

Improve Your
Handling Skills
at Home

Backyard Dogs

By Karen Holik



This month's column includes lots of fun jump exercises. When working on the exercises in **Figures 1 and 2**, try starting with your dog on your left and also on your right. Do each variation running with your dog (no lead-out) and then by leading out to jump #2.

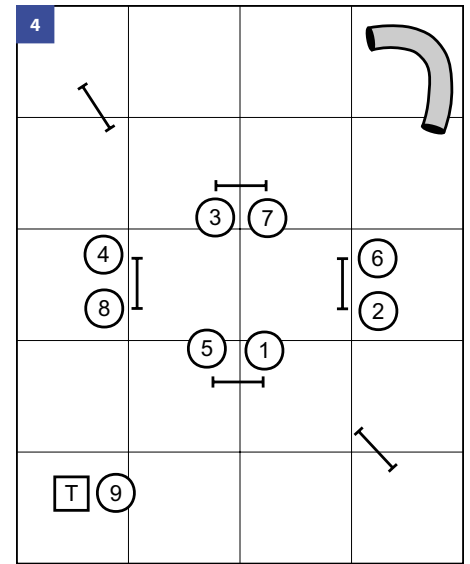
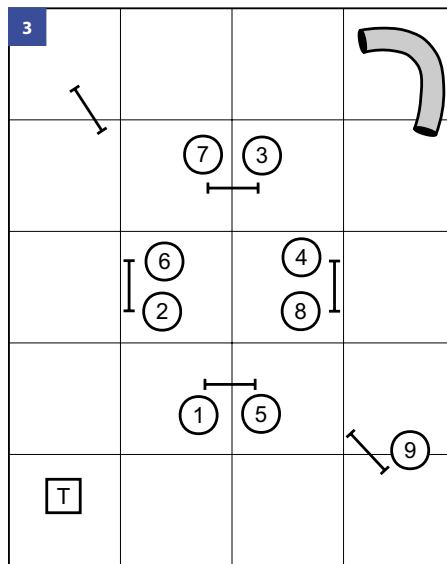
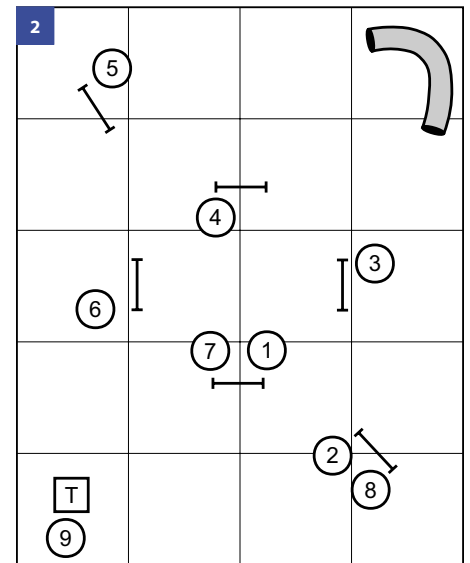
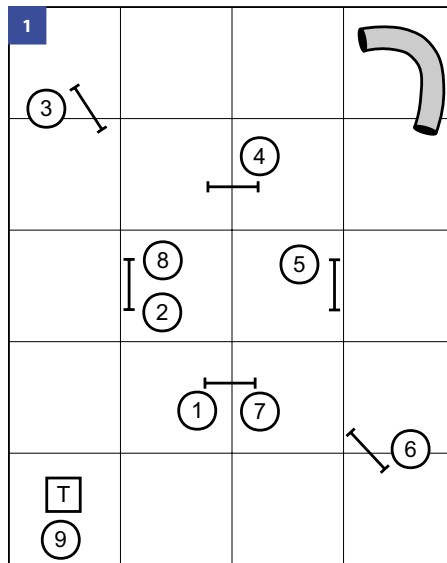
The exercises in **Figures 3 and 4** have some challenging 270 work with the off-course jumps and tunnel being very close. Start out slow with these sequences and try to pick up speed once your dog understands what you expect him to do.

The exercises in **Figures 5 and 6** have some variations with pinwheel and 270 work. Don't get discouraged if your dog takes any off-course obstacles. Reward your dog with a toy for coming back to you when asked.

In the exercise in **Figure 7**, try starting with your dog on your left without a lead-out. Can you get into position for a front cross after jumps #5, #7, and #9? Can you do the same with a rear cross at #7 and #9?

In the exercise in **Figure 8**, start with your dog on your right. Then try the exercise again, starting with the dog on your left, and do a rear cross at #2.

Figures 9 and 10 have many choices for the dog. Remember to reward highly when your dog stays with you and makes the right choice. 🐾



Karen Holik has been involved in agility for over 10 years as a competitor and also a USDAA and AKC judge. She has competed in the finals of the USDAA Grand Prix World Championships seven times with all her dogs: two Shelties, a Border Collie, and an All-American. Her youngest dog, ADCH MACH2 Triune's Feelin Hot Hot Hot (a.k.a. Sizzle) won the Steeplechase event at the USDAA World Championships in 2003. Karen and Sizzle were members of the AKC/USA World Team in 2003, 2005, and 2006. Karen offers private lessons and seminars and can be reached at oncourseagility@comcast.net.

