



## DETECTOR DOG - SEARCH WORKBOOK

Pam Mackinnon



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Talking Dogs Scentwork® Detector Dog Search Workbook. I've written this to give you a jumping off point, a series of searches to act as guides as you and your dog build skills and experience in scentwork together.

Each search lays out suggested resources that will help increase your understanding of the specific search, lists the equipment you will need, and how much time each search should take. I've also included what you should look for from the search along with learning goals for both and your dog. The workbook is split into three sections, [Starter](#), [Intermediate](#) and [Advanced](#) so that you can easily find searches at the right level for your search team. If you work through each search in book order, you will find that each builds upon the previous search. But you will also see that there are [Specialist Searches](#), such as baggage and vehicle, where you might decide to focus on one specialism and work through the all the searches for that topic. Use the workbook to learn how to set the goals and the searches that will help you reach those goals. Take the searches directly from the workbook, or adapt them. Be creative, be thoughtful, progress gradually rather than taking huge leaps and most of all, make sure your dog is having fun with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Pam Mackinnon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pam" and last name "Mackinnon" clearly distinguishable.



# STARTER



## Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Teach your dog to sniff!  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P30-32, P34-38, P70-71

### Equipment:

Indoor area  
Search articles  
7 cardboard boxes, various sizes  
Hand cleanser









### Searches

3 searches, each under 1 minute long.

### Search requirements:

Search area must be indoors, 1 room.  
Do not reuse boxes that have contained the finds.  
In each search, 1 easily accessible find.  
A different hide in each search.

### The searches should demonstrate:

-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog happily moving into the search area.
-  Dog searching for the target odour.
-  Handler moving backwards and away from the dog, allowing the dog to cover the area without body blocking or impeding him/her.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  If necessary, handler using hand gestures to aid searching.
-  Dog successfully locating the finds and playing (scented article) or eating (edible article)

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

How to search for a target odour in an expanded search area.  
That when the handler gives the cue to search, there will be something for him/her to find.  
That the handler will support him/her throughout the search.

#### For the handler to learn:

How to move during the search.  
How to cue the dog to search.  
How to ensure the dog accesses the whole area.  
How to respond when the dog finds the article.

## Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 2

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Teach your dog to sniff!

TDS Manual Detector Dog - P30-32, P34-38, P70-71

### Equipment:

Indoor area

Search articles

10 cardboard boxes, various sizes

Hand cleanser

### Searches

2 searches, each under 1½ minutes long.

### Search requirements:









Search area must be indoors, 1 room.

Do not reuse boxes that have contained the finds.

In each search, 1 accessible find. Dog may have to move a box, lift a lid or push into the box to access the find.

A different hide in each search.

### The searches should demonstrate:

-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog happily moving into the search area.
-  Dog searching for the target odour.
-  Handler moving backwards and away from the dog, allowing the dog to cover the area without body blocking or impeding him/her.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  If necessary, handler using hand gestures to aid searching.
-  Dog successfully locating the finds and playing (scented article) or eating (edible article)

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

How to search for a target odour in an expanded search area.

That when the handler gives the cue to search, there will be something for him/her to find.

That the handler will support him/her throughout the search.

That the find is still accessible even if s/he has to physically move things to get to it.

#### For the handler to learn:

How to move during the search.

How to cue the dog to search.

How to ensure the dog accesses the whole area.

How to respond when the dog finds the article.

How to recognise when the dog needs assistance and how to help.

## Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 3

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Teach your dog to sniff!

TDS Manual Detector Dog - P30-32, P34-38, P70-71

Scent 1 DVD - Learning to Sniff

### Mandatory modules

FSSL1/2 Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 2

### Equipment:

Indoor area

Search articles

5 cardboard boxes, various sizes

5 non-cardboard containers, various sizes

Hand cleanser

### Searches

2 searches, each between 30 seconds - 2 minutes.

### Search requirements:

Search area must be indoors, 1 room.









If using boxes then please use a maximum of 5. Plus 5 non-cardboard containers.

Do not reuse items that have contained the finds.

In each search, 1 accessible find. Dog may have to move a container, lift a lid or push into the box to access the find.

A different hide in each search.

### The searches should demonstrate:

-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog happily moving into the search area.
-  Dog searching for the target odour.
-  Handler moving backwards and away from the dog, allowing the dog to cover the area without body blocking or impeding him/her.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  If necessary, handler using hand gestures to aid searching.
-  Dog successfully locating the finds and playing (scented article), swapping (scented article swapped for food treat) or eating (edible article)

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

How to search for a target odour within hides of different materials.

That when the handler gives the cue to search, there will be something for him/her to find.

That the handler will support him/her throughout the search.

#### For the handler to learn:

How to cue the dog to search.

How to ensure the dog accesses the whole area.

How to respond when the dog finds the article.

How to recognise when the dog needs assistance and how to help.



## Key Skill - Directed search

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Scentwork Skills  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P27-28, P42-44

### Equipment:

Indoor area  
Scented articles  
A line of 6 chairs or 6 medium sized cardboard boxes  
Hand cleanser  
Lead  
Search harness strongly recommended











### Searches

3 searches, each between 10 seconds - 1 minute.

