

*Revised 7.2021*

## **Rules and Guidelines for Rally-FrEe**

**Rally Freestyle Elements** (hereafter RFE) offers titles in Rally-FrEe. Rally-FrEe is an amateur canine performance sport that combines the structure of Rally-Obedience with the creativity of Canine Musical Freestyle. Rally-FrEe emphasizes the precise execution of fundamental freestyle and obedience skills, as well as novel behaviors. Rally-FrEe encourages and supports the use of positive-reinforcement training methods that strengthens teamwork and fosters a reciprocal learning process between dog and handler. The goal of Rally-FrEe is for all dogs, handlers and volunteers to enjoy participating in this unique sport.

### **Getting Started**

#### **Dog-and-handler Team Registration**

Rally-FrEe is a canine performance sport performed by a team consisting of a dog and a handler. Registration of a dog must include a named handler. The handler is the person who trains and shows the dog. Handlers may not be paid for services.

All dog-and-handler teams must be registered with RFE prior to competing in a Rally-FrEe event. The one time registration fee helps cover the maintenance of online records of the team's qualifying scores and titles by RFE. A single registration is required to participate in either or both Rally-FrEe and Musical Freestyle events. Only RFE members may register a dog and handler team.

Handlers may join RFE and register their team for competition by clicking on the "members" link on the RFE website home page. At the member's page, click the "join now" button, fill out the form and submit online.

Member benefits include discounted entry fees, discounts on workshops and seminars hosted by RFE, and RFE retail products. RFE members will also have online access to titling records and exclusive training resources and skill courses. The first year of membership is required when handlers register their first dog. Subsequent yearly membership is optional.

#### **Fees:**

First-year membership and lifetime registration of first dog: \$42

Lifetime registration of each additional dog: \$22

Optional subsequent yearly membership: \$20

Entry fees: Titling classes: \$24 for members; \$28 for non-members

Non-titling classes: \$18 for members, \$20 for non-members

Rally Freestyle Elements is owned by Creative Canine, LLC. All correspondence, questions and requests for information or hosting should be directed to Rally Freestyle Elements:

Creative Canine, LLC

Address: 1379 N 9th, Philomath, OR 97370

Phone: 541-929-3915

E mail: [info@rallyfree.com](mailto:info@rallyfree.com)

Website: [www.RallyFree.com](http://www.RallyFree.com)

Sample hidden text to preserve code  
**Etiquette and decorum of the sport**

The atmosphere of a Rally-FrEe event is relaxed and supportive. Exhibitors maintain not only exemplary sportsmanlike conduct throughout the competition, but also act respectfully and supportively toward their dogs, fellow exhibitors, spectators, event organizers and officials. To encourage a relaxed atmosphere, host should have music playing during runs unless asked not to by the exhibitor on the course. Respectful, festive attire for handlers, and decorative collars for dogs, is encouraged though not required and does not affect score. Participation in the sport celebrates the training relationship we create with our dogs.

**Exhibitor Information**

Purebred and mixed breed dogs are welcomed to participate in Rally-FrEe events. A dog or puppy of any age may enter the pre-novice or post-novice non-titling classes. However, a dog must be at least one year old to enter in titling classes. Other species are welcome to participate in the Skills Tests. Please see Skills Test rules for more information.

Bitches in season are not allowed on event grounds. RFE will refund entry fees less a \$10 processing fee if a bitch comes into season just prior to an event.

No correction-based collars or leads are allowed on event grounds. The use of squeakers and other noise-emitting toys should not be used on the event site.

Food and/or toy reinforcers are not allowed in the ring during the performance of the titling classes. However, verbal praise is encouraged.

The recommended dimensions for a competition ring is 40 feet by 60 feet. RFE encourages spectators at Rally-FrEe live events. Adequate space should be available for both spectators, and crating of dogs. A music sound system will be available and exhibitors may bring their own music to be played during their run.

Exhibitors will have access to courses 7-10 days prior to the date of event. Hosts will e mail courses, and in the case of video events, written judge's briefings to exhibitors upon receipt from RFE.

### **Performance Guidelines**

In all classes, a dog-and-handler team will navigate a course of 15 stations and perform the behaviors indicated on each station's sign. The start sign will indicate the initial position of the dog relative to the handler, but it is not judged. However, the finish sign is judged and will always request that the dog take a final bow.

Signs must be placed upright on stands or leaning on something such as cones. Signs may be printed from the Rally-FrEe website or purchased from RFE at the website store.

Signs will be positioned to the left or right of the dog-and-handler team and will generally be placed on the opposite side of the dog so as not to interfere with the team's movement. Signs that direct the dog-and-handler team to change direction, such as left, right or U-turn signs, will be placed directly in front of the dog-and-handler team. Signs

that indicate the entrance to sign #8, Prop Weave, will be placed at the first prop. Signs that indicate the dog will change sides relative to the handler will generally be placed on the same side as the dog on approach to the sign, so that the dog may move to the opposite side of the handler without interference. It is important to follow the correct line of travel on a course map. A video tutorial on how to read a course map can be found on the member's page under the "Training Resources" tab.

Tabs, clips or markers will be attached to the left, top center or the right side of a sign, indicating the dog's position relative to the handler as they approach the sign. If the clip is on the right of the sign, the dog should be on the right side of the handler. If the clip is on the left side of the sign, the dog should be on the left side of the handler. If the clip is on the top center of the sign then the dog will be either in Center or Behind positions relative to the handler. Numbers will be placed at the base, side or top of the sign to indicate the station number. If stations are placed next to each other, whether on the left or right of the handler, the order of the stations are read left to right.

Behaviors should be performed within reasonable proximity to a given sign. A handler should allow sufficient space to ensure that the sign does not interfere with the dog's performance. Knocking or hitting a station sign by either dog or handler may affect the station score and teamwork score.

A team choosing not to execute a sign behavior or passes a sign station without attempting to perform the behavior will earn no score for that station. This will be indicated on the score sheet as "NS" for that station. The team may still qualify, if their total score reaches the minimum qualifying score for the class entered.

There are no automatic or default sits in Rally-FrEe. The dog will remain standing unless indicated on the station sign or in the sign descriptions. Sitting where not indicated will affect the station score.

Each course will include four Free Choice signs in which the handler may choose any behavior for the dog to perform at that station. Upon completion of a Free Choice behavior and before proceeding to the next station, the dog must return to the position held on approach to the Free Choice sign.

The Rally-FrEe course maps that have been approved for classes in a specific event will be available to exhibitors 7-10 days prior to the event. This allows handlers to plan their Free Choice behaviors and better prepare for the day of the event.

Food and/or toy reinforcers are not allowed in the ring during the performance of the titling classes and will result in a disqualification. If a prop used at a Free Choice station is toy-like and appears to be rewarding or motivating to the dog, the prop will be considered a reinforcer. "Rewarding or motivating" behavior is (a) the dog is following the item as if it is a lure or (b) the dog is biting or shaking the items as if playing with it. While reinforcers are not allowed in the ring, verbal praise is encouraged.

