

Freestyle Rules



Object of the game:

- The object of the game is for the human and dog team to showcase their best “discdogging moves” highlighting their strengths in the four judged areas.

UpDog Freestyle Philosophy:

- UpDog believes that the “game” of freestyle is the ultimate conglomeration of a human handler and their canine pal’s skills. All of the other UpDog challenge games (4 way play, Frizgility, Spaced Out, etc.) help to build a foundation of skills and creativity that can translate to the game of freestyle.

Overview of the game:

- The “game” involves two freestyle rounds and two sweet spot bonus throws.
- The first round of freestyle is known as the criterion round and will be judged by three or four judges based upon a set criteria in four categories: human performance, dog performance, teamwork, and success. Specific criteria that judges will look for in each of these categories can be found in the rules below and in the judges’ worksheets.
- The second round of freestyle is known as the performance round. A “celebrity” judge will be added to the judging lineup. This celebrity could be a local celeb, a member of another dog sport organization, a retired club member, someone’s relative visiting the event, etc. Clubs should try to utilize someone from outside the discdog community if possible to bring more exposure to the sport and to add in the “layman’s” opinion. We feel it is important for UpDog and its players to maintain a pulse on both what judges look for in a freestyle routine and also what the general public appreciates as entertaining in a freestyle routine.

Levels:

- There are two levels of UpDog freestyle: Level 1 and Level 2. Level 1 is the **recreational beginners’** level. Level 2 is the advanced level. Unlike most other UpDog games, a team may choose which level of freestyle they would like to enter. (Teams do not have to earn their way to Level 2 through achievements and UPs.) The general rules for each level are the same, although the judging criteria for the criterion round is more sophisticated and at a higher degree of difficulty at level 2.

Dog Divisions:

- There are **four** divisions for dogs in UpDog freestyle based upon height: Mini, Midi, Maxi and **Mega**. These are the same divisions accounted for in UpDog agility crossover games. The divisions are defined as follows:
 - Mini Division: Under 13”
 - Midi Division: 13”-17”
 - Maxi Division: Over 17" **and under 23”**
 - **Mega Division: 23” and over**
- ~~• Height cards from officially sanctioned agility venues are accepted as proof of “height”. Accepted venues for height cards: AKC, USDAA. If a height card from ASCA, CPE or NADAC can be used to determine eligibility it will be allowed. Because these venues do not print the dog's exact height on the card these will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. If the dog has no pre-existing height card from an accepted agility venue measuring will be done on site via PVC wickets set at 13” and 17”. The dog's withers must fit under the wicket (when standing on a level hard surface) without touching. **(not needed information for freestyle rules)**~~
- Depending upon the numbers of entries in each division, a club may decide to include all dogs within one division and provide placements (1st, 2nd, and 3rd) for only 3 teams. If a club decides to offer more than one dog division at their event, but less than **four**, they will need to accommodate competitors with dogs at the missing

level by allowing them to enter the level that most closely matches the height of their dog. For example: If a club offers the mini and the maxi divisions, but not the midi division, the club should allow a 16" dog to enter the maxi division.

- These dog divisions may be offered at Level 1 and/or Level 2 of freestyle

Human Divisions:

- There are three divisions for humans in UpDog freestyle based upon age: Junior, Open, and Senior. The divisions are defined below:
 - Junior: Must be 15 years of age or younger
 - Open: Open to all ages.
 - Senior: Must be 50 years of age or older
- Depending upon the numbers of entries in each division, a club may decide to offer one or all of the divisions for freestyle.
- These human divisions may be offered at Level 1 and/or Level 2 of freestyle

Freestyle Options:

- A club may offer any combination of freestyle levels and divisions they choose. The number of possible entries will most likely play a large role in deciding which levels and divisions a club will offer.
- Divisions allow for clubs to offer more placements/awards at 1st, 2nd, and 3rd
- All achievements are open to teams regardless of the division they enter. (Achievements are specific to levels.)

Rules:

Discs Allowed:

- Competitors are allowed up to eight discs.
- Discs must be dog safe discs. For a list of dog safe disc approved by UpDog consult the updogchallenge.com site [general rules document](#).
- Any size dog may use any size disc (as long as the safety of the dog is maintained).
- Competitors may mix discs of different sizes and types.
- Competitors may select different discs for different rounds (including the SweetSpot bonus round).

