



YRKC HANDLING



HANDLING COMPETITIONS
RULES 2027 (CRUFTS 2028)



YRKC HANDLING

YRKC HANDLING RULES - CHANGE LOG

1. Changes Dated 27/03/2026 – (v1.0 to v1.1).
 - i. Changed all YKC logos to YRKC.
 - ii. Changed all mention of YKC to YRKC.
 - iii. Changed all mention of Kennel Club to Royal Kennel Club.
 - iv. Added a new section (F) to the document to outline Crufts health testing requirement for RFG breeds.
 - v. G.8.i.a - increased the cutoff point for swapping dogs from 7 days to 14 days
2. Changes from 2026 (Crufts 2027) to 2027 (Crufts 2028)
 - i. Reset revision back to 1.0 for new year
 - ii. Changed title page of document to update the year
 - iii. B.3 updated the text to make it very clear that any show (including championship shows) must allow a YRKC handling class to be the first and only entry at the show.
 - iv. B.3.ii.a.(1) – reworded for clarity
 - v. C.7 added the word “must”
 - vi. C.10 added the distinction of “Breed of Dog”
 - vii. H.2 reworded for clarity
 - viii. NEW CLASS DEFINITIONS
 - a. YRKC HANDLING TOURNAMENT CLASSES
 - (1) Changes to qualification methods for YRKC Tournament classes can be viewed here:
 - (i) C.1.i
 - (ii) D.2
 - b. YRKC HANDLING LEAGUE CLASSES
 - (1) Changes to qualification methods for YRKC League classes can be viewed here:
 - (i) C.1.ii
 - (ii) D.3
 - (iii) G.4.i.a

n.b. a quick note as to why the YRKC have split these classes out:

At Crufts 2026 we were oversubscribed for the YRKC Handling classes, the obvious solution being to simply restrict the number of shows holding qualifiers during a single qualifying year. Because handling is not a fully recognised RKC activity, taking classes away may result in some members being unable to compete in handling. It was decided, instead, to introduce a league for the open shows to keep the total number of handling opportunities, but still introduce a measure of control over the number of YRKC members in the YRKC ring at Crufts.



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A: HANDLERS

1. The following three subcategories will be open for members to compete in:

06-11 Years

12-17 Years

18-24 Years

2. Only current YRKC members may compete in YRKC Classes.
3. Use the YRKC member's age on the first day of the show to work out which age category a YRKC member should enter.

B: DOGS

1. Bitches in season will not be allowed to compete in any YRKC Handling competition.
2. All competing dogs must be six calendar months of age or over on the day of competition.
3. Dogs must be registered with the Royal Kennel Club when entering Royal Kennel Club licenced shows.
 - i. Dogs can either be registered on the breed register or the activity register.
 - ii. As of 07-JAN-2020 the Royal Kennel Club board decreed that YRKC Handling Classes may be the first and only entry at a show.
 - a. As dogs in YRKC Handling Classes may be a pedigree/non-pedigree/crossbreed; that dog must be on a Royal Kennel Club breed register **OR** the activity register.
 - (1) If a dog is to compete in both a handling class and a breed class at a show, the dog must be on the relevant breed register.

C: YRKC HANDLING QUALIFIERS & GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. YRKC HANDLING QUALIFIERS WILL NOW BE SPILT INTO TWO TYPES OF QUALIFIER:

- i. **YRKC HANDLING TOURNAMENT**

- a. These classes will occur **ONLY** at championship breed shows or YRKC run events throughout the year

- ii. **YRKC HANDLING LEAGUE**

- a. These classes will occur at non-championship breed shows.

2. **The new classes will feature exactly the same class requirements, but how you qualify for Crufts will differ for each one.**
3. **By entering a YRKC qualifier or final, the YRKC member and anyone representing them (parent/guardian etc) agree to abide by the YRKC's Code of Conduct**
4. YRKC Handling competitions will be judged in-line with the YRKC Handling Judges Criteria, available on the YRKC website.
 - i. The winner will be the handler who the judge has deemed to have exhibited their dog the best according to the guidelines mentioned above.
5. The qualification period for **Crufts 2028** is: **01-Nov-2026 till 31-Oct-2027**
6. Unless otherwise specified in this document, YRKC Handling classes will be subject to all in-force Royal Kennel Club regulations for show competitions. Including, but not limited to:
 - i. (F) Show Regulations
 - a. In this section, any regulation that directly relates to judging criteria is superseded by the YRKC Handling Judges Criteria
 - b. In this section, any regulation that directly relates to a judge's eligibility is ignored, however the show organising the YRKC handling competition must appoint a competent handling judge.
 - ii. (O) Regulations for The Young Royal Kennel Club



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7. When entering a YRKC handling class, you must enter the age category you would be on the first day of the show.
8. YRKC members must enter both the handler and dog into the class. The following information will be captured when entering the class;
 - i. YRKC Handlers Name
 - ii. Dog's Royal Kennel Club Name
9. YRKC handling classes are not linked to which breeds are being exhibited on the day of the qualifier.
 - i. If a show has qualifiers across multiple days, any breed of dog may be handled on any day.
10. When a show holds YRKC qualifiers over multiple days, if a YRKC member wishes to enter a YRKC handling qualifier on more than one day, each YRKC handling entry must be with a different breed of dog.
 - i. This is to limit handlers entering all days of a show with one dog and blocking qualification spots for other competitors.
11. A YRKC member may swap the dog entered to another dog that has already been entered at the show at any point before the class begins.
 - i. If a swap has occurred, the competitor must inform the steward at the earliest opportunity.
 - ii. A dog may not be swapped to another dog if by doing so it would break the above rule: C.10
12. YRKC Handling classes may be the first and only entry for a dog at a show.
 - i. You do not have to enter your dog in the relevant breed class at the same show when entering a YRKC handling qualifier.
13. Crossbreed dogs may compete in YRKC handling competitions at any show holding YRKC handling qualifiers.
14. A YRKC member may only handle one dog per class.
15. YRKC Members may enter YRKC handling classes if they have already qualified.
16. YRKC Handling qualifiers are listed on the YRKC website
 - i. Only qualifiers listed on the website will be eligible for qualification, please ensure that you are entering a valid YRKC qualifier.
 - a. [Click here](#) to view all YRKC Handling Qualifiers



D: YRKC HANDLING - WHO QUALIFIES FOR THE CRUFTS FINALS?

1. There will be 3 categories for YRKC members to qualify for.
 - i. The categories will be subdivided as follows:
 - Handler 06-11 Years
 - Handler 12-17 Years
 - Handler 18-24 Years
2. **QUALIFYING FROM YRKC HANDLING TOURNAMENT CLASSES:**
 - i. **First & Second place** at any YRKC Tournament Handling qualifier during this season will guarantee a space in the final
 - ii. **Competitors will not earn points for the Handling League at these shows**
3. **QUALIFYING FROM YRKC HANDLING LEAGUE CLASSES:**
 - i. Members will accrue points for placing at YRKC handling league shows using the following points:
 - a. 1st = 5 points
 - b. 2nd = 4 points
 - c. 3rd = 3 points
 - d. 4th = 2 points
 - e. 5th = 1 point
 - f. Any place lower than 5th = 0 points
 - (1) Points will be gained per YRKC member, it does not matter if the dog is the same for each YRKC Handling League Class that member gains points at.
 - ii. At the end of the qualifying year, any member that placed between 1st and 5th at a YRKC handling league qualifier will be added to the league table.
 - a. There will be a separate league table for each of our 3 age categories.
 - (1) The age category for the league table will be determined by what age the YRKC member will be on the first day of Crufts.
 - (2) If a YRKC member changes age category mid-way through the qualifying year, they will keep any previously earned points when being placed in their league table for Crufts.
 - b. YRKC members will be removed from the league table IF they have already qualified for the Crufts final through the YRKC Tournament Handling Qualifiers.
 - c. The remaining handlers will be ranked according to who accrued the most points over the qualifying year.
 - (1) The YRKC will guarantee that top 6 handlers per age category will qualify for the handling finals at Crufts
 - (2) Please note, the YRKC may increase the number of handlers qualifying this way based upon class sizes.
4. The YRKC reserves the right to amend either of the qualification methods if we are vastly oversubscribed for the final at Crufts **OR** if not enough spaces were filled.
 - i. The YRKC will only amend qualification criteria in exceptional circumstances.
5. The YRKC will invite all those who have qualified to enter Crufts via email before Christmas

E: HOW MANY DOGS CAN I QUALIFY FOR YRKC HANDLING?

1. YOU MAY ONLY ENTER A MAXIMUM OF **ONE** DOG TO THE FINALS AT CRUFTS.
 - i. This dog must be registered on either the Breed Register or Activity Register.
 - ii. This dog may be different from the dog you competed with in the qualifier.



F: NEW HEALTH ENTRY CRITERIA FOR BULLDOGS, FRENCH BULLDOGS AND PUGS AT CRUFTS

1. All Bulldogs, French Bulldogs and Pugs exceeding 14 calendar months on the first day of Crufts must have a valid Respiratory Function Grading (RFG) Scheme assessment to attend. This requirement is mandatory for entry into the show, not just individual classes.
2. **VALID RFG SCHEME ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**
 - i. To gain entry, all eligible Bulldogs, French Bulldogs and Pugs must attach a valid RFG Scheme certificate dated within the last 24 months of the first day of the show to their entry.
 - ii. Dogs assessed as Grade 2 or 3 will be excluded and not allowed to enter or attend the show.
3. **CERTIFICATE UPLOAD AND VALIDATION**
 - i. The dog's RFG scheme certificate must be uploaded as part of your entry, including the expiry date and grade. The Royal Kennel Club will validate and approve the certificate.
4. **EXEMPTIONS AND AGE REQUIREMENTS**
 - i. Bulldogs, French Bulldogs and Pugs not exceeding 14 calendar months on the first day of the show are exempt from needing an RFG Scheme assessment, and a certificate is not required.
 - ii. Bulldogs, French Bulldogs and Pugs aged 7 years or older on the first day of the show do not need a valid RFG Scheme assessment; however, they must upload the last certificate awarded to the dog
 - a. The corresponding certificate must be uploaded prior to entry, but it does not need to be dated within the last 24 months.
 - b. The last certificate awarded must have the dog assessed as either Grade 0 or Grade 1.
5. **OVERSEAS ASSESSMENTS**
 - i. International RFG Scheme assessments issued by licensed organisations, and carried out by approved assessors, will be accepted. Overseas exhibitors must upload a valid certificate prior to entry, and ensure certificates meet the same standards as domestic entries.
6. **CROSSBREED DOG BREED DETERMINATION**
 - i. A crossbreed that has characteristics of either a Bulldog, French Bulldog or Pug will be asked to prove that there are none of the aforementioned breeds in the dog's breeding going back 5 generations.
 - ii. A crossbreed that has unknown lineage will be deemed as one of the designated breeds (Bulldog, French Bulldog or Pug) if it has characteristics that are associated with those breeds respectively.
 - iii. Any Crossbreed that is deemed to be one of the designated breeds (Bulldog, French Bulldog or Pug) is subject to the same health testing restrictions as outlined in F1 through F5 in this document.
 - iv. If there is any doubt whether a dog should be deemed as one of the designated breeds (Bulldog, French Bulldog or Pug) AND that dog has been entered into Crufts without submitting a valid RFG scheme certificate, the judge of the competition will adjudicate.
 - a. The judge may ask for a second opinion from the YRKC show organisers.
 - b. If it is deemed that the dog is one of the designated breeds, that dog shall be asked to leave the show immediately.
7. **More Information**
 - i. For information on where the scheme is available, expected costs and more information on why the RKC is implementing these rules: please visit <https://www.royalkennelclub.com/rfgscheme>



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G: YRKC HANDLING AT CRUFTS – FINALS

1. By entering a YRKC class, the YRKC member and anyone representing them (parent/guardian etc) agree to abide by the YRKC's Code of Conduct.
2. The finals for the YRKC Handling competitions are held at Crufts in the YRKC ring.
3. The handling competitions at Crufts will be broken down into the following 9 classes (3 per day):

DAY (TBC)	DAY (TBC)	SUNDAY
CLASS 1 Handler 18-24 Years (Max. 18 Handlers)	CLASS 4 Handler 12-17 Years (Max. 18 Handlers)	CLASS 7 Handler 06-11 Years (Max. 18 Handlers)
CLASS 2 Handler 18-24 Years (Max. 18 Handlers)	CLASS 5 Handler 12-17 Years (Max. 18 Handlers)	CLASS 8 Handler 06-11 Years (Max. 18 Handlers)
CLASS 3 Handler 18-24 Years (Max. 18 Handlers)	CLASS 6 Handler 12-17 Years (Max. 18 Handlers)	CLASS 9 Handler 06-11 Years (Max. 18 Handlers)
GRAND FINAL 1 st Places from classes 1-9		

4. Handlers will be evenly distributed into the relevant classes.
 - i. The YRKC will randomly distribute even numbers of those who qualified with 1st and 2nd places into each class.
 - a. There will also be (at least) 2 YRKC handling league competitors in each class.
5. YRKC Handling at Crufts will be judged in the same manner as the qualifiers.
6. Awards will be presented in the ring.
7. At Crufts, the YRKC member's age will be calculated as that member's age on the first day of Crufts.
 - i. The YRKC will use this calculated age to determine which age category a YRKC member will compete in at Crufts.
 - a. This may be a different age category to the one the YRKC member qualified in
 - b. Handlers who turn 25 before the first day of Crufts are not eligible to compete at Crufts in the YRKC ring – any qualifications gained for the YRKC will be forfeit.
8. A handler is allowed to swap dogs to any breed/crossbreed.
 - i. This must be reported to the YRKC at the earliest opportunity.
 - a. The latest you may swap a dog from the one entered is 14 days before the first day of Crufts unless;
 - ii. Swapping dogs on the day of the competition at Crufts must be done during check in and before the start of the competition.
 - a. The dog you are swapping to must already be entered into another YRKC class or a Breed class at the show.
9. Docked dogs may not be entered into the YRKC handling finals competition at Crufts.
10. Dogs will be lined up in accordance with the approximate breed height and each dog's speed of movement; this will be determined by the YRKC ahead of the competition.



H: CLOTHING @ CRUFTS

1. Handlers should wear a similar style of suit to what would be typically seen in the breed ring. These suits should be smart while allowing the handler to perform the full range of motions required.
 - i. Boys should be in either a trousered or kilted suit with jacket.
 - ii. Girls should be in either a trousered or skirted suit.
2. Handlers choosing to wear a kilt or skirt must ensure it is of a suitable length and fit to permit the full range of movement required when exhibiting their dog, while preventing accidental exposure. Special consideration should be given to positioning during stacking and presentation.
3. Handlers should pick outfits that do not distract the judge from their view of the dog (e.g. don't pick trousers that are the same colour as your dog as then the judge cannot clearly see the topline of the dog etc.).
4. Handlers should wear smart comfortable shoes that allow them to move at the correct pace for their dog over artificial grass. High heels and trainers are not appropriate.

I: YRKC HANDLING FINALS – PRIZEGIVING

1. The following awards will be presented in the YRKC ring for the YRKC Handling Finals:

DAY (TBC)	DAY (TBC)	SUNDAY
CLASS 1 Handler 18-24 Years 1 st – 5 th	CLASS 4 Handler 12-17 Years 1 st – 5 th	CLASS 7 Handler 06-11 Years 1 st – 5 th
CLASS 2 Handler 18-24 Years 1 st – 5 th	CLASS 5 Handler 12-17 Years 1 st – 5 th	CLASS 8 Handler 06-11 Years 1 st – 5 th
CLASS 3 Handler 18-24 Years 1 st – 5 th	CLASS 6 Handler 12-17 Years 1 st – 5 th	CLASS 9 Handler 06-11 Years 1 st – 5 th

J: YRKC HANDLER OF THE YEAR – GRAND FINAL

1. The winner of each of the above handling final competitions at Crufts will be invited to take part in the YRKC Handler Of The Year Grand Final held in the YRKC Ring on Sunday at Crufts. (9 competitors total)
2. Competitors should use the same dog as they handled in the finals.
 - i. If there is a suitable reason this dog may not be used in the Grand Final, a substitute dog may be used only with the agreement of the YRKC.



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K: YRKC HANDLING GRAND FINAL – PRIZEGIVING

1. The following two awards will be presented in the YRKC ring for the YRKC Handling Grand Final:

YRKC Handler of The Year

Overall Winner

YRKC Handler of The Year

Reserve

2. All YRKC competitors in the YRKC Handling Grand Final will receive a YRKC Handling Grand Finalist Rosette.