Respectful, festive attire for handlers and decorative collars for dogs are encouraged though not required. Dogs may wear undecorated, plain harnesses. No other costuming, clothing or adornment for dogs is allowed, including coat dyes. A plain elastic band may be used for the sole purpose of tying hair or coat off of the dogs face and eyes of long coated breeds. A judge will not penalize a handler for their attire, unless the judge deems the attire inappropriate, and the judge may excuse the dog-and-handler team.

Acting judges may enter that live event and either be judged by another judge in attendance or may take a video of their run(s) and send back to RFE for judging. Acting judges will compete for qualifying scores only and are not eligible for placements.

## **Description of Divisions and Classes**

### **Titling Divisions**

Classes in the titling division allow the dog-and-handler team to achieve title certificates indicating proficiency in the sport. There are two titling divisions; one which is comprised of the Regular Classes and one which is comprised of the Alternative Classes. In addition exhibitors may achieve Skills Test titles. Each of these titling divisions include "Encore Classes". Encore classes allow a dog-and-handler team to continue in a class upon achieving their title, and earn additional titles in that class before opting to move up. Teams may remain in Encore classes indefinitely. In addition RFE offers Pre-Novice and Post-Novice classes which allow handlers to reinforce their dogs in the ring. Descriptions and requirements for each class are described below.

### **Skills Tests**

A dog-and-handler team may earn a Skills Test title that shows proficiency in the execution of the sign behaviors. All skills tests are performed off-leash with the exception of blind or deaf dogs. In each of the below classes the team performs 15 signs in the related class. Fourteen signs are chosen by the exhibitor. One of the signs

will always be sign #32 Bow. The signs are not laid out in a course but are performed individually. The team must reach a total score of 125 to earn a Skills Test title. Teams may continue to earn subsequent Skills Test titles by entering the Encore Skills classes. In earning subsequent Encore Skills tests titles it is recommended that at least some of the signs are different from those performed for the first Skills Test title. Skills Tests are offered once per month and are only available through video. No placements are provided.

While reference is made to “dog-and-handler teams”, species other than canines may participate in the Skills Tests. Please see rules below for each test.

**Skills Test Novice:** A dog-and-Handler team must execute 15 signs from the novice class, chosen by the exhibitor. They must not include sign numbers one, two or three, and must include sign #32 Bow. A team must earn a single score of 125 or higher to achieve their Skills Test Novice title (R-FE/NS). Upon achieving their Skills Test Novice R-FE/NS, a team may enter the Skills Test Intermediate/Advanced class or the team may choose to earn additional titles at this level in the Encore Novice class. See below “Performance Guidelines for Skills Tests” for more information.

**Encore Skills Novice:** Upon achieving their R-FE/NS title, a dog-and-Handler team may opt to enter the Encore Skills Novice class. The team must execute 15 signs from the novice class, chosen by the exhibitor. They must not include sign numbers one, two or three, and must include sign #32 Bow. A team must earn a single score of 125 or higher to achieve their Encore Skills Novice title (R-FE/NSE). See below “Performance Guidelines for Skills Tests” for more information.

**Skills Test Intermediate/Advanced:** Upon achieving their R-FE/NS title, a dog-and-handler team may enter the Skills Test Intermediate/Advanced class. The team must execute 15 signs from the Intermediate and Advanced classes, chosen by the exhibitor. At least 3 signs should be from the Advanced class, and must also include sign #32 Bow. A team must earn a single score of 125 or higher to achieve their Skills Test Intermediate/Advanced title (R-FE/XMS).

**Encore Skills Test Intermediate/Advanced:** Upon achieving their R-FE/XMS title, a dog-and-Handler team may enter the Encore Skills Test Intermediate/Advanced class. A dog-and-Handler team must execute 15 signs from the Intermediate and Advanced classes, chosen by the exhibitor. At least 3 signs should be from the Advanced class and must also include sign #32 Bow. A team must earn a single score of 125 or higher to achieve their Encore Skills Test Intermediate/Advanced title (R-FE/XMSE).

## Performance Guidelines and Briefing for Skills Tests for Dog and Handler Teams:

1. There must be exactly 15 unique signs used with no duplicates. Thus the same sign number with the dog performing the behavior on a different side would not count as a unique sign. Only signs with their own unique sign number may be used. Sign 32 Bow must be included as one of the 15.
2. The judge needs to know what sign you are intending to perform. The sign could be held up to the judge before the behavior is started or upright on the floor and visible to the judge. An alternative is to put captions on the video that do not obstruct the view of the dog or handler. The signs may be printed from the Rally-FrEe site.
3. The video camera should be positioned so both the dog and handler's full bodies are visible for the entire behavior execution including start and end positions.
4. You may video indoors or outdoors. The area shown on video, your working area, should be clear of toys, treat containers, other dogs or people, and provide enough space that furniture or other household items do not appear to act as guides or aids.
5. Performance of all signs may be in sequence with a single un-edited video or may be videoed as individual clips and then edited together. You will be uploading a single video for judging.
6. Handlers may perform the behaviors in a stationary position as if they have already approached the sign, or they may opt to walk a few steps before and/or after performance as if approaching and leaving the station.
7. If using music during the recording of your skills tests, ensure that your cues can be heard over the music. If you over-lay music onto your video, be sure that the video sound is louder than the music so the over-lay of music does not prevent the judge from hearing your cues.
8. It is advisable that you do a test video upload for YouTube to ensure that the music you have chosen will not be blocked. While this is rare, this action by YouTube, due to some copyright rules, blocks out all sound and the judge is then unable to hear praise as part of teamwork, or whether cues are repeated or missed. One option is to post a test video with your music to YouTube or the site you intend to use before recording your performance video. [This video tutorial](#) also explains how to check your music or playability.

9. Be sure to check your pockets for food or toys. These reinforcers are not allowed during the skills test. Training aids are also not allowed during performance of the test, including clickers or targets.
10. Each execution of a sign behavior is worth 10 points. The qualifying score for the Skills Tests is 125/150 available points.

**Specialty Division and Skills Tests for Other Species:** Species other than canines may participate in the Skills Test Classes. Animals and their handlers must execute a total of 10 signs for each test. They must not include sign numbers one or two and must include sign #32 Bow and one Free Choice sign #3, and 8 signs from the class in which they have entered: 8 Novice signs for the Novice Skills Test and 8 Intermediate and Advanced signs any combination for the Intermediate/Advanced Skills Test. The Intermediate/Advanced skills test for other species must include at least one Advanced sign.

