

American Temperament Test Society (ATTS)

American Temperament Test Society, Inc.

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General information about the

American Temperament Test Society, Inc. (ATTS)

The American Temperament Test Society, Inc. (ATTS) is a national not-for-profit organization (registered in the state of Missouri) for the promotion of uniform temperament evaluation of purebred and spayed/neutered mixed-breed dogs.

ATTS was established to:

Provide for a uniform national program of temperament testing of purebred and spayed/neutered mixed-breed dogs.

Conduct seminars to disseminate information to dog owners, dog breeders and evaluators (testers) concerning dog psychology, motivation, reaction and other aspects of temperament testing.

Recognize and award certificates to dogs that pass the requirements of the temperament evaluation.

Work for the betterment of all breeds of dogs.

Select, train, prepare and register temperament evaluators.

Our motto says all:

"A SOUND MIND IN A SOUND BODY"

ATTS is the only non-profit organization that gives the TT (Temperament Tested) title for a dog. The TT, our logo and test procedures are copyrighted. The test is for all breeds and it is uniform throughout the country.

ATTS was founded by Alfons Ertel in 1977. The first test was held in September 1977; ATTS has held more than 960 tests as of December 31, 2003. The number of dogs tested as of December 2001 is 24,892 with 20,134 dogs earning a TT title. The average overall pass rate is 80.9 percent; the pass rate may vary for different breeds. The breed's temperament, training, health and age of the dog is taken into account. Minimum age for dogs to take the test is 18 months.

The test takes about 12 minutes to complete. The dog is on a loose six-foot (6') lead and three ATTS trained evaluators score the dog. Majority rules. Failure on any part of the test is recognized when a dog shows panic, strong avoidance without recovery or unprovoked aggression.

National breed clubs can request the list of their breed which earned the TT for the previous year by sending a request accompanied by a self addressed stamped envelope. A request for a complete list of all dogs of any one breed which have earned a TT is available, but breeds which have more than five pages of dogs will need to cover the cost of copying and postage.

About Canine Temperament

Because of breed-specific dog legislation and negative publicity associated with many breeds of dogs, temperament testing has assumed an important role for today's dog fancier. The ATTS Temperament Test provides breeders a means for evaluating

temperament and gives pet owners insight into their dog's behavior. It can have an impact on breeding programs and in educating owners about their dog's behavioral strengths and weaknesses as well as providing a positive influence on dog legislation.

What is temperament?

W. Handel, German Police Dog Trainer, in his article, "The Psychological Basis of Temperament Testing," defines temperament as:

"the sum total of all inborn and acquired physical and mental traits and talents which determines, forms and regulates behavior in the environment"

The ATTS test focuses on and measures different aspects of temperament such as stability, shyness, aggressiveness, and friendliness as well as the dog's instinct for protectiveness towards its handler and/or self-preservation in the face of a threat. The test is designed for the betterment of all breeds of dogs and takes into consideration each breed's inherent tendencies.

The test simulates a casual walk through the park or neighborhood where everyday life situations are encountered. During this walk, the dog experiences visual, auditory and tactile stimuli. Neutral, friendly and threatening situations are encountered, calling into play the dog's ability to distinguish between non-threatening situations and those calling for watchful and protective reactions.

Description of the Temperament Test

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Dogs must be at least 18 months old to enter this test. The test takes about eight to 12 minutes to complete. The dog is on a loose six-foot (6') lead. The handler is not allowed to talk to the dog, give commands, or give corrections.

Failure on any part of the test is recognized when a dog shows:

Unprovoked aggression

Panic without recovery

Strong avoidance

The ATTS Temperament Test consists of ten subtests divided into five subcategories:

Behavior Toward Strangers

Objective: To measure the dog's reaction to strangers in a non-threatening situation.

Subtest 1: Neutral stranger

A stranger to the dog approaches the handler, shakes hands with the handler and engages the handler in a brief conversation, ignoring the dog.

The purpose of this subtest is to evaluate the dog's reaction to passive socialization and the dog's protective instinct.

Subtest 2: Friendly stranger

A stranger to the dog approaches happily and briskly, is very friendly to the dog and pets

the dog.

The purpose of this subtest is to evaluate the dog's active social skills.

Reaction to Auditory Stimuli

Objective: To measure the dog's reaction to auditory stimuli and the dog's investigative behavior.

Subtest 3: Hidden Noise

The handler/dog team approaches a hidden assistant who rattles a metal bucket filled with rocks and sets this bucket in the path of the team. The handler may encourage the dog to investigate the bucket only when asked to do so. The handler's focus must be on the bucket, not on the dog.

