

Six Ways to Handle a 270

By Sandy Rogers

One of my favorite training exercises is to take a sequence and handle it as many different ways as I can think of. This is one way to push yourself out of your comfort zone and to perfect the skills that you may be avoiding. But you have to be able to imagine those clever maneuvers before you can get better at them.

One way to come up with different ways to handle a sequence is to be creative with your handling of basic configurations like 180s, serpentine, boxes, pinwheels, and 270s. Then all you have to do is recognize the configurations in the sequences and choose the best way for you and your dog to excel on courses.

Training the 270

You need to teach your dog to take the second jump of the 270 without your helping him every time. He must learn not to come in through the middle of the two jumps unless he is cued to do so.

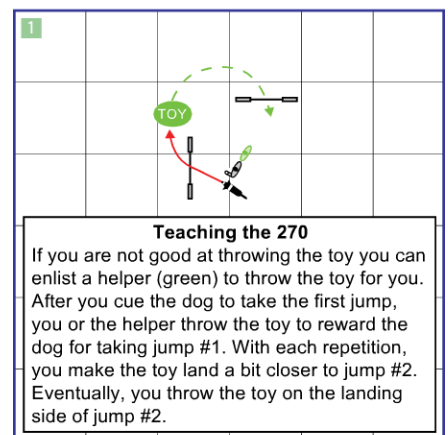
There are a few good ways to teach the 270. All work equally well as far

as I can see. One way is to practice the classic 180 a bunch. Make it easy at first by having the jumps close together; then slowly spread the jumps farther apart until the dog will go out on his own to take the second jump while you remain close to the first jump. Then gradually rotate one of the jumps while you work until the 180 turns into a 270.

But my current favorite way to teach the 270 is to start with the jumps set in the 270 configuration and toss the dog's toy over jump #1 in a progressive manner. Imagine a path from the landing point on jump #1 to the takeoff point of jump #2. Each time you throw the toy to reward the dog for taking jump #1 you make the toy land along that path just a bit closer to jump #2, as shown in **Figure 1**. The dog is being rewarded for taking jump #1 and staying in the logical lane to the next jump. After all, to come through the middle requires a cue that means turn sharply, and you did not give the dog that cue, right? Training and handling the 270 helps clarify many of your turn

cues for both you and your dog. Listen to your dog; he will be honest with you about what he thinks of the consistency of your turn cues!

Your job is to teach the dog to "read" the 270 even when it is larger or angled more than the classic, evenly spaced configuration. As you train you can experiment with making the 270 into those larger and more angled configurations. Notice how far you are asking the dog to travel to the refusal line of jump #2. The farther the dog



needs to go to cross that refusal line, the more challenging the 270. See **Figure 2**.

Figure 3 shows a drill to help teach the dog that once he has crossed the refusal line he should take jump #2. It also helps you realize that you are actually cueing the dog to “take” the refusal line of jump #2 more than the jump itself. I look at the refusal line as an obstacle; your dog can learn to be sent to that refusal line, so that you do not have travel all the way to it. Set the dog up with just his nose over the refusal line in a sit- or stand-stay. Lead out to the landing side of jump #2 and release him to take jump #2. If he has trouble, just set up him a tad closer to jump #2. When he understands to take the jump, you can move him back.

As you train, try not to bore your dog. Some handlers can bore some dogs a lot faster than others (the dog gets

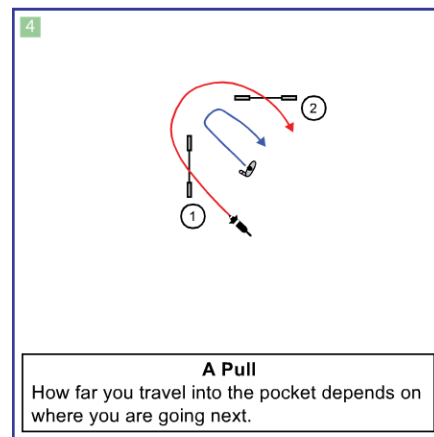
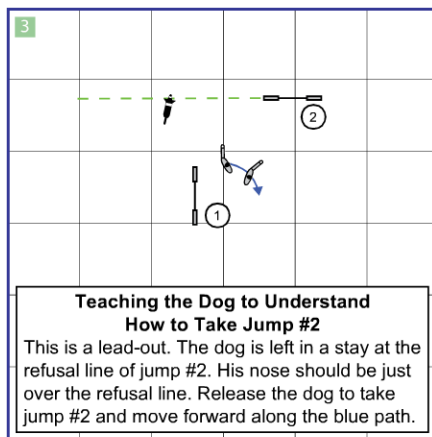
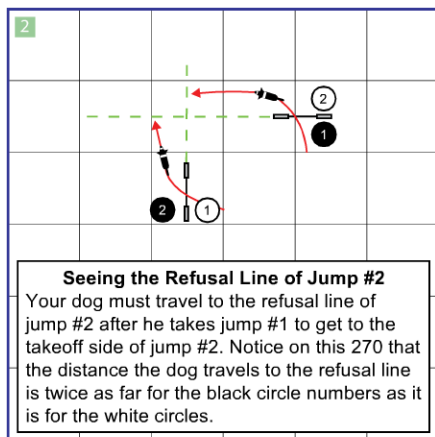
to make the call on that one). Having said that, I like to teach the concept to the dog in a few days. It is easier for the dog to grasp the concept if he sees it a few times a day for four or five days consecutively than it is if he sees it twice a week. Dogs that are asked to understand the 270 when they only see it twice a month often never really do.

