



OFFICIAL JUDGE RULEBOOK

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This is a dynamic document, watch for updates as necessary.

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BARN HUNT JUDGE RULEBOOK

Part 1: About the Judge Rulebook

This rulebook contains all of the information needed for individuals to become a Judge, understand and maintain Judging status, design fun and legal courses, and run and manage a ring during a Trial. **This rulebook does not replace the Competitor Rulebook or the Club Rulebook, and those Rulebooks contain information Judges are required to know.** Competitors and Clubs will have full access to this book and are welcome to read it to further understand course design and how Barn Hunt Events are judged.

Barn Hunt competitor rules are updated every three years, but the rules in this document may be updated more often. Judges must always check that they are using the latest version of this document. Changes and additions will be announced and posted to the main Judge forum at barnhuntforums.com.

Part 2: The Key Role of the Barn Hunt Judge

An efficient, capable, friendly, and supportive Judge is essential to the success of Barn Hunt. The Judge is the public face of the sport, and the person competitors most easily remember and identify with.

Judges must exhibit good course design skills. Judges must be fair and impartial. Judges must communicate with show giving Clubs/groups in a timely and courteous manner. Judges must be on time and ready to Judge in accordance to the Club's schedule.

Judges must always be cognizant that their demeanor and professionalism in public and on social media will shape the experience of spectators, Trial staff, and competitors in the sport of Barn Hunt. Even when not in an active judging role, Judges must always be above reproach in how they deal with others in connection with the sport. Judges are role models for Barn Hunt.

Part 3: Becoming a Judge

There are a number of steps on the path to becoming a Judge. These steps are structured to ensure Judges are fully prepared, capable, and comfortable assuming a primary role in the success of a Trial. Part of the Judge approval process is analytical and procedural (i.e., handling a dog to a certain title, passing the written test, course design), and part is subjective (friendly and welcoming, able to deal with stress and adversity, etc.).

Part 4: The Judge Agreement

The following statement is part of the Judge application and must be reviewed and affirmed when applying to become a Judge. All Judges are expected to abide by this agreement when acting as a representative of the sport.

I agree to adhere to all current Barn Hunt rules and regulations and judge according to those rules. I will work to continually increase my knowledge and understanding of the rules and the sport. I promise to judge in a fair and unbiased manner, treating each competitor and dog equally. I will not discriminate based on race, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, ability, or sexual orientation. I pledge to portray the sport of Barn Hunt and the Barn Hunt Association in a positive manner at any and all times when I am acting as a representative of the sport, including on websites and in social media. I promise to hold rat care to the highest possible standards. I understand that the ability to officiate as a judge at Barn Hunt events is a privilege, not a right. If my actions result in a negative impact for myself, a Club, or the Barn Hunt Association LLC, I understand that a range of penalties may be applied, from a written and/or verbal warning up to and including temporary or permanent suspension as a Barn Hunt Judge. I understand that my judge license may be withdrawn at any time, with or without notice, for cause as determined by the Barn Hunt Association.

I understand that any action taken to enforce the provisions of this agreement shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the United States in the state of Kentucky. Each party irrevocably submits to the exclusive jurisdiction of, and venue in, any state or federal court located within Kentucky Circuit 42, Western District, for the purposes of any Suit arising out of this agreement or any transaction contemplated by this agreement, and agrees to commence any such suit only in such courts. Any legal fees or court costs resulting from such action will be paid by the prevailing party.

SECTION 1. Application Requirements

The below qualifications must be accrued under at least three different Judges in two different locations. That does not mean each task must be undertaken in two places or under three judges, but the span of work must meet that criteria. Unless otherwise noted, the requirements must be completed within a calendar year.

1. **Be a minimum of 18 years of age.**
2. **Have shown in the sport for a minimum of two years, at 10 or more Events.**
3. **Personally handle at least one dog from Novice A to a Senior title (RATS) and show any dog at least 5 times at the Master level.** This dog does not have to be owned by the applicant. This requirement applies to any dog handled within the past five years and does not have to be completed in the one-year time frame.
4. **Attend a Judge Workshop in a Working slot.** May be completed any time in the current or previous year.
5. **Accrue a minimum of 150 points as a Fun Test Judge.** Judging as many dogs/hours in one Event as possible will reflect positively on the application when sent for review since it will more fully replicate the actual judging experience. Crazy 8s experience is encouraged but not required. The Fun Test point system is as follows:

FUN TEST POINTS ACCRUAL REQUIREMENTS

Class	Instinct	Novice	Open	Senior	Master	Crazy 8s	Line Drive
Minimum Number of Dogs Required in each Class	5	15	15	10	10	0	0
Points Per Dog Judged	1	1	2	3	4	3	1
Minimum Number of Points Required in each Class	5	15	30	30	40	0	0
Total Points 150 (120 from the 5 classes + 30 pts from classes and/or Crazy 8s)							

6. **Log a minimum of two Event days as an Apprentice Judge.** Apprentice Judges cannot take on other roles at the Event. This experience can be cumulative but optimally will consist of two, eight-hour apprentice days. The Judge will work directly with the apprentice offering feedback, answering questions, etc. Any A-Judge who has been licensed for at least a year and who has been a Judge of Record for at least 4 events within the past year can take up to two apprentices per day. Apprentices are encouraged to choose an unfamiliar supervising judge and area. **Apprentice Judges must:**
 - a) **Receive permission from the Judge and Club prior to the Event.**
 - b) **Stand outside the ring and practice-judge while filling out the Apprentice Judge Scoresheet.**
 - c) **Stay ringside and "on duty," at all times the Judge is in the ring.**
 - d) **Review course maps and design with the Judge (nesting, fluff, safety).**
7. **Log a cumulative minimum of 8 classes as a Scribe.** To be completed within the previous year. This includes scribing at least once in all Regular classes. Scribing for Crazy 8s or Line Drive is not required but may be included. Scribing experience can be cumulative.
8. **Log a cumulative minimum of 4 hours as an Outside Rat Wrangler.** Including at least 2 hours as an ORW for Master managing rat and litter bins.
9. **Log a cumulative minimum of 8 hours as an inside Rat Wrangler.** Including at least 4 hours in Master. Wrangling for Crazy 8s is not required but may be included and may reflect positively on the application review.
10. **Act as Chief Course Builder for a minimum of 4 courses at each level/class except Instinct.** The judge candidate must be able to take the judges map and direct the build; working in the ring with oversight from the JOR and assisted by others. **Accommodations can be made for candidates who cannot lift bales.**

SECTION 2. Judge Application

The Judge application is on the Barn Hunt Register. Log in, and click on Judge Application. It should be started as soon as the Judge candidate begins to accrue experience. All required documentation must be uploaded to the application.

