

# Agility Obstacles

Dog agility equipment can be somewhat confusing to the beginner. Each obstacle has a name, although it may be referenced by another word, depending on the locale of the trial. Each handler will also have a specific call word (instructional word) that will help the dog to know what he is supposed to do. Some obstacles require a dog to jump over or through an area, while others require the dog to encounter a contact zone.

**Contact Obstacles** – These include the A-Frame, Dog Walk, Teeter (sometimes called; “Seesaw”) and Table. The contact obstacles have an area or areas that are painted yellow. At least one of the dogs paws must physically touch each contact area. The handler may instruct the dog to; “touch”, “paw”, or “get it” to make sure that contact with the yellow portion occurs. This helps to ensure that the dog will not attempt to leap on to or off an obstacle at a height that could pose a risk of injury. In the case of the table, the dog will be expected to pause for five seconds in either a sitting or standing position.



**A-Frame**-This contact obstacle is constructed of two large aluminum or wooden planks that are 3' wide and 9' long. The planks are set up to form the peak of triangle, or 'A' shape. The A-Frame is also known as a scaling wall, frame, wall, or mountain. The dog is to ascend a somewhat steep incline and then come down on the other side making sure that his paws come in contact with the yellow zone. Common handler instructions or call words include: charge, mountain, wall, climb, and frame among others.



**Dog Walk**- The dog walk is a contact obstacle constructed of three 8' - 12' planks. It is sometimes called a balance beam, catwalk, or plank. The dog ascends on one side, walks straight across quickly and without wavering, then descends the opposite side. His paws must make contact with the yellow zone; the dog may not leap over this contact area. Common handler instructions or call words for the dog walk include; climb, walk, walk it, and walk on.



**Teeter**- The teeter or seesaw is a contact obstacle constructed of wood or vinyl. It consists of a single plank balanced on a metal or plastic frame allowing the board to 'teeter' back and forth with the dog's weight. The dog must ascend the approach and use his balance when he reaches the middle of the teeter, located directly above the frame; the pausing action that the dog will make at mid-point stabilizes the teeter and allows him to use his weight so that the opposite side comes in contact with the ground. The dog then makes his descent. Common handler instructions or call words for this obstacle include; teeter, tip-it or teeter-totter.



**Table-** The table is another contact obstacle. It is constructed of wood and sometimes plastic as well. The dog must stop on the table for a full five seconds in either a standing or sitting position (refer to judge's instructions per this obstacle). Also known as a pause table, pause box, or box. Common handler instructions or call words include; table, get up, rest, get on, place, load up, or box.



**Weaves-** This obstacle consists of between 6 and 12 vinyl poles that are secured in a straight line to a metal base. The poles will be spaced 20 – 24" apart depending on the trial sanctioning. The dog enters with the first pole on his left and then weaves in and out of the remaining poles until he reaches the end. The weaves are also called weave poles, slaloms, or slalom poles. Common handler instructions or call words include; in, out, weave, zig-zag, snake, slalom and wiggle.



**Tunnel-** The tunnel is an open tube formed by a metal coil, which is then covered in full with vinyl. The tunnel ranges from 10'-20' long with an opening diameter of 24". The dog is to navigate through the tunnel as quickly as possible. This may also be called an open tunnel or tube. Call words include; zoom, tunnel, go and through.



**Chute-** Similar in function to a tunnel, the chute has one end held open by a plastic barrel that measure 22" in diameter; 10'-12' of fabric is attached to this barrel at one end, allowing an opening in the fabric for the dog to begin navigating the obstacle. The middle and opposite end of fabric are not supported by coils or a tube. As the dog runs through the chute, he pushes the fabric open, allowing him to come out of the opposite end. This is called a chute, closed tunnel, or simply a tunnel. Common handler instructions or call words include: tunnel, zoom, chute, through, and push.



**Jumps-** The bar jump obstacle is made of PVC piping which is formed into a base. A minimum of two bars are then placed on the base at the height required for the dog competing. Wings can be added to each side; this offers increased stability, a slight distraction to the dog (requiring increased attention) and an increase in the distance of dog to handler. Bar height is adjustable from 4 to 26". This jump is known as a hurdle or bar jump. Common handler instructions or call words include; over, hup, and jump.



**Panel Jump** is essentially the bar jump, but panels are added to make the obstacle appear solid, with no space between bars. The panel jump is also known as a wall or hurdle. Call words would be the same as with the bar jump.



**Spread Jumps-** The spread jump is of the same construction as the bar jump, though it is a series of two or three bars which ascend over a horizontal plane, requiring the dog to not only jump to a specific height, but to span the width of the horizontal plane as well. Both the height and width of this obstacle are adjustable. This obstacle can be called a spread jump, double jump, or triple jump. Call words are the same as those used for other jumps.



**Broad Jump-** In the broad jump, the dog is required to jump the distance of a horizontal plane. Jump height is not as important in this obstacle, as the boards are only 6-12" high. This obstacle is almost placed in the form of a very low table with an incline, but the dog is not to contact any area of the formation; he is required to clear the distance in full. This is also known as a long jump. Common handler instructions or call words for the broad jump include: over, jump, and hup.



**Tire-** This jump obstacle is not actually a tire. It is constructed of corrugated plastic tubing formed into a ring shape, which is held by a metal or PVC frame using cording and a chain. The dog is required to leap clearly through the 19 to 24" opening. The tire may be referred to as a tire jump, ring, or hoop. Common handler instructions or call words for the tire include; through, jump through, hoop or tire.