GALEN COMFORT SCALE©

Guide for guardians



The Galen Comfort Scale©, is a resource for dog handlers and canine professionals to help classify and identify physical and behavioural changes in a dog.

We have found that each indicator is directly associated with muscle pain and discomfort. Against every question, select a response that most represents you dog at that time, from the following options:
3: No, **2:** Rarely, **1:** Sometimes, **0:** Consistently. We recommend that you observe your dog and record their scores for a full week.

PHYSICAL	DAILY SCORES AND OBSERVATIONS						
1. Does your dog show signs of being stiff when getting up? Signs of being stiff are often seen in the first couple of strides when getting up. Signs of being stiff could be awkward movement, wobbling when taking a stride, taking short strides or getting up slowly. If your dog shows signs of being stiff every time they get up, then you would answer '0 - consistently'.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
2. Has your dog stopped jumping onto furniture or into cars? Often habits such as these can change without us noticing. Observe whether your dog pauses or hesitates before jumping up, if so you would answer '1 - sometimes'. If you have to physically lift them, then you would answer '0 - consistently'.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
3. Does your dog groan when they lie down? Just the same as we would, if it is difficult or uncomfortable to sit or lie down, your dog could make an audible groan or involuntary noise.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
4. Does your dog walk into objects or people? (have they become clumsier) When we feel uncomfortable we have a tendency to concentrate on the destination rather than the obstacle/environment we have to negotiate to get there. This can involve us cutting corners, being less body aware which results in clumsy behaviour such as walking into objects. If your dog is clumsy everyday, then you would answer '0 - consistently'.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
5. Does your dog sit or lie down occasionally during a walk? Both young and older dogs may find it tiring or difficult to walk for a period of time so they may choose to sit or lie down for a rest. If your dog sits or lies down once or more during their walks, then you would answer '0 - consistently'.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						

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BEHAVIOURAL	DAILY SCORES AND OBSERVATIONS						
6. Does your dog scratch an itch on their body daily? Often itching can be caused by a parasite/nutritional or skin condition. It can also commonly be a result of a muscular problem. If your dog scratches or itches once or more a day, then you would answer '0 - consistently'.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
7. Does your dog lick their feet, legs or body daily? Regular and repeated licking and chewing is different from occasional cleaning themselves when they are wet or dirty.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
8. Does your dog chew, gnaw or nibble at their feet, leg, body or tail daily? Licking and chewing can often be a habit that is not observed often, however, on a dog with pale coloured fur, the pinky/brown coat change can be seen which can indicate continuous licking.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
9. Does your dog find it difficult to stretch out both their back legs, behind them? A dog should be able to stretch their back legs freely and regularly behind them. If they don't stretch their back legs at all, you would answer '0 - consistently'. If they stretch but do not fully extend their legs, you would answer '1 - sometimes'.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
10. Has your dog stopped wagging their tail fully? Most dogs should be able to naturally wag their tail rapidly from 10 o'clock to 2 o'clock when happy. If your dog has reduced the speed, range and height or even stopped wagging its tail, you would answer '0 - consistently'.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						

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EATING AND DIGESTION	DAILY SCORES AND OBSERVATIONS						
11. Does your dog have anal gland problems? We have found that some dogs with muscular problems also have suspected anal gland issues. This could be following a veterinary diagnosis, or you may have seen them skid their bottoms along the ground, or noticed a rather offensive fishy smell from their bottom.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
12. Does your dog move when having a poo? Dogs should be able to stand still and poo in one place. They could start shifting their leg position, or start walking away when they are having a poo. If they always move when having a poo, you would answer '0 - consistently'.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
13. Does your dog have any skin disorders? There are many reasons why chronic muscular issues can cause skin disorders, such as myofascial tension through the superficial layers that can affect the health of the skin. Also overloaded areas can cause 'hot spots' by being chronically inflamed, resulting in skin disorders.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
14. Has your dog stopped chewing, or are they chewing differently? If your dog has stopped chewing their food by maybe prioritising soft food. Or, stopped wanting dog chews, chewing with one side of their mouth. If they have stopped wanting to chew, you would answer '0 - consistently'. If they are chewing less or differently, you would answer '1 - sometimes'.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						

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OTHER INDICATORS	DAILY SCORES AND OBSERVATIONS						
15. Does your dog have regular tummy upsets (loose stools)? All types of discomfort and pain will cause various levels of emotional stress throughout the body and due to these physical and neural connections we have found that this can also cause tummy upsets and/or loose stools/poo	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
16. Does your dog have a dry nose? A dry nose can be one that is cracked over the top or just dry and looks muddy, or could be dry over the border where the hair meets the nose.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
17. Does your dog prop their head up/or hang their head off something, when they rest/sleep? Does your dog support their neck on a cushion/pillow/ or hang their neck lower than their body.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
18. Does your dog always lie in the same position? Does your dog lie one side more than the other? If they always lie on the same side, you would answer '0 - consistently'.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
19. Does your dog find it difficult to stand still without shifting their weight side to side? Does your dog rock from side to side/shift their weight or lean on an object (or you) when standing still.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						
20. Does your dog have any coat disturbance? Physical tension in a dog's body can cause their coat to look unhealthy or dead. This can happen when the skin tightens, pulling the coat in different directions. The tension can also affect blood flow to the hair bulb, which can also impact shedding. Often dead hair is more obvious in the hind leg and lower back region.	**M**	**T**	**W**	**T**	**F**	**S**	**S**
	Notes:						

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