#### Search requirements:

Search area must be indoors, 1 room.  
Do not reuse items that have contained the finds.  
In each search, 1 accessible find. Dog may have to move a container, lift a lid or push into the box to access the find.  
A different hide in each search.

#### The searches should demonstrate:

-  On lead: dog searching the line of chairs / boxes.
-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog searching for the target odour.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the line of chairs / boxes.
-  Team working on the correct side of the line.
-  Handler maintaining loose lead without it getting tangled.
-  Handler physically supporting the dog if s/he jumps onto the chairs.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the find.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

How to search on lead.  
How to search a linear area.  
That when the handler gives the cue to search, there will be something for him/her to find.  
That the handler will support him/her throughout the search.  
That the handler will provide physical support.

#### For the handler to learn:

How to get into the correct position before starting to search.  
How and when to cue the dog, on lead, to search.  
How to ensure the dog accesses the whole area, including areas that the dog might not have considered to be possible hides.  
How to respond when the dog, on lead, finds the article.

How to recognise when the dog needs assistance and how to help.  
How to use the lead effectively and appropriately.  
How to use the harness effectively and appropriately.

## Search Skill Level 2 - Starter 1

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Scentwork Skills  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P38-39, P46-54, P75-79

### Equipment:

Indoor area  
Search area set up so that there are definite corners, perimeter and objects in the middle of the area.  
Boxes and containers of different sizes and materials, enough to ensure there is something to search in each of the corners, along the perimeter and in the middle.  
One of the sides of the search area should comprise 3 chairs side by side, seats facing into the search area  
Scented articles  
Hand cleanser  
Search harness strongly recommended











### Searches

2 searches, each between 1 ½ - 2 minutes.

### Search requirements:

Search area must be indoors, 1 room.  
Do not reuse items that have contained the finds.  
In each search, 2 accessible finds. Dog will have to move a container, lift a lid or push into the box to access the find.  
Different hides in each search.

### The searches should demonstrate:

-  Dog working off lead.
-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog searching for the target odour.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.
-  Handler positioning her/himself correctly while following the search patterns. It should be clear when moving from one pattern to the next.
-  Handler physically supporting the dog if s/he jumps onto the chairs.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the find, with assistance if required.
-  Dog continuing to work after reward for first find.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

How to search an expanded area with hides of different materials.  
How to search for longer.

How to work with the handler to search in greater detail.  
That the handler will support him/her throughout the search.  
How to continue to search after the first article is found.  
That the handler will provide physical support when needed.

**For the handler to learn:**

How to ensure the dog accesses the whole area, including areas that the dog might not have considered to be possible hides.  
How to follow the search plan, moving from pattern to pattern appropriately.  
How to respond when the dog finds the article, considering s/he has another to find.  
How to resume the search in the correct place after the first find.  
How to use the harness effectively and appropriately.

## Search Skill Level 2 - Starter 2

**Resources:**

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Scentwork Skills  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P38-39, P46-54, P75-79

**Equipment:**

Indoor area  
Search area set up so that there are definite corners, perimeter and objects in the middle of the area.  
Boxes and containers of different sizes and materials, enough to ensure there is something to search in each of the corners, along the perimeter and in the middle.  
One of the sides of the search area should comprise 3 chairs side by side, seats facing into the search area.  
Scented articles  
Hand cleanser  
Search harness strongly recommended






**Searches**





2 searches, each between 1 ½ - 2 minutes.

**Search requirements:**

Search area must be indoors, 1 room.  
Do not reuse items that have contained the finds.  
In each search, 1 accessible find and 1 find hidden inside two layers, e.g. in a box inside another box, or in a cone inside a basket . Dog will have to move a container, lift a lid or push into the box to access the find.  
Different hides in each search.

**The searches should demonstrate:**

-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog searching for target odour.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.
-  Handler positioning her/himself correctly while following the search patterns. It should be clear when moving from one pattern to the next.
-  Handler opening up objects in the area to give dog access to layered finds.

-  Handler physically supporting the dog if s/he jumps onto the chairs.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the find, with assistance if required.

## Learning goals

### For the dog to learn:

To build confidence by physically working to get the less accessible finds.

To hit smaller scent pictures.

That the handler will support him/her throughout the search.

That the handler will provide physical support when needed.

### For the handler to learn:

How to ensure the dog accesses the whole area in detail, by opening boxes to give access to potential finds within them.

How to recognise (potentially) smaller indications.

How to delay asking the question as the dog sniffs longer to locate the layered finds.

To practise the search patterns within the plan.

## Search Skill Level 2 - Starter 3

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Scentwork Skills

TDS Manual Detector Dog - P46-54, P75-79

### Equipment:

Indoor area

Search area set up so that there are definite corners, perimeter and objects in the middle of the area.

Boxes and containers of different sizes and materials, enough to ensure there is something to search in each of the corners, along the perimeter and in the middle.

One of the sides of the search area should comprise 3 chairs side by side, seats facing into the search area.

Scented articles

Hand cleanser

Search harness strongly recommended

### Searches

2 searches, each between 2 ½ - 3 ½ minutes.

### Search requirements:

Search area must be indoors, 1 room.