1. The application must be complete and accurate before submission. Applications with incorrect or incomplete information will be opened a single time for candidates to correct information. A second incorrect submission will result in a denial.
 - a) In applications with errors, the Judge Development Chair will stop the review and return the application after the first mistake is found. It is up to the Judge candidate to find and fix any further errors prior to resubmission.

SECTION 3. Course Maps

The Judge Candidate must upload one complete set of nested course maps for a one-ring Event, Novice through Senior plus Crazy 8s. **Two Master maps, one with, and one without a Distance Challenge must be uploaded. Include two extra**

maps with hides marked for each level. Maps must be designed from scratch (not previously used for a Judge Workshop or Fun Test), and be formatted as outlined in these rules. Course size is 24' x 24', with all four sides being fencing. The class order must be noted.

SECTION 4. Required Forms

The following forms must be completed and uploaded with the application. They are available by logging in to the Barn Hunt Register then clicking on Resources. The Judge Candidate either completes the form or gets the form/a copy from the appropriate source.

1. **Prospective Judge Fun Test Review Form.** (Club completes)
2. **Apprentice Judge Scoresheet.** (Judge candidate completes)
3. **Apprentice Judge Trial Review.** (Judge of Record completes)
4. **Scribe Review Form.** (Judge of Record completes)
5. **Inside Rat Wrangler Review Form.** (Judge of Record completes)
6. **Prospective Judge Course Builder Review Form.** (Judge of Record completes)

SECTION 5. Written Test

After the Application is submitted, all Judge candidates must take a written test. This is an un-timed, online, closed book, multiple choice and true/false test. Any score of 90% or above on the test will qualify the Judge candidate to move forward to the next step. The test may be taken a total of two times. If needed, a second test cannot be taken until a minimum of two weeks after the first test. The second test can be open-book.

1. Applicants who fail twice must request permission to take the test a third time. Permission is based on the strength of the application and other subjective factors. If allowed, the candidate must pass the test on the third try to continue as a Judge candidate.
2. Judge candidates are strongly advised to not rush through the questions as many are technical and meant to test depth of knowledge. While there is no specific deadline for submission of the test after the judge application has been submitted, keep in mind that the test must be completed before accrued experience and judge workshop attendance expires.
3. The test must be taken independently, without oversight/coaching/help from others.

SECTION 6. Publication to Judge and Club Forums

After a passed test, all Judge candidates are published to the private Judge and Club forums for open commentary. Peer input is an important element in the application process.

SECTION 7. Review Process

There are several key review time-frames prior to being fully approved as A-Judges. The final decision on Judge status is determined by the Judge Development Chair with input from the Advisory Committee as needed. Reviews happen:

1. After the Application submission.
2. After the test.
3. After commentary.
4. After being mentored as a B-Judge.

SECTION 8. B-Judge Status

Judge candidates moving forward from the application and initial review process are approved as, B-Judges. B-Judge status may last for one Event or several Events, depending on the individual and locations of judging. B-Judges:

1. Are required get prior approval from the Judge Development Chair before taking any assignments. The Judge Development Chair and the Barn Hunt office, with feedback from the Judge Mentor, will determine how many, if any, assignments they can take prior to being mentored.
2. Must submit courses to the Judge Development Chair (judgedev@barnhunt.com) at least 45 days ahead of each Event where they will be Judge of Record, and to their mentor if it's a mentored Event.
3. Will be directly supervised by a Judge Mentor (see "[Judge Mentors](#)" on page 6) at least once prior to being moved to A status. **B-Judges:**
 - a) Cannot be officially mentored by any Judge who has a personal friendship/relationship with the B-Judge, or who has had a substantial role in helping them fulfill their judging license requirements. They will not be

mentored at their home club and must be prepared to travel as needed.

- b) Have up to one year from the date of their approval to be mentored.
4. To be mentored, the B-Judge must judge each Regular class at least once during a 2-day, four-trial weekend; with a cumulative minimum over the two days of 15 entries each in Novice and Open, and 20 entries each in Senior and Master. Instinct must be judged at least once but no minimum cumulative entry is required. Up to 20 Crazy 8s entries can be substituted for regular class entries if needed, but are not required. If the entry is not going to meet those standards, the B-Judge will not be mentored at that event.
5. Clubs pay B-Judges a fixed fee. The maximum amount a B-Judge can request for payment is 50¢ per run plus travel expenses.
6. For information about entering dogs as a B-Judge, see [“Judge Assignments” on page 15 of the Club Rulebook](#) and [“Substitute Handlers” on page 7](#). B-Judges may not accept free or comped dog runs as part of their judging fee.

SECTION 9. Final Step: Moving to A-Judge Status

After completion of the required Provisional Assignment(s), a final judging status is then determined by the BHA and the Judge Mentor, with input from the Judge Development Chair and the Advisory Committee. If all agree, A-Judge status is granted.

SECTION 10. Barn Hunt Forums

Licensed Judges must subscribe to the Barn Hunt Forums and request to be added to the private BHA Judge section, in order to keep up with critical Judge announcements and changes. To subscribe:

1. Go to barnhuntforums.com and create a login, password, and user name.
2. Set the account to stay logged in and receive notifications.
3. Email info@barnhunt.com with your username and email, to be added to the Judge section.

Part 5: Maintaining Judge Status

In order to remain in good standing as an A-Judge, the following criteria must be met.

1. Must design courses for and act as a Judge of Record at least once a year for each Regular Class level.
2. Must attend a Judge Workshop in a working slot at least once every 3 years.
3. Must complete any other required yearly criteria set by the BHA.

Part 6: Judge Mentors

Judge Mentors are A-Judges appointed by the BHA and the Judge Development Chair to guide and assist B-Judges for their two-day assignment. They also may be asked to step in to assist other A-Judges who are struggling with specific aspects or concepts, and/or step forward to correct critical rule misunderstandings at Events where they are not specifically assigned as a Judge Mentor. See [“Judge Assignments” on page 15 of the Club Rulebook](#).

1. The Judge Mentor will stay ringside with the B-Judge while they are judging. They may work as Inside RWs or scribes, but cannot take any other major roles or take an Apprentice Judge at the event as their primary job is to observe and advise the B-Judge.
2. Judge Mentors are arranged for, sent, and paid by the BHA. The Club incurs no expense for Judge Mentors.
3. Judge Mentors can personally handle a dog for up to two runs under the B-Judge and if so, should be first dog in the Blind. They can also show any number of dogs in other classes if those classes take place when the B-Judge's ring is idle, or they can have them tended and shown by others. See [“Substitute Handlers” on page 7](#).