The purpose of this subtest is to test alertness and curiosity.

Subtest 4: Gunshots

The handler stops at a designated marker with his/her back towards a well hidden assistant. The assistant fires three shots using a .22 caliber starter pistol (SHOT-PAUSE-SHOT-SHOT).

The purpose of this subtest is to measure the dog's recovery response to a sudden noise.

Reaction to Visual Stimulus

Objective: To measure the dog's reaction to a sudden visual stimulus.

Subtest 5: Umbrella

The handler/dog team approaches an assistant sitting in a chair holding a closed umbrella parallel to the ground at a 90 degree angle to the approaching team. When the dog is five feet from the assistant, the umbrella is opened. The handler may encourage the dog to investigate the umbrella only when asked to do so. The handler's focus must be on the umbrella, not on the dog.

Tactile Stimuli

Objective: To measure the dog's reaction to unusual footing.

Subtest 6: Plastic Footing

Both the handler and the dog walk the entire length of a 15-foot by 6-foot clear plastic strip.

Subtest 7: Wire Footing

Only the dog will walk the entire length of a 12-foot by 3-foot unfolded exercise pen. The purpose of these subtests is to measure the dog's sensitivity to unusual footing, its ability to recover from the fear of unusual footing and to measure its investigative behavior to the unusual footing.

Self Protective/Aggressive Behavior

Objective: These tests collectively evaluate the dog's capacity to recognize an unusual situation, its threshold to provocation, its protective instincts, and its propensity to realize when the situation becomes a threat.

Subtest 8: Non-Threatening

The handler/dog team stops at the designated marker. A weirdly-dressed stranger crosses the path 38 feet in front of the team.

The purpose of this subtest is to test the dog's alertness to an unusual situation.

Subtest 9: Threatening

The weird stranger advances 10 feet towards the stationary handler in a threatening manner.

The purpose of this subtest is to evaluate the dog's ability to recognize when an unusual situation turns into a provocation.

Subtest 10: Aggression

The weird stranger advances to within 18 feet of the stationary handler in an aggressive manner.

The purpose of this subtest is to evaluate the dog's protective instincts.

The stranger is never closer than 10 feet from the dog. The handler's 2 foot arm and the 6' lead is added in for a total of 18 feet. Aggression here is checked against the breed standard and the dog's training. A schutzhund trained dog lunging at the stranger is allowed, but if an untrained Siberian husky does the same, it may fail.

At the conclusion of the test, the handler will receive a critique about the dog's performance. Certificate will be mailed within 90 days of the test.

This copyrighted test may not be used in whole or part without the express written consent of the American Temperament Test Society.

Breeds Tested as of December, 2004

Breed Name	Tested	Passed	Failed	Percent
Afghan Hound	161	116	45	72.0%
Airedale Terrier	98	75	23	76.5%
Akbash Dog	13	11	2	84.6%
Akita	420	306	114	72.9%
Alapaha Blue Blood Bulldog	6	4	2	66.7%
Alaskan Malamute	182	153	29	84.1%
American Bulldog	116	95	21	81.9%
American Eskimo	75	62	13	82.7%
American Foxhound	1	1	0	100.0%
American Pit Bull Terrier	469	391	78	83.4%
American Staffordshire Terrier	480	400	80	83.3%
American Tunnel Terrier	2	2	0	100.0%
American Water Spaniel	5	4	1	80.0%
Anatolian Shepherd Dog	24	19	5	79.2%
Australian Cattle Dog	148	113	35	76.4%
Australian Kelpie	6	5	1	83.3%
Australian Shepherd	549	442	107	80.5%
Australian Terrier	16	13	3	81.3%
Azawakh	1	1	0	100.0%
Basenji	156	103	53	66.0%
Basset Hound	32	27	5	84.4%

Beagle	55	43	12	78.2%
Bearded Collie	43	23	20	53.5%
Beauceron	10	7	3	70.0%
Bedlington Terrier	16	15	1	93.8%
Belgian Laekenois	4	4	0	100.0%
Belgian Malinois	196	176	20	89.8%
Belgian Sheepdog	449	358	91	79.7%

