

## DOG AGILITY OVERVIEW

Dog Agility has many benefits can be done for fun or competition. All the information below is copied from “K9 of Mine”. <https://www.k9ofmine.com/diy-dog-agility-courses/>. There are links to many organizations that host dog agility competitions along with rules and specifications for the agility equipment. There are also links to several sites that provide instruction for making your own agility equipment. Below is an overview along with a list of the various links.

### Why Build Your Dog an Agility Course?

Dog agility courses can be incredibly beneficial for many dogs. Some of the most notable benefits they provide include:

#### They Help Your Dog Get More Exercise

Because dogs are usually expected to run through an agility course as quickly as possible, **the activity is a great form of exercise**. They will often use all of their muscle groups while doing so, ensuring that they get a thorough, full-body workout. You will even get a bit of exercise while leading your dog through the course.

#### They Provide Mental Stimulation

Learning to negotiate obstacles while following you around an agility course will help keep your dog’s brain humming. This will help prevent boredom, provide a number of emotional benefits, and generally help keep your dog healthier and happier.

#### They Help Improve Your Dog’s Obedience

Your dog will need to be minimally obedient to begin agility trial work, but once you begin training, you will surely notice that **your dog’s obedience becomes much sharper**. It may even help improve your training and leadership skills at the same time!

#### They Allow Your Dog to Show Off

**Some dogs are complete hams who love to show off their skills and abilities**. Agility trials provide a great way for them to do so. And because you’ll want to provide plenty of positive reinforcement during the training process, people-pleasing dogs will especially enjoy agility coursework.

## They Give You Another Way to Bond with Your Dog

Just about any activity you share with your dog will help strengthen your bond, but because **agility trials require you to work very closely with her, you'll likely enjoy a closer connection after a few months of work.**

## Common Dog Agility Course Obstacles

Although agility courses can be laid out in an infinite number of ways, most courses use the same basic obstacles.

These typically include:

- **A-Frame** – This is exactly what it sounds like – an A-shaped ramp which requires your dog to run up one side and down the other.
- **Dog Walk** – The dog walk is essentially an A-frame that has a flat section in the middle.
- **Seesaw** – A pivoting plank, just like you can see on a playground. Your dog runs up one side, waits for her weight to swing the other side down, and then runs down. Some call this obstacle a teeter-totter.
- **Crossover** – This obstacle (which isn't used by any of the major organizational bodies anymore) is like a multi-sided dog walk. It consists of several ramps leading to a central platform. To successfully negotiate the obstacle, dogs must ascend and descend via the predetermined ramps without using the others.
- **Tunnel** – A flexible tunnel your dog must run through.
- **Collapsed Tunnel** – A collapsed tunnel is like a normal tunnel, except that the frame is removed from the far end. So, your dog will have to run in the open side of the tunnel and then push her way through the opposite side which is caved in.
- **Jump** – Jumps are obstacles dogs are required to bound over. They are typically constructed like a hurdle used in human track and field events.
- **Spread Jumps** – A jump that requires your dog to clear a predetermined distance and
- **Panel Jump** – Jumps that utilize a flat panel, rather than a hurdle-like design. Picture a short wall that your dog must jump over.

- **Broad Jump** – A series of raised platforms your dog must jump over without contacting any part of the obstacle.
- **Tire Jump** – A vertically mounted tire (or any other torus-shaped object) suspended in a frame. Your dog must jump through the center of the tire.
- **Pause Table** – A raised platform that your dog is required to jump up on and pause for a predetermined length of time before moving on.
- **Weave Poles** – A series of vertical poles through which your dog must weave like a slalom skier.
- **Cavalletti's** – A series of low horizontal bars that the dog must step over without jumping.
- **Ladder** – a grid of bars 12"- 18" wide and 12" apart and 6' – 12' long that the dog must step through.

The exact dimensions and design details of these obstacles vary from one organizational body to the next, and many allow these sizes to be adjusted to suit the size of your dog. Here are the NADAC equipment specifications, which are widely accepted, but you can always be creative and design unique obstacles for your pup. Just be sure to keep your dog's safety in mind when doing so.

	Ramp Length	Ramp Width	Height	Contact Zone
<b>A-frame</b>	8' or 9'	3' to 4'	4'8" for 8' ramps 5' for 9' ramps	42 inches
<b>Dog Walk</b>	11'6" to 12'	11.25" to 12" (12" recommended)	46" to 50"	42 inches

**Weave Poles** – 40" – 48" high, 24" center to center, 6 to 8 poles

**Tunnels** – 24" diameter and at least 10' long

**See-Saw** – 10' – 12' long and 12" wide, 18" – 24" high

**Non-winged Jumps** – 4' – 5' wide with uprights a minimum of 32" high and adjustable jump heights of: 4", 8", 12", 16" and 20". Bars must be easily displaceable and may be made of wood, plastic or PVC (3/4" Schedule 40 PVC is ideal for this.) The uprights can be of any material. Wings may be added. These are extensions on the side of the jump to help guide the dog over the jump bar. They should be 6" – 12" higher than the highest jump height to be used.

**Tire Jump** – An old 24” - 28” bicycle tire or a 24” hula hoop suspended vertically between 2 uprights. The uprights can be the same as used for the jumps.

**Stationary Table** – a wood platform 20”-24” square 6” – 12” high. The surface should have a non-slip service such as a rubber mat, carpeting or gritted paint.

**Cavalletti’s** – Orange traffic cones for uprights can be purchased at Five Below (in the auto section) and PVC bars should be 30” – 36” wide. Uprights can also be made of blocks of wood or PVC.

**Ladder** – A 3’ section of ladder can be made from 10 12” sections of ¾” PVC and 8 tees. Connecting sections are made of

**Here are some links to sites that list rules and regulations:**

[https://www.nadac.com/WPsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/NADAC-Exhibitor\\_MasterFile-Rev-2.25.20.pdf](https://www.nadac.com/WPsite/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/NADAC-Exhibitor_MasterFile-Rev-2.25.20.pdf)

[https://rsagility.com/Forms/3\\_Agility\\_Equipment\\_Specifications.pdf](https://rsagility.com/Forms/3_Agility_Equipment_Specifications.pdf)

**Here are some links to sites with instructions and ideas for making the equipment:**

<https://www.diynetwork.com/how-to/outdoors/structures/how-to-build-a-3-part-dog-agility-course>

<https://dogsaholic.com/training/dog-agility-equipment-diy.html>

<https://www.wikihow.com/Build-a-Dog-Agility-Course>

<http://www.gonetothesnowdogs.com/diy-agility-jumps/>

<https://www.petful.com/pet-products/make-your-own-dog-agility-course/>

<https://www.wideopenpets.com/how-to-build-a-backyard-agility-course/>

<https://www.thisoldhouse.com/pets/21016642/how-to-build-a-dog-agility-course>

**For \$5, you can download a PDF file with detailed instructions to build everything you need.**

<https://www.etsy.com/listing/159346259/dog-agility-equipment-construction>

**DIY DOG PUZZLE TOYS**

<https://www.k9ofmine.com/diy-dog-puzzle-toys/>