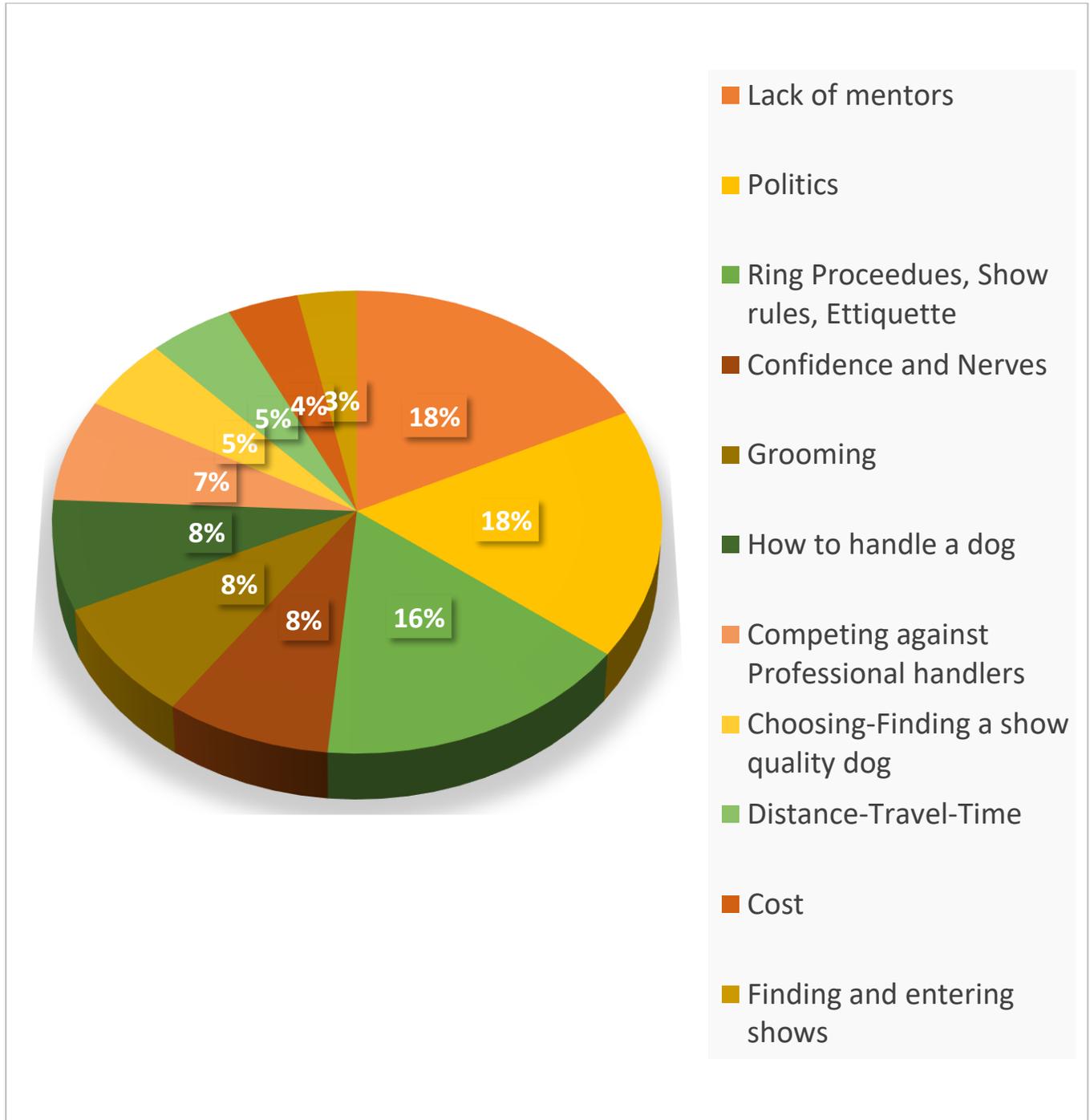




Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

**Question: What were the most challenging barriers you face(d) as a beginner?
(Categorized all answers)**





Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

This chart shows the top 11 categories that most survey takers chose. We allowed for multiple answers and comments. However, we did find some additional answers that did not fit into these 11 categories. The complete data is listed below.

What were the most challenging barriers you face(d) as a beginner?

Feeling afraid that I didn't know the pattern the judge wanted me to do. When I started, it was the dreaded L or T that through you for a loop. Always the fear of the judge getting angry, or you becoming embarrassed or frustrated.

I was blessed to never feel that there were barriers when I started showing. I had very helpful and encouraging mentors and friends. Once I conquered my nerves I never looked back!

Good advice

Not understanding that it's not as easy as it looks.

Trying to feel and look smooth in the ring - also proper grooming of my English Cockers

N/A

Where to find a responsible breeder. How to evaluate a dog especially your own. Learning how to present a dog to the judge and being a good enough owner handler to beat professional handlers sometimes. Understanding that some judges might not understand your breed. You may lose a lot.

I was 15 and no one help[ed], nor did I know to ask, was a interesting beginning

Learning how to show my dog

Finding a place to practice and learning what had changed especially grooming since the 60s/70s when I showed as a Jr in Jr showmanship and Reg breed ring

Not knowing how it all worked

Grooming for my specific Breed. Finding suitable beginners classes for confirmation training.

We were fortunate in that we had a fabulous mentor in the breeder of our foundation dogs. Also, fun matches were readily available throughout the area and were of great worth in learning the ropes of showing a dog and at a price considerably less than regular AKC shows.

Inadequate advice on handling and showing dogs. Lack of a mentor who was not jealous of my dog or overly competitive. Judges who play favorites with known handlers!!!

Other exhibitors attitudes.

None

I lived 200mi from the closest kennel club so it was impossible for me to attend any classes. All the training I did with my dog was at home. I was grateful for the handling seminars. At my first show (fall 20**), I sat in the audience of a Jr Handling seminar and took notes as a spectator all the way through and applied them to my handling.

Understanding that getting a conformation championship on a dog is a lot of work. We did not live close to the breeder, so we did not get a lot of help showing.

Grooming

Rules of showing

"I didn't know anyone locally who show our breed and most used handlers who took care of the grooming.

Grooming advice was hard to come by.

Also, advice at shows was sometimes not well intentioned."

Lack of knowledge showing & my breed.



