:** The posting deadline is firm due to the time it takes to process, analyze and determine winners. Scores submitted after the deadline will not be included for that event. We recommend setting calendar reminders or other double checks each week to ensure the person responsible for submitting scores submits timely. The Dog Gurus regret when the hard work of staff cannot be included in the results, but we cannot make any exceptions and manage the games fairly for all other participants.