

Rally is the newest dog sport in town.

Rally became an official, AKC titling event in 2005. Rally is a variation on obedience in which handlers and dogs complete a **course** comprising a series of obedience exercises to be done as continuous performance, rather than as tests. The course is laid out by a judge with a set of small **signs** describing the exercises to be performed at the various stations. You move through the course at your own pace, rather than according to a judge's orders. (Handlers get the course beforehand, as in agility.)

Scoring in rally isn't as rigorous or formal as in traditional obedience. For example, in rally, if you or your dog makes an error at a station, you're **to immediately re-try** that station; you'll lose points but you won't fail the exercise. Also, rally handlers can use **vocal praise and encouragement in the ring**, including clapping your hands and patting your leg. This interaction with your dog makes rally an ideal way to your new dog started in competition training or to begin your career in dog sports.

The idea for rally has been around for a while, and many rally exercises rally are what some trainers have been doing for years in obedience classes. Some of you can see how rally derived from British "working trials" and other dog sports with its various heeling patterns, turns and changes of pace, and stationary exercises (such as a sit or down). As a sport, rally was designed by Charles "Bud" Kramer (who originated UKC agility), and was intended to be a kind of bridge between pet training and competition training — to help entice more people into competition obedience. Currently, AKC and a few other organizations have rally programs which are all similar in about the same way that various organizations have similar agility programs.

As in traditional obedience, AKC **rally** has three levels, or classes, in order of difficulty — Novice, Advanced, and Excellent, to earn the RN, RA, and RE titles respectively. To get a title, you need three qualifying scores under at least two different judges. In rally, a perfect score is **100 points**; a **qualifying** score is 70 or better. **Timing** is used only as a tie-breaker for placements.

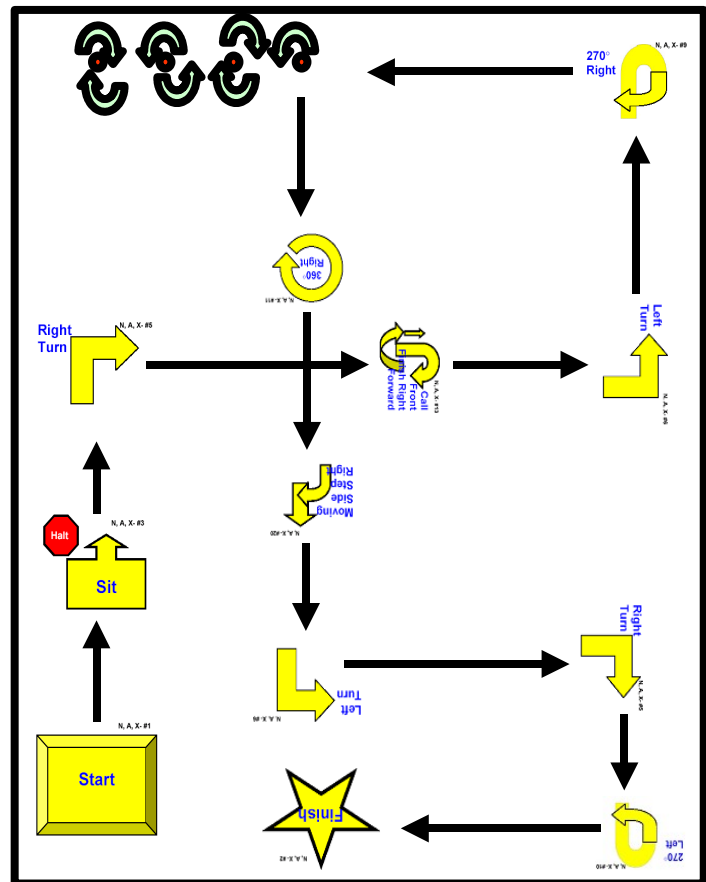
In the **Rally Novice** class, everything is **on leash**, and the courses have 10 to 15 stations (not including *Start* and *Finish*), with up to five stationary exercises — that is, ones involving a halt. There are no jumps in Novice.

Here's a **sample Rally Novice course**. By the way, the rally ring can be 70' x 100' — rather larger than a traditional obedience ring, although usually it's not that spacious.



series of discrete the course to walk

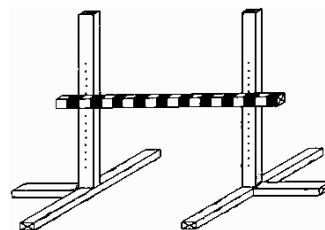
For **allowed** exercise.



In AKC rally, there are A and B classes, similar to obedience. The B classes are for experienced handlers, such as those of us who already have AKC obedience titles. Rally Novice A is for tyros who have never put a AKC obedience title or rally title on a dog; Rally Novice B is for handlers who already have an AKC obedience title or an RN on another dog.

