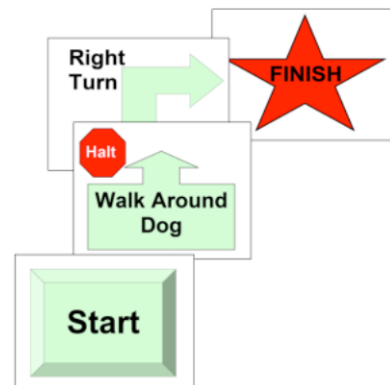


Rally O!

What can the average person do with the average dog? Rally O! Rally Obedience is a relatively new dog sport that was introduced in the U.S. in 2000 and has since made its way into Canada. It's fast becoming a favorite way to spend time "working" with your dog! Rally is a fun dog obedience sport that begins with basic heeling and incorporates over 40 obedience movements into the sits, turns and paces of traditional heeling. It has 3 Levels – with Levels 1 and 2 conducted on leash and Level 3 off leash and incorporating jumps and other more complicated exercises – even weaving between full bowls of food! Each course design is different and contains 10 to 20 stations with Direction Signs giving instructions for the next position change. Each competitor is required to move through the course at a brisk pace. A positive and happy attitude from both dog and handler is actually more important and earns higher marks than precision!



One of the great things about Rally O is even though it's a competitive sport (you can attend trials and win titles), it's open to all dogs, mixed breed or purebred as well as all handlers, young and old. You can even do Rally if you or your dog is physically challenged. The trials are designed to take all aspects of dog and handler into consideration. One of the best things about it is the emphasis on positive reinforcement and handling. Some of the rules are:

- you must work your dog on a regular leash and flat collar
- the leash must be loose at all times - none of that alarming yanking and jerking into position
- you are not allowed to issue any verbal or physical "corrections" – verbal cues or hand signals only (yay!)
- you are welcome to talk to, praise and encourage your dog through the course
- the happier and more connected you and your dog are, the more points you can earn
- you can be disqualified from the trial for any use of physical punishment or stern verbal corrections

We like everything about it! What you see is dog and handler having fun, connecting and working cooperatively together and perfecting and generalizing their obedience. Obedience has always had a reputation of being a bit boring to learn and a bit boring to watch – not any more!

If you're looking for a fun, interactive activity to enjoy with your dog, Rally Obedience may be just the thing. It's not simple or easy, but challenges you and your dog in a partnership that improves heeling, obedience and teamwork. This greatly adds to your dog's ability to maintain his attention and attitude at a high level. If you want to get started, the main sources for information are:

- The American Kennel Club (www.akc.org)
- The Association of Pet Dog Trainers, APDT (www.apdt.com)
- The Canadian Association of Rally Obedience, CARO (www.canadianrallyo.ca)

These websites contain extensive information on rules and regulations as well as downloadable copies of all the Direction Signs designed and copyrighted by the original developer of Rally O, Charles (Bud) Kramer. If you want to attend a class, you can check the APDT website Trainer Search (www.apdt.com) and select "Rally" to search for a list of trainers in your area who offer classes. Check out some video clips by doing a Google video search using "CARO Rally O" as your search term. Have fun!