

# HERDING REGULATIONS FOR SV HERDING COMPETITIONS

## 1. General

Local herding competitions - minimum three entries – at least 200 sheep – one judge  
Regional herding competitions – at least 300 sheep - two judges  
National herding competitions – at least 300 sheep and more - three judges

HGH – Herdengebrauchshund – Herding Utility Dog  
Haupthund – Main Dog  
Beihund – Assistant or Man Dog

The herding skill aims at optimal food consumption and thus at maximum weight gain of the sheep with consideration given to the available pastures and the weather by using a sensible way of herding. For that purpose the handler needs a well trained herding dog. The dog will be called HGH (herding utility dog, Herdengebrauchshund) from here on. Only with harmonious team work between human and animals can optimal grazing be accomplished. The flock of sheep may not be disturbed more than necessary while grazing. The flock must be kept in certain areas. It must be led skillfully on roads. The course for a herding competition should be laid out in a way that the exercises are connected with each other and that a flowing run is possible. The order of the exercises doesn't matter. The course should be according to every day practices regardless of the constraint to judge the shown performance.

The work of the sheep herder with the flock and the dog must present a unified and composed picture. The shepherd's confidence and calm demeanor has to transfer to the flock and dog. The handler uses the dog skillfully and sensibly. For that purpose the handler uses verbal commands or signals. The reaction of the HGH and the execution of the signals receive special attention. During a run, one must show repeatedly that the HGH responds immediately in the proper direction according to the verbal commands and signals.

**Main rule: All exercises should be done in a calm and quiet manner!**

The work of the HGH is determined by its genetics and training, by its relation to the handler and by how the handler uses the dog. The dog's disposition must be composed and sure; it must show good nerves and fearlessness. Drive, courage and toughness are further necessities to be respected by the flock which contains rebellious sheep. The willingness to defend the handler should be pronounced.

### 1.1. Behavior test, ID check, mandatory collar

- a) Behavior test (temperament test): Before the herding trial, the entered dogs must be subjected to a behavior test. The test continues throughout the herding trial. Dogs that do not pass the behavior test are to be excluded from the herding trial. The judge can exclude the dog from the trial if the dog exhibits temperament flaws throughout its run even if it passed the initial behavior test.
- b) Part of the behavior test is the ID check (tattoo or chip number)
- c) Mandatory collar/ mandatory leash: The handler has to have a leash at all times with him/her. The dog must wear a collar at all times. Only fur savers/choke collars (with a single row of links) are permitted. The collar must be loose around the neck. Prong collars, buckle collars, and tick collars are prohibited.

## 2. Regulations for Admission and Organization

### 2.1 The dog must be at least 14 months old.

### 2.2 Health regulations

Only healthy dogs are permitted to compete in herding competitions. Official health regulations must be met. The dogs must be vaccinated against rabies. The vaccination certificate must be available to show to the host club.

### 2.3 Application

The herding competitions will be announced. The host clubs sets an entry deadline. The owner must have the dogs entered by that deadline. The entries have to be sent to the host club.

The entry form must include: names of main dog and assistant/man dog, breed book or registration number, sex, date of birth, sire/dam, name and address of owner and handler.

Sending the entry form means acceptance of the regulations for admission and the SV herding regulations.

### 2.4 Herding regulations

Herding with one main dog and one assistant/man dog is the regular case. The herding regulations refer to the main dog. They refer to the man dog only there where its work relates to the performance, allowed help, etc. There is no difference in judging a run with one or with two dogs.

### 2.4.1 General regulations

All information given by the handler has to be true. A handler who intentionally gives wrong information, tries to mislead the judge, or tries to disturb the work of another dog loses all his/her and his/her dog's titles. He/she can be disqualified. Handler, owner and breeder can be removed from the trial by the hosting club or chairman when they violate the herding rules or argue the judge's decision improperly.

Every handler is liable for damages caused by his/her dogs.

### 2.4.2 Running order

The running order will be decided by luck of the draw. The order is not influenced by using one or two dogs or by the sex of the dog. The chairman observes the draw.

Females in season must be reported to the chairman before the draw. They are not allowed to enter the course and must compete at the end.

If a handler does not attend the draw the chairman or another participant can draw for this handler.

### 2.4.3 Course

The course must be chosen according to practical real life situations. It must allow the handler to show all required parts. The elements can be shown in any order.

### 2.4.4 Examination

The competition will be done with at least 200 sheep, and at regional and national competitions with at least 300 sheep.

The handler should stand or move in a proper position during his/her run like in real life situations. The handler has to lead the dog by using verbal commands or signals.