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Finding my specific breed mentor
Learning how to look like I was enjoying myself in the ring and how to have fun in the ring.
Had a breed dominated by handlers
Judges who didn't smile or make you feel comfortable
Learning what the code, or etiquette of showing was
Grooming
Finding local shows to attend and help with grooming
Not understanding the limitations of my first dog. She wasn't that good, but my breeder didn't mentor me about that.
How to show your dog.
Lack of experience and no help/feeling alienated or unwelcome
No one wanting to help or too busy
No one to learn from.
Lack of understanding of how dogs did/didn't fit the breed standard
Time and cost factor
Getting someone to give a Junior a nice dog. I dislike when people post "dog looking for performance/juniors home". Juniors need nice dogs too. People will say they shouldn't look at the dog but unfortunately if it comes down to it they aren't going to pick a poorly built dog.
Learning how to show
Understanding type vs structure
Understanding ring procedures
Learning how to groom properly
Being terrified to do something wrong
Find someone to help me...
Learning proper grooming and handling techniques
Location
Learning how to groom properly, started with cockers
Understanding the show format and entries.
I had a solid foundation of mentors, so the hardest thing was just learning how to show.
Learning how things are done
Getting started. "How do I enter? How do I fill out an entry form? What class do I enter? Where do I submit it?"
Thankfully most supers are online now, but we should have a more clear "Dog show 101!" link on all super pages to show exhibitors HOW to use their website and HOW to enter a dog show. There is such a thing as a "new exhibitor briefing" but that is not published large enough in the premium (premiums are CONFUSING if you are new and don't know what you're looking at!) or made readily available for new exhibitors.
the phrase you haven't paid your dues yet. Frustrating when everyone is out for themselves
Getting breeders to give a Junior a nice dog.
Finding a breeder willing to give a young person a chance
My breed was very "cliquey" when I started. Thankfully was not my first breed.
Resistance to help a newcomer
Getting a good dog. Breeders don't want to give up their best to newbies
Feeling welcome
Learning that it's a lot harder than it seems. Also, understanding that my first dog was not worthy of a conformation championship; that's a hard pill to swallow.
Best training method for each dog - each dog learns differently
Breaking through people that have been handling for a long time.
very few good handling classes where i used to live



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Politics, poor judging and judges with bad attitudes/rudeness- all still factors 30 years into showing
Knowing what to do, where to go. Asking questions of more experienced handlers and receiving no help. Ring stewards have been helpful.

Finding shows. Knowing where to go or what to do for ring procedures

Having little knowledge about the actual workings of a show

Having little knowledge about the actual workings of a show

Having little knowledge about the actual workings of a show

difficulty find a handling class near me

Learning to handle and groom.

Lack of mentors

Learning to handle well

Myself and my nerves. No classes in my area to learn.

Distance to shows

The competition - the professional handlers.

Stacking properly Keeping

So many, but grooming, training are the biggest

I was born into the dog show world, so I didn't have a hard time. Sometimes getting into a new breed can be tricky.

Very mean people

Too long ago to remember

The politics and it is still a barrier today Has never changed Pro handlers and Judges you see it all thie time

Judges need to start looking at the dogs not at who is on the end of the lead

Prof Handlers

Lack of confidence

Nerves!

Understanding the points and how it worked.

Being scared to get into the ring with people who had been showing for years.

Breaking in, learning how to handle, identify show prospect

preparation and access to training when I lived (and still live) in a remote area

Owner handler should not have to beat professionals to get into owner handler group.

The competitiveness of the sport and the fact the judges pick people and not dogs.

Not understanding the order the classes go in the ring and what Reserve meant.

Getting out handled

Developing a competitive line

Understanding structure and gait.

finding handling classes nearby

Competing against pro handlers

Nerves!

Not "knowing" what dog to follow in for group class, what judges "expected" of you, and learning to "show"
groom is the hardest ...

Grooming, getting familiar with ring procedures etc

Professional Handlers

Education

Learning the ropes while also training a puppy. Finding classes in areas that don't have many.

learning the ropes

Hard to compete with "experienced" handlers. Unkind people in the breed.

Grooming for show



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Rural area with limited people showing

Finding a good Club and classes in order to learn and understand dog shows.

Cliquish attitude of exhibitors

understanding ring etiquette

Grooming, confidence in handling

Grooming for show with coated breed

Not knowing what to do

unfriendly competitors

Complete ignorance of what a dog show meant

Not enough classes available

Ring procedure

I would love to have classes and workshops where you get one on one attention and feedback. The most convenient classes in my area don't have steady, quality instructors, so if you don't know what you're doing, you don't know what you're doing wrong.

Understanding how to fill out the entry forms, what to do in the ring, lots of information for juniors but new adults have no similar opportunities

I had a pretty smooth start-great club

It was horrible. I was in the ring with professional handlers and lost every time for a long time. There were a few people who were kind but many were harsh, cold, and competitive.

For me, it was all the different classes that were available.

Money

grooming

Unfriendly people

Learning to handle

Not knowing what I'm doing in the ring

Skill development, confidence, awareness of resources ie even accessing show information details

grooming

Being overwhelmed with suggestions and some conflicting! Not able to decide what questions to direct to whom!

confidence in the ring

Ring procedures, understanding what class best fits your dog

Not knowing how to handle

People unwilling to teach me how to groom Shelties. I decided to go with another breed.

Not understanding the classes

(Before the internet!) It was hard finding local shows. I subscribed to "Dog World" since it was the only magazine I knew of. It helped a little, but by the time they were published the entry deadline had already passed. But I took the opportunity to try and contact the Club to get on a mailing list. I did not know about Superintendents or entry services back then (1975). I also put the closing dates on my next year's calendar to remind me. And the local ones I missed I would try to attend as a spectator. That is where I learned all about what to bring (chairs, shade, food, water, etc).

Not knowing ring protocols and how to best present my dog.

Just no idea where to start

Grooming challenges,

Understanding the point system

knowing how a dog show works, also the expenses incurred in showing

nerves in ring

Forgetting the old ways of 50 years ago



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

nerves

I had no mentor but did find many friends in my breed.

Not knowing how to handle the dog.

Not knowing what to do

Joining a club and becoming accepted, obtaining a show quality dog and the financial commitment

Not having a clue on what to do, not having a great conformation dog at the time

Gaining confidence in a new sport and obtaining training. Getting a handler

No help from other exhibitors

Filling out the entry forms, what online programs for what and getting parking lodging at shows, the cost of the shows and lodging

Finding time to go to shows, working full time.

Not knowing where to find quality conformation and performance handling classes

Lack of handling classes

Lack of being welcomed by others in our breed.

Not knowing what to expect.

Finding classes and seminars or a mentor. Competing against professional handlers

Need help in understanding what is required in conformation showing

someone to tell me what to do.

