



Rules for 'Scentwork UK –On-Line' 'Home Alone' Starters Competitors.

General

- 1) You can enter a 'Home Alone' trial if you either live on your own or family members don't wish to participate.
- 2) You can enter both Scent Hider and Home Alone Categories. You may mix and match the Categories in consecutive trials but may not enter both Categories in the same trial.
- 3) Each Category has a separate League and you will be scored in both according to which Category you enter.
- 4) After you have qualified at 10 trials in each Category at any particular Level, you must move up a Level.
- 5) However, if you wish to move up before qualifying as above, you must have qualified in your present Level at least 6 times and at least 3 of these must be in the Home Alone Category.
- 6) Your total number of qualifiers in any Category must be with at least three different judges. This can be in any combination eg. 5, 4, 1 or 6, 2, 2 or if moving up a Level early 4, 1, 1 or 3, 2, 1 etc
- 7) Once you have qualified at a higher level, you may not return to a lower Level in that Category. You may however continue at a lower Level in the remaining Category providing you have not qualified out.
- 8) It is recommended that you leave 3 days in-between trials to prevent contamination.
- 9) It is recommended that you don't practice 3 days before the trial owing to contamination.
- 10) Items can be re-used for different trials but you must read the information on contamination beforehand. (see below)
- 11) It will be your responsibility to keep the dog's safety in mind. Any hot appliances eg ovens, heaters should not be used as hiding places. Also be mindful of sharp edges protruding, small gaps where dog could get stuck, items that could fall onto the dog and anything that could constitute a hazard to the dog. At all times common sense must prevail
- 12) The dog maybe worked on a 12ft line in the exterior searches for reasons of safety.

Criteria for each search.

There are 4 searches:

- 1) Table & chairs or 'House Hold items'
- 2) Kitchen Cabinets
- 3) Exterior Search
- 4) Vehicle/Wall or Fence.

Tables & Chairs There will be a minimum of 4 chairs and one table. Chairs can be arranged in either a circular pattern or two chairs can be positioned next to one another either side of the table. (see picture gallery) The 'scented' article will be placed either under one of the chairs or on a table leg. The judge may ask you to point at the 'scented' article for clarification before the search starts.

House hold Search The area must be a minimum of 9ft x 9ft (3m x 3m) and contain 10 household items. (see list of suitable items on 'Instructions when Hiding the scent') The items should be placed approximately 18" (45cm) apart.

Vehicle Search – The vehicle must be parked and the camera set up in a safe area. The camera must be positioned so that 2 sides of the vehicle are in view. The 'scented article' must not be hidden in the exhaust, petrol cap, mud flaps, tyre tread, wheel arch's or number plate. Suitable hiding places can be seen in the 'picture gallery'.

Wall/Fence Search- The wall/fence must be at least 5m in length with at least 8 potential hiding places. Items can be placed at the bottom of the fence/wall if 8 potential hiding places cannot be found.

Kitchen Cabinets – The kitchen cabinet search must include at least 8 potential hiding places and may include a door. If draws are part of the search each draw can be counted as a hiding place. The camera can show the cabinets/draws in a continuous row or include all sides of the kitchen.

Exterior Search The outside area can consist of any material. The area must be at least 3m x 3m in size. The search must contain 10 exterior items and the list of suitable items can be found on the 'Instructions when hiding the scent' guide.

Marking System

One 'scented article' per search.

All 4 'Finds' must be found to qualify

The dog must remain at the source for 3 seconds to qualify.

The dog must indicate within 6" (15cm) of the 'scented' article in order to pass. In the 'Household' & 'Exterior' search the dog just has to alert on the correct item.

If the dog leaves the 'scented' article more than three times this will be a fail in that particular search.

Marks 15 points for each 'Find', 10 marks for handling

The searches will not be 'timed' but the search will end after 5 minutes.

	<i>Awarded</i>	<i>Deductions</i>
A - 5 points (Indication)	Dog precisely at source	Dog not quite at source deduct approximately 1 marks per inch. Dog leaving and then returning to the source.(see above) Dog nibbling scented article
B-3 Points (Team Work)	Relationship	Dog ignoring handler when attempting to direct dog back to the items to be searched. overuse of verbal corrections
C-2 Points (General)	Dog understanding their job/eagerness to search Systematic area coverage.	Dogs swallowing articles. trashing & fouling area dog spending a lot of time not searching (Basically not interested)

Points awarded for league

1st – 10 points

2nd – 8 points

3rd – 6 points

4th – 4th points

C/S – 2 points

On the Day

1. Please prepare the 4 search areas well in advanced before your time slot. If the tables and chairs are close to a wall move them to the centre if possible. Position 10 'Exterior' & 'Household' items, if you plan to do the 'Household' search, 18" 45cm apart in the search area/s. Stick 'post it' notes on the wall or fence next to potential hiding places as this will help you and the judge to re-locate hiding places in case they are difficult to find again.
2. If you cannot set up 'all' 4 areas, owing the space limitations, contact the judge/TM and they will give you two time slots with a 15-30 minute interval.
3. Plan where you will position the camera for every search so that everything can be seen. If using a tri-pod place sticky tape markers on the floor for each search. (see picture gallery) If using a chair, (instead of a Tri-Pod')set-up a chair in each search area

beforehand; check the camera angle. **Note: If you have any concerns with what can or cannot be seen from your camera please contact the judge/trials manager beforehand to see what can be achieved in your own home.**

