

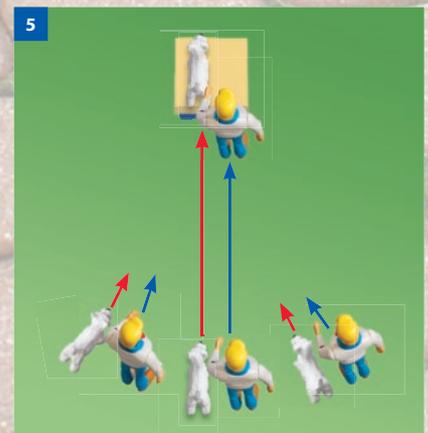
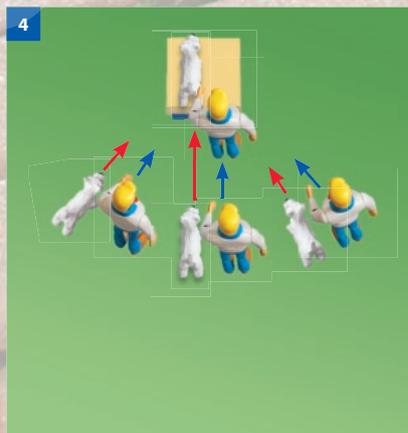
This month's exercises focus on table work. Although we don't see a table in all classes in the various venues, we do see it enough that it should be worked on a regular basis. Precious seconds are frequently lost on the table.

Note: This is an article on working variations of distances and angles to the table.

I am assuming that you have already taught your dog a fast sit or down on the ground away from the table, you have taught your dog how to jump on and off the table happily, and you have taught him to stay in position on the table and wait for release.

My philosophy with all obstacles is that they should be taught as shown in **Figures 1 through 3**: with the handler running beside the dog to the obstacle, with a recall, and with a send. You should practice each of these skills from all possible approach angles.

The easiest way to teach any obstacle is running with the dog so that is what I teach first. I run with the dog from every possible angle (and on my left and right sides) and reward on the table for the proper position (down or sit) as shown in **Figure 4**. When the dog is proficient from different angles, I start to increase the distance we travel to the table as shown in **Figure 5**.

