

AGILITY DOG CLUB OF NEW SOUTH WALES

LEVEL 3

2024
CLASS MANUAL

UPDATED: JANUARY 2024



Caveat

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Thank you for respecting the arduous work the club put into creating this manual for you, our students and valued club members.

Here's to your future success in the sport of agility.

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Dedication

This manual is dedicated to the handlers and dogs that have made the sport of agility great in Australia.

It is dedicated to those who started the ADC and helped the club achieve its status today.

We would also like to thank those members (past and present) who have contributed to creating this yellow Class manual.

Acknowledgement

Robyn Jones for the inaugural Yellow Training Class manual, which has been modified.

Additionally, for Robyn's continued contribution to this manual by way of advice diagrams, etc., contained herein.

&

The Agility Dog Club Executive Committee & Training Sub-Committee extends its deepest gratitude to **Vicki Case**, who devoted much time, effort, and expertise to developing this updated manual.

We also thank **Jess Isaacs**, current Chief Instructor, for updating the manual for 2024 and beyond.

Disclaimer

It should be noted that:

- Agility is an active dog sport.
- Dogs are excited by movement.
- Many dogs drawn to agility are very excitable.
- Excitable dogs can behave differently than their normal personality or behaviour in an aroused state.

However, the ADC will not tolerate continued acts of 'Reactive / Aggressive behaviour' were adog:

- Lunges at other dog/s with intent to harm.
- Snaps at a human or dog.
- Runs away from the Handler to chase or attack another person or dog.
- Choose any behaviour that may be intimidating to others or their dogs.



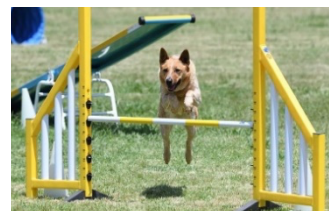
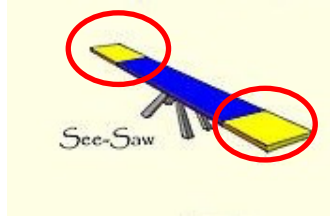
NOTE:

1. All serious incidents are recorded in a logbook and kept with club officials.
2. A Senior Instructor will counsel members with these dogs.
3. If there is no improvement and the behaviour continues, the member will be asked tomuzzle the dog whilst in training classes.

Additionally, it should be noted that the ACD Constitution allows the club to rescind the membership of any member if deemed necessary.

Glossary of Agility Terms

As with any sport, agility has its language. Hereunder is a glossary of words, terms, and phrases you can/will use during your agility journey.

Skill / Task	Definition / Criterion	Diagram
Dog side leg	The Handler's leg, which is closest to the dog.	
Dog side arm/hand	The Handler's arm/hand that is closest to the dog.	<p>Redline – Dog side leg Yellow line – Dog side arm</p>
Landing side	The dog's side of the obstacle after finishing the obstacle.	 <p>Landing on the side of an obstacle</p>
Take offside	The side of the obstacle that the dog takes off from to complete the obstacle	 <p>Take off the side of an obstacle Photo by Michael TURNER</p>
Contact Zone	The yellow portion at the bottom/end of both sides of each piece of contact equipment (i.e., A-Frame, See-Saw & dog walk)	 <p>Contact Zones are circled in red.</p>
Flat Work	'Flatwork' is a term used when the Handler is required to change sides whilst on the course (i.e., Front Cross (FX), Rear Cross (RX) and the Blind Cross (BX)).	
'Virtual Dog'	An imaginative dog that you visualise whilst learning new skills	

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"FOUNDATIONS"

ARE PIVOTAL FOR AGILITY SUCCESS

Remember the adage '*Rome wasn't built in a day,*' well, neither is an agility champion.

FOUNDATIONS = BUILDING BLOCKS



One cannot build a STABLE structure without a solid foundation.

Let's build a great foundation¹.

Success in any discipline relies on strong foundations – agility is no different. Long before you start tackling equipment or running courses, you can take the vital first steps to launch your dog's agility career. If you get it right from day one, shaping his mental attitude and honing his skills, you could be nurturing the agility star of tomorrow.

From your commencement at Taster, through Green Class, and in Yellow Class, you have been instructed with games/exercises that develop your dog's drive and motivation as you build a robust interactive relationship with them.

Preparing both the mind and body for agility is essential. The ADC introduction classes show you how to achieve this by teaching you a series of exercises/tricks and warm-up / cool-down exercises. You have also been taught basic handling skills like the front cross.

¹ www.core-gility.com

Flatwork games/exercises require minimal space and virtually no equipment. The games/exercises are based on 100% positive training methods with great positive reinforcement, so learning is always a fun, enjoyable experience for your dogs.

As you progress through the games/exercises, your dog will start accumulating all the knowledge they need to find its way around an agility course. They will have been handsomely rewarded at every step of their learning, so, when you are ready to try it for real, you will have a dog who not only knows his job – but one he also loves doing it².

**WE AIM TO TEACH SOLID FOUNDATIONS AND A COMPLETE
UNDERSTANDING OF CRITERIA WITH OBSTACLE INDEPENDENCE,
COMMUNICATING TOGETHER AS A TEAM³.**

² www.cleanrun.com/product/foundation_fun_and_games_play_your_way_to_agility_success

³ www.core-gility.com

WEEKLY HOMEWORK

Flatwork / Foundation Exercises

SITUATION:

Foundation training impacts your future agility career with your dog more than you might realise. Even if your dog seems to breeze through any new task you give them, it's always best to start from the basics.

OUTCOME:

The exercises you do during foundation training teach your dog:

- How to use their body
- How to learn; and
- How to respond to your handling on the agility course

More important, however, is the energy and tone of your foundation training sessions – this will set your dog's mindset and attitude for future training sessions and competitions⁴.

TRAINING:

Agility Foundations is all about fun⁵!

1. **Circle work** – left and right sides, clockwise and anti-clockwise at a jog
2. **Send around pole/cone/wing** – send your dog around a pole/cone/wing from at least 3 metres away. Be creative with what you send your dog around. This will not happen overnight, and it may take many sessions. Be patient.
3. **Send around a wing – Front Cross move**, then recall to the side. Extend the distance of the send
4. **Stays** – Practice Start Line Stays. Remember to return to your dog, "mark" correct stay behaviour, and reward. Your dog is not to move until they are verbally released.
5. **Recall to side** – on both the Left and Right-hand sides. Finish with a stay – the Handler returns to the dog to "mark" and reward the correct behaviour.
6. **Send to a target** – either a food bowl, pod or toy. The Handler should send from at least 1 metre away from the target.



HOMEWORK:

Minimal equipment is required for any/all the exercises as mentioned earlier / games. Be creative when out for a walk; use a tree, a garbage bin, etc. The obstacle doesn't matter; the dog understands that going around an obstacle and returning to the Handler is key.