**Performance Guidelines and Briefing for Skills Tests for Other Species:**

1. There must be exactly 10 unique signs used with no duplicates. Thus the same sign number with the animal performing the behavior on a different side would not count as a unique sign. Only signs with their own unique sign number may be used. Sign 32 Bow must be included as one of the 10.
2. The judge needs to know what sign you are intending to perform. The sign could be held up to the judge before the behavior is started or upright on the floor and visible to the judge. An alternative is to put captions on the video that do not obstruct the view of the team. The signs may be printed from the Rally-FrEe site.
3. The video camera should be positioned so both members of the teams full bodies are visible for the entire behavior execution including start and end positions.
4. You may video indoors or outdoors. The area shown on video, your working area, should be clear of toys, treat containers, other dogs, animals or people, and provide enough space that furniture or other household items do not appear to act as guides or aids.
5. Performance of all signs may be in sequence with a single un-edited video or may be videoed as individual clips and then edited together. You will be uploading a single video for judging.
6. Handlers may perform the behaviors in a stationary position as if they have already approached the sign, or they may opt to walk a few steps before and/or after performance as if approaching and leaving the station.



7. If using music during the recording of your skills tests, ensure that your cues can be heard over the music. If you over-lay music onto your video, be sure that the video sound is louder than the music so the over-lay of music does not prevent the judge from hearing your cues.
8. It is advisable that you do a test video upload for YouTube to ensure that the music you have chosen will not be blocked. While this is rare, this action by YouTube, due to some copyright rules, blocks out all sound and the judge is then unable to hear praise as part of teamwork, or whether cues are repeated or missed. One option is to post a test video with your music to YouTube or the site you intend to use before recording your performance video. [This video tutorial](#) also explains how to check your music or playability.
9. Behaviors should be on a verbal or physical cue and not lured with food. You may reward your animal after each execution.
10. Each execution of a sign behavior is worth 10 points. In addition, each team may earn up to 50 points for “Teamwork” – the evident engagement, support and willingness to work together as well as the apparent enjoyment derived from working together. The qualifying score for the Specialty Skills Tests is 125/150 available points.

### **Regular Titling Division Classes**

**Regular titling classes are open to all Dog-and-Handler teams.** Dog-and-Handler teams may start at the Novice class and earn a Novice title R-FE/N before moving to the Encore Novice class or the Intermediate class. Any team may enter the Pre-Novice or Post-Novice classes.

**In the Regular titling division classes** a dog-and-handler team must navigate a course of 15 stations and perform the behaviors indicated on each station sign. To earn a qualifying score a dog-and-handler team must reach a score of 125 in the Pre-Novice through Champion classes and a score of 175 in the Grand Champion classes. The number of qualifying scores to earn a title varies with each class.

**Regular classes include “Pre-Novice” and “Post-Novice” titling classes.** Any exhibitor may enter a Pre- or Post-Novice class at anytime. This titling class provides handlers the opportunity to reinforce their dogs in the ring.

Use of food in the Pre-Novice and Post-Novice Classes

1. Handlers may reinforce their dog a maximum of 5 times using food reinforcement.
2. Food reinforcement must be hidden from view until such time it is delivered to the dog. Handlers may store reinforcement in a pant or vest pocket.
3. Food reinforcement should be delivered immediately and not held in the hand. Food should not be used as a lure or prompt.
4. Food may only be provided at the end of a behavior/station exercise and while stopped at a station.
5. Dropped food will result in a score no higher than a 3 for that station
6. All other guidelines pertaining to earning scores remain the same as in any other regular division class.

Failure to perform to the standard of these guidelines will impact execution scores at the station the violation occurred. Dropping food will impact Execution score and Teamwork score. Exhibitors in these classes are not eligible for “High in Trial” or “High Score” awards, however they are eligible for all other special awards.

**Regular classes include “Encore” titling classes.** Exhibitors may enter an Encore class upon achieving the title of the same class, for example, if you have earned a Novice title you may move into Encore Novice class before proceeding to the Intermediate class. For example, if you have earned an Advanced title, you may enter Encore Advanced or Champion, but not Encore Intermediate. You may still enter Encore Intermediate until you have achieved your Advanced title. Until you have achieved a title, you may compete in the previous Encore class. However, you may not compete in both in a same show. The exception is that there are no Encore classes for the Pre- or Post-Novice titling classes.

**Pre-Novice Class:** This titling class provides handlers the opportunity to reinforce their dogs in the ring. Handlers may reinforce their dog a maximum of 5 times using food reinforcement. This class is not a prerequisite to any other class and is open to all dogs and handlers. This class may be performed on or off leash. The signs used in this class are [Novice signs, 1-32](#). The Novice course will be used for this class. A team must earn a score of 125 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Pre-Novice Title (RF-E/Pre-N). Upon achieving their RF-E/Pre-N title a team may advance to the Post-Novice class or the Novice class.

**Post-Novice Class:** This titling class provides handlers the opportunity to reinforce their dogs in the ring. Handlers may reinforce their dog a maximum of 5 times using food reinforcement. This class is not a pre-requisite to any other class and is open to all dogs and handlers. This class may be performed on or off leash. The signs used in this class

are Novice and [Intermediate signs 1-54](#). The Intermediate course will be used for this class. A team must earn a score of 125 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Pre-Novice Title (RF-E/Post-N). Upon achieving their RF-E/Post-N title a team may advance to the Novice class.

**Novice class:** This class is a prerequisite before moving up to the Intermediate class. This class may be performed on or off lead, however, at least 1 qualifying score must be achieved with the dog off-leash before moving up to the Intermediate class. A team must earn a score of 125 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Novice Title (R-FE/N). [Signs 1-32](#) may be included in a Novice course. Upon achieving their Novice R-FE/N title, a team may enter the Intermediate class or the team may choose to earn additional titles at this level in the Encore Novice class.

**Encore Novice class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/N title, a team may opt to enter the Encore Novice class before proceeding to the Intermediate class. Or the team may opt to remain in the Encore Novice class and continue to earn Encore Novice titles up until they earn their Intermediate title. This class may be performed on or off lead, however, at least 1 qualifying score must be achieved with the dog off-leash before moving up to the Intermediate class. A team must earn a score of 125 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Encore Novice Title (R-FE/NE). Those entering Encore Novice will run the Novice course.

**Intermediate class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/N title, a team may enter the Intermediate class. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 125 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Excellent Title (R-FE/X). Signs 1-54 may be included in an Intermediate Level course. [Signs 33-54 are Intermediate signs](#); a minimum of four Intermediate signs must be included in an Intermediate Level course.

**Encore Intermediate class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/X title, a team may opt to enter the Encore Intermediate class before proceeding to the Advanced class. Or the team may opt to remain in the Encore Intermediate class and continue to earn Encore Intermediate titles up until they earn their Intermediate title. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 125 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Encore Excellent Title (R-FE/XE). Those entering Encore Intermediate will run the Intermediate course.

**Advanced class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/X title, a team may enter the Advanced class. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 125 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in two separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Masters Title (R-FE/M). Signs 1-62 may be included in an Advanced Level course. Signs 55-62 are Advanced signs, and a minimum of three Intermediate signs and three Advanced signs must be included in an Advanced course.

**Encore Advanced class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/M title, a team may opt to enter the Encore Advanced class before proceeding to the Champion class. Or the team may opt to remain in the Encore Advanced class and continue to earn Encore Advanced titles until they earn their Championship title. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 125 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Encore Master Title (R-FE/ME). Those entering Encore Advanced will run the Advanced course.

