

# Agility Nationals

By Christy Gammage, Practice Makes Pawfect

Once you've been successfully competing for a while at a local level, you may want to 'up your game' and enter more prestigious trials like regional or even national level events. Each of the different agility organizations has at least one yearly national level. Most 'nationals' require participation in that organization's local level events during a preceding qualifying period. Usually, the courses are more challenging than you will see at a local level. Let's look at the various organizations' national events. They go by different names, have different qualifying criteria and may have different formats.

The AKC (American Kennel Club) National Agility Championship is known by its initials, the "NAC". The 2026 NAC will be in Temecula, California March 19-22. During the 2026 qualifying period of Dec 1, 2024 – Nov 30, 2025, you must have 4 'double Qs' (where you qualify in Standard and Jumpers on the same day) and 400 MACH/Premier points earned. Premier Qs can replace some double Q requirements. MACH/Premier Points are earned with fast, clean runs in the Standard and Jumpers classes at the Master or Premier level. There are also ways to earn a 'bye' into the NAC by winning other AKC awards. (A 'bye' grants the dog special entry into a competition, usually skipping earlier rounds or going straight into the Finals.) Friday and Saturday have Standard and Jumpers rounds, with the top dogs from those rounds competing in the Finals on Sunday. Sunday also has a 'Challengers' round where the winner from that class makes it into the Finals.

AKC has another big event called the Agility Invitational which is usually held as the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, along with other dog events like the Junior Agility Competition, obedience, and dock diving. This year it is on Dec 13-14. The top 5 ranked dogs of each breed are invited to compete. The top Preferred dog (jumping one height lower than they normally measure into) is also invited. If any invitees decline, then the next dog(s) in the ranking can be invited. This is a great event to see the more unusual breeds doing agility.



CPE (Canine Performance Events) will also be holding their Agility 2026 Nationals event May 29-31 on the west coast in Auburn WA. Big News: CPE's 2027 Nationals will be in Perry, Georgia on April 23-25! To enter the 2026 CPE Nationals, the dog must have earned 30 Q's (may change each year) at their jump height in previous calendar year and have completed all their titles in Level 3. Each of the 3 days has a Standard class and 2 of the other games classes. The overall winners are determined by Q's and time.

NADAC (North American Dog Agility Council) calls their national event "Champs". In 2026 (and recent years) the event is held in Gillette, WY on Sept 11-14. The qualifying period is Aug 1, 2024 – Jul 24, 2025. In 2027, it will move east to Springfield, OH. To enter the Elite division, the dog must have an Elite title in Regular (aka Standard) and

either Jumpers or Chances. To compete in Pre-Elite, they must have Open level titles. Titles require 30 points, which are earned for Qs. To enter a Stakes class (with a distance challenge), you must have earned various levels of Bonus/Distance Challenges depending on which level you want to enter.

TDAA (Teacup Dog Agility Association) is for our smaller friends. Their national event is called the "Petit Prix". In 2025, the Petit Prix will be held in New Glarus, WI on Sep 12-14. Big News: in 2026 it will be held in Lakeland, FL on July 31 – August 2! To be eligible to compete in the Petit Prix, the dog must have their Intermediate / Games 2 titles and have competed during the previous year (start/end July 31).

USDAA (United States Dog Agility Association) calls its national championship "Cynosport Dog Agility World Games" on Oct 15 – 19, 2025. It is held in Murfreesboro, TN each year. To compete at Cynosport, you must earn qualifying scores or 'byes' (wins) at regional events during the year. Cynosport events consist of USDAA 'Tournament' classes. So instead of Standard and Jumpers, the classes are Steeplechase, Grand Prix, Biathlon and multi-dog teams in a Dog Agility Masters class. They have Quarterfinals and Semifinals rounds to earn your way into the Finals.



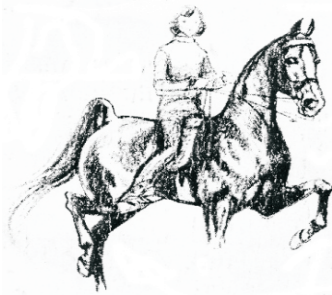
UKI (UK Agility International) is the North American version of United Kingdom Agility (UKA) organization. The UKI US Open is the pinnacle of UKI shows each year. The 2025 UKI US Open will take place from the 19th – 23rd November 2025 at Jacksonville Equestrian Center, Florida. Bonus: it is scheduled there for the next few years. Dogs will compete in Agility (aka Standard), Jumping, Speedstages and Games classes. There will be multiple rounds to earn your way into the Finals. Unlike the other organizations, you don't have to qualify to enter; hence the "Open" in the name. UKI also has "Cups", "Classics" and "Festivals" with different sets of classes where you can earn 'byes' into the US Open (allowing you to skip the early rounds).

As you can see, there are many opportunities to see national level agility events in and around Florida. Check out each organization's website to see all the details for their events. And if you want to compete at a national event, Better

Practice!

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