⁴ www.oneminddogs.com/blog/agility-foundations-successful-career

⁵ www.oneminddogs.com/blog/agility-foundations-successful-career

Week 1

Exercise 1 – One Jump Drill – Send over Jump Rear Cross

DEFINITION:

The **Rear Cross** is one of the building blocks of Agility handling. It can be utilised on almost every Agility course. Like the Front Cross, the **Rear Cross** can be used to change from one side of the dog to the other or change the dog's Lead Leg to initiate a turn.

A key point to remember about the **Rear Cross** is that the Handler must be patient enough to let the dog pass them before turning the dog or changing sides. A handler who initiates the **Rear Cross** too early will push the dog away from them without getting the dog to pass across the Handler's path⁶.

SITUATION:

The objective in Yellow Class is for the Handler to assist their dog in learning to work independently whilst the Handler is crossing behind the rear of the dog.

OUTCOME:

Your dog will successfully negotiate a jump obstacle whilst the Handler performs a **Rear Cross**.

TRAINING:

Step 1: Start without Your Dog!

Many beginning handlers are too self-conscious to practice their handling movements without their dog. But *please believe me* that you'll be more successful if you get the movements drilled into your muscle memory before you add your dog into the process. You'll only confuse yourself (or even worse – confuse your dog) if you start off right away with your dog.

1. Move forward a few steps, and as you plant the leg nearest the dog, draw the dog past your near side leg using the arm nearest the dog as you continue to step forward with your opposite side leg.
2. As your virtual dog passes your knee, bring up your opposite side arm to turn the dog away from you. Your weight is now predominately on your opposite side leg.
3. Once the dog turns away from you, step behind the dog with the (formerly) inside leg. This will bring you up alongside your dog with it on your opposite side. **Believe me; it is easier done than said!**⁷

⁶ www.agilitynerd.com/blog/agility/starting/LearningRearCross

⁷ www.agilitynerd.com/blog/agility/starting/LearningRearCross

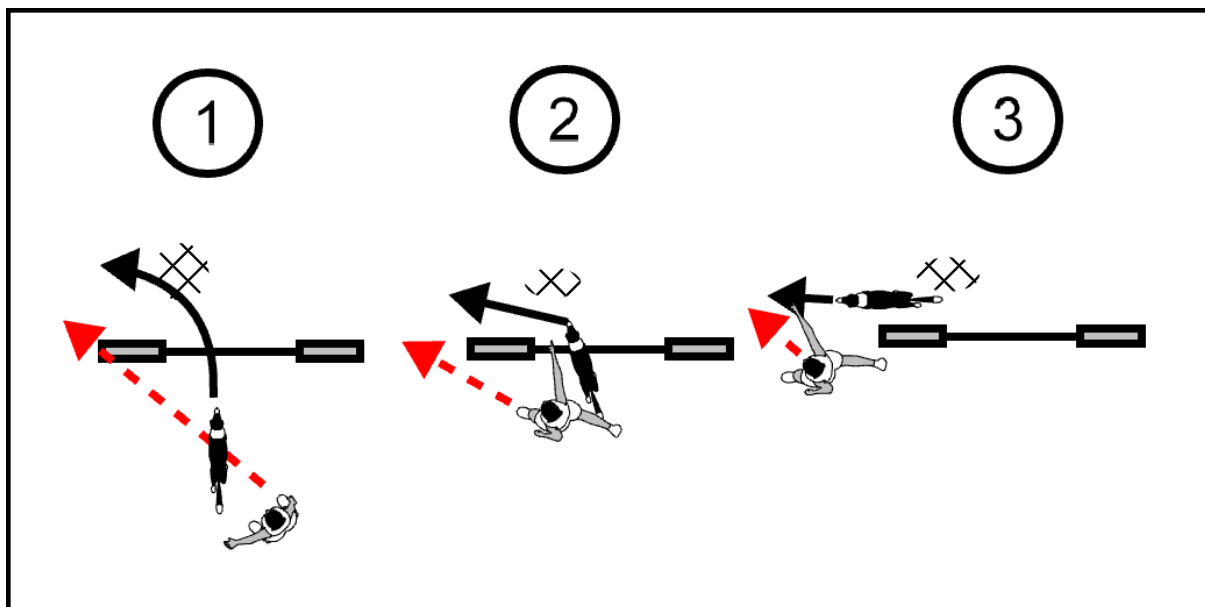


Redline– Dog side leg
Yellow line– Dog sidearm

Step 2: Add Your Dog!

Only add your dog when you can perform the steps without consciously thinking about them.

- Using one jump, plus their favourite toy or a high-value treat. Place the toy/treat on the landing side of the jump, slightly off-centre toward the side they are turning to.
- Sit your dog close to the jump bar.
- The Handler is to stand slightly behind the dog and should already be turning in toward the dog.
- Send your dog over the jump, using your verbal jump command (i.e. hup, jump, over) using the dog sidearm.
- Simultaneously, step across behind your dog, raising your outside arm and pointing towards the reward.
- The Handler needs to move quickly into the recall to the side position on the landing side (as per the diagram hereunder).



Exercise 2 – Weaves

SITUATION:

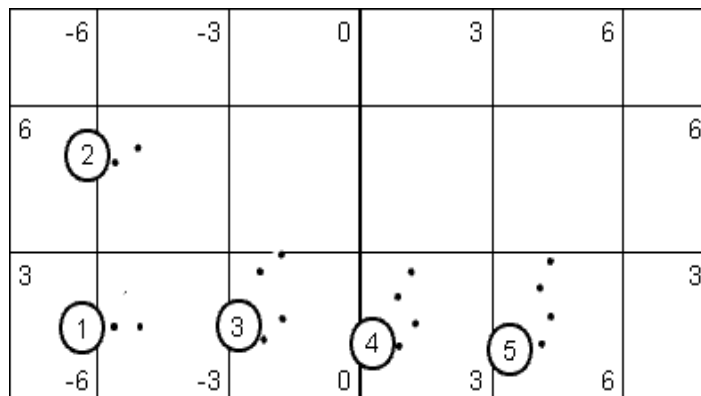
The objective of Yellow Class is to continue your **weave** pole training. Comprehensive **weave** pole training notes (a summary of Susan GARRETT's method) is attached to this manual as an Annexure.

OUTCOME:

At the Yellow Class stage, handlers should be attempting at least 2 sets of 2 x 2s. It is encouraged that you begin to close the gap[s] on the 2 sets (both distances apart and the angles)

TRAINING:

Hereunder is an illustration of the various stages of weave pole training.



