



Scenetwork UK

Guidelines for Level 1 Trials

Please be aware that it is the competitor's responsibility to read and understand these guidelines and to draw the attention of the judge and/or trial manager to any potential issues that may arise regarding any deductions that may be awarded.

The Test

The Test involves four timed searches in four separate search areas. Two areas will be interior and two will be exterior.

The trial manager and judge(s) to liaise as to who will bring exterior or bags, boxes, container items for adding to areas to be searched.

Interior searches:

1. 'Tables & chairs' ('T&C') 1x scented article (3 minutes permitted)

The test will be conducted indoors.

1. The dog to find one scented article hidden on one of 8 chairs arranged around 2-4 tables.
2. The room should preferably be free from other room clutter which is not part of the test.

The tables and chairs should be arranged in a square pattern.

Handlers who give a wrong alert will be asked to 'stop' and will not be allowed to continue in this particular search area.

2. 'Bags, boxes and containers' ('BBC'): 2x scented articles (5 minutes permitted)

To be tested indoors. To find two scented articles amongst 10-15 items:

1. One in a bag or piece of luggage and
2. One in a cardboard box or container

The room should preferably be free from other room clutter as possible.

There should be a mixture of containers which may include cardboard boxes, luggage, bags, hard plastic & wooden containers and any other suitable items. The luggage shouldn't be padded with anything other than newspaper, brown paper or bubble wrap.

The scented articles should be easily accessible to the dog, for example around

handle areas and pockets on luggage and underneath the flaps on a single box. The boxes can either be 'open end' up or 'over turned' (see pictures below) and the scented articles should be placed just under the flap or just in the seam.

Handlers have only two opportunities to call an alert. Handlers who give a first wrong alert will continue the search but will be asked to 'stop' when a second alert is called whether the call is correct or incorrect.

When the handler calls a correct alert first, the judge will confirm and the clock will be stopped. The item containing the scented article will be removed while the handler and dog team make their way back to the start cones.

Once judge, scribe and team are ready, the search will resume and will end when the second alert is given, or time has run out.

Exterior searches:

3. 'Exterior items' ('ExIt'): 2x scented articles (5 minutes permitted)

The test must be conducted outdoors.

During the 'ExIt' search the dog to find two scented articles amongst 10-15 medium to large items in a 'marked out' area approximately 6m x 6m up to 8m x 8m in size:

1. One on any of the items that are placed within the search area, and
2. One on any other item that is placed within the search area but not on items that are adjacent to each other.

The area can be of any shape.

The ground surface can consist of materials such as grass, gravel, tarmac, artificial grass/ fabric.

If it is to take place in a public area it is recommended that the area is fenced off using plastic webbing or something similar.

None of the items will contain materials such as litter, rope, hessian packaging or anything else that could become a 'distraction scent' to the dog.

Handlers have only two opportunities to call an alert. Handlers who give a first wrong alert will continue the search but will be asked to 'stop' when a second alert is called whether the call is correct or incorrect.

When the handler calls a correct alert first, the judge will confirm, and the clock will be stopped. The item containing the scented article will be removed while the handler and dog team make their way back to the start cones.

Once judge, scribe and team are ready, the search will resume and will end when the second alert is given, or time has run out.

If a dog is interfered with by another dog or member of public entering the search area then the stopwatch will be paused and will restart when the team is ready. The judge will decide if the team is allowed a re-run.

4. 'Vehicle or wall' ('VW'): 1x scented article (3 minutes permitted)

To find one scented article on the exterior of a vehicle or a wall of 10m in length. The vehicles should be cleaned prior to the test although it is more important that it must not contain any other dogs or food.

The vehicle must be parked in a safe area that allows the team easy access to all four sides.

Ideally it should be fenced off or parked well away from kerbs and verges.

The scented article should be located in one of the wheels, although not in the tyre itself. Any excessive scratching at the paintwork should be stopped by the judge immediately.

Handlers who give a wrong alert will be asked to 'stop' and will not be allowed to continue in this particular search area.

The outside wall can be brick, wood, or any solid material.