Part 7: Relief/Back Up Judges

RBJs are Licensed A- or B-Judges who do not design any courses. An RBJ is used to relieve any/all other Judges of Record at the Event, and Judge the JOR dogs. All Judges of Record for any Trial day must use a Relief/Back Up Judge if they wish to handle their own dogs on any course they designed or are actively judging. See [“Judge Assignments” on page 15 of the Club Rulebook](#).

SECTION 1. Showing Dogs using a Relief/Back Up Judge

1. If there are two or more Judges of Record for an Event day, they may act as RBJ for each other. Judges may not leave an active ring to act as an RBJ for another Judge.
2. Judges of Record handling their own dogs must be scheduled when it will be least disruptive to the rest of the com-

petitors at a Trial and may occur prior to the official trial start or just after the trial has ended.

SECTION 2. Family Members

For the purposes of Barn Hunt, “Family member” means an immediate family member, partner or friend, living with, and/or frequently traveling/cohabiting with the Judge.

1. Family Members can use the RBJ to show their dog(s) on any course the Judge designed, and are included in the Judge’s allowed runs per day.
 - a) Family members can show any **number of** dogs on any other Judge’s course without need for an RBJ, as long as their family-member JOR did not design the course and is not judging on the course at that time.
2. If a family member does not actually live with (or frequently travel/cohabit with) the JOR, the JOR and the family member can decide whether or not showing under the JOR would cause an appearance of impropriety. (i.e., a family member who lives hours away and comes to an event may be fine showing under the JOR whereas a family member who lives a block away and is very frequently in the JOR’s presence may not be).
3. If both JOR are family members (**e.g., married/partners**) they must use a separate RBJ and cannot judge each other.

SECTION 3. Co-owned Dogs

Whether a co-owned dog needs to be judged by an RBJ depends on the circumstance. If the dog lives part or most of the time with the Judge or the Judge interacts with the dog on a regular basis, an RBJ will be needed. If the dog is never in residence with the Judge and lives in a different part of the country, no RBJ will be required.

■ Part 8: Substitute Handlers

A-Judges may use a Substitute Handler for any dog they own on any course they are not judging and did not design, without need for a Relief/Back Up Judge. Dogs meeting the criteria to be run by a substitute handler are not included in the Judge’s limit for handling their own dogs.

B-Judges, Apprentice Judges who wish to show their own dogs, and Judge Mentors wanting to show more than 2 runs per day must use a substitute handler, with the following additional restrictions:

1. The substitute handler is responsible for all aspects of the dog(s) care, including exercising, pre and post run management, and competing with the dog in the ring.
2. The Apprentice, Mentor, or B-Judge cannot leave their assigned ring to attend to any dog except in the case of an emergency.

■ Part 9: Judging Basics

SECTION 1. Contracts

See [“Hiring Judges” on page 15](#) and [“Cancellation of Events” on page 23](#) of the Club Rulebook.

SECTION 2. Deadlines

See [“Deadlines and Fees” on page 22](#) of the Club Rulebook. A Judging Assignment Checklist is also available at barn-hunt.com/judgeforms.html.

SECTION 3. Dress Code

Clothes must be clean, neat, in good repair, and comfortable. Clothing should be suitable for the climate and grounds. Judges cannot wear any type of dog advertising on their clothing, including items with a specific dog’s name, kennel name, etc. Small pieces of breed-specific jewelry, **caps**, etc. are acceptable. Judges must avoid the appearance of favoring a specific breed over other breeds. Judges cannot wear competing Club or rat hunting organization gear. Footwear must be close toed for safety and suitable for the surface on which the Judge will be standing.

SECTION 4. Mobility

Judges must be physically capable of efficiently moving around the entire course area. Bending, lifting and, climbing on the bale structure to position or reposition a rat tube and/or move a bale/bales will also be necessary. Judges must be capable of being on their feet for several hours at a time. Sitting **on bales** in the ring is not permitted.

SECTION 5. Timeliness and Trial Hours

Judges are expected to arrive at the Event a minimum of 60 minutes prior to the published start time. They must be present on trial grounds during Trial hours unless they have received approval from the Trial Chair and Secretary to leave, and any/all other JOR have been informed. Pre-trial tasks include:

1. Provide written briefing to Club
2. Provide map copies for competitors and course builders
3. Supervise build and/or adjustments to course
4. Run any dogs under the Relief/Back Up Judge (if applicable)

If possible, the Judge should arrive the evening prior, to check the grounds and build courses (see [“Building Courses Prior to the Event” on page 20 of the Club Rulebook](#)).

SECTION 6. Conflict of Interest

1. Judges cannot discuss actual courses with any potential competitors prior to the Trial, nor may a Judge “practice” a specific course/rat locations with someone he or she will judge within the next 3 months. It is permissible for a Judge to, as an example, practice courses in one location that he/she will use in a different area of the country where local competitors are unlikely to attend.
2. There is no time limit on Judges training with or instructing potential competitors, only on practicing specific course configurations with those potential competitors within three months of a Trial.

SECTION 7. Class Placements

1. Judges of Record are not eligible for and cannot accept class placements or High in Class ribbons on any Trial day they are Judge of Record but may accept New Title or other special ribbons if offered by the Club.

SECTION 8. Smoking, Eating and Drinking

Judges cannot consume alcoholic beverages or recreational substances during Event hours or eat in the ring at any time. Judges may request and have just outside the ring non-alcoholic beverages such as water, soda, etc. in a bottle/cup that can be capped. Open bottles cannot be carried while the Judge is actively judging a dog. See [“Smoking/Vaping” on page 8 of the Competitor Rulebook](#) for smoking/vaping regulations.

SECTION 9. Discrimination and Bias

1. A Judge must never show breed bias, or use the dog’s breed to either excuse or justify its behavior.
2. Judges must treat every dog and handler the same, even if the team is well known to them. If the dog or handler commits an NQ error, or an act that would be called misconduct or aggression if the dog/handler were unknown, it must also be called for the familiar dog/handler.

SECTION 10. Judging Limits

Judging efforts are based on judging time of 8 hours not including a lunch but including course builds and blind changes. Details, including Maximum Run Values, are found in [“Total Entries Allowed per Judge” on page 16 of the Club Rulebook](#).

SECTION 11. Communication

Judges must communicate promptly and courteously with potential show giving Clubs, with email the preferred method so a paper trail can be maintained. Even if turning down a Trial judging opportunity, Judges must do so promptly so the Club can continue their search. Failure to communicate promptly on a regular or continuing basis may be grounds for administrative action up to and including suspension/retirement as a Judge.

SECTION 12. Judging Assignments

See [“Judge Assignments” on page 15 of the Club Rulebook](#).

