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What to Bring

K9 Nose Work

- **Hungry & Motivated Dog.** Please either don't feed your dog before class, or feed a VERY reduced meal so that your dog is hungry and motivated. If you have a high energy dog, please don't burn them out with a long hike or play session before the class - nose work will do that for you!

Rewards. Your dog will be searching for the thing(s) he loves most, whether that's food or a toy. If your dog is toy motivated, bring two-four of his favorites. Also bring very HIGH VALUE toys and/or treats. Bring a few things in case what you thought would work, doesn't (especially in the first few classes). Sometimes your usual food reward for other activities is not high enough value for nose work. Please avoid crumbly/crunchy cookie-type treats or very loose and "soupy" treats if possible. You'll also want to try to find things with high STINK FACTOR (SF) as this helps your dog stay focused and motivated on the search. We've found some of the following to be very motivating: summer sausage (no spice!), salmon, bleu cheese, ham hocks, sausages, mackerel, meatballs, liverwurst and hot dogs.

One of my nose work dogs has developed a sensitive belly in her old age, so I use **Plato Salmon Strips** (not "patties" or "planks"). They are very healthy and don't seem to bother *her*, plus she goes batty for them. They have a seriously high SF, are very easy to break down and use in hides, are not messy or oily, and they are made in the USA! You can search for them cheapest on Amazon. Clean Run (www.cleanrun.com) sells these treats in addition to a bunch of other really good (and often healthy) special treat options.

- **Please bring two food containers or baggies.** Label one with your dog(s) name and give it to the instructor; this will be used to set up your searches. Leave the second one at your crating area; you'll use this to reward at source during your runs. If you work with toys, talk to your instructor before class to work out logistics.
- **Crate** (where your dog will rest between runs). Dogs must be crate trained unless other accommodations are available; ask the instructor. There are crates in the building, but they belong to others and not always available, so it's best to bring your own and your own bedding. If you use a crate in the building, take out the bedding and use your own! Dogs will be crated in vehicles, weather permitting. I also suggest a crate cover if this helps your dog relax. Be sure to think about the weather and use shades and fans if needed. If your class is being held in any of our Houston hot months (I will tell you if this applies to your class), we will crate indoors whenever possible in the Level One class. You **MUST** bring a sheet or other crate cover and/or a large panel of cardboard to cover the front of the crate as a visual barrier. In nose work we need to limit the dog (sight and sound) distraction as much as possible.

- **If your class is being held in any of our Houston hot months, please be sure to check out my suggested Summer Supply List.** You don't need to have the fancy summer supplies for the first class (we will crate indoors whenever possible in the Level One class) but if you get addicted to the sport, understand that we work in *all* weather conditions as long as we can stay safe. Often we are outdoors, so think about your dog *and yourself!* Hot weather, in my opinion is the most difficult, so you might consider the supplies on my list if you intend to do this ongoing or compete. The right supplies make all the difference! My dogs have attended trials in 10 degree and 100 plus degree weather in comfort and safety thanks to the right gear.
- **Water** (for you and your dog). We also have bowls of fresh water in the building.

Don't Bring Your Clicker. There are many ways to teach nose work, but the method we use involves no clicking (I know this is odd). We love clickers for everything else, but not nose work. When we click, our dogs immediately focus on us. We want them to basically forget about us and focus on the hunt and solving the problem on their own! But the biggest reason is searching or hunting is not a targeting exercise, so what do you click? Head in the box? Targeting a treat pouch? Turning toward source? In nose work we often let the dog *self reward*, so they know right away when they got it right and don't need us to tell them.

- **Flat Collar or Traditional Harness.** You'll use this during your searches. We don't want the dog to wear anything that may cause an inadvertent leash correction while they work. This means no gentle leaders, easy walk harnesses, slip or limited slip collars that tighten around the neck, choke chains, prong collars, or electric collars.

