

Showing Your Westie

by Mary Dunphy, Dunkeller Westies

No doubt you have seen televised dog shows and wondered about showing your westie in Conformation Dog Shows. There are also obedience trials and rally obedience as well as agility shows. This article will focus on conformation shows. Showing your dog can be immensely rewarding and a lot of fun. You will meet other westie owners, learn all about westies, and make new friends.

Dog Shows are not a beauty pageant. They originated as a means for experts to evaluate breeding animals to ensure that only dogs that conform to the breed standard were used for breeding purposes. The dogs are judged by people in the dog fancy who have years of experience and training. All dogs must be CKC registered or qualify to be registered to show in conformation shows. Dogs not yet registered can be shown with an Event Registration Number (ERN). All breeds have a CKC regulated *standard* that the dogs are judged against. They are not judged against other breeds until they have been judged against the others of their own breed to determine which dog best meets its own breed standard. As long as a dog is at least 4 months, registered or able to be registered, and sexually intact it can be shown in conformation shows

Most provinces in Canada have regional and local all breed kennel clubs where you can obtain information about shows and training in your area. The CKC runs a website called [Canuck Dogs](#) which lists upcoming shows and past show results for all regions in Canada.

THE RIGHT WESTIE

All westies are adorable and fun to own but not all dogs are created equal. A good CKC registered breeder is your first point of contact to obtain a good show quality westie. You will find that good breeders rarely advertise to sell puppies because they rarely need to. Most will have waiting lists which can be quite long, so a lengthy wait is typical. Attend dog shows in your area to meet westie breeders who show their dogs. They will be happy to discuss their dogs and to offer advice. If you already have a westie that you are interested in showing, they may be willing to evaluate your westie for you to determine its show potential.

A good breeder will have many questions and often have written questionnaires to determine the best homes for their puppies. They have dedicated many years to producing top champion lines and are naturally very selective of where their puppies will go. They will be knowledgeable about the breed and offer at least a three generations pedigree but can go back many more generations of champion westies. The puppies will be from champion lines, registered or are to be registered by the breeder, microchipped or tattooed, vaccinated, and socialized appropriate to their age.

HOW SHOWS WORK

For the novice dog shows can seem complicated but they are basically a process of elimination. To become a champion the dog must receive 10 points in conformation shows of which at least one win must be a 2point win called a major. A dog can earn a maximum of 5 points at any one show.

Breed Level: The first step is the breed level judging. Within the breed level there are several different *classes* that the dog can be entered under. Males and females of each class will be shown separately at first.

Baby Puppy Class: Puppies are from 4 to 6 months old. A baby puppy can only be entered in one show per day. The baby puppy class is a separate show from the other classes.

Junior Puppy Class: A puppy is from 6 to 9 months old on the day of the show.

Senior Puppy Class: A puppy is from 9 to 12 months old on the day of the show.

12 to 18 Months Class: The dog is within this age group on the day of the show.

Open Class: Any dog can be entered in this class.

Canadian Bred Class: A dog that was bred in Canada

Bred by Exhibitor Class: A dog that was bred by the person showing the dog in the ring.

Winners: In each class the males will compete first for best of each class followed by the females. Once the classes are completed the male winners from each class will be judged together to select Best Of Winners Male and Reserve Winners Male. This is followed by the female winners from each class who are judged together for Best of Winners Female and Reserve Winners Female.

Best of Breed: To select Best of Breed the Winners Dog and Winners Female will return to the ring to compete with the Specials. Specials are dogs that are already CKC champions. Specials do not compete in the classes but will compete against the Winners Dog and Winners Female from the classes. The judge will first choose Best of Breed. This is followed by selecting Best of Opposite Sex from the dogs of the sex opposite from the Best of Breed winner.

The judge will then decide which of the Winners Dog or Winners Female is Best of Winners. If Winners Dog or Winners Female wins Best of Breed then they automatically win Best of Winners also.

A judge may also present a Select Dog and Select Bitch ribbon to a male and female that he feels are high quality.

Best Puppy in Breed: The male and female class winners from Junior and Senior Puppy Classes will be judged together to determine Best Puppy in Breed.

Best Baby Puppy in Breed: The winning male and winning female baby puppies compete for Best Baby Puppy in Breed.

Championship Points Based on Number of Dogs Entered

	0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points	4 points	5 points
Dogs Competing	1	2	3 – 5	6 – 9	10 – 12	13 or more

Group Level:

Best in Group: Once the westie Best of Breed westie has been determined that dog will move forward to compete at the group level. There are seven separate groups at Canadian shows. For westies the group is the Terrier Group which in Canada is Group 4. The westie will compete against the other terrier breeds Best of Breed winners. The judge will select a winner for first, second, third and fourth place in the group. The first-place winner will move forward to compete for Best in Show.

Best Baby Puppy in Group: The best baby puppy in breed winners from each terrier breed will compete for best baby puppy in group. That winner will move forward to compete for Best Baby Puppy in Show

Best Puppy in Group: The best puppy in breed winners from each terrier breed will compete for Best Puppy in Group. If the Group first is a puppy that puppy automatically wins Best Puppy in Group.

Group Points Based on Number of Dogs Entered

	Group First	Group Second	Group Third	Group Fourth
13 or more breeds	5	4	3	2
10 to 12	4	3	2	1
6 to 9 breeds	3	2	1	1
5 breeds	2	1	1	1
4 breeds	2	1	1	0
3 breeds	2	1	0	0
2 breeds	1	0	0	0
1 breed	0	0	0	0

Show Level:

Best Baby Puppy in Show: For the Best Baby Puppy in Show competition the seven Baby Puppy in Group winners will enter the ring. The judge will choose the Best Baby Puppy in Show.

Best In Show: The Group first winner from each of the seven groups enter the ring to compete for Best in Show. The judge will also select a Reserve Best in Show. Should for any reason the Best in Show dog is disqualified later, the reserve in show winner will be awarded The Best in Show points.

Best Puppy in Show: For the Best Puppy in Show competition the seven Best Puppy in Group winners will enter the ring. The judge will choose the Best Puppy in Show.

As you can see the show is a process of elimination. Competitions if first Breed Level followed by Group Level followed by Show Level. Consider showing your westie. It's a lot of fun and you will meet wonderful people and dogs. And once your dog reaches champion you can continue on to Grand Champion and beyond.