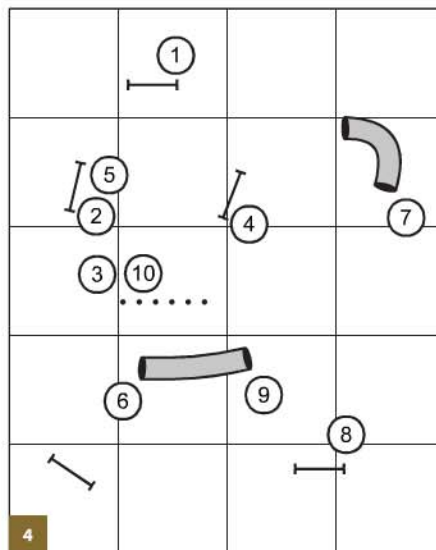
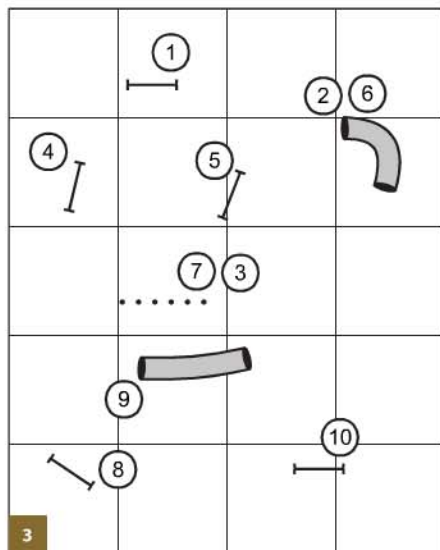
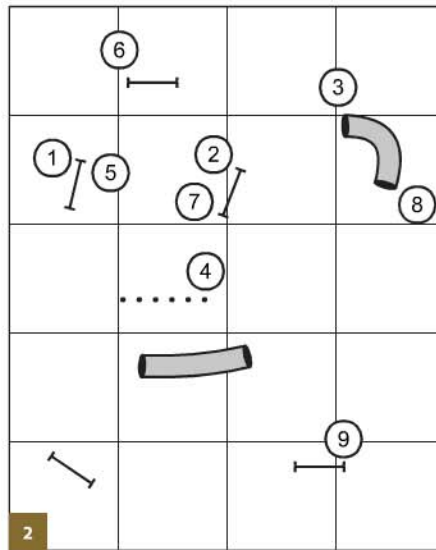
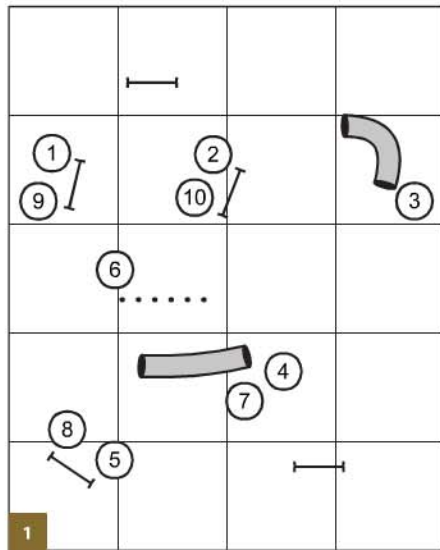


Improve Your
Handling Skills
at Home

Backyard Dogs



By Karen Holik



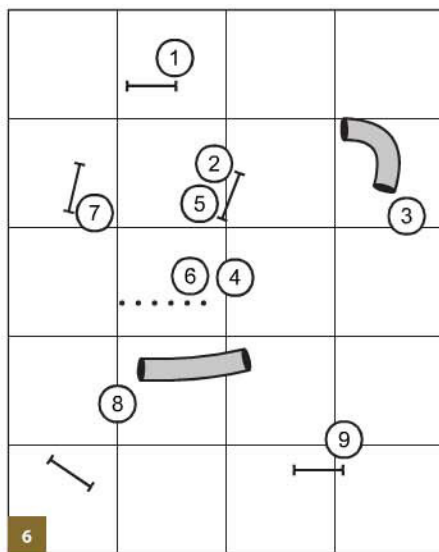
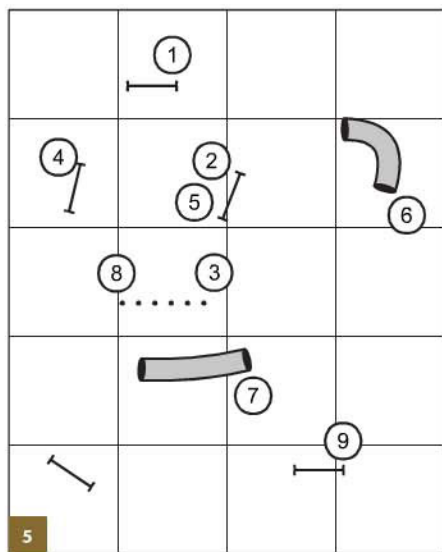
This month's exercises focus on weave poles, obstacle discrimination with the weave poles, and various jump sequences.

