

DESCRIPTION OF MERRIMAC CLASSES

Unless otherwise specified, dogs must be 12 weeks old to enter classes.

Dogs may repeat classes at the owner or instructor's discretion. If you are not sure what level your dog should begin in or if your dog should move forward, the Training Director or Instructors can help you determine the best class for your dog.

Dogs with training other than at MDTC may need to be tested/assessed by the Instructor or Training Director before being allowed to begin in a higher level class. Testing is done at the club at a time that is convenient for the owner and Instructor or Training Director.

The following classes are considered 'core' classes and are generally held most sessions.

Other specialty classes may be listed on the schedule with requirements for that class listed below the class.

Obedience:

Puppy Obedience - This is for puppies from 3 to 9 months old. Some of the topics covered in the classes are socializing your puppy, gentling exercises, house-breaking, nipping, jumping, and beginning obedience exercises such as sit, down, come, stay, and walk on a loose lead. If you are a non-member and are bringing your puppy or dog for the first time, you will need to provide proof of all required vaccinations the first week of class. If you are a new to pet ownership this class is for you!

Basic Obedience - This is for dogs 5 months and older, puppies that have completed a puppy class or already have some training and beginners of any age. The course will cover obedience commands of sit, down, stand, stay, come and walk on a loose lead. All exercises are taught on lead. Attention is also introduced and the use of some obstacles such as cones and chairs to help build confidence. Non-member dogs entering this class without having entered the Puppy Class need to provide proof of all required up to date vaccinations.

Advanced Basic - This class is for dogs that have successfully completed the Basic class or that have had other training and possess the skills taught in basic. The basic exercises of sit, down, stay, come, and walk on a loose leash are expanded upon with distractions. This class is geared toward preparing the dog for the AKC's Canine Good Citizenship test, which is offered by the club, frequently during the year. Exercises include but are not limited to walking in a crowd, being petted by a stranger, being brushed, and having noise distractions. Dogs will be kept on leash for this class with long line recalls. This class may be repeated as needed for proofing for dogs working towards their Therapy Dog Certification.

Rally Classes - In this class you will learn how to read the AKC Rally signs and how to perform them with your dog. The Rally class levels are *Novice, *Advanced, *Excellent, and Masters. Each level is usually taught as a separate class. Classes are often started in Session 1 and will move along as a group during the year. There may be a second group that starts in future sessions if there is interest.

The requirement to enter the *Novice Rally class is successful completion of the MDTC Advanced Basic Class. In order to enter the *Advanced Rally class, you must have successfully completed the MDTC Novice Rally class or have legs toward your Rally Novice title. In order to enter the *Excellent Rally class, you must have completed the MDTC Rally Advanced class or have legs toward your Advanced title.

Conformation:

Conformation Handling - This class is for puppies 3 months and older, as well as for dogs and handlers new to the sport. The class is designed to prepare both the handler and the dog for competing in the conformation ring. This class is for all sizes of dog and novice as well as experienced handlers. Junior handlers are welcome to attend this class as well to improve their handling skills or to be introduced to ring procedures during dog shows.

Agility:

Larger breeds of dogs grow at different rates and owners may want to wait until the dog is a little older or consult their breeder/vet before beginning agility classes with puppies.

Generally, a group starts in Intro together and levels progress during the year with other Intro classes beginning later in the year. If you are interested in an Intro class and one is not listed, please contact us and let us know.

PARTICIPANTS IN ALL AGILITY CLASSES ARE EXPECTED TO HELP SETUP AND/OR TEAR DOWN EQUIPMENT.

Introduction to Agility - This class is open to dogs 6 months and older. Exercises learned in this class will teach basic handling skills using non-contact equipment and foster teamwork between handler and dog. Other exercises covered will be gaining and maintaining your dog's attention, and beginning start line and table stays. Dogs will be introduced to equipment such as tunnels, chutes, low jumps and low tables. Agility contact equipment will not be used in this class. The requirement to enter this class is successful completion of the MDTC Advanced Basic Class. Participants in class are expected to help set up and put away equipment afterwards. This class will begin off-lead work. Please make sure you have a reliable recall.

Basic Agility - This class is open to dogs 8 months and older. The class builds on skills learned in the Introduction to Agility class. Additional handling techniques will be taught by performing small course sequences and drills. Dogs will be introduced to the contact equipment at low height. Table and start line stays will be proofed. The requirement to join this class is the successful completion of the Introduction to Agility class. Participants in class are expected to help set up and put away equipment afterwards. Drills will be done off lead.

Advanced Basic Agility - This class is open to dogs 10 months and older who have successfully completed the Basic agility class or who have previous training on contacts. Contact equipment will be brought to full height by the end of the class, with the possible exception of the teeter (aka seesaw). Front and rear crosses, 180's and distance work will be introduced using more difficult sequences and drills. Weave poles will also be introduced. Participants in class are expected to help set up and put away equipment afterwards.

Intermediate Agility - Open to dogs that have successfully completed Advanced Basic agility or are comfortable on all agility equipment (except weaves) when tested prior to class entry. This course is designed to expand handler and dog teamwork. Exercises in this class will include getting greater distance away from the dog, continue to gain confidence in weave poles, gaining speed and confidence on contacts, using the teeter at full height, and beginning to learn to read courses. These techniques will be taught using drills, sequences, half and/or full courses. Participants in class are expected to help set up and put away equipment afterwards.