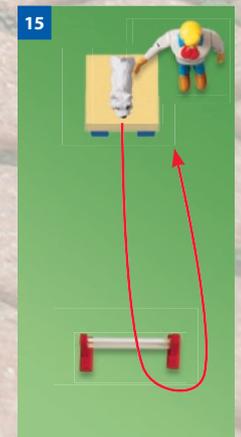
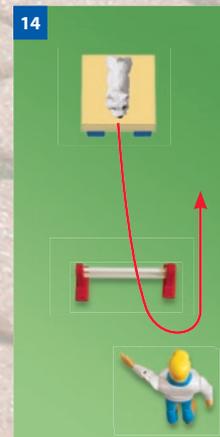
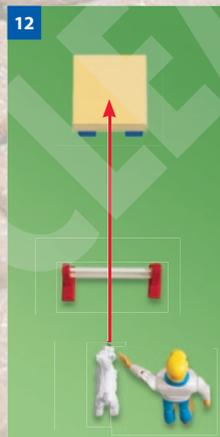
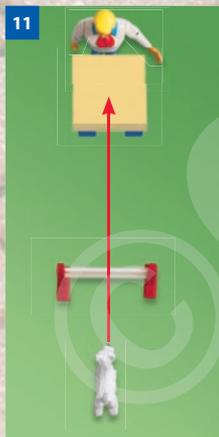
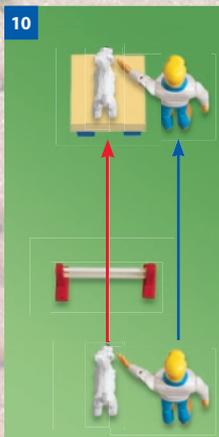
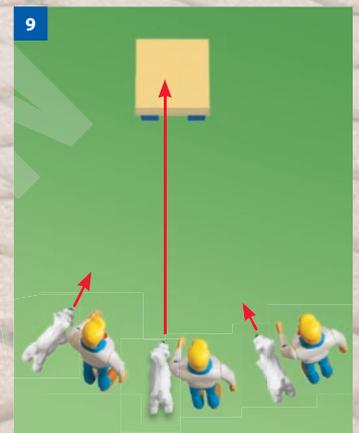
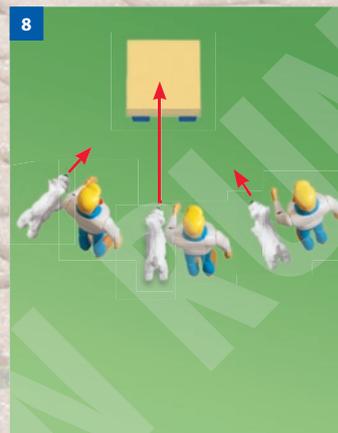
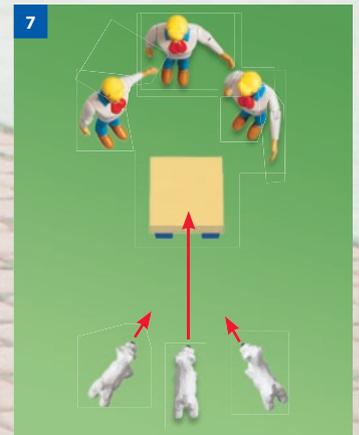
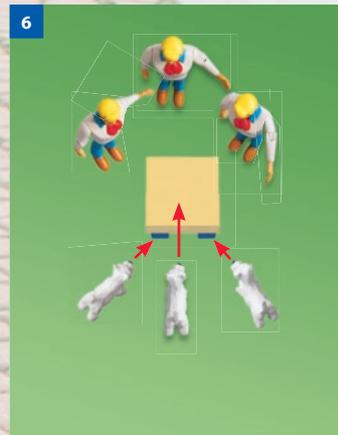


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Then I begin working on my recall to the table. I start with the dog very close to the table and reward for the proper behavior. I practice my recall from all different angles, as shown in **Figure 6**, just as I did when I was running with my dog. When I have the speed and precision I want, I start to increase the distance between me and the dog, and again work all the approach angles as shown in **Figure 7**. I continue to increase the distance until I can be at least 20' away from the table and my dog is 20' away. You can always practice a farther distance if you want.

Once my dog has mastered a recall to the table and running with me to the table, I start to work on my send to the table. I start very close to the table and reward often, working the dog on both my left and right side. Again, I work all angles to the table as shown in **Figure 8**. I gradually increase the distance while insuring I send to the table from all directions as shown in **Figure 9**.

Now that I have a dog that is confidently recalling, sending, and running to the table with me beside him, I start to add obstacles. As shown in **Figures 10 through 12**, I recall, send, and run with my dog from a jump to a table. As before, I work from all different approach angles. I start close to the table and then gradually increase distance. I also do the same exercises with a tunnel and the table as shown in **Figure 13**.



You can add different variations in a very small area. You can use the same setup as Figure 10 and leave your dog on the table, recall over the jump, and send back to the table while you stay near the jump as shown in **Figure 14**. You can also send your dog to the jump, stay at the table, and then recall your dog back as shown in **Figure 15**. Another exercise is to start at the table, run with the dog to the tunnel and back to the table, but keep running past and reward when your dog stays on the table. The same could be done with the tunnel. If you make it fun and fast for the dog, he should *love* table training.

A few important reminders about table training:

- Remember to have fun and reward often.
- Make sure your dog has a fast down or sit *away* from the table before you expect him to be fast *on* the table.
- Make sure you reward your dog for waiting for your release command *on* the table.
- Don't always make your dog stay for 5 seconds. Make it 1 second the first time, 10 seconds the next, and maybe 4 seconds the next. Keep your dog guessing and paying attention to you for his release.
- Have someone pretend to be the judge and count for you.
- Do the count yourself and see if your dog leaves on the word "Go!" He should only leave on *your* release word.