

Next, Training - Obedience! Short version. There is one area of training which is advantageous for both Conformation and Obedience. In Conformation it is called "baiting", in Obedience it is called "attention". For those who are thinking of doing both Conformation and Obedience developing concentration is the best place to begin. The Silky naturally has attention which jumps quickly from sensory stimuli to stimuli (sights and sounds). Except in certain circumstances concentration is short termed. This makes Obedience performance erratic. Although Silky's can do all the exercises very well looks better than the one that responds to everything outside the ring. Begin by teaching the young hopeful to focus on one spot on the handler's body on command. The face works well in both fields. Also teach the dog to follow with his eyes the movement of the right hand. Using food is a good way to shape the action (eyes moving from anywhere to the face) and to motivate repeating the action when the pupil performs correctly the foot is a reward. Eventually move the hand without the foot in it. At first the command (word or sound) occurs while the dog is performing (conditioning). Then it is used before the action. Teach one little step at the time. Eyes move to the face. Reward. Eyes move to the face. Command then reward. Eyes move to the face with no food in the hand. Reward. And so on until your Silky will turn around and look at you when given the command.