- When you can, introduce the 3rd set of 2 x 2s. This set should also be angled slightly more than the first two sets.
- Close up the 3rd set of 2 x 2s as soon as practicable.
- The final angle for Yellow Class is "slightly" angled (i.e., no wider than the dog's ribcage)
- The challenge is introducing a second set of 6 poles about 1 metre away from the first set. Angle them so there is a clear channel through both sets of poles.
- Get the dog to go through the first set and allow the Handler to move forward. Reward the dog and then quickly point out the second set of poles. Wait a bit to see if the dog will go through the second set of poles of their own volition.
- Have the toy reward ready. Line up your dog, get them excited, and ask them to go through the first set and then wait to see if they will offer the second set themselves. Throw the toy reward (on the reward line).
- Move the two sets of 2x2 poles closer together. Remember to approach the weaves on both the left and right sides. Imagine an arc is drawn around the entry to the weavers. The dog must be sent through the poles from all spots on that imaginary arc.

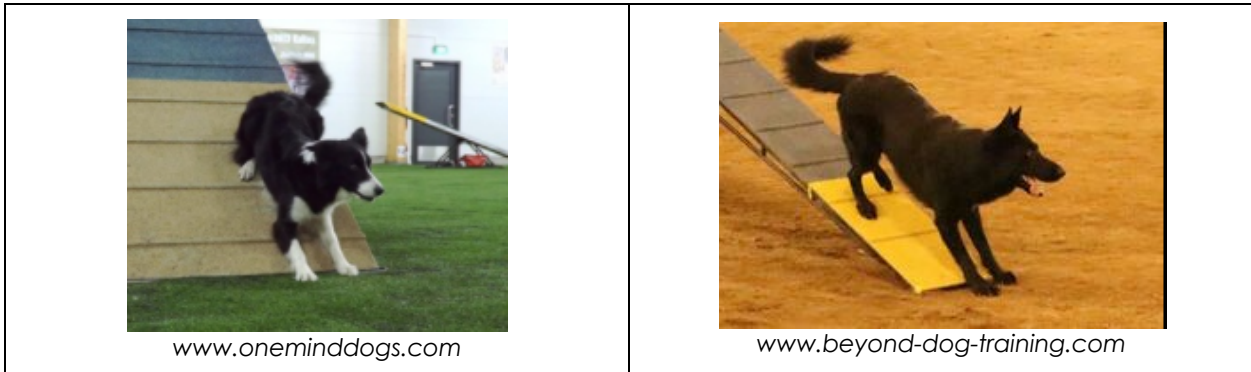
HOMEWORK:

Weave pole training requires *DAILY PRACTICE* for 1-3 months. Remember to keep your sessions short.

Exercise 3 – Contacts A-Frame / Dog Walk

DEFINITION:

There are three (3) obstacles in agility – a dog walk, a frame, and a See-Saw. These obstacles have yellow zones (contact zones) painted on the bottom of their respective ramps. For a dog to qualify, it must touch at least one part of one foot in the yellow zone before leaving the obstacle⁸. This practice is commonly referred to as the 2o2o position.



SITUATION:

Yellow Class gets experience with the Dog Walk and A-Frame (as a complete obstacle, however, set at a lower than competition level height) with the emphasis on the '2o2o' end behaviour.

OUTCOME:

The dog is taught that he is expected to stop (in the 2o2o position) at the end of these contact obstacles. This is a progression from those coming up from the Green Class

TRAINING:

Set up two contact obstacles so the Class can use the contact equipment simultaneously.

- Set your dog up at a slight angle to the contact (this is to discourage them from running at the obstacle and launching themselves onto it).
- Encourage your dog to perform the obstacle at a steady and smooth gait on its approach and up and over (this assists the dog in balancing correctly on their way down).
- Each dog is expected to stop at the end of each obstacle in the 2-on-2-off position.
- Each dog should remain in the 2-on-2-off position until the Handler verbally releases it.
- Dogs can now go up and over the entire obstacle.
- Once you and your dog have mastered these obstacles, place a jump in front and after the obstacle.

HINTS & TIPS:

- Handlers should move laterally from the equipment to not crowd their dog.
- The goal is for the dog to demonstrate the 2-on-2-off behaviour independently.

Remember to "Mark" the 2-on-2-off behaviour and REWARD the same.

⁸ www.wagagility.com

Exercise 4 – Tyre



www.pinnacle.com.au

SITUATION:

Obstacles such as the **Broad Jump** and **Tyre** are often used at the beginning of a Novice Course. As such, you must ensure you can do a lead-out whilst your dog remains in a sit/stay.

OUTCOME:

The objective of Yellow Class is for your dog to understand the **Broad Jump** and **Tyre** obstacles and negotiate them correctly and confidently.

TRAINING:

- Place the **Tyre** onto the lowest height
- Reward your dog for going through the Tyre, making sure you do not lure the dog to 'back jump' the obstacle
- Use a target or throw a toy away from the Tyre
- Begin using a verbal cue when your dog is consistently going through the tyre obstacle (i.e., Tyre)

HINTS & TIPS:

- Do not go too high or fast when raising the Tyre to your dog's height, as this could scare or confuse your dog.
- It is also essential that you do not raise the Tyre too slowly, as this can cause your dog to crash into the obstacle.
- If your dog becomes confused or scared or incorrectly completes the obstacle, go back a few steps in your training and start again.
- Keep your sessions short, upbeat, fun, and full of rewards/treats so that your dog learns to love the obstacle.

HOMEWORK:

Practice at home. You can practice these by utilising items such as a pool noodle. Practice this using the dog's night meal as the reward for this training.

Week 2

Exercise 1 – Jumping Sequence

SITUATION:

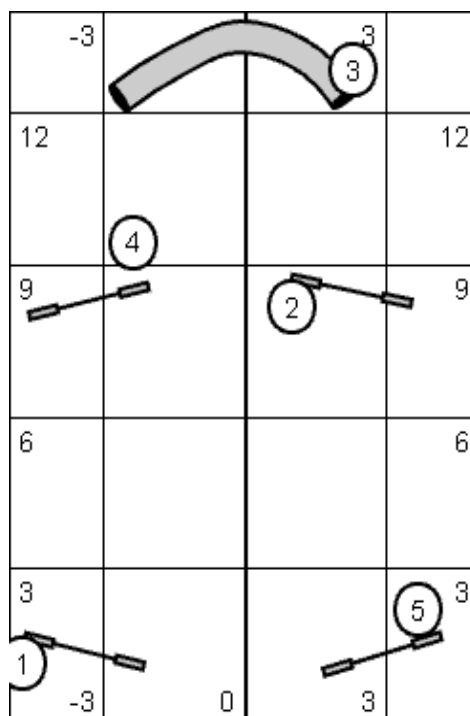
The objective in Yellow Class is for the Handler and dog to learn to work as a team and complete a short jumping sequence.

OUTCOME:

The handler and dog (team) undertake a series of obstacles in sequence, using the skills you have learnt to date.