During the competition all dogs are on leash, except for the ones currently competing. The host is responsible that no other dogs besides the entered dogs are on the course.

## 3. Judges and Scores

### 3.1 Judges

The judging panel in local herding competitions contains at least one SV recognized HGH judge, in regional competitions at least two SV recognized HGH judges, and in national competitions three SV recognized HGH judges. The judges will be requested by the hosting club.

After every run the HGH judge gives the critiques and the score.

### 3.2 Score system

#### 3.2.1 Scoring the handler

The work of the handler will be judged (very good, good, satisfactory, deficient) according to:

- a) herding technique
- b) handling of the sheep
- c) use and direction of the dog

The work will be described in words.

#### 3.2.2 Scoring the HGH

The work of the dog will be judged as follows:

	Maximum number of points
Exit from the pen	6
Traffic	10
Wide graze	10
Placement and Stands	8
Narrow graze	10
Narrow road	8
Bridge	6
Grip	8
Obedience	10
Diligence	10
Independence	10
Re-pen	4
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100

#### The Grades are:

Excellent	90 to 100 points
Very good	80 to 89 points
Good	70 to 79 points
Satisfactory	60 to 69 points
Deficient	50 to 59 points
Unsatisfactory	less than 50 points

In order to get the HGH title according to the breeding regulations the dog must get the grade **Satisfactory with 60 points**.

#### 4. Guidelines for Herding Competitions

Description:

##### 4.1 Exit from the pen (6 points are the maximum available)

In order to establish contact with the sheep the shepherd goes around or in the pen. He/she can do both. The dogs stay on the outside of the pen or are tied to prevent disturbance.

After the handler has contact with the sheep, he/she opens the pen by taking out one panel in order to get an opening of approximately 4 meters. Where the shepherd opens the pen is up to him/her unless the judge decides where. While opening the pen the HGH stands in front of the gate in order to prevent the sheep from escaping. After opening the gate, the handler stands in front of it, where the HGH just stood. Then he/she sends the dog into the pen by letting the dog jump over a panel. The dog will stand calmly on command in the pen in a proper position. The handler tries to bring the flock in motion by moving slowly backwards and calling the sheep. If the sheep don't follow the handler the dog tries gently to move the sheep. As soon as the sheep move the HGH stands inside the pen on the panel near the gate.

If necessary the HGH can go back and move the sheep but has to come back to and stand at the panel. The HGH can leave its position by itself or on command, not before the last sheep has left the pen. If the sheep while exiting don't follow the handler the man dog has to be used. A normal exit has the man dog on the panel opposite the main dog. A stand stay is not necessary.

Faults:

- Opening more than one panel unless ordered by the judge.
- Unnecessarily long exiting.
- HGH is led into the pen.
- HGH doesn't react to verbal commands and signals.
- HGH sits or lies down.
- HGH stands outside the panel.
- HGH stands too far away.
- HGH is called too early from position.
- HGH disturbs sheep.
- HGH needs too much help.

##### 4.2 Obstacles, traffic (10 points are the maximum available)

The exercise will be shown on a reasonably wide (6-8 meters) road. The handler leads the flock while the HGH moves the sheep far enough to the side that a car, first from in front and afterwards from the rear, can slowly pass the flock. The HGH has to move between car and flock in order to make room and keep the sheep safe. The handler has to watch that the sheep don't damage bordering fields.

Also, on any other obstacles such as agricultural equipment, the HGH has to move or stand between flock and obstacle in order to prevent the sheep from being injured.

Faults:

- HGH is afraid of car.
- HGH goes around the car.
- HGH works behind or too much in front of car.
- HGH charges into the flock and creates disturbance.
- HGH chases sheep away from flock.
- HGH doesn't make enough room between car and flock.
- Car can not pass flock on marked road.
- Flock moves too far over on man dog side.

##### 4.3 Wide graze (10 points are the maximum available)

The handler goes in front of the flock and leads the sheep into the wide graze. He/she lets the flock go around him/her into the graze with several borders. While the handler stands with the man dog at the corner of the graze, the main dog has to patrol on the opposite side and – if necessary – to go with the flock. The handler can also stand with the HGH on the corner when the graze starts if there is a field with especially endangered crops or a road there. If there is a furrow/border the HGH has to work in/on it correctly and has to work besides the sheep on that border which is closest to the sheep without receiving commands. It is desirable that the HGH covers the whole length of the flock several times. If there are no furrows/borders, the HGH has to patrol along the edge of the graze and otherwise has to show the same behavior. It is not allowed to leave the edge to the outside or inside (disturbance). If the dog has to patrol on several borders it has to go around the corner. It always has to watch the front of the flock and has to go with the sheep without any commands and signals. If the dog has to switch sides it has to do it in front of the flock.