The Six Ways

Some of these six handling drills can be done without the proper 270 training completed beforehand; others, not so much. Do the required training before handling the few drills that require the dog to truly understand the 270. When the jumps of the 270 are embedded within the sequence, we’ll show jump #1 in red and #2 in blue for clarity (with a thank-you to Dr. Seuss, for the idea and rhyme in *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish*).

A Pull

There is no side change when you do this drill as shown in **Figure 4**. The dog jumps #2 on the same side of your body as he jumped #1. You simply rotate your shoulders and then get out of town. Try to move in and out of the pocket between the two jumps smoothly. You do not want to have to go all the way into the pocket every time. How far you go into the pocket is determined by the sequence and where you are going next. For example you might go farther into the pocket if jump #2 is on the way to an obstacle where you need to do a rear cross, and you are using the space of the pocket to set the line. But if you need to get down a row of jumps quickly, you do not want to waste the time or precious steps to go into the pocket. You want to cut the corner off and have the dog pick up jump #2 without an escort.





Where do Dog Trainers Go to Learn from the Experts?

Join the Association of Pet Dog Trainers and become a part of the premier resource for dog training and behavior information. Network with other trainers, receive discounts on educational programs, and have access to the APDT's member benefits.

**APDT Annual Educational Conference & Trade Show -
October 12-16, 2011, San Diego, CA**

Registration is now open! Visit www.apdt.com/conf for information.

To join call 1-800-PET-DOGS, e-mail information@apdt.com, or go to www.apdt.com/join!



Get Started With Our 4-Jump Kit

includes all necessary pipe, fittings and jump cups to build 4 jumps that adjust from 3" to 35" in height

All the PVC You Need to Build It Yourself

4-Way Tee

Snap-On Jump Cups

5-Way Cross

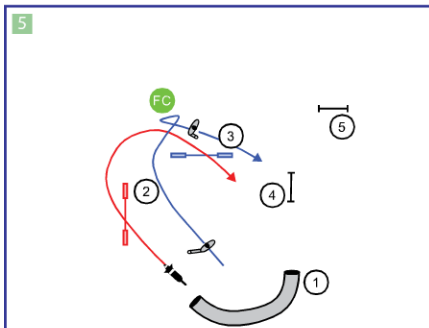
PatiosToGo.com

352.243.3220

Furniture Grade PVC
Low Minimum Order · Box Quantity Discounts

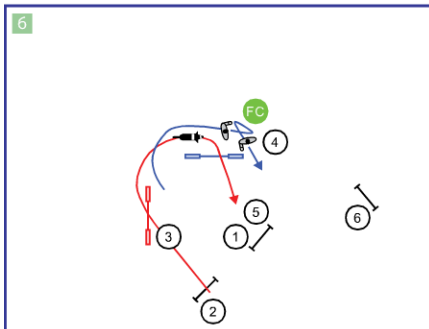
vinyl tape for striping too!

If you do not train the dog to understand 270s you will have to go in as far



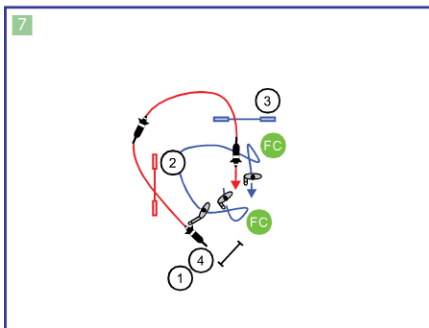
A Front Cross on the Takeoff Side of the Second Jump of the 270

To begin, stand in the middle and send the dog to the tunnel to make it easy to get into position for the next obstacle, jump #2. Where you rotate on the bar of any jump determines the angle at which the dog takes the jump.



