

Sealyham Terriers a true Earth Dog

The American Kennel Club's definition of Earth Dog test: "it offers breeders and owners of small terriers a standardize gauge to measure their dog's natural aptitude and trained hunting and working behaviors when exposed to an underground hunting situation."

In earlier generations, the mention of "working terrier" was understood by anyone who was to discuss the topic. It can be documented that the American Sealyham Terrier Club has offered working certificates to its member's dogs since 1913. At one time a general rule of the club was "to encourage field trials and the development of the working qualities of the breed".

Earth Dog is a non-competitive program a dog will either pass or fail. It begins with the basic introduction to den work and quarry and progresses through gradual steps to require the dog to demonstrate that it is willing to perform the required tasks including seeking its quarry, locating and working it underground.

Even if your dog doesn't qualify, you will have a fun time and will meet lots of other terriers folks who will offer help in learning more about the wonderful world of Earth Dogs!

Purpose:

Earth Dog is a non-competitive program a dog will either pass or fail. It begins with the basic Introduction to den work and Quarry and progresses through gradual steps to require the dog to demonstrate that it is willing to perform the required tasks including seeking its quarry, locating and working it underground.

History:

Captain John Tucker Edwardes, an avid sportsman, had a special pit made, covered over so as to be dark inside. A drag (scent trial) was laid leading directly up to the pit in which a live polecat had been placed. The trial gave a dog a chance to warm up first. If the dog went in and tackled, the dog was added to his hunt.

Earth Dog Title

Test	Title Earned	Suffix
Junior Earth Dog	Junior Earth Dog	JE
Senior Earth Dog	Senior Earth Dog	SE
Master Earth Dog	Master Earth Dog	ME
Senior & Master Earth Dog	Endurance Earth Dog	EE#

The Introduction to Quarry Class:

The IQ initial test is where the dog is introduced to a 10 foot tunnel with one right angle turn and at the end is a cage of rats behind a set of bars. There is a scent trail of rat scent leading into the tunnel and to the rats. At this level the handler can encourage the dog into the tunnel and the judge may help get the dog working at the rats by shaking the cage or making a noise to incite the dog's instincts. The non regular class, with no credit toward a title, a training cage containing a rat is placed in front of the dog to see the initial response.

The titling classes are Junior Earth Dog (JE), Senior Earth Dog (SE) and Master Earth Dog (ME). The highest level of performance is the Endurance Earth Dog (EE) class and title.



Junior Earth Dog Test is the first level. The dog must complete the 30 foot tunnel and work. That means the dog must;

- Enter an underground tunnel.
- Pass through the tunnel with at least three right angle turns within 30 seconds to find the caged rat.
- Work the cage (For 60 seconds by either digging, barking, biting and other forms of active work).

- Then allow the handler to remove them without injury to themselves or the handler.



Junior Earth Dog Test is the first level. The dog must complete the 30 foot tunnel and work. That means the dog must;

- Enter an underground tunnel.
- Pass through the tunnel with at least three right angle turns within 30 seconds to find the caged rat.
- Work the cage (For 60 seconds by either digging, barking, biting and other forms of active work).
- Then allow the handler to remove them without injury to themselves or the handler.

Senior Earth Dog Test is the second level. The dog must again complete the 30 foot den and work. That means the dog must;

- Enter an underground tunnel.
- That has at least three right angles and there are the added distractions of a false, unscented exit and an unscented bedding area with used rat bedding at the end.
- The dog has 90 seconds to travel the tunnel and get to the rat.

- Must begin working the rat within 15 seconds of arriving at the end of the tunnel
- Must work the rats for 90 seconds
- At the end of 90 seconds the rats are removed and the dog must recall from the den to the handler within 90 seconds.



Master Earth Dog Test is the final level the dog must:

- Actually hunt with a brace mate 100 to 300 yards. On the way they must investigate an empty unscented den when the handler asks them to. Then both dogs must find the entrance to the den and mark it decisively so there is no question that the den is an active den.
- The den itself is like the senior den with the addition of two obstacles:
 - A 6 inch diameter PVC pipe crossways in the den to simulate a root and
 - A narrowing down to 6 inches for a distance of 18 inches.
- The Master competitor has 90 seconds to get to his quarry;
- Must work the rats for 90 seconds and
- Must allow himself to be removed from the den by his handler within 15 seconds.
- While one dog is working the other dog is staked out and must wait his turn with minimum amount of noise while his bracemate works the quarry.
- Once a dog successfully completes all parts of the Master test four times under three different judges the dog shall be designated a Master Earth Dog and may continue to compete at all three levels at Earth Dog tests.

The higher level test is the **Endurance Earth Dog Test** is for dogs that have acquired a Master Earth Dog title:

A dog passing on five occasions both the Senior Earth Dog test and the Master Earth Dog test at the same event earns the EE title. The title will be followed by a numeric designation indicating the number of times the dog has met the requirement.

Few small terriers are regularly hunted to ground by their owners in natural hunts but the AKC Earth Dog test allow these game dogs an outlet for their excess energy and instincts in a way to benefit the dog and the owner.