Novice/Open Agility - Dogs must be comfortable on all equipment and ready to begin trialing or currently trialing in Novice or Open level or others with instructor approval. They should know at least 6 weave poles. Participants in class are expected to help set up and put away equipment afterwards.

Agility Skills and Drills - Dogs should be near ready to trial or trialing. Full courses or sequences may be used. Dogs should know all equipment at full-height and 12 weave poles are encouraged. Participants in class are expected to help set up and put away equipment afterwards.

Excellent Agility Run-Through - Dogs must be trialing in open level or greater agility or have instructor approval. Full courses (including 12 weave poles) in FAST, T2B, standard or jumpers with weaves will be used. Dogs will be able to get at least two runs per class. There will be minimal instruction but brief problem solving will be available. Participants in class are expected to help set up and put away equipment afterwards.

The following classes are held based on need/demand:

Obedience:

S.T.A.R. Puppy Class – For dogs up to 1 year of age who have had all their shots (including rabies) before the session ends. AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy Program is the AKC program designed to get puppies and their owners off to a great start. AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy requires that owners attend a basic training course with their puppies. All dogs need the necessary components of the program including Socialization, Training, Activity, and a Responsible owner. There are 20 items that are required for successful completion of the program and dogs and owners **MUST ATTEND** all 6 weeks of class in order to pass. For more information visit this AKC page: <https://images.akc.org/pdf/starpuppy/brochure.pdf>

Pet Manners Class - This class is meant for the pet owner who wants a dog they can live with and enjoy. Pet owners will be shown the methods they can use to get their dog to walk on a loose leash, come when called, stay in a sit or down position, and be a joy to have around the house. Class size will be limited to eight to ensure individual attention from instructors.

Pre-Novice - This class is for dogs that have successfully completed Advanced Basic. Exercises include the stand for exam, on and off-lead heeling, off-lead sits and downs, off-lead recalls, return to heel position, and the figure eight as well as other useful control commands.

Attention and Footwork - This class is for those handlers who are interested in competing in Obedience and Rally. The time during the class is split into half - the first half teaching formal attention to you and your dog, and the second half learning and practicing consistent footwork without your dog. Footwork is practiced without your dog to avoid dog confusion until your footwork has become “ingrained”, then you practice with your dog. It is advised that you do no formal heeling until you have learned consistent footwork. Your dog will be crated for the footwork part of the class. The attention part of the class will be on lead. The minimum requirement to enter this class is successful completion of the MDTC Advanced Basic Class.

Beginning/Competition Novice - This course is for handlers and dogs that want to train for obedience competition toward obtaining an AKC Companion Dog title. Footwork, attention, how to create a better performance, motivation, and developing a foundation for advanced work are some elements covered in this class. Advanced Basic must be successfully completed in order to enter this class.

Open Obedience- This class introduces the exercises for AKC's Companion Dog Excellent title. The exercises include off-lead heeling, drop on recall, retrieve on the flat and over a high jump, a broad jump, and long out of sight sit and down stays. A good foundation of the Novice level work is required as well as familiarization with Open exercises.

Advanced Open - This course is for dogs that are comfortable with all the exercises at the open level and need to polish their performance for competition.

Utility - This class is for dogs that are working toward obtaining the AKC Utility Dog title. The scope of the class depends on the particular level of the students at the time of enrollment. Dogs entering this class should be able to perform all the Open class exercises.

Obedience Run-Through Class - These classes are for dogs that are showing or getting ready to show in the Novice, Open, or Utility ring. They will be fast moving classes and will be run as a real trial ring. Instruction will be limited.

Advanced Utility Workshop - This class is for dogs and handlers who know all utility exercises. Class will combine helpful techniques for problem exercises, proofing, and some run-thrus.

Agility:

PARTICIPANTS IN ALL AGILITY CLASSES ARE EXPECTED TO HELP SETUP AND/OR TEAR DOWN EQUIPMENT.

Puppy Agility - This class is open to dogs 4 to 9 months and older. Techniques used are designed to boost puppy confidence and help with socialization. Handlers and dogs are introduced to body language, working on both the right and left sides of the handler, targeting, wobble boards, tunnels and low jumps. Contacts are not used in this class. Dogs will work on lead in this class. Dogs should be comfortable walking on a leash and should have a sit command. Non-member participant's dogs need to provide proof of all required up to date vaccinations when registering for this class.

Obedience for Agility - This class stresses start line and table stays. Additional work covers entering/leaving the ring, staying in the vicinity of the handler while walking to the start line, leaving stewards alone, as well as other related issues. Handlers must have full control of off-lead dogs to include stay and recall. The minimum requirement for this class is that the dog must have successfully completed Advanced Basic Agility.

Novice/Open Agility Run-Through Class - Dogs must be almost ready to trial or trialing in agility. Full courses in standard or jumpers with weaves will be used. Dogs will be able to get at least two runs per class. Class size will be a maximum of eight. Some instruction will be provided as necessary. Participants in class are expected to help set up and put away equipment afterwards.

Other specialty classes are offered sporadically when there is enough interest.

Conformation:

Conformation Run-Through Class - This is a non-instructional class designed for the experienced handler. It provides an opportunity to work in a ring setting with other dogs and a judge. Just the class to prepare for those upcoming shows.