Another Front Cross on the Takeoff Side of the Second Jump of the 270

The handler is keeping the dog on the left longer and is traveling across the front of the second jump of the 270. The handler rotates into the front cross when the dog reaches the point that creates the correct angle to the next obstacle.



A Front Cross on the Landing Side of the Second Jump of the 270

This drill requires the dog to "read" the 270 so the handler does not have to escort the dog to the back of jump #3, the second jump in the 270. Start with the dog on the right and do a front cross at jump #1 into the sequence. This is a good way to avoid doing a bunch of boring lead-outs.

as your dog needs you to just to pick up jump #2 every time and you will not have the luxury of cutting the corner when you want to.

A Front Cross on the Takeoff Side of Jump #2

This move is often not considered by novice handlers; they are not used to handling "outside the box."

When the front cross is done closer to the first stanchion of the second jump of the 270 (#3) as seen in **Figure 5**, the dog will take the jump at a severe angle (a.k.a. slicing). This would be correct when the on-course obstacle lies in that particular path. I recommend also practicing turning the dog over the bar at whatever angle you choose to. Do this by keeping the dog on your original side a tad longer as you travel across the takeoff side of the jump, as shown in **Figure 6**. Rotate into the front cross at will, putting the dog across the bar anywhere you want, creating any angle you want.

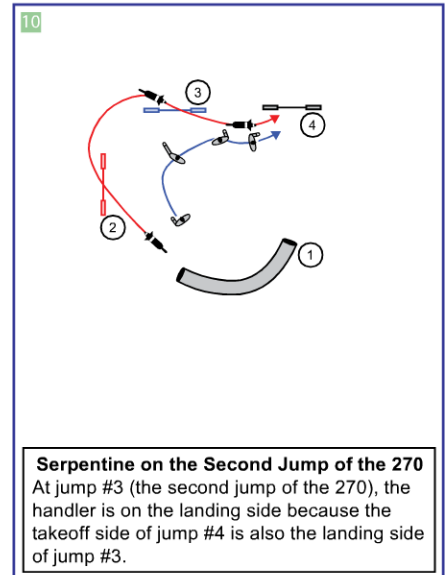
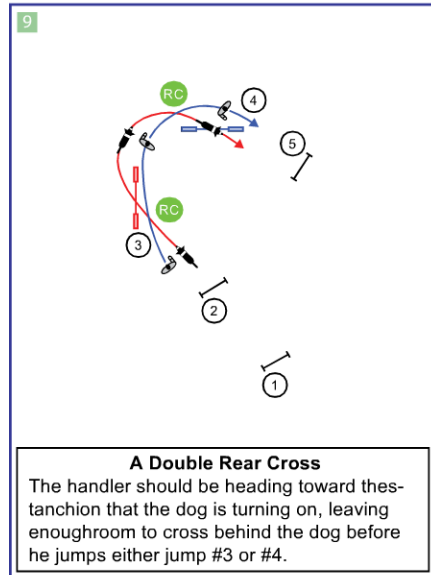
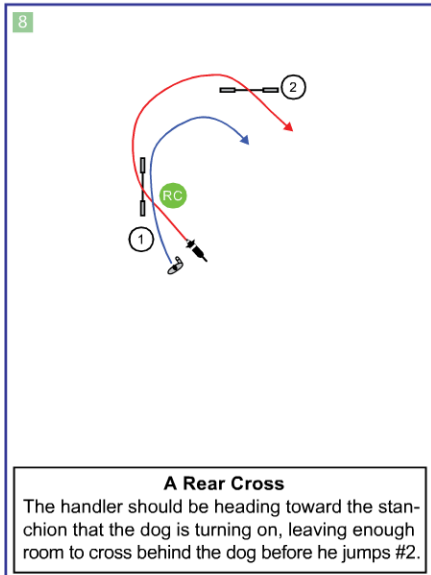
A Front Cross on the Landing Side of Jump #2

This one really requires the dog to understand the path from the first to the second jump of the 270 (#3) as shown in **Figure 7**. If he does, you can cue the first jump with no worry that your dog will skip the second jump. This allows you the freedom to get into the correct position for your front cross, execute it, and be off! Do not come across the front of the jump any farther than you have to be to set up the line to the next obstacle on course. When I need a tight turn around the first stanchion I pretend that my jump is only 2' wide so that I can turn the dog very close to the stanchion.

If you have to backtrack a bit to pick up the next obstacle when you finish the front cross, then you have overshot the place on the bar to do the cross.

A Rear Cross

You will want to perfect a rear cross into the 270 as well. After the rear cross on jump #1, seen in **Figure 8**, you need to pull to jump #2. Use another obstacle or two to set yourself up to do a rear cross at jump #1. When you get good at that, go for the double rear cross, adding a second rear cross at the second jump of the 270



(#4) as shown in **Figure 9**. Be patient: this double is a bit tricky and may require you to freshen up your rear-cross skills first.

Serpentine Jump #2

The dog needs to know basic serpentine handling before you can perfect the drills shown in **Figures 10 and 11**. Send him out and over the first jump of the 270 (#2) and head for serpentine position, the far stanchion on the second jump of the 270 (#3). This drill also requires the dog to have been trained to read the 270 and execute the second jump of the 270 jump (#3) on his own. You will often have to hustle to get into serpentine position. It means you need to be able to trust your well-trained dog to take the second jump! Don't put the cart before the horse. Teach your dog how to serpentine jumps and 270s, and then put them together into this drill.

Serpentine Jump #1

Figure 12 has a drill that's the trickiest of the six to perfect; take your time and be patient. It is easy to push the dog through the gap. You have to get the dog over the refusal line of jump #2 to get the dog to take the correct side of jump #2. How far the dog has to travel to the refusal line of jump #2 when he lands after taking jump #1 determines the difficulty. The farther he has to travel, the harder the jump is.

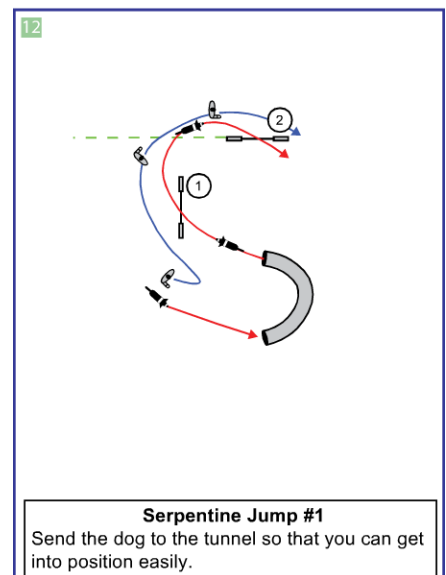
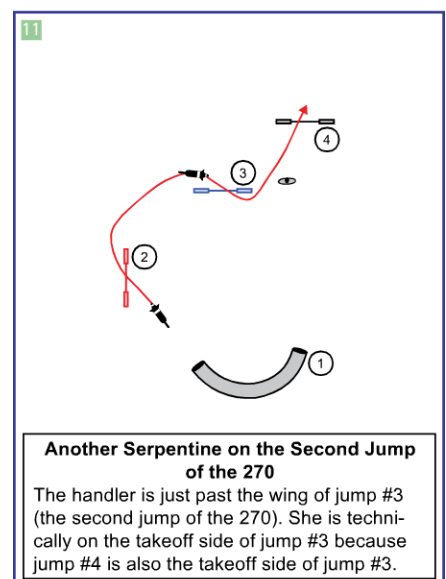
Start with making that distance smaller when you begin to train this move.

Note: When handling the drills in Figures 10, 11, and 12, the serpentine drills, you are using arm cues. These arm cues should have been used consistently in your initial serpentine work. Remember to remain consistent when handling these drills.

In Closing

These drills are fun to perfect. If you find that you can't run fast enough to make the positions successfully, keep trying. I find it often takes handlers several attempts to get the timing right and find the best (shortest) line to run. Good timing and efficient lines can make up for slower foot speed! If you still are not having success modify the drill by moving or changing the obstacles that are before the 270. Using tunnels works very well to keep the dog moving and for resetting the dog for another attempt.

Don't waste any time to begin making up sequences by adding other obstacles around your 270, and keep your eyes peeled for 270s in disguise when you walk courses. The 270s can be large and/or offset and are not obvious all the time. These maneuvers can also be done on 180s and every degree of angle in between. Have fun! 🐾



Sandy Rogers has owned and operated ACE Dog Sports in San Francisco, California, since 1991. Her Border Collie, Brink, finished in the top five placements four times at USDAA Nationals in the Grand Prix and Steeplechase finals. In 2007 he won both the Speed Jumping and Performance National Standard and won Speed Jumping again in 2008. Brink won the Purina Incredible Dog Challenge Regional two years in a row. Her Parson Russell Quill took 3rd in Grand Prix finals in 2008. Sandy's USDAA champions in the 12", 16", and 22" classes are also all high in trial obedience dogs. Contact Sandy at acedogsports.com. Her DVD, titled One Jump Two Jump, presents her easy-to-use system for learning handling and teaching dog skills with only two jumps.