The length will be 10m and may include doors, windowsills, drainpipes, taps, heating vents etc. which may be used as potential hiding places (Heating vents must not be used to hide scented articles if they are in use).

On a wall where there may be a lack of hiding places, additional objects may be placed at the foot of the wall. The number of items will be at the discretion of the judge.

Bases of walls must be free from sharp, uneven surfaces and not contain any harmful materials such as nettles etc.

NOTES

Target scents will be 'cloves'. See preparation in 'Definitions/Notes'.

Competitors can choose to end any search before the permitted time is up, even if the scented items have not been found. The time recorded for the search will be the time the competitor ended the search.

The competitor can continue to work the other three search areas and can still pass providing 4 out of 6 scented articles have been found in total.

Marking System

The team must find 4 out of 6 scented articles to pass the overall test. The searches can run in any order.

15 points for each scented article found	90 marks
2.5 'Handling points' will be available per search area.	10 marks
Total Available	100 marks
Qualifying Mark	60 marks

Allocation of marks and Qualification:

Qualification Mark = 60

A minimum of 4 scented articles must be correctly identified.

15 points for the handler calling each 'alert/find' correctly.

2.5 handling points in each area if no deductions are made.

Maximum of 100 points available.

If the handler fails to call a correct 'alert/find' in an area, the team are still entitled to 2.5 handling points, providing no deductions have been made. Permissible deductions are listed under Judge's Deductions.

Certificates of merit will be awarded to those that qualify and in addition there will be rosettes from 1st to 4th awarded to those with the highest marks. Any team that finishes outside of the top 4 with a maximum of all 6 hides found and no handling points deductions will receive a clean sweep rosette. In the event of a tie the team with the fastest time will be the winner.

Disqualification

See deduction notes below.

General Guidelines

- Owners/handlers of visually impaired dogs may wish to accompany them on a walk-through of all search areas to acclimate before the target odour is placed. Owners/handlers of dogs fitting this criteria must communicate their circumstances when booking to the Trial Organiser/Manager & in every case, before their arrival on trial day. It will be considered good practice to permit this activity. However, it remains at the discretion of individual Trial Managers and judges to do so.

- Owners/handlers of visually impaired dogs may wish to and will be permitted to give an audible signal whilst under test in search areas.
Handlers may choose to:
 - i) click fingers
 Or tap items/objects or floor with:
 - ii) non powdered nitrile or vinyl gloves
 - iii) clean stick
 This includes Tables, chairs, fixtures and fittings, interior and exterior items, vehicles and walls.
In all cases the judge must be informed of this intention and no damage or disturbance to scented article must take place.
- The team to find 4 out of 6 scented articles within four search areas using either an 'active' or 'passive' indication. See Definitions/Notes below.
- The searches can run in any order.
- There will be a draw for each of the tests to determine the running order of the teams.
- Dogs can be on or off lead, can switch between on or off lead and this decision is entirely the responsibility of the handler.
- Where necessary search areas will be clearly identified by flags, cones, tape or other identifiers.
- The hides will only be within the designated search area.
- At the start of each search the judge will tell the competitor how many scented articles are hidden in the particular search area and how much time they have.
- No items should be touched or moved by the competitor.
- Each search area will have a start point marked with a pair of cones through which the dog must pass to start the test.
- The judge will ask the handler when he/she is ready and as soon as the dog's nose passes the start markers the scribe will start the stopwatch.
- Handlers may choose to work the search area from any angle after the dog has crossed the designated start markers.
- The competitor will have the option of having a 30 second warning.
- The scented article should be located no higher than 80cm. Height will be determined by the size and physical capabilities of the dogs at the trial..
- Calling the 'Alert/Find'. When the handler thinks his/her dog has found the scented article the handler should tell the judge verbally and/or by raising their hand/arm. If the judge asks the competitor to confirm 'where' for clarification, the competitor should not send the dog in again but should show the judge by 'pointing' to with a 'verbal explanation' of where the scented article might be hidden. Marks will be lost if the competitor asks the dog to search for a second time or allows the dog to search again.
- Levels 1 & 2: If the handler identifies the correct box, piece of luggage, chair, interior item or exterior item, marks will not be lost no matter how far the dog is indicating from the hidden scented article
- When the handler calls a correct alert, the judge will confirm and the clock will be stopped. In the areas where two scents are hidden, the item containing the scented article will be removed while the handler and dog team make their way back to the start cones. Once judge, scribe and team are ready, the search will resume and will end when the second alert is given or time has run out.
- The judge will tell the handler at the time if each 'alert' is correct or not.
- The handlers can carry rewards with them during the search but must not reward,

