

MH test - Mental Description of dog

MH test – (mentalbeskrivning hund), a canine character test, is originally developed in Sweden by Svenska Brukshundklubben – Swedish Working dog association. The test is mainly intended for working dogs, such as German Shepherds, Rottweilers, Collies, Boxers etc. But dogs of other breeds can take the MH test as well.

In Finland the test is under the Finnish Kennel Club (SKL) and the Finnish Working Dog Association (SPKL). The dog must be registered, micro-chipped and vaccinated and at least 18 months old but not over 7 years to participate.

The test takes about 45 minutes and is so stressful to the dog that mental defects are likely to show up during testing. The test has fairly good reliability and validity. The MH-test may not look difficult to us humans, but it is very stressful for the dog. There is also a two minutes timeline for every phase meaning that the dog must act / recover during that time. If two minutes timeline is passed, the valuation is "doesn't go on time", but the dog it's not disq. because of that.

The 10 phases of the MH-test

1. **Contactability** with strangers. The test leader takes the dog from handler and walks away; then handles the dog checking out fur and body structure pretty much the same way as does a judge in dog exhibitions. The dog must also show its teeth. It is desirable that the dog is neither too much on guard nor excessively fawning and that it is capable of collaboration with other humans.
2. The dog's **play behaviour**. Unleashed dog. Tug-of-war-play with a motivation object. Repeated.
3. The dog's **chasing behaviour**. A rug is quickly pulled zig-zag about 8 meters from the dog. Then the dog is unleashed. It is desirable that the dog chases the rug and keeps it at least 3 seconds. Repeated.
4. The dog's ability to **relax**: Handler is standing still with the dog during 3 minute's silence. It is desirable that the dog is able to relax.
5. **Distant play**. The dog's willingness to make contact with a stranger at a distance and collaborate with the stranger. A "Witch" comes out of the woods at about 40 meters distance. The witch un.masks herself and hides behind a bush, talks to the dog and invites it to play. This phase measures the dog's behavior toward strange things, its curiosity and willingness to leave its handler and willingness by itself to invite a stranger to play. It is desirable that the dog is willing to play.
6. The dog's reactions to a **fast emerging** bigger object. The dog is walking with its handler as suddenly a man-size-overall emerges on their way. It is desirable that the dog has the ability to quickly shrug off the discomfort.
7. The dog's **noise sensitivity**. The dog is walking with its handler. A rather heavy metal chain is pulled over corrugated plate hidden in a shrubbery, the so-called "rattle". It is desirable that the dog should not be over-sensitive to noise.
8. The dog's reaction to **approaching threat**. Ghosts - two figurants clad in white sheets with white buckets/masks on their heads. The ghosts stride slowly forwards in a stereotype manner in order not to move like human beings. The wind must be off the dog to prevent it from sensing the humans scent. At a distance of about 3 meters the ghosts turn their backs to the dog. Finally the handler is allowed to say the dog's name, talk to the ghosts and unmask them. It is desirable that when the ghosts appear the dog is willing to defend itself and its handler. And when the ghosts are unmasked the dog should be willing to make a contact with them.
9. The dog's **possible change in playing behavior**. Followed directly by phase no 10.
10. The dog's tolerance to **gun shots**. The MH test ends with firing two gun shots from a distance of 20 meters (handgun, 9 mm ammunition) and then two shots at a nearer distance.
 - a) Activity: Tug-of-war-play as 2 gun shots are fired at intervals of 10 seconds.
 - b) Passivity: Dog in leash with handler passive, another 2 shots are fired at intervals of 10 seconds.If the dog becomes excessively nervous when the first shot is fired, the test is interrupted and the dog has failed the gun shot test.

The dog who passes all the ten phases including gun shots earns title "MH".

MH valuation of Koda vom Hause Schwartz.

Kodas valuation is marked as **bold**.

Values in **green** or **light green** background are desirable for Rottweiler according the Finnish Rottweiler Club.

