



## Dog Scouts of America Training & Safety Information

## No Contact Agility

**OVERVIEW:** As described in the criteria for this badge, this badge is designed to introduce new agility challenges by using both traditional and novel agility obstacles. There are no contact obstacles included, and thus, there are no prerequisites for the badge. The new challenges presented by this badge provide an opportunity to further strengthen the human/canine bond.

Three different courses are required for this badge. Courses must use the equipment as described for each course. Course maps are provided but may be altered to meet the needs of the space available providing the required elements and equipment are included for each course.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** This badge should be appropriate for most handler/dog teams. The handler must be able to move through the course safely, either on foot or in a power chair. As speed is not a requirement, the courses should not disqualify most people from attempting the badge. Since every badge is not appropriate for every dog, dogs with severe arthritis, back issues, heart or lung issues may not be able to meet the badge requirements. Age is not a disqualifier providing the dog is otherwise healthy, as age itself is not a disease. Dogs with amputations may or may not be able to complete the courses. The instructor/evaluator will partner with the handler to determine if there is a reason why any dog should not attempt the badge.

The Rule of 120 is an easy to remember way to consider if the weather outdoors is conducive to working on this badge. Take the outside air temperature and the current humidity and add the 2 numbers together. If the total exceeds 120, then proceed with caution when working on this badge outdoors. The rule holds true whether the temperature is warm or cold, as the same dangers exist summer or winter. While a young, healthy dog with no physical issues would likely have no problem running any of the courses a single time, when training is taking place and multiple runs are occurring back to back, this same dog could find himself in danger if the temp + humidity exceeds 120.

**EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS:** All required equipment is described in detail below. All equipment is easy to build using primarily pvc pipe. Ramps require plywood and the beam requires a length of wood that is 6 inches wide and at least 10 feet long. Some equipment may be purchased rather than built providing it meets the specifications. There should be no alterations to height or other dimensions to how equipment is built. Where necessary, specific instructions for building equipment are described. How the equipment is to be used and any requirement related to that equipment are also described. Any questions regarding equipment or how it is to be built or used should be directed to [dsavideoeval@gmail.com](mailto:dsavideoeval@gmail.com).

**Jumps** – All jumps may be purchased commercially or built using pvc. Jumps may be built in many different ways and there are many instructions for building these easily available on the internet. Some links are provided below along with photos of appropriate jumps. It is quite easy to build jumps using jump cup strips, easily available through Amazon or many other online retailers. Alternatively, single jump cups can be easily purchased, or made with a little effort. However, using single jump cups requires significantly more measuring than when using jump cup strips. When making jumps you can use either standard or furniture





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grade pvc. Standard pvc tends to be cheaper when purchasing to build just one jump, but furniture grade can be ordered in bulk from Amazon for about the same price.

At a minimum, jump standards must be at least 42 inches apart.

### [Building a Single Jump](#)



Wings must be at least 18 inches wide with a center that is at least partially opaque. This is easily achieved using a piece of canvas, gromets and 4 gromet bungees as seen in the photo. Alternatively, a piece of lattice would work when building wings. Wings may clip to the jump standard, or they may simply sit beside the standard.

Building a double jump is not much different than building a single. An easy way is to essentially build two single jumps that connect at a distance of 8 inches (see photo). Or you can use jump cup strips made specifically for building double jumps.



### [Building a Double Jump](#)

A panel jump can be built similar to how a single jump is made, using bars spaced 4 inches apart. Attach a heavy vinyl strip of material to each bar so that it covers the drop from each bar with no gap. Material should be the same color as the bars used, in most cases, white. Alternatively, vinyl house siding can be used for the drops.



There are many ways to construct a broad jump. The method included in the link uses primarily pvc with vinyl house siding. If time is an issue, it can be just a cost effective to purchase a broad jump.

### [Build a Broad Jump](#)

***Dog requirements for jumps:*** Dogs must complete all jumps without knocking down a bar, disturbing a panel, etc. Dogs may have up to 3 run by faults providing the handler is able to immediately redirect the dog and complete the course in flow. Repeated faults on the same jump are not allowed.

