

**Obstacle Course 2  
Training Instructions**

***These instructions are very basic guidelines to help you achieve the objectives on your merit badge check-off sheet. They are not intended to supersede any of the information your instructor gives you at the Orientation & Safety or Field Session.***

**Closed (Chute) Tunnel  
Dog Walk  
Jumps**

**Closed Tunnel Introduction:**

When you first introduce your dog to the closed or "chute" tunnel, scrunch up all or most of the material which makes up the collapsible part of the tunnel. Have a helper hold the dog in front of the tunnel while you hold all of the folds of material. This makes the tunnel appear much like the one he has already learned. The dog should readily go through to you and the treat or toy you have waiting. Little by little, you may back up, so that the chute part becomes longer and longer (still hold it all the way open though. When the dog is doing the full length of the chute with you or someone holding it open, begin dropping the material on the dog's back as he is about 3/4 of the way through the chute. Then start dropping the material sooner and sooner, as the dog gets accustomed to pushing his way out of the chute. Encourage the dog with auditory cues, like clapping and praise, to keep him coming toward the end of the chute. Be sure you are in line with the end of the chute if you are making noises for your dog to hear. If you are off to one side, the dog will go toward the happy noises and could get caught up in the chute material causing fear.

Always make sure the chute is straight and flat before you send your dog through the chute. If your dog were to get tangled in the material, he would twist around even more, and by the time he could be rescued, he would have developed quite a panic about this tunnel.

When your dog will easily enter and exit the closed chute, you can add the cue word, "chute" or "through" to differentiate it from the other tunnel. Then you can start working from further back, and from both sides, until the dog will approach the obstacle from any direction and take it as directed.

**Dog Walk Introduction:**

Do not attempt this obstacle until the dog understands the A-Frame at an equally steep angle. This obstacle is similar, but it is much narrower, so your dog will have to be more careful in negotiating it. Some people also advise that you teach the teeter first. This lets the dog learn that the ramp moves. If he gets comfortable with the stable Dog Walk plank and THEN goes up the teeter, he could get surprised and lose trust in both ramps. By learning the moving ramp (teeter) first, the stable dog-walk ramp is no big deal.

Keep your treats (lure) down low to the plank, so that the dog does not take his eyes off the walking surface. Use a spotter to cover the far side of the obstacle, in case your dog decides to exit prematurely or accidentally steps off the side of the ramp. Place one hand around the collar or harness, and the other in front of the dog's nose, with the treats held down low. Watch what you are doing with that hand holding the treats! Your dog's nose will be "attached" to your fingertips, and if you move your hand out away from the plank to look where you are going or something, the dog might try to walk off into thin air to follow the treat! As an alternative, you can place treats all along the planks of the dog walk and let the dog "find" them and clean them up. Much more rewarding than a lure that he doesn't get till the end! It also teaches him to watch where he's going instead of just watching your hand.

Put treats on the contact zones and encourage your dog over the obstacle. If the dog is reluctant to enter the ramp, you can try backward chaining. To help your dog overcome his apprehension, pick

him up and place him on the down-side contact zone for his treat, then walk him off. Gradually place the dog further and further back up on the down ramp of the obstacle and have him walk down to get the treat, then walk off. Gradually work your way to the top and over (in reverse) until the down-ramp will be a piece of cake to the dog. Any dog who shows fear at any time in the learning of this obstacle can be “backward chained” in this manner by starting him at the end of the obstacle and having him work his way to the beginning. Another possible method would be to “shape” the dog over it by clicking and rewarding any interaction with the up ramp, then click/reward a step toward it, then a step on it, and gradually more and more steps. Use this method with the dog walk set low so that if the dog gets spooked he can jump off without worry of injury. This method makes it the dog’s choice to go across for his reward or jump off early for no reward. If the reward is good enough, the dog will eventually choose to do the whole obstacle!

If your dog wants to race across this obstacle, place treats across the long board to slow him down. A cue to walk slowly, like “easy” can also be employed. If your dog doesn’t know what “easy” means, do not shout it at him while he is racing across the plank! Teach him “easy” by working him separately (on leash), and making him slow down in some other walking situation. Only then should you use the word to try to slow him down on the dog walk.

When the dog begins taking this obstacle with ease, add the cue for the obstacle. Some suggestions are: walk-up, climb, plank, dog-walk, or anything else you wish to name it.

When your dog will easily enter and exit the dog walk from a straight line approach you can start working from further back, and from both sides, until the dog will approach the obstacle from any direction and take it as directed.

### **Jumps:**

See the instructions for Jumps in the Obstacle 1 training information

### **Combining Obstacles:**

See the instructions for Combining Obstacles in the Obstacle 1 training information