****Harnesses are an EXCELLENT option, if your dog will wear one.**** They allow for unrestricted movement, eliminate strain on the neck, and offer an added level of safety. However, do not use harnesses that tighten to prevent pulling or jumping. Use the traditional style of harness. I have found harnesses are the perfect equipment cue to my dog that we are doing something that sniffing the floor *is* allowed. I have a low-rider dog that does many other sports where sniffing is *not* good, so this has helped her understand when it's okay to sniff and when she needs to focus on me. It is NOT however a requirement to have a harness (especially for the first class), and neither is it the end of the world if you work with a collar. Try both. Do what works best for your dog! See last page for more harness options than you'll ever need

- **Leash(es).** The first few weeks your regular leash is okay, but as we progress you will need other length options. Retractable or chain leashes are never to be used.

6-foot leash. Ideally choose something that is lighter in weight and be sure to remove dangling items such as rings, charms, poop bag holders. There are times your dog will drag a leash, so lightweight provides for less restriction and is less likely to get hung up on things.

Long line(s). 10ft is a good all-purpose length for any size dog. I personally also have a 12ft and 15ft version, too because I work dogs of three different sizes and speeds. Any material will do, but again lightweight and strong is king. I have recently stumbled on biothane and love it because it's lightweight, weather resistant, doesn't tangle, and it's AWESOME on your hands. They come in different colors, weights, and widths (even good sizes for really small or really large dogs). I've now even replaced most of my normal leather leashes with biothane! See the last page for two excellent sources for lines, if you are interested. I have lines from both places with different features and lengths, so if you want to road test, ask me in class. **Again, you do NOT need to get fancy at first while you are just trying out the sport.** The bargain cotton long line at Walmart will do just fine too!

Harness Styles, Brands, and Sources

Standard/Traditional H-Style Harness

Find in lots of places. Example: www.cozycritter.com/harness.html

Step In Harness

Find in lots of places. I use this one for little Henrietta.

Example: www.cozycritter.com/stepin.htm

Alpine Outfitters – Flyball Harness

Semi-Step In, Y-Style Breast, Handle. I use this one, but not good for really small dogs.

www.alpineoutfitters.net/secure/scripts/prodList.asp?idCategory=32

RuffWear – Web Master Harness

Semi-Step In, Y-Style Breast, Handle. I use this one also, not good for really small dogs.

http://www.ruffwear.com/Web-Master-Harness_2?sc=2&category=1131

Walkeeze Harness

Semi-Step In, Y-Style Breast, X-Back. I might try this one....

Clean Run sells them in the U.S. www.walkeezeharness.com/

ComfortFlex Sport Harness

Over the Head, Straight Breast, Handle. Not my favorite as studies show the straight piece across the breast can inhibit airflow while the dog is sniffing with head held low. Plus, it's not good for dogs with a pronounced breast bone, like my little Henrietta. But plenty of students use this without issue. Dogs CAN back out of this, so DO NOT use for extremely fearful or aggressive dogs. Ask me if you don't believe me!

www.cleanrun.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=product.display&Product_ID=1771

EzyDog Harnesses

Convert Harness, Quick Fit Harness, Chest Plate Harness. Same issues as ComfortFlex.

<http://store.ezydog.com/categories/dog-harnesses/>

Biothane Long Line Sources

K9Noz

<http://www.k9noz.com/>

Bud makes great lines, and if you want customizations, different kinds of snaps, or regular leashes he does an awesome job. (He's also just plain nice.) His lines are sewn, not riveted, and can be made with or without handles. I personally don't like handles on my nose work lines, but my dogs aren't Mac trucks, either, so I don't NEED handles. In fact I often need to drop my line for my two smaller dogs that go under everything so they will get hung up with handles. He also has a special biothane with more thickness and a special grip on them that I hear are great for the bigger and stronger dogs. They are very high quality. Please tell him I and my little beast of a dachshund sent you!

Palomine Lines

<http://palominelines.com/>

These lines are riveted, not sewn, and can be made with or without handles. They will also put rivets near the tail of your line so you can feel when you are reaching the end of it. I like having the rivets to help me since I typically give my dogs as much line as possible! They have a round version of biothane, if that sort of thing floats your boat. These are also great, high quality lines.