Part 10: Prior to Judging

SECTION 1. Pre-Marking Course Maps

For Senior, Master, and Crazy 8s classes, the Judge must have all tube locations for all blinds to be judged marked on course maps prior to the General Briefing at the start of the Event. These marked maps must be kept in a secure location and cannot be shared with any competitor at any time, up until the Judge is delegating to the Rat Wrangler(s) before and between blinds.

1. At least 1 pre-marked map is required for each blind. Extra pre-marked maps must be included to accommodate move-ups and extra blinds and should be available for Rat Wranglers.
2. Unmarked maps must be available for any Relief/Back Up Judges.
3. Pre-marking is **strongly** encouraged, but not required, for all other classes.

SECTION 2. Randomizing Rat Numbers for Master

Prior to arriving at the Event the Judge must generate a list of random numbers from 1 to 5 and mark those numbers on each blind's course map in accordance with the number decided for each blind. The random numbers must be assigned using a random number generator or other completely unbiased method. **Once assigned, those numbers cannot be changed or re-arranged.**

SECTION 3. Briefings and Course Map Copies

1. **Written Briefings.** Judges are required to bring and post in a prominent position a written briefing. A sample written briefing is available at barnhunt.com/judgeforms.html. This written briefing covers the basics of what is expected in the ring such as removing collars and leashes, calling rat declaratively, etc. The written briefing may be altered by Judges prior to posting as long as the items listed are within the scope of the rules.
2. **Class Briefings.** Prior to Instinct, Novice, and Line Drive, the judge must hold a Class Briefing at ringside. This class briefing covers only the following:
 - a) Level/name of class.
 - b) Entry and exit gate (line) locations.
 - c) Location and number of official tunnels.
 - d) Location of start box.
 - e) Reminder of where the Rules document and written briefing are posted/located.
 - f) For Instinct and Novice courses built in a larger ring, the dead area of the ring which will not be used.
3. **Maps.** For any course containing a tunnel for Senior/Crazy 8s or Master a base level map must be provided. Master maps must show distance challenge areas. Maps must be posted in a prominent place.

SECTION 4. Measuring Dogs

Judges are to measure dogs if they are requested to do so, or if they feel a dog may be in the wrong height. If allowed by the Judge, a Club Official may also measure a dog. If a measurement is called for, make every effort to be calm, quiet, and non-threatening to the dog. Bring the wicket up from the rear, not over the head. Have the handler stand the dog with head in a natural position and feet four-square. The wicket should rest on the top of the shoulder, not the back of the neck or the back behind the wither.

■ Part 11: Judging and Scoring

Judging begins when the team enters the ring enclosure. Judging ends when the team exits the ring enclosure.

SECTION 1. Timing

1. The Judge is required to time all runs with a hand-held stopwatch.

SECTION 2. Calls to the Scribe

1. The following calls are directed to the Scribe.
 - a) Tunnel.
 - b) Climb.
 - c) Rat 1, etc. Each rat call has a number attached at all levels. So in Novice, it is Rat 1. In Master, even if there are five rats, the Judge still calls Rat 5.
 - d) Bonus and/or Super Bonus for Crazy 8s.
 - e) REMX Qualifying score.
2. **End of class.** It is suggested that Judges avoid the use of the word "time" when a competitor has exceeded time limits for the class. Something that does not rhyme with the word Climb is preferred; "I'm sorry," works well. **Judges must indicate a successful run to the handler immediately ("Congratulations," etc.)**
3. **Speaking audibly.** Judges must speak the elements clearly and loudly so that not only the Scribe but the competitor can hear their call.

4. **Hand signals.** In noisy conditions and/or if the Judge wishes, they may use hand signals as well as voice to indicate the various elements. If using hand signals the Judge must review those signals with the Scribe prior to the start of the class.

SECTION 3. Self-scribing

Judges are not allowed to self-scribe other than the Line Drive class.

SECTION 4. Coaching/Prompting/Training Advice

Trials are a test of the knowledge, skills, and ability of the competitor and dog. The Judge does not coach the team in any way during the run (i.e., “you still need to do the tunnel,” “you still have two rats to find.”) If the handler directly asks the Judge if they have found all rats, the Judge must stay silent. The judge never volunteers training or handling advice or critique before, during, or after the handler’s run. If the handler requests advice from the judge, the judge may meet with the handler outside the ring during a break or at the conclusion of their judging tasks **if they wish**.

SECTION 5. Accidental Hinting

Judges sometimes inadvertently hint at elements and locations. To avoid inadvertently giving away elements, Judges should:

1. Keep voice inflections steady and **consistent**.
2. Keep the team in sight even when the team is hunting in an area without rats or has found all rats in Master.
3. Avoid smiling or frowning as the team nears or just before they call a rat tube.
4. **When rehidng tubes** between competitors; point and gesture, do not speak.

SECTION 6. Confirming Scores

1. After each run, shows or hands the stopwatch to the Scribe to record the time, reviews the scoresheet, marks if the dog passed or failed, and initials/**stamps** the sheet. Optimally two hand-held stopwatches are used, with the Judge handing a just used stopwatch to the Scribe and picking up a reset stopwatch to use with the next dog. The Scribe writes down the time then resets this stopwatch for the next competitor. The Judge cannot turn his/her back on an exiting team to go to the Scribe.

SECTION 7. Hiding Rat Tubes

See **“Rat Tube Locations” on page 16 of the Competitor Rulebook**. Additional Judge notes:

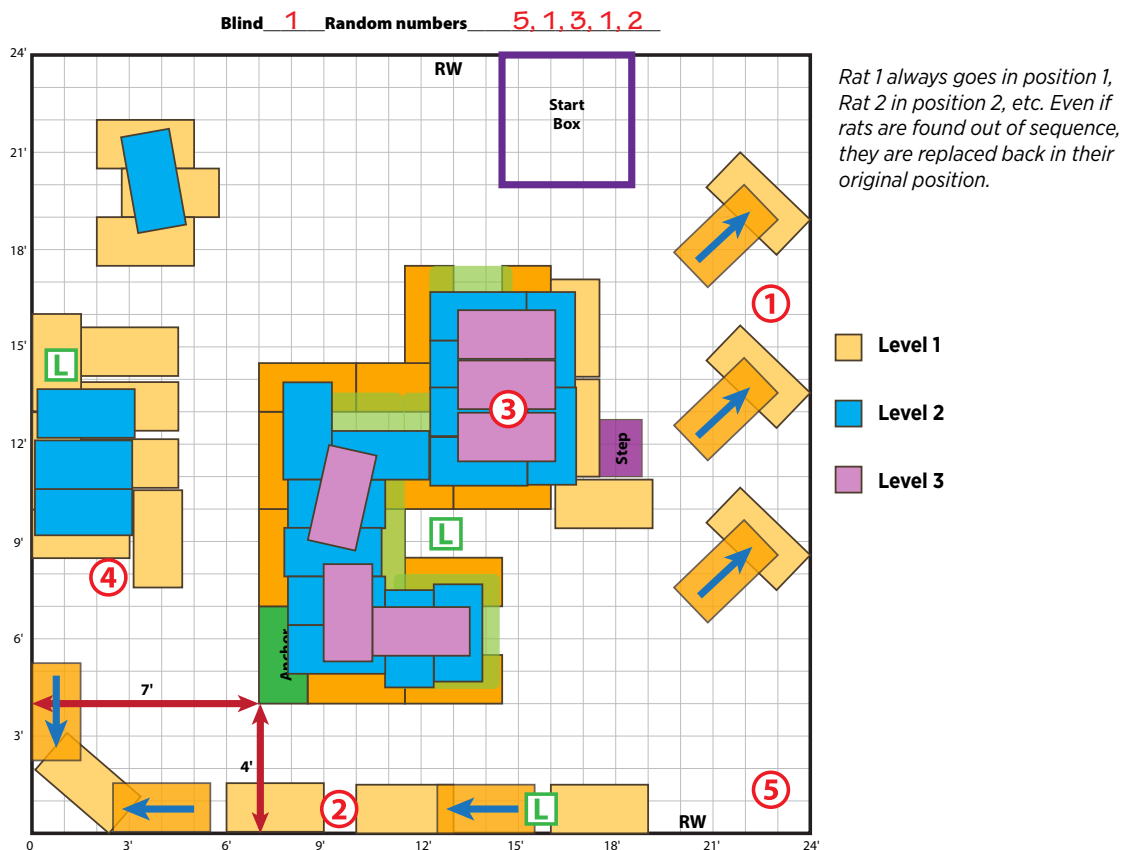
1. Tubes can’t be hidden where a dog could easily push, roll, or shove the tube into any tunnel. Tubes may be hidden in Novice tunnels including Novice tunnels used as incidental tunnels at higher levels.
2. Tubes cannot be hidden on any 6" ledge, the minimum ledge width for a tube is 12".
3. Tubes cannot be hidden where an entire bale would have to be lifted off the tube to remove the tube, or wedged so tightly into a gap that the handler or Rat Wrangler would physically struggle to remove the tube.
4. Tubes cannot be hidden **where a dog could easily push the tube, causing it to drop** down the vertical distance of more than one bale.
5. Tubes cannot be so heavily covered or packed down as to cut off air to the rat or hinder the ability of the dog to scent through the hay/straw.
6. Tubes cannot be hidden in any place the handler cannot see even very small dogs indicate. Special attention should be paid to small dogs disappearing into pits at upper levels **and behind the tunnel pile in a Distance Challenge**.

SECTION 8. Efficiently Placing and Switching Tubes

Quick and efficient tube placement is critical to smooth and efficient trials. **All tubes, live, litter, rat, are kept level at all times and never placed on end.**

1. **Rat Safety.** Rat tubes are never opened in the ring for any reason. Any rat needing to be checked must be returned to the rat safe area. **When loading or switching tubes, live rat tubes are never placed on bales where they could roll off.**
2. **Rat Wranglers.** As the Judge finishes judging each team and confirms the score and time with the Scribe, the Rat Wranglers handle switch outs, referring to the map as necessary. Care should be taken that rat numbers are only communicated to the Rat Wranglers, not to spectators. Assigning each RW a specific area of the ring will help keep things moving quickly as they can more easily keep up with just one side of the ring. The Judge should finish with the Scribe, non-verbally confirm with the RW(s) that tubes are properly placed and covered, then call the next dog.
3. **Master Rat Locations.** Each numbered Rat Tube location is kept consistent from dog to dog within the blind. Using this system, the Rat 1 slot in each blind always contains a rat. If there are two rats, slots 1 and 2 are filled, etc.

SAMPLE PRE-MARKED MASTER COURSE



This illustration does not include all course map requirements, see the map design section.

Pre-marking does not have to be done on the computer, hand writing is acceptable. It is suggested that judges use different colored ink to differentiate between litter (green), empty (blue) and rats (red).

Part 12: Falling Bales and Tunnel Fails

Sometimes dogs dislodge bales as they navigate the course. How that is handled depends on the specific circumstances. Sometimes dogs exit tunnels in unorthodox ways.

- Bale falls and blocks tunnel.** At all Class levels, if a bale is dislodged and it blocks the tunnel entrance completely, and if the dog has not yet tunneled, the ring is stopped and the dog is run in a later blind.
- Bale falls and does not block tunnel.** If a bale falls and does not block the tunnel it is generally left where it falls. If it has fallen in such a way that it completely blocks a passage way (handler cannot pass without touching the bale); in Novice, Open, Senior, and Crazy 8s, the ring is stopped and the dog is run in a later blind. In Master, the bale lays where it is and the handler must navigate around the new challenge.
- Bale falls and opens up a Distance Challenge.** If a bale falls or rotates so that it opens up a DC area, the DC remains. Handlers crossing into that DC without calling rat are NQd.
- Dog destroys tunnel.** If a dog exits a tunnel by making his own path (not using the designated path) or otherwise interferes with the tunnel and the tunnel is disarranged in such a way that it can't be used (board falls, etc.) the run is stopped and the dog is assessed an NQ score.
- Dog exits the side of a tunnel and tunnel can still be used.** If the dog exits in an unorthodox way and the tunnel is still viable, the dog may continue to hunt, but must complete the tunnel correctly to receive a qualifying score. The tunnel is not fixed until the dog exits the ring. The only exception to this rule would be if the tunnel was so poorly constructed, it makes the side of the tunnel inviting and seem like a viable exit.

Part 13: Re-Judging

There are several scenarios in which a team may need to be re-judged. Judges are human and make mistakes, and re-judging will happen. Videotapes are not allowed to be used as evidence for re-judging.

SECTION 1. Re-judging, General

1. If a dog has failed on a portion of the course because of unusual circumstances in which the dog/handler are not at fault, the team must be re-judged. Unusual circumstances could include things like an unexpected extremely loud noise that badly startles a dog, a ring gate falling, etc.
2. If a Judge NQs in error (mistaken rat tube, etc.) the team must be re-judged.
 - a) To check a tube for a rat, run a small flashlight across a row of holes at the top of the tube. Do not shine a flashlight directly into the tube from the grate end.

