

Top Notch Canines LLC

Class Descriptions

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The following table lists the class offerings at Top Notch Canines. Not all classes listed as Skill Building Sets will be offered every 8 weeks. Classes will be rotated based on interest. If you are interested in a Skill Building set that is not on the current schedule, please contact Debbie Strieter at debbie@topnotchcanines.com.

Please Note***. Prerequisites are general requirements. Instructor approval is REQUIRED for ALL classes. Completing one class is never a guarantee that you and your dog can move to another class. Your dog's mental and physical readiness is always a primary consideration in the decision to move a dog and handler team forward. We do a disservice to our dogs and undermine their confidence in themselves and us when we put them in a situation where they cannot succeed do to a lack of foundation. The Instructors who have worked most closely with you will make the final decision.

Click on the link to be directed to the **page** that contains the description for that class.

Foundation Classes	Skill Building Sets	Handling Classes
Foundation 1	Weave Poles 101	Novice Handling
Foundation 2	Weave Poles 201	Advanced Handling
Intro to Agility 1	Contacts 101	Competition Handling
Intro to Agility 2	Contacts 201	FUNdamentals of Handling
Beginner 1		Technical Handling 1
Beginner 2		
Intermediate 1		
Intermediate 2		

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Class Descriptions

Foundation 1 –

This 8 week class is designed to strengthen the bond between dog and handler through play, mutual responsibility and respect.

Agility is great fun for both owner and dog. With a little patience and a lot of positive reinforcement almost any dog can be taught how to maneuver the obstacles on an agility course. However, in order to have a truly successful team, a special relationship must exist between owner and dog. The purpose of this class is to establish this relationship. In this 6-week course you will learn to use the clicker and a positive reinforcement schedule to form the building blocks for the teamwork necessary for a successful agility career. Don't know about clicker training? We will teach you. The goal in this class is to build a strong working relationship between handler and dog. Your dog will learn to focus on you the handler. You will learn to build excitement about toys and play that can be used in any kind of future training, especially in agility training.

This class is ideal dog that is embarking on their first adventure in the world of performance sports. It is a must take class for puppies and young dogs.

This class will remain at this day/time for at least 4 sessions even as you progress in skill level. So if you join, please plan on continuing through Foundation 2, Intro to Agility 1 and 2 to get maximum results with your dog.

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Foundation 2 –

Prerequisite: Foundation 1

This 8 week class is designed to build on the foundation established in Relationship 1, creating a trust between dog and handler that will make training for any performance sport easier.

Skills developed in Relationship 1 will be proofed and refined, while additional exercises will be added which will develop the dogs balance and coordination in preparation for more advanced work, i.e., ladder work, pivot on a block, stretching exercises etc

Puppies and very young dogs should expect to stay in Relationship 2 for more than one session while they develop the mental alertness and stamina as well as physical coordination need as a pre-requisite for the Intro to Agility classes.

The second in the series of classes that continues at the same day / time for at least 4 sessions.

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Class Descriptions

Intro to Agility 1 –

Prerequisite: Relationship 1 and 2 and/or approval of an instructor.

This 8 week class will introduce several flat work skills that will be the foundation for your handling system (*A handling system is a system of cues for communicating with your dog on course*). This is the beginning of the agility dance. You will learn to lead while your dog learns to follow. Your dog will begin to learn how to follow your body and your verbal directional commands. Developing a good system of communication prior to starting equipment will encourage consistent handling from day one so your dog is never confused about what your body language means. Weave poles and basic jump work will be introduced as well as an introduction to both stationary and moving board work.

The second in the series of classes that continues at the same day / time for at least 4 sessions.

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Intro to Agility 2 -

Prerequisite: Introduction to Agility 1

This 8-week class will give you and your dog an opportunity to expand on refine and perfect the skills learned in Introduction to Agility 1. This means more guided work and practice time for you and your dog. Rushing thru this phase of the training will cause problems later so please, feel free to hang out here until you and your dog are comfortable and ready for the next step.

