

## Competition: Trials

Want to see more? Trials are held in our area under the auspices of several governing bodies such as: United States Dog Agility Association (USDAA), North America Dog Agility Council (NADAC), Canine Performance Events (CPE) and the American Kennel Club (AKC). At trials there are a variety of events emphasizing different skills. The teams try to get the fastest times while getting the fewest number of penalty points. The rules vary slightly for each organization, but the overall theme is the same: people and dogs working together to perform their best in agility.

It takes a lot of people to make a trial run smoothly. The **judge** designs the course and is responsible for watching the dog and handler. She assigns faults for knocked bars, missed contact zones, unsafe execution and off courses, using a series of hand signals. The **scribe** records the faults given by the judge. The **timer** times the dog on the course. **Scorekeepers** record the dog's time and penalties and post the class standings. **Ring stewards** and **course builders** get the courses set up as described by the judge as well as put up downed bars. The **gate steward** makes sure that as soon as one dog is finished the next dog is ready to go. We are always happy to have people come help – no experience necessary!

The Willamette Agility Group was founded in 1991 and is dedicated to promoting the sport of dog agility in the Willamette Valley. This goal is achieved through classes, fun matches, demonstrations and trials. If you are interested in learning more about agility, visit WAG's web page at:

**[www.wagagility.org](http://www.wagagility.org)**

# Spectator's Guide to Agility

Welcome to dog agility!

It's excitement and action as humans and canines combine to perform agility. Watch as dogs run, jump and weave through poles being directed through the complicated course by the human running at their side. But what exactly are they doing? Here is a short introduction to the participants, rules and scoring of agility along with some interesting facts. So pick your favorites, sit back and enjoy the show!

**Brought to you by**



## The Dogs

Any and all breeds and mixes of breeds are welcome, although they must be at least 12 months old to compete in agility trials. The dogs must be non-aggressive and safe when performing the obstacles. In competition dogs run without collars, leashes, or any treats or aids such as balls or toys. We usually use a variety of training aids in practices and demonstrations.

The dogs are entered in classes based on their height and experience level. Dogs over age 7 may run as "veterans" and are allowed to jump at a lower height and have a longer course time.

## The Handlers

All ages, sizes and shapes of humans are also welcome! You will see all levels of handlers, from first-time competitors to people that have competed at the national level. The comraderie and support of others is part of what makes this sport fun. Watch for people helping one another work on a specific training technique with their dog. Whatever the level, safety, good sportsmanship and gentle handling of the dogs are priorities.

# OBSTACLES

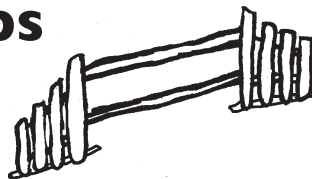
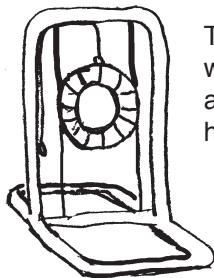
## The Obstacles

In today's event you may see any of the following obstacles. In competition, depending on the level the dog is competing at and the class they are entered in, the kind and number of obstacles vary. Faults or penalties are incurred for knocking a jump bar down, not touching a contact zone when entering or leaving a contact obstacle, improper execution of an obstacle or going off course.

Although the jump and pause table heights vary with the size and age of the dog, the other obstacles are the same for everyone.

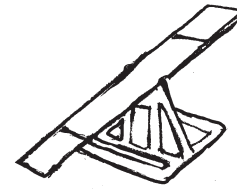
At the lower level classes the emphasis is on the dog and handler correctly performing the obstacles. In the more advanced classes you will see tighter turns requiring more handling, as well as "object discrimination" where the dog must take a cue from the handler about which equally available object is the correct one.

## Jumps



The three jump types are: winged jumps, wingless jumps, and tire jumps. Spread jumps have width as well as height.

## Contact Obstacles



The contact obstacles are: teeter-totter, dog walk, and A-frame. The dog must get at least one paw in every yellow contact area, both getting on and off.



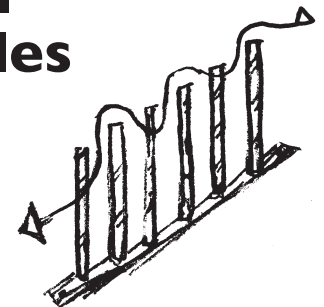
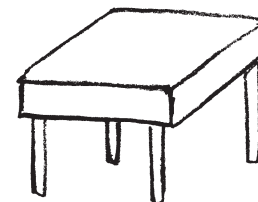
## Tunnels



The two tunnels are: open tunnels and closed tunnels, or chutes. The open tunnel is rigid and can be straight or curved. The closed tunnel is a short barrel with a nylon tube attached.



## Control Obstacles



The control obstacles are weave poles (at least 6 and up to 12), and the pause table, where the dog must sit or lie down for 5 seconds as the judge counts.