Entries, classes available, and points

Too many people telling you what you are doing wrong

How to succeed in the ring filled with professional handlers

Judges with no patience.

Being surrounded by people who knew what to do and I wasn't confident that I knew enough to compete against them.

Distance between shows

Grooming

Clique behavior that made me feel unwelcome, to the point that I no longer show AKC conformation. This behavior is not seen on the performance side, so I still participate in AKC obedience. Trying to identify classes for handling and obedience that allowed me to improve my skills. As it is, I drive an hour and a half to get to training classes. They are well worth the drive and I love my trainer, but it would be preferable to stay closer to home.

Clique behavior that made me feel unwelcome, to the point that I no longer show AKC conformation. This behavior is not seen on the performance side, so I still participate in AKC obedience. Trying to identify classes for handling and obedience that allowed me to improve my skills. As it is, I drive an hour and a half to get to training classes. They are well worth the drive and I love my trainer, but it would be preferable to stay closer to home.

Lack of support from other competitors. On more than one occasion I had people pull entries to break majors on my first dog wasting my time and money so I could not get the dog finished.

Lack of resources, including matches, classes, and local shows

Lack of resources, including matches, classes, and local shows

Confidence, correct procedure, correct grooming presentation

Distance to shows

"There is more to it than just walking with your dog

"

Not having classes at all levels of skill

finances

Building confidence for the show ring

I was unable to develop appropriately sophisticated grooming skills

Fear of entering the ring to show the first time. So clueless as to ring protocol.



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Getting a quality show dog

Expenses

help from other handlers and encouragement

Still a beginner. No idea how fun it is, easy to enter and try. much easier to do then I thought seems like it would have

Competing confidently against professional handlers

Competition with professionals

how expensive some of the events can be

Lack of local knowledgeable people

learning thru training classes

Etiquette, knowing what to do and when, expectations of the judge

Trying to get a quality dog when not having a history in showing

Dealing with professional handlers and their rudeness or lack of patience.

Time and money

Being a kid

lack of mentor

Not knowing what to do at a show

mean exhibitors

Learning grooming for my breed and handling techniques for different situations that can happen in the ring.

Not many dog shows where around.

Fear of doing wrong

I was determined to learn, but if you're not up to a challenge, you might get frustrated and drop out of the sport for lack of help from others in the sport.

Finding handling classes and withstanding attacks by "the experienced".

People with my breed would not help when I ask. They still don't. I have had to go out of state to get help.

Getting a good dog

Lack of show knowledge

Social anxiety. Not knowing how to groom as well as my competitors. Not being able to have fun and learn from the experience without the external validation of a ribbon.

Battling nerves, and being inexperienced

Knowing how to present my dog

Finding appropriate classes

I started in a breed that was almost exclusively professionally handled.

Not knowing what I was doing

Competing with so many professionals

Finding anyone to be willing to sell me a serious show prospect.

Stage fright-not sure where to go or what to do-everyone's so busy not sure who to ask-no one has time to answer questions

I assumed people within my breed would have been more welcoming and helpful. That was not the case.

Lack of support and encouragement; finding resources to learn about training and showing dogs, structure, movement -- they're out there, you just have to know where to look.

I don't know what questions to ask or who to trust to give a complete and polite answer.

Not having mentors willing to help in the local area. I was told that I purchased a dog out of state and therefore locals would not provide help.

Not knowing what the judges are looking for, and not knowing what is expected of a handler.

Knowledge, finding shows within driving distance

Knowing how to enter and what to do (at least for agility, but I imagine it's the same for conformation)



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Find confirmation classes

Choosing a dog that will win

Cost of handlers and not enough knowledge to do it myself

Trying to coordinate work and time to properly raise a dog

I have no idea where to learn about showing or how to get hands-on help in my area.

Our kennel club holds practice but does not actually go through handling techniques or how to ACTUALLY show your dog.

Everything!

Others with large dog experience.

Understanding the classes

Not knowing what to do.

Not knowing what to do.

Lack of information

There is literally no where to learn about showing.

n/a

Right now, trying to figure out positive training methods as opposed to 'Just be firm'

no body was willing to help get a show quality dog

Knowing where to Register for dog shows

The non friendliness of some participants . Felt like you are being judged even before you get in the ring. I am a friendly and welcoming person so that doesn't help.

Not many around in my breed

Living in a rural area with no mentors

How rude the participants are. The "you do not fit into our group and you never will" attitude.

Getting a quality dog

Knowing ring etiquette

Snobby people.

bad experience with handler

Having people to watch dogs with ringside/comradery. It took me a long time to build.

Rude exhibitors

No local handling classes, breeder in a different country, prior to the advent of online handling classes

Being confident in a new environment.

Rude handlers & owners.

Resources and education

Geography.

Having the courage to keep trying after feeling very inadequate

The competitive nature of participants in my breed, feeling very alone and no sincere help

It took almost 5 years of talking to people before a breeder trusted me with a dog to show. Show lines are held so tightly it's almost impossible for a new person to start. I nearly gave up so many times. I feel very fortunate that I finally found a mentor and someone to trust me but I also know getting another line will take a ton of time and effort.

Snooty people, who bad mouth others.

Travel

Knowledge

Unfriendly people

Very little information and interruption of the rules. Conflicting information

No one had time to help me,

Not having a mentor and no one wanting to sell a good dog to a new person.



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

finding a good trainer

Seeing the "illegal" things people did when showing ie. Dyeing coats

Feeling all alone and uninvited. Few other exhibitors were friendly to the newbie.

Competing against handlers

Money and handlers

The nastiness of the other handlers who assumed they had better dogs and could do it better. The games they played in the ring.

Winning over handlers

Having no one to offer guidance. Finding handling classes that were near by. Lack of friendliness from other exhibitors not from all, but many. Could help to have pleasant judges as well. It is hard for a newcomer to get started. A smile goes a long way as well as patience.

Filling out entry form

Information on how things were done. A lot of this isn't written anywhere.

Distance & cost

Finding handling classes and grooming instruction

Learning ring procedure, how earning point's work, and correct entry for age/ class.

Not knowing what to do.

Not having support from anyone. Not having confidence.

Getting a ring worthy dog

Nasty pro handlers.

How to stack and present the dog to his best

Competing against pro handlers

Breeders who were less than helpful and even problematic

Club members resistant to non pure bred dogs and lack of help from some club members showing in events I am interested.

Finding a mentor with higher level of experience

Club members resistant to non pure bred dogs and lack of help from some club members showing in events I am interested.