Time Allotment:

- Time allotted for the criterion round in level 1 is 105 seconds. Teams performing at least 60 seconds of material will receive a score.
- Time allotted for the criterion round in level 2 is 135 seconds. Teams performing at least 90 seconds of material will receive a score.
- Time allotted for the performance round (round 2) in level 1 is 105 seconds. Teams performing at least 60 seconds of material for round 2 will receive a score.
- Time allotted for the performance round (round 2) in level 2 is 135 seconds. Teams performing at least 90 seconds of material for round 2 will receive a score.
- [There is no time limit for the SweetSpot bonus round, however, the team should complete their bonus round and clear their discs off the field prior to the judges completing their scoring, allowing time for the next team to prepare for their round.](#)

Round 1: The Criterion Round Rules:

- Four judges are suggested for this round. At least one judge must be a certified UpDog Freestyle judge. See the UpDog website for details on becoming certified.

- A head judge should be appointed. The head judge must be a certified UpDog Freestyle judge.
- The head judge pairs each judge with one of the four criterion categories (human performance, dog performance, teamwork, and success). The least experienced judge should be paired with the success category. UpDog suggests that the human judge have at least two years of **recent** experience playing freestyle.
- See each of the three separate judges worksheets for details on the criteria for human performance, dog performance, and teamwork. Each category has been broken down into 6 subcategories. A judge may award up to 5 points in each subcategory and may award **half quarter** point increments. The highest combined score possible for each of the three categories (Human, Dog, Team) is 30 points.
- If only three judges are available, a club may choose to utilize the three judge format. In this format, the team category is split between the human and dog judge. The teams will be judged on the same criteria as in the four judge format and will have the opportunity to earn the same amount of points. In the three judge format, the human and dog judge will each be evaluating three additional sub categories. It is required that both the human and dog judge be certified UpDog freestyle judges in order to utilize the three judge format. ~~If using this format, refer to the altered judges worksheets labeled as “3 judge format” at the top of the worksheet.~~
- The success category is worth ten points. The success judge records the number of throws or rollers during a round and the number of catches. At the end of the round the judge should divide the number of catches by the number of throws/rollers. This will yield a decimal that the judge will multiply by 10 (move the decimal 1 place to the right) and round to the nearest **half quarter** point.

For example:

If the handler threw 24 throws/rollers and the dog caught 20 of them, the judge would do the following calculation $20 \div 24 = 0.83333....$. If you multiply the decimal by 10 (move the decimal 1 space to the right) the result is 8.33333.... The judge will round the value 8.333... to the nearest **half quarter** point which is 8.**25**. The team would receive an 8.**25** as their success score.

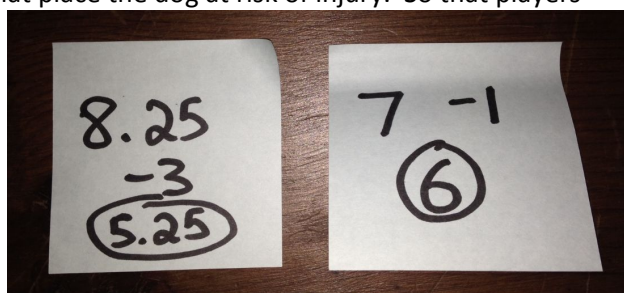
- The total number of points that can be awarded during the criterion round is 100.
 - Human performance category = 30 points
 - Dog performance category = 30 points
 - Teamwork = 30 points
 - Success = 10 points
- Teams should view the 100 points more as a percentile score rather than a typical percentage score that they might receive on a school test out of 100.
 - 90 – 100 points is **not** an “A” and a score below 60 points does **not** denote a “failing” score.
- A team receiving 50 points should be considered an “average” freestyle team for that level. ~~If a team receives a score of an 80, they should consider that given 100 teams competing at that level they would have scored better than 79 of them.~~ A team scoring between 90 – 100 points is performing at an extremely high level, fulfilling almost all of the criteria at a very high difficulty level ~~and should be considered one of the top teams in the game.~~ It is possible, however, that at an event such as the UpDog Challenge International finals (where many of the top teams in the world are performing) that many teams could score between 90-100 points.
- No props **or dog costumes (other than a bandana)** are allowed during the criterion round of freestyle.
- The time for the criterion round begins when the player signals to the announcer that they are ready for their music to begin. (Music and time begin together.)
- A player may decide to utilize a portion of their 135 seconds to conduct a “pre-routine” with their dog. Judging for the criterion round, however, does not begin until the first disc is thrown to the dog.

