

**Size and play style:** Do the dogs already in the area have a play style compatible with your dog? Are they a similar size? Puppies, small dogs or elderly dogs may be at risk of injury from boisterous dogs. Even friendly dogs can injure or scare smaller dogs by running into or treading on them in the excitement of a game.

**Know your dog's exercise limits:** If your dog is having fun, it will not know when to stop and this can put undue strain on its body. Take special care to avoid heat stress in hot weather. If your dog is less than twelve months old, unfit or overweight you must set sensible exercise limits for it.

**Toys and treats:** Many dogs are possessive of food, balls and other toys. Using these items in an off-lead area may provoke over-arousal or resource-guarding aggression. Use food with discretion and do NOT throw balls and toys. Don't feed your dog treats when other dogs are focussing on your food supply. Don't feed other dogs – not everyone wants their dog to take food from other people and some dogs may have food allergies.

**Be aware of your dog's social skills:** Some dogs are not particularly tolerant of unfamiliar dogs or lack the social skills to greet and mix with new dogs in an appropriate manner. While there are always exceptions, many socially mature dogs do not enjoy playing with unfamiliar dogs. If your dog is not 'good' with other dogs – or you have any reservations – use the off-lead area by yourself so your dog can enjoy itself without being bothered by other dogs, or arrange an off-lead play date with a couple of other dogs that your dog knows and likes. Do not feel pressured to let other people join you.

**Entering an off-lead area:** Always ask permission before entering an occupied area and only enter if everyone has given their permission. Then – enter on lead and move well away from the gate. Get your dog to give you attention while you remove the lead. Harnesses and head halters must always be removed. Keep your lead handy – you may need to use it in a hurry.

**Spread out and keep moving:** Dogs tend to mill around their owners and this is when incidents can occur. Keep walking around the paddock to reduce the risk of dogs forming a 'pack'. Stay a good distance away from the gate so that your dog is less likely to rush up to people and dogs entering or leaving the area. And stay well away from the fences to adjoining paddocks to reduce the likelihood of fence-running. This might look like fun but it can lead to over-arousal and antisocial behaviour including barrier aggression.

**Watch your dog:** Keep an eye on your dog at all times. Don't let it annoy other dogs or jump up or beg for food from other people. Dogs can communicate a lot of messages without growling or biting, so learn about dog body language to keep your dog out of trouble. If for any reason you feel your dog is not enjoying the experience – or there is an incident between dogs in the area – quickly and quietly get your dog and leave the paddock. Always consider how your behaviour and your dog's behaviour is affecting other users on the grounds.

**Keep children out of the off-lead area:** You can't watch your dog and your child at the same time. Excited movement combined with shrill voices can arouse prey behaviour or rough play in some dogs. Dogs that haven't been well-socialised with children (and vice versa) may be timid, fearful or unsure. Your child will be safer on the other side of the fence and you will be able to focus on controlling your dog. Remember, you are also responsible for your child's behaviour and safety whenever they are on the grounds. Note that children under 11 are not permitted in off-lead areas and children between 11-16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For more information about exercise and socialisation – and to help you recognise and understand body language when dogs mix – please contact the club office and we will send you some helpful articles.

If you have any queries or concerns about the use of the club's grounds please talk to a club official (ie Session Manager, Instructor, Committee member) or email the club on [contact@actcdc.org.au](mailto:contact@actcdc.org.au).



## **Using the club grounds**

The ACT Companion Dog Club has wonderful amenities, including fenced areas where members can train and exercise their dogs.

**This brochure sets out the rules and advice that you must follow when using grounds.**

The ACT Companion Dog Club does not accept responsibility for any injury to persons or dogs, property loss or damage arising from the use of the club's grounds.

[www.actcdc.org.au](http://www.actcdc.org.au)

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## RULES OF USE

- You must be a current financial member of the club to use the grounds.
- You must follow the instructions of a club official when asked (ie Session Manager, Instructor, Committee Member).
- You must not bring visitors on to the grounds unless you have obtained permission from a club official. Fees may apply (contact the club office).
- Only dogs listed on your membership record may use the grounds.
- Your dog must be currently immunised against canine distemper, adenovirus (canine hepatitis) and parvovirus.
- You must not bring your dog onto the grounds if it is showing any signs of illness including diarrhoea, vomiting or coughing.
- You must not bring a bitch in season on to the grounds.
- You are responsible for your dog while it is on the grounds.
- You must always clean up after your dog. Bring a spare bag with you and use the bins provided.
- Children under 16 years old must be accompanied by an adult who is responsible for the child and the dog.

## NO DOGS IN THE CLUBHOUSE

Your dog is only allowed in the clubhouse if:

- A club official has given you permission.
- You wish to use the weighing scales.
- Your dog is a recognised Assistance Dog.