Figuring out how everything works and how to correctly handle my dog for show

Procedures in ring,

probably hearing my first dog after I stop showing since a jr was just finding out he was not as nice as the breeder said but learn and got back into routine, told the wrong way to groom **** handstripping other people being nice learning to have thick skin dirty tricks in ring, running up on your dog on purpose saying thinks so judge will hear like what breed in mix in with that dog are you sure he purebred squeaking toys behind my puppy when the judge looked at him, not telling me I did not have to put the winners dog back on the table for best of breed and laughing when the judge told me did not need to do that .

No handling classes

Finding a mentor

Learning as much as possible in a short amount of time

**** shows didn't have enough dogs to win points

Crooked judges

Finding good homes for my puppies even though I only need once every few years

Distance to travel. Nothing close to home

People in my Breed were/are very rude

Pro handlers that have a personal relationship with the judges. I know of a handler that constantly is given favoritism by judges because he and his wife stay at their house or helps another judge by selling their mini horses.



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

handling

Knowing where to be and when

Handling

money

In 19** there were few classes, and a variety of experiences

Not understanding how everything worked

Unfriendly people in conformation.

snotty seasoned competitors. when I start a new performance effort, other performance folks are welcoming and happy to help, not at all so in the conformation world. I think that attitudes not only discourages people like me, I think ti puts of the general public who might otherwise consider getting involved

Meeting people.

the negativity from exhibitors

Dishonest judges

Lack of acceptance and support from more experienced exhibitors

Not knowing what I was doing with an inexperienced dog.

Distance between show giving clubs

Learning to show and groom

Getting a truely good dog. Financial start up costs

I was fortunate to have a fabulous mentor, so my challenges involved getting skilled at handling.

Geographic, finding breeders with puppies

Nerves

finding a class

Understanding the rules of conformation & how the point system worked.

Getting to know fellow exhibitors. It took quite awhile before anyone would speak with me when I first started but after they got used to seeing me at the shows people started to talk to me and were more friendly. Typical humans

Not understanding the point system

Other exhibitors

Finding someone to help you along

Unfriendly judges

Lack of handling classes in my area.

Grooming

It simply takes time to learn. Be patient. I've finished my 3rd dog and put rally titles on all, and I'm just now feeling that I can show my dog properly. Also, learn to groom your breed!

Learning how to properly train and handle my puppy

Beating professionals

don't recall any

Not knowing the strengths and weaknesses of my dog

Distance from shows & handling classes in my area

The dog show language, it is confusing

finding a reputable breeder & finding a breed that didn't have lots of back-stabbing among breeders (factions of breed clubs forcing newbies to "choose."

Cost

Ringcraft and grooming

Acceptance by my peers.

Getting to know other exhibitors in my breed

Having a quality dog



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Getting a dog to show

Breaking into the established clicks. Being a nooby and an outsider made for frustrating times

Time to get to a show.

Things have changed so much over the years ... we need better sportsmanship, above all, between old and new exhibitors to keep this sport the fun loving sport we all are so very fond of. Showing can always be fun for the new and the seasoned exhibitor if we remember to be kind and courteous to everyone inside and outside the ring. Always be willing to lend a helping hand and share what you know with the new exhibitors just starting out!

Unpleasant exhibitors and judges

Learning that if certain handlers are in the ring you're not going to win no matter who has the better dog. Also, realizing that a lot of judges don't know much of anything about your breed. These problems are still paramount today.

Finances, inexperience

Grooming

Showing and grooming the dogs properly myself

Getting to know other exhibitors. Many experienced exhibitors look down on new exhibitors and makes it hard to get to know people.

Handling and grooming

Competing against professionals

Cost

Grooming, exhibitors who were only nice if you were losing but building points

Learning how to bring the best out of your dog

Understanding the process of judging

Being intimidated by handlers when most will actually reach out and help you.

Getting to be as good as the professionals

Dog show folks tend to be clique-ish. Not a lot of helpful, welcoming folks at shows.

Not understanding the process

No explanations and rude judges who barely looked at any of the dogs. I like the European shows that didn't pit you against other dogs but gave you information about your dog's quality in written format.

Finding consistent classes

Learning how to groom, knowing when to do what in the ring

Mean professional handlers

It was easier when I started because my family and extended family showed dogs and I was able to tag along.

Learning handling techniques and understanding dog-show terminology.

Cost of showing

I don't recall

Handling correctly

Proper grooming, dis-approval as an owner handler by other competitors

Finances, lack of experience

Finding good conformation classes

Very competitive breed

Distance to shows

Being intimidated by the longtime people in my breed and getting up the courage to talk to them, as they weren't super welcoming.

distance to travel to shows

Just leaning the standard.

Learning how the classes worked and how to handle my dogs



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

professional handlers

The first contact with a breeder. I had heard a lot of breeders ignored any new person wanting to learn if they didn't do or say everything perfectly.

Not having a "name". Politics

People that were born into the sport vs being someone that came into it.

Being a child, and now while I am an adult, having others not respect that I am old enough to know what I am discussing.

I was only 8 years old when I started, so being treated with respect.

Not knowing where to go for help...how do you find mentors? Classes etc?

Confidence in the ring

Not really having any idea of what I was doing or who to even ask for help

Grooming

Pro handlers

Needed to learn how to groom and to handle and present.

Other people & no classes

Other exhibitors, especially a couple of particularly rude pro- handlers. Others were great, however.

Learning the routine, how to handle the dogs. I'm still learning. Not enough conformation shows in our area.

Traveling can be an issues.

Me. I had a superb dog that became a DC.

Locations, funding, politics

Experience

navigating the ropes without much help

Juniors judging is inconsistent and therefore confusing

Judges who were frustrated with my lack of experience

Learning to groom wire coated terriers

Attitudes from judges and other handlers

Mean spirited people

Judges and ring steward where often very intimidating and not very nice. Professional handlers in the ring

making rude comments or maneuvers with the dog they were showing g to throw off an inexperienced person and dog.

Fear of failure, nerves. I was lucky & had lots of support

Nerves

Learning to groom. Having the right tools. Table is a must. Two motor drying another must

Competing against pro handlers

Learning to have a thick skin

Snobby exhibitors

Finding classes

Familiarizing myself with the standards

Learning to groom

setting my dog up correctly. Having dog wag tag and get ears

Learning to groom

Learning how dog shows worked

My dog is spayed so we are limited where we can show.

Trying to. Figure out the point system

People not willing to talk with others or introduce themselves to new people or new faces around the ring.

Ring etiquette and finding local handling classes for competitive conformation

Learning the ropes and getting useful feedback on things to improve.