In the next level or class, **Rally Advanced**, all of the exercises are **off leash**, and there are 12 to 17 stations, with up to seven stationary exercises, and **one jump** exercise — a broad jump, high jump (panel jump), or bar jump. The jump heights in rally are very modest:

Dog's height	High/Bar Jump	Broad Jump
Under 15"	8"	16" (2 boards)
15" to under 20"	12"	24" (2 boards)
20" and over	16"	32" (3 boards)



Rally Advanced A is for dogs who have an RN title but don't yet have an AKC obedience title; Rally Advanced B is for dogs who already have an RN as well as an AKC obedience title.

In the **Rally Excellent** class, everything is, of course, **off leash**, and there are 15 to 20 stations, with **two jumps** and up to seven stationary exercises. Also, the handlers are somewhat more restricted in the kinds of encouragement they can use with their dogs (see chart below).

Rally Excellent A is for dogs who have an RA title but don't yet have any AKC obedience titles; Rally Excellent B is for dogs who already have an RA or an AKC obedience title.

Here's a quick summary of the AKC rally classes. For more information, see the AKC Web site www.akc.org for rally rules and regulations.

	Rally Novice	Rally Advanced	Rally Excellent
Leash?	All exercises on leash	All exercises off leash	
Interactions allowed?	Vocal praise and encouragement and multiple commands and signals are allowed — including hand clapping or patting your leg		No hand clapping or patting your leg; however, voice commands and <i>inaudible</i> signals are allowed
Number of stations?¹	10 – 15	12 – 17	15 – 20
Stationary exercises?	No more than 5	No more than 7	
Jumping exercises?	None	1	2
Enter in A class?	No AKC rally titles or obedience titles	RN but no AKC obedience titles	RA but no AKC obedience titles
Enter in B class?	No AKC rally titles	RN	RA

¹ Not counting *Start* and *Finish*

Rally resources online

- ❖ Bud Kramer & Rally Obedience
<http://www-personal.ksu.edu/~kramerc/home.htm>
- ❖ Rally Obedience Guidebook (Pat Knepley)
www.geocities.com/rallyobedience/guidebook.htm
- ❖ Rally Obedience
www.rallyobedience.com
- ❖ AKC Rally Trainers Workbook (Bea Moore) — lesson plans, course diagrams, flashcards, etc.
www.k-grally.com
- ❖ K9Rally (Sue McAnulty)
www.k9rally.com
- ❖ Rally Obedience — Durham Kennel Club
www.gracegift.info/rally/rally_index.html
- ❖ Rally exercises described, with signs
www.rysong.com/lurikeen/Desc_and_Perf_of_Exercises_with_Signs.htm
www.silverblades.net/scout/RallySigns.htm
- ❖ Rally O! Signs
www.rallyosigns.com
- ❖ Rally Obedience Start to Finish instructional DVD
www.dograllyo.com
- ❖
- ❖ Cindy Pischke's articles on rally from the *Everything Golden* online newsletter:
 - Retries
www.everythinggolden.com/new_page_6.htm
 - #20: Moving Side Step Right
www.everythinggolden.com/new_page_56.htm
 - 270° Right and Left Turns
www.everythinggolden.com/new_page_57.htm
 - #13–16: Call front and finish
www.everythinggolden.com/new_page_59.htm
 - #48: Moving Stand, Walk Around Dog
www.everythinggolden.com/new_page_65.htm
 - "How to Improve Your Scores!"
www.everythinggolden.com/new_page_66.htm
 - #24: Serpentine, Weave Once
www.everythinggolden.com/new_page_98.htm
 - #35: Halt – Turn Right 1 Step – Call to Heel – Halt
www.everythinggolden.com/perfecting_halt
- ❖ AKC and APDT rally flash cards signs, lesson plans, and other resources
<http://rally.canissapiens.com>
- ❖ Rally Dog
www.rallydog.com
- ❖ Laminated rally signs and cards, bandanas
www.akcrallyobedience.com
- ❖ Clipart for rally
www.rugpalnorth.com/funstuff.htm
- ❖ Assn of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) Rally-O
www.apdt.com/rallyo/index.htm AND
[performance-standards/performance-standards.htm](http://www.apdt.com/rallyo/performance-standards/performance-standards.htm)
- ❖ Rally Regulations & Judges Guidelines
www.wcotc-dogs.org/rallyobedience.htm
- ❖ Canadian Assn of Rally Obedience (CARO)
www.canadianrallyo.ca
- ❖ "Secrets of a Stunning Performance" by Linda Sperco
www.sthuberts.org/petpouri/articles/Rally.asp
- ❖ Rally Club of the Low Country (SC)
www.dogrally.org

Books on rally

- ❖ *An Introduction to Rally Obedience*, 3rd ed.,
by Charles L. (Bud) Kramer — the father of
rally obedience
- ❖ *Click Your Way to Rally Obedience*
by Pam Dennison

❖ *Rally On: A Training Manual for Rally Obedience* by Marie Sawford

❖ *The Rally Course Book: A Guide to AKC Rally Courses* by Janice Dearth — course design