Phases	1	2	3	4	5
1a. CONTACT Greeting	Refuses contact, growls and / or tries to bite.	Avoids contact, dodging or withdraws.	Accepts contact but shows no interest to test leader, no dodging	Makes contact voluntarily or responds to it. Is well-balanced.	Insinuating towards test leader, might also bark, jump or whine.
1b. CONTACT Collaboration	Doesn't follow / Can not be performed.	Follows reluctantly.	Follows but shows no interest to test leader, is neutral.	Follows willingly. Shows interest to test leader.	Follows willingly. Shows intensive interest in test leader.
1c. CONTACT Handling	Reject, growls and/or tries to bite.	Avoiding, dodging or looks for handler's support.	Accepts. Acts neutral.	Accepts, responds with contact.	Accepts. Intensive contact behaviour towards test leader.
2a. PLAY 1 Playfulness	Doesn't play. Shows no interest.	Doesn't play, but shows interest.	Plays, activity increases / decreases	Plays, starts quickly and is very active.	Plays, starts very quickly and is very active.
2b. PLAY 1 Grabbing	Doesn't grab.	Doesn't grab, but sniffs the object.	Grabs slowly or carefully (not with a full mouth)	Grabs immediately with full mouth.	Grabs immediately, attacks when object still moving
2c. PLAY 1 Tug-of-war	Doesn't bite.	Bites carefully, let go / holds but doesn't pull back	Bites, pulls back, let go and bites again / Corrects bite	Grabs immediately with whole mouth, pulls back until test leader let go.	Grabs immediately with whole mouth, plays actively until test leader let go.
3a. CHASE Pursuing	Doesn't start.	Starts but interrupts.	Starts slowly, may speed up when approaching. Follows the prey.	Starts at high speed, very focused, stops at the prey.	Starts directly at high speed. Passes the prey and may turn back.
3b. CHASE Grabbing	Ignores the prey / Doesn't run up to the prey.	Doesn't grab, but sniffs the prey.	Grabs hesitatingly or slowly.	Grabs immediately but let go.	Grabs immediately. Keeps prey for at least 3 seconds.
4 ACTIVITY	Inattentive, uninterested, inactive.	Attentive and calm - standing, sitting or lying.	Attentive and mainly calm. Shows some activity.	Attentive, but slightly anxious. Activity increases as time goes by.	Activity changes rapidly / Anxious all the time
5a. DISTANT PLAY. Interest	Shows no interest to assistant	Interested, but interruptions occur.	Interested, follows up the assistant without interruption.	Interested, few attempts to go.	Very interested. Several attempts to go.
5b. DISTANT PLAY Threats/Aggression	Shows no aggressive or threatening behavior.	Shows some threatening behavior during first phase.	Shows some threatening behavior during first or second phase.	Shows threatening or aggressive behavior during first phase.	Shows threatening or aggressive behaviour during first and second phase.
5c. DISTANT PLAY Curiosity	Doesn't approach the assistant. Uninterested.	Approaches when assistant is talking and playing with the object.	Approaches when assistant is still hidden, but talking.	Approaches the assistant with hesitation and/or time delay.	Approaches the assistant immediately and without any help.
5d. DISTANT PLAY Playfulness	Shows no interest.	Doesn't play but shows interest.	Plays but grabs carefully, releases, doesn't resist the pulling.	Grabs immediately. May let go and grab again.	Grabs immediately with whole mouth. Pulls back, doesn't release.
5e. DISTANT PLAY Collaboration	Shows no interest.	Becomes active, but interrupts.	Shows interest towards active / playing assistant.	Shows interest towards both active and passive assistant.	Invites also passive assistant to continue playing.
6a. SURPRISE Fear	Makes a short stop / doesn't stop at all	Crouches and stops.	Dodges without turning away gaze.	Escapes max. 5 meters.	Escapes more than 5 meters.
6b. SURPRISE Threats/Aggression	Shows no aggressive or threatening behavior.	Shows some threatening behaviour.	Shows threatening behavior during a long time.	Shows threatening behavior, tries to attack few times.	Shows threatening behaviour and many attacks