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Confidence the judge would see past my weak handling skill.

No way to learn from people outside my breeder and family.

talking to other competitors

Being nervous in the ring

Knowing how to train the dog, and what is actually going on when entering the ring.

I had none

haven't started

Grooming my dog

Snobby exhibitors

Judges judging handlers not dogs

I did not know what classes to enter, did not know how to correctly groom my breed, did not even know there was such a thing as a breed standard much less whether my dog was a good example, and did not understand the point system and what it took to champion a dog. I just started showing because I loved my dog and proud of her. My breeder did not help me to understand what the breed should look like or go over the standard with me so I knew how to evaluate my dog. The most challenging barrier were judges who had NO patience for beginners who made mistakes in the ring, and I still see so much of that. I have been to other shows, such as IABCA shows, where the judges will actually take the lead and HELP the exhibitor and show them how to do something right or let them try again if they make a mistake. AKC is too unforgiving; new exhibitors are not encouraged but instead told to get a handler if they don't know what they are going. There are a limited number of handlers and a limited number of owners who can afford one. If you truly want to encourage the sport to grow, then you have to have a way to help people who want to do it themselves.

Knowledge

Advanced "professionals" who were dismissive and intimidating, the general assumption that because you were a beginner you weren't going to win so you weren't worth the bother ...

No support and lack of encouragement

Knowing what your dog could participate in and how to enter shows and find out about them.

Meeting people

Fitting in

Constant pressures from professional handlers to want to show my dog

Learning how the shows, classes, point schedules work

Mentor was great for prep, but left me to work issues on my own - Competition is scary territory.

Grooming

Learning the rules!

None

Everyone was busy getting ready to show their dogs so no one had time to talk

Not knowing the ring procedure and how to make my dog look it's best

Learning rules and requirements, grooming techniques

Having a quality dog

How to find dog shows and fill out entries

it was all challenging but all fun too, I started showing in 196*

started at 11 years old transportation

Unfriendly competition from long time exhibitors who were critical and unhelpful, and told me I had no business being in the show ring

Grooming

47 years ago, I don't remember challenges other than family, money, job restrictions

Knowing where to be in the ring/lineup after cuts and when to exit

unlevel playing field, i.e. total beginners up against professional handlers



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Traveling

Traveling

Judges not aware of standard

I am not a beginner but the challenges I face is other breeders in my breed being nice to one another and being good, fair sportsman.

Other exhibitors

Gossip/negative people

Grooming, Understanding ring procedure

Being taken seriously

It was really hard for me to be in the ring and not have real feedback regarding why the judge chose who they did. It often felt so random and I felt that I couldn't learn to be better if I didn't know what the judge did or didn't like about what I did or how my dog looked/moved.

Getting biased judges to consider my dogs even though I'm not a professional and not the prettiest person out there.

I was lucky and had a spot in a great group through my mentor.

distances to shows in the NW

Competing against professional handlers and very experienced non-professionals

Understanding why other participants were not very nice/friendly.

"Lack of experience, and criticism that was unconstructive from breeder handlers. Some of them are downright arrogant in my breed. I've met other breeder/handlers in other breeds who are delightful and very helpful.

."

How everything works at a dog show. Grooming and handling.

Grooming

Breeder of first show dog at a distance and no help to me.

No one would help me in the beginning. It was next to impossible to break through the "Old Guard" mentality.

Finding someone to handle

Meeting people willing to help in my breed. Learning how to groom

Money

I don't know where to even begin.

expense, distance,

Grooming and the back stabbing

Did not have a good mentor in the beginning.

Figuring out how all the details of dog shows work. Getting used to losing.

Not having a mentor to teach me about the breed and help me to learn what to look for in a good dog.

getting people to trust me as serious

Unwritten rules

Learning to show and learning about all dogs

Showing against professional handlers.

No family experience, unkind exhibitors

Complete ignorance of the nuances involved with a new task

Steep learning curve

One was the terminology. I was fortunate to have a local kennel club with a conformation class available weekly, but what I hear from new exhibitors now is that finding a conformation class where they can learn and practice is a huge challenge.

Making time to do this well & right. Also overcoming the feeling that because I wasn't a known face I still would get a fair/sinning evaluation of my dog.

Judges not looking at dogs because they are shown by an owner.



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Being confident enough to have the dog perform as I knew they could, nasty competitors/a few judges

Acceptance from other exhibitors

grooming

none

Judges judging people and not dogs

Understanding logistics at a show

Professional handlers

started with an All-American in obedience as a teenager.

Grooming, specific breed help-37 years ago

no help at all, but this was in the late 50's early 60's

Hearing contradictory help as well as not friendly help from other exhibitors.

I was just 13 (in 196*) and dog shows were intimidating! I enjoyed going to matches, which need to be revived so that people have a place to practice and get instruction without the high stakes of going to an actual point show.

I like helping develop the club. The breeder I bought my dogs from got me involved. I don't show myself but I have entered an A Match with one of the club members at the time female Boxer. I think one of the challenges is understanding the dog show mechanics.

I don't show my dogs.

Figuring out the numerous entry options

Rude judges

Learning how to get dog to show correctly, and because of the breed I show, how to handstrip.

Lack of knowledge of showing, poor grooming skills, and not having a chance to win when up against professional handlers.

Back in the 70s all we had was books and seminars.

It is not as easy as it looks! And I had a very strong-willed girl. We did it though!

Knowing that politics plays more for some than I wish it did and my mentors don't live near me so actual help at the shows to prep my dog from trusted folks would be helpful.

Finding local handling classes. Finally got a pro handler to agree to give lessons.

Not many since I was raised in the sport and started showing at 3 years of age.

"None. My chosen breed (****) has a community overflowing with people happy to help. I have a literal army of mentors. My issue was an overcontrolling husband, and being financially strapped.

I would love to speak to someone further about the things I feel my national club is doing RIGHT, please feel free to email me."

Just learning how it's done. I'm quick to pick up

Correctly grooming my dogs

aloof judges

With beagles being the only one; with Doberman being competitive to judges and get an opportunity

None, I was lucky to have an excellent mentor

If the dog does not come from a local breeder that shows in the dog club no help.

learning to handle with skill

Winn over handlers!

Learning how my dogs conformed to the standard, the use of pedigrees and learning about types

People

mentor

professional handlers



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

People not that friendly, lack of help-mentoring as I purchased my dog from a different area of the country as no one in my area offered to sell me a puppy

Petty antagonisms from professional handlers

Getting to know people.

