

# **Tracking Performance Standards**

## **Tracking Dog (TD), Tracking Dog Excellent (TDX), and Variable Surface Tracking (VST)**

MBDCA's tracking degrees are intended to be equivalent to AKC's. For more details and specifics, especially on tracklaying, refer to AKC's pamphlet *Tracking Regulations* which is available at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org) or [orderdesk@akc.org](mailto:orderdesk@akc.org).

A dog must earn its Tracking Dog (TD) title before earning the Tracking Dog Excellent (TDX) title. However, the Variable Surface Tracking (VST) title can be earned at any time.

### **Tracking Dog**

A Tracking Degree (MB-TD) may be earned by a registered mixed breed dog in the following way:

1. Tracking Certifications are not required for entering an MB-TD test.
2. The dog must pass one tracking test under one MBDCA-approved Judge and one witness. The witness must have experience in tracking and be familiar with tracking conditions. There need be no more than one dog entered in the test.
3. The track must be at least 440 yards in length, but not more than 500 yards. It should have from 3 to 5 turns. No posts or markers may be used to indicate the track or the turns, except for a directional stake 30 yards from the start. Turns may not be sharper than 90°, but may be greater when the purpose is to determine the dog's tracking ability in different wind conditions. The track must be at least 30 minutes old and not more than 2 hours old.
4. The dog must succeed in locating a leather article that belongs to the Tracklayer and which is a personal item thoroughly impregnated with scent, at least the size of a glove or wallet. The article must be approved by the Judge prior to the trial. The article may not be food.
5. Dogs shall not be required to cross a paved road or a body of water. The track should not be laid within 15 yards of a fence or boundary.
6. The judge and witness must complete and sign the tracking test form at the time of the test. The owner must forward the tracking test form to MBDCA within 30 days of the test. Upon receipt of the form, a certificate will be sent to the owner confirming the MB-TD degree.

## Tracking Dog Excellent

A registered mixed breed dog which already has the MB-TD may earn the Tracking Excellent title (MB-TDX) in the following way:

1. The dog must pass one tracking excellent test under one MBDCA-approved Judge and one witness. There need be only one dog entered in the tracking test.
2. The track must be at least 800 yards but not more than 1000 yards in length. It should have from 5 to 7 turns and 2 double crosstracks. The dog must locate 4 dissimilar articles belonging to the Tracklayer and previously approved by the Judge. The track must be at least 3 hours old but not more than 5 hours old.
3. The double crosstracks are created by two people together crossing the original track at right angles at two widely separated locations. The people laying the crosstracks must not come near the start of the track, and the crosstracks must not come near a turn, an obstacle, or an article. The crosstracks should be laid 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 hours after the start of the original track.
4. The dog shall be required at several points to negotiate changes in scent and conditions such as terrain and cover. There shall be at least two natural or man-made obstacles such as a stream or fence.
5. The Judge and witness must each sign the Tracking Test Form at the time of the test. The owner must forward the Tracking Test Form to MBDCA within 30 days of the test. Upon receipt of the properly completed form, a certificate will be sent to the owner confirming the MB-TDX degree.

## Variable Surface Tracking Test (VST)

**Section 1. Variable Surface Tracking Test.** The MBDCA will issue a Mixed Breed Variable Surface Tracking Dog certificate and will permit use of the letters MB-VST after the name of each dog that has been certified by an approved MBDCA Tracking Judge.

**Section 2. Variable Surface Tracking Test Requirements.** The following are the restrictions and minimum requirements for a variable surface track:

1. The track will be at least 600 yards and not more than 800 yards in length.
2. The track will have a minimum of three (3) different surfaces, which will include vegetation and two (2) areas devoid of vegetation, such as concrete, asphalt, gravel, sand, hard pan, or mulch. The areas devoid of vegetation will comprise at least one-third (1/3) *but not more than two-thirds (2/3)* of the total length of the track.
3. The length of each of the legs of the track will be at least thirty (30) yards.
4. The track will be plotted using different surfaces and scenting conditions as afforded by the terrain. There will be no physical obstacles or obstructions such as those used on a TDX track.
5. The scent on the track will be not less than three (3) hours or more than five (5) hours old.
6. Turns will be on various surfaces as dictated by the terrain. There will be at least four (4) and not more than eight (8) turns on a track. Both right and left turns will be used. At least three (3) of the turns will be 90-degree turns, and there will be more than three (3) such turns. At least one (1) 90-degree turn will be in an area devoid of vegetation and will be plotted to allow at least thirty (30) yards before crossing or returning to a vegetated surface. Acute angle turns *should* be avoided. *Articles will not be placed less than thirty (30) yards before or after this turn. Articles placed after this turn should not be clearly visible from the turn.* Tracks may be laid along the sides of buildings and fences, through buildings with two or more openings or open-sided structures, such as breezeways, shelters, or roofed parking garages. However, tracks may not enter a building with closed doors and sides.
7. No part of the track will be within fifty (50) yards of any other track. No part of the track may be within thirty (30) yards of any other part of the same track.
8. All tracks will be laid utilizing buildings and the diverse scenting conditions created by being in close proximity to such buildings. Tracks will also utilize any and/all other structures such as fences, breezeways, ramps, stairs, bridges, shelters, roofed parking garages, courtyards, and buildings with two or more openings and/or open buildings. The intent of Variable Surface Tracking stresses that dogs will be able to handle the diffusion of scent created by these structures. Tracks will be as equal in complexity as possible in this regard. Tracks may not enter a building with closed doors and sides.

**Section 3. Articles for Variable Surface Tracking Test.** The VST test articles will consist of four (4) dissimilar, common, everyday items that can be easily carried by the tracklayer and safely picked up by the dog. Each article will not be smaller than 2” x 4” or larger than 5” x 5” and will weigh no more than 8 ounces. There will be one leather, one plastic (rigid or semi-rigid), one metal, and one fabric article, which will be handled by the tracklayer and will be dropped on the track by the tracklayer at the points indicated on the judges’ charts. The first article will be fabric or leather. The last article will be clearly and temporarily marked with the number “4.”

The first article will be dropped at the starting flag and will be clearly visible to the handler. The next two (2) articles will be dropped at wide intervals directly on the track at the places designated by the judges and so marked on the chart. One article must be dropped in one of the areas devoid of vegetation. The fourth article will be dropped at the end of the track.

The articles must be approved by the judges prior to the laying of the track. The second, third, and fourth articles must be presented to the judges by the handler following the completion of the track.

No article will be dropped less than *twenty (20)* yards from a turn *except as indicated in Section 4, #6.*

**Section 4. Champion Tracker Title Certificate.** The Mixed Breed Dog Clubs of America will issue a Mixed Breed Champion Tracker certificate and will permit the use of the letters MB-CT preceding the name of each dog that has earned all three tracking titles: MB-TD, MB-TDX, and MB-VST.