

J Regulation amendments effective 2 February 2026

The Kennel Club has approved the following changes to the regulations for field trials.

Regulation J4.c.(4)

TO:

The secretary of the society shall send a copy of the schedule and entry form to The Royal Kennel Club ~~within three days of printing if requested.~~

(Deletion struck through) (Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J12.a.(6)

TO:

To have been handled at a trial, boarded or prepared for competition by one of the scheduled judges within the previous twelve months prior to the trial **or by the scheduled judge's spouse or immediate family or is resident at the same address as the scheduled judge within the previous twelve months prior to the trial.** This provision does not apply to judges appointed in an emergency **or at any Field Trial Championship or Champion Stake.**

(Insertion in Bold. Deletion struck through.)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(A)3.m.

TO:

At the end of each retrieve or run, Judges are advised to place each dog in a category such as A or B (+ or -) according to the work done. Such gradings may, quite properly, be supplemented on occasion by additional notation for reference purposes when Judges are going through their books. It is, however, imperative to appreciate that gradings **must** **should** never be retrospectively adjusted **once agreed with all judges and written in the grid.** Neither should there ever be any attempt to sum sequences of grades to produce a single letter grading of a dog. When all dogs have been seen by a Judge, or Judges, they will wish to confer to determine which dogs they wish to discard or retain; it is vitally important for Judges to make short notes of each dog's work. Judges should never expect to be able to trust to memory.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(A)4.i

TO:

All game should be examined for signs of hard mouth. A hard-mouthed dog seldom gives visible evidence of hardness. The dog will simply crush in one or both sides of the ribs. Visible inspection and blowing up the feathers on a bird will not disclose the damage, digital examination is imperative.

Place the game **bird** on the palm of the hand, breast upwards, head forward, and **using that same hand** feel the ribs with fingers and thumb. They should be round and firm. If they are caved in or flat this may be evidence of hard mouth. Be sure the game reaches the co-Judges for examination. Judges should always satisfy themselves that the damage done has been caused by the dog, not by the shot or fall. Judges, for instance, must be clear about the difference between damage to the ribcage caused by shot and the quite distinctive damage caused by a dog.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

J Regulations J(B), J(C), J(D), J(E).

TO:

These Regulations should be read alongside and assume a familiarity with The Royal Kennel Club Guide to the J Regulations document.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)3.(d)

TO:

In the event that the dogs are to be split between the Judges **under the 4 judge system**, this will be done odds and evens. ~~Where the Trial is to be run under the 4 judge system~~, In the first round the odd numbered dogs will be seen by the right hand Judges and the evens by the left hand Judges. Where this system is adopted, in the second round the odd numbered dogs remaining in the Trial must be seen by the left hand Judges and the evens by the right hand Judges. ~~The Judges can thereafter continue to rotate the dogs remaining in the stake in this way until they get together for a run-off, when the order of sending shall revert to numerical order.~~

Upon completion of the second round the order of sending may revert to the order of the draw, although this decision depends on circumstances applying at the time and would be at the discretion of the Judges. Where a handler is running an odd numbered dog and an even numbered dog, both dogs should be run on the side of the lowest numbered dog. The dogs on that side will be run in numerical order.

(Deletion struck through) (Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)3.(e)

TO:

Where the trial is to be run under the three judge system, the dogs should be split equally, and in numerical order, between the three Judges, i.e. 1,2,3,4 with the right hand Judge, 5,6,7,8 with the middle Judge and 9, 10, 11 and 12 with the left hand Judge in a one-day stake and 1-8, 9-16 and 17-24 in a two day. Dogs should then rotate from right to left so that the dogs under the left hand Judge in the first round should be seen by the right hand Judge next and so on. ~~The rotation should continue until a run-off when numerical order will resume.~~

(Deletion struck through)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)7.d.(4)

TO:

In a round with two retrieves a judge should be most careful to see that each dog gets its chance in the correct order, starting with the lowest number on the right. Should dog No. 1 fail, and dog No. 2 be successful, so eliminating his partner, No. 2 still has the first chance on the next retrieve. In these circumstances a dog may be given two consecutive retrieves.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)7.d.(5)

TO:

When a Judge tries his dogs, for example No. 1 & No. 2, behind other dogs, if No. 1 dog is successful, then the next retrieve under that Judge should be offered to No. 2 dog. **The back up dog in line must always have the first opportunity of an eye-wipe over its partner, irrespective of which round it is in. Lower round dogs should not be called over from the other side until after this dog has been given its chance.** If the two dogs fail on game, the Judge should not call fresh dogs into the line to try for the retrieve until all the other dogs already in the line have been tried. **The exception to this is when using the odds and evens system the Judges should continue to use dogs on their own side. For example, dogs No. 5 & No. 7 would be tried behind No. 1 & No. 3. If No. 5 is successful, the next retrieve should be offered to No. 7. Should No. 5 fail and No. 7 be successful, No. 7 still has the next retrieve. The Judges should have four dogs in line, the two sending dogs and two back up dogs. In the concluding stages of a Trial, Judges may use their own discretion as the situation arises.**

(Deletion struck through) (Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)8.