Do not reuse items that have contained the finds.










In each search, 1 accessible find hidden above the dog's head, e.g. stuck to a door frame, jammed between the wall and the back of the chair, or under the seat of the chair, depending on the height or physical limitations of the dog. Plus 2 finds hidden inside two layers, e.g. in a box inside another box, or in a cone inside a basket.

Dog will have to move a container, lift a lid, push into the box or stand on a chair to access the find.

Different hides in each search.



**The searches should demonstrate:**

-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog searching for the target odour.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.
-  Handler positioning her/himself correctly while following the search patterns. It should be clear when moving from one pattern to the next.
-  Handler opening up objects in the area to give dog access to layered finds.
-  Handler physically supporting the dog if s/he jumps onto the chairs.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the find, with assistance if required.

**Learning goals****For the dog to learn:**

To learn that finds can be high as well as low.

To practise hitting smaller scent pictures.

That the handler will provide physical support when needed.

**For the handler to learn:**

How to ensure the dog accesses the whole area in detail, including high hides.

How to encourage the dog to search at height.

How to effectively use the harness when the dog is working at height.

To practise the search patterns to include height. It should be clear when moving from one pattern to the next.

## INTERMEDIATE



## Search Skill Level 3 - Intermediate 1

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Increasing the Challenge  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P27-28, P45-46, P75-80

### Equipment:

Indoor area.

Search area set up so that there are definite corners, perimeter and objects in the middle of the area or in each room.

Boxes and containers of different sizes and materials, enough to ensure there is something to search in each of the corners, along the perimeter and in the middle.

Hand cleanser

Scented articles

Search harness

Assistant recommended

### Searches

2 searches, each between 3 - 4 minutes.

#### Search requirements:

Search area must be indoors.

Whole area must be cleared.










#### Search 1



No finds placed. After 1 minute, the handler should place a quick find without the dog seeing it / or keep the dog engaged while an assistant places a quick find. Dog should then be worked to locate that find. After being rewarded for that find, the dog should be worked on. Repeat placing a quick find at an appropriate time during the remainder of the search. When deciding when to put this second find out, keep in mind the length of search, how long the dog has gone without a find and how much of the area is still to be cleared.

#### Search 2

1 layered find (2 layers). At an appropriate stage in the search, the handler should place a quick find without the dog seeing it / or keep the dog engaged while an assistant places a quick find. Dog should then be worked to locate that find. Both finds must be located and the area must be cleared.

#### The searches should demonstrate:

-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog searching for target odour.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.
-  Handler positioning her/himself correctly while following the search patterns. It should be clear when moving from one pattern to the next.
-  Handler opening up objects in the area to give dog access to layered finds.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the find, with assistance if required.
-  Handler assessing when the quick find should come.

-  Handler placing a quick find without the dog noticing / or working the dog so that s/he doesn't notice an assistant placing a quick find.
-  The area being cleared.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

To build search stamina.

To practise searching for smaller scent pictures.

#### For the handler to learn:

How to observe the dog to determine when a quick find is required.

How to place, or facilitate the placing of, quick finds.

How to search thoroughly knowing that there is no find in the area.

How to work on until the whole search area has been cleared using a search plan.

### Key Skill - Introducing different articles (non-edible)

#### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Increasing the Challenge

TDS Manual Detector Dog - P14-16, P79-80, P99-100

#### Equipment:

Indoor area

Unscented articles of different materials, e.g. fabric, leather, wood, plastic





### Exercise

#### Requirements:

Work area must be indoors, 1 room.

Handler playing appropriate games with dog with a variety of different unscented articles.

#### The exercise should demonstrate:

-  Handler engaging the dog in games with a variety of unscented articles.
-  Games should be safe and appropriate to the article and to the dog.
-  Dog should be happy to pick up the articles to bring to the handler.
-  Handler should reward the dog appropriately.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

How to pick up articles that are not as initially appealing, or familiar as, their usual scented articles.

That interacting with these articles is rewarding.

#### For the handler to learn:

How to teach the dog to pick up any article, despite the texture, weight or size.

How to reward the dog appropriately.

How to build confidence in the dog with less familiar objects.



## Key Skill 7B - Delaying the reward (edible articles)

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Increasing the Challenge  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P79-80, P99-100

### Equipment:



Indoor area  
Unscented containers of different materials, e.g. fabric, leather, wood, plastic  
Edible articles

### Exercise

#### Requirements:

Work area must be indoors, 1 room.  
Handler encouraging the dog to investigate a variety of safe and appropriate containers to find the edible articles. Choose the containers with care as the dog is used to eating his/her finds - you do not want the dog to eat the container.

#### The exercise should demonstrate:

-  Handler engaging the dog in 5 short simple free searches.
-  Searches require the dog to pick up or give strong indications on the containers which the handler then opens to reveal the edible articles and allow the dog to eat them.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

How to pick up or indicate on containers/materials which deny instant access to the article.  
That indicating on these containers/materials will result in their handler giving them access to the article.  
That a short delay between indicating on, then eating the article is acceptable.