- other than a verbal or physical reward of praise within the search area.
- If a dog is interfered with by another dog or member of public entering the search area then the stopwatch will be paused and will restart when the team is ready. The judge will decide if the team is allowed a re-run.
 - The competitor will be told after the search how many scented articles were found and how many deductions were lost. It is the responsibility of the competitor to point out any discrepancies at the time as marks cannot be changed from then after. The judge's decision is final.

Judge's Guidelines

- It will be considered good practice yet at the discretion of individual Trial Managers & Judges to allow dogs that are visually impaired an opportunity to walk thru search areas in order to acclimate prior to target odour being placed.
- Owners/handlers of visually impaired dogs may wish to and will be permitted to give an audible signal whilst under test in search areas.
Handlers may choose to:
 - i) click fingersOr tap items/objects or floor with:
 - ii) non powdered nitrile or vinyl gloves
 - iii) clean stickAny information relating to specific search areas must be relayed to and understood by individual handlers prior to the start of a test.
- The judge will hold a briefing before the tests begin and may give the handler brief feedback after each test.
- The judge will ask the competitor how they will let them know that their dog has found the scented article.
- The judge will ask the competitor if they want a 30 second time warning.
- When the competitor calls the 'alert' the judge will tell the competitor at the time if this is correct or not.
- Scented articles will be placed in the hide a minimum of 10 minutes before the first competitor starts.
- The scented article should be hidden from view and positioned to prevent the dog from retrieving as far as possible.
- Hides should not be readily visible but neither must they be fully enclosed. They should be placed in such a way that the scent of the article is easily accessible to the dog.
- In the vehicle or wall search if the dog is near the source of the scent, but it is not clear to the judge that the dog has communicated the exact location, the judge should ask "where?" The handler must then point or explain where they believe the source of scent to be. For Level 1-3 trials, the handler may indicate an area up to 6 inches, on any axis. (a vertical six inches, a horizontal six inches, or a diagonal six inches).
- The handler can indicate to the judge even though the dog isn't in that area when it is called; providing it is called before the time is up.
- The judge may stop the search in the event of fouling in the search area, extreme trashing of items, damage to vehicles, and the dog continually leaving the search area and clearly not searching. The dog and handler team will be allowed to continue to search the other search areas.
- Every effort will be made to use a 'white dog' prior to testing to check the scent

strength and its location. When a 'white dog' isn't available the first dog in the running order will complete the search, after which the judge will determine whether the search is acceptable or not. If the first dog to run encounters unforeseen difficulties, the judge can decide to adjust the search test and the dog/handler team will be allowed a re-run at the end of the class. See **White Dog** in 'Definitions/Notes' below.

Judge's Deductions

	Deduction Reason	Up to Points
1	Handler getting in dog's way	0.5
2	Handler pulling dog away from the hidden scent	0.5
3	Handler with tight lead (see definitions)	0.5
4	Overuse of verbal directions (see definitions)	0.5
5	Dog spending a lot of time not searching the items under test	0.5
6	Dog leaving search area and not responding to handler's recall (reward purposes and to reset dog allowed)	0.5
7	Re-tasking the dog to search/indicate again, after calling the alert, if the judge asks "where?"	1.0
8	Moving or touching items without permission	1.0
9	Dog trashing article (see definitions)	1.5
10	Dog trashing items within search area (see definitions)	1.5
11	Dog pulling out, or retrieving the scented article (see definitions)	2.0
12	Feeding and rewarding in the search area, verbal rewards and physical praise are acceptable	2.0
13	Punitive correction or harsh handling of the dog, including lead, harness, verbal, physical interactions.	2.5
14	Dog swallowing article	2.5
15	Dog scratching vehicle and causing damage	2.5
16	Dog fouling in search area	2.5
17	Dog continuing to foul in search area (Eliminated for that search only)	Eliminated

18	Dog continuing to trash article (Eliminated for that search only)	Eliminated
19	Dog/Handler attacking any person or dog at a SWUK Trial	Disqualified

Notes:

Please note that the above deductions are the only deductions that can be used. Actual value of each deduction to be determined by the judge up to the maximum points specified in the table above.

