

The Agility Dog's Dictionary

Learn the names of basic agility moves and decode popular terms used in dog agility competitions.

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If you've ever watched an agility trial, you already know it's an action-filled scene of airborne dogs, swift weaves through flexible poles, and mad dashes toward the finish line. But do you know what these moves are called? This glossary of common non-obstacle terms will guide you through the basic agility moves and popular terms used in competition.

Clean run (clear run): A run without any faults.

Contact zone: The yellow zone at the entrances and exits of several obstacles, including the dog walk and A-frame. The dog's paw must touch the contact zone or he will be faulted.

Faults: Typical faults include knocking down a jump bar, refusing to do an obstacle, and missing contact zones. After a run, faults are translated into either points or time, which are deducted from the finishing score or time.

Flyoff: Occurs when the dog jumps off a contact-zone obstacle before touching a paw to it.

Front cross: A maneuver in which the handler moves from one side of the dog to the other, in front of the dog, to deal with an upcoming turn or obstacle. A rear cross moves behind the dog.

Jump turn: A maneuver in which the dog takes a jump, then runs in a tight, partial circle around one of the uprights to change direction for the next obstacle.

Leg: One qualifying score toward an agility title.

Pinwheel: Three to four jumps arranged so the dog's path is circular – 180 to 270 degrees.

Post turn (pivot turn): A maneuver in which the handler pivots in place while the dog rotates closely around him, staying on the same side.

Qualifying run or score (leg or Q): A run that meets at least the minimum requirements for the course time and faults, as opposed to a non-qualifying score (NQ).

Refusal: A fault in which the dog approaches the correct obstacle, but turns away or pauses before actually taking it.

Runout: A fault in which the dog runs past an obstacle he's supposed to be attempting.

Standard Course Time (SCT) or Assigned Course Time (ACT): The maximum number of seconds allotted to complete a course run. Going over this time results in a time fault.

Walk through (run through): The handler has 10 minutes to walk through the course without the dog to put together a handling strategy.

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