#### For the handler to learn:

How to choose safe, appropriate containers.  
How to teach the dog to indicate on any container/material, despite the texture, weight or size.  
How to build trust in the dog that when they indicate, the handler will always give them access to the articles.  
How to build confidence in the dog with less familiar objects.

## Search Skill Level 3 - Intermediate 2

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Courses - Scentwork Skills & Increasing the Challenge  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P27-28, P45-46, P75-80

### Equipment:

Indoor area, 2 rooms or equivalent size, e.g. section of village hall.  
Search area set up so that there are definite corners, perimeter and objects in the middle of the area or in each room.

Boxes and containers of different sizes and materials, enough to ensure there is something to search in each of the corners, along the perimeter and in the middle. Include areas where hides can be high for the dog (stay safe)

Scented articles

Hand cleanser

Search harness

## Searches

1 search, each between 4 - 6 minutes.

### Search requirements:











Search area must be indoors, 2 rooms or equivalent size.

Whole area must be cleared.

4 finds, plus quick find if necessary. All finds (except the quick find) should be layered, minimum of 2 layers, maximum of 3.

Each find should be different to each other, e.g. different size, material, density, etc. If your dog searches for edible articles they should be placed in hides of different materials, i.e. not all in cardboard boxes.

### The search should demonstrate:

-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog searching for the target odour.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.
-  Handler positioning her/himself correctly while following the search patterns. It should be clear when moving from one pattern to the next.
-  Handler opening up objects in the area to give dog access to all layers.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the find, with assistance if required.
-  If required, handler placing a well-timed, quick find without the dog noticing / or working the dog so that s/he doesn't notice an assistant placing a quick find.
-  The area being cleared.

## Learning goals

### For the dog to learn:

To build search stamina.

To practise searching for a variety of scented articles.

To locate multiple finds.

### For the handler to learn:

How to observe the dog to determine if a quick find is required.

How to place, or facilitate the placing of, quick finds using appropriate articles.

How to work on until the whole search area has been cleared using a search plan.

## Search Skill Level 3 - Specialist Search 1 - Baggage

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Baggage

TDS Manual Detector Dog - P82-84

### Equipment:

Indoor area

8 items of baggage, including soft sided suitcases, rucksacks, handbags, canvas totes.

No plastic carrier bags.

3 scented articles (as per Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1)

Hand cleanser

Lead

Search harness

### Searches

3 searches, each between 20 seconds - 1 ½ minutes.

#### Search requirements:

Search area must be indoors

Dog must work on lead

Baggage search must consist of 6 bags laid out in a straight line with a gap between each bag

1 find in each of the three searches








Find 1 must be easily accessible in an open bag

Find 2 must be in a closed bag

Find 3 must be in a closed zipped pocket/section

Previously used (contaminated) bags must not be re-used

#### The searches should demonstrate:

-  On lead: dog searching the line of bags to find the target odour.
-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.
-  Handler allowing the dog time to show them exactly where in the bag the find is located.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the find, with assistance if required.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

To search new items, i.e. baggage.

To take time to search methodically and thoroughly.

To work through layers of different materials to locate the hide.

#### For the handler to learn:

How to allow more time for them to sniff through the layers that make up the various items of baggage.

How to ensure that the dog searches efficiently and methodically.

How to observe not just which bag contains the find, but where in the bag the dog is indicating.

## Search Skill Level 3 - Specialist Search 2 - Vehicle (exterior)

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Vehicle Searches  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P80- 81  
Scent 3 DVD - Super Searches

### Equipment:

Vehicle - car or small van  
3 scented articles (as per Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1)  
Hand cleanser  
Lead  
Search harness











### Searches

3 searches, each between 20 seconds - 1 ½ minutes.

#### Search requirements:

Search area must be outdoors  
Dog must work on lead  
Dog must not put paws on any paintwork on the vehicle  
1 find in each of the three searches  
All finds must be no higher than the height of the vehicle's tyres  
All finds must be placed safely for the dog  
All finds must be placed safely for the vehicle, e.g. don't place finds in areas where they can drop into gaps from where the handler cannot retrieve them.  
All finds must be accessible for the dog  
Previously used (contaminated) hides must not be re-used

#### The searches should demonstrate:

-  On lead: the team searching methodically around the vehicle.
-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog searching for the target odour.
-  Handler working backwards, ahead of the dog, using clear hand gestures to assist a safe and thorough search of the area.
-  Handler working methodically
-  Handler allowing the dog to move freely in any direction when they hit the scent
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler driving the dog in to access the find.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the find, with assistance if required.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

To search a new area, i.e. a vehicle.  
To search around and under the vehicle, only putting paws on areas of that vehicle where the handler gestures, i.e. not on paintwork.  
To follow the scent from wherever they hit it to the source  
To re-find the scent if it gets lost due to wind direction, etc.



**For the handler to learn:**

How give very specific hand gestures to suggest to the dog where to search, and what to touch / not touch without being discouraging or restrictive.

To practise lead handling skills

To learn how to methodically search a vehicle

How to ensure that the dog searches in unexpected or unusual places on the vehicle.

How to observe when the dog air scents and then allow the dog to follow that scent to the source.