The second in the series of classes that continues at the same day / time for at least 4 sessions.

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Class Descriptions

Beginner 1 -

Prerequisite: Intro to Agility 1 or 2 and/or instructor approval

This is the class where the real agility work starts. The foundation laid in the previous classes will help make this class a breeze. Your dog's confidence and trust in you will make this first introduction to real agility equipment fun and exciting for your dog. Contact, weave and jumping skills will be a major focus in this class. Basic handling concepts will be introduced based on the flatwork learned in Intro to agility.

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Beginner 2 –

Prerequisite: Beginner 1

Not all dogs learn at the same speed. Skills introduced in Beginner 1 take many months to perfect. This 6-week class will give you and your dog an opportunity to refine and perfect the skills learned in Beginner 1 without having to listen to the whole explanation again. This means more guided work/practice time for you and your dog. Rushing thru this phase of the training will cause problems later so please, feel free to hang out here until you and your dog are comfortable and ready for the next step.

You may take a recess from this class anytime you feel the need. The Handling Skill Set classes are a great place to advance your skills in other areas during this time. Then return to Beginner 2 with a fresh outlook. Or you may choose to take a Skill Set class concurrently with Beginner 2. If you have not graduated from Beginner 2, registration for a Skill Set class will require instructor approval so we can help ensure you don't inadvertently place your dog in a class they are not ready for. It is important to maintain your dog's confidence at all times so not to undermine the trust in the relationship you have been diligently building.

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Class Descriptions

Intermediate 1 -

Prerequisite: Beginner 1 or 2 and/or instructor approval

This is the class where the real agility work starts. The foundation laid in the previous classes will help make this class a breeze. Your dog's confidence and trust in you will make this first introduction to real agility equipment fun and exciting for your dog. Contact, weave and jumping skills will be a major focus in this class. Basic handling concepts will be introduced based on the flatwork learned in Intro to agility.

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Intermediate 2 –

Prerequisite: Intermediate 1

Not all dogs learn at the same speed. Skills introduced in Beginner 1 take many months to perfect. This 6-week class will give you and your dog an opportunity to refine and perfect the skills learned in Beginner 1 without having to listen to the whole explanation again. This means more guided work/practice time for you and your dog. Rushing thru this phase of the training will cause problems later so please, feel free to hang out here until you and your dog are comfortable and ready for the next step.

You may take a recess from this class anytime you feel the need. The Handling Skill Set classes are a great place to advance your skills in other areas during this time. Then return to Beginner 2 with a fresh outlook. Or you may choose to take a Skill Set class concurrently with Beginner 2. If you have not graduated from Beginner 2, registration for a Skill Set class will require instructor approval so we can help ensure you don't inadvertently place your dog in a class they are not ready for. It is important to maintain your dog's confidence at all times so not to undermine the trust in the relationship you have been diligently building.

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Class Descriptions

Weave Poles 101 -

Prerequisite: Beginner 1 and/or instructor approval

This is TNC's concentrated introduction and problem solving weave pole class. Just starting your weave pole training? Want more work to complete the training process? This class will give you the foundation you need. Does your dog pop out, perform in slow motion, and get tangled feet? Then, come obsess over your dogs weave pole performance by revisiting your foundation training and building on your existing performance with the goal of proofing for independent performance.

This class is an on-going class, so if you join, please plan on continuing for several sessions to get maximum results with your dog. Cost for subsequent class sessions is reduced to \$100 after the initial session is completed.

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Weave Poles 201 -

Prerequisite: Weave Pole 201 and/or instructor approval. (weave poles must be closed and without aids or guides)

The next step in weave pole training – proofing, proofing, proofing! Test your weave pole entries! Does the dog have a problem collecting for the entries? Learn how to handle independent weave poles in sequences and proof for even the most difficult of entries! This class is designed for those dogs who periodically have a weave pole fault, keeping you from consistently being in the ribbons! Elicia will find any holes in your dog's training and provide a training solution!