**Championship Class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/M title, a team may enter the Championship class. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 125 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in two separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Champion Title (R-FE/CH). Signs 1-62 may be included in a Championship Level course. A minimum of three Intermediate signs (signs 33-56) and three Advanced signs (signs 57-62) must be included in a Championship Level course.

**Encore Champion class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/CH title, a team may opt to enter the Encore Champion class before proceeding to the Grand Champion class. Or the team may opt to remain in the Encore Champion class and continue to earn Encore Champion titles until they earn their Grand Championship title. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 125 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Encore Master Title (R-FE/CHE). Those entering Encore Champion will run the Champion course.

**Grand Champion Class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/CH title, a team may enter the Grand Championship class. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 175 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn five (5) qualifying scores in five separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Grand Champion Title (R-FE/GrCH). Signs 1-62 may be included in a Grand Championship course. A minimum of three Intermediate signs (signs 33-56) and three Advanced signs (signs 55-62) must be included in a Grand Champion Level course.

**Encore Grand Champion class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/GrCH title, a team may opt to enter the Encore Grand Champion class. The team may opt to remain in the Encore Grand Champion class indefinitely and continue to earn Encore Grand Champion titles. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 175 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn five (5) qualifying scores in five separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Encore Grand Champion Title (R-FE/GrCHE). Those entering Encore Grand Champion will run the Grand Champion course.

### **Alternative Division Levels**

The Alternative Division is for those dogs-and-handler teams who, due to advancing age or physical limitations choose an alternative to the regular titling division. The classes are as indicated above, however are preceded by Alt- (Alt-Novice, Alt-Intermediate, Alt-Advance, and Alt-Champion, Alt-Grand Champion). For all alternative classes, a dog-and-handler team must navigate a course of 15 stations and perform the behavior indicated on each station sign. Certain signs are exempt from use on an Alternative course and are indicated in the sign descriptions with ALT EXEMPT at the end of the sign description. These are signs where the dog must weave through the handler's legs, either forward or backward, any sign where the dog must perform a behavior behind the handler, or any sign where the handler must turn in a circle. An Alternative team may however choose to perform these skills at their Free Choice stations. An Alternative team must earn a score of 100 or higher for a qualifying score with the exception of the Alt-Grand Champion class where the team must earn a qualifying score of 150.

**Alternative Novice class:** This class may be performed on or off lead, however at least 1 qualifying score must be achieved with the dog off-leash before moving up to the Intermediate class, with the exception of blind or deaf dogs. A team must earn a score of 100 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Alternative Novice Title (R-FE/Alt-N). [Signs 1-32](#) may be included in an Alternative Novice class course with the exception of sign numbers 4, 5, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29. Upon achieving their Novice R-FE/Alt-N title, a team may enter the Alt-Intermediate class or the team may choose to earn additional titles at this level in the Encore Alt-Intermediate class.

**Encore Alternative Novice class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/Alt-N title, a team may opt to enter the Encore Alternative Novice class before proceeding to the Alternative Intermediate class. Or the team may opt to remain in the Encore Alternative Novice class and continue to earn Encore Alternative Novice titles, up until they earn their

Alternative Intermediate title. This class may be performed on or off lead, however at least 1 qualifying score must be achieved with the dog off-leash before moving up to the Intermediate class, with the exception of blind or deaf dogs. A team must earn a score of 100 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Encore Alternative Novice Title (R-FE/Alt-NE). Upon achieving their Novice R-FE/Alt-NE title, a team may enter the Alt-Intermediate class or the team may choose to earn additional titles at this level in the Encore Alt-Novice class. Those entering the Encore Alternative Novice class will run the Novice course.

**Alternative Intermediate class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/Alt-N title, a team may enter the Alternative Intermediate class. This class must be performed off-lead, with the exception of blind or deaf dogs. A team must earn a score of 100 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Alternative Excellent Title (R-FE/Alt-X). Signs 1-54 may be included in an Alternative Intermediate course with the exception of sign numbers 4, 5, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 48 and 49. [Signs 33-54 are Intermediate signs](#). A minimum of four Intermediate signs must be included in an Alternative Intermediate course.

**Encore Alternative Intermediate class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/Alt-N title, a team may opt to enter the Encore Alternative Intermediate class before proceeding to the Alternative Advanced class. Or the team may opt to remain in the Encore Alternative Intermediate class and continue to earn Encore Alternative Intermediate titles, up until they earn their Alternative Advanced title. This class must be performed off-lead, with the exception of blind or deaf dogs. A team must earn a score of 100 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Alternative Excellent Title (R-FE/Alt-XE). A team entering the Encore Alternative Intermediate class will run the Alternative Intermediate course.

**Alternative Advanced class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/Alt-X title, a team may enter the Alternative Advanced class. A team must earn a score of 100 or higher for a qualifying score. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in two separate titling events to achieve a Rally Freestyle Elements Alternative Masters Title (R-FE/Alt-M). Signs 1-62 may be included in an Alternative Advanced class course with the exception of sign numbers 4, 5, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 48, 49, 58, 59, 60, 61 and 62. [Signs 55-62 are Advanced signs](#). A minimum of three Intermediate signs and two Advanced signs must be included in an Alternative Advanced class course.

**Encore Alternative Advanced class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/Alt-M title, a team may opt to enter the Encore Alternative Advanced class before proceeding to the Alternative Champion class. Or the team may opt to remain in the Encore Alternative Advanced class and continue to earn Encore Alternative Advanced titles, up until they earn their Alternative Champion title. This class must be performed off-lead, with the exception of blind or deaf dogs. A team must earn a score of 100 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in two separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Encore Alternative Master Title (R-FE/Alt-ME). A team entering the Encore Alternative Advanced class will run the Alternative Advanced course.

**Alternative Championship Class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/Alt-M title, a team may enter the Alternative Championship class. A team must earn a score of 100 or higher for a qualifying score. This class must be performed off-lead with the exception of blind or deaf dogs. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in two separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Champion Title (R-FE/Alt-CH). Signs 1-62 may be included in a Championship Level course with the exception of sign numbers 4, 5, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 48, 49, 58, 59, 60, 61 and 62. A minimum of three Intermediate signs (signs 33-54) and two Advanced signs (signs 55-62) must be included in an Alternative Championship course.

**Encore Alternative Champion class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/Alt-CH title, a team may opt to enter the Encore Alternative Champion class before proceeding to the Alternative Grand Champion class. Or the team may opt to remain in the Encore Alternative Champion class and continue to earn Encore Alternative Champion titles, up until they earn their Alternative Grand Championship title. This class must be performed off-lead, with the exception of blind or deaf dogs. A team must earn a score of 100 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in two separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Encore Alternative Champion Title (R-FE/Alt-CHE). A team entering the Encore Alternative Champion class will run the Alternative Champion course.