Breed Name	Tested	Passed	Failed	Percent
Belgian Tervuren	388	300	88	77.3%
Bernese Mountain Dog	149	128	21	85.9%
Bichon Frise	26	20	6	76.9%
Black and Tan Coonhound	13	13	0	100.0%
Black Russian Terrier	6	5	1	83.3%
Bloodhound	32	23	9	71.9%
Bluetick Coonhound	1	1	0	100.0%
Boerboel	5	5	0	100.0%
Border Collie	221	176	45	79.6%
Border Terrier	97	87	10	89.7%
Borzoi	94	83	11	88.3%
Boston Terrier	54	46	8	85.2%
Bouvier Des Flanders	837	707	130	84.5%
Boxer	333	282	51	84.7%
Boykin Spaniel	1	1	0	100.0%
Briard	290	232	58	80.0%
Brittany Spaniel	100	90	10	90.0%
Brussels Griffon	9	8	1	88.9%
Bull Terrier	55	50	5	90.9%
Bulldog	120	82	38	68.3%
Bullmastiff	106	80	26	75.5%
Cairn Terrier	41	29	12	70.7%
Canaan Dog	4	3	1	75.0%
Cane Corso	39	29	10	74.4%
Cao De Fila De Sao Miguel	1	0	1	0.0%
Cardigan Welsh Corgi	56	43	13	76.8%
Carolina Dog	2	2	0	100.0%
Catahoula Leopard Dog	8	6	2	75.0%
Caucasian Ovcharka	4	4	0	100.0%

Cavalier King Charles Spaniel	42	33	9	78.6%
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Breed Name	Tested	Passed	Failed	Percent
Central Asian Ovcharka	4	3	1	75.0%
Chart Polski	1	1	0	100.0%
Chesapeake Bay Retriever	92	79	13	85.9%
Chihuahua	34	24	10	70.6%
Chinese Crested Dog	30	22	8	73.3%
Chinese Shar-Pei	201	140	61	69.7%
Chinook	8	6	2	75.0%
Chow Chow	88	61	27	69.3%
Clumber Spaniel	12	10	2	83.3%
Cocker Spaniel	216	176	40	81.5%
Collie	791	625	166	79.0%
Curly-Coated Retriever	163	148	15	90.8%
Dachshund (Miniature Longhaired)	21	18	3	85.7%
Dachshund (Miniature Smooth)	26	20	6	76.9%
Dachshund (Miniature Wirehaired)	19	15	4	78.9%
Dachshund (Standard Longhaired)	31	22	9	71.0%
Dachshund (Standard Smooth)	42	28	14	66.7%
Dachshund (Standard Wirehaired)	23	19	4	82.6%
Dalmatian	306	249	57	81.4%
Dandie Dinmont Terrier	7	5	2	71.4%
Doberman Pinscher	1399	1070	329	76.5%
Dogo Argentino	10	9	1	90.0%
Dogue De Bordeaux	57	40	17	70.2%
Dutch Shepherd	6	6	0	100.0%
English Cocker Spaniel	59	55	4	93.2%
English Foxhound	3	2	1	66.7%
English Jack Russel Terrier	2	2	0	100.0%
English Setter	19	14	5	73.7%
English Shepherd	3	3	0	100.0%
English Springer Spaniel	136	114	22	83.8%

Estrala Mountain Dog	1	1	0	100.0%
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Field Spaniel	6	4	2	66.7%
Fila Brasileiro	12	9	3	75.0%
Finnish Lapphund	6	4	2	66.7%
Finnish Spitz	10	7	3	70.0%
Flat-Coated Retriever	81	74	7	91.4%
French Bulldog	17	16	1	94.1%
German Pinscher	5	4	1	80.0%
German Shepherd Dog	2717	2250	467	82.8%
German Shorthaired Pointer	115	87	28	75.7%
German Wirehaired Pointer	17	14	3	82.4%
Giant Schnauzer	226	167	59	73.9%
Golden Retriever	659	551	108	83.6%
Gordon Setter	60	49	11	81.7%
Great Dane	229	180	49	78.6%
Great Pyrenees	127	106	21	83.5%
Greater Swiss Mountain dog	172	136	36	79.1%
Greyhound	55	44	11	80.0%
Havanese	5	5	0	100.0%
Hovawart	12	11	1	91.7%
Ibizan Hound	29	26	3	89.7%
Irish Setter	130	118	12	90.8%
Irish Terrier	10	8	2	80.0%
Irish Water Spaniel	25	22	3	88.0%
Irish Wolfhound	90	80	10	88.9%
Italian Greyhound	36	27	9	75.0%
Japanese Chin	4	4	0	100.0%
Karelian Bear Dog	2	2	0	100.0%
Keeshond	81	65	16	80.2%
Kerry Blue Terrier	49	36	13	73.5%