TRAINING:

- Place the dog in a sit/stay position behind obstacle 1. The dog should be on the Handler's right-hand side so that the dog's path will be on a diagonal to the tunnel entrance and exit. Start with the obstacles relatively close (but not too close) together, so it is simple to begin with.
- As the dog is exiting the tunnel, the Handler needs to reconnect with the dog whilst simultaneously beginning to move laterally⁹ away from a straight path and onto the diagonal direction (**NOTE:** all the jumps are angled slightly)
- Once you have completed the course, challenge yourself by performing a Front Cross after obstacle # 4 (for the advanced Yellow class handlers).



HOMEWORK:

Practice your **Front Cross** exercises at home (on both sides).

⁹ Lateral movement means the dog and handler maintain a distance whilst being parallel to each other.

Exercise 2 – Weaves (See Week 1 Exercise 2)

Exercise 3 – See-Saw



<https://susangarrettdogagility.com/>

DEFINITION:

The See-Saw (Teeter Totter) is one of the two more difficult contact obstacles. The See-Saw **can be** the scariest obstacle for a dog as the tipping point is unpredictable for them, and the slower they are, the more unpredictable it gets. The See-Saw obstacle requires the dog to have some momentum to navigate it successfully.

SITUATION:

Yellow class members will now get to do the whole see-saw obstacle.

OUTCOME:

Dogs will get exposure to the whole see-saw obstacle.

NOTE: Some dogs will still be somewhat nervous or apprehensive of the obstacle, generally because of not having played the 'bang its game' correctly.

If this is the case, be consistent and support your dog by keeping them on lead, asking the instructor to hold the down end of the see-saw for support and dropping it slowly). The long-term goal is to teach your dog to run quickly up and over the See-Saw before stopping at the very end, in the 2o2o position.

TRAINING:

- Initially (for the first few repetitions), ask the instructor to support the end and encourage the dog to walk to the end. In the end, reward heavily (whilst the dog is still in place). Lower the end slowly.
- Dogs do NOT have to do 2 on 2 off on the See Saw – BUT they should pause at the end of the plank and await a verbal release word (i.e., okay, break).

HOMEWORK:

Practice at home so your dog gets used to the movement of the obstacle. You can make a mini see-saw.



Open Source

Exercise 4 – Contacts A-Frame / Dog Walk (See Week 1 Exercise 3)

Week 3

Exercise 1 – Jumps – Tight (180) Front Cross or Take-Off Side Front Cross

DEFINITION:

A Tight (180) Front Cross or Take-Off Side Front Cross is where the Handler performs the Front Cross on the Take-Off side of the obstacle. The Handler turns towards the dog (this indicates for the dog to decelerate) and gives the verbal cue and respective arm signal for the dog to take the jump and to come back tightly around the wing – between the Handler and the wing.

SITUATION:

A Tight (180) Front Cross or Take-Off Side Front Cross is used on a course where the dog and the Handler are required to do the next obstacle on the course, which is in the direction from which they both just came.

OUTCOME:

The objective of Yellow Class for both the Handler and the dog is to understand the Tight (180) Front Cross manoeuvre and negotiate it correctly and confidently.

TRAINING:

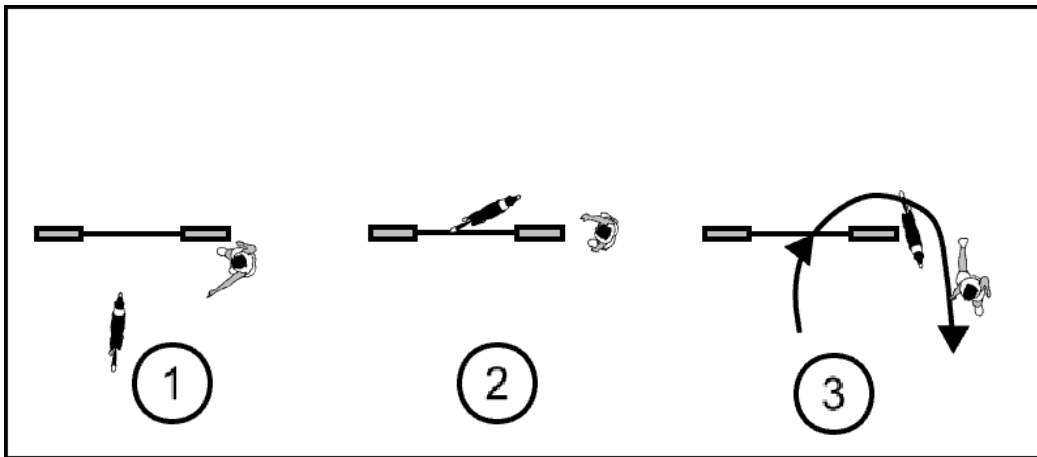
This lesson can be undertaken by multiple dogs/handlers simultaneously, with each team utilising a single wing jump.

- Place your dog in a sit/stay position in front of the jump
- The Handler stands ahead of the dog (in the lead-out position) beside (but not past) the wing of the obstacle with their body turned inward, toward the wing and the dog
- Verbally release your dog over the jump (using your dog side – nearest arm), pointing to the dog's take-off point on the ground¹⁰
- Take a step back, immediately use your other arm, point to the dog's landing position¹¹ over the bar, and draw the dog around the wing into a 180-degree tight turn.
- Move forward and recall your dog to the side.

Continue to the next page.

¹⁰ A **dog's take-off point** is the spot from which the dog launches itself to take the obstacle in front of it. Small dog's take-off point is much closer to the obstacle than a larger dog that needs to launch itself earlier; hence its take-off spot is further back. Handlers need to be aware of how far back (take-off point) their dog takes off to successfully complete an obstacle. If a dog is not told earlier enough that there is a tight turn coming, it will generally knock the bar in front of itself.

¹¹ A **dog's landing point** is the spot the dog will land on the opposite side of an obstacle. Again, a small dog's landing point will be closer to the obstacle than a larger dog.



HOMEWORK:

Practice this move at home. The Handler and the dog must understand and perform each agility move confidently and successfully. This takes repeated training.

Exercise 2 – Contacts A-Frame / Dog Walk (See Week 1 Exercise 3)

Exercise 3 – See-Saw (See Week 2 Exercise 3)

Exercise 4 – Tyre (See Week Exercise 4)

Exercise 5 – Broad /Long Jump



www.pinnacle.com

TRAINING:

- Start with fewer boards and work your way up to the number required for your dog's height.
- Place a target/toy at the other end of the obstacle.
- Place your dog back from the broad jump and ask them to stay.
- Give your dog the 'jump broad jump' command (i.e., big, broad) and encourage them to move towards the obstacle, over it, and send it to the reward at the other end.

HINTS & TIPS:

- If your dog is not correctly jumping the obstacle, modify the jump by placing the boards closer together or removing a few to make the jump shorter.¹²
- Repeat.

HOMEWORK:

Practice at home. You can practice utilising several planks (or similar) lying around the house.

¹² www.wagwalking.com/training

Week 4

Exercise 1 – Jumping Sequence (Acceleration and Deceleration)

SITUATION:

Frequently on the course, the Handler will be required to indicate to their dog that they need to decelerate (Decel) or subsequently – accelerate.

OUTCOME:

The objective of Yellow Class is for both the Handler and the dog to understand the **Decel** manoeuvre and for the Handler to confidently indicate it to the dog before the dog takes off for said obstacle. If the dog is not told early enough before taking the obstacle in front of it, it will generally knock the bar.

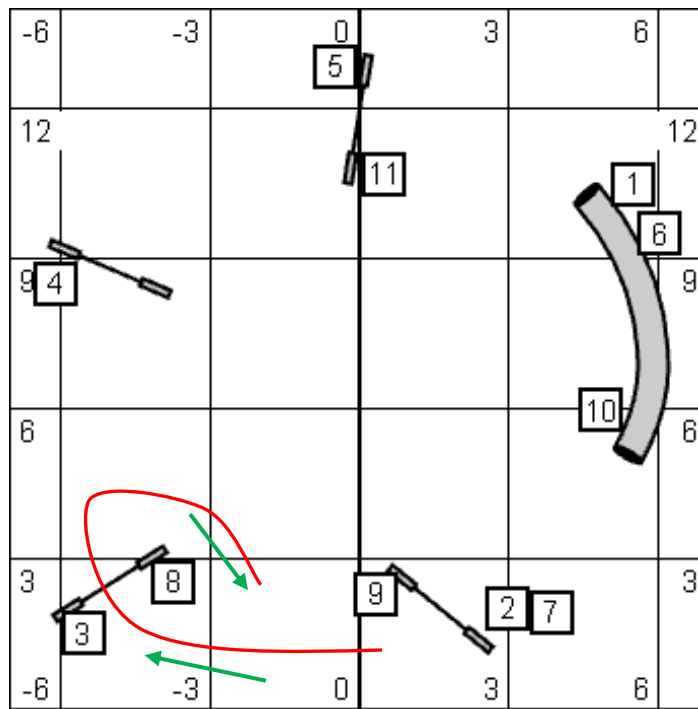
This exercise aims to build drive around a course but then show '**Decel**' at one of the jumps for the Handler to do a **Tight Front Cross** and reverse the forward direction of the team.

TRAINING:

This setup is like Green Class but has an extra jump to make the shape larger.

- On your 2nd circuit, perform a **Tight Front Cross** on obstacle # 8 to get your dog to **Decel** and turn back to you (between the Handler and the wing).
- Ensure the Handler decelerates their speed and turns into their dog when they are doing the **Tight Front Cross**

There needs to be a clear delineation between the dog knowing to keep going straight ahead and making a tight turn on the next obstacle.



Exercise 2 - Weaves (See Week 1 Exercise 2)

Exercise 3 - Contacts A-Frame / Dog Walk (See Week 1 Exercise 3)

Exercise 4 - Broad/Long Jump (See Week 3 Exercise 5)

Week 5

Exercise 1 – Two Jump drill – Landing Side Front Cross with forward motion

SITUATION:

Frequently, on the course, the Handler will be required to perform a **Landing Side Front Cross** and continue the course.

OUTCOME:

The objective of Yellow Class is for both the Handler and the dog to understand the **Landing Side Front Cross**¹³ and negotiate it correctly and confidently.

TRAINING:

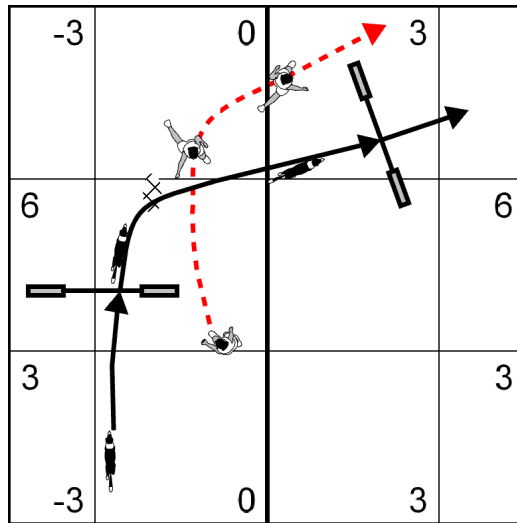
- Set your dog in a sit/stay and back from the jump.
- Place a toy/food bowl on the **landing side**, where your dog will land.
- The Handler leads out – to approximately, but not quite up to the jump (on the **take-off side**), but sufficiently clear – laterally.
- Give your dog its verbal release to take the jump to the target (toy/food bowl) whilst the Handler simultaneously moves into the **Front Cross** position and a little ahead of the target.
- 'Mark' the dog for going to the target, then complete the **Front Cross**.
- Move forward immediately to indicate the second jump and recall the dog to the side after the second jump. REWARD!
- Do this on both the left and right-hand sides (changing the position of the second jump for the other side, **Front Cross**).
- Remove the target as soon as you possibly can.

NOTE: the purpose of the toy/food bowl for this exercise is to give the handlers a little extra time to get themselves into position.

¹³ **Landing side** is the side of the obstacle that the dog will land after it has successfully negotiated it.

HOMEWORK:

Practice this exercise at home.



Exercise 2 - Weaves (See Week 1 Exercise 2)

Exercise 3 - Contacts A-Frame / Dog Walk (See Week 1 Exercise 3)

Exercise 4 – See-Saw (See Week 2 Exercise 3)

Exercise 5 – Tyre (See Week 1 Exercise 4)

Week 6

Exercise 1 – Jumping Sequence (Front Crossing a Jump)

DEFINITION:

A **Front Cross** is a manoeuvre in which the Handler changes handling sides in **front** of their dog. This typically occurs on a turn. The side change happens when the Handler turns toward their dog. The Handler can **see** their dog throughout the side change¹⁴ in this manoeuvre.

SITUATION:

The objective of Yellow Class is for the Handler and the dogs to understand the **Front Cross** manoeuvre and perform it correctly during a jumping sequence.

OUTCOME:

The **Front Cross** is one of the building blocks of dog agility handling. It can be utilised on almost every agility course. It is also the foundation for several more complex handling movements. The **Front Cross** is also used to change your dog's leading leg to enable it to initiate a turn on the course¹⁵.

You and your dog will be able to confidently perform a **Front Cross** from both sides during a jumping sequence.

TRAINING:

A sequence diagram is on the next page.

The tunnel entrance must be almost in line with obstacle 1 when setting up the course. This gives the Handler sufficient time to get into position on the landing side of obstacle number 3.

Handlers are encouraged to "**send**" their dogs to the tunnel from as far away as is possible.

This exercise aims for the Handler to have completed their **Front Cross** and be in position as the dog exits the tunnel.

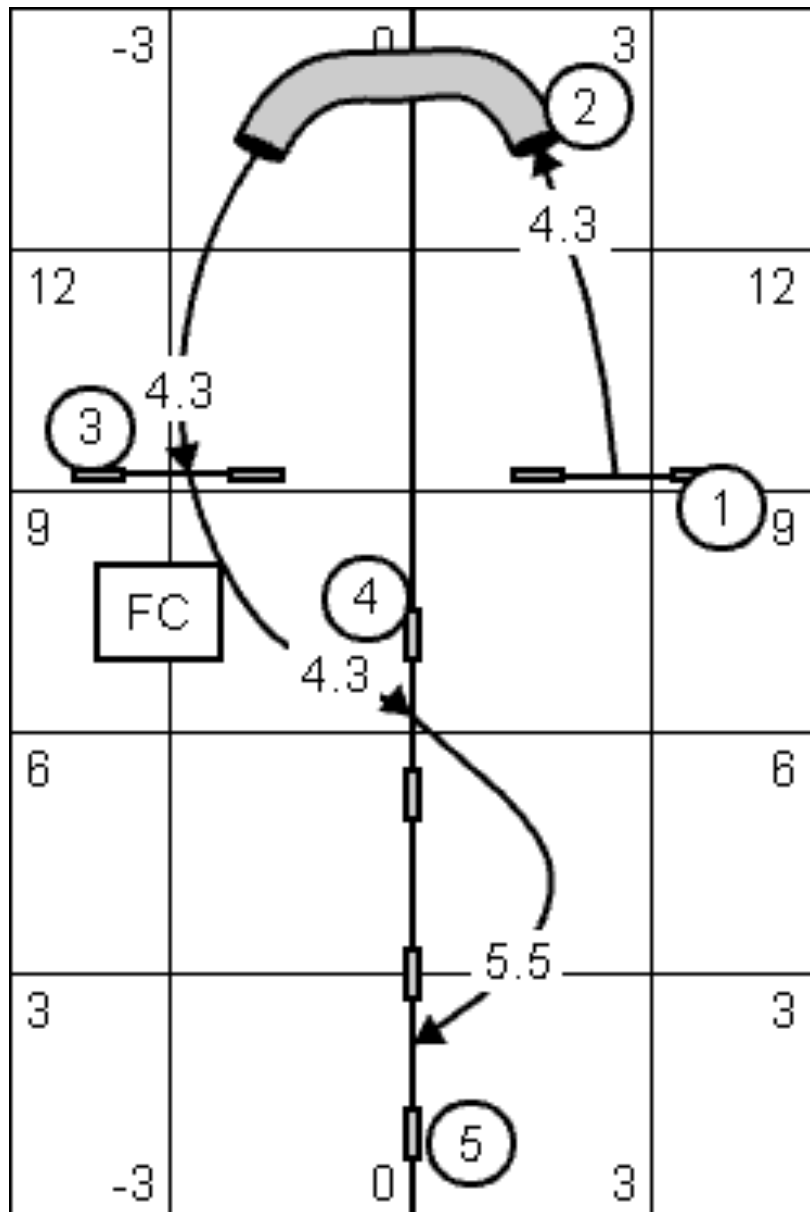
REMEMBER to reconnect with your dog as they exit the tunnel.

- Set your dog in a sit/stay on the take-off side of obstacle # 1
- The Handler will lead out and verbally release the dog and send it to the tunnel (this should give the Handler sufficient time to get ahead of their dog and into the **Front Cross** position on the **landing side** of obstacle # 3)
- Perform a Front Cross manoeuvre between obstacles # 3 and # 4
- Reward the dog after taking obstacle # 3 and then continue over obstacles # 4 and # 5
- Recall to the side at the end of the sequence and REWARD your dog again.

¹⁴ www.addogagility.com

¹⁵ Steve Schwarz

Jumping Sequence – Front Crossing a Jump Sequence Diagram



Cont. Next page.

Exercise 2 - Contacts A-Frame / Dog Walk (See Week 1 Exercise 3)

Exercise 3 – See-Saw (See Week 2 Exercise 3)

Exercise 4 - Broad/Long Jump (See Week 3 Exercise 5)

Week 7

Exercise 1 – Jumping Sequence – Blind Cross with Two Jumps

DEFINITION

A **Blind Cross** is a manoeuvre in which you change handling sides in front of your dog. The side change happens quickly with the Handler turning your back on your dog and changing dog sidearms/hands behind their back, thereby temporarily losing sight of their dog momentarily. This manoeuvre contrasts with the Front Cross¹⁶.

SITUATION:

The objective of Yellow Class is for the Handler and the dogs to understand the **Blind Cross** manoeuvre and perform it correctly during a two-jump sequence.

OUTCOME:

The **Blind Cross** is an advanced agility handling manoeuvre. A **Blind Cross** can be utilised on almost every agility course. The **Blind Cross** also changes your dog's leading leg whilst enabling the Handler to switch sides on course.

You and your dog will be able to confidently perform a **Blind Cross** from both sides during a two-jump sequence.

TRAINING:

Set up the two jump sequences (per the diagram hereunder), ensuring a gentle curve between them. Place the jumps at least 6 metres apart.

Step 1:

- Set your dog up in a sit/stay position in front of obstacle #1
- The Handler leads out (refer to position #1) – ahead of their dog but already preparing (turning their body slightly) to switch sides in a **Blind Cross** manoeuvre
- Do this exercise with your 'virtual' dog for the first several practices. This enables the Handler to feel confident with their body/foot placement before attempting it with their dog
- With your dog – do not verbally release your dog until the Handler is in position
- Once the Handler is confident, progress to Step 2.

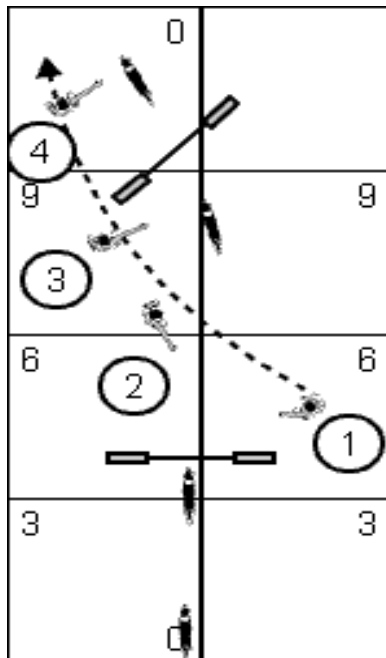
Step 2:

- Set your dog in a sit/stay position; however, on this occasion, put them back further from obstacle #1
- Run into position, verbally releasing your dog midway (refer to position #2), essentially releasing your dog as it crosses the jumping line in front of obstacle #1.
- Once your dog has landed after the first jump, the Handler needs to be in position (refer to position #3)

¹⁶ www.baddogagility.com

NOTE:

- ✓ The Handler must be in position #2 **BEFORE** the dog commits to the first jump.
- ✓ The Handler needs to have crossed the dog's path on the landing side of the jump **BEFORE** the dog commits to the first jump
- ✓ **Blind Crosses** are all about **timing!**



HOMEWORK:

Practice this exercise at home.