SECTION 2. Re-judging, Judge errors

1. If a dog has Qualified on a course but there has been a judge error which did not in any way make the course easier or give an advantage to the dog, (both tubes on the ground in Open, extra litter tube on the course, etc.) the handler may choose whether to be re-judged or to accept their course time and receive a qualifying score.
2. If a dog has Qualified on a course set up or design that does not meet the basic requirements for that level the error must be corrected as soon as it is found.
 - a) If the error has made the course easier than a legal course would be (too few rats, tubes left uncovered, only one place in Master 3-high, etc.) all affected dogs must be re-judged.
 - b) If the error has made the course harder than a legal course (more than the allowed number of areas at 2 high, an illegal tunnel that is too long or too many turns for the level, etc.) then all dogs who have Qualified on the course may keep their scores or choose to re-run on the corrected course. All dogs who have not Qualified on that course must be re-run unless they were dismissed for a reason unrelated to finding rats or going over time, such as misconduct, elimination on the course, etc.

SECTION 3. Re-judging, Timer Failures

1. If there is a timer failure and the handler has not yet completed any of the course elements, the handler should be stopped and restarted immediately.
2. If there is a timer failure and the handler has successfully completed some but not all of the course elements, the handler should be stopped and allowed to run again in a later blind.
3. If there is a timer failure and the handler has successfully completed all elements before the timer malfunction was discovered, the Judge should ask if the team wants to re-run for time or accept maximum course time for a qualifying score. If re-running, the handler must be in a later blind. The dog must complete all elements including finding all rats on the re-run. If the team does not successfully complete the course on the second run, they are NQd.
4. Teams who are NQd due to other faults on any part of the course are not eligible for re-judging based on timer failure.

Part 14: Course Design

SECTION 1. Design Overview

Barn Hunt courses must be handler accessible and level-appropriate.

1. Each Judge must design a unique course for each class level.
2. Courses must be nested if at all possible. If working with a multiple Judges, they should work together to nest courses for maximum building efficiency (see [“Nesting” on page 4.](#))
3. Courses must be designed prior to the Event
4. A Judge should not constantly use the same 3 or 4 courses; they will vary by Judge and Trial. It is natural that most Judges will develop a “style” over time.
5. The diagrams and guidelines in this section of the rules are based on two-stringer bales. Judges must adjust course design for 3 stringer bales to ensure safety and sight lines for small dogs, as well as the ability of small dogs to get in and out of wells created with the taller three-stringer bales.

SECTION 2. Maps

Maps must be clear and detailed enough for non-experienced volunteers to be able to easily understand and interpret the map for building. At least one copy of each map must be kept for a year. Maps are subject to review.

- Each Event's courses should be a single document, with a page for each map, saved as a pdf. A Word template for course design and guides on how to save to pdf are at barnhunt.com/judgeforms.html.

The following elements are required on each page of the map document:

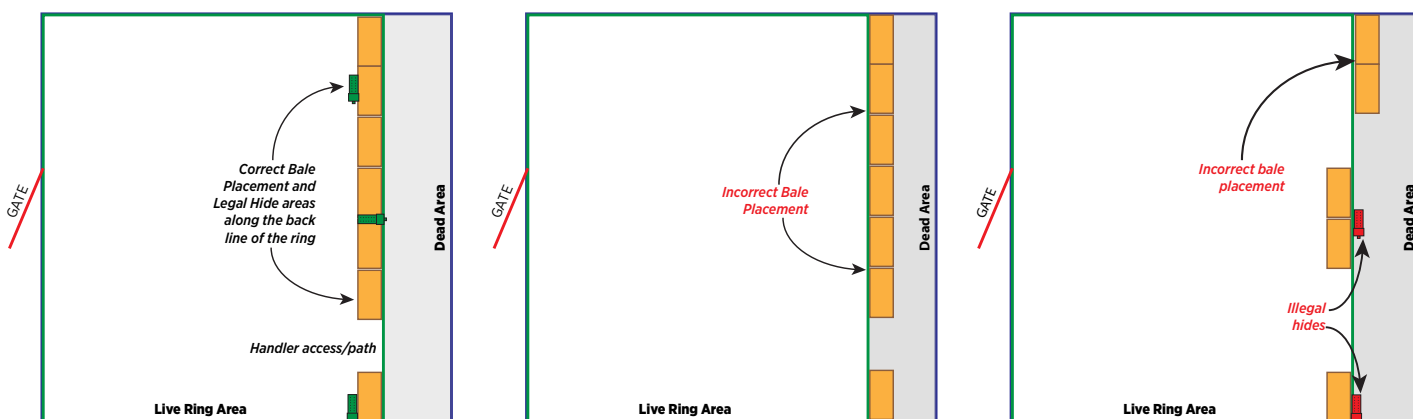
- Course title.** Judge name, class level, trial, and date (e.g., Jane Smith, Novice T2, Jan 1, 2020).
- Map key.** A key to the elements on the map.
- Grids.** The course must be drawn/built on a visible grid with lines marked at every 6" to 1 foot. Grid measurement numbers should be placed at least every 4-5'.
- Layers.** Each map (except Novice and Instinct) must have a separate base layer.
- Anchor Bales.** Anchor bales are required for all tunnel structures not against a wall, fence, or other permanent structure. This anchor bale is noted on the map diagram for the bottom layer and shows a specific measurement to the corner of the two nearest sides of the ring so that course builders can accurately place the stack(s).
- Walls, fencing, gates, obstructions.** Ring borders must be marked as solid wall or fencing, with gates properly placed. Any obstructions or unusual areas must be indicated. Those could include pillars, windows, outlets, or any other item which requiring design adjustment.
- Leaner bales.** Leaners must be clearly marked including the direction of the lean.
- Bale numbers.** List the total number of bales needed, numbers for the bottom layer, and when nesting, the total number of new bales or bales being taken away. (e.g., Senior, 40 bales on base, 55 bales total. Open from Senior, -15 bales, 30 on base, 40 bales total).
- Start box.** The Start box location must be indicated.
- Tunnel Length.** This is a centerline measurement from each portal to the next portal (can be in the key).
- Board edges.** Board edge locations must be marked. Individual boards should not be placed; a line indicating the board ends placement is sufficient. Board end locations are to be shown on the bottom layer map.

SECTION 3. Building Instinct/Novice/Open in a Larger Ring

See the [“Briefings and Course Map Copies” on page 9](#) for how to Brief when you have a small ring in a larger space. See [“Building a Lower Level Class in an Upper Level Ring” on page 12 of the Club Rulebook](#) for layout notes and diagrams. When designing the course and placing tubes:

- Tubes can never be hidden on the side of any bale facing the open/dead area. It is not in play.
- Judges and Rat Wranglers are not to be posted inside the dead area. They may use the area briefly to follow the dog, but not linger.
- There can be no sheer faces on the side of the course facing the empty area; all rules on safe step downs, etc. apply.
- Dogs and handlers may cross into the blank space without penalty. If using bales to designate the border, an opening must be left for handler access to retrieve their dog if necessary.