My breeder is several states away, my first show experience was awful and I left the event on the last day vowing to never show conformation again. The exhibitors were unpleasant and the professional handlers were rude. Instead of trying to help or encourage a new exhibitor, they criticized and belittled. I got the courage to try showing again after getting a really nice puppy from a reputable breeder who has been more than supportive and this round has been a lot more fun.

Not winning

Money and understanding the game

Grooming learning curve.

Self confidence- I found it very intimidating to show against professional handlers, and also who goes back in for winners and what order to line up

There is so much to know. Just filling out the entries is challenging! I still don't understand all of the class wins and what they mean i.e winners bitch best of opposites etc. some people are very helpful but it's a confusing and stressful time. It's just hard to know where to go and what to do. Plus I work full time and have dogs so traveling every weekend just isn't an option. I want to finish my dog but it's expensive and very challenging.

There is so much to know. Just filling out the entries is challenging! I still don't understand all of the class wins and what they mean i.e winners bitch best of opposites etc. some people are very helpful but it's a confusing and stressful time. It's just hard to know where to go and what to do. Plus I work full time and have dogs so traveling every weekend just isn't an option. I want to finish my dog but it's expensive and very challenging.

Learning skills

I'd love to show my dog myself, but I feel like I'm not good enough, so I hire a handler, which is really expensive. I'm doing this for fun as I don't have plans to breed my girl. I feel like she won't stand a chance in the ring if I show her myself.

Education

No communication from the judges. Understanding how the dog is handled is equally if not more important than the dog. That professional handlers always seem to beat better dogs.

Seasoned veterans ignoring you or not helping you

I didnt understand what was going on and in retrospect, that was part of the fun

Being told you don't show him well. Get a handler!

Showing against the pros.

Poor handling skills, not knowing where to enter.

No support from other competitors

help from current handlers

Lack of help from other handlers, feeling like you don't fit in, going up against professional handlers as an amateur

I have a rare breed so not always competition when showing

Figuring out the vocabulary involved at shows and how to enter a show. where to find entries for shows.

Other exhibitors with nasty attitudes

Availability of nearby shows/trials

Grooming and handling against professional handlers was disheartening.

We had no resources, teachers, or equipment

We had no resources, teachers, or equipment

Not understanding correct procedure of the ring and points counting

Not knowing how to stack my dog and how the points system actually worked



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

If it weren't for Jan I wouldn't have had any idea how to get started.

No support

Finding a show prospect and getting past being intimidated.

Knowing where to get help starting.

Long distance from any other member or club

Getting a dog of quality to show

Confidence; Knowledge;

Priority is with FT. Lack of time and money to show and FT.

Starting. It's a little intimidating.

I don't understand how to find shows... And how it all works. My breed is in FSS.

Learning how

People taking me seriously

Getting help. Everyone I talked to just said I should go talk to my breeder, and if I asked for help with stacking and grooming, I only got told the flaws of my dog. I was looking for help with specifics, and got told I shouldn't bother showing him, even for experience, because it's a waste of money. Which.... Isn't exactly encouraging to a new person.

Crowding in a line up.

Learning how the judges interpret the standard of my breed and understanding how dog shows work

Not feeling I had two left feet and fingers all thumbs.

Hard when you don't have a mentor, or the volunteer mentor preferred a style that was not my interest.

Not knowing where to start

learning how the placements worked

Going up against professional handlers,

I knew nothing and no one helped. I had a gorgeous dog and I hired a professional handler. He finished before I even understood the point system.

No help, didn't know what we are doing

Experienced handlers are not very welcoming

Finding help

Finding a dog! It's so so hard to get someone to sell you a dog, even though I was a junior handler as a teen. A lot of people won't sell to you if you have young kids.

No others of my breed in the area to learn from

My first show dog was a number to build majors for the others in my breeders friend group. They yelled and literally screamed at me ring side in Topeka KS four years ago. I went onto CH that boy then was lucky enough to find a wonderful breeder. She's been nothing but wonderful. I now have a GCH CH happy and healthy AKC show dog who I am proud to show

Rare breed so nobody around to ask anything breed specific.

Politics, professional handlers, experience

I would love to already be working on my handling skills with my mixed breed before I have a puppy of show quality. I think it is easy to be 'written off' with a mixed breed and therefore leave us with a sour taste of conformation. I know my dog isn't of show quality. BUT how you should be looking at me is a future potential responsible puppy owner. Give me the skills and knowledge to pick out my first show prospect now that I have the companion sports bug. Now that I know I want every dog I have to be the best they can be! Mentor me before I get the dog, give me the skills before I struggle through it with my prospect. I would rather learn and bumble through the first learning portion with my mixed breed.

Understanding the rules of the shows and getting a show dog from a breeder was almost impossible.

Learning how to groom our breed. It's also very hard coming into the sport as a newbie. People aren't always very welcoming and make it extremely intimidating.



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Lack of knowledge and consistent resource to seek help from
Not knowing exactly what to do in the ring in different Obedience classes
Literally no help, competitive exhibitors. Lack of support/community.
Being able to buy a GOOD show dog
Grooming better
Finding good information and a mentor
Getting use to politics
Not many- everyone has always been helpful and so has my breeder!
Negative people
Understanding how to train a dog; understanding that building relationship is the key and first step.
Had a pet, but didn't realize it
Grooming
Learning the basics of showing
long time ago.
Nerves, ring procedure, wild dogs, pro handlers, feeling "not good enough".
Learning to handle MY dog properly
Politics of the ring
Feeling like an outsider
Gaining the confidence and learning that you lose more than you win.
Gaining the confidence and learning that you lose more than you win.
Gaining the confidence and learning that you lose more than you win.
Gaining the confidence and learning that you lose more than you win.
Gaining the confidence and learning that you lose more than you win.
Gaining the confidence and learning that you lose more than you win.
Gaining the confidence and learning that you lose more than you win.
Gaining the confidence and learning that you lose more than you win.
I don't remember any barriers... When I decided on the breed I wanted to own, I got involved got with the local specialty club, found a mentor, and the rest is history...
Handling
Thick skin
I was 4*!
How to walk, how to stand, same people always winning, people not even saying hello
Learning the ropes of showing especially the supers
Others accepting a new person
Rudeness of professional handlers and lack of help
Time and patience
Learning what to do in the ring and how to properly handle the dog
Other competitors were nasty because my dog has a natural tail.
Nervousness and rude handlers especially pros
Accessibility. So many things are hard to figure out, from entry forms to show etiquette. The AKC and its superintendents, as well as many clubs, do not utilize technology like many other sports do that attract newbies and are touted as more newbie friendly.
Honesty of fellow exhibitors
Control of my dog
Getting a decent show dog. Having to compete against professional handlers.
A not so easy dog whinalso struggles with surface and environmental issues and not a lot of Ring knowledge
Cliques