**Alternative Grand Championship Class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/Alt-CH title, a team may enter the Alternative Grand Championship class. A team must earn a score of 150 or higher for a qualifying score. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Grand Champion Title (R-FE/Alt-GrCH). Signs 1-62 may be included in a Championship Level course with the exception of sign numbers 4, 5, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33, 35, 38, 39, 48, 49, 58, 59, 60, 61 and 62. A minimum of three Intermediate

signs (signs 33-54) and two Advanced signs (signs 55-62) must be included in a Grand Championship course.

**Encore Alternative Grand Champion class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/Alt-CH title, a team may opt to enter the Encore Alternative Grand Champion class. The team may opt to remain in the Encore Grand Champion class indefinitely and continue to earn Encore Alternative Grand Champion titles. This class must be performed off-lead, with the exception of blind or deaf dogs. A team must earn a score of 150 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn three (3) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Encore Alternative Grand Champion Title (R-FE/Alt-GrCHE). A team entering the Encore Alternative Grand Champion class will run the Alternative Grand Champion course.

### **Elite Titling Division Classes**

**The Elite Division is open to teams that have earned their Rally-FrEe Champion title.** In the Elite titling division classes a dog-and-handler team must navigate a course of 15 stations and perform the behaviors indicated on each station sign. To earn a qualifying score a dog-and-handler team must reach a score of 165 in the Novice through Champion classes and a score of 185 in the Grand Champion classes. The number of qualifying scores to earn a title varies with each class. There are no Encore classes in the Elite Division.

**Elite Novice class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/CH title, a team may enter the Elite Novice class. This class must be performed off lead. A team must earn a score of 165 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Elite Novice Title (R-FE/EN). [Signs 1-32](#) may be included in an Elite Novice course. Upon achieving their Elite Novice R-FE/EN title, a team may enter the Elite Intermediate class or the team may choose to earn additional titles at this level in the Encore Elite Novice class.

**Elite Intermediate class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/EN title, a team may enter the Elite Intermediate class. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 165 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in three separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Elite Excellent Title (R-FE/EX). Signs 1-54 may be included in an Elite Intermediate Level course. [Signs 33-54 are Intermediate sign](#); a minimum of four Intermediate signs must be included in an Intermediate Level course.



**Elite Advanced class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/EX title, a team may enter the Elite Advanced class. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 165 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in two separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Elite Masters Title (R-FE/EM). Signs 1-62 may be included in an Elite Advanced Level course. [Signs 55-62 are Advanced signs](#), and a minimum of three Intermediate signs and three Advanced signs must be included in an Advanced course.

**Elite Championship Class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/EM title, a team may enter the Elite Championship class. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 165 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in two separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Champion Title (R-FE/ECH). Signs 1-62 may be included in an Elite Championship Level course. A minimum of three Intermediate signs (signs 33-56) and three Advanced signs (signs 57-62) must be included in a Championship Level course.

**Elite Grand Champion Class:** Upon achieving their R-FE/ECH title, a team may enter the Elite Grand Championship class. This class must be performed off-lead. A team must earn a score of 185 or higher for a qualifying score. A team must earn two (2) qualifying scores in 2 separate titling events to achieve a Rally-FrEe Grand Champion Title (R-FE/EGrCH). Signs 1-62 may be included in an Elite Grand Championship course. A minimum of three Intermediate signs (signs 33-56) and three Advanced signs (signs 55-62) must be included in an Elite Grand Champion Level course.

### **Titles Earned with Distinction – Magna Cum Laude**

Any dog-and-handler team earning an average qualifying score of 190 for a title at any level will earn the distinction of Magna Cum Laude. The MCL designation will be added to the title conveyed for that class.

### **Advancing to the Next Class (Move-Ups)**

Upon achieving a title, the dog-and-handler team may choose to move up to an Encore class or to the next class in the progression, or if indicated, change to the Alternative Division. Teams may not move downward in progression of classes. Move ups may occur upon entry of an event. In the case of live back-to-back events, a move up may occur prior to the second show. Move-ups will be accepted by the host immediately following the end of the first show.

## **Changing Titling Divisions**

A dog-and-handler-team may take their qualifying scores and titles from the Regular titling division into the Alternative titling division without starting at the Alternative Novice class, if their situation dictates. However the titles earned after moving to the Alternative division will be Alternative Titles. If a dog-and-handler team wishes to move from the Alternative titling division to the Regular titling division, they must start at the Regular Novice Titling class in order to achieve Regular Division titles.

## **Judging Criteria and Scoring Guidelines**

Rally-FrEe judges will apply subjective scoring. Judging begins when the judges says “forward.” Judging is complete when the dog-and-handler team passes sign #32, Bow.

Each team enters the ring with 0 points. There are no deductions taken in Rally-FrEe. Teams earn their points through the execution of each station sign, their heelwork, attention and teamwork, and the additional points earned for creativity and/or difficulty at each Free Choice sign.

Scoring is subjective. In determining the points awarded for each station, judges will assess the dog’s responsiveness to handler cues, the precision and execution of the behavior(s) represented on each sign, the precision of the start and ending position of each behavior(s) indicated on each sign and the ability of the dog to focus on both the handler and the task. Exhibitors can earn a maximum of 200 points. See individual class descriptions for qualifying scores for each class.

### **Points are awarded based on a 1-10 scale:**

A sign performed “With Significant Deficiencies” can earn 1-3 points

A sign performed “Adequately to Well” can earn 4-7 points

A sign performed “Very Well to Superb” can earn 8-10 points

**Teams will earn points at each sign according to the following criteria:**

***Performed with Significant Deficiencies (1–3 points)***

Teams will earn a maximum of 1–3 points at a station which the primary or essential part of the behavior is incomplete or poorly executed to the point that it is not recognizable as the fundamental behavior.

***Performed Adequately to Well (4–7 points)***

“Adequately” is defined as performing the primary or essential part(s) of the behavior effectively enough for the judge to identify the fundamental parts of the behavior without observing *significant* deficiencies. Some deficiencies may be present. If the team is off-course they can earn no more than 4-5 points depending on the execution of the sign behavior. Off-course is defined as the dog on the incorrect side of the handler or the team on the incorrect side of the sign. Off-course may also include a dog-and-handler team that veers significantly from the course map or signs performed out of order.

“Well” is defined as performing the primary or essential part(s) of the behavior while meeting all minimum requirements of the sign description. Extraneous behaviors not essential to the performance of the sign behavior may or may not effect score depending on the extent of these irrelevant behaviors and whether the judge views these behaviors as refusals or missed cues. Hand or body cues that appear obvious to the dog and aid in the execution of the behavior will not score more than a 7 and could score less depending on the extent of the aid.

***Performed Very Well to Superbly (8–10 points)***

“Very Well” is defined as performing the primary or essential part(s) of the behavior while meeting the minimum requirements of the sign description. The performance includes a high degree of precision, accuracy and response to handler’s cues.

“Superbly” is defined as performing the primary or essential parts of the behavior while exceeding the minimum requirements of the sign description. The performance includes meeting all performance guidelines with an exceptional degree of precision, accuracy and response to handler’s verbal cues. It also includes a high degree of precision in the start and end position in regards to the performance of the sign as well as exceptional attention and teamwork.

