

Four-star

The exercises at FOUR-STAR level build on the exercises from THREE-STAR level. The dog's understanding of front and heel positions are again tested with slightly more difficulty added. There are new exercises added at this level; these are primarily to further clarify the dog's understanding of the heel position.

Additional verbal and physical cues can no longer be given throughout each exercise. Just a single verbal and/or physical cue for each exercise (or additional single cues as stated in specific exercises). Dog cannot be physically manipulated into position or lured with a toy or food.

A tug toy or food can be used at the conclusion of each exercise. Food can either be kept in a container nearby or in the handler's pocket. No treat pouches to be worn.

All exercises are to be completed off leash.

This level requires minimal space and can be conducted indoors or outdoors.

There are two separate tests available at this level – Test A and Test B. You can choose to complete either one or both.

The video should be unedited, **it should show all 8 exercises in that Test**, and the dog and handler should remain in view the entire time.

Test A

- Exercise 1 – Stay and call front
- Exercise 2 – Finish to heel position from front
- Exercise 3 – Heeling figure 8
- Exercise 4 – Front position directly from heel position
- Exercise 5 – Change of position (stand to down)
- Exercise 6 – Heel pattern
- Exercise 7 – OPTION – Pick up object or go to defined area
- Exercise 8 – Stay

Test B

- Exercise 1 – Stay and call front
- Exercise 2 – Finish to heel position from front
- Exercise 3 – Heeling figure 8
- Exercise 4 – OPTION – Side-step or back steps
- Exercise 5 – Change of position (down to sit)
- Exercise 6 – Heel pattern
- Exercise 7 – Change of position in heel position
- Exercise 8 – Stay

DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISES

Test A

Exercise 1. – Stay and call front.

Leave dog in a sit stay, handler walks forward a minimum of 4 normal steps. Handler about turns to face dog. Handler remains still for 2 full seconds. Handler calls dog to front position. Dog to sit in the front position once arrived (additional sit cue can be given.) Dog to find straight front position with no prop and maintain for 1 full second.

EXERCISE START: Handler standing still with dog sitting in heel position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog sitting in front position maintained for a minimum of 1 full second.

Exercise 2. – Finish to heel position from front

From sitting in the front position facing the handler. Dog is asked to move to the heel position and sit. Handler to remain stationary. Dog can either go to the heel position from the left (direct) or the right (dog walking around the back of the handler to the left heel position). Dog is to maintain the sit position for 1 full second. Dog to find straight heel position with no prop. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the FINISH and the SIT.

EXERCISE START: Handler facing the dog. Dog sitting in front position facing handler.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog sitting straight in heel position maintained for a minimum of 1 full second.

Exercise 3. – Heeling figure 8.

Two posts to be set up approximately 2.5 metres apart. These can be cones, poles, boxes, chairs, pot plants or similar. Dog and handler to complete two full turns around each post in a standard figure-8 pattern. Enter by walking in between the two posts, exit out the middle of the two posts. Dog can start in the sit or stand position and should finish in the same stationary position. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the HEEL and the ending SIT/STAND.

EXERCISE START: Handler standing next to dog. Facing between the two posts. Dog in sit or stand position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Handler standing next to dog. Dog in same stationary position as starting position (sit or stand).

Exercise 4. – Front position directly from heel position

From sitting in the heel position. Dog is asked to move to the front position and sit. Handler to remain stationary. Dog is to maintain the sit position for 1 full second. Dog

to find a straight front position with no prop. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the FRONT and the SIT.

EXERCISE START: Dog sitting in heel position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog sitting straight in front position maintained for a minimum of 1 full second.

Exercise 5. – Change of position – stand to down

Leave dog in a stand stay, handler walks forward a minimum of 4 normal steps. Handler about turns to face dog. Handler remains still for 2 full seconds. Handler cues dog to change to down position. Handler returns around behind dog back to heel position. Dog to maintain position for 1 full second after handler returns. Can use prop (platform or mat) if desired. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the STAY, the DOWN and another STAY if required during return to dog.

EXERCISE START: Handler standing still. Dog in a stand in heel position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog in down next to handler maintained for a minimum of 1 full second.

Exercise 6. – Heel pattern

Dog to start in stand or sit position next to handler. Handler to take 3 slow steps forward and make a 180-degree pivot left, then walk a further 3 slow steps forward and make a 180-degree pivot right, then walk a further 3 slow steps forward and halt. Dog to maintain heel position through the forward steps, pivot hind-quarters through the left turn and maintain a close position through the right turn. Handler to step on the spot to accurately complete the two 180-degree turns. Dog can end with a stand or sit but should be the same position as the starting position. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the HEEL and the finishing position if required.

EXERCISE START: Handler standing still. Dog standing or sitting in heel position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Handler standing still. Dog to be in a sit or stand (same position as starting position).

Exercise 7. – OPTION – Pick up object or go to defined area.

PICK UP OBJECT

Dog to pick up object (toy or article or dumbbell) off floor, or table or similar. Dog to hold object near handler for a minimum of 3 full seconds. Dog may be in sit or stand but should be mostly still during the 3 second hold (minor mouthing and head movement allowed). Dog may be offered continuous verbal encouragement for the hold but no physical assistance (i.e. chin rest).

EXERCISE START: Dog's starting position is optional.

EXERCISE FINISH: Three seconds after dog commences hold.

