These are the tests conducted in the BBC program "Test Your Pet"

1) Paw preference (5 min)
It's likely that your dog is either right- or left-handed. In the wild it makes sense to have a paw preference, because in emergencies, one side of the body will take the lead. Why left or right are dominant is open to debate, but in some species it has some amazing consequences.
left handedness for visually guided acts of manual prehension and right handedness for fine manipulation (Rogers and Kaplan, 1996).

What do I need?
- A plastic or cardboard tube that is wide enough for your dog to reach into with its paw, but not with its head
- A pet treat or toy

The walkthrough below describes the stages of the test:
Step 1: Put the treat near the end of the tube and hold the tube directly in front of your dog.

Step 2: Encourage your dog to get the treat.

Step 3: Do this twice more. If your dog isn't pawing for the treat, place the treat under a sofa, just within reach, and try it again. What does your dog do?

Results:
A - Dog uses left paw most of the time
B - Dog uses right paw most of the time
C - Difficult to tell

If option A - Your dog appears to be left-handed. Left-handedness in humans is often associated with creativity and a natural musical ability. Maybe your dog has hidden talents as well!
If option B - Your dog appears to be right-handed. Right-handedness in humans is often associated with language ability and a logical mind. There is some evidence that right-handed animals can be better at remembering and using words, so maybe your dog understands more of your conversation than you had thought!
If option C - It could be that your dog has no preference; in other words, it could be ambidextrous. In some animals this has been shown to be unhelpful. It's often good to have a dominant hand to lead the way.

2) Flip the tin (5 min)
This is a view-of-the-world test. Your dog must be able to understand that even though the object disappears from view, it still exists. If the treat has a strong smell, the test would not be conclusive, because scent would give its position away.

What do I need?
- A small tin, plastic cup or an empty cardboard box such as a shoe box (make sure that the end of the tin isn't sharp)
- A pet treat or toy that isn't too smelly

The walkthrough below describes the stages of the test:

Step 1: Let your dog see you place the treat or toy on a rug or carpet.

Step 2: Place the tin or box over the toy or treat.

Step 3: Leave your dog with the tin or box.

Step 4: How does your dog react?

Results:
A - Dog flips tin/box over
B - Dog shows an interest in tin/box, but gives up
C - Dog completely ignores tin/box

If option A - Your dog understands what psychologists call "object permanence". It realises that objects continue to exist even after they have disappeared from view. This is cleverer than you may imagine. To understand this, it must believe in a world beyond its perception.
If option B - Your dog shows signs that it understands that the treat still exists under the vessel. This could be because it can still smell the treat, or it could be because it still imagines it to be there. The latter takes some thought and your dog is being fairly smart. You might also consider trying the test with another vessel or on another surface in case it was just to difficult to flip over.
If option C - Your dog has shown that it doesn't understand the idea that an object exists when it isn't perceived. For many dogs this is a natural response, it takes a leap of imagination to picture a world beyond the one that we see in front of us. We humans act the same way until we are about 9 months old.

3) Drop the treat (5 min)
This is another view-of-the-world test. It looks at your dog's understanding of how objects, especially horizontal objects, relate to each other. Animals that move about more in 3 dimensions should do better at this than those that move only on the ground.

What do I need?
- A kitchen or dining table, or for dogs larger than a Labrador, a tea tray
- A cushion
- A pet treat or toy

The walkthrough below describes the stages of the test:

Step 1: Place your dog in front of the table, or hold the tray, so that the surface is above your dog's eye level.

Step 2: Place a cushion or folded towel on the table or tray.

Step 3: Stand on the opposite side of the table or tray to your dog. Hold the treat above the table or tray, and when your dog is watching it, drop it onto the cushion.

Step 4: How does your dog react?

Results:
A - Dog looks at the table top or tray
B - Dog looks at the floor, then back up at the table or tray
C - Dog looks on the floor for the treat

If option A - Your dog understands the way that horizontal objects relate to each other. This may not seem like much, but many animals have difficulty with this test. Pets that move about more in 3 dimensions should do better at this than those that move only on the ground.

If option B - Your dog was surprised that the treat didn't hit the floor, but quickly worked out where it was likely to be. Many animals have trouble with this test. Pets that move about more in 3 dimensions should do better at this than those that move only on the ground.

If option C - Your dog expected the treat to fall to the floor. This shows that your dog hasn't grasped the way in which horizontal objects relate to the other objects in their world. Pets that move about more in 3 dimensions should do better at this than those that move only on the ground.

4) Round the bend (5 min)
This is both a problem-solving test and a detour test. First your dog has to work out a route to the reward, and then it has to walk away from the treat in order to get it.

What do I need?
- Two dining or kitchen chairs
- A pet treat or toy

The walkthrough below describes the stages of the test:

Step 1: Arrange the two chairs so that they face each other. Lay them on their sides, so that their bases make a V-shaped barrier with a gap in the middle that is too small for your dog to fit through.
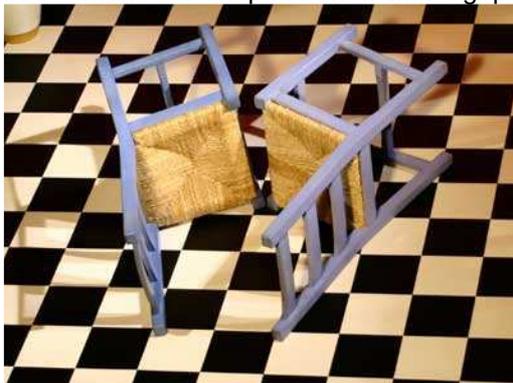
Step 2: Place your dog outside the V-barrier next to the gap.