***Dogs are required to jump at least 75% of their jump height, rounded down to the nearest 4 inches. This applies to all jumps. Puppies under 1 year of age may participate but must not jump more than 50% of their height at the time of their participation (not their approximated adult height).***



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*For senior dogs above age 10, the evaluator will determine if a reduction in jump height is needed, based on the dog's physical condition. All seniors are not alike, and age alone is not a disability. The handler will have information to give to the evaluator regarding his/her own dog and the dog's ability to jump. Seniors must jump at least 50% of their standard jump height.*

**Hurdles** – A set of 5 hurdles are needed for this badge. They are 26 inches wide and 10 inches tall from the bottom of the bar. A second set of legs for hurdles may be constructed for smaller dogs. Shorter legs must be constructed so that the minimum height is 5" tall from the bottom of the bar. Hurdles are easily made using  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch pvc, two 90-degree elbow connectors, and two 3-way connectors. You may choose to add caps on the legs to help keep your hurdles clean and insect free. Hurdles may be constructed in other ways providing they meet the specification. However, uprights of any kind are not allowed to distinguish the hurdles as a different challenge to the dog than a regular jump.



**Dog requirements for hurdles:** *Dogs may touch, but not knock over the hurdles. The latter would be a disqualifying fault. Dogs must move over the hurdles by jumping over the 26-inch spread of each hurdle. Hurdles are placed just 36 inches apart, meaning most dogs will touch the ground once, without taking steps between the hurdles.*

**Hoop Rings** – Three hoop rings are needed for the required courses. These can be purchased easily from many sources, or they may be built. They are quite cost effective when purchased though, with a set of 3 costing about \$66 at the time of the badge creation. Hoop rings are 36 inches wide at the hoop part (the foot extends about 5 inches further), and 36 inches tall at the highest point.



### [Hoop Ring](#)

**Dog requirements for hoops:** *Dogs must run cleanly through the series of hoops without faulting by touching, moving or refusing a hoop. One course should include the hoops set in a curved pattern.*



**Barrels** – Any type of barrel will work for these courses, and you may have some on hand. Barrels must be 36 inches tall and approximately 24 inches in diameter. An easy option for barrels is to use pop up barrels like those used for horses when practicing barrel racing.

### [Barrels](#)

**Dog requirements for barrels:** *Dogs must circle around the barrels clockwise, with their right shoulder closest to the barrel as they move around. Additionally, one course must include a "slingshot" maneuver, where the dog moves around one barrel and then quickly moves to*



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the next while the handler remains stationary between the two. One course requires that all 3 barrels be used, though they need not be in succession.

**Tunnels** – Four tunnels are required for this badge, including 1 that is used for the ramped tunnel. Heavy competition tunnels are not required, but they must be heavy enough to hold up to dogs moving through them quite rapidly. The tunnels linked below, made by Better Sporting Dogs, are a good option as they are fairly rugged, though not to a competition standard. They are also very cost effective. The company does make heavy duty tunnels at a reasonable price if you are interested in upgrading equipment.



Each tunnel must have a set of tunnel bags at each end of the tunnel. The linked option includes necessary tunnel bags, minus the sand, and the company offers additional tunnel bags that may be purchased separately.



[Better Sporting Dogs Tunnel – 10 foot](#)

[Better Sporting Dogs Tunnel – 16 foot](#)

[Better Sporting Dogs Tunnel Bags](#)

Tunnels used must be a minimum of 10 feet long, with the exception of the one used for the ramped tunnel, which needs to be at least 16 feet. Keep in mind that you may find 10 feet may not be enough length for all of the tunnels as some curves on courses are required.

**Dog requirements for tunnels:** *The requirements here are not different than what is expected on any agility course, with the dog entering and exiting the tunnel cleanly. The dog may not fault by refusing to enter the tunnel or by turning in the tunnel and exiting from the same end he entered.*

**Elevated Tunnel** – This is a unique tunnel and an obstacle not used in any agility venue. Therefore, the ramps must be built as there is no commercially available source. The ramps are built to a height that fits up next to a Klumb platform, which are fairly common in many households these days as they are so versatile.

The ramps are built so that the dog can see daylight from one end to the other. Some dogs will see this ramped tunnel as very different from other tunnels; others will take it just as eagerly, seeming not to notice the difference.