Exercise 2 – Blind Cross out of a Tunnel

SITUATION:

The objective of Yellow Class is for the Handler and the dogs to understand the **Blind Cross** manoeuvre and perform it correctly as your dog exits a tunnel.

OUTCOME:

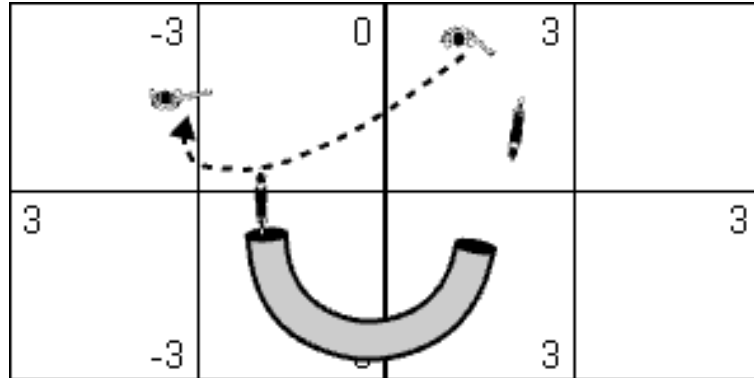
You and your dog will be able to confidently perform a **Blind Cross** from both sides exiting a tunnel

TRAINING:

- Set up a curved tunnel
- Practice sending your dog to/into the tunnel
- Once your dog is "committed" to the tunnel, the Handler performs a Blind Cross at the front of the exit of the tunnel
- Ensure you do this exercise from both the left and right-hand sides

NOTE:

- ✓ Being able to "send" their dog is paramount.
- ✓ This enables the Handler to leave their initial position quickly, thereby avoiding a collision.
- ✓ SAFETY is vital in this exercise



HOMEWORK:

Practice this exercise at home.

Exercise 3 - Contacts A-Frame / Dog Walk (See Week 1 Exercise 3)

Week 8

Exercise 1 – Distance Handling

DEFINITION:

Distance handling is the term used to describe an unusual type of handling where the Handler isn't next to their dog yet running with them. **Distance handling** means the Handler is still running with their dogs but cannot keep up with them, so they learn to work a few obstacles away from their Handler¹⁷.

SITUATION:

The objective of Yellow Class is for the Handler and the dogs to attempt to get their dogs working independently and ahead of them, at a distance – starting small and building up in the distance.

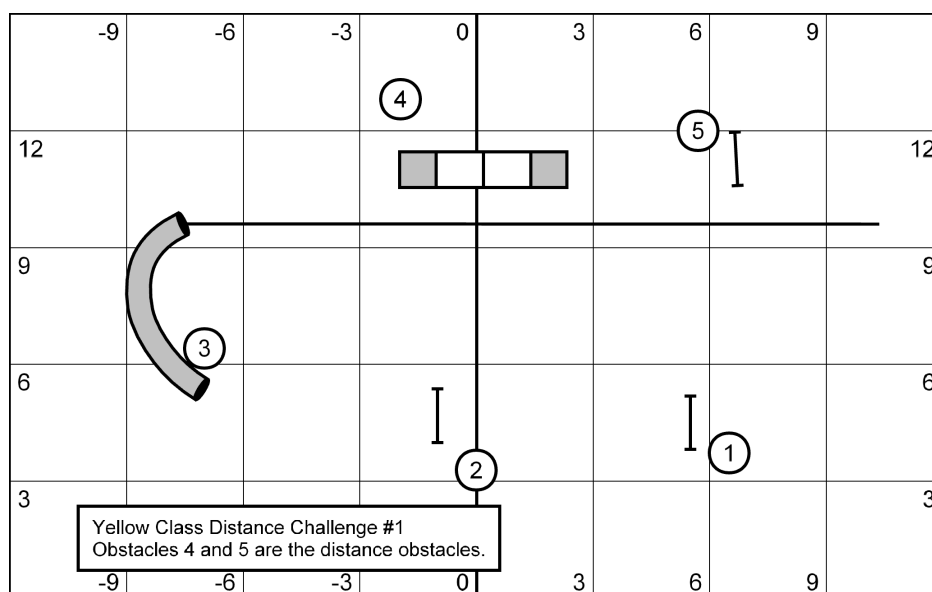
OUTCOME:

Your dog will confidently work for you on the course – at a distance.

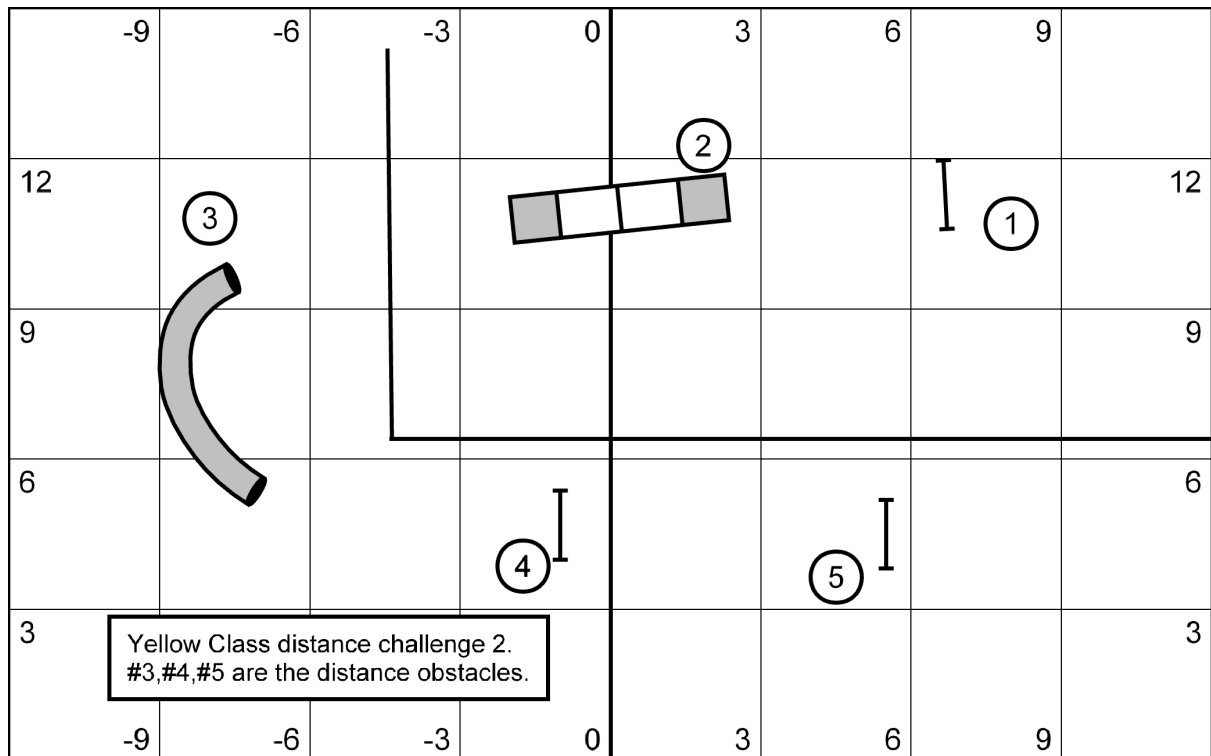
TRAINING:

Set up the course following the diagram hereunder. Tonight, you will be using the A-Frame, tunnel, and several jumps to learn the concept of **distance handling**. The bold straight line from the tunnel exit and below the A-Frame is considered where you can demonstrate **distance handling**.

