RULES FOR JUNIOR HANDLERS (U.S.)

2026 AKC TRICK DOG COMPETITION

For Handlers and Dogs in the United States, U.S. Territories and on U.S. Military Bases

Attention Juniors! We are pleased to announce the Junior Division for the 2026 Virtual AKC Trick Dog National Competition.

The Juniors competition is for handlers 17 years old and younger.

How it works: Submit a video of your dog performing the tricks for the highest level of Tricks title the dog has earned from AKC (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Performer, or Elite Performer). The video must be submitted via a YouTube link.

- There is no fee to enter.

- The dog must already have a Trick Dog title (in your hands by the entry opening date of August 1, 2026) to enter the competition. For the Junior division only, the title required for entering may be Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Performer, or Elite Performer. (The regular Adult Handler competition is for Elite Performer only and there are separate rules).

- The Juniors division is for handlers 17 years old and under.
    - Age divisions for Juniors are 1) 9 years and under. 2) 10 to 13 years old, and 3) 14 to 17 years old.

- Juniors do not have to perform a routine, unless the dog is at the Elite Performer level. This means that in all classes but Elite Performer, Juniors may submit a video of the dog demonstrating one trick after the other with no story.

How it works: Submit a video to AKC of your dog performing at least 10, and not more than 15 tricks. The tricks may include props and music.

If **music** is used, it must be royalty-free.

Juniors may use a new video, or the video submitted to AKC to earn your title. Videos submitted to the competition in past years may not be submitted for the 2026 competition. The video for Juniors many be one continuous video, or short videos of each trick may be edited together.

Juniors may submit only one video (per dog) to the competition. Juniors may enter up to two dogs with one video for each dog.

- Handlers may wear costumes; dogs may wear a decorative collar or neck ruffle, but they may not wear costumes.

- Dogs may **not** wear prong/pinch collars, e-collars, or head collars in the routine. Tricks should be performed off-leash.

- Your tricks will be judged based on:

    - Fluency (accuracy of tricks, difficulty)
    - Handling skills
    - Entertainment value
    - Creativity
    - Overall impression

When: To enter, submit your video between Saturday, August 1, 2026, and Thursday, October 1, 2026.

Judges will judge the submissions, and the winners will be announced in December 2026.

Entry form: The entry form must include:

1. The Application
2. List of Tricks
3. Photo release completed and signed by your parent or guardian.

- Winners in each age group of the Juniors competition will receive an age group rosette. All qualifiers will receive a qualifiers rosette and medal.

- **The application including the video link must be received by 5:00 p.m. EST on Thursday, October 1, 2026. Submit the entry to: trickdog@akc.org**

ENTRIES OPEN: Saturday, August 1, 2026

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES: Thursday, October 1, 2026

Entry forms will be posted at: **https://www.akc.org/sports/trick-dog/**