Faults:

- Dog doesn't stay in furrow or on border.
- Dog covers whole length only on command or signal.

Dog cuts corners severely.  
Flock is unnecessarily disturbed.  
HGH lies down, sits, sniffs.  
HGH shows little interest.

#### 4.4 Placement and Stands (8 points are the maximum available)

Placement: The handler has to show in this exercise that he/she can send the HGH with commands and signals in front of the flock without disturbing its grazing.

The handler sends the HGH from the furrow or border in a wide angle in front of the flock. There the HGH has to stand on command facing the flock. On one command or signal the HGH moves towards the head of the flock until it gets the command "Stand." The closer the HGH comes to the head of the flock the slower it has to move. This exercise has to be shown with at least three pauses until the head of the flock turns slowly around.

When the HGH has done this, it should go back on command the same way it came from. The handler is not allowed to stand close to the dog while sending it in front of the sheep. Going with the dog partly devalues the result.

Faults:

Too many commands and signals.  
HGH goes in a close angle to the head of the flock.  
HGH does not go straight towards the head of the flock.  
HGH disturbs the flock.  
HGH doesn't stand steady.  
HGH moves towards handler and not towards head of the flock.  
HGH moves too fast towards head of the flock.  
HGH lies down, sits, sniffs.  
HGH charges into flock.  
HGH stands incorrectly and insecurely on corners. (Placing)

#### 4.5 Narrow graze (10 points are the maximum available)

The narrow graze can be a small meadow, a field with residual, or a narrow 30 meter wide pasture. The flock has to graze in a small area, which necessarily strings out the flock. While entering the narrow graze the handler does the same as in the wide graze. When the handler works with one dog it stands on the corner and the flock goes around the dog. While entering the graze the dog must be ready to correct stray sheep or prevent sheep from straying into the next field. The HGH stands at the corner until the last sheep has entered the narrow graze. It changes sides on command or signal in order to work the side opposite the handler. Here the HGH goes independently with the flock and stays correctly on the border or in the furrow. When the handler works with two dogs the handler stands with the man dog on the corner and the main dog goes right away independently to the opposite side.

On command the HGH has to switch sides at least once no matter if the handler uses one or two dogs. The HGH has to be sent several times from the endangered side to the front. The HGH must be sent with ample room to the flock that the sheep are not disturbed and especially the flock is not turned around. Stray sheep must be pushed back or if necessary corrected by the dog without giving a command. If the flock behaves in a way that the HGH has no need to patrol and the HGH shows less activity, the HGH should not lose points. Otherwise the dog has to patrol constantly along the flock.

To be in a better position to influence the situation, the handler should place him/herself beside the last third or middle of the flock.

Faults:

HGH doesn't stand on the corner while entering the graze.  
HGH leaves furrow or border several times.  
HGH charges into flock.  
HGH doesn't cover the whole length of the flock.  
HGH switches sides too close to the sheep.  
HGH stands too close in front of the flock.  
HGH turns flock around.  
HGH shows too little ambition.  
HGH stands for a longer time, sits, or lies down.  
Handler helps too much while dog is switching sides.  
Handler is in front of flock.

#### 4.6 Narrow road (8 points are the maximum available)

The narrow road should be narrow and at least 200 meters long. The handler goes in front and leads the flock while the HGH works on the endangered side. Without getting a command, the HGH has to cover the whole length of the flock. If all sheep are on the road the dog does not have to cover the whole length all the time. If necessary, the dog has to go to the last sheep. If necessary, the dog has to switch sides in front of the handler. It can follow stray sheep into the flock and grip.

Faults:

- HGH lacks interest, shows little liveliness.
- HGH doesn't cover whole length.
- HGH switches sides between handler and flock.
- HGH chases sheep away and follows them.
- HGH grips unnecessarily.
- HGH slows down, stands still, sits, and lies down.
- HGH is heat sensitive.
- HGH is not weather resistant.
- Flock moves too far over to man dog side.
- HGH works too far away from flock.

#### 4.7 Bridge (6 points are the maximum available)

If there is no natural bridge one must be set up. It should be reasonably wide (5 meters) and long. While passing over the bridge the HGH should stand on the sharp corner. This should be done when the first sheep enter the bridge. The HGH should stand in a way that it sees the handler and the following part of the flock. The HGH has to prevent sheep from going around the bridge and possibly damaging themselves. After the sheep have crossed the bridge the dog follows over the bridge either on command or independently. Right afterwards the HGH has to work the whole length of the flock on the endangered side.

