



## SEARCH SETUP TIPS

### CHOOSING A SEARCH AREA

The goal of Cyber Scent Work is to promote as many dogs as possible to participate in the game of Scent Work as possible. This may include dogs who have significant environmental sensitivities or concerns.

As such, it is the responsibility of the participants to choose search areas where their dogs will be safe and able to rise to the challenges of the search.

Safety is of paramount importance, so if a participant determines it would be safer for a dog to only search in familiar locations (at home, at a friend's house, at a dog training facility), they may do so. Safety always comes first.

When choosing a search area, handlers must follow these rules:

- Dogs must be permitted on the grounds.
- If a business, written or verbal permission must be obtained prior to filming the searches.
- All steps must be taken to ensure the safety of the dog, participant, Assistant, any volunteers, and the public at-large (human and canine alike). Includes but not limited to scoping the area out ahead of time and passing on a location if loose dogs are commonplace.

### WHERE TO PUT THE HIDES

Whenever possible, placing a hide on a removable object is preferable. This will keep the potential odor contamination within the space to a minimum.

This does **NOT** mean that all search areas need to be staged or filled with unusual objects. However, participants and Assistants are urged to be creative in how they design their search areas. For instance, a fake rock with an odor vessel within it.

When placing an environmental hide (e.g., on a tree trunk, on a wall, on a piece of furniture, etc.) consider the following:

- Does this hide placement pose any safety concerns?



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- Be careful about the odor vessel (e.g., metal tin, straw, tube, etc.) you choose.
  - Ideally the handler is unable to see it as they are working the dog.
  - Ensure odor can indeed escape and is accessible to the dog.
- Where will the odor potentially go?
  - Will the dog be able to source this hide?
  - If placing a hide on a fence, where is the wind taking the odor? Is the dog blocked from getting to the odor itself?
  - Where is the sun and shade and how will this affect the odor (will the odor rise and spread or fall and stay close to the hide itself)?
  - To determine the direction of the wind, a flag, strip of surveyor tape or crepe paper can be helpful. Another tact is to pet the dog, gather a few strands of fur and then sprinkle them at the start line.

Upon completing the search, clean the area with an alcohol wipe or dish soap and water.

### LEARN MORE ABOUT ODOR

In formal Scent Work trials, highly experienced and talented trial officials will set the hides. Ensuring hides can indeed be found and are level-appropriate is an art! There are countless factors that may affect the odor picture, including but not limited to, weather, temperature, humidity, barometric pressure, airflow and the presence or absence of objects in the environment.

Since the goal of Cyber Scent Work is to promote as many dogs and handlers to be involved in Scent Work as possible, we do **NOT** require Assistants to be certified or approved for participants submitting online entries.

We do, however, recommend that participants and Assistants learn as much as they can about odor theory.



## SEARCH SETUP TIPS

Here are some recommended resources:

- [Hide Placement and Odor Movement Seminar by Laurel Scarioni](#)
- [Sniff Busters Webinar by Laurel Scarioni](#)
- [Hound and Found's How Scent and Airflow Works](#)

### WAYS TO VISUALIZE ODOR

Some tools which can help better visualize what odor may do within a given space include a [smoke pencil](#), [Cirrus](#) or dry ice.

The Wind Tunnel free app ([Apple version](#) and [Android version](#)) is another wonderful tool designed to provide a representation of what airflow may do within a given space.

You may also be interested in the [Tools to Help Design Your Scent Work Searches Webinar](#) offered through Scent Work University.