BUILDING BALES AGAINST THE DEAD AREA LINE



Part 15: Building Safe Courses

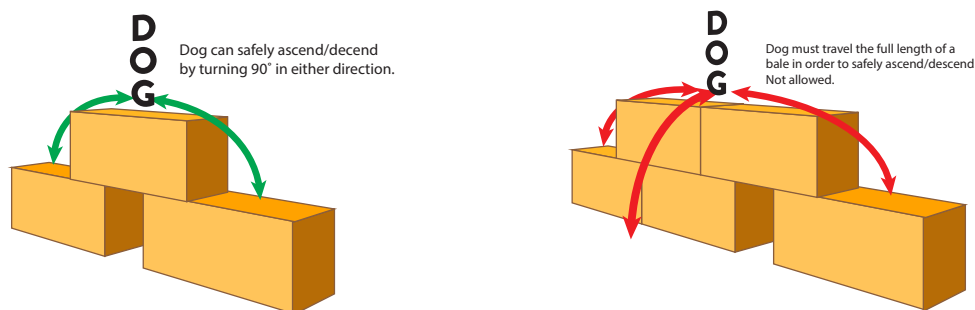
SECTION 1. Sheer faces.

Sheer faces are formed when bales are stacked two or more high in such a way that there are no readily available safe step up or down areas for the dog. Dogs must be able to safely ascend/descend a stack of bales without having to turn more than 90° in any direction and without having to travel more than the length of half a bale in any direction.

SECTION 2. Safe ledges.

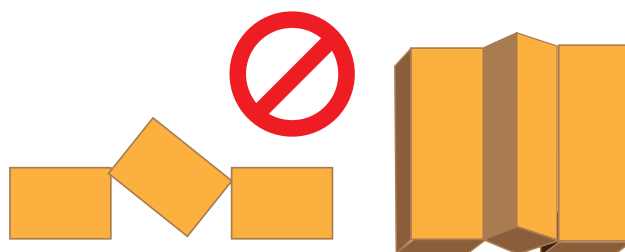
A safe ledge is defined as a ledge not less than 6" in depth for the dog to securely place a foot. In Senior and Master in locations where bales are stacked three-high there can be no more than one 6" ledge per total vertical drop. If using a 6" ledge, the ledges above and below the 6" ledge must be a minimum of ½ bale wide or approximately 12" or wider.

SAFE AND UNSAFE CLIMBS



Note: Only the front sides of these elements are shown in the illustrations above. In a real ring, these elements would need safe steps on all sides.

LONG LEANERS



Bales tilted diagonally along their long axis are not allowed.

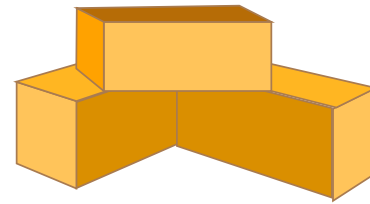
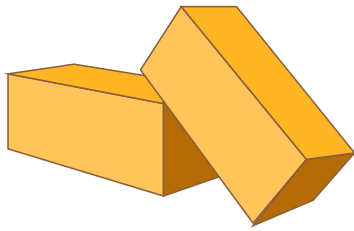
SECTION 3. Other Safety Considerations

Courses must be designed to maximize safety for competitors, Judges, dogs, and rats.

- Steps.** The step must be placed so there is no tripping hazard for handlers, and there is adequate room for the dog to both get on and get off the higher level. See [“Steps” on page 10 of the Competitor Rulebook](#).
- Escape hazards.** Bales can be stacked no more than 1 bale high against any fenced area of the ring to prevent dogs from using a stack to jump out of the ring. Single 2-stringer leaner bales placed diagonally from the floor to the second level are allowed. Any flat second level of bales must be placed at least one bale-width away from the fence and a third level at least two bale-widths away from the fence. Facilities which only have access to three-stringer bales may not use leaner bales against a fence and must increase the horizontal distance away from the fence as the stack rises accordingly. (See [“Line Drive Class” on page 22 of the Competitor Rulebook](#) for specific line drive rules.)
- Stability.** Courses must be designed to be stable. It is impossible to eliminate all rocking of bales, but all structures should be sturdy. Bales that would be very easily dislodged by an enthusiastic dog and/or bales that rock so much that they could easily roll off a structure are prohibited.

4. **Alleys.** Alleys (pathways with bales on either side) leading to tunnels cannot be less than 18" wide.
5. **Walking paths.** Planned walking paths must be a minimum of 12" wide with 18" preferred. Unplanned gaps free of fluff may still be used by the handler (see ["While In the Ring" on page 12 of the Competitor Rulebook](#)).
6. **Fluff and gaps.** All areas of the course where a tube could be safely hidden must have fluff, including all bases of bales (skirts), all fence edges, etc.
 - Dogs need to be able to see edges/ledges where they can safely step down. No fluff is allowed on 6" ledges.
 - Narrow vertical gaps unsuitable for tube placement must be tightly packed with straw to within 1-2" of the top so that dogs can see the gap but have a surface to step on. All gaps must be clearly visible to the dog.
 - Fluff piles, with or without tubes, cannot be placed in the middle of the floor.
 - Walking paths must be clear of fluff. 18" pathways/alleys have fluff on one side only.

COMMON ALLOWED ELEMENTS

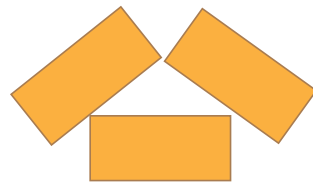


Part 16: Heights, Leaners, Spacing

SECTION 1. Bale Height Requirements

Bale height requirements by Class level are described in the [Competitor Rulebook](#). In order to qualify as a legal 2-high or 3-high place, the bales at that height must be grouped together in such a way that a rat tube can be safely hidden on top of them. Five or more bales grouped together in a single location count as two places. Bale groupings must be separated by 18" or more at their closest sides/corners at that height to qualify as separate places.

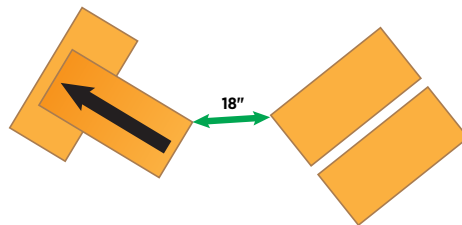
2- AND 3-HIGH LEVEL GROUPINGS



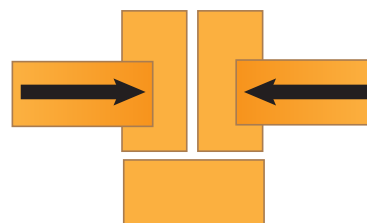
These bales touch but no tube could be hidden on top, they do not count as a 2- or 3-high place.



