



4-H DOG Showmanship Guidelines

*Be sure that YOU are properly groomed before you enter the ring

*Make sure that your outfit allows you to properly gait and show your dog. If you are uncomfortable wearing your outfit or your shoes it will be noticeable in the ring.

*When you buy shoes make sure to try them with the hosiery that you would be wearing when you show and at the speed that you show. That means that if you must run to gait your dog then you need to run in the aisles to be sure your shoes won't slip off and that you can run comfortably. Many shoes are ok to walk in but not to run in. Remember they don't have to be beautiful, just a neutral color, not detract from your outfit, and be comfortable.

*Girls be sure that your top is cut high enough to allow you to bend forward and that your skirt is long enough to allow you to bend forward also. If you need to kneel on the ground then you need enough room in the skirt to do get up and down.

*Guys be sure that your pants and jacket fit properly and are not sloppy or too tight. A nice shirt and tie look better than an oversized sloppy suit.

*Clothing should be fitted and not sloppy and should project a business like look.

* The color of your outfit should compliment your dog's color. Do not pick the same color as your dog because the dog's topline will disappear. Try not to wear wild loud prints as they draw attention to you and away from your dog. The object is to make your dog look the best it can look.

*No dangly jewelry or flashy necklaces. Think elegant and understated. Less is better. The same is true for makeup.

*Hair needs to be out of your eyes and off your collar. If your bangs will be flopping around then pin them back with a cute barrette or pin. Long hair should be in a bun, ponytail or braided so that it does not flop around. It may be quite windy going from one building to another or if you are showing outside, so hair spray is your friend. Guys your hair should be off your collar and neatly cut.

*Nail polish is acceptable as long as it is subdued.

* Be sure to check the height of your dog's head before you buy a new skirt so that it doesn't end where your dog's head is or hit the dog in the face when you move. Full skirts can be bad about interfering with the movement of a dog if you are not careful.

* Consider having several outfits to choose from that you can mix and match pieces to. Also if you show in the summer, most shows are outdoors and a full suit in the summer can cause you to overheat, so look for a lighter fabric or a shorter sleeved version.

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