SweetSpot Bonus Round:

- While the judges are making their final decisions and calculations on the criterion round of freestyle, the freestyle team will make their way to either end of the field (players choice) and stand behind, or outside of the perimeter of the field. (This is the same line utilized during a round of throw and go.)
- Standing behind the line, the human will make two attempts at getting a catch in the center square of the UpDog field, also known as the Sweet Spot. A “catch” includes rollers. The success judge will watch the sweet spot zone to determine how many catches are made by the dog in the sweet spot (max of two attempts).
- The team will be awarded 1 point for each catch in the sweet spot for a maximum of two points.
- These sweet spot bonus points will be added to the team’s criterion score.
- The maximum number of points a player can accumulate after their criterion round and the SweetSpot Bonus Throws is 102.
- Players may bring as many discs to the throwing line as they wish, but they may only make two attempts at completing a catch in the SweetSpot.
- Players completing two catches and receiving two points during the SweetSpot Bonus Round will earn the SweetSpot Double Shot achievement.

Performance Round

- The performance round encourages teams to break out of a typical competitive routine and demonstrate their most creative, innovative, and entertaining disc dog moves. **With this said, the above should be done with the safety of the dog in mind.** During this round, handlers should feel free to engage and interact with the crowd for maximum entertainment value. The judges will be looking for outstanding tricks and moves, showmanship, and quality disc play with the safety of the human and K-9 as a priority.
- Five judges are needed for this round. At least one judge must be a certified UpDog Freestyle judge. See the UpDog website for details on becoming certified.
- If a club is utilizing the three judge format (as noted in the criterion section above), they will only utilize four judges for the performance round.
- The head judge from the criterion round will act as head judge during the performance round as well. The head judge must be a certified UpDog Freestyle judge.
- The fifth judge (did not judge during the criterion round) should be a local celeb, a member of another dog sport organization, a retired club member, someone’s relative visiting the event, etc. Clubs should try to utilize someone from outside the discdog community, if possible, to bring more exposure to the sport and to add in the “layman’s” opinion.
- Each judge will award the team a comprehensive score for the performance round, taking into account all elements they look for in a high level, entertaining freestyle routine.
- Judges will receive small slips of paper upon which to record their score for the team’s performance round. 3 x 3 post it sized slips of paper work well.
- The comprehensive score awarded by each judge will be between 0 and 10 with quarter point increments allowed. Points should be deducted for moves and throws that place the dog at risk of injury. So that players are aware when points have been deducted for unsafe behavior, the judges will record the score the player would have gotten, the deductions, and then the judges will circle the final score. **See examples.**
- Because this is the “performance” round, judges are encouraged to award up to 8 points for the overall freestyle routine (see a suggested scoring guide below) and to “save” 2 points to award as bonus points (may use quarter point increments). The number of “performance bonus points” awarded should be based upon the “performance” aspect brought to the routine. Performance aspects could include: Human or dog costumes,



props, music matching a routine's theme, special tricks, big tricks, unique and innovative moves, human athleticism, crowd appeal, humorous interludes, entertainment value, etc.

