

Road Warrior

Classic blunders nip at the heels of good advice, in this survey of top competitors in agility, obedience, tracking and more.

Performance sports competitors travel often and far. Depending upon where they live and train, and where the competitions are being held, they may be on the road every weekend, if not the entire week. We appreciate the time they took to answer our questions about traveling, and offer advice for new competitors.

What three essential items do you never leave home without?

"My dogs, my cell phone and my clothes! You'd think not forgetting the dogs would be pretty obvious. But with a busy schedule and five dogs in my household, there are times when the only way I can be sure they're all where they should

be is to count them! I haven't forgotten one yet, but I've come awfully close. And I would absolutely turn around to go back and get any one of them."

— Kip Kirby

Kip Kirby, of Nashville, Tenn., is an award-winning writer for *Action Agility Online*. She competes in agility and teaches at Leaps and Bounds Dog Agility. She



COURTESY OF LELKA GROSSMAN WWW.GRANPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

has titled four dogs, including two MACHs, an ADCH, and a MAD.

"Dog food, environmental needs—including shade, fans, and rain gear—and all the necessary competition items—including dumbbells, grooming materials, and Frisbees."

— Susan Meier

"Extra clothes, as weather condi-

tions can change quickly; food and water for myself and the dog. Items like PowerBars, fruit, and water are always with me; and a crate for the dog."

— Dr. Stuart G. Mah

"Competition equipment, event confirmation, including directions, start times, and contact information, and the dog's crate."

— Laura Stout

Bob Stout, of Escondido, Calif., does agility, obedience, and tracking, and has titled two dogs, a Pembroke Welsh Corgi and a Doberman Pinscher.



COURTESY OF BOB STOUT

"The dog, correct collar and leash, and my driver's license. Actually, the dog and my driver's license are truly the only essentials. The upstate New York performance community is very friendly, and I could borrow virtually anything else I needed."

— Deb Eldredge, DVM

"My dog van always has the dogs' rabies certificates, identification, emergency contact info, raingear, sunscreen, insect repellent, and a well-stocked first-aid kit."

— Jane Jackson

Have you ever forgotten anything?

"Once I forgot cleats for agility when it was raining. I ended up running barefoot. (I asked the judge if it was okay.)"

— Laura Stout

"I turned around once because I forgot the tracking bag, with the tracking harness and leash in it. It's hard to run a track without that!"

Sue Fregien, of Waterford, Wis., participates in agility, herding, tracking and obedience. She currently competes with a Belgian Tervuren.



COURTESY OF SUE FREGIEN

"Kate, Tom and I were taking all six dogs to a rally match. We had five crates in the minivan and Susan, the older Corgi, was to ride up front. Kate loaded dogs. We were 20 miles from home when I asked if Susan had been loaded into the van. We decided she could stay home that trip."

— Deb Eldredge, DVM

Pati Hatfield Mah, of Rising Stars Dog Agility in Bryceville, Fla., competes with her multi-titled Belgian Malinois, and a Shetland Sheepdog.



COURTESY OF STUART G. AND PATI HATFIELD MAH

"I forgot a dumbbell once. I've lent or borrowed leads, collars, dumbbells, and even lent out an extra set of scent articles. That's the nicest thing about dog events—everyone helps each other out."

— Sue Fregien

Jane Jackson, of Walworth, N.Y., participates in obedience, retriever hunt tests and field trials, and agility. Her black Labrador Retriever



COURTESY OF JANE JACKSON

crew includes a 14-year-old Am./Can. champion, a 10-year-old Am./Can. champion, and 4-year-old, all with multiple titles.