Materials required to build **one** ramp:

- 43" X 22" piece of plywood per ramp
- 1" PVC to be cut into 4 lengths of 22", plus enough to make the base
- Four 1" PVC elbow joints
- Four 1" PVC 4-way connectors



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- Four 1" PVC end caps or rubber feet
- One 22" length of 3/4" PVC
- Two 3/4" rubber feet
- Self-tapping screws
- One thick yoga mat or rubber sheeting
- E6000 glue (for gluing mat to completed ramp)

It is very important that the ramps be screwed together rather than glued with PVC glue. This ensures that the ramps will be sturdy and will not move under the weight of the dog going through the tunnel. The ramps are generally not connected to the table but could be for peace of mind. Zip ties would be good for this. However, the instructor/evaluator must be responsible for checking the safety on the elevated tunnel periodically, just as he/she would for any other obstacle on the course. Any connection between the ramps and the tables does not negate the need for safety checks, particularly after a very large or fast dog goes through it.

When set up correctly, the tunnel is stretched taught, allowing no room for the tunnel to slip off the table. Several straps, like ratchet straps, could be placed around the tunnel and table if desired, providing they are not cinched so tight as to distort the tunnel. Sandbag placement is important with the bags being placed on the ground at the base of the ramp (see photo.) A second set of sandbags may be used on the ground at the tunnel entrance and exit if desired.

The photos below show the dimensions of the ramps and how to construct them.



*For assistance in building this or any other obstacle needed for this badge, please email [dsavideoeval@gmail.com](mailto:dsavideoeval@gmail.com).*

***Dog requirements for the elevated tunnel:*** *The elevated tunnel must be completed just as any other tunnel.*



**Balance Beam** – The beam used here is similar to a practice beam used by a gymnast. The beam may be constructed in different ways but must be 6 inches wide and at least 10 feet long, with 10 inches between the bottom of the beam and the ground. Beam should be constructed so that it is portable and can be moved.



**Dog requirements for the balance beam:** For this obstacle, the dog must step up onto the beam and complete it cleanly by moving all the way to the end without a paw touching the ground. Dogs under 8 inches at the shoulder are allowed the accommodation of some type of a platform set just before the start of the beam, providing it is no more than 4 inches tall.

**Weave Poles** – A standard set of 6 weave poles is used, with 24-inch spacing in between the poles.

**Dog requirements for weave poles:** Requirements here are no different than on any standard agility course. Dogs must cleanly complete a set of 6 poles, entering with their left shoulder next to the pole. Dogs may not fault by exiting the weaves before all 6 are completed. A run by fault is allowed, but only if the dog never enters the weave sequence.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** The badge requires the dog/handler team to complete 3 different courses with no more than 3 run by faults on each. Knocked bars, panels, etc. are not allowed on any course.

Course maps are provided but may be altered if necessary to meet the needs of the space being used, providing the obstacle requirements are met. Requirements include:

- Unless specified, each course must include the appropriate number for each obstacle included, for example, 3 hoop rings used in succession rather than 1 randomly placed on the course; the exception to this is the barrels, which may be used singly, except where otherwise required.
  - At least 1 course must use 2 barrels for the “slingshot” maneuver (course 2)
  - At least 1 course must use 3 barrels; they may not be used *ALONE* as a distance challenge (course 2)
- At least 1 distance challenge must be included on 1 course; the barrels are not to be used as a part of the distance challenge, without being interspersed with other obstacles (course 1)
- Jump types must be varied on each course and each type must be used at least once; courses may not be simplified in such a way that allows only or primarily standard single jumps
- At least 1 course must contain all 4 tunnels, one of which must be the elevated tunnel (course 3)
- At a minimum, 2 courses must use the ramped tunnel (courses 2 & 3)
- At least 1 course must include the balance beam (courses 1 & 3)
- Weave poles must be used on 2 different courses (courses 1 & 3)
- Other than stated as above, each obstacle must be used at least once
- A minimum of 12 obstacles must be used on each course



