

VOLHARD PUPPY APTITUDE TEST

Developed by Joachim and Wendy Volhard
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PUPPY APTITUDE TEST

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puppy (color, sex) _____ litter _____ date _____

TEST	PURPOSE	SCORE	#
SOCIAL ATTRACTION Place puppy in test area. From a few feet away the tester coaxes the pup to her/him by clapping hands gently and kneeling down and leaning backwards.	Degree of social attraction. Pack Drive.	Came readily, tail up, jumped, bit at hands.	1
		Came readily, tail up, pawed, licked at hands.	2
		Came readily, tail up.	3
		Came readily, tail down	4
		Came hesitantly, tail down.	5
		Didn't come at all.	6
FOLLOWING Stand up and walk slowly away from the pup with your back to it. Make sure the pup sees you walk away. Coax puppy to follow by talking to it and attracting it's attention.	Degree of following attraction. Pack Drive	Followed readily, tail up, got underfoot, bit at feet.	1
		Followed readily, tail up, got underfoot.	2
		Followed readily, tail up	3
		Followed readily, tail down.	4
		Followed hesitantly, tail down.	5
		No follow or went away.	6
RESTRAINT Crouch down and gently roll the pup on his back and hold it down with light pressure with one hand for a full 30 seconds.	Degree of dominance or submission. Flight or flight drive. How it accepts stress when socially or physically dominated.	Struggled fiercely, flailed, bit.	1
		Struggled fiercely, flailed.	2
		Settled, struggled, settled with some eye contact.	3
		Struggled then settled.	4
		No struggle.	5
		No struggle, straining to avoid eye contact.	6
SOCIAL DOMINANCE	Degree of	Jumped, pawed, bit, growled.	1

<p>Sit puppy on left side and gently stroke him from the head to back while you crouch beside him talking to him. Continue stroking until cognizable behavior is established - no more than 30 seconds.</p>	<p>acceptance of social dominance.</p> <p>Pack drive.</p>	Jumped, pawed.	2
		Cuddles up to testor and tries to lick face.	3
		Squirmed, licked at hands.	4
		Rolled over, licked at hands.	5
		Went away and stayed away.	6
<p>ELEVATION DOMINANCE</p> <p>Bend over and cradle the pup under its belly, fingers interlaced, palms up and elevate it just off the ground. Hold it there for 30 seconds.</p>	<p>Degree of accepting dominance while in position of no control.</p> <p>Flight or flight drive.</p>	Struggled fiercely, bit, growled.	1
		Struggled fiercely.	2
		No struggle, relaxed.	3
		Struggled, settled, licked.	4
		No struggle, licked at hands.	5
		No struggle, froze.	6

The remainder of the puppy test is an evaluation of obedience aptitude and working ability and provides a general picture of a pup's intelligence, spirit, and willingness to work with a human being. For most owners, a good companion dog will score in the 3 to 4 range in this section of the test. Puppies scoring a combination of 1's and 2's require experienced handlers who will be able to draw the best aspects of their potential from them.

VOLHARD OBEDIENCE APTITUDE TEST

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TEST	PURPOSE	SCORE	#
<p>RETRIEVING</p> <p>Crouch beside pup and attract its attention with crumpled up paper ball. When the pup shows interest and is watching, toss the object 4-5 feet in front of pup.</p>	<p>Degree of willingness to work with a human.</p> <p>High correlation between ability to retrieve and successful guide dogs, obedience dogs, field trial dogs.</p> <p>Prey drive.</p>	Chases object, picks up object and runs away.	1
		Chases object, stands over object, does not return.	2
		Chases object and returns with object to testor.	3
		Chases object and returns without object to testor.	4
		Starts to chase object, loses interest.	5
		Does not chase object.	6
<p>TOUCH SENSITIVITY</p>	<p>Degree of</p>	8-10 counts before response.	1
		6-7 counts before response.	2