Once a maximum of 2.5 marks has been lost the competitor can no longer lose any further points but may continue with the search except for continuous fouling and trashing.

Deductions are per search area and can only be deducted once per search.

Any information specific to the particular venue should be disclosed to competitors at Judge's Briefing or prior to teams starting searches.

Competitors should be aware that handling of a harsh or punitive manner will result in deductions being made.

Deductions Notes:

Handler should be aware of potentially blocking the scent from the dog when standing between the dog and items to be searched.

Handler should be aware of the dog being in odour: Marks will be lost if it is clear to the judge that the dog has detected the odour and the handler 'pulls the dog away'.

Marks will be lost for the following: Dogs being worked continually on a tight lead. Dogs being restrained and prevented from reaching the hidden odour.

NB: The judge must decipher whether it is the dog or the handler that causes the tight lead. A dog that becomes momentarily restrained by its own choice should not be penalised.

Marks will be lost for the handler continually asking the dog to search individual items, particularly if the dog already appears to be searching or if the communication, in the judge's opinion appears to not benefit and or hinder the dog.

Marks will be lost for the dog appearing to just be sniffing or wandering around the search area as opposed to searching.

Marks will be lost for the dog continually leaving the search area and not responding to the handlers recall.

Re-tasking the dog to search/indicate again: On a vehicle or wall search, if the dog indicates beyond 6" from the source no points will be awarded for the find (it will be counted as a wrong alert). If the dog is within 6" on any axis the alert will be correct. Once the alert has been called, marks will be lost for the handler re-tasking the dog, or failing to prevent the dog indicating again if the judge has asked 'Where?'

Marks will be lost for the handler moving or touching items without permission.

Trashing article - (Please read indication description in definition/notes below. Marks will be lost for any behaviour that is excessive or could potentially cause damage to the article that is scented. Behaviours not acceptable will include biting, persistent paw scratching (more than three paw contacts in succession) or throwing items around and rough handling of any non-scented items.

Trashing item. In the event of trashing items, deductions will be made but marks for finding the scented article will not be lost and will go towards the final total. However, in the event of continuous trashing of items the test must immediately be stopped by the judge and the handler/dog team will be eliminated from this search area (not get any marks for this search area) although the dog/handler team shall be allowed to participate in the other search tests.

Dog removing the scented article - If the scented article is removed and either dropped or retrieved by the dog, marks will be lost. In this event the judge must replace a fresh scented article in the exact same position before it was removed and before the next dog & handler team runs. The item does not need to be replaced unless damage occurred during the scented article removal. (see 'scented article' and 'item' in definition/notes below.)

Marks will be lost for feeding and rewarding in the search area, verbal rewards and physical praise are acceptable. Rewards such as food or toys may be carried but care should be taken especially in the case of food to not accidentally drop food within the search area.

Marks will be lost for punitive correction or harsh handling of the dog. Either through the lead or the harness and will also include harsh verbal or physical interactions that are considered detrimental to the dog.

Dog swallowing article

Marks will be lost if the dog attempts to or does eat or swallow the scented article.

Marks will be lost for scratching or other damage done to a vehicle. It may be a consideration for handlers of dogs that have a pawing indication or those that like to place feet on a vehicle to wear non-abrasive footwear. NB More than three consecutive pawing actions will incur deductions.

Fouling. Up to 2.5 marks will be lost for dogs fouling in the search area. Repeated fouling in an area may result in elimination of that particular search area. After a fouling incident it is recommended that the search items are moved to a new search area, if possible. If the search area cannot be moved, subsequent competitors must be made aware where the fouling incident happened.