TO:

When the Judges decide to run-off the top few dogs to confirm their final placings, they will usually position themselves together in the centre of the line or, at least, in a position where they can see all the dogs working. At this stage in the Trial, a dog may be stretched to such a degree that it may fail and be eye-wiped. In this situation the dog which has had its eye-wiped would be penalised, but could still feature in the awards. **In the concluding stages of a Trial, Judges may use their own discretion with the order of sending, as the situation arises.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)9.d

TO:

A handler should not have ~~his/her~~ their second dog backing up ~~his/her~~ their first dog, while other dogs are available in the round except in a run off.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through.)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)1.b

TO:

~~No title used to describe the winners of GWTs will be associated with such competition which is best understood as a means to an end rather than an end in itself.~~

Gundog Working Tests should be conducted in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, welcoming to newcomers as well as being a test of the progress of a gundog's training for the shooting field and field trials.

No titles are to be used for the winners of Gundog Working Tests.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)1.e

TO:

Application for authority to hold GWTs must be made annually to The Royal Kennel Club and, ~~on the form provided~~, applicants should indicate the number of GWTs they propose to hold in the forthcoming year.

(Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)2.a(2)

TO:

Sporting Spaniels other than Irish Water Spaniels.

(Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)2.b(3)

TO:

PUPPY. Open ~~Confined to all~~ dogs of specific breed or breeds less than eighteen months of age on the date of the test **regardless of awards gained.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)2.b(4)

TO:

NOVICE DOG/NOVICE HANDLER. Confined to dog and handler who have not gained any award in a field trial or classified GWT or won a Novice Dog/Novice Handler test.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

(Subsequent regulation to be renumbered)

Regulation J(G)3.d

TO:

The organisers of GWTs will try, wherever possible, to simulate the circumstances of a shooting day. They must also ensure the tests are designed to further good Gundog work, and not inhibit dogs from marking or showing natural working ability. It is important, for instance, that guns and dummy throwers are positioned with such considerations in mind, **and that distances of retrieves and difficulty of test are achievable and relevant to the standard (e.g. puppy, novice, open). Organisers may set tests in advance, using non-competing dogs of the same standard to ensure this.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)3.g

TO:

Only dummies acceptable to the judges, will be used for retrieves in GWTs. **The same type of dummy must be used within each exercise.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)3.h

TO:

When dummies are thrown in association with gunfire in retrieving tests, the shot must always precede the thrown dummy **with the gun pointing in the direction of where the dummy is to be thrown**. The gun should be positioned **within 'shot range'** of a ~~plausible~~ distance from the retrieve. With unseen retrieves gunfire is optional.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)3.i

TO:

Organisers and judges must be careful for the safety of dogs and must not require them to negotiate dangerous obstacles. Whilst judges should take reasonable precautions for the safety of competing dogs, it is the duty of the handler to satisfy ~~himself or herself~~ **themselves** that the dog is suitably trained, physically fit and prepared to undertake the work allocated by the judges before directing ~~his or her~~ **their** dog to undertake the allotted task.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)4.b

TO:

The Code of Conduct expected at GWTs is the same as that for Field Trials. **The Code of Conduct documents can be found on The Royal Kennel Club website.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)4.g

TO:

All judges must have **considerable** experience of dog-work under shooting field conditions **and competition**.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)4.h

TO:

In an Open Gundog Working Test (GWT), ~~each sub-group there must have be at~~ at least one Royal Kennel Club Field Trial Panel Judge **from the relevant sub-group** officiating. **In all other GWT's a Royal Kennel Club Field Trial Panel Judge should officiate, if possible.**

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)4.i

TO:

The officiating judges must be announced to all competitors.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

(Subsequent regulations to be renumbered)

Regulation J(G)4.j (previously J(G)4.i)

TO:

All handlers must carry out the instructions of the judges. The judges are empowered to remove from the test any dog whose handler does not follow their instructions or whose handler willfully interferes with another competitor or ~~his~~**their** dog.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)4.k

TO:

Each GWT day must have a minimum of 2 judges.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

(Subsequent regulations to be renumbered)

Regulation J(G)4.p (previously J(G)4.n)

TO:

No competitor may withdraw their dog and leave the GWT ground without informing the ~~chief steward~~ **Test Secretary or a Club Official**.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)



