

TIPS FOR NEWCOMERS: WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR FIRST DOCKDOGS EVENT

What To Bring (necessary items)

- Leash (not longer than 4 feet)
- Flat buckle collar
- Water dish and water for your dog
- Throw object (not edible, must float, cannot be live or anything that has been live)
- Shot records
- Poopy bags



What To Bring (suggested items)

- Crate
- Treats (for your dog)
- Cooler with drinks (for you)
- Snacks (for you)
- Chair
- Towels
- Blanket or sheet to cover crate if in direct sun
- Any medications your dog might need
- Extra collar
- Tent canopy for shade
- Extra change of clothes



Registering For Your First Event

In order to register for a DockDogs event, whether a club event or a national event, go to the DockDogs website at <http://www.dockdogs.com>. Click on the icon on the right that says Register for Membership or Events. Then, just follow the prompts. You will need enter a Handler ID which is a unique number. It is not your member number or your forum handle.

VERY IMPORTANT: If you do not know your handler ID and you have participated in any DockDogs event (club or national), then you already have a Handler ID. Just click on "**Recover Handler ID,**" and it will be sent to you. If you have *never* participated in any DockDogs event (club or national), then click on "**Register as a DockDogs Handler.**"

One question we frequently get from newbies is: "Do I have to register for all the waves?" or "Do I have to jump every day of the event?" The answers are: You can register for one or all of the waves. Register for as many waves as your schedule and budget allow. You do not need to be there every day, but you might want to come back on the last day to see if you dog made the finals. (See below **The Finals.**)



There is always Open Dock Practice Time between each of the Waves. At Dixie Dock Dogs events, if you enter one or more Waves, you will receive a competition wristband. That wristband entitles you to the practice times. Dixie Dock Dogs will have Practice Coaches available to help you and answer any questions.

The amount of practice time depends on how full the Waves are. If the Waves are full (or close to full), that will cut down on the practice time between the Waves. Also, the number of teams wanting to practice also affects the time you will get on the dock to practice.

So please keep this in mind: Often the practice lines are long, so you might only get one or two times on the dock during a practice session. Sometimes, due to time constraints, practice time might be limited to only dogs jumping in the next wave.



What do we do when we get there?

Check-in and Practice

There will be a crating area for competitors and their dogs. Just look for the tents.

Pick a place and get your gear and dog(s) all situated. Then look for the **admin tent**. Under that tent, you will usually see one or two people sitting at a table with a computer, clipboards, etc.



At the admin tent, you will check in, sign the Waiver of Liability, and get your wrist band, which designates you as an official competitor. The people in the admin tent can also answer any questions you might have.

Once you are checked in, you can walk around and mingle with people, watch the dogs that might be jumping, or sit and relax with your dog. You can do whatever you want until it is time for your first wave.

There will be open dock practice times. If you would like to practice with your dog (and I strongly recommend you do), put your dog on a leash, get your throw object, and get in line at the steps behind the dock. When it is your turn, there should be someone to help you. You will get one or two jumps or a certain amount of time, depending on how many people need to practice.



The Waves

About 15 minutes before your wave begins, the wrangler will call a handlers' meeting behind the dock. This meeting is *imperative* for all handlers to attend. **If you are not at this meeting, you will be scratched!** It is better if you do not bring your dog to this handlers' meeting.

At the meeting, you find out in which group you are jumping (each wave usually has 2-5 groups) and what number jumper you are in your group. You can again sit in your crating area, watch the dogs jump, or walk around and talk until the announcer calls for your group. But do not wander too far away. You need to be able to hear the announcer call your group to the dock.



When you hear the announcer call for your group, take your dog (on a leash) to the back of the dock. The wrangler will be there to help keep everyone in order and will let you know when to go up on the dock for your jump. It might help if you let the wrangler know this is your first event and you need a little more direction. Beginning with the #1 dog in the group, each competitor in your group will get one jump. You all then start over with #1 and everyone gets a second jump. The longer of the two jumps is your official score for that Wave.



The Finals

There are two formats: National format and Divisional format. Dixie Dock Dogs uses the Divisional format for finals. Other clubs might use the National format for finals.

So, at our club events, after all the waves are completed, the top six dogs from each of the Divisions move on to the finals, making the finals look like this:

- Novice Finals - top 6 Novice dogs
- Junior Finals - top six Junior dogs
- Senior Finals - top six Senior dogs
- Master Finals - top six Master dogs
- Elite Finals - top six Elite dogs
- Super Elite Finals - top six Super Elite dogs



Although each wave will have dogs of all levels jumping, your dog's jump will determine in which division he is placed. For example, if your dog jumps 12'4", he will be placed in the Junior Division. Another dog in the same wave might jump 22' and be in the Master Division. This ensures that while your dog is jumping with dogs of all levels, he is only *competing* against dogs that jump in his division.

There are also divisions in the **Speed Retrieve waves**, so your dog will only be competing against dogs who run similar Speed Retrieve times.

Each wave of the event will have ribbons for the competitors, so be sure to go by the admin tent after your wave to pick up your ribbon.

As you can readily see, it is important for you to stay until the finals participants are posted (after the last wave). Your dog could have jumped 8' or 9' and very easily make the Novice Finals. Remember, your dog is competing only against dogs in his division.

The Finals: National Event

If you are attending a DockDogs National event, or if you're at a club event that uses the National Finals, then the Finals will break down like this:

Amateur Division

Top 6 Dogs whose longest jump was up to 17' 11"

Semi-Pro Division

Top 6 Dogs whose longest jump was 18' - 21'11"

Pro Division

Top 6 Dogs whose longest jump was 22' and over



Whether your dog makes the Finals or not, you are sure to have a great time at your first DockDogs event!



The following links might be of help to you:

[Email Team 4 Dawg Flite](#)

[Team 4 Dawg Flite website](#)

[Team 4 Dawg Flite on Facebook](#)

[Team 4 Dawg Flite on Twitter](#)

[Team 4 Dawg Flite on YouTube](#)

[Dixie Dock Dogs website](#)

[Dixie Dock Dogs on Facebook](#)