This class is an on-going class, so if you join, please plan on continuing for several sessions to get maximum results with your dog. Cost for subsequent class sessions is reduced to \$100 after the initial session is completed.

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Class Descriptions

Contacts 101 - *Solidifying your Foundation Skills!*

Prerequisite: Beginner 1, Get on Board Workshops Series and/or instructor approval

Do you want to focus heavily on putting your contact training into full swing? Have you participated in the 'Get On Board' Workshop Series and want the next step? This weekly class format is designed to continue the progress you made with the Contact Board and the Foot Touch, proof the behavior and integrate it onto the actual obstacle while continuing to proof the dog's independent behavior.

Whether you are doing Running or Stopping Contacts, this class will get you moving forward to having those independent contacts you need for a successful career!

This class is an on-going class, so if you join, please plan on continuing for several sessions to get maximum results with your dog.

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Contacts 201 - *The Next Step – Putting it all Together!*

Prerequisite: Contacts 101 and/or instructor approval

Now that you have the various pieces needed for the ideal contact performance, it's time to put things together! Integrating the behaviors into the complete obstacle, maintaining speed, focus and proper reinforcements are the keys to having independent contact obstacle performances! Under Elicia's trained eye, she will oversee your progress and proof each step of the way to help you reach your goal! Don't miss out on Elicia teaching the contact programs she created!

This class is an on-going class, so if you join, please plan on continuing for several sessions to get maximum results with your dog. Cost for subsequent class sessions is reduced to \$100 after the initial session is completed.

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Class Descriptions

FUNdamentals of Handling - *Adapted from Elicia Calhoun's World Renowned Program!*

Prerequisite: Jumping 101 or instructor approval

Introduction to Foundation Handling skills. Topics Include: body language, timing, position, crosses. Focus will include only jumping and handling – no contact or weave pole work.

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Technical Handling 1 –

Prerequisite: FUNdamentals of handling or instructor approval Intermediate

Handling skills - Focus will be restricted to jumping and handling, so no contact or weave pole work. Topics include more advanced attention to body language, timing, position, crosses, and specific attention on pinwheel and box patterns.

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Class Descriptions

Novice Handling -

Prerequisite: Demonstrate good proficiency with each obstacle and basic handling skills such as the front cross, rear cross, serpentines, lead outs and pinwheels. Instructor approval required.

This class is for dogs that have mastered the individual obstacles and basic handling skills. Focus will be on refining those handling skills in a variety of obstacle configurations, recognizing where different skills can be used, and increasing the dog's reliability and speed on the equipment.

Classes will alternate weekly to focus on JWW and Standard courses.

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Advanced Handling -

Prerequisite: Novice Handling. Dog and Handler teams should be well versed in front and rear crosses, lead out pivot, false turns, 270s, 180s, pinwheels, serpentines, and threadles. Instructor approval required .

This class is for dogs that have mastered the individual obstacles and are familiar with the above mentioned handling skills. Focus will be on refining those handling skills in a variety of obstacle configurations, recognizing where different skills can be used, and increasing the dog's reliability and speed on the equipment.

Classes will alternate weekly to focus on JWW and Standard courses.

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Competition Handling -

Prerequisite: Advanced Handling. Instructor approval required.

This class is for dogs that are competing at the top levels and are looking for increasingly challenging sequences to pit their course analysis and handling skills against. Focus will be on pushing handling skills in a variety of challenging obstacle configurations, recognizing where different skills can be used, understanding which skills are best for the individual dog, and increasing the dog's reliability and speed on the equipment.

Classes will alternate weekly to focus on JWW and Standard courses.

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Class Descriptions

Push to Win Handling -

Prerequisite: Competition Handling. Instructor approval required.

This class is for ADCH/MACH Dogs who are competing at National and International level and are looking for sequences to pit their course analysis and handling skills against. Focus will be on pushing handling skills to the max in a variety of challenging obstacle configurations, recognizing where different skills can be used, understanding which skills are best for the individual dog, and increasing the dog's reliability and speed on the equipment.

Classes will alternate weekly to focus on JWW and Standard courses.

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