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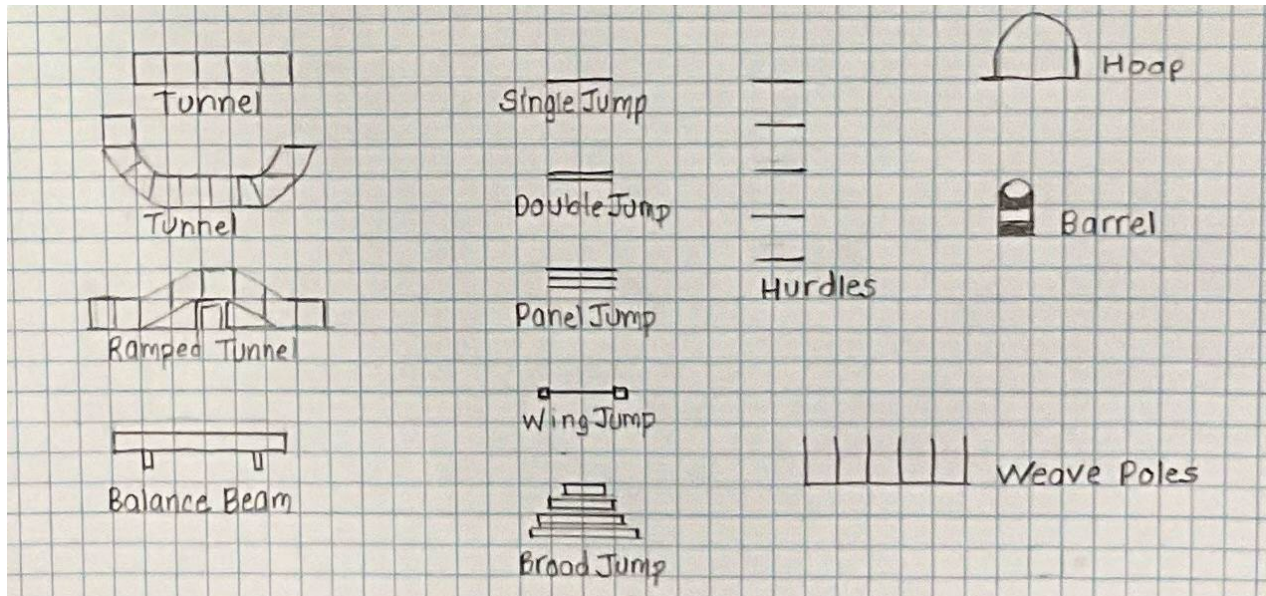
- A set of 5 hurdles counts as 1 obstacle, though they may be placed on the course in 2 different places, using sets of 3 and 2 (course 2)
- Hoops must be used as a set of 3 and count as 1 obstacle (all courses), and should be set in a curved pattern on one course (course 2)

**COURSE MAPS:** Course maps below are provided to make it easy for an instructor/evaluator to set up courses for the badge. Courses may differ from what is shown, but courses must be of the same difficulty as the ones shown. Maps were designed specifically to challenge both dog and handler skills. Keep in mind weave entrances, hoops placed in a curve, a maneuver that takes the dog around a barrel and then into a tunnel, the required slingshot move, the distance challenge, etc.

Minimum course size is 60 X 60, as depicted on the maps.

