

# Beginner's Guide



## Heelwork to Music

### What is Heelwork to Music?

One of the most exciting innovations in the world of dog training has been the recent introduction of Heelwork to Music (HTM). The title is quite descriptive because competitors design a routine to suit a piece of music of their choice of up to 2.5 minutes in duration.

This new dog training sport has gained many supporters in the short time that it has been available and it is becoming more and more popular for competitors and spectators alike.

Probably it's secret is that not only is it totally different from other dog training disciplines, but additionally it has the emotion and power of music combined with the beauty of a dog showing how versatile it can be. All this adds up to spectator appeal and at its best an HTM routine can be quite breathtaking.

### A Suitable Dog

Most breeds are capable of doing HTM, using variations of music to suit the size and breed of dog as well as handlers capabilities. A reasonable knowledge of basic Obedience and control of the dog is essential and the dogs ability and desire to play is also important.

### Equipment Required

- ✓ Costume
- ✓ Scarf or fancy collar for your dog
- ✓ 2 copies of your CD are recommended
- ✓ Clickers and food



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Supashots

### Basic Training

To start training HTM, clickers and food are often used as a reward to teach various moves. Once the dog has been taught the moves then music is chosen along with choreographed movements in time with the music. There are two styles of HTM.

The first is made up primarily of Heelwork with freestyle moves added. The second style is a predominantly Freestyle routine with moves from distances included, as well as in the heelwork

### Definition of Classes

In New Zealand, the structure of the various levels of heelwork to Music is still being set, the tests being offered can vary from competition to competition and can be determined by the entries received. As the sport grows in popularity it is expected that all levels will be included in both freestyle and heel work to music.

At the moment however, beginners start in Elementary. This class is structured to encourage the beginner, food can be taken into the ring and used to encourage the dog however this must not be actually fed while in the ring. It is recommended that this food be contained in a container or wrapped securely as it must not be dropped in the ring. This would result in automatic disqualification.

From Elementary, competitors move through to Starters. Food cannot be taken into the ring in this grade.

The sport also makes provision for Intermediate and open grades, however at the moment, teams are often moving into the open grade after starters as numbers often do not make an Intermediate grade possible.