

10 step guide

Taking photos at Canine Partners

1. Make a shot list

Make a very short shot list of the images that you would like to achieve.



2. Find a location

Good light is everything in photography, especially when taking photographs of dogs with dark coats. Avoid photographing in dark rooms or on heavily overcast, grey days.

Outdoors

Before you start shooting, take a look around your environment and determine where the best light is. Bright yet diffused light is the best for creating good photographs.

When outdoors, diffused shade will eliminate distracting shadows and keep the contrast down.

A grassy area outside in the shade is a perfect location. Avoid harsh, bright sunlight. On cloudless days, take photos in the shade. Overcast days are perfect for outdoor photography.

Indoors

If you are taking photographs indoors make sure there is good light on your subject. Placing them near a window or doorway is better than using flash.

3. Get rid of background clutter

Have a look around at your location and get rid of any clutter and objects that you don't want to appear in the photo (from plug sockets and coffee cups to vehicles and bins). Either remove them or compose your photograph to exclude them. An uncluttered environment produces more aesthetically pleasing images.

3. Branding

Include Canine Partners branding if you can. Photographing a dog that is sitting slightly side on in a CP jacket is a great way to do this or position a cheque presentation in front of a Canine Partners sign. If you are taking a photo of a puppy in training, make sure their bandana is facing the camera so that the branding can be seen clearly.





4. Focus mode

Select AF for shots. This will ensure the camera refocuses on your subject if he or she moves and also means that the image will be reasonably sharp. Selecting the sports setting, if the camera has one, will capture moving subjects, such as a dog running towards you, without blurring.

5. Relax and be quiet

There is no quicker way to confuse a dog, than to shout commands at them repeatedly. Animals will sense if you are stressed and anxious and become stressed and anxious too. Take a deep breath and remember to enjoy it!

6. Shoot at the dog's level

While a few shots looking down at the dog or puppy may work – you'll need to get down to their level to create the really engaging images. To make your photos interesting, try getting down on your knees or on your stomach and get a dog's eye view.

7. Focus on eyes

If you want to create a really engaging 'portrait' shot, focus on the eyes and facial expressions. A well-timed puppy whine will focus a puppy or curious dog, and have them staring straight at the camera. Waving a toy or brightly coloured object or whistling will also attract a dog's attention.

8. Move slowly

If you need to move, and you don't want your model to move, do so very slowly without making any eye contact. Move slowly and calmly around them while taking photos.

9. Keep it brief

The thing to remember with posed animal photography is to keep the session brief. Dogs will get bored, and if you haven't got a good shot in the first few minutes of shooting, move on to the next shot on your list. Try to limit photo sessions to a maximum of half an hour.

10. Take lots of photographs

The more you take, the better your chances of getting a few amazing shots. Sometimes your best photo will be one you haven't planned. Only keep the best images. Delete the rest.