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Unfriendly people and having no clue what I was doing
Lack of support from Breeder..Handlers..Not understanding
No clue how to go to a show, find my ring, grooming set up, buying a catalog
Being taken seriously
Rare breed, poor mentorship outside Europe.
People taking me seriously
Learning to handle
Competitors were/are not nice,friendly,respectful of brand new novice entering/showing for first time.
Political... who to trust.. where to get guidance
Breaking in to the cliques and being welcomed in my breed. All of my help has come from professional handlers and experienced owners/breeders in breeds other than my own.
Just finding out how to begin. I was lucky and had 2 people I met become an awesome set of mentors
Being accepted as a younger exhibitor with children, with most of the established exhibitors being older without children. That was 30 years ago.
Lack of conformation classes, lack of shows within a reasonable drive (under 4-5 hours I think is reasonable)
Dog who was a good dog, but had faults that were unable to be hidden.
Anxiety from lack of shows attended
Understanding the rules of dog shows. AKC didn't have all the booklets available at the time. Other dog owners accepting the fact that I was there.
I was fortunate to have a quality dog and I was able to have success immediately. My breed had good entries in the area at the time as well.
How judges treat owners vs handlers
Not really a beginner anymore, but being competitive against pro handlers
Being in a breed that was so political handling my own dogs was a waste of time.
politics
Just understanding how it worked and how to enter
Cost
Being allowed to purchase a QUALITY dog because I hadn't paid my "dues"
experience
Learning the breed standard
None really. I had lots of support
Understanding the structure of my breed
Not enough major shows
learning what a good dog of my breed was
don't remember any, just the normal learning curve
Figuring out what judges wanted
Finding handling classes and my life would never be the same again
Help from experienced people
For new people it is the distance to shows!
Getting a trainer for conformation
Learning proper grooming
Help learning to handle. People in my first breed were not accommodating
Not knowing what I was doing and not living very close to my breeder and starting late.
Unknown - Its been over 25 years.
understanding points and being able to properly groom and show my own dog
Breed specific grooming tips.



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

The politics involved in the sport with pro handlers and judges vs the owner handler. The corruption and favoritism between some judges and pro handlers. Reason I have quit conformation and now only do performance events

Understanding the classes. Grooming

Learning how to handle the dogs

Ageism in the group rings

Finding shows (before internet or PCs). Had to buy magazines but the publication was often after the closing date. I still think it is close to that now, hard to know where there are shows.

People experienced with my breed

Competing with the professionals

Being accepted

Learning to trim

No challenges. First dog became an OTCH

Sorting through all the "rules"

No assistance

politics

Being told I couldn't do it myself because that's not how it was done.

Unfriendly people

Competing against the handlers. Judges favoring handlers over quality of other dogs in the ring

Wondering why certain dogs always won but were not always the best

finding a quality dog and how to groom for show

competing against more experienced owners and handlers

Professional Handlers

Competing w/ professional handlers, moving fast enough around ring, showing the dog to her best

For me, it was distance from other shows.

Unwelcoming behavior from other breeders

Nerves

competing against the experienced handlers

Lack of mentor ship.

Purchasing show quality dog

Cost

cost of showing

Grooming, Terriers need lots of grooming!

didn't have very good dogs

Grooming Poodles

Competing against pro handlers. After 20 years, that's still the case.

Lack of resources

1) Learning how to groom & show the dog to it's best advantage; 2) Confidence in myself to show the dog.

Didn't really have any as my parents bred and showed so it was just part of life. Today the bigger issue is keeping my interest in dog shows.

None-parents were experienced/judged

Having competitive dog and skills to present dog and finances to show dogs

None. My friend that introduced me to the fancy is a professional handler so I was pushed right in to all things

Dog Show!

Outsider

Cliks

Learning to present my dog.



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Never showed before

Seems intimidating. Seems very much judged on handler, not dog.

Showing against professional handlers and grooming terriers (Airedales)

learning to trim

Lack of knowledge

My own nerves!

Not sure yet...just getting started.

Not Applicable

No experience

puppy did not develop into good show prospect

No dog

From what I see no one has the time

Judge on Judge (As I was told)

no mentor nearby

Competition in Open Intermediate

Lack of acceptance.

People didn't want to invest time in helping as there are so many that only participate for a short amount of time.

just no guidance on the who, what, where, and hows of showing

Lack of mentor

Judges not knowing you, learning the educate

Knowing the process of showing

No help or encouragement as to how to show when started.

have not participated

Other exhibitors are in general snotty

Money

Grooming

How to show a Doberman

not having someone to show me the ropes and not be self serving to themselves

Lack of information-no internet. In the 70's

Finding out how shows worked

Not having a mentor

Feeling like we were given equal evaluation when competing against the pro handlers.

Other competitors/didn't get a dog from them/politics

I was only 1* so I really don't remember. I got involved because the owner of the stud dog we bred our bitch to thought it would help my self esteem.

going against pro handlers

Shows too far away due to clusters

Not knowing what I was doing

Being accepted as a serious exhibitor and breeder, despite the fact that I was young and had young children.

LEARNING THE BASICS ABOUT ENTERING A SHOW, HOW TO SHOW A DOG, HOW TO GROOM MY BREED, ETC. I WAS FORTUNATE TO HAVE BREEDERS AND HANDLERS WHO SAW THAT I WAS EAGER TO LEARN AND HELPED ME.

Grooming

Knowing when to go in the ring

Grooming and presentation

No help to a newcomer from the longtime show people



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

Back in the '60s (pre-Internet) I faced very few barriers.

expense

None

Rudeness from others

I came from showing horses so the transition was pretty easy. My mentor/breeder was awesome and I traveled with her for several years.

Figuring out the rules, points, show order

Competition

Feeling inadequately prepared

money, getting a good dog

Not many, I had good support

Gaining experience

Lack of handling skills

People are snarky.

People weren't friendly.

Handling

Jealousy

Managing home with show travel.

I was 1* and didn't come from a dog show family.

Distance to events

Don't remember any

Criticism from professional handlers

Conversing with fellow exhibitors I didn't know

The show community is not inviting to new people. Unless you're asking someone you already know, if you ask a question they belittle you and try to make you feel stupid for not knowing standards. Education is key and sometimes they "try" educating but include the sarcasm to make people feel dumb. Also as a beginner the obvious political/popularity wins discourage people from continuing participation.

Finding a handler and getting started showing.