NB. If fouling occurs the stopwatch will continue to run until both dog and handler have left the search area. Dogs must not be led through the search area whilst fouling is in progress. The judge/handler should attempt to make neutral the area by removing faeces and or soaking up any urine. Adding any other scent to the fouled area to mask scent of fouling is not permitted.

THE JUDGE'S DECISION IS FINAL.

Definitions/Notes:

Age of Dogs allowed to compete - Dogs aged 6 calendar months and over on the day of the trial are eligible to compete. This is the minimum age but handlers are advised to consider the effects of; travelling, waiting around, other handler and dog teams and the activity itself. Scentwork UK trials should be; fun for all, build the confidence of the dog and the relationship between dog and handler.

Indication - The dog can indicate to the handler by expressing 'any' non- destructive behaviour. (see definition of trashing, below). Acceptable indications can include: freeze, stare, sit, down (**passive**). Lick, paw touch, nibbling, nose prod, barking (**active**).

Scented article - An article is something that is used as the carrier for the 'target odour'.

In L1-6 the carriers should be cotton, fleece and/or Velcro. This includes material that may be made from mixed fibres such as; socks, pillowcases, t-shirts, trousers etc. Cotton wool pads are acceptable but not cotton wool balls due to likelihood of leaving fibres behind when removing.

Surface hides - A hide should not be readily visible but neither must they be fully enclosed. They should be placed in such a way that the scent of the article is easily accessible to the dog. A surface hide is when all of, or some part of the scented article is exposed to airflow and the natural environment. If none of the scented article is exposed at the point at which a dog can access it, the scented article will be considered a 'deep' hide.

Item - The term used to describe an object upon which the judge may hide the scented article eg. box, bag, luggage and any of the exterior items.

Shells - Shells are neutral scented items that carry scented articles which may be hidden on items, or in areas to be searched.

SHELLS WILL NOT BE USED IN TIER 1, LEVELS 1-4.

White Dog - An experienced dog, not entered in the trial is allowed to do an initial 'pre-run' to help set time, assess areas of difficulty, and identify potential contamination. A 2nd 'pre- run' can be used to test article strength and its location. The 'white dog' is not to be handled by anyone entered in the trial.

Equipment - All dogs must wear either a collar or harness whilst under test. Slip leads or a half-check collar are permitted but handling marks will be deducted if used in a corrective manner. Dogs cannot wear a 'halti', any other head collar or retractable/flexi lead whilst working. No person shall carry out punitive correction or harsh handling of any dog at any time within the precincts of the competition.

Fails - An incorrect call of the location of the scented article, running out of time.

Trashing - (Please read deduction notes 9 and 10 above) Any behaviour that could or does cause damage to items and or including the scented article.

Behaviours not acceptable will include biting, persistent paw scratching (more than 3 paw contacts in succession), throwing and rough handling of any item or scented article.

In the event of continuous trashing of items, the test must immediately be stopped by the judge and the handler/dog team will be eliminated from this search area (not get any marks for this search area) although the dog/handler team shall be allowed to participate in the other searches.

Fouling - (Please read deduction note 16 above) Urinating or defecating in the search area. Points will not be lost if the scented article(s) is found, however deductions will be made.

In the event of continuous fouling the test must immediately be stopped by the judge and the handler/dog team will be eliminated from this search area (not get any marks for this search area) although the dog/handler team shall be allowed to participate in the other searches.

Calling the 'Alert/Find' - Before the test begins the handler should inform the judge how she/he will call the 'Alert/Find', either verbally and/or a hand signal, when he/she thinks their dog has found a scented article.

Rewards - The competitor is allowed to reward their dog once they have passed outside of the search area or into a designated 'Reward Zone'. A designated 'Reward Zone' will be identified by the judge prior to the start of a search.

Replacement of scented articles - It will be decided by the judge to replace scented articles for the following reasons: if it has been retrieved, mouthed, or damaged in any way.

Number of dogs entered at a L1 trial - A competitor wanting to enter two dogs in the same level at a trial is permitted to do so at the trials manager's discretion and only at Levels 1 and 2.

Position of scented articles for handlers with more than one dog.

The scented article must remain in the same location for each competitor but In the event of a person having 2 dogs in the same level, one dog will work as per draw order and the other will run last.

The scented article will be located in a different position for the second dog of the same handler. The previous scented article and search item should be removed, and an additional search item added. In the vehicle search a different vehicle should be used. When more than one handler has more than one dog another separate draw should take place.

Entering more than one Level at a trial - A dog and handler team can only enter two levels if the team has already qualified at the lower level at a previous trial.

Gaining Excellence in two different levels simultaneously

Dog/handler teams may gain excellence points in two levels at the same time.

This means that teams can attempt to achieve excellence in one level whilst also starting to gain points towards Excellence in the following level. However, when a team has qualified at more than two levels, Excellence points will only be added to the two highest Levels of qualification.

Eg. Once a team qualifies at Level 3 they will no longer be able to collect Excellence points for Level 1.

Eg. Once a team qualifies at Level 4 they will no longer be able to collect Excellence points for Level 2 and so on.

Allowing teams to run for points in two levels ensures a greater chance of being able to find, attend and compete in a level of choice.

Eligibility for entry - Open to new dog and new handler teams, experienced handler and new dog teams and experienced dog and new handler teams.

Not open to teams who have gained 20 points in Level 1 or have qualified in level 3.

Bitches in Season - Bitches in season are not allowed to compete at the trial or be mated at the venue.

Unregistered Handler and Dog Teams - It is at the trial managers discretion to allow 'Unregistered teams' to enter. Unregistered teams may enter Levels 1 and 2 if they have not already qualified at these levels. If the dog, then becomes registered at a later date they will need to start in Level 1 again. No 'Qualifying' or 'Clean Sweep' points achieved during this 'unregistered' period will carry over.

Running NFC (Not for competition)

Dog and handler teams can run NFC in any level within Tier 1 providing they have qualified at Level 1. If teams have not qualified at the first level in Tier 1 they may only run NFC at Level 2.

Dog and handler teams that have qualified at Level 3 may run NFC at Tier 2 Level 5 but not Level 6

Dog and handler teams can run NFC in any level within Tier 2 providing they have qualified at Level 5. If teams have not qualified at the first level in Tier 2 they may only run NFC at Level 6.

Dog and handler teams that have qualified at Level 9 may run NFC at Tier 3 Level 11 but not Level 12

Dogs with disabilities, XL and small dogs - To inform trial manager at time of entry.

Handlers with disabilities - At time of entry handlers should inform TMs of potential issues in order to be best accommodated on the day of the trial.

Contamination - Contamination is an increasing risk as SWUK grows in popularity and as venues are used more frequently. It is the responsibility of the Trial Manager and Judge to collectively ensure to the best of their capabilities that there are no areas of contamination within the search areas and immediate vicinity. Suspect areas should be scrutinised, if possible, by a White Dog and then monitored as the trial progresses.

Care should be taken when preparing a search area to use tweezers and/or gloves

and pay particular attention to placement of hands once gloves have been in contact with the target scent.

After the trial is completed, all scented articles will be recovered and disposed of.

Progression - Competitors need to qualify only once at Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3 & Tier 4 trials before progressing to the next level. Excellence will be achieved at 20pts. Teams *must* progress to the next level once Excellence has been achieved (20 points accrued) unless they wish to enter this level as NFC.

Different Target Odour - It is at the Trials manager's discretion, (although it is not recommended) to accept entries from those competitors on different odours other than 'cloves' and 'gun oil'. If using a different scent, it is the competitor's responsibility to bring 6 scented articles of the correct size and material specification.

Preparing scented articles

It is the trial organiser's responsibility to supply 'clove' scented articles.

To prepare **clove** scented articles, place 8/10 dried cloves in a clean, empty airtight jar. Place articles, approximately 2cm x 2cm in size on top of the dried cloves and leave at least 7 days prior to the competition. Shake the jar occasionally to ensure even, thorough scenting of the articles. Note that articles should not fill any jar by more than 1/4 full thus allowing complete and thorough scenting of articles within, by turning and/or shaking occasionally.

The scented articles will be ready for use after 7 days and for up to 4 weeks.

Guidelines updated 1st January 2024