In addition to station scores Teams are provided a 1-10 score for their over-all heelwork, Attention, and Teamwork.

**Heelwork**, as judged criteria, is the dog's ability to remain precisely within a consistent proximity to the handler, while moving in any direction and while performing the behaviors indicated at each station. In order to be considered "Heelwork" the dog's body must be overlapping the handler's. Changes in position or proximity to the handler when not indicated on a sign are considered faults. There are no automatic or default sits in Rally-FrEe. The dog will remain standing unless indicated on the station sign or in the sign descriptions.

**Attention**, as judged criteria, is the ability of the dog to focus on the handler and on the task. The dog is responsive to cues and does not disengage from the handler. Eye contact is not a necessary component of attention, however is a clear indication that the dog is attentive to the handler.

**Teamwork**, as judged criteria, is the evident engagement, support and willingness to work together and the apparent enjoyment derived from working together as a dog-and-handler team. Support includes but is not limited to appropriate choices by the handler that aid the dog in the correct performance of the sign behaviors, such as allowing the dog to complete behaviors before moving to the next station, or ensuring the dog has adequate space to avoid hitting signs.

### **Scoring of Free Choice Behaviors**

In the scoring of "Free Choice" sign behaviors, judges will observe only that which is presented and shall not assume they know what the intended behavior is. However if a judge is unable to determine whether there was a completed behavior, they may provide a lower score in both execution and additional Free Choice points. Apparent mistakes as indicated by the handler may be taken into account as may any verbal cues that indicate the intended behavior. The precision of the start and end positions will also be considered in scoring "Free Choice" signs.

The dog and handler team may leave the line of travel when performing a free choice behavior, however, they must return to the line of travel before continuing to the next station. Signs may not be used as props in the performance of "Free Choice" behaviors.

Handlers are urged to limit the number of behaviors performed at a Free Choice station and refrain from performing long sequences. Performing more than 1 or 2 behaviors with transitions out of and back into position will likely increase risk of accurate execution and station points earned. Performing multiple behaviors in a sequence will not necessarily benefit the possible additional points earned at Free Choice stations.

And the additional time taken at Free Choice stations where sequences are performed could impact the team's ability to stay under the 4 minute time limit.

Handlers may use props in their Free Choice behaviors. Props should be set up at the station prior to the team entering the ring for performance. Handlers will have 45 seconds to set up their props and 45 seconds to remove their props at the end of the performance. Failure to remove props in the allotted time will result in a disqualification. If a handler opts to keep a prop on their person during a performance such as a scarf the dog jumps through or a handkerchief pulled from the handler's pocket, it is the handler's responsibility to ensure the prop is appropriate in terms of not being viewed as a toy or motivator/reinforce by the judge.

Dog-and-Handler teams can earn up to an additional 5 points for Free Choice Behaviors. The 1-5 points awarded for creativity and/or difficulty are based on the following guide.

1 point: Simple single behavior such as sit or down

2 points: Novice class behavior or other novel or creative behavior with equivalent difficulty

3 points: Intermediate class behavior or other novel or creative behavior with equivalent difficulty

4 points: Advanced class behavior or other novel or creative behavior with equivalent difficulty

5 points: Behavior that is beyond the training level of the Advanced class behaviors or other highly, creative or difficult behavior

### **Use of a Leash**

Leashes are allowed in the Novice classes. All other classes must be performed off-leash with the exception of blind or deaf dogs entered in the Alternative classes.

A handler that chooses to perform their run on leash needs to consider their ability to use the leash appropriately. The following guidelines apply to teams that choose to perform their runs on leash where allowed.

Any leash shorter than 4 ft including “tabs”, or longer than 6 ft is not allowed in the performance ring. Retractable leashes and chain leashes are not allowed in the performance ring. Leashes may not be used to manipulate the dog or restrict the dog’s movement in the form of a “tight leash”. The use of a tight leash will result in a lower score for execution of the behavior at the sign stations as well as lower scores in Heelwork, Teamwork and Attention. It is recommended that exhibitors work to maintain a “J” between the snap of the leash on the dog’s collar and the hand which holds the leash. This will help to ensure that a lower score is not received for a tight leash.

A handler that uses the leash to reprimand the dog through leash pops/jerks will be disqualified.

Leashes may be dropped only while performing behaviors in which the dog passes through the handler’s legs or Free Choice behaviors where the leash would impede the dog’s ability to complete the behavior. The leash must then be picked up before continuing to the next station. If the leash is dropped at a station other than where the dog passes through the handler’s legs, or at a Free Choice station as indicated above, the team will receive a score indicating a deficiency (1-3 pts) at that station.

### **Hand Signals and Other Physical Cues**

In the scoring of physical cues or hand signals, the goal is for handlers to cue their dogs with subtle physical cues or verbal-only cues. Judges will take subtlety of physical cues into consideration.

A team will not earn more than a score of 7 at a station where the handler uses a lure-like hand signal or a signal that is an obvious aid to the dog and could earn less if the hand signal is excessive to the point of uncertainty as to whether the dog could complete the behavior without the hand being used as a lure. Large body cues such as, but not limited to, a bend at the waist to aid in cueing the bow, or a twisting of the upper body to aid in cueing forward or backward circles will also not earn more than a score of 7. Very subtle hand cues or slight physical cues may earn a score of 8 but are not likely to earn a higher score.

Due to the high number of variables of physical cues and the resulting behavior, scores provided for stations that include physical cues are at the judge’s discretion, while applying the above guidelines.

In general: Hand or body cues that appear obvious to the dog and aid in the execution of the behavior will not score more than a 7 and could score less depending on the extent of the aid.

A team's performance of a station will not result in a lower score if the handler provides multiple verbal cues provided the dog responds on the first cue and does not exhibit refusals. Large lure-like hand cues at any level will earn lower scores than subtle hand or

body cues or verbal-only cues. As teams progress through the classes, the expectation is for handlers to use fewer physical cues and increasingly rely upon verbal cues.

## **Barking**

Barking or other vocalizations that are *excessive or affect the execution of station behaviors* will receive lower station scores than if performed with no barking or vocalization. Teamwork score will also be affected by excessive barking. The random bark at one or two stations is not likely to affect station score unless quality of the station behavior lessens as a result. Excessive barking or vocalization as determined by the judge will affect teamwork score. The effect of barking on scores is at the judge's discretion while applying the above guideline.

## **Repeating a Station**

"Re-doing" a station following deficiencies, by stepping back and approaching the station again will not improve upon the score of the first attempt. When scoring a station Judges will consider the totality of behaviors observed performed at the station whether they are part of the sign description or extraneous to it.

The scoring of the station begins when the team arrives within close proximity to the sign and ends when they leave the proximity of the station or when there is an obvious end to the behavior. This includes moving forward to continue on the course or moving backward to re-position the dog for an additional attempt. Behaviors performed at the station after re-approaching will not be applied to the station score. Leaving the station as a result of performing a behavior such as a side pass or walking weave is not affected by this rule.

