

AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy: 20 Steps for Success



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The AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy program focuses on all the things every puppy and owner need to have a great start together.

STAR stands for Socialization, Training, Activity and a Responsible owner and in six weeks of STAR puppy classes, puppies and dogs learn the following behaviors and skills:

OWNER BEHAVIORS:

1. Maintains puppy's health (vaccines, exams, appears healthy)

2. Owner receives Responsible Dog Owner's Pledge
3. Owner describes adequate daily play and exercise plan
4. Owner and puppy attend at least 6 classes by an AKC Approved CGC Evaluator
5. Owner brings bags to classes for cleaning up after puppy
6. Owner has obtained some form of ID for puppy-collar tag, etc.



PUPPY BEHAVIORS:

7. Free of aggression toward people during at least 6 weeks of class
8. Free of aggression toward other puppies in class
9. Tolerates collar or body harness of owner's choice
10. Owner can hug or hold puppy (depending on size)
11. Puppy allows owner to take away a treat or toy

PRE-CANINE GOOD CITIZEN® TEST BEHAVIORS:

12. Allows (in any position) petting by a person other than the owner
13. Grooming-Allows owner handling and brief exam (ears, feet)
14. Walks on a Leash-Follows owner on lead in a straight line (15 steps)
15. Walks by other people-Walks on leash past other people 5-ft away
16. Sits on command-Owner may use a food lure
17. Down on command-Owner may use a food lure
18. Comes to owner from 5-ft when name is called
19. Reaction to Distractions-distractions are presented 15-ft away
20. Stay on leash with another person (owner walks 10 steps and returns)

AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy prepares pups to move on to Canine Good Citizen training. For example, in STAR, puppies must walk on a leash in a straight line. In CGC, the task becomes more advanced with dogs walking in a pattern that includes right and left turns and stops.

The skills in AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy classes are practical and functional. Teaching puppies to tolerate grooming, handling, and basic exams of the ears, feet, and mouth will result in well-mannered puppies that veterinarians are happy to see.