GO TO DEFINED AREA

Defined area can be a mat or platform, or a square on the ground defined by cones, lines or pipes. Handler to stand a minimum of 2 metres from the defined area. Dog to start next to handler in heel position (standing or sitting). On cue from the handler dog is to go to the defined area and turn to face handler. Dog can maintain a stand or be cued to a sit or down. Dog to maintain position for 3 seconds. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the SEND AWAY and the FINAL POSITION if required.

EXERCISE START: Dog sitting or standing in heel position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog in either a sit, stand or down at defined area and position maintained for 3 full seconds.

Exercise 8. – Stay

Dog to be left in either a sit, stand or down. Handler to leave dog and move a minimum of 3 metres away. Handler to sit on chair, box, stool or similar and wait 10 seconds before returning around back of dog to heel position. No additional cues are to be used except the initial STAY cue.

EXERCISE START: Dog in either a sit, stand or down position next to handler.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog in either a sit, stand or down position next to handler. Position maintained for 1 full second after handler becomes stationary.

Test B

Exercise 1. – Stay and call front.

Leave dog in a sit stay, handler walks forward a minimum of 4 normal steps. Handler about turns to face dog. Handler remains still for 2 full seconds. Handler calls dog to front position. Dog to sit in the front position once arrived (additional sit cue can be given.) Dog to find straight front position with no prop and maintain for 1 full second.

EXERCISE START: Handler standing still with dog sitting in heel position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog sitting in front position maintained for a minimum of 1 full second.

Exercise 2. – Finish to heel position from front

From sitting in the front position facing the handler. Dog is asked to move to the heel position and sit. Handler to remain stationary. Dog can either go to the heel position from the left (direct) or the right (dog walking around the back of the handler to the left heel position). Dog is to maintain the sit position for 1 full second. Dog to find straight heel position with no prop. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the FINISH and the SIT.

EXERCISE START: Handler facing the dog. Dog sitting in front position facing handler.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog sitting straight in heel position maintained for a minimum of 1 full second.

Exercise 3. – Heeling figure 8.

Two posts to be set up approximately 2.5 metres apart. These can be cones, poles, boxes, chairs, pot plants or similar. Dog and handler to complete two full turns around each post in a standard figure-8 pattern. Enter by walking in between the two posts, exit out the middle of the two posts. Dog can start in the sit or stand position and should finish in the same stationary position. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the HEEL and the ending SIT/STAND.

EXERCISE START: Handler standing next to dog. Facing between the two posts. Dog in sit or stand position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Handler standing next to dog. Dog in same position as starting position (sit or stand).

Exercise 4. – OPTION – side-step or back steps

SIDE-STEP

Dog to sit in heel position. Handler takes single step to the right. Dog to move with handler and then sit again in heel position. Dog to take hind quarters so as to ensure the finishing sit is accurately in a straight heel position. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the HEEL and the SIT.

EXERCISE START: Handler standing still. Dog in a sit in heel position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Handler standing still. Dog in a sit in heel position.

BACK STEPS (optional - front or heel position)

Dog to back up a minimum of one full body length. This can be next to handler in heel position or facing handler in front position. If performed in heel position the handler moves with the dog, if performed in front position the handler is to remain stationary. A continuous verbal and/or hand signal can be used. Dog is to maintain straightness throughout the backward steps.

EXERCISE START: Dog standing either in heel position or facing handler.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog standing either in heel position or facing handler.

Exercise 5. – Change of position – down to sit

Leave dog in a down stay, handler walks forward a minimum of 4 normal steps. Handler about turns to face dog. Handler remains still for 2 full seconds. Handler cues dog to change to sit position. Handler returns around behind dog back to heel position. Dog to maintain position for 1 full second after handler returns. Can use prop (platform or mat) if desired. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the STAY, the SIT and another STAY if required during return to dog.

EXERCISE START: Handler standing still. Dog in down in heel position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog in sit next to handler. Position maintained for a minimum of 1 full second.

Exercise 6. – Heel pattern

Dog to start in stand or sit position next to handler. Handler to take 3 slow steps forward and make a 180-degree pivot left, then walk a further 3 slow steps forward and make a 180-degree pivot right, then walk a further 3 slow steps forward and halt. Dog to maintain heel position through the forward steps, pivot hind-quarters through the left turn and maintain a close position through the right turn. Handler to step on the spot to accurately complete the two 180-degree turns. Dog can end with a stand or sit but should be the same position as the starting position. A separate cue (verbal and/or physical) can be given for the HEEL and the finishing position if required.

EXERCISE START: Handler standing still. Dog standing or sitting in heel position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Handler standing still. Dog to be in a sit or stand (same position as starting position).

Exercise 7. – Change of position (in heel position)

All three positions to be shown. Dog starts in sit position, moves to stand position, moves to down position. Each position to be cued once only and each position to be maintained for 3 full seconds

EXERCISE START: Dog sitting in heel position.

EXERCISE FINISH: Handler upright and still. Dog in a down position next to handler maintained for 3 seconds.

Exercise 8. – Stay

Dog to be left in either a sit, stand or down. Handler to leave dog, collect a bowl of treats / food from a nearby area, place bowl on ground approximately 3 metres in front of dog. Handler to then move to a nearby chair and sit and wait for 10 seconds, handler to then return around behind dog and back to the heel position. No additional cues are to be used except the initial STAY cue.

EXERCISE START: Dog in either a sit, stand or down position next to handler.

EXERCISE FINISH: Dog in either a sit, stand or down position next to handler. Position maintained for 1 full second after handler becomes stationary.