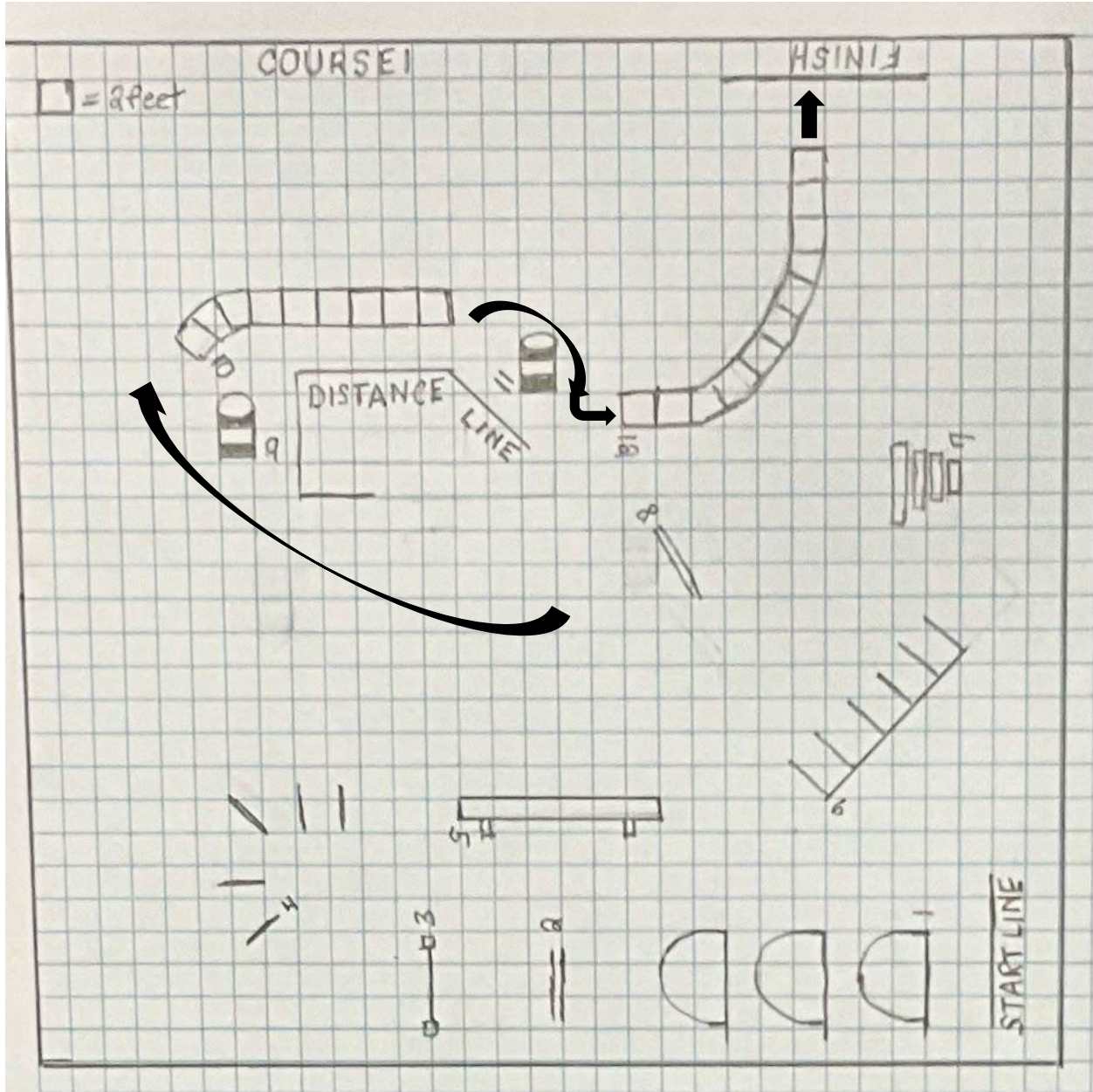
*Note: As there is no agility course software that includes the obstacles we are using, the course maps are hand drawn. Every effort was made to keep obstacles to scale and distances accurate. However, you may find some minor discrepancies as you would find in any hand drawn map.*