<p>With puppy on left side, take his front foot with your right hand and press your finger* and thumb lightly then more firmly between his toes on his webbing until you get a response. Count slowly to 10.</p> <p>Stop as soon as puppy pulls away, or shows discomfort.</p> <p><i>*Do not use your fingernail when performing this test.</i></p>	<p>sensitivity to touch.</p>	5-6 counts before response.	3
		2-4 counts before response.	4
		1-2 counts before response.	5
<p>SOUND SENSITIVITY</p> <p>Place pup in center of area, assistant makes a sharp noise a few feet from the puppy.</p> <p>A large metal spoon struck sharply on a metal pan twice works well.</p> <p>Do not repeat.</p>	<p>Degree of sensitivity to sound. (Also can be a rudimentary test for deafness.)</p> <p>Prey drive.</p>	Listens, locates sound, walks towards it barking.	1
		Listens, locates sound, barks.	2
		Listens, locates sound, shows curiosity and walks toward sound.	3
		Listens, locates the sound.	4
		Cringes, backs off, hides.	5
		Ignores sound, shows no curiosity.	6
<p>SIGHT SENSITIVITY</p> <p>Place pup in center of room.</p> <p>Tie a string around a large towel and jerk it across the floor a few feet away from puppy.</p>	<p>Degree of intelligent response to strange object.</p>	Looks, attacks and bites.	1
		Looks, barks and tail up.	2
		looks curiously, attempts to investigate.	3
		Looks, barks, tail duck.	4
		Runs away, hides.	5
<p>STRUCTURE</p> <p>The puppy is gently set and held in a natural stance and evaluated for structure in the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Straight front • Straight rear • Shoulder layback • Front angulation / Croup angulation • Rear angulation <p>see diagram below</p>	<p>Degree of structural soundness.</p> <p>Good structure is necessary.</p>	The puppy is correct in structure.	good
		The puppy has a slight fault or deviation.	fair
		The puppy has an extreme fault or deviation.	poor

Interpreting the Scores

Mostly 1's

A puppy that consistently scores a 1 in the temperament section of the test is an **extremely dominant, aggressive** puppy who can easily be provoked to bite. This puppy is **high in Fight Drive**. His dominant nature will attempt to resist human leadership, thus requiring only the **most experienced of handlers**. This puppy is a poor choice for most individuals and will do best in a working situation as a guard or police dog.

Mostly 2's

This pup is **dominant and self-assured**, also **high in Fight Drive**. He can be provoked to bite; however he readily accepts human leadership that is firm, consistent and knowledgeable. This is **not a dog for a tentative, indecisive individual**. In the right hands, he has the potential to become a fine working or show dog and could fit into an adult household, provided the owners know what they are doing.

Mostly 3's

This pup is **outgoing and friendly** and will adjust well in situations in which he receives regular training and exercise. **High in Pack Drive**, he has a flexible temperament that adapts well to different types of environment, provided he is handled correctly. **May be too much dog for a family with small children or an elderly couple** who are sedentary.

Mostly 4's

A pup that scores a majority of 4's is an **easily controlled, adaptable** puppy whose submissive nature and **high Pack Drive** will make him continually look to his master for leadership. This pup is easy to train, reliable with kids, and, though he lacks self-confidence, **makes a wonderful family pet**. He is usually less outgoing than a pup scoring in the 3's, but his demeanor is gentle and affectionate.

Mostly 5's

This is a pup who is **extremely submissive, high in Flight Drive** and lacking in self-confidence. He **bonds very closely with his owner** and requires regular companionship and encouragement to bring him out of himself. If handled incorrectly, this pup will grow up very shy and fearful. For this reason, he will do best in a predictable, structured lifestyle with **owners who are patient and not overly demanding**, such as an elderly couple.

Mostly 6's

A puppy that scores 6 consistently is **independent, low in Pack Drive and uninterested in people**. He will mature into a dog who is **not demonstrably affectionate and who has a low need for human companionship**. In general, it is rare to see properly socialized pups test this way; however there are several breeds that have been bred for specific tasks (such as basenjis, hounds, and some northern breeds) which can exhibit this level of independence. To perform as intended, these dogs require a singularity of purpose that is not compromised by strong attachments to their owner.

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