Regulation J(G)6.a(1)

TO:

~~At the start of a GWT, judges must ensure they have the correct dogs in the line, lowest number placed on the right.~~

A handler must ensure that only the number of the dog being handled at the time is displayed. It is the responsibility of the handler if handling more than one dog, to ensure that their dogs are being run in the correct order when competing.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.a(2)

TO:

~~A Retriever must be steady to shot and fall and must retrieve only on command. Also, whenever possible, all dogs should be tested at a simulated drive, walking up and in water. Whenever possible, all dogs should be tested in water. Except in Puppy and Novice Dog/Novice Handler GWTs, dogs should be tested either at a simulated drive and/or a walk up.~~ A dog must walk steadily at heel **and retrieve tenderly to hand.**

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.a(5)

TO:

Credit points.

Natural marking and hunting ability.

Quickness in gathering retrieve and **good delivery.**

Nose. Drive and style.

Quiet handling. Control.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.a(6)

TO:

Serious faults.

Refusing to retrieve. Whining or barking.

Running in or chasing. Out of control.

Failing to enter water. Changing retrieve.

Poor heel work. **Without merit.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.b(1)

TO:

~~At the start of a GWT, judges must ensure they have the correct dogs in the line. A handler must ensure that only the number of the dog being handled at the time is displayed. It is the responsibility of the handler if handling more than one dog, to ensure that their dogs are being run in the correct order when competing.~~ Dogs must be run either singly or in pairs, with the lowest number on the right.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.b(3)

TO:

A Spaniel must be steady to flush, shot and fall and retrieve **tenderly to hand** on command from land or water.

(Insertion in bold.)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.b(6)

TO:

~~If live pigeons are released this must be treated as a separate exercise and not occur as part of an exercise involving a retrieve.~~

If there is a flush while the dogs are hunting that is not part of the test, they should not be asked to retrieve at this point. It is acceptable for the judge to ask the handler to redo the test.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.b(8)

TO:

Serious Faults.

Refusing to retrieve. Whining or barking.

Running in or chasing. Out of control.

Failing to enter water. Changing retrieve.

Without merit

(Insertion in bold.)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.c.(1)

TO:

Organisers must be aware of the limitations and possible problems when using game for pointing exercises.

A handler must ensure that only the number of the dog being handled at the time is displayed. It is the responsibility of the handler if handling more than one dog, to ensure that their dogs are being run in the correct order when competing.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.c(2)

TO:

Dogs should quarter the beat across the wind hunting systematically and regulating their pace to suit the ground and cover. In **puppy, novice dog/ novice handler** and novice tests dogs should not normally be required to work down wind.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.c(7)

TO:

~~If live pigeons are released this must be treated as a separate exercise and not occur as part of an exercise involving a retrieve.~~

If there is a flush while the dogs are hunting that is not part of the test, they should not be asked to retrieve at this point. It is acceptable for the judge to ask the handler to redo the test.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.c(9)

TO:

Serious Faults.

Refusing to retrieve.	Whining or barking.
Out of control.	Chasing.
Failing to enter water.	Changing retrieve.
Failure to deliver to hand	Without merit

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

K regulation amends

Regulation K2.c(3)

TO:

(3) Proviso for all Retrievers

Before any Retriever is entitled to be described as a Field Trial Champion it must also have a Water and Drive Certificate. ~~The Water Certificate may, but not necessarily, be gained at a special water test.~~

The **Water Certificate** ~~or special water test~~ must have been conducted before two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A Panel, at one of the following: the Retriever Championship, a Field Trial Open Stake, or at a subsequent special test. (J(A)2 refers.)

The Drive Certificate must be conducted before two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A Panel, at the Retriever Championship or a Field Trial Open Stake.

(Deletion struck through) (Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation K2.c(6)

TO:

(6) Proviso for all Spaniels

Before a dog is entitled to be described as a Field Trial Champion it must also have gained a Water Certificate. ~~The Water Certificate may, but not necessarily, be gained at a special water test.~~

The **Water Certificate** ~~or special water test~~ must have been conducted before two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A, at one of the following: the Championship, a Field Trial stake or at a subsequent special test.

(J(A)2 refers.)

(Deletion struck through) (Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation K2.c.(8)

TO:

(8) Proviso for all breeds which Hunt, Point and Retrieve

Before a dog is entitled to be described as a Field Trial Champion it must also have gained a Water Certificate. ~~The Water Certificate may, but not necessarily, be gained at a special water test.~~

The **Water Certificate** ~~or special water test~~ must have been conducted before two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A, at one of the following: the Hunt, Point and Retrieve Championship, a Field Trial Stake, or at a subsequent special test (J(A)2 refers.)

(Deletion struck through) (Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)