4. Be aware when filming the outside searches that if you set up the camera too far away from your modem the signal will be poor and infrequent it would help if you practiced this firstly.
5. If there is a break in transmission the judge will ask you to do the search again.
6. Plan where you will start and remain during the search bearing in mind that it will need to be roughly 5ft (1.5m) away from the first item to be searched.
7. Send the dog out of the search area before you make a video connection with the judge. Make sure that the dog isn't able to jump up onto windows or look out through glass doors whilst you are hiding the scent as some dogs are very good at cheating!
8. Hide the scent where the judge has instructed and the judge may also ask you to pretend to hide a scented article in another couple of places in case your dog is peeking!
9. Let the judge know where you will start the search with the dog.
10. Enter the search site with the dog on a leash and remove the leash at the start of the search and for the duration of the search.
11. The dog can be worked on a long line during the outside searches owing to safety reasons.
12. Let the judge know when you are ready and start on the judge's instructions.
13. The dog must be within 6" (15cm) of the 'scented' article on the vehicle/ wall or fence and kitchen cabinets and must remain at the source for 3 seconds to pass.
14. In the 'Exterior & Household' searches the dog must indicate on the right item and must remain at the source for 3 seconds to pass.
15. It is acceptable if the dog leaves the scented article and returns up to 3 times after which this will be a fail in this section. The judge will tell you if this is correct or not and the test will then end.

Contamination

Under normal circumstances, the Trial Manager and Judge take responsibility for ensuring there is as little contamination in the search areas and on the items used as possible.

In the online trials, that responsibility will obviously fall to the 'scent hider' or competitor.

There are a few things to be mindful of when selecting items and areas to use:

1. Soft objects absorb scent and hard objects repel it.
2. Residual odour can remain on a scented object for several days.
3. Lingering odour can contaminate a search area, particularly if the area is enclosed.

It is important, therefore, to consider the objects intended for use carefully, particularly if a competitor intends to trial frequently using the same items:

- Anything soft and fluffy (eg. cuddly toys) should be rejected.
- Upholstered items (chairs etc.) will hold odour and are not recommended.

- Items that are made of fabric or sponge (umbrellas, yoga mats etc.) can be cleaned but are likely to retain some odour for longer.
- Wicker baskets and wooden objects hold scent and are difficult to decontaminate quickly.
- Hard plastic or metal items are easy to clean however, if not cleaned properly, they will also hold odour.
- Cardboard will retain not only odour but also any saliva the dog leaves on it and is virtually impossible to clean.
- Leather or faux leather luggage and handbags will retain odour but can be cleaned relatively easily. Bags made of fabric etc. will take up odour and retain it easily.

Cleaning & Decontamination

Methods and cleaning solutions vary from item to item. Residual odour can be removed as follows:

- Steel and glass – a solution of Milton Fluid (made as per the instructions for making sterilising fluid) will clean the item without leaving any taint from the cleaning fluid. Leave the items to air dry naturally, at least overnight, to ensure complete decontamination.
- Hard plastic can be cleaned using Milton solution as above. The items should, however, be left for 24 – 48 before re-use. It is possible to decontaminate more quickly by using proprietary bleach sprays on colour fast fabrics. This will remove the odour quickly but will also taint the search item. Please ensure the item is thoroughly dried and aired before letting the dog sniff it.
- Wicker baskets and wooden objects can be cleaned with a weak solution of washing up liquid. These will need to be air dried and will not be ready for re-use for at least five days.
- Fabric and sponge items that are washable can be cleaned in the washing machine with a few drops of unscented washing liquid. Again, these should be air dried. These items are usually ready for use after approximately three days.
- Leather bags and luggage – These will retain odour for a considerable period of time. Milton solution or a weak solution of washing up liquid, as described above, can be used to clean them but the odour can still be present for up to two weeks.
- Kitchen cabinet doors can be cleaned using your usual kitchen cleaner. Leave the cabinet door open after cleaning for as long as possible to ensure no odour is trapped within the cupboard itself.
- Wooden fences and brickwork are extremely difficult areas to clean. Spray with the Milton solution and allow to air dry. It is recommended that the same part of the wall or fence is not reused for several days.
- Cardboard boxes can be re-used as a training tool to teach your dog to understand threshold but should not be reused for trials.

Lingering odour such as scent pools that have collected on the floor beneath where a hide had been placed should be left to disperse naturally. When setting up your search area, it is worth remembering that scent rises in warm air and dissipates more quickly, whereas in a cold atmosphere, the scent stays closer to the source and should be stronger. Scent also tends to pool in corners.