**Search Skill Level 3 - Specialist Search 3 - Postal****Resources:**

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Baggage

TDS Manual Detector Dog - P86-88

**Equipment:**

Indoor area

8 postal sacks or similar woven polypropylene sacks

A selection of paper envelopes, small boxes and junk mail (enough to fill 2 carrier bags)

No padded envelopes or plastic.

3 scented articles (as per Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1)

Hand cleanser

Lead

Search harness

**Searches**

3 searches, each between 20 seconds - 1 ½ minutes.

**Search requirements:**

Search area must be indoors

Dog must work on lead

Postal searches must consist of 6 postal sacks laid out in a straight line with a gap between each sack

1 find in each of the three searches


Search 1: All postal sacks must be empty, except the one containing the find


Search 2: 4 postal sacks must be empty, two should have half a carrier bag of mixed mail in each sack, one of the filled bags must contain the find, loose in the sack


Search 3: All postal sacks should contain some of the mixed mail, the find should be hidden inside an envelope hidden amongst the mail inside the sack.

Previously used (contaminated) sacks must not be re-used


**The searches should demonstrate:**


 On lead: dog searching the line of sacks to find the target odour.


 Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.

 Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.

 Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.

 Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.

 Handler allowing dog to access the find, by tipping the contents of the sack onto the floor and, in searches 2 & 3, asking the dog to search those contents.

 Handler only tipping out those sacks on which the dog has indicated.

## Learning goals

### For the dog to learn:

To search new items, i.e. postal sacks.

To take time to search methodically and thoroughly.

To work through layers of different materials to locate the hide.

### For the handler to learn:

How to allow time for the dog to investigate the sacks.

How to ensure that the dog searches efficiently and methodically.

How to carefully observe the dog's indication on the correct sacks.

How to encourage and assist a 'second' search after tipping out the contents of the sack.

## Search Skill Level 3 - Specialist Search 4 - Outdoor

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Increasing the Challenge

TDS Manual Detector Dog - P84-86

### Equipment:

Outside area such as a small domestic back garden, around 8 x 8 m<sup>2</sup>

3 scented articles (as per Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1)

Hand cleanser

Search harness

### Searches

1 search, between 3-4 minutes.

### Search requirements:









Search area must be outdoors in a safe area.

All finds must be no higher than the height of the dog.

All finds must be accessible for the dog.

All hides should be part of the area, i.e. don't bring in boxes or containers, use what is there, e.g. bushes, plant pots, fencing.

### The searches should demonstrate:

-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog searching for the target odour.
-  Handler working backwards or sideways, whichever is safest, ahead of the dog, using clear hand gestures to assist a safe and thorough search of the area.
-  Handler using appropriate search patterns.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' however early they hit the scent, and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler supporting the dog to locate the hides.
-  Handler supporting the dog to access the finds, with assistance if required.

## Learning goals

### **For the dog to learn:**

To search a new area, i.e. open, outdoor area.

To stay focussed and working despite multiple competing scents and distractions.

To trust the handler to assist with finding the articles.

To follow the scent from wherever they hit it to the source.

To re-find the scent if it gets lost due to wind direction, etc.

### **For the handler to learn:**

How to move around the area effectively, methodically and safely.

How to observe when the dog air scents and then allow the dog to follow that scent to the source.

How to work the dog on between finds.

How to keep the dog focussed on searching, i.e. to stay on task and not become distracted.

# ADVANCED



## Search Skill Level 4 - Advanced 1

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Increasing the Challenge  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P88-91

### Equipment:

Indoor area, 4 rooms or equivalent size, e.g. section of village hall.

Search area set up so that there are definite corners, perimeter and objects in the middle of the area or in each room.

Boxes and containers of different sizes and materials, including baggage and partially filled postal sacks, enough to ensure there is something to search in each of the corners, along the perimeter and in the middle.

Include areas where hides can be high for the dog (stay safe)

Scented articles of different materials and sizes

Hand cleanser

Search harness

### Search

1 search, between 8-9 minutes.

### Search requirements:











Search area must be indoors, 4 rooms or equivalent size.

Whole area must be cleared.

5 finds, plus quick find if necessary. All finds (except the quick find) should be layered, minimum of 2 layers, maximum of 4.

Each find should be different to each other, e.g. different size, material, density, etc.

### The searches should demonstrate:

-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog searching for target odour.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.
-  Handler positioning her/himself correctly while following the search patterns. It should be clear when moving from one pattern to the next.
-  Handler opening up objects in the area to give dog access to all layers.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the find, with assistance if required.
-  If required, handler placing a well-timed quick find without the dog noticing / or working the dog so that s/he doesn't notice an assistant placing a quick find.
-  The area being cleared.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

To build search stamina.

To include searches of specialist items (baggage and postal) within a non-specialist search area.

To practise searching for a variety of scented articles hidden within multiple layers.

**For the handler to learn:**

How to observe the dog to determine if a quick find is required.

How to incorporate searches of specialist items (baggage and postal) into a non-specialist search area.

How to search specialist items (baggage and postal) off lead.

How to increase search duration and complexity.

## Search Skill Level 4 - Specialist Search - Advanced Baggage

**Resources:**

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Increasing the Challenge

TDS Manual Detector Dog - P91- 92

**Equipment:**

10 items of baggage, including soft and hard sided suitcases, rucksacks, handbags, canvas totes. No plastic carrier bags.

Old towels, bedding or clothes. Enough to fill 3 of the bags.

2 scented articles, one each placed in one of the filled bags. Ideally, leave the scented articles in the bags for a minimum of 4 hours.

Hand cleanser

Lead

Search harness

**Searches**

2 searches, each between 1-2 minutes.

**Search requirements:**

Search area can be indoors or out.

Baggage search must consist of 9 bags laid out in a straight line with no gap between each bag.

1 find in each of the two searches.


Finds must be amongst the contents of a closed bag.


Handler must not open the bag until the dog has identified the correct one, i.e. no opening of all the bags during the search.


Dog can snuffing amongst the contents to access the find once the bag is identified.


Previously used (contaminated) bags and contents must not be re-used


**The searches should demonstrate:**


 On lead: dog searching the line of bags for the target odour.


 Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.


 Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.

 Handler 'puffing' the air out of the bags by squeezing them.

 Handler allowing the dog extra time to search all the bags, especially the full bags.

 Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.

 Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.

 Handler allowing dog to access the find, by opening the bag, and providing further assistance required.

## Learning goals

### For the dog to learn:

To search unopened baggage.

To take time to search methodically and thoroughly.

To work through layers of different materials to locate the hide within the bag.

### For the handler to learn:

How to allow more time for them to sniff through the layers that make up the various items of baggage and contents.

How to ensure that the dog searches efficiently and methodically for a longer time.

How make accurate observations in order to identify the correct bag before opening it to give the dog access to the find amongst the contents.

## Search Skill Level 4 - Advanced - Vehicle (exterior) - 1

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Vehicle Searches

TDS Manual Detector Dog - P80- 81

### Equipment:

Vehicles - 3 cars/small vans

3 scented articles (as per Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1)

Hand cleanser

Lead

Search harness

### Search

1 search, between 2-3 minutes.

### Search requirements:

Search area must be outdoors

Dog must work on lead

Dog must not put paws on any paintwork on the vehicles

3 finds in the search

All finds must be no higher than the height of the vehicle's tyres

All finds must be placed safely for the dog

All finds must be placed safely for the vehicles, e.g. don't place finds in areas where they can drop into gaps from where the handler cannot retrieve them.


1 find must be accessible for the dog


2 finds where the dog will require assistance to access them


Do not place multiple finds on the same side of the same vehicle


Vehicles must be cleared


### The searches should demonstrate:

 On lead: the team searching methodically around each car.








 Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.

 Dog searching for the target odour.

 Handler working backwards, ahead of the dog, using clear hand gestures to assist a safe and thorough search of the area.

 Handler working methodically.



-  Handler allowing the dog to move freely in any direction when they hit the scent.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler driving the dog in to access the finds.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the finds, with assistance if required.
-  Handler working the dog on between finds.
-  Vehicles being cleared.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

To search more vehicles in one search and so increase their search stamina.

To practise searching around and under the vehicles.

To follow the scent from wherever they hit it to the source, even when there are several finds and therefore a chance of competing scent pictures.

To re-find the scent if it gets lost due to wind direction or competing scent pictures, etc.

#### For the handler to learn:

How give very specific hand gestures to suggest to the dog where to search, and what to touch / not touch without being discouraging or restrictive.

To practise lead handling skills.

To learn to work at the dog's pace.

To learn how to search a series of vehicles methodically.

How to ensure that the dog searches in unexpected or unusual places on the vehicles.

How to observe when the dog air scents and then allow the dog to follow that scent to the source/s.

Adaptability when searching should the dog move between scent pictures before hitting the exact location of the hide.

### Search Skill Level 4 - Advanced - Vehicle (exterior) - 2

#### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Vehicle Searches

TDS Manual Detector Dog - P80- 81

#### Equipment:

Vehicles - 1 tractor/truck/large vehicle

3 scented articles (as per Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1)

Hand cleanser

Lead

Search harness

#### Search

1 search, between 2-3 minutes.

**Search requirements:**

Search area must be outdoors.

Dog must work on lead.

Dog must not put paws on any paintwork on the vehicle.

3 finds in the search.

All finds must be no higher than the height of the vehicle's tyres.

All finds must be placed safely and appropriately for the dog.

All finds must be placed safely for the vehicle, e.g. don't place finds in areas where they can drop into gaps from where the handler cannot retrieve them.












1 find must be accessible for the dog

2 finds where the dog will require assistance to access them

Do not place multiple finds on the same side of the vehicle.

Vehicle must be cleared.

**The searches should demonstrate:**

-  On lead: the team searching methodically around the vehicle to find the target odour.
-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Handler working backwards, ahead of the dog, using clear hand gestures to assist a safe and thorough search of the area.
-  Handler working methodically.
-  Handler allowing the dog to move freely in any direction when they hit the scent.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler driving the dog in to access the finds.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the finds, with assistance if required.
-  Handler working the dog on between finds.
-  Vehicle being cleared.

**Learning goals****For the dog to learn:**

To search a larger, more complicated vehicle and so increase their search stamina and skill.