## **In Addition**

A dog that leaves their handler at a station will earn a score indicating a significant deficiency (1-3) at that station. A dog that leaves their handler one time in between the stations will not earn more than 7 points in Heelwork, Attention and Teamwork. A dog that leaves their handler two or more times will not earn more than 3 points in each Heelwork, Attention and Teamwork.

The estimated time for each run is 1-3 minutes. The maximum time for each run is 4 minutes. A dog-and-handler team that has reached the 4-minute time limit will be disqualified. A judge may allow the team to continue on the course, provided the team has passed station #12. However, scoring will stop at the 4 minute time limit.

Placements for tied scores will be determined by which team had the higher teamwork score. If the teams are still tied, placements will then be determined by the higher total Free Choice score.

Disqualifications: A dog-and-handler team will be disqualified for any of the following:

- Dog eliminating in the ring
- Taking food, a toy motivator/reinforcer, or training aid into the ring in the titling classes with the exception of Pre-Novice and Post-Novice classes
- Correcting the dog through leash jerks or other physical means
- Dog or handler leaving the ring (dog or handler's whole body must leave the ring with obvious intent of no longer performing)
- Team going over the 4 minute time limit
- Team going over 45 seconds to set up or remove props
- Dog wearing apparel other than decorative or non-decorative collars, or non-decorative harnesses (long-coated breeds may wear non-decorated bands for the purpose of keeping hair out of the eyes)
- In the case of video submissions, signs lying flat on the ground without stands, cones or other means to bring upright
- Exhibitor arguing or using inappropriate language toward a judge, event official, or volunteer
- Performing a behavior the judge deems unsafe for the dog, handler or spectators
- Dog wearing any gear that is not allowed, such as tabs, inappropriate leash length, or correction based collars



**Hosting a Live Event:** Before applying to host your first Rally-FrEe event, read all of the rules and guidelines. [Hosting applications](#) are available on the website. Approval or denial is generally provided within five days. If your application is denied, the reasons for the denial will be stated and you will be given an opportunity to rectify those objections. Only Rally-FrEe members may host Rally-FrEe events.

Hosts may hold back-to-back weekend events or back-to-back daily events, depending on the anticipated number of entries. No more than three events may be held within a two-day period. Hosts will choose a theme and name for their event in keeping with the intended relaxed atmosphere of RFE events.

All event entries go directly to Rally Freestyle Elements. The split for entry fees is 70% to the hosting entity and 30% to Rally Freestyle Elements. Proceeds are sent to the host within seven business days of the closing date. Application and approval of an event stands as an agreement for the above mentioned allotment and dispersal of monies.

If you have questions regarding the hosting of a Rally-FrEe event and are unable to locate the answers on the site or in the guidelines, please feel free to contact us!

**Guidelines for Hosting a Live Event:** Once the application to host an event is approved and your opening (no earlier than 6 months prior and no later than 2 months prior) and closing dates (3 weeks prior to event) are set you are ready to go to work at creating the most fun event possible!

- Secure your venue
  - Recommended ring size is 40 feet by 60 feet. Exceptions may be requested with good cause.
    - Rally-FrEe approved course maps are displayed in 40 feet by 60 feet configuration, and may sometimes be adjusted to fit approved size. The judge has final approval of spacing of signs and exact layout and they may depart slightly from intended course.
  - There should be adequate crate space and room for exhibitors and audience members to view the ring.
  - Some exhibitors may choose to change into more festive attire for their run; therefore, a changing area

should be provided. This may be a restroom or other area set aside for this purpose.

- Equipment for playing music, ideally with different formats (mp3, CD) should be available. Some exhibitors may choose to have specific music playing during their run. Music should be playing continuously at live events.
- Multiple rings may run at the same time if space allows. It is suggested that one ring be used for training levels where food reinforcement or other training aids may be used, allowing the second ring to remain clean and used solely for exhibitors seeking to earn titling legs. If more than one ring is being used, only exhibitors in the competition ring will have the option of playing their chosen music.
- Hosts will choose a name for the show. Decorations and hospitality are optional but encouraged.
- Secure all equipment necessary to host a safe and enjoyable event:
  - Ring gating/matting
  - Boombox or sound system, music/playlist for background music
  - Signs (can be downloaded and printed from website or purchased from RFE)
  - Sign holders
  - Markers, or clips to indicate side of dog in relation to the handler
  - Station numbers
- Invite your judge(s):
  - A list of certified judges is available on the host application.
  - Hosts are responsible for the travel/lodging costs of their judges.
  - A judging contract is advisable. A standard judge's contract is available on the website.
  - Creative Canine, LLC, doing business as Rally Freestyle Elements, will pay judges at a rate of \$1 per run for all live events.
  - The maximum number of runs by a single judge during an event has not yet been determined. However hosts and judges should plan on 15 runs per hour plus 15 minutes for each course change and walk thru.
- The estimated time for each run is 1-3 minutes

- The maximum time for each run is 4 minutes. A dog-and-handler team that has reached the 4-minute time limit will receive an NQ score. A judge may allow the team to continue on the course, provided the team has passed station #12.
- Submit your announcement for the RFE website and e-lists and begin advertising.
  - Announcement should include:
- Name and theme (if any) of event
  - Location of event
  - Size and number of ring(s)
  - Opening and closing dates
  - The name of judge(s)
  - Info on hotels or campsites or other available lodging
  - Solicitation of special awards if offered. Include any special awards in addition to placements and qualifying ribbons, if offered by host club.
  - Date on which courses will be available for preview
  - Contact info for event host and Rally Freestyle Elements
- Following the closing date
  - Order appropriate number of qualifying and placement ribbons and special awards if offered. Contact RFE for correct placement ribbon colors, logo or to order ribbons from RFE.
  - Determine running order and schedule
  - Solicit volunteers
  - Volunteers are an integral part of well run Rally-FrEe events. The following minimum volunteer positions will need to be filled:
- Check in
  - Gate Stewards
  - Timer
  - Music Person
  - Scorekeeper for data entry
  - Judges assistant
- On completion of event
  - If not entered directly into database, send compiled results, in provided Excel score reporting form to RFE
  - Provide score sheet to exhibitor
- Send a brief report to RFE describing what made your event successful or how it might have been more successful.

## **Video Events**

Rally Freestyle Elements offers video events for those that either live too far from live events or for those dogs not suited to the show environment. All rules and guidelines that apply to live events also apply to video events. There are two types of video events, private video events hosted by individual members and regional video events hosted by RFE.

For privately hosted video events a minimum of 3 dog-and-handler teams submitting video entries is required in order to be judged and earn qualifying scores and titles. A maximum of 10 video entries per privately hosted event is allowed. All entries in privately hosted events must reside in the same geographic location with addresses being no more than a 500 mile distance from the host. If a privately hosted video event has over 10 entries, a live event is encouraged. If there are less than 10 entries, RFE will offer the opportunity to enter to others in your geographic area. For hosted Rally-FrEe video events, only titling classes are offered.