Step 3: Stand outside the barrier, with your dog, and drop the treat onto the floor the other side of the barrier so that your dog can see it through the gap.

Step 4: How does your dog react?

Results:
A - Dog walks immediately around the barrier to retrieve treat
B - After some time, dog walks around the barrier to retrieve treat
C - Dog ignores the test or simply tries to get at the treat through the gap

If option A - Your dog cracked this puzzle remarkably quickly. This may be because it has come across a similar situation before, or it may be very good at looking at physical problems and coming up with solutions. This takes a fair deal of brain power.
If option B - Your dog took a little time to crack this puzzle. It may be that it spent a few moments trying to get at the treat before deciding on a less direct action, or it could have simply stumbled upon the solution by mistake as it walked away. If you repeated the test, it may do it more quickly now it knows what to do.
If option C - Your dog wasn't able to crack this puzzle. It may seem obvious to you, but to do this successfully, your dog must have a good understanding of its physical world, and be prepared to walk away from a treat in order to get at it. This is no mean feat.

5) Command of language (5 min)
This is both a learning test and a memory test. Your dog learns your words, phrases, body language and vocalisations so that it can understand us and can guess what we're going to do next. The number of commands that an animal can understand is to do with both its ability to learn and the size of its memory.
The walkthrough below describes the stages of the test:

Step 1: Go through all the commands your dog responds to, including verbal commands, vocalisations such as whistles and hand signals.

Step 2: Roughly how many commands does your dog know?

Results:
A - More than 25 commands
B - 11-25 commands
C - 1-10 commands

If option A - Your dog is obviously skilled at learning and remembering commands. When it learns a new command, your dog is associating the sound or body signals that you create with one of its own actions. Your dog's learning and memory has probably got a lot to do with your own training habits as an owner. It looks like you've given your dog plenty of opportunity to learn.

If option B - Your dog has learnt and remembered a broad selection of the commands that it finds most useful to pay attention to. When it learns a new command, your dog is associating the sound or body movement that you create with one of its own actions. Your dog's learning and memory has probably got a lot to do with your own training habits as an owner. They may be able to learn more commands with the right encouragement.

If option C - Your dog has learnt and remembered a small number of commands. When it learns a new command, your dog is associating the sound or body movement that you create with one of its own actions. Some dogs are better at doing this than others, but your dog's capacity to learn and memory has also got a lot to do with your own training habits as an owner.

6) Pull the string (5 min)
This is a speed-of-learning test. Your dog is presented with a task that it hasn't encountered before. It has to learn how to conquer it by trial and error, but can it learn in just three attempts?

What do I need?
- A shoelace or a piece of strong string the length of your arm
- A pet treat or toy

The walkthrough below describes the stages of the test:

Step 1: Tie the treat to one end of the shoelace.

Step 2: While your dog is watching, hide the treat under a sofa or any other suitable object so that it is out of reach, but your dog can still see it. Leave at least half of the shoelace trailing out from under the object.

Step 3: Encourage your dog to pull the shoelace to get at the treat, but don't let it eat it. If your dog does nothing, show it how to pull the shoelace.

Step 4: Do it all again, so that it gets used to the idea.

Step 5: Do it a third time, but this time, leave your dog to work it out on its own. What does your dog do?

Results:
A - Dog pulls or paws the shoelace and gets the treat immediately
B - Dog takes some time before it pulls or paws the shoelace to get the treat
C - Dog doesn't manage to get the treat

If option A - Your dog has very quickly associated the action of pulling the string with the delivery of a reward. It could be that your dog has experience of performing this action already, and that it therefore took to this task quickly, or maybe your dog is simply very good at learning new physical tasks.
If option B - Your dog has worked out that if it carries out the physical action of pulling the string, it will be rewarded. This is pretty impressive because pulling a string may be an entirely novel thing for your dog to do.
If option C - Your dog has not learnt that pulling the string will lead to the reward. This could be because carrying out the action of pulling the string is either a difficult or very strange thing for your dog to do, or it could be that your dog is not that good at associating a physical task with the arrival of a reward.

7) Hide and seek (5 min)
This is a spatial memory test that tests two parts of your dog's memory. If your dog can find the treat, it has managed to remember both the layout of the room and the position of the treat in relation to all the other objects in the room.

What do I need?
  • 4 pet treats or toys

The walkthrough below describes the stages of the test:

Step 1: Take a treat and let your dog see you hide it somewhere in a room (e.g. under a chair).

Step 2: Take your dog out of the room and hide a further 3 treats in other places.

Step 3: Let your dog back in the room and ask it to find the treat. How does your dog react?

Results:
A - Dog finds the first treat you hid immediately
B - Dog finds the first treat you hid eventually but before the other treats
C - Dog doesn't find the treat at all or finds the first treat you hid after another treat

If option A - Your dog has performed well. It has used two types of memory to perform this task. It used its spatial memory to remember the layout of the space, and it used its episodic memory to remember the action of you placing the treat in the hiding place.

If option B - Your dog had to think about this, but it appears to have remembered the hiding place of the treat. To do this it used its spatial memory to remember the layout of the space, and they used its episodic memory to remember the action of you placing the treat in the hiding place. There is also a chance that your dog discovered the hidden treat accidentally before it discovered the others.

If option C - Your dog has forgotten where you hid the treat. This is less dim than it may seem. To succeed your dog has to use two types of memory, a spatial memory to remember the layout of the space, and an episodic memory to remember the action of you placing the treat in the hiding place. So it's quite a complex task.