Dogs must be on-lead in the clubhouse (unless other permission has been given). For hygiene reasons, dogs are not permitted in the kitchen under any circumstances.

## ON-LEAD AREAS

Your dog must be on lead in the Instructors' Car Park, Home Paddock and Long Paddock at all times unless it is working off-lead under the direction of an instructor or other club official. The Obedience and Agility rings are only available for club training and trialling activities. You must not use them for off-lead exercise or use them as a thoroughfare to other areas.

## LIMITS ON ACCESS TO OFF-LEAD AREAS

The club's off-lead areas (Narrabundah Paddock, Flyball Paddock, Bore Paddock, Back Paddock and Puppy Play Pen) are subject to the following restrictions:

- During Behaviour Training classes on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays these areas may only be used by members who are at the club to attend a class on their designated training day. You must NOT come to the club to use these areas while training classes are being held UNLESS you are attending a class on the same day.
- If an off-lead area is already occupied, you must ask all members using the area if you can join them and you must obtain permission from everyone before you and your dog enter the area.
- No off-lead exercise is permitted in the Narrabundah Paddock or Flyball Paddock 30 minutes before or after Behaviour Training classes on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. Dogs may be walked on lead in these areas during these times.
- Access to off-lead areas may be restricted at any time due to scheduled club activities (including trials). Where possible, these activities are advertised on the club's Facebook page, website calendar and club magazine and/or signposted on gates to the grounds or specific areas.

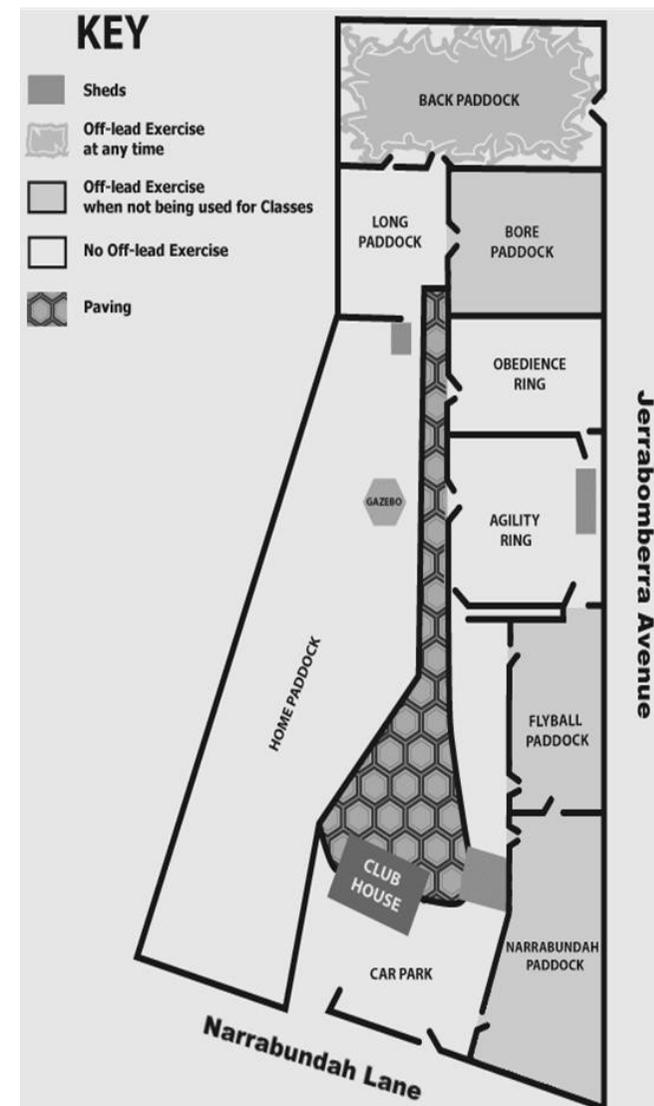
The Puppy Playpen between the Workshop and Narrabundah Paddock may be used to exercise small dogs and puppies off-lead. The same rules and advice apply to the use of this area.

## USING THE OFF-LEAD AREAS RESPONSIBLY

The following advice is designed to keep you and your dog safe and will help minimise the risk of incidents.

**Fair access:** Limit your time to 15 minutes if other people are waiting to use the same area.

**Too many dogs:** The more dogs playing in an area the more excited and aroused they are likely to become. If there are already several dogs in the paddock you would like to use, go to another paddock or wait until some of the dogs leave. Let the people already in the paddock know you are waiting.



The ACT Companion Dog Club is NOT a public dog park.

Use of the grounds is limited to club members.

Access to the grounds (including off-lead areas) may be restricted at any time due to scheduled club activities.

Is your club membership up-to-date?

Check at the Club Office.