

This month's exercises use only two jumps in a very limited training area (10' x 20'). I am fortunate enough to have a yard to practice in, but during the long, cold winter months in Chicago, it is sometimes impossible to find the equipment under the snow and I have to find things to do indoors. Besides being useful exercises for those of you who have a very small training area, these exercises are also great for puppies and young dogs.

The focus of these exercises is on front crosses and tight turns. For the first exercise, which is shown in **Figure 1**, start with your dog on your left, execute a front cross at the side of the first jump to put the dog on your right, and reward your dog from your right hand. Continue to the second jump with the dog on your right, execute another front cross to put the dog on your left, and reward your dog from your left hand. Try to have your dog wrap the jump standard as tightly as possible. If needed, lower the jump bars or lower just one side of the jump bar (the side toward which the dog is turning).

Repeat the exercise, this time rewarding your dog further away from the jumps as shown in **Figure 2**. Does your dog still wrap the standard as tightly as when you rewarded him closer to each jump? If not, move in closer to the jump to deliver the reward and gradually build distance until he does.

Repeat the exercise, this time sending the dog to the jump as shown in **Figure 3**. See if your dog can wrap the jump standard as tightly as in the previous exercises and come back to you for the reward. After the dog comes back to you, send him to the second jump (with the dog now on the right side) and try to achieve the same performance. Does he wrap the jump standards tightly and also with speed? If not, go back to the first two exercises and work until you can achieve this goal.

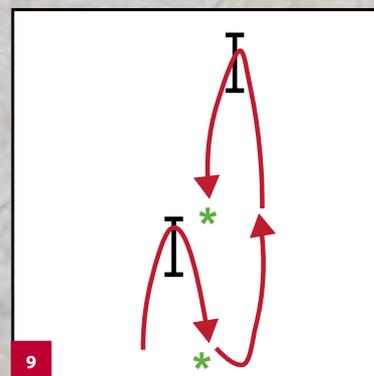
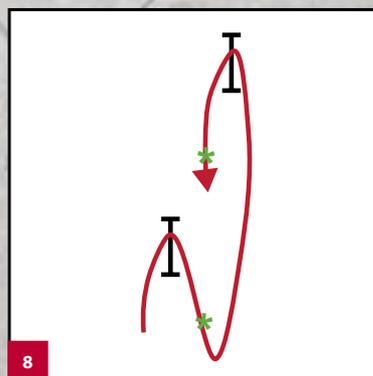
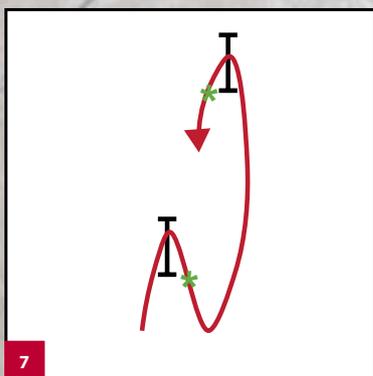
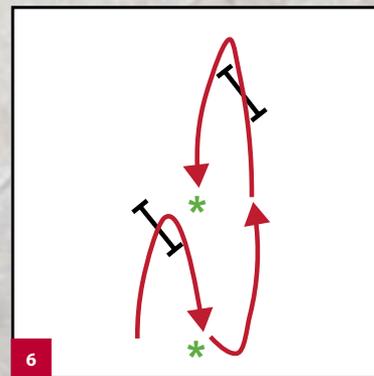
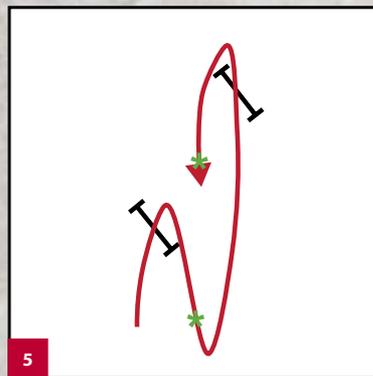
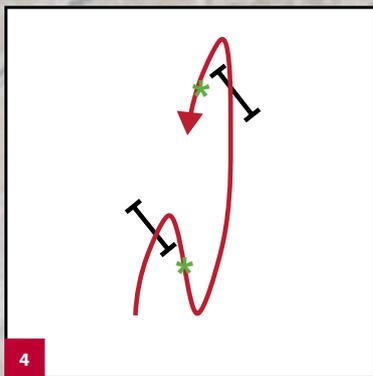
Don't forget to keep the dog motivated. It may be very difficult when working in a small space. If you have problems, put the jump bars on the ground and just use the standards of the jumps. This is a great exercise for puppies that are beginning to learn.

Figures 4, 5, and 6 are the same exercises, but the jumps have been angled. Remember to keep your same position in each one and expect your dog to wrap the jump at an angle—always keeping it fun and upbeat so that your dog does not lose interest.

The angles have been made even tougher in **Figures 7, 8, and 9**. If you start seeing that your dog's path around the standard of the jump is not as tight, make the exercise easier, either by giving your reward closer to the jump or by changing the angle of the jump. Remember to always start your dog in the same position so that he has to figure out how to wrap the jump tightly at an angle even when you are far away.

Have fun! 🐾

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 with all four of her dogs on six different occasions. Her youngest dog, MACH Triune's Feelin Hot Hot Hot (a.k.a. Sizzle) won the USDAA Steeplechase Finals in 2003. Karen and Sizzle were members of the AKC/USA World Team in 2003 and were chosen again to be part of the team in 2005. Karen offers private lessons and seminars and can be reached at oncouseagility@comcast.net.



The green asterisks in the diagrams indicate where along the dog's path to deliver a treat. Use the hand closest to the dog to reward.