6c. SURPRISE Curiosity	Approaches when the overall has put on the ground / Doesn't approach on time	Approaches when the handler squats and is calling the dog.	Walks up to the overall when the handler is standing beside it.	Walks up to the overall when handler has walked half of the distance.	Walks up to the overall without any help.
6d. SURPRISE Remaining fear	Doesn't make any change of tempo nor dodging while walking	Makes small kneeling or change of tempo in some passing	Makes small kneeling or change of tempo at first passing. Reaction decreases at the second time.	Makes same kind of kneeling or change of tempo at least two different times.	Shows great fear or increased fear after every passing.
6e. SURPRISE Remaining interest	Shows no interest to overall	Stops, sniffs or looks at the overall in one passing.	Stops, sniffs or looks at the overall at least two times.	Bites / tries to play with the overall, interest decreases during time	Bites / tries to play with the overall at least two different times.
7a. NOISE SENSITIVITY Fear	Makes a short stop or doesn't stop at all.	Croaches and stops.	Dodges without turning away gaze.	Escapes max 5 meters.	Escapes more than 5 meters.
7b. NOISE SENSITIVITY Curiosity	Doesn't approach the rattling gadget.	Approaches the gadget when handler squats and calls the dog.	Approaches when handler is standing beside the cadget.	Walks up to the rattling cadget after handler has walked half of the distance.	Walks up to the rattling cadget without any help.
7c. NOISE SENSITIVITY Remaining fear	Doesn't make any change of tempo nor dodging while walking	Makes small kneeling or change of tempo in some passing	Makes small kneeling or change of tempo at first passing. Reaction decreases at the second time.	Makes same kind of kneeling or change of tempo at least two different times.	Shows great fear or increased fear after every passing.
7d. NOISE SENSITIVITY Remaining interest	Shows no interest to the rattling gadget.	Stops, sniffs or looks at the rattling gadget in one passing	Stops, sniffs or looks at the rattling gadget at least two times	Bites / tries to play with the cadget, interest decreases during time	Bites / tries to play with the cadget at least two different times.
8a. GHOSTS Threats/aggression	Shows no threatening or aggressive behavior	Shows some threatening behavior	Shows threatening behavior during a long time.	Shows threatening behavior and even some attacks	Shows threatening or aggressive behavior, makes several attacks.
8b. GHOSTS Control	Looks few times, becomes uninterested / Shows no interest	Looks towards ghosts from time to time.	Keeps one or both ghosts under control but long interruptions occur.	Keeps both ghosts under control. Short interruptions may occur.	Keeps both ghosts under control during the whole phase.
8c. GHOSTS Fear	Stays mainly in front of or beside the handler.	Stays mainly in front of or beside the handler. Some changes in distance.	Stays mainly in front of or beside the handler. Shows hesitation between escape and control.	Stays mainly behind the handler. Shows hesitation between escape and control.	Backs more than the length of the leash. Or leaves the scene. / Escapes
8d. GHOSTS Curiosity	Approaches when the handler has unmasked the ghosts. / Doesn't go on time	Approaches when the handler talks to the ghost and is calling the dog.	Approaches when the handler is beside the ghost	Walks up to the ghost when the handler has walked half of the distance.	Walks up to the ghost without any help
8e. GHOSTS Contact	Avoids contact / Doesn't go on time	Accepts contact but doesn't respond to it	Accepts contact and responds to it	Takes contact voluntarily. Is well-balanced.	Intensive contact behavior. Might jump, bark or whine.
9a. PLAY 2 Playfulness	Doesn't play. Shows no interest.	Doesn't play, but shows interest.	Plays, activity increases / decreases during the play	Plays, starts quickly and is very active.	Plays, starts very quickly and is very active.
9b. PLAY 2 Grabbing	Doesn't grab.	Doesn't grab, but sniffs the object.	Grabs slowly or carefully (not with a full mouth)	Grabs immediately with full mouth.	Grabs immediately, attacks when object still moving
10. GUN SHOTS	Stays mainly calm. Fast reaction and after that inattentive.	Annoyance to shots increases during activity / passivity. After that inattentive.	Shows interest to the gun-man, audience etc. but returns to activity / passivity.	Interrupts activity, locks attention towards the gun-man or audience. Difficulties to return to play / passivity	Anxious, fearful / tries to escape. No more shots fired.