

Your Smart Dog

Your Dog's Amazing Nose

How Powerful Is It?

A dog's nose is an amazing thing to behold -- they have the ability to: wiggle each nostril independently, breathe in through the holes in the front of their nose and exhale through the side slits, discern individual odors making up what we could call a "scent."

People have about 5 million cells devoted to smelling. Dogs have up to 220 million. Not only that, dogs have 4 times the brain power devoted to processing scents.

We smell "vegetable soup," and the dog smells each individual ingredient. Their noses are so powerful, they can detect 1 tablespoon of sugar in the water it would take to fill two Olympic-sized swimming pools!

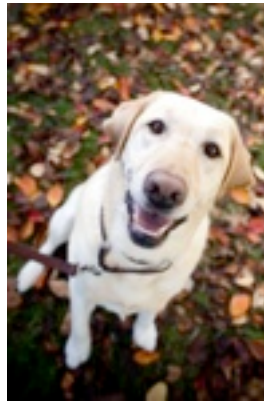
A new sport called K9 Nose Work® has emerged over the past few years. K9 Nose Work harnesses the power of the canine nose and allows dogs to utilize

both their powerful nose and their desire to hunt.

The sport of Nose Work has now reached dogs of all ages, personalities, and sizes and has made basic search dog skills available to companion dogs. A new urban sport for dog enthusiasts has been born!

Before competing all dogs must pass an Odor Recognition Test (ORT). In an ORT, twelve identical boxes are lined up in two rows of six. One box contains the scent. The dog has three minutes to locate the target box.

(continued on page 2...)



What Is K9 Nose Work®?

K9 Nose Work is a new urban sport in which dogs search for specific scents: Birch, Anise, Clove.

There are three competitive levels of Nose Work:

- NW 1 - Searching only for Birch; able to reach the source of the odor; not required to formally alert.
- NW 2 - Searching for Birch and Anise; may not be able to reach source of odor.
- NW 3 - Searching for Birch, Anise, Clove; may not be able to reach source; must have formal alert.

SMART DOG U'S PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR IS AN ASSOCIATE K9 NOSE WORK INSTRUCTOR

Attending her first K9 Nose Work workshop two years ago, Smart Dog U's founder Laurie Luck has been approved as an Associate K9 Nose Work Instructor. She's attended more than seven days of instruction from the K9 Nose Work founders.

Laurie has also attended working Nose Work seminars with her dog, Nemo, and received

coaching from the Nose Work founders. In April Laurie traveled to Georgia to attend K9 Nose Work Camp -- five days of intense instruction. She will also be attending another five-day camp in Pennsylvania in the fall with Nemo.

Smart Dog U offers K9 Nose Work classes in the Frederick, MD area. Join a class! Join the fun!

NOSE WORK COMPETITION

After passing the ORT, the dog is eligible to compete in a Nose Work Trial.

A competitive dog sport, there are four elements involved in a Nose Work trial: container search, interiors, exteriors, and vehicle searches. Let's take an in-depth look at each element.

CONTAINER SEARCH

The container search element consists of an interior room with a variety of containers on the floor -- one of which contains the target odor. The dog must locate the container containing the target odor.

INTERIORS

The interior search element is exactly what it sounds like -- the dog will search an interior room for the scent. The dog must locate the target odor.

EXTERIORS

The exterior search element is outdoors. The target odor can be hidden anywhere within the prescribed search area. The odor can be placed in the crack of a sidewalk, on a light pole, under a table, etc.

VEHICLES

The vehicle search element contains up to three vehicles. The target odor hidden on a vehicle. The odor is never hidden inside the vehicle, but can be placed under the vehicle, in a door seam, or otherwise placed on the vehicle.

There are three different levels of competition in K9 Nose Work. The first level, NW1, is the entry level -- it's where every dog starts competition. All four elements are part of every level of competition.

In a NW1 Trial, the dog searches only for birch odor. In a NW2 Trial, the dog is expected to locate both birch and anise odors. And in a NW3 Trial, the dog must recognize and locate all three odors in each element.

As the dog advances through the levels, the difficulty of the hides increases accordingly. For example, a NW 2 or 3 trial might include distractor odors such as food or animal scents.

At the advanced levels, there might be blank rooms -- rooms with no scent at all. The dog should not alert, of course, and the handler must call the room clear if her dog hasn't alerted.

Some faults are awarded in situations where you will not receive full points for an element. For example: a False Alert. In this situation, you will receive a fault, and will not be allowed to continue searching the area. This means you will not be able to accumulate the full number of points for that element and therefore will not earn your title. These faults are awarded to ensure that the overall scoring ranks teams in the appropriate order.

Faults may be awarded for the following reasons:

- ▶ False Alert. You will not be allowed to continue searching the area after a false alert, therefore full points for the element will not be possible.
- ▶ Incorrect Response
- ▶ Handling Errors -- for example: correcting dog off odor. At this time faults will not be applied for minor poor handling choices such as blocking odor, tangling your leash, etc.

- ▶ Damage to the search area
- ▶ Compromising the search area
- ▶ Elimination during your search - This will earn you 2 faults and 0 points for that element

K9 Nose Work is a terrific sport for both people and dogs. This is the one sport where the dog knows more than the person at the end of the leash! The sport accommodates almost every type of dog: It's a terrific way to give your older dog something to do - impact-free; it's a great way to burn off energy in a younger dog; for shy dogs, the sport builds confidence; and for dog-aggressive or reactive dogs, it's the perfect sport because there are never any other dogs around when another dog is searching. If you're interested in learning more, check out [this website](#). Then sign up for a Nose Work class with Smart Dog U!

Happy sniffing!

Laurie Luck
Faculty, Karen Pryor Academy for Animal Training & Behavior
Helping good dogs become great dogs.

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