

Developing Handling Skills

Introduction to Handling in Agility

PART 1: CUES

Introduction & Definitions

- **Jumping Arcs**
 - Extension
 - Relative Collection
 - True Collection

Striding depends on spacing of obstacles
- **Direction Cues**
 - Forward
 - Turning
 - Collection
- **Natural and Trained Cues**
- **Turning and Nonturning Obstacles**
 - Turning Obstacles**

Cues on the approach of the obstacle affect how the obstacle is performed.
Include jumps, straight tunnels, chutes
 - Nonturning Obstacles**

Cues on approach do not change performance of the actual obstacle.
Include contacts, weave poles, tables, curved tunnels
Reasonable independence is desired.

6 Basic Cues: Use balance of cues used to create desired effect. Every cue has a spectrum from extension to collection.

- **Motion**

Primary cue

Natural cue

Run in the right direction. On the approach to a turning obstacle, run in the direction you want the dog to go after completion of the obstacle.

- Forward Motion**

Forward cue

Extension

Appropriate for straight-line sequences

- Lateral Motion**

Turning cue

Relative collection

Both toward dog (rear cross) and away from dog (lateral send)

Typically has a forward motion component

- Deceleration**

Turning cue

Relative collection

- No Motion**

Collection cue

True collection

- Backward Motion**

Facing dog, moving toward obstacle: forward cue, extension

Facing obstacle, moving away from obstacle: turning cue, relative collection—variation of deceleration

- **Shoulders**

Direction shoulders are facing

Natural cue

- Facing Forward**

Facing forward: forward cue

- Facing the Dog**

Facing dog: collection cue

- Turning Toward the Dog**

Turning toward dog: turning cue—higher degree of turn toward dog results in more collection

- Turning Away from the Dog**

Turning away from dog: forward cue (no shoulder pulls)

- **Location**

Natural cue

- ❑ Location Cues Relative to Obstacle
 - Take-off Side Location: turning cue
 - Landing Side Location: forward cue
Distance from obstacle exaggerates cue
[Discussion of lead-outs]
- ❑ Location Cues Relative to the Dog
 - Behind the Dog: turning cue
 - Ahead of the Dog: forward cue
- ❑ Location Cue Relative to Midline of Jump

- **Arms/Hands**

Trained cue, but attached to shoulders (natural cue).

Defined when both dog and handler are facing forward on same side of jump

- ❑ Inside Hand
 - Forward cue
 - Side cue on a recall
- ❑ Outside Hand
 - Collection cue
- ❑ Hand Signals as Restrictions of Dog's Path
 - Use inside hand for side cue
 - Use outside hand to restrict dog from going forward
 - Calling dog past plane of an obstacle

- **Verbal Cues**

Trained cue

- ❑ Obstacle Name
 - Forward cue
 - Name discrimination for nonturning obstacles; especially tunnel
- ❑ Dog's Name
 - Attention cue
 - Used in like-obstacle discriminations
- ❑ Directional Commands
 - Not used to override motion (for example, "Get out," "Go on")
 - Use "Left"/"Right" for odd circumstances where motion can't be used
[Discussion of young dogs following natural cues]
[Maintaining desired responses during training]

- **Eye Contact**
 - Natural cue
 - No sunglasses
 - Indirect Eye Contact
 - Forward cue
 - Direct Eye Contact
 - Collection cue
 - Eye Contact as Side Cue
 - Primary side cue

PART 2: FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

Recall to Heel (RTH)

Recalls to Heel on the Flat

Dog's rear end should not go sideways

[Discussion of bending]

Not used on the flat while midcourse

- Foundation Recall
 - Teaches collection
- Extension Recall
- Back-up Recall

Basic Turns on the Flat

- Pull
- Front Cross
- Rear Cross
- Push

Sends

- Forward Sends
 - Use deceleration
 - Dog keys in on motion away from him
 - [Discussion on wide turns]*
- Lateral Sends
 - Use lateral motion
 - Stay close to jump

Recalls to Heel Over Jumps: 6 presentations

- Foundation Recall
Parallel landing
No diving: dog must collect and not go behind or forge ahead
- Serpentine Recall
Collection is not required
- Directed Jump Recall
Cannot expect parallel landing due to angle of approach
- Back-up Recall
Take backward step toward jump
May expect less collection than with foundation presentation
- Extension Recall
For completeness
- 270 Recall
Allow room for perpendicular landing
Bending around upright

Handler Motion Before Release on Recall to Heel Over Jump

PART 3: DEMONSTRATIONS

Introduction

Location

- Takeoff Side
- Landing Side

Motion

- Forward Motion
- Lateral Motion
- Deceleration
- No Motion (with Outside Arm)

Question & Answers