Breed Name	Tested	Passed	Failed	Percent
Komondor	7	6	1	85.7%
Kuvasz	36	28	8	77.8%
Labrador Retriever	644	587	57	91.1%
Lakeland Terrier	5	3	2	60.0%
Leonberger	14	13	1	92.9%
Lhasa Apso	26	18	8	69.2%

Lowchen	12	9	3	75.0%
Lurcher	1	1	0	100.0%
Maltese	12	10	2	83.3%
Manchester Terrier	46	40	6	87.0%
Mastiff	142	120	22	84.5%
Miniature Bull Terrier	7	7	0	100.0%
Miniature Pinscher	50	40	10	80.0%
Miniature Poodle	63	48	15	76.2%
Miniature Schnauzer	100	78	22	78.0%
Mixed Breed	680	579	101	85.1%
Neapolitan Mastiff	11	6	5	54.5%
Newfoundland	165	144	21	87.3%
Norfolk Terrier	9	8	1	88.9%
Norwegian Elkhound	121	90	31	74.4%
Norwich Terrier	13	9	4	69.2%
Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever	13	8	5	61.5%
Old English Bull Dogge	2	2	0	100.0%
Old English Sheepdog	45	35	10	77.8%
Otterhound	10	7	3	70.0%
Papillon	71	56	15	78.9%
Parson Russell Terrier	54	44	10	81.5%
Pekingese	14	13	1	92.9%
Pembroke Welsh Corgi	177	139	38	78.5%
Petit Basset Griffon Vendeen	9	8	1	88.9%

Pharaoh Hound	52	42	10	80.8%
Pointer	17	15	2	88.2%
Polski Owczarek Nizinny	10	5	5	50.0%
Pomeranian	32	24	8	75.0%
Portuguese Water Dog	136	105	31	77.2%
Presa Canario	10	9	1	90.0%
Pug	35	32	3	91.4%
Puli	23	21	2	91.3%
Pungsan	2	2	0	100.0%
Rat Terrier	12	10	2	83.3%
Redbone Coonhound	4	4	0	100.0%
Rhodesian Ridgeback	213	163	50	76.5%

Rottweiler	4498	3702	796	82.3%
Russo-European Laika	2	2	0	100.0%
Saint Bernard	41	34	7	82.9%
Saluki	60	41	19	68.3%
Samoyed	272	214	58	78.7%
Schipperke	99	90	9	90.9%
Scottish Deerhound	30	27	3	90.0%
Scottish Terrier	32	21	11	65.6%
Sealyham Terrier	1	1	0	100.0%
Shetland Sheepdog	459	306	153	66.7%
Shiba Inu	23	15	8	65.2%
Shih Tzu	39	30	9	76.9%
Shiloh Shepherd	14	11	3	78.6%
Siberian Husky	271	235	36	86.7%
Silky Terrier	16	11	5	68.8%
Skye Terrier	8	3	5	37.5%
Sloughi	1	1	0	100.0%
Smooth Fox Terrier	52	39	13	75.0%

Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier	32	23	9	71.9%
Spinone Italiano	5	2	3	40.0%
Staffordshire Bull Terrier	59	55	4	93.2%
Standard Poodle	206	178	28	86.4%
Standard Schnauzer	54	35	19	64.8%
Sussex Spaniel	3	3	0	100.0%
Sweedish Vallhund	1	1	0	100.0%
Texas Heeler	1	1	0	100.0%
Tibetan Kyapso	1	1	0	100.0%
Tibetan Mastiff	13	5	8	38.5%
Tibetan Spaniel	8	7	1	87.5%
Tibetan Terrier	10	5	5	50.0%
Tosa	3	3	0	100.0%
Toy Fox terrier	8	6	2	75.0%
Toy Manchester Terrier	10	10	0	100.0%
Toy Poodle	47	38	9	80.9%
Treeing Feist	1	1	0	100.0%
Treeing Walker Coonhound	8	5	3	62.5%

Vizsla	46	38	8	82.6%
Weimaraner	202	161	41	79.7%
Welsh Sheepdog	1	1	0	100.0%
Welsh Springer Spaniel	5	5	0	100.0%
Welsh Terrier	34	26	8	76.5%
West Highland White Terrier	50	43	7	86.0%
Whippet	175	148	27	84.6%
Wire Fox Terrier	18	15	3	83.3%
Xoloitzcuintli	3	3	0	100.0%
Yorkshire Terrier	35	28	7	80.0%

TOTALS		25,726	20,848	4,878	81.0%
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