



ENRICHING THE LIVES OF DOGS

# Galen Comfort Scale



**The Galen Comfort Scale<sup>®</sup>, is a resource for dog handlers and canine professionals to help classify and identify physical and behavioural changes in a dog.**

Each indicator in the questions below, are those that we have found to be directly associated with muscle pain and discomfort. Myotherapy and changes in environment can help improve these indicators.

Complete the form below to understand your own dog's comfort. For each question circle the number which most accurately represents your dog. It's best to closely observe your dog over a couple of weeks before completing the form to ensure you get an accurate assessment. You'll find explanations over the page if you need some guidance on what to look out for and how to complete the form.

## Physical

1. Does your dog show signs of being stiff when getting up?
2. Has your dog stopped jumping onto furniture or into cars?
3. Does your dog groan when they lie down?
4. Does your dog, walk into objects/people? (i.e. become clumsier)
5. Does your dog sit or lie down occasionally during a walk?

No	Sometimes	Frequently	Yes (always)
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0

## Behaviour

6. Does your dog scratch an itch on their body daily?
7. Does your dog lick their feet, legs or body daily?
8. Does your dog chew/gnaw/nibble their feet, leg, body or tail daily?
9. Does your dog find it difficult to stretch out both their back legs, behind them?
10. Has your dog stopped wagging their tail fully?

No	Sometimes	Frequently	Yes (always)
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0

## Eating and Digestion

11. Does your dog have anal gland problems?
12. Does your dog move when defecating?
13. Does your dog have any skin disorders?
14. Has your dog stopped chewing/or are they chewing differently?
15. Does your dog have regular tummy upsets (loose stools)?

No	Sometimes	Frequently	Yes (always)
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0

## Other Indicators

16. Does your dog have a dry nose?
17. Does your dog prop their head up/or hang their head off something, when they rest/sleep?
18. Does your dog always lie on the same side?
19. Can your dog stand still without shifting their weight from side to side?
20. Does your dog have any coat disturbances?

No	Sometimes	Frequently	Yes (always)
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0
3	2	1	0

## What your dog's comfort score means:

- If you mainly circled 3 this could indicate that your dog is very comfortable.
- If you mainly circled 2 this could indicate that your dog is mostly comfortable but there could be indicators to review in the future.
- If you mainly circled 1 this could indicate that your dog has some areas of discomfort.
- If you mainly circled 0 this could indicate that your dog is very uncomfortable and could be struggling with everyday actions.

## What to do next?

These scores are just a guide but if you think your dog is showing signs of being uncomfortable, why not talk to our team to see how Galen Myotherapy can help. We offer on the ground and remote support to help improve your dog's health.

**To find out more please visit our website [www.galenmyotherapy.co.uk](http://www.galenmyotherapy.co.uk) or contact us on mail@galenmyotherapy.co.uk or 01444 881 027**

## Guidance notes for completing the Comfort Scale

Please see below for guidance notes and tips to help with your observations as you assess your dog. Please remember to try and be as objective as possible.

### Physical

#### 1. Does your dog show signs of being stiff when getting up?

Signs of being stiff are often seen in the first couple of strides when getting up. Signs of being stiff could be awkward movement, wobbling when taking a stride, short strides and slow to get up and physically respond.

#### 2. Has your dog stopped jumping onto furniture or into cars?

Often habits such as these can change without us noticing. Observe whether your dog pauses or hesitates before jumping up. If you have to physically lift them, then you would answer 'frequently'.

#### 3. Does your dog groan when they lie down?

Just the same as we would, if it is difficult or uncomfortable to sit or lie down, your dog could make an audible groan or involuntary noise.

#### 4. Does your dog walk into objects/people?

When we feel uncomfortable we have a tendency to concentrate on the destination rather than the obstacle/environment we have to negotiate to get there. This can involve us cutting corners, being less body aware which results in clumsy behaviour such as walking into objects.

#### 5. Does your dog sit or lie down during a walk?

Both young and older dogs may find it tiring or difficult to walk for a period of time so they may choose to sit or lie down for a rest.

### Behaviour

#### 6. Does your dog scratch an itch on their body daily?

Often itching can be caused by a parasite/nutritional or skin condition. It can also commonly be a result of a muscular problem.

#### 7. Does your dog lick their feet, legs or body daily?

Regular and repeated licking and chewing is different from occasional cleaning themselves when they are wet or dirty.

#### 8. Does your dog chew/gnaw/nibble their feet, leg, body or tail daily?

Licking and chewing can often be a habit that is not observed often, however, on a dog with pale coloured fur, the pinky/brown coat change can be seen which can indicate continuous licking.



#### 9. Does your dog find it difficult to stretch out both their back legs, behind them?

The picture to the left is an example of a dog stretching both their back legs effectively.

#### 10. Has your dog stopped wagging their tail fully?

Most dogs should be able to naturally wag their tail rapidly from 10 o'clock to 2 o'clock when happy. This may reduce in speed, range and height or stopped (which would equate to frequently).

### Eating and Digestion

#### 12. Does your dog move when defecating?

Dogs should be able to stand still and defecate in one place. They could start shifting their leg position, or start walking during defecation.

#### 14. Has your dog stopped chewing/or are they chewing differently?

If your dog has stopped chewing their food by maybe prioritising soft food, or stopped wanting dog chews, chewing with one side of their mouth.

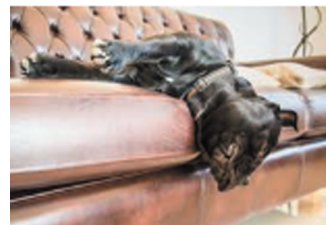
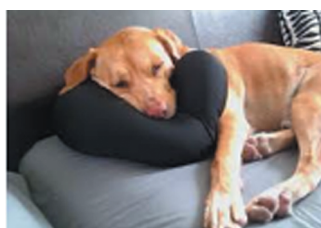
### Other Indicators

#### 16. Does your dog have a dry nose?

A dry nose can be one that is cracked over the top or just dry and looks almost muddy, or could be dry over the border where the hair meets the nose.

#### 17. Does your dog prop their head up/or hang their head off something, when they rest?

Does your dog support their neck on a cushion/pillow/ or hang their neck lower than their body like the example below:



#### 18. Does your dog always lie on the same side?

If your dog always lies on their left side, you would answer '0 - consistently' or if they lie predominantly on one side you would answer '1 - sometimes'.



#### 19. Can your dog stand still without shifting their weight from side to side?

Does your dog rock from side to side/shift their weight or lean on an object (or you) when standing still.

#### 20. Does your dog have any coat disturbances?

The picture (right) is an example of a dog exhibiting a coat that is not lying smoothly, or sticking up, on about 50% of its visible body, therefore this dog would score '1 sometimes'.