To practise searching around and under the large vehicle.

To follow the scent from wherever they hit it to the source, taking consideration of hide height and complexity.

To re-find the scent if it gets lost due to wind direction, etc.

**For the handler to learn:**

How give very specific hand gestures to suggest to the dog where to search, and what to touch / not touch without being discouraging or restrictive.

To practise lead handling skills.

To learn to work at the dog's pace.

To learn how to search a large vehicle methodically.

How to ensure that the dog searches in unexpected or unusual places on the vehicle.

How to observe when the dog air scents and then allow the dog to follow that scent to the source.

## Search Skill Level 4 - Specialist Search - Advanced Postal

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Baggage  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P92- 93

### Equipment:

Indoor area

15 postal sacks or similar woven polypropylene sacks

A selection of paper envelopes, small boxes, junk mail, padded envelopes (plastic and/or paper) (enough to fill 2 postal sacks)

2 scented articles (as per Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1)

Hand cleanser

Search harness

### Search

1 search, between 3-4 minutes.

### Search requirements:

Search area can be indoors or outdoors.

Postal search must consist of all postal sacks laid out in a loose pile.









All postal sacks must contain a mix of mail (use all the collected mail to fill the sacks)

2 sacks must also contain the finds, which should be wrapped inside:

Find 1. a padded envelope

Find 2. 3 paper envelopes.

### The searches should demonstrate:

-  The dog searching the pile of sacks for the target odour.
-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.
-  Handler assisting the dog in a logical and useful manner so as not to disperse the scent or interrupt the dog while searching.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler correctly selecting just the two sacks containing the finds to empty out. No other sacks should be emptied.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the finds, by tipping the contents of the sack onto the floor and asking the dog to search those contents.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

To increase the duration of a single postal search.

To continue to search even if the finds take longer to locate.

To work through layers of sacks and materials to locate the hides.

#### For the handler to learn:

How to move sacks judiciously, i.e. to help not hinder the dog.

How to ensure that the dog searches efficiently and methodically.

How to support the dog to continue working if no finds have been located for some time.

How to carefully observe the dog's indication in order to select the correct sacks.

How to encourage and assist a 'second' search after tipping out the contents of the sack.

## Search Skill Level 4 - Specialist Search - Advanced Outdoor

### Resources:

TDS Detector Dog Online Course - Increasing the Challenge  
TDS Manual Detector Dog - P93- 94

### Equipment:

Outside area such as a paddock, field, large garden, around 15m x 15m  
4 scented articles (2 articles as per Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1, and 2 as per Search Skill Level 3 - Intermediate 2 )  
Hand cleanser  
Search harness











### Search

1 search, between 7-8 minutes.

### Search requirements:

Search area must be outdoors in a safe area.  
1 find must be accessible for the dog  
1 find must be higher than the dog  
1 find must be ground level  
1 find must be placed during the search at an appropriate time as a quick find  
All hides should be part of the area, i.e. don't bring in boxes or containers, use what is there, e.g. fencing, plant pots, bushes, grass.

### The searches should demonstrate:

-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Dog searching for the target odour.
-  Handler working backwards or sideways, whichever is safest, ahead of the dog, using clear hand gestures to assist a safe and thorough search of the area.
-  Handler using appropriate search patterns.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' however early they hit the scent, and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler supporting the dog to locate the hides.
-  Handler supporting the dog to access the finds, with assistance when required.
-  How to place, or facilitate the placing of, a quick, well timed finds.
-  The area being cleared.

### Learning goals

#### For the dog to learn:

To practise searching outdoors.  
To search a larger area, working for a longer time  
To locate finds at various levels.  
To stay on task.

#### For the handler to learn:

How to move around a large outdoor area effectively, methodically and safely.  
How to observe when the dog air scents and then allow the dog to follow that scent to the source.  
How to work the dog on between finds.  
How to place, or facilitate the placing of, quick, well timed finds.

### Key Skill 8 - Handler rewards

This is an advanced search on sealed finds where the dog cannot access the find and so is rewarded by the handler.

#### Resources:

Scent 3 DVD - Super Searches

#### Equipment:

Indoor area  
8 cardboard boxes of similar size (shoebox size or smaller)  
Packing tape  
Scented articles x 3 (as per Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1)  
Hand cleanser  
Search harness  
Lead  
Assistant (strongly recommended)

#### Searches

3 searches, each between 10 seconds - 1 minute.

#### Search requirements:

Search area must be indoors, 1 room.

Hide one article each into 2 boxes. If the dog has not chewed or damaged these hides, they can be re-used. (i.e. you may use the same hide for all 3 searches, but you have 1 spare just in case it's needed)










Each search must consist of 6 sealed boxes (put packing tape around the lids), 1 of which contains the scented article.

The box containing the scented article must be in a different position (1-6) in each search line-up.

The handler should retain 1 scented article on their person in readiness to reward the dog. If working with an assistant (strongly recommended), during the search, the assistant should observe the search in order to confirm that the indication is correct by saying 'Yes!' or assert that the indication is incorrect by saying 'No!'

The search ends when the dog has been rewarded for indicating on the correct box.