Figure 1 has obstacle discrimination at the #4 tunnel and also the #6 weave poles. You can run the entire sequence with your dog on your left if you do a rear cross at the #3 tunnel entrance and a front cross at the exit. Try to get your dog to take the shortest possible path to the entrance of the weave poles and also the exit.

Figure 2 has an obstacle discrimination between the tunnel and weave poles at #4. You can handle the opening with your dog on your left with a lead-out or try handling your dog on the right from the beginning without a lead-out and executing a rear cross at #3.

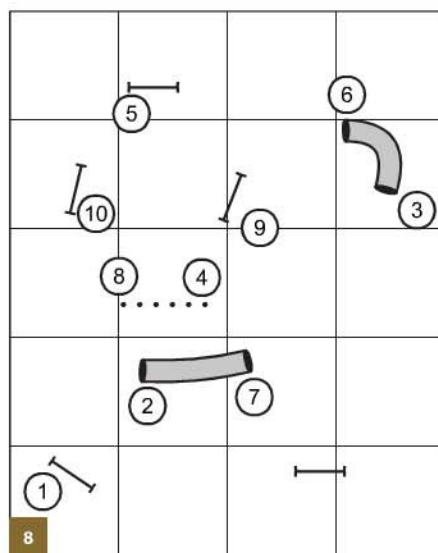
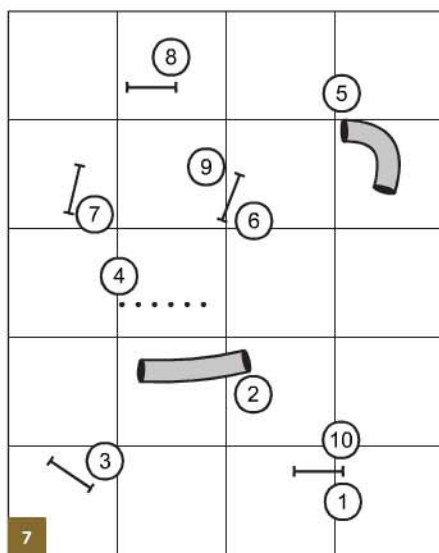
Figure 3 has yet another discrimination at #3 and #7. You can try to serpentine obstacles #4, #5, and #6 with your dog on your left. Don't forget to try to get the best possible path for your dog from the exit of the #7 poles to jump #8.

Figure 4 has an obstacle discrimination at the #3 weave poles and also at the #6 tunnel. It also includes a very difficult entry to the #10 weave poles if you trust your dog and try to get the best possible path for your dog to the poles.

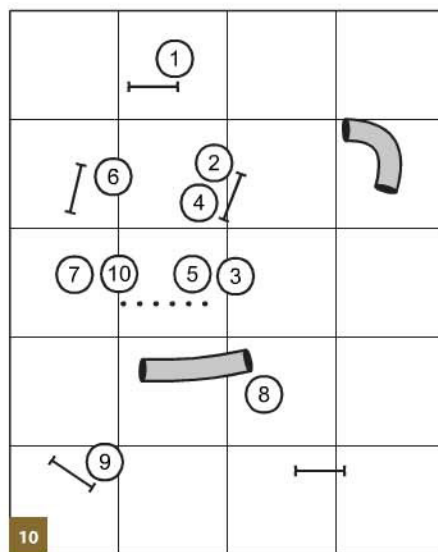
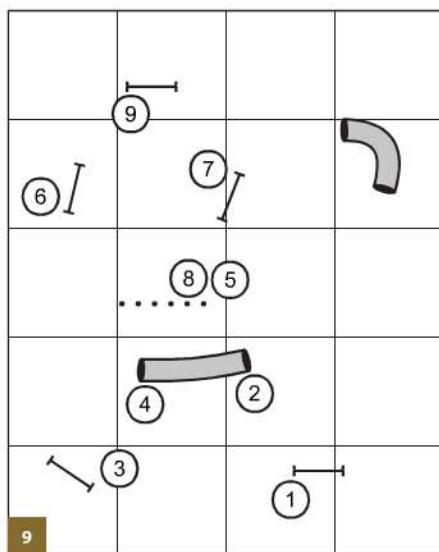


In **Figure 5** you can run the entire course with your dog on your left if you include a front cross at the exit of the #6 tunnel. You should envision your dog's tightest possible path throughout the sequence and strive to achieve that when running it.

Figure 6 has some challenging entries and exits from the weave poles. You can start with your dog on your right and then do a front cross after the #3 tunnel or if you start your dog on your left with a lead-out between #2 and #3, you will have to do a rear cross at the #3 tunnel entrance. A front cross is probably best at the end of the #6 weave poles since your dog will probably be on your left in the poles. Then do another front cross in front of the #8 tunnel.



Figures 7, 8, 9, and 10 have more obstacle discriminations at the weave poles, challenging exits from the poles, and fun jump sequences. Remember to reward your dog for a great performance! 🐕



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.