

# 5 SIMPLE CANINE AGILITY GAMES



with Lindsey Paige

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Let's make training fun for you AND your canine companion!

We have several core activities and two advanced activities.

We are going to use regular household items for the basic agility course.

Once you have mastered the basics, feel free to check out the advanced activities that may require purchases and assembly.

## ITEMS NEEDED

- Broom handle, hockey stick, OR pool noodle
- Two chairs with foot rails
- Medium size box
- Crate pad or small blanket/towel
- 4 rolls of paper towels OR 4 2-liter bottles
- Blanket
- Large Box, Laundry Basket, or Under bed storage container
- Hula Hoop
- Kids Tunnel
- Kiddie Pool
- Plastic ball pit balls

## PREPARATION

Decide which activities you want to do first. Have your kids help you gather items around the house to get started. Make sure that all materials are safe with no jagged or sharp edges. Also, avoid using glass or other breakable items that could injure you or your animals during play.

# AGILITY JUMP

1. Take broom handle, pool noodle or hockey stick and rest it on the foot rails of two chairs. Make sure the broom handle is only a few inches off the ground.
2. Lure your puppy over to the area with treats.
3. Stand on one side of the bar and lure your puppy over the bar.
4. When he jumps over the bar, reward with a treat. REPEAT and have fun!

PLEASE NOTE: Make sure the bar is low to the ground to begin no matter the size of your dog. Only raise the bar as high as their chest and consult with a trainer or vet about any concerns you may have regarding hip and joint development in regards to repeatedly jumping higher than a few inches off of the ground.

# Weave Poles

1. Use four tall household items like 2-liter bottles or paper towel rolls
2. Place the items on the floor in a staggered line across the floor.
3. Lure your puppy between the poles with a high value treat
4. Once your puppy is comfortable going through the weave poles, you can rearrange the poles so that they are in a straight line.
5. Eventually, you can lure them with your hand with NO treats in your hand.
6. And the final step is adding in a hand signal or verbal cue to indicate that you want them to WEAVE.

# Box Pose

1. Use a medium sized box that is heavy enough to handle the weight of your puppy. You can use a plastic under bed sized container for example. The box should be no higher than chest height for your dog.
2. Cover the box with a soft crate pad or blanket.
3. Make sure the covering is secure to avoid slipping.
4. Invite your dog to come up onto the box with a food lure.
5. This is a great time to reinforce the cue PLACE.

Now that you have three basic agility stations set up, you can link them all together for a fun obstacle course for you and your puppy to practice together.

# TUNNEL, BALL PIT, HULA HOOP JUMP

If you have hula hoops, tunnels, or plastic ball pits, you can add even more to your agility course for your puppy. Make sure to have fun and bond with your puppy safely and successfully!

## TUNNEL

You can use a simple child's tunnel or get a larger tunnel specifically designed for dogs. Lure your dog in and around the tunnel with treats. Introduce slowly to reduce any FAS (fear anxiety stress) with new items.

## BALL PIT

Ball pits are so much fun and super versatile. You can use a kiddie pool, a laundry basket, a large box or other large container. Use plastic ball pit balls, tennis balls, or toys to fill up the space. You can sprinkle in some kibble or treats for a fun enrichment activity for your dog.

## HULA HOOP JUMP

This is similar to the AGILITY JUMP using a HULA HOOP.

1. Hold the hula hoop up on its side, resting on the ground and encourage your dog to walk through it. Lure with a treat.
2. Once they walk through the hoop comfortably, you can increase the difficulty by raising it up off the ground, one inch at a time.
3. Make sure to keep the jump no higher than chest height.

# ADVANCED AGILITY GAMES

For these two activities, you may need to purchase materials

## BALANCE BEAM

Dogs benefit from learning balance skills just as humans do. The balance beam is a great way to establish these skills while building self-confidence.

### PREPARATION

- Start with a wooden beam that is about 12-24 inches wide and 7-10 feet long and maximum of 12 inches off of the ground.
- Ensure that it is slip proof by adding rubber matting secured to the wooden board.
- Use cinder blocks to get it to the proper height.
- You can also train your dog to jump over the board as in the AGILITY JUMP activity.

### STEP BY STEP

1. Make sure you have high value treats in your treat pouch
2. Lead your dog over to the balance beam
3. When he hops up on to the beam, give an indicator like “YES” and treat right away.
4. You can teach the verbal cue, “PAWS UP” or visual cue of an open hand lifting straight up.
5. Keep the beam low to the ground to begin in case your dog falls off.
6. If your dog jumps off before getting to the other end, ignore and start again.
7. Reward your dog when they get all the way to the other end of the beam.

# BALANCE BALL

This is another fabulous way to introduce balance and strength activities for your dog while giving them self-confidence.

I highly recommend FITPAWS balance balls. You can find them in many different shapes and sizes.

Once you have your balance ball, you can teach strength and balance games with your dog.

Start out slowly with just putting two one and then two paws onto the ball. You can increase the challenge by having them get all four paws onto the ball.

Once they are comfortable going on to the balance ball, you can work on basic cues like sit, touch, down, and stay. You can even do more advanced cues on the ball like shake or paw.

**PLEASE NOTE:** When introducing new equipment and activities, pay close attention to how your dog reacts - check their body language and provide high value treats every step of the way. For more Fear Free Tips, check out [www.facebook.com/groups/pawprintsuniversity](https://www.facebook.com/groups/pawprintsuniversity)