These bales provide a safe surface for tube(s) and would count as a single 2- or 3-high place.



To be called separate places, bale groupings must be at least 18" apart.



5 or more bales grouped together count as two places.

SECTION 2. Pillar Bales

Pillar bales are stood on end to protrude above the level where they are set. They must be propped on all sides using a wall and/or bracing bales. They may not be placed against a fence. No tubes may be hidden on top of a pillar bale, and they do not count toward any specific level height.

SECTION 3. Bales on their tall side as part of a grouping.

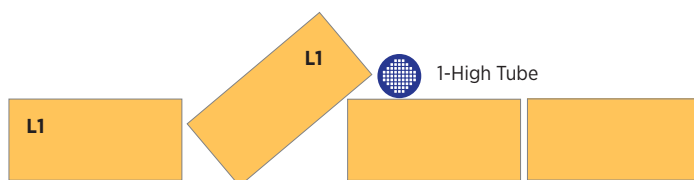
Bales on their taller side count as part of a grouping at 2- or 3-high if braced by a wall or on either side by other bales at that height.

SECTION 4. Assigning Leaners to Levels

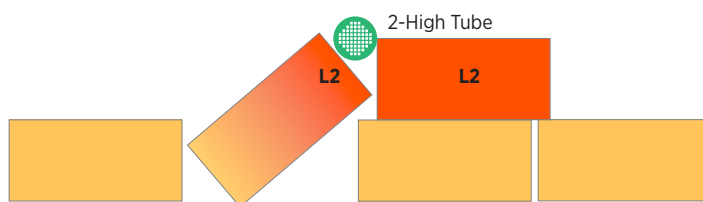
When building courses with leaner bales, it can be difficult to know when a bale can be counted as a higher level bale. This illustration should help Judges determine whether or not their structure is a legal 2- or 3-high level.

ASSIGNING LEANER BALES TO LEVELS

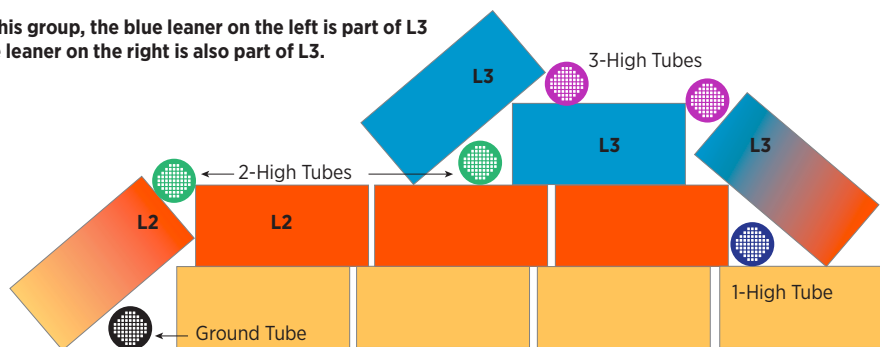
All bales in this group considered at the same level



In this group, the leaner bale becomes part of Level 2



In this group, the blue leaner on the left is part of L3
The leaner on the right is also part of L3.



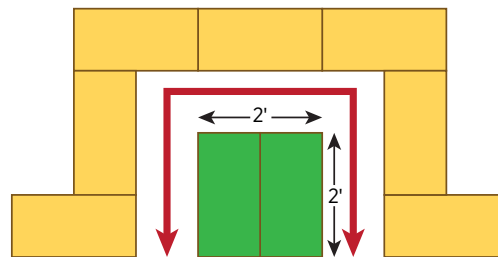
Part 17: Tunnel-Specific Definitions

Tunnels start and end where they become a tunnel; at the front edge of the leading board of an entry/exit portal. Illustrations in this section that don't show boards as part of the illustration are assumed to have boards covering the entire length shown as a tunnel unless noted otherwise on the illustration. See the Class descriptions in the **Competitor Rulebook** for tunnel level specifications.

- Turns.** To be a legal turn, the dog must turn 90 degrees. Angles/turns less or greater than 90° are not allowed in tunnels.
- Distance.** The minimum distance a dog travels after a 90° turn is 2 feet as designed.
- Jogs.** A jog is any turn that is less than 2 feet of bale-length. Jogs are only allowed at the entry/exit of tunnels in Senior, Master, and Crazy 8, not in the body of the tunnel. Jogs do not count as turns.

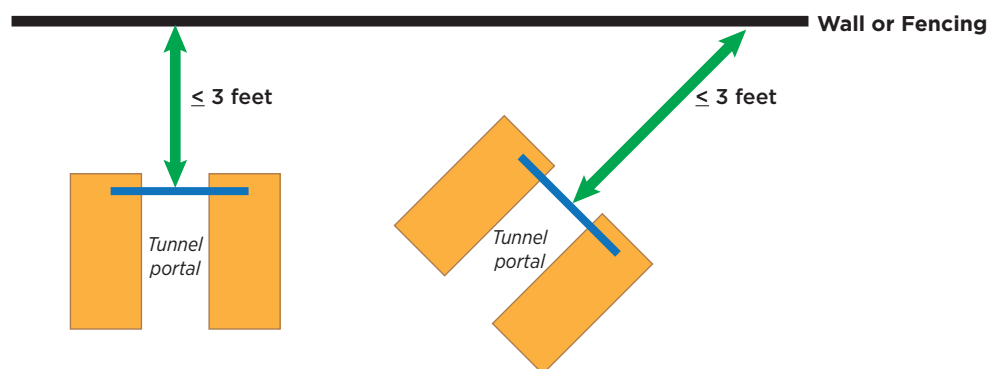
4. **Total Length.** This is the total length of the tunnel, measured down the center line, from one entry portal to the next nearest entry portal. Length is “as designed.” Variance of up to a foot or so based on bale lengths is expected and allowed.
5. **Clearance to fence/barrier.** There must be at least 3’ of space between a tunnel portal and a blocking fence or wall.
6. **Nesting.** Events with two Trials per day may have the same tunnel structure from T1 to T2 of a Class level with minor rearrangements of floor elements between each Trial. If using a two-turn tunnel, the tunnel structure can be identical in Senior and Master. Crazy 8s tunnels may have the same base bales but the top elements must change. Tunnels must change from day to day (the same tunnel structure cannot be used for an entire Event.) Lower level courses may contain higher level tunnels. See [“Official and Incidental Tunnels” on page 10 of the Competitor Rulebook.](#)
7. **Drop-Ins.** