



## Scentwork UK Guidelines for Level 5 Trials

### The Test

The Test involves 3 timed searches in 3 separate search areas two of which will be interior and one exterior.

The search areas will be known as:

- Interior 1
- Exterior
- Interior 2

The dog to find 9 out of 12 scented articles hidden across the above 3 search areas.

### NOTES

Target scents will be 'Cloves', 'Gun Oil'. See preparation in 'Definitions/Notes'.

Articles to be scented will consist of material which should be approx 2cm x 2cm in size. Carriers can be cotton, fleece and/or Velcro.

The length of time allowed for each search will be determined by the size of area to be searched.

Competitors can choose to end any search before time even if all 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 two searches and can still pass providing 9 scented articles have been found in total and that they have a minimum of 90 marks after bonus points are added and after deductions have been calculated.

### Marking System

10 points for each scented item found	120 marks
10 'Bonus points' will be available per search area. (Bonus points are awarded for finding all the scented items in the search area within the allocated time)	30 marks
Total Available	150 marks
Qualifying Mark	90 marks

Permissible deductions are listed under Judge's Deductions.

## Qualification

### Pass Mark 90

Find a minimum of 9 articles and  
Have a minimum of 90 marks **after bonuses added** and any points have been deducted.

Certificates of merit will be awarded to those that pass and in addition there will be rosettes from 1st to 4th awarded to those with the highest marks. In the event of a tie the team with the fewer wrong alerts will be the winner. If there is still a tie the team with the fastest time will be the winner.

## Disqualification

Teams will be disqualified for more than 3 wrong alerts throughout the 3 search areas.

## 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 stickThis 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 9 out of 12 scented articles within 3 search areas using either an 'active' or 'passive' indication.
- 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. The search areas will be clearly identified by flags, cones, tape or other identifiers marking the perimeter of the search area. The hides will only be within the designated search area. However, dogs and handlers may move outside of those areas as part of their search.
- 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.
- The dogs can be worked 'on or off' leash and this will be decided by the handler. No items should be touched or moved by the competitor unless the judge gives permission.
- 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 knowing when they have reached the 'half time' mark and/or have a 30 second warning. The judge will confirm with the competitor and the scribe of this request before each search starts.
- Scent will not be placed any higher than 80cm. However height will be determined by the size and physical capabilities of the dogs at the trial.
- Calling the 'Alert/Find' - 1. 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.
- Calling the 'Alert/Find' - 2. If an 'alert' is called and the judge deems that the indication is close enough to be considered correct then the points for that hide will be awarded.
- However, because the indication is not at source a deduction will be given. The judge's decision is final.
- The judge will tell the handler at the time if each 'alert' is correct or not and the handler and dog team will then continue the search.
- 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 unless in a designated 'Reward Zone'.
- The handler can reward their dog as many times as they wish within permitted 'Reward Zones' but the clock will not be stopped.
- 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 fingers
  - Or tap items/objects or floor with:
  - ii) non powdered nitrile or vinyl gloves
  - iii) clean stick
 Any 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 decide how many scented articles are to be hidden per search area. (As a guide, a 30m x 20m search area could contain 5 scented articles.)
- Before the start of the search the judge will ask the competitor if a 'half time' mark and/or a 30 second warning is required and will confirm request with the scribe.
- Scented articles should be hidden at least 1m 20cm from each other in the exterior search and no more than 80cm above floor level.
- Scented articles in the 'Interior search' must be hidden at least 80cm from each other. Scented articles in any area must be no more than 80cm above floor level.
- As a guide, the time allocated will be calculated by the size of the search area and the detail within.
- Vehicles can be included as part of the area to be searched and a further one minute plus an extra 20 seconds per open door shall be added to time allowed.

- The judge will hold a briefing before each search showing the competitors the area/s to be searched, what is not to be searched, what items can be moved as well as being told the number of hidden scented articles and how much time they have.
- The judge should consider safety especially if using any electrical appliances or heaters when choosing suitable places to hide the scented articles. The judge can remove any items deemed unsafe from any of the three search areas.
- Items added to the search areas may or may not be used as places to hide the scented articles.
- Scented articles should be placed in the search areas at least 5-minutes before the first competitor runs.
- If a handler calls the alert/find on a previously found article no marks will be lost and neither will this result in a 'wrong alert'.
- Scented articles must be hidden from view and secured to prevent retrieving as far as possible.
- Scented articles may be hidden in a shell/carrier providing the shell/carrier can be concealed from the competitor and has previously been tried and tested to provide adequate source of scent in differing environmental conditions such as weather/temperature and indoor/outdoor conditions. It is imperative that air flow can affect the scented article itself so that a pool of target scent is available to the dog under test.
- The judge may stop the search in the event of fouling, 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 re-run at the end of the class. See **White Dog** in 'Definitions/Notes' below.

### **Judge's Deductions**

	<b>Deduction Reason</b>	<b>Up to Points</b>
1	Handler Pulling dog away from the hidden scent	1.00
2	Handler getting in dog's way	1.00
3	Lack of systematic coverage of the search area	1.00
4	The dog spending a lot of time not searching the items under test	1.00
5	Dog entering a vehicle during search (more than 2 front feet entering vehicle)	1.00
6a	Re-tasking the dog to search/indicate again, after calling the alert, if the judge asks "where?"	2.00
6b	Correct but NOT at source	1.00
7	Moving or touching items without permission	2.00

8	Minor trashing of the items	2.00
9a	Handler using lead/harness in corrective manner	3.00
9b	Handler overuses verbal directions or corrections	3.00
9c	Handler unnecessarily works dog on a tight/restrictive lead	3.00
10	Punitive correction or harsh handling of the dog	5.00
11	Feeding and rewarding in the search area, verbal rewards are acceptable	5.00
12	Dog retrieving and swallowing article	5.00
13	Dog fouling in Search Area	5.00
14	Dog Continuing to Foul in Search Area (Eliminated for that search only)	Eliminated
15	Dog Continuing to Trash Article (Eliminated for that search only)	Eliminated
16	Dog/Handler attacking any person or dog at a SWUK Trial	Disqualified

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

**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.

### 1) Interior Searches

- These are typically room-sized environments such as a kitchen, toilets, committee rooms, barns, or warehouse space. A search may include several rooms which must be sectioned off using for example; cones, rope, hazard tape or even a row of chairs.
- The search rooms may include items added by the judge as potential search items. The judge must bear in mind safety and workability of the search areas and the judge can remove items deemed not safe.
- Scented articles must be surface hides although hidden from view and can be placed anywhere within the fixtures and fittings of the search area. Eg. Door, cupboard, drawer, seals. Dado rails, pipework, radiators etc.
- Scented articles should be hidden at least 80cm from each other and no more than 80cm above floor level.
- Search areas should be appropriately sized for the amount of scented articles within. ie

large areas that realistically will take 6 minutes to search should not contain less than 4 or 5 target scents.

## 2) Exterior Search

- The test must be conducted outdoors. Example of outside areas would be car park areas, playing fields, car park lay-bys and courtyards.
- The ground surface can consist of materials such as grass, gravel, tarmac, artificial grass/fabric.
- The search areas will be clearly identified by flags, cones, tape, or other identifiers marking the perimeter of the search area.
- Scented articles should be hidden at least 1m 20cm from each other and no more than 80cm above floor level.
- The scented articles will only be hidden within the designated search area. However, dogs and handlers may move outside of those areas as part of their search.
- Vehicles can be parked within the search area and may or may not be used as a hiding place.
- It is permissible to hide more than one scented article on the same vehicle.
- The judge should allow extra time by adding one minute per vehicle plus 20 seconds per open door.
- Only the exterior and places accessible through an open door and within reach of the smallest dog on the interior of the vehicle will be included, the scented article may be hidden behind a closed door. Door sills may be used as a step, but rear feet should remain on the ground.
- Additional Items can be added and used as possible search sites or removed if deemed unsuitable or unsafe by either the judge or the trials manager.
- Natural items such as trees, fencing, walls, and drainpipes are acceptable hiding places although hiding under gravel, soil, grass and similar terrain is not allowed.
- The judge should bear in mind safety aspects when hiding the scented articles.
- If a dog is interfered with by another dog or member of public entering the search area, the judge should stop the search and re-start when they feel the search site is safe again to do so. In exceptional circumstances the team will be allowed a re-run.

### Definitions/Notes:

**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.

**Items** - The term used to describe the object upon which the judge hides 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. They decrease contamination by preventing the scented article coming in to contact with a surface or any item. A shell must have been tried and tested in order to prove it is able to produce an odour pool.

A selection of shells should be stored with blank decoy scent carriers in order to prevent them becoming a target scent.

**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 can not 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.

**Trashing & Fouling** - (Please read indication description above) Any behaviour that is excessive or could potentially cause damage to any items including the item that is scented will be considered excessive.

Behaviours not acceptable will include biting, persistent paw scratching (more than 3 paw contacts in succession), throwing items around and rough handling of any non-scented items.

In the event of a fouling incident, subsequent competitors must be made aware where the fouling incident happened.

However, in the event of continuous trashing of items and repeated fouling the test must immediately be stopped by the judge and the handler/dog team will be eliminated from this 'section' (not get any marks for this section) 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.

**Surface Hide** - 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.

**Rewards** - The competitor is allowed to reward their dog once they have passed outside of the search area or into a designated 'Reward Zone'.

**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.

**Entering more than one Level at a trial** - A dog can only be entered in one level at a Tier 2 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 5 they will no longer be able to collect Excellence points for Level 3.

Eg. Once a team qualifies at Level 6 they will no longer be able to collect Excellence points for Level 4 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 teams that have qualified at level 4.

Not open to teams who have gained Excellence in Level 5 or have qualified in level 7. Once a dog & handler team have gained their 'Ex' title in any level they can no longer stay in that level unless they run NFC.

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

**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** - At time of booking handlers should inform TM's of dogs with special circumstances and then TM's will inform judges who will show discretion in relation to accuracy of indication when these dogs are clearly in odour but unable to get to source because of their physical limitations.

If handlers choose to pick up or carry their dog it is entirely the responsibility of the individual handler as judges cannot be held responsible for such actions.

If deemed necessary the judge will allow an object (not the scented article) in the search area to be moved to accommodate ease of movement and access for the dog. Handlers are solely responsible for the welfare of their dog(s).

**Handlers with disabilities** - At time of booking handlers should inform TM's 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.

Scented articles may be set out in a shell but should be inconspicuous and concealed from view from the searching team.

After the trial is completed all scented articles must 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.

**Preparing scented articles**



It is the trial organiser's responsibility to supply the 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 or cut into 'bands' (eg the elastic top of a sock) on top of the dried cloves and leave at least 2 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. Prepare at least 7 days prior to the competition.
- The **Gun oil** should be prepared in the following way. The gun oil recommended for use is 'Napier gun oil'. Ensure you purchase the gun oil lubricant rather than the gun oil cleaners and sprays.
- Place 8/10 droplets of the 'gun oil' on to the top of a round cotton wool pad then place into a clean jar, oil facing up on top of articles. Alternatively suspend cotton pad above the scented articles in a shell such as a tea infuser or muslin drawstring small bag.
- Scented articles should be approximately 2cm x 2cm in size. Take care NOT to get gun oil on to individual articles as this can lead to contamination of search areas. Oil is difficult to remove once it has been in contact with surfaces/other items. To ensure even, thorough scenting of the articles turn/shake the jar occasionally.

**PLEASE REMOVE COTTON WOOL PAD AND REPLACE LID SECURELY BACK ON TO JAR BEFORE TURNING/SHAKING**

- Use gloves or tweezers when removing cotton wool pad and place pad, gun oil side up on a clean tissue or another cotton wool pad. After shaking, replace cotton wool pad into jar and secure the lid. Note also that articles should not fill any jar by more than 1/4.
- The scented articles will be ready for use after **7 days** and for up to 4 weeks.
- Prepare at least 7 days prior to the competition.

GUIDELINES EFFECTIVE FROM MONDAY 1st MAY 2023.