Learning the "ropes" . The unspoken rules

Being accepted

Getting to shows

My own lack of confidence

Acceptance from others already in the breed

Fitting in. Learning ring procedure. Balancing nerves.

Transportation

Judges that were not clear.

I don't remember facing challenges.

disinterest by my husband!

My breed is mostly professionally handled (toy poodles)

Finding shows

I had a judge that was extremely rude on my third show. He acted as if he hated what he was doing and almost spoiled it for me. After that it was the politics and the favor - paying by judges to handlers etc.

Where to go for shows & what to do. I won two points, but didn't even know I had.

small children and no money

Grooming

No help from others.

learning to groom appropriately



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

I was a child and few would take me seriously.

nervousness

The ability to present my dog in a way the showed their attributes

Absolutely no help from anyone.

People were generally very helpful and pro active with beginners. The challenges came as one became more experienced, started winning and facing other experienced competitors.

Understanding the rules

Help with grooming. Understanding line ups.

Help for other Malamute exhibitors

Professional handlers

Older more experienced exhibitors being unhappy if I beat them as a teenager

Grooming

Judges looking at the conformation of the dog and not the COLOR of the dog

the learning curve is steep and other competitors can be ruthless.

Rude people

Being accepted into the community, handlers and breeders are not overly friendly in my breed. Once accepted they were very supportive but it took a lot of time and patience.

Learning coatcare

It was over 20 yrs ago but finding handling classes & becoming accepted by those in the dog show world.

Finding a quality dog

I knew what to do with my dog but know what to do with MYSELF was like navigating a maze. I had no idea if there was a specific order to stand in the wrong, where to wait ringside, what faux pas to avoid, etc.

I still have no clue what half of the terminology/rules are. I just recently learned what a specialty was.

Competing as a Beginner at dog shows

Not understanding the classes and point system

Cost

Pressure from unfriendly peers

The very first show my daughter and I entered, there was no one to tell us how it worked. We showed up at 8 a.m. when the dog show "opened" thinking that's what you do. Our breed didn't enter the ring until the afternoon. Really no clue and no one to advise us how it worked. It would be great if you could check a box when you registered your first dog that said you need a Dog Show One-On-One with someone who can give you the basics of how a show works.

I struggled with understanding how to enter a show and all of the terminology and I had a difficult time understanding the class structure.

Lack of competitors

fear of the unknown

Long distances to shows

getting correct information about dog training

grooming

nasty judges

For me mostly the nuances of handling and grooming different breeds.

Everything! I left my first show in tears.

Lack of a mentor

Experienced exhibitors treating me with disrespect

Have not really started yet

Not sure

Finding a reputable breeder who will mentor.



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – Western Edition

No one told me anything, I truly was on my own
Just knowing/learning how things worked at shows.
"in the ring" tips and getting used to the procedure
How to train a dog for the show ring and other exhibitors criticizing others' dogs.
Not enough help
Not knowing where to go to ask the questions I had, or finding people willing to share information to a potential competitor if you didn't buy a dog from them
Knowing the rules
relaxing and being comfortable in the ring
No one talked to me
Finding shows
Others to be rude because of me non having experience
Winning over pro handlers for majors .
Back in the 80's it was a lack of known resources
Crate space
Learning to navigate entries and point systems
Don't remember I showed other species.
Distance to shows
Not enough local resources or help.
Surprisingly nobody in my local area in my breed wanted to help me because I imported my puppy. I asked to learn grooming and one lady twisted it around by saying, "I'm not going to groom your dog for you." I ended up paying a professional groomer to teach me grooming methods and honed my skills from there, further perfecting them by sitting with professional handlers at dog shows. Nobody in my breed ever helped me.
Before I started showing I took my pet to agility classes put on by the all-breed club and they were so very rude and asked me not to come back to class because my dog and I did not move fast enough. The worst was when people in my breed club started spreading rumors about me and my imported dog before she was even 2 years old, saying that I did not health test. It was really ugly how nasty the people were. If I hadn't had the resiliency to stick it out I would have quit showing.
The unfriendliness of others in my breed.
Not knowing anyone
"Expenses
"
Just being brave enough to take my dog in the ring the first time.
learning about judges likes and dislikes
Judges picking the wrong end of the leash
financial
Dog Show procedures
Learning how it all works (how to enter a show, ring procedure, etc)
just learning the ropes
Understanding the points system
Understanding what the judges were looking for in the ring.
Lack of funds. Finding a quality dog from a great and supportive breeder.
Learning to lose gracefully.
Learning to groom
People who thought their negative commentary was constructive criticism.
I was a kid, in 197*. Different environment
Finding a handling class



Jan's Dog Show Boost Survey – *Western Edition*

Learning that why you lose doesn't always make sense

Getting a quality dog

Being a newbie and some issues with clicks

The challenges that face include not being able to understand the Judges, they assume that we know what's going on and use hand signals, but we have no clue what they are telling us. It is sometimes intimidating and doesn't want us going back in the ring.

Finding out HOW to show dogs, where to go for handling classes in my area and getting people to share knowledge.. I started way back in 1987

Confidence

Having to compete directly against professionals

Getting the proper guidance

Finding a breeder that would allow me to have full registration on a puppy. Even being willing to co own, I was turned away a lot.

Learning how classes at specialty work

Just my own nerves

Honestly, it's competitive and many will not help. But 3 ladies became my mentors via social media. My breeder is great too

Intimidating & aggressive exhibitors - handlers on their mission

Mentors were few

Being nervous and not getting constructive feedback to improve my ability to show my dog well.

Trying to acquire a worthy puppy of show conformation. A lot of people will tell you to buy the best dog your money can afford, when in reality it's more like buy the best dog a breeder will let you have.

Experienced exhibitors looking down their noses at new comers

No shows close to home

getting conflicting advice from different people

Understanding how the show is conducted and what classes would be appropriate for me to enter.... and I still don't understand NOHS. When I entered the ring.. the Stuart told me it's just a way to tell the judge you are a newbie and I left right after judging. Now I'm under the impression that it is a whole other class that I should have went to after I was judged in the first ring... it's very confusing to newbies

Learning to handle

The Rude Handlers

Where to start, meeting the breed I'm interested in (borzoi)

Show grooming

handling and grooming

Distance to pretty much any show in the world. Only 2 AKC conformation shows in my entire state, and only 2 AKC conformation shows in one adjoining state - all shows require travel, hotel and food expenses, etc.

Finding a handling instructor

People "letting me in" to the breed, sharing information and being helpful. Trusting a new person.

Xx

Woof!!