- Set up your dog in a sit/stay on the take-off side of obstacle # 1.
- Lead out and verbally release your dog.
- Send your dog to obstacles # 4 and # 5 from between the tunnel and the A-Frame, or
- Ensure you (the Handler) remain on the bottom side of the distance handling line whilst your dog is undertaking the A-Frame and final jump (# 5)



¹⁷ www.tamingcanines.co.uk/services



Exercise 2 – Backside

DEFINITION:

In Backside Send, the dog is sent behind the obstacle. The aim is that the Handler can send the dog behind the obstacle from a couple of meters distance or even further. Advanced courses nowadays almost always include backside jumps, and many of the more complex handling techniques begin with a Backside Send. The more reliable Backside Send you have, the sooner you can start moving to your next position on a course, and the easier it will be for you to perform more advanced handling techniques. A backside send can be performed in several ways, and its approaches vary. We commonly see a backside as either a wrap or a slice.

SITUATION

The objective of Yellow Class is for the Handler and the dogs to attempt to get their dogs working on Backside sends on wing jumps and experimenting with wraps and slices.

OUTCOME:

Your dog will confidently take the backsides of jumps as a wrap or slice and eventually build independence and substances.

TRAINING:

- Set up a single wing jump to start practising Backside sends with the bar on the ground.

- Start by adding something behind the wing near the bar for the dog to drive to, such as a food bowl or toy.
- Get the dogs nice and close to the wing, initially release them to the toy/food and then recall them through where the bar would be to your side. This will get the Backside nice and tight.
- Do this several times before adding the bar and start to build distance.
- Make sure to work on both sides of the wing and start incorporating a verbal command.
- After some time, you can add the bar and start working on the jump.

Week 8

Putting it All Together Week!

Before a Yellow Class handler can be promoted to Purple Class, they must demonstrate they can confidently perform the skills they have learnt over the previous 8 weeks.

Finally, before progression to Purple Class, a discussion will occur between the Yellow Class Instructors and a member of the Instructors Committee.

ADC YELLOW CLASS

Congratulations

GRADUATES

PURPLE CLASS Right this way! →

ANNEXURE

Weave Pole Training

NOTE: These points summarise the 'Susan Garrett's Weave Training' DVD.

Each member is encouraged to purchase this DVD training video or loan a copy (limited copies) from the ADC Learning Library.

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND: -

- D.A.S.H – 'D' = Develop a drive to work, 'A' = Accuracy, 'S' = Speed (which comes with accuracy and confidence); and 'H' = Habitat (i.e. changing locations / environment)
- Keep your sessions short.
- Make the Reward Line very clear.
- Don't let the dog go back through the Weaving Poles.
- Don't use the command "Weave" until the dog is weaving straight lines. This is a general rule in dog training – that you don't label the behaviour with a verbal until it looks like the desired finished behaviour. Use a release word such as "Go" instead.
- Toss the food or toy underhand along the reward line.
- Be in the action of throwing as the dog goes through the poles.
- Enter Weave Poles from both the left- and right-hand sides.
- When working the arc on the poles, vary the speed at which you approach the entry.
- Mistakes allow you to reward the correction.
- Work on an 80% success rate before moving on to the next stage of the training.
- Don't stay on the 1st step too long.
- Arc – imagine a semi-circle drawn perpendicular to the Weaving Pole base at the entry point.

10 STEPS TO PERFECT WEAVING

1. Build value for the 1st & 2nd poles. This step is done with the Weaving Poles at right angles to the dog and Handler. Stand right next to the poles so that any forward movement of the dog – even just a slight turn of the head movement will result in an interaction with the poles. Reward this by "marking" and throwing food rewards through the poles. Use food for the 1st few repetitions as it creates a thoughtful dog. Make sure the food is large enough for the dog to see. Once the dog is reliably stepping forward through the gap, change the handler position so the dog moves through the gap at a slightly different angle. A toy can now be used to build a drive. Make sure the reward always lands on the Reward Line. NB: Some dogs might need to be taught to move forward from the "heel" position toward a reward.
2. Once the dog reliably moves through 2 poles (remember 80% success rate), move on to the next level. The 2x2 base is now set in the "2 o'clock & 8 o'clock" position. The Reward line is set, so the dog must go through the Weaving Poles at an angle. The Handler should move slightly around the arc – keeping the challenge simple but working on both the left and right-hand sides. Make sure the Reward Line is easy for the Handler to see. Reward/s must be thrown along the Reward Line.

3. 2 sets of 2x2 bases – move dogs onto this step when offering the behaviour of confidently driving through the poles from different angles. Add the 2nd set approximately 4 metres from the 1st set at the same angle. Reward the dog 50% of the time after the 1st set before asking them to enter the 2nd set. Gradually reduce the percentage and simply wait for the dog to enter the 2nd set before throwing the reward down the reward line. The Handler should not see the Reward Line through both sets of poles. Both sets are at the 2 & 8 o'clock position/s.
4. Move the 2nd set closer. Again, work the arc from both the left- and right-hand sides.
5. Move the 2nd set of 2x2s to the 1 & 7 o'clock positions. The Handler still does not use the weave command but may use a release or "go" command when moving further from the poles.
6. Move the 2nd set of 2x2s closer still and reduce the angle slightly. First, build confidence with easy entries before working the arc.
7. Straighten the poles. Handlers need to stay at this level for a little while to build confidence. If they have their poles, now is also a good time for Handlers to change training locations (i.e., take it on the road).
8. Add the 3rd set of 2x2s at 1 & 7 o'clock – about a metre away from the 4 poles. Gradually bring it closer and straighten it. Dogs should continue 6 poles until they work out their rhythm. Practice easy entries until the dog is comfortable with their footwork. Add a jump before the Weaving Poles and change the angle of the approaches.
9. Once the dog gets different approaches correct 80% of the time, add the 2nd set of 6 poles about 4 metres away from the 1st set. Step 3 rewards 50% of the time between the two sets, then gradually reduces the percentage. Bring progressively the 2 sets of 6 poles together. Continue to reward to keep building drive. Remember to take your weave poles to different locations.