

Improve Your
Handling Skills
at Home

Backyard Dogs



By Karen Holik

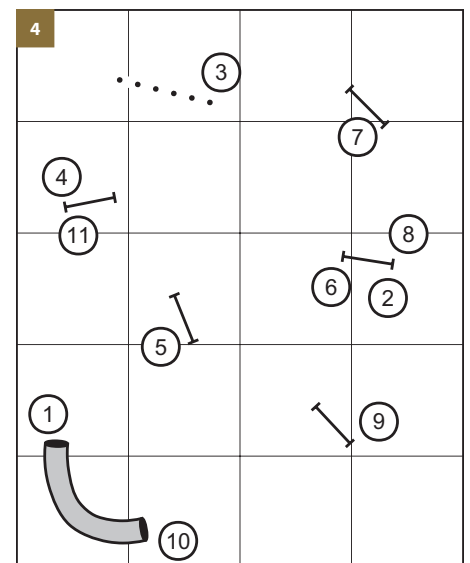
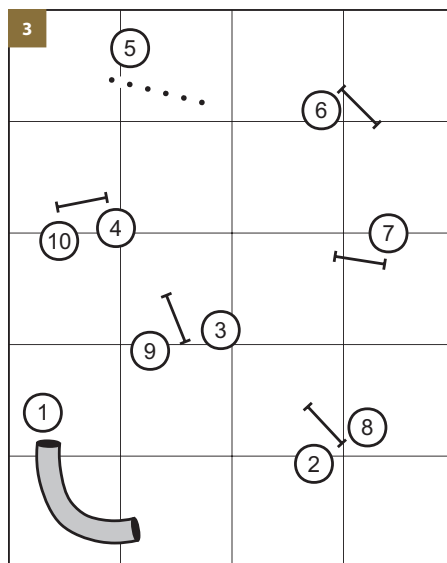
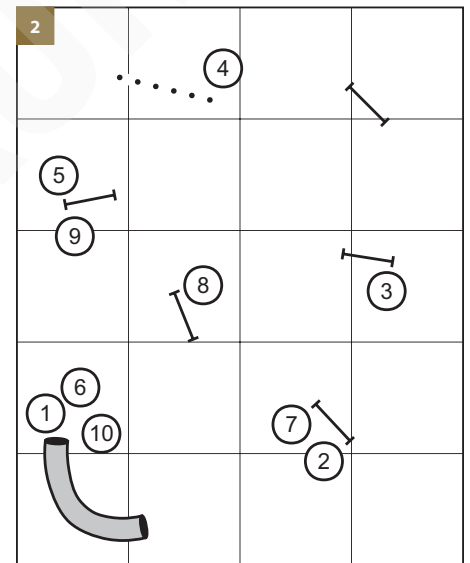
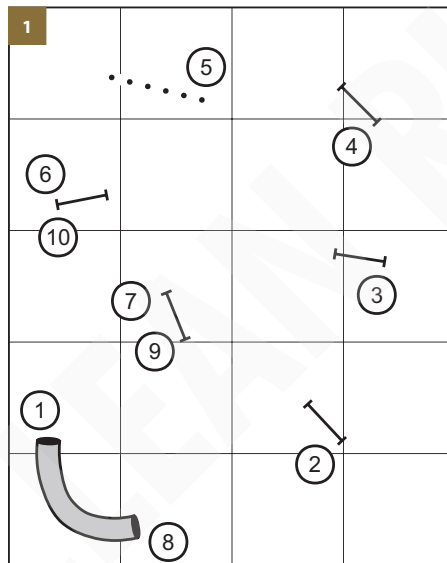
This month's exercises include some challenging jump sequences, but also some that are just plain fun. They contain some difficult threadles and also some fast serpentine.

In **Figure 1** try keeping your dog on your right throughout the sequence until doing a rear cross at the #8 tunnel. Meet your dog at the exit of the tunnel and do another rear cross before jump #9 or on the landing side of jump #9 to push to jump #10.

Figure 2 is very similar, but this time you have to direct your dog past the off-course jump before the entry to the weave poles. You could again try keeping your dog on your right for the entire sequence. You will notice that it may be difficult to keep your dog in the poles since the poles are so close to the edge of the ring. Reward your dog when he is successful. This can be a challenge designed by the judge and you will probably see it often.

In **Figure 3** I would suggest a front cross on the landing side of jump #2. If the weave entrance is too difficult, you can try moving jump #4 to the left.

Figure 4 has a difficult off-course trap going from the #1 tunnel to jump #2. After that, you can keep your dog on your right for the remainder of the sequence.



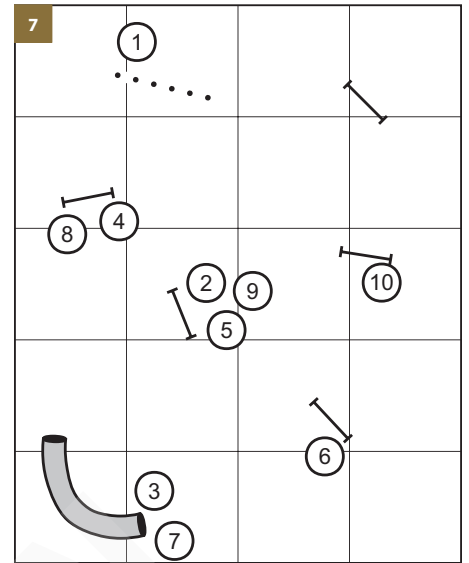
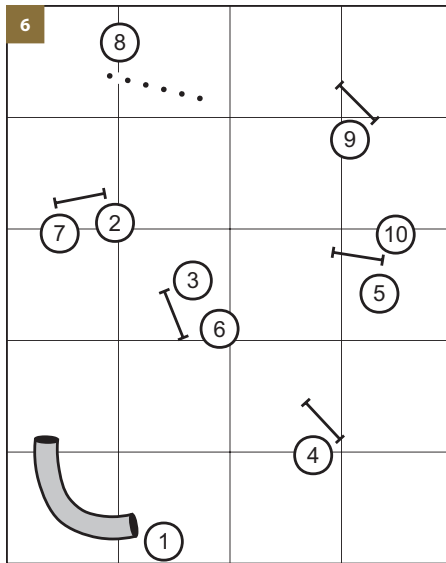
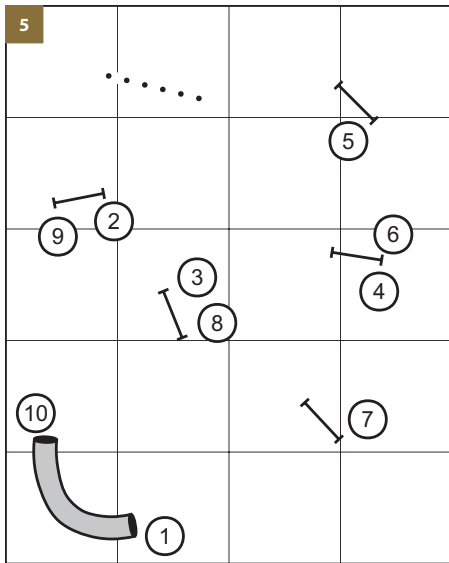
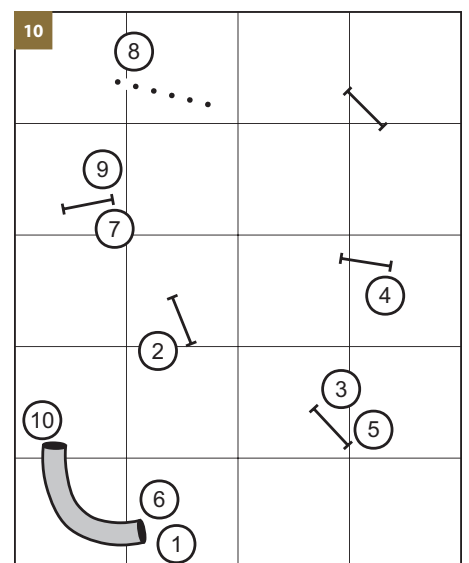
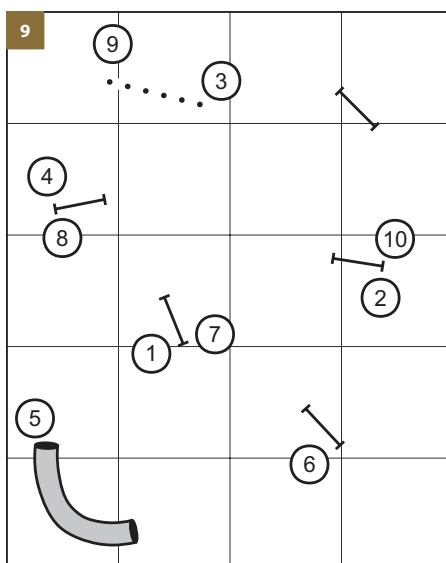
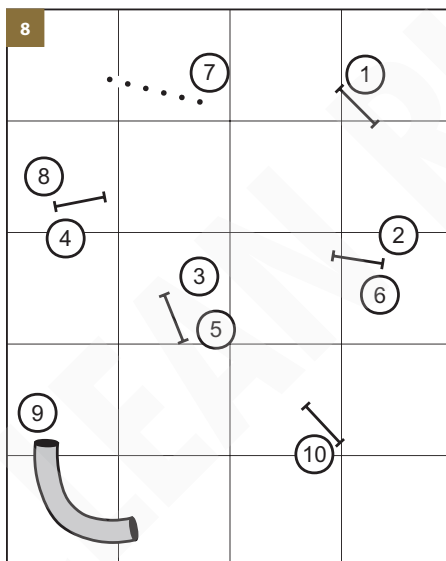


Figure 5 has a difficult threadle between jumps #3 and #4, and #7 and #8. Reward your dog for each successful attempt. Threadles are becoming very popular these days in courses and should be practiced along with your other jumping skills.

Figure 6 has a difficult weave entry, but otherwise it's a fast and rewarding romp for the dog. Again, if the weave entrance is too difficult, you can try moving jump #7 to the left.

Figure 7 can be done with your dog on your left the whole sequence. There is a difficult push from jump #9 to jump #10.

Figures 8 through 10 include more handling challenges for you to try. Remember to have fun and reward often! 🐾



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 and 2006. 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.