Video event hosts fill out the online “application to host an event”. On the application, hosts will choose the “date of event”. This is the date in which videos need to be submitted to RFE via online.

The host will also choose an “opening date” and a “closing date”. The opening date is the date which entries will be accepted for the event. The closing date is the date after which entries will no longer be accepted for the event. For video events, please allow *at least* 14 days from the closing date to the “date of event”. This ensures that RFE will be able to get courses to the host for distribution to exhibitors 7-10 days prior to the “date of event.”

Entry forms for privately hosted events are found by clicking “enter online” next to the event you would like to enter on the green side-bar on the member’s page. If you are unsure whether you meet the 500 mile requirement, please contact the host, also listed there, or RFE.

RFE hosts 12 regional video events per year. The schedule for these events and eligibility to enter can be found through a link on the RFE website calendar.

In addition, RFE also hosts monthly Skills Tests offered for video only. Guidelines relating to these tests are listed under “Skills Tests” above, along with the description of divisions and classes.

For video events, approved course maps are delivered to the host via e mail attachment. The host will then forward the course(s) on to all exhibitors entered. Once the courses have been sent, exhibitors will have 7-10 days to video and submit their video URL (web address where video can be found). Exhibitors must submit their video no later than the “date of event” by going into their RFE online account, click on the events tab, then clicking “details” for the event they have entered and pasting the URL into the designated box, then clicking update.

To get a URL, videos are uploaded to YouTube, Vimeo or file sharing sites such as Dropbox. Please note that only YouTube offers copyright protection.

Upon receipt of entries, they will be scored by the event Judge. Judges will be required to return scores to RFE within 2 weeks of the “date of event”. Results of video events are then e-mailed to exhibitors along with their score sheet. RFE will supply qualifying and placement ribbons to those scores that meet the criteria.

#### **Step-by-Step Process to host a video event:**

1. Fill out the “application to host an event”
2. Contact your exhibitors. Between the opening and closing date, exhibitors can enter
3. Upon the closing date, RFE will send course maps to host for distribution to exhibitors

Exhibitors will have until the “date of event” to video and upload to a video site, and copy and paste the URL in the entered event form under the “events” tab at their RFE account page

4. RFE will then process all entries. Judge will return scores to RFE within 2 weeks and RFE will notify all exhibitors of scores and placements no later than 4 weeks following date of event
5. RFE will send qualifying and placement ribbons to exhibitors

#### **Step-by-Step Process to enter a video event:**

1. Find the event you would like to enter on the member’s page in the green side bar
2. Between the opening and closing date, click on “enter online” next to the event you would like to enter
3. Using the drop down menus to fill out the entry form

4. Click continue and proceed to payment page after checking the box indicating acceptance of conditions of entry
5. Check with your host if have not received the course within 7-10 days of the “date of event”
6. Video your run and upload to a video sharing site such as YouTube. Copy and paste the URL where video may be viewed into the “details” of your entry in your member account. Note: only YouTube provides copyright protection whereas sites such as vimeo or drop box do not. To find out if your music is playable under YouTube music licensing, [please view this tutorial](#) found on the YouTube site.

### **Video-taping your routine**

The videographer should be positioned in the ring so as to capture the performance of the signs. However the videographer does not need to follow the team closely, but rather find a location within the course where discreet movements allow for a judge to be able to view the positions and behaviors performed. If the handler feels the performance of the behavior will not be visible to the judge, for example a paw lift on the far side of the videographer, the handler may turn to face the camera, perform the behavior, and then turn back to the direction of travel. Using the zoom lens will also allow the judge to get a better view of performance of the sign while still maintaining a distance from the team. If RFE or the assigned judge feels the video is not of a quality where fair scoring can be applied, the video entry will be returned with recommendations for camera position. The return of said video will not affect the other video entries in the group. If the exhibitor chooses to resubmit the video, RFE will determine if a new course will be provided. If you have questions regarding video entries please [contact us](#).

### **Becoming a Certified Judge**

Applications to become a certified judge are available on the Rally-FrEe website. Judges must have the ability to observe and fairly assess performance as written in the Rally-FrEe guidelines. Applicants should have either a judging background in other canine performance sports or titled in either Rally-FrEe, Canine Musical Freestyle or Rally-Obedience.

Applicants will be asked to demonstrate their ability to perform a variety of Rally-FrEe signs from all classes. Applicants will be required to participate in an online training meeting and when possible, accompany a certified judge to an event or fun match. To better assess applicant’s ability to observe and consistently assess performance fairly, they will be required to view and judge several video performances.

All certified judges will be required to achieve their R-FE/Novice title within their first year of certification and their R-FE/Master's title within 3 years of certification. All certified judges must be members in good standing of Rally Freestyle Elements.

To apply to become a certified judge:

- Fill out and submit an [application](#)
- Schedule an online training meeting
- Schedule demonstration of Rally-FrEe signs
- Schedule viewing/judging of video performances

### **Glossary for Signs Descriptions:**

**ALT-Exempt:** Refers to any sign that is exempt from the Alternative Division classes.

**CW and CCW:** Refers to Clockwise and Counter-Clockwise and indicates the direction of a behavior the dog is to perform.

**Colors on the signs:** Green will refer to the dog and lavender will refer to the handler.

**Heelwork:** the dog's ability to remain precisely within a consistent proximity to the handler, while moving in any direction and while performing the behaviors indicated at each station. Changes in position or proximity to the handler when not indicated on a sign are considered faults.

∞ **Infinity Symbol:** When this symbol appears on a sign it refers to the handler having a choice, either in the transition, the direction or as in the case of sign #3 free choice behavior, a choice on what behavior to perform.

**Pivot:** On inside pivots (dog on left, doing a left turn pivot or dog on right doing a right turn pivot) The dog's front feet are the pivot point. On outside pivots (dog on left doing a right turn pivot, or dog on right doing a left turn pivot), the handler is the pivot point. On Center and Behind pivots, (dog in center or behind positions) the handler's feet are the pivot point.

**Positions:** Refer to the location of the dog in relation to the handler. The dog should remain in a stand.

**Left heel** position is directly to the left of the handler, with the dog and handler facing forward.

**Right heel** position is directly to the right of the handler, with the dog and handler facing forward.

**Center** position is directly in front of the handler, with dog and handler facing each other.

**Behind** position is directly behind the handler, with the dog and handler facing the same direction.

**Prop:** A prop as it is referred to in sign #8 are the objects in which a team will pass through in a slalom pattern. These may be no more than 18" wide and 3' tall and a minimum of 7" tall.

**Prop:** In the Non-titling Divisions a prop refers to training tools such as platforms, targets, target sticks, barriers or training gates.

**Prop:** In the Titling Divisions a prop refers to items the dog and handler may need to perform their Free Choice behaviors for sign #3, such as a cane or other item that the dog or handler interact with.

**Sidepass:** Refers to the lateral movement of the dog in either direction and on any side or position in relation to the handler.

**Trx:** Refers to "transition". A transition is any move that allows the dog and or handler to change position and or direction.