Faults:

- HGH stands on wrong side of the bridge.
- HGH shows little attention to the flock, acts insecurely.
- HGH sniffs, sits, or lies down.
- HGH or man dog lets sheep go around the bridge.
- HGH charges into the flock.
- HGH reacts badly to commands and signals.
- HGH switches sides behind sheep or bridge.
- HGH stands unsteady and insecure.
- HGH needs a lot of help to be placed.

#### 4.8 Grip (8 points are the maximum available)

In every flock are sheep that have no or only a little respect for an HGH and try to challenge the dog. In order to get their respect the HGH has to show once in a while a correct grip. In order to show the necessary result the grip has to be fast, with the full mouth, and with the necessary pressure over a short time period. Unnecessary and many grips are wrong. The HGH has to go with the sheep while gripping. It must not tear. Injuries must not happen. Grips on the back of a back leg, on the back of the neck, and on the ribs are allowed.

When the handler gives the command to grip, the HGH immediately has to go to grip. It must not hesitate. One to two commands should be enough, the same when the dog grips too long and has to release. It has to be noted if the HGH gets the necessary respect and also watches lambs. Just barking is not enough.

Faults:

- HGH is afraid.
- HGH doesn't grip.
- HGH grips too often.
- HGH tears.
- HGH grips too long.
- HGH injures sheep.
- HGH ignores lambs.
- Grip is too hard.

#### 4.9 Obedience (10 points are the maximum available)

Obedience is the foundation of the training. The HGH must be willing and easy to handle. When the handler gives a command or signal the HGH has to carry it out immediately. Obedience is part of every exercise. All commands and signals have to be carried out immediately, enthusiastically and with vivacity – even at a far distance like in the wide graze. The dog may not go after wild animals.

The way the handler works with the HGH shows if the dog obeys happily. The handler's tone will be influenced by his/her composure and confidence and by his/her love, understanding and empathy for the creature.

Faults:

- HGH is badly trained.
- HGH is afraid of handler.

HGH obeys unwillingly.  
Commands and signals are carried out slowly and without desire.  
HGH needs repeated commands and signals.  
Handler and HGH have no relation of trust.  
HGH is under enormous pressure.  
HGH goes after wild animals.

#### 4.10 Diligence (10 points are the maximum available)

The HGH must show joyful willingness at all times. It always has to watch sheep and handler. Liveliness, quickness while working and constant patrolling show a good and diligent HGH. A spectator should get the impression the dog constantly wants to count the sheep.

Faults:

HGH is lazy, tired, or cannot work anymore.  
HGH doesn't listen to commands.  
HGH doesn't see signals.  
HGH shows no ambition.  
HGH shows no interest.

#### 4.11 Independence (10 points are the maximum available)

The HGH is considered working independently when it works where it is needed; (if necessary, it patrols on several sides in the graze), doesn't disturb the sheep, pushes stray sheep back and corrects them if necessary. The independent HGH patrols without getting commands and signals, goes with the flock and watches the sheep while they are grazing.

Faults:

HGH shows little or no independence.  
HGH lacks necessary attention.  
HGH shows little vivacity.  
HGH doesn't cover the whole length of the flock.  
HGH doesn't have courage or strength to correct.  
Handler gives hidden help (wide graze).

#### 4.12 Re-pen (4 points are the maximum available)

At the re-pen the handler stands where the HGH stood while exiting but outside and not inside the pen. He/she lets the sheep go around him/her into the pen. If necessary, he/she leads the sheep into the pen. The HGH has to be placed on the furthest end of the removed panel. It can leave its place if the flock refuses to go into the pen (heat, mud, etc.). Otherwise the flock should be forced to funnel into the pen. The HGH has to prevent sheep from going around. If the last sheep of the flock refuse to go into the pen, the HGH can push slowly on command from behind and can go up to the middle of the gate.

Faults:

HGH stands too far away from panel.  
HGH stands too close to the gate.  
HGH sits, sniffs.  
HGH makes sheep nervous.  
HGH lets sheep go around the pen.  
HGH charges into flock.  
Handler stands in the pen.

**Each dog that will pass shall show pronounced willingness to defend the handler and the flock. (It simulates that a criminal will attack the handler and/or steal sheep.)** The exercise is shown nearby the pen. An agitator threatens (with a bite sleeve and stick) the handler and his dog, while the handler holds his dog on leash. The HGH should show aggression and/or strong interest and/or should bark. The dog is not allowed to grip the sleeve. Shyness and bad nerves are faulty.

These herding regulations are effective as of 2009.