

The Dog Sports Code



The Scottish Outdoor Access Code includes a conditional right of access to land across Scotland to train and exercise dogs in canine sports such as canicross, bikejor, scootering and the use of sleds and non-motorised wheeled rigs.

This right of access depends on behaving responsibly at all times and not causing problems for wildlife, livestock and other people visiting or working in the outdoors.

Following this Dog Sports Code, developed in partnership with the Kennel Club, will help you and your dogs stay safe, enjoy your visit and be welcomed back by others.

Stay safe

- Make sure dogs travel safely and are under control when getting in and out of vehicles.
- Ensure all equipment is well-maintained and suitable for your dogs and activity.
- Only use soft, flat, flexible collars and harnesses during training and transportation. Avoid equipment that can cause injury or distress, such as shock, pinch, prong or choke collars.
- Wear all recommended safety equipment including helmets and eye protection as appropriate to your activity and prevailing conditions.
- Use a snub line and shock absorber to connect dogs to fixed objects and your rig, sled, bike, scooter or hip belt.
- Always carry a first aid kit, whistle, personal identification and a mobile phone or other means of summoning help.
- Keep a look out for other visitors and unexpected hazards, especially in poor visibility and after strong winds.
- Abide by all temporary access restrictions to protect wildlife and for land management reasons.
- Stop your activity if the weather or trail conditions threaten the well-being of you or your dogs.
- Check your dogs and yourself for ticks after every visit.
- Avoid leaving dogs unattended when in harness or in a vehicle.
- Follow any additional guidance specific to your activity and equipment; ideally join a club for more advice and support.



Prevent conflict with others

- Park vehicles to avoid causing problems for other visitors or land managers and comply with any local requirements such as parking fees.
- Ensure your dogs are always under control and don't approach any wildlife, livestock or other people and their dogs uninvited.
- Choose your training times and locations to minimise the likelihood of meeting other people.
- Display information where other visitors will see it, advising them that training is taking place and how to stay safe.
- At night, dawn and dusk wear high-visibility clothing and use lights.
- Hail other visitors to warn them of your approach; remember some people may not be able to hear you.
- Slow down and be prepared to stop if you encounter other people, dogs, horses or wildlife.
- Remember that land management operations can occur at any time of day or night; look out for warning signs, diversions or closures.
- Maintain third-party insurance to protect yourself and others in case of an accident.
- Make sure you have permission from the land manager before using all-terrain vehicles or quad bikes.
- If you want to organise an event, follow the land manager's guidance to ensure you do so safely and lawfully.

Be an ambassador for your sport

- Leave only paw prints and wheel tracks behind.
- Remove any fouling or grooming waste; fill any holes your dogs have dug.
- Comply with any local travel restrictions, and clean paws, boots and wheels to avoid spreading pests and diseases to other areas.
- Help other visitors understand your sport and what to do if they encounter dogs being trained or exercised.

