



Like the Tracking Tests, Track and Search Tests get more difficult as the dog and handler demonstrate their competence. **Margaret Keast** explains.

# Track and Search Dog Excellent

**T**here are three tracks to gain the Track and Search Dog Excellent title – and like Tracking Tests they are Tests 4, 5 and 6.

## Test 4

Test 4 starts the same way as Track and Search Tests 1 to 3 – with a starting line, which shall be indicated by two flags approximately 30 metres apart. As with Test 3, there are four turns and two articles. The time is set from two hours to four hours.

Because there is a chance of articles being removed by the general public, the articles do not have to be found to pass the test. However, a dog that fails to indicate any articles can have its pass downgraded.

The extra levels of difficulty cover four points. Firstly, the track must meander as a lost person would. Secondly, the start flags are to be set up at a point likely to be contaminated with scents, such as a road end. Thirdly, the track should cross at least one paved or gravel road, stream or shallow body of water. And finally, the track is

physically longer – 1200 metres as compared to 1000 metres of Test 3.

The dog must search for the start by quartering on collar and lead. In Tests 1, 2 and 3 the dog could be free quartering – now it must be on lead due to the roadway's close proximity to traffic. The dog should be harnessed before the quartering begins.

## Test 5

Test 5 is an urban track. This introduces a range of surfaces, including bitumen roads, cement paths, foot trails and grass. It also adds distractions to the dog – such as parked cars and passing humans and vehicles.

The track may be laid in close proximity to fences and buildings. This can cause the scent to spread differently from the way it does in open paddocks or even forests. The distance of the track is shortened to 800 metres as the complexity comes from the surfaces, structures and distractions.

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The time before the handler and dog are sent out remains between two and four hours. The start is changed to a residential gateway, front door or car door, mimicking the last known position of a lost person. There is an extra turn compared to Tests 1, 2, 3, and 4, with five turns to be made – at least three of which are to be on non-vegetated surfaces.

There are no articles in Test 5. As with Test 4, the dog should be in a harness, but quarter on collar and lead until it finds the scent. For safety considerations, the dog should work on a shorter lead when in traffic. A safety steward will follow the dog and handler to warn them of traffic or other issues such as cyclists, skateboarders, pedestrians or stray dogs. The handler must stop when requested by the safety steward and not continue until they confirm that the danger has passed. At times the tracking will be allowed to continue in dangerous situations, but on a shortened lead. The safety steward will indicate this.



**Test 6**

Test 6 is another urban track, but at night. All the specifications of Test 6 are the same as Test 5 – 800 metres distance; five turns at least three of which should be on non-vegetated surfaces; time before handler and dog set out between two and four hours; no articles; the start at a gateway; front door or car door and the dog quartering on lead to find the scent.

As the track takes place at night, the handler must wear high-visibility clothing and a headlight. The dog should have reflective tape sewn onto the harness or alternatively have some type of LED light attached to the harness. Again, a safety steward will follow the dog and handler in close proximity to alert the handler to potential safety issues. ↙

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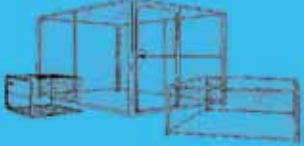
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Here are just a few suggestions

Length	Width	Height
12	x 6	x 6
12	x 4	x 6
10	x 4	x 4
8	x 3	x 4
6	x 4	x 2

Types of Mesh  
(standard) 2" chain wire  
1 3/4" chain wire  
3" x 2" weld mesh  
2" x 1" weld mesh

• WIRE OR SOLID TOPS TO PENS EXTRA •



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