**Map Key –**





Course 1 –

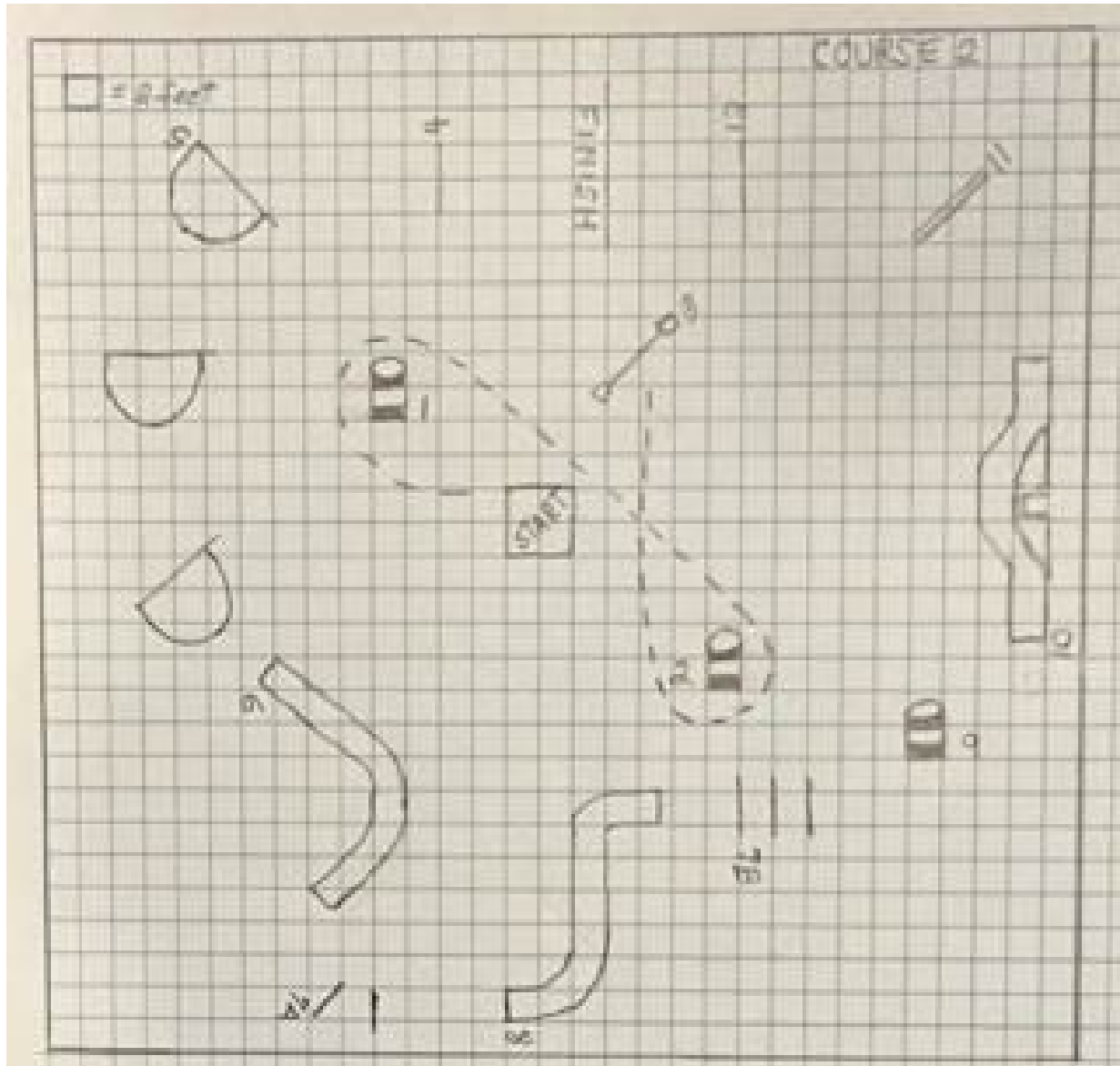


Distance Challenge – For this challenge, the handler must stay within the distance line on the map. This means that handlers must send the dog around barrel #9 and into tunnel #10 without crossing the line. Next, the dog moves around behind barrel #11 and into tunnel #12, where the handler may join the dog to finish the course. The handler may move anywhere within the line, without crossing it during the distance challenge. The black arrows denote the dog's path.





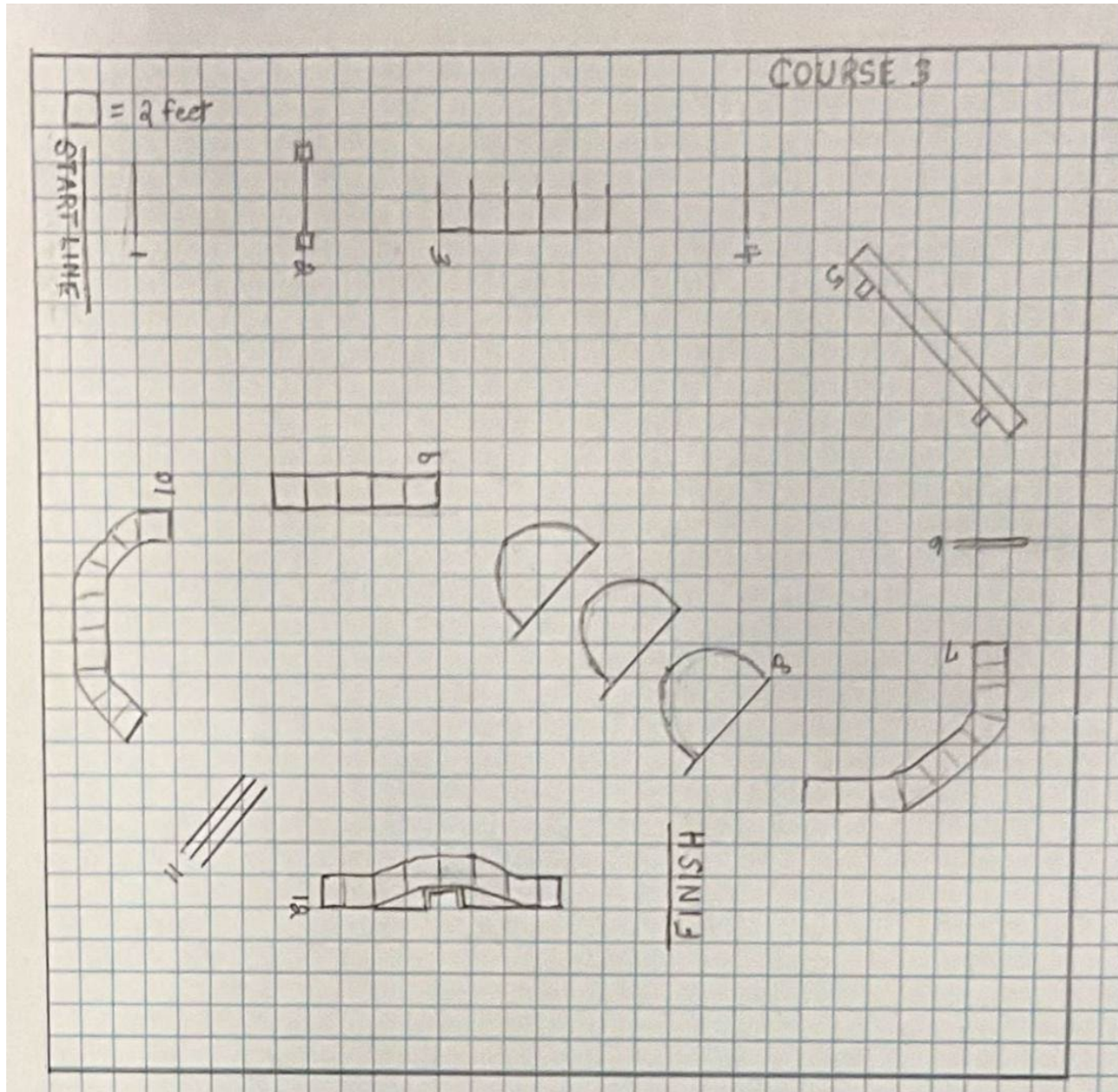
Course 2 –



Slingshot Maneuver – For this course, the barrels are 16 feet apart with a 4-foot square box marked on the ground in the center. The handler starts in the center within the start box, where they must remain during the slingshot maneuver. The dog's path is illustrated by the dashed line. The dog starts in the box with the handler and is directed to move around barrel #1 with his right shoulder to the barrel. Then the dog moves across and around barrel #2, again with the right shoulder to the barrel. The handler may move out of the start box when the dog moves around to the handler's side of barrel #2.



Course 3 –



This course moves in a simple, backward “S” shape and includes required obstacles. All 4 tunnels are used on the course. Though tunnel #9 appears on the map as a shorter 10-foot tunnel, a longer tunnel may be used instead if that’s what is available. If a 16-foot tunnel is used here, obstacles #10-12 will need to be moved closer to the perimeter of the course area.

*Any questions about course maps should be directed to [dsavideoeval@gmail.com](mailto:dsavideoeval@gmail.com).*