#### The searches should demonstrate:

-  On lead: dog searching the line of sealed boxes for the target odour.
-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the line of boxes.
-  Team working on the correct side of the line.
-  Handler maintaining loose lead without it getting tangled.
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler delivering the scented article at the correct time and correct place to reward the find.
-  Handler playing with the dogs searching for non-edible finds.

## Learning goals

### For the dog to learn:

How to search sealed boxes.

How to receive the tossed reward.

### For the handler to learn:

How to respond when the dog, on lead, indicates on the correct box.

How to listen and respond correctly when the assistant confirms that the indication is correct by saying 'Yes!'

How to listen and respond correctly when the assistant asserts that the indication is incorrect by saying 'No!'

How to deliver the reward in a timely manner.

How to deliver the reward to the correct spot.

How to reward the dog appropriately.

## Search Skill Level 3 - Specialist Search 5 - Water

### Resources:

Scent 3 DVD - Super Searches

### Equipment:

Outdoor area

6 buckets (appropriate to the size of the dog)

6 plastic containers big enough to hold the scented article but with a hole/holes to let the water in and the air out (maggot boxes are ideal)

2 scented articles (as per Search Skill Level 1 - Starter 1)

Hand cleanser

Lead

Search harness

### Searches

3 searches, each between 20 seconds - 2 minutes.

### Search requirements:

Search area must be outdoors in a safe area.

Dog must work on lead.








1 find in each of the three searches, must be in the same bucket in the same box, but in a different position in the line each time.

Search 1 - 3 buckets filled with water, all containing water filled plastic box, one box containing the scented article

Search 2 - 4 buckets filled with water, all containing water filled plastic box, one box containing the scented article

Search 3 - 6 buckets filled with water, all containing water filled plastic box, one box containing the scented article

**The searches should demonstrate:**

-  On lead: dog searching the line of buckets for the target odour.
-  Handler using a cue word to set the dog to search.
-  Handler working backwards, using clear hand gestures to assist a thorough search of the area.
-  Handler allowing the dog time to show them exactly which bucket contains the scent
-  Handler asking the question 'Have you found something?' and stepping back.
-  Handler responding appropriately to the dog's response to the question.
-  Handler allowing dog to access the find with assistance / or tossing a scented reward as per Key Skill 8.

**Learning goals****For the dog to learn:**

To search new items, i.e. buckets of water.

To take time to search thoroughly and accurately.

**For the handler to learn:**

How to allow time for the dog to sniff the water in the buckets in whatever manner s/he finds best.

How to ensure that the dog searches throughly and accurately.

How to ensure the most appropriate reward is used, according to the dog's preference.



## Glossary

**Accessible find** - Dog may have to move a container, lift a lid or push into the box to access the find.

**Clear the area** - to clear an area is to search it thoroughly before declaring that no scented items remain within it

**Drive in** - verbal commentary to help maintain the dog's drive to precisely locate the find

**Scented article** - the scented object that you want your dog to find, either an object scented with the chosen target scent or an edible find such as mild cheddar cheese

**Scent picture** - the plume or movement of scent that the dog detects

**Source** - the location of the article and so the source of the scent

## Resource List

**Talking Dogs Scentwork® DVDs (hard copy):**

[http://www.talkingdogsscentwork.co.uk/Talking\\_Dogs\\_Scentwork/Shop\\_\\_DVDs.html](http://www.talkingdogsscentwork.co.uk/Talking_Dogs_Scentwork/Shop__DVDs.html)

**Talking Dogs Scentwork® DVDs (download):**

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/scentwork>

**Talking Dogs Scentwork® Scentwork Official Starter Kit and Mice:**

[http://www.talkingdogsscentwork.co.uk/Talking\\_Dogs\\_Scentwork/Shop\\_\\_Equipment.html](http://www.talkingdogsscentwork.co.uk/Talking_Dogs_Scentwork/Shop__Equipment.html)

**Talking Dogs Scentwork® Detector Dog Manual (Kindle & Paperback):**

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Detector-dog-Talking-Scentwork%C2%AE-Manual/dp/1845849639/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Detector-dog-Talking-Scentwork%C2%AE-Manual/dp/1845849639/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1518622825&sr=8-1&keywords=talking+dogs+scentwork)

[ie=UTF8&qid=1518622825&sr=8-1&keywords=talking+dogs+scentwork](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Detector-dog-Talking-Scentwork%C2%AE-Manual/dp/1845849639/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1518622825&sr=8-1&keywords=talking+dogs+scentwork)

### USA

Talking Dogs Scentwork® DVDs (hard copy)

Talking Dogs Scentwork® Detector Dog Manual (paperback):

<https://www.dogwise.com/#>

**Catac Working Dog Harness:**

<http://www.catac.co.uk/xcart/product.php?productid=239>

**Comfort Flex Sport Harness:**

[https://www.cleancleanrun.com/product/comfortflex\\_sport\\_harness/index.cfm](https://www.cleancleanrun.com/product/comfortflex_sport_harness/index.cfm)

**Maggot boxes:**

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Fishing-Maggot-Bait-Boxes-Shatterproof/dp/B00S6ELUX8>