- The highest combined score each judge can award a team is a total of 10 points.
- Suggested 8 point scoring guide:
 - 0-2 – only brief flashes of freestyle skills are demonstrated throughout the routine
 - 2.25 – 5 – “Average” freestyle skills are demonstrated, throughout most of the round
 - 5.25 – 7 – “Average freestyle skills are demonstrated throughout most of the round with flashes of superior skills scattered throughout the round
 - 7.25 – 8 – “Superior freestyle skills were demonstrated throughout the entire freestyle round
- Judges should award those teams they feel have the best overall freestyle performance and are the most entertaining the highest scores. Judges may award the same score to multiple teams if they so choose.
- The performance round begins when the music begins and lasts 135 seconds. A team may decide to do some “pre-routine” flatwork or dog tricks. Judging begins when the music begins. If a disc is not thrown until 30 seconds into the round, that is fine, but judging begins when the music begins.
- “Costumes” are allowed during the performance round of freestyle as long as they are safe for the competitor and dog. If at any time during the round the judges deem that the costumes are unsafe, the judges will stop the round and the team will receive no score for the performance round.
- “Props” are allowed during the performance round, but must be off the field prior to a disc being thrown. For example: The music is started, competitor enters the field on a unicycle with their dog following. Prior to the first disc being thrown, the unicycle must be off the field.
- Following a routine, judges will receive 30 seconds to write a score on their slip of paper. The countdown track that is played for the performance round of freestyle will begin the judge's countdown immediately following “Time” being announced and ending the players' round.
- After the 30 seconds have expired, the judges will write the **scores (comprehensive and performance bonus)** for the performance round on their slip of paper, fold it inward so that the score is covered and no one can see. All five judges scores will be collected, shuffled around so that the person inputting scores does not know which score came from which judge, and the scores will be inputted into the competitors' spreadsheet.
- **The scores (comprehensive and performance bonus) from the judges with the highest and the lowest comprehensive score will be dropped.** The spreadsheet will calculate the mean (average) of the remaining three scores rounded to the nearest hundredth of a point. That score is then multiplied by 10. **The performance bonus points from the three calculated judges' scores will be added to this score.**
- The maximum number of points a team may earn during the performance round is 100
- The maximum number of combined points a team may earn after completing both rounds of freestyle and the SweetSpot Bonus Round is 202.
- During the 30 seconds while judges are scoring the performance round, if possible, the announcer will announce **all 5 of the individual judges' comprehensive scores** of the previous team for the audience to hear. (For example: “The performance round scores for Bryan Batchelder and Banshee are 9.0, 8.75, 9.5, 7, and 9.25)
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Tiebreaker: In the event that two or more teams in the top three are tied, the teams will participate in a 15 second “trick off”. Each team will have 15 seconds to showcase their best freestyle moves. The announcer will begin the round with “Ready, set, go”. The announcer will announce “10 seconds” and “5,4,3,2,1,time”. After each team has performed their 15 seconds worth of material, the judges will huddle up, converse with each other, and (based upon the 15 seconds of freestyle moves they just watched) decide who wins the tiebreaker.

Freestyle Awards:

- ~~The team with the highest score for the criterion round in each level will receive a medal.~~

- ~~The team with the highest score for the performance round in each level will receive a medal.~~
- ~~The teams with the three highest combined score (criterion, sweetspot bonus, performance) in each level will receive medals.~~

Freestyle Achievements and Ups:

There are two levels of freestyle: Level 1 and 2

- Players may move up at any time. They do not have to level up to move to level 2

Criterion Round Achievements:

Players may earn achievements in each of the three main categories: Human, Dog, and Team

Level 1 Excellent Human: Score between 18 and 23.75 points in the human category

Level 1 Excellent Dog: Score between 18 and 23.75 points in the dog category

Level 1 Excellent Team: Score between 18 and 23.75 points in the team category

Level 1 Superior Human: Score between 24 and 27.25 points in the human category

Level 1 Superior Dog: Score between 24 and 27.25 points in the dog category

Level 1 Superior Team: Score between 24 and 27.25 points in the team category

Level 1 Elite Human: Score 27.5 points or higher in the human category

Level 1 Elite Dog: Score 27.5 points or higher in the dog category

Level 1 Elite Team: Score 27.5 points or higher in the team category

Players earning 3 of the same achievement will earn the Up for that achievement

Performance Round Achievements:

Level 1 Excellent Performance: Score between 70 and 79.75 points

Level 2 Superior Performance: Score between 80 and 89.75 points

Level 3 Elite Performance: Score between 90 and 100 points

At the same time as teams are working towards these achievements and ups, they are earning points towards their cumulative ups through the total points awarded in two rounds of freestyle and the double shot attempt.

Cumulative Point Ups:

Bronze: 500 cumulative freestyle points

Silver: 1000 cumulative freestyle points

Gold: 1500 cumulative freestyle points

Titanium: 2000 cumulative freestyle points

Unobtanium: 2500 cumulative freestyle points

Special Achievements/Ups:

Double Shot Sweet Spot Achievement (No Level): Complete a catch on both sweet spot attempts after the criterion round

Double Shot Sweet Spot Excellent Up: 5 double shot achievements

Double Shot Sweet Spot Superior Up: 10 double shot achievements

Double Shot Sweet Spot Elite Up: 15 double shot achievements