

SKILL OF THE MONTH

BY KAREN HOLIK

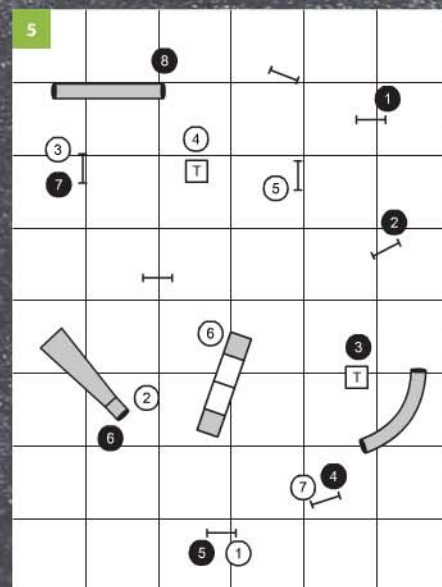
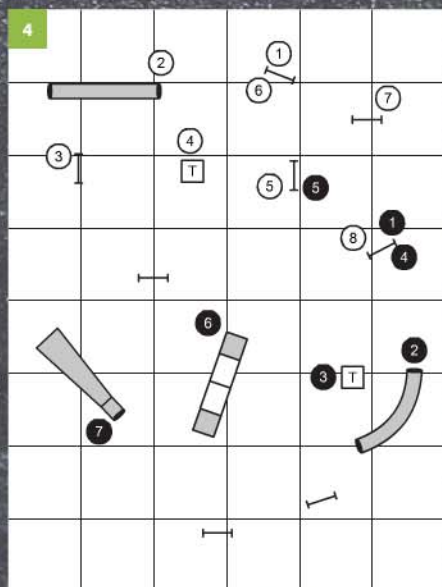
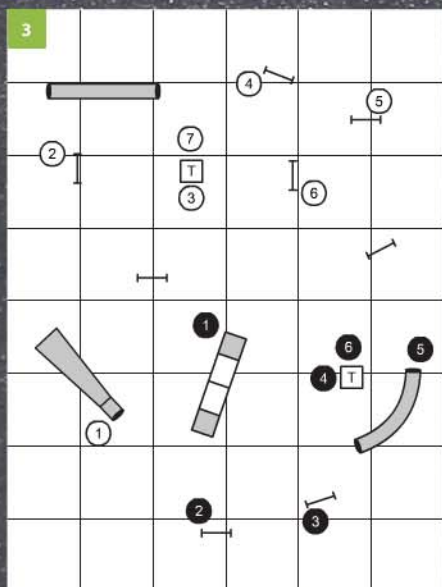
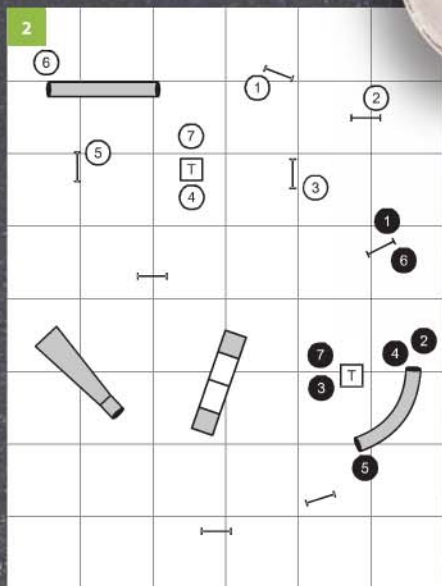
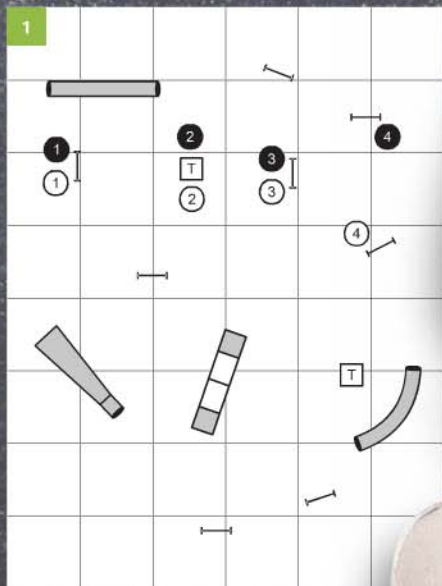
This month's exercises focus on the table. The table is an obstacle that people rarely practice, but often worry about their dog's ability to perform. In the Standard class, it is often the obstacle that will help win the class. Fast, efficient performances, along with the handler's ability to lead out from the table are some of the skills to train. I hope these exercises will help you and your dog become more confident about the performance of the table.

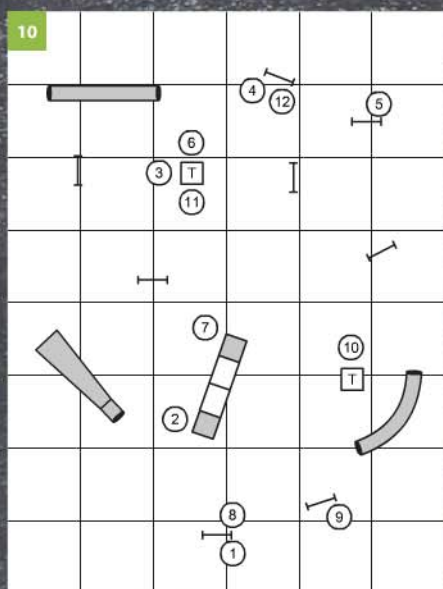
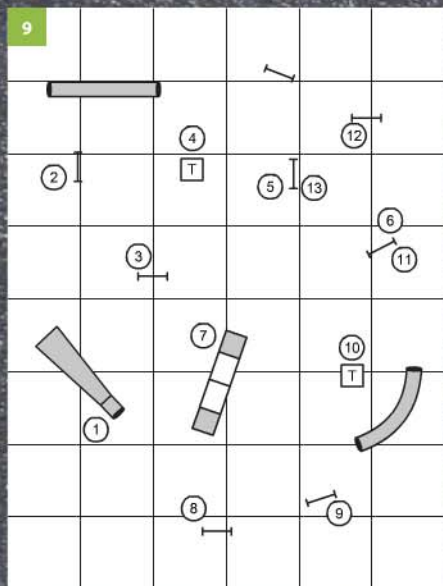
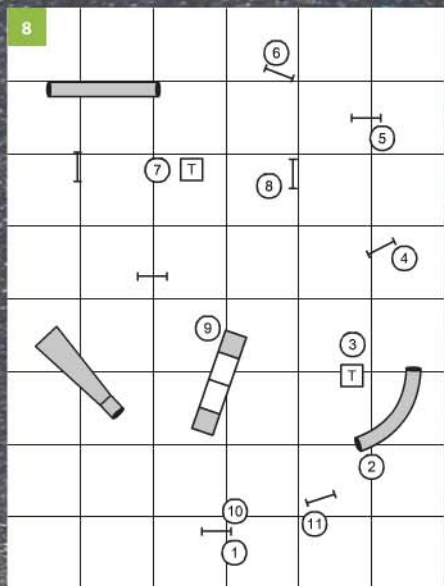
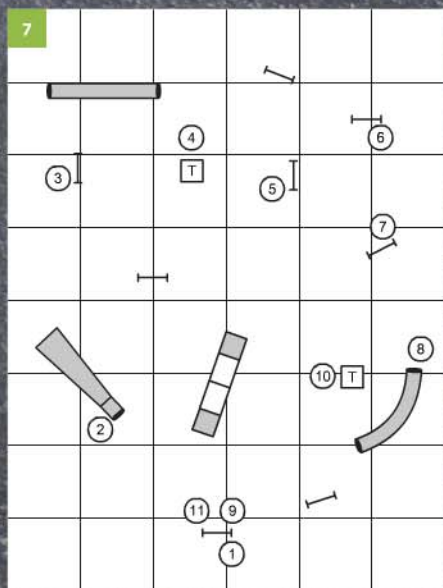
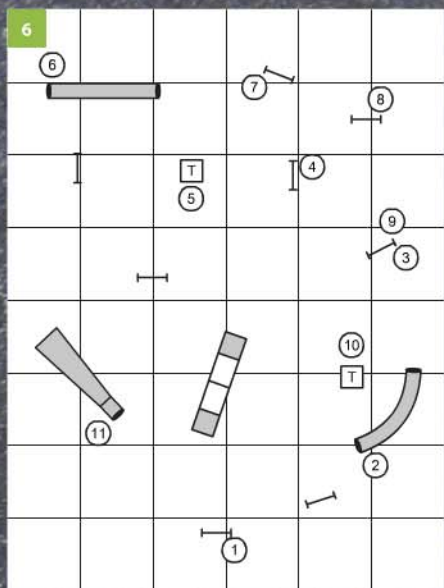
The first sequence in **Figure 1** is very short. Practice sending your dog to the table from jump #1, just in case you get caught behind your dog on course and you need this skill. Also practice recalling your dog to the table by starting with a lead-out past the table. Running as fast as you can past the table and rewarding your dog if he does not slide off and assumes his table position (sit or down) is another skill to practice. Also, remember in this short exercise to lead out from the table and wait for your dog on the landing side of jump #3. A lead-out advantage from the table is very valuable on most courses.

Figures 2 and 3 are fast and flowing and allow your dog to gain speed on his way to the table. Can your dog perform the table at speed without sliding off? Does he assume his correct position quickly?

Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7 challenge your ability to lead out from the table. In each sequence it is very beneficial to get away from the table and closer to the next obstacle because of the different options your dog has on course.

The sequences in **Figures 8, 9, and 10** have all sorts of table challenges. Remember to have fun and reward your dog often for a job well done! 🐾





Karen Holik, involved in agility for over 15 years as a competitor and a USDAA and AKC judge, has competed in the finals of the USDAA Grand Prix of Dog Agility World Championships and Dog Agility Steeplechase Championships many 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, is a two-time USDAA national Steeplechase champion and a member of the AKC/USA World Team in 2003, 2005, 2006, and 2007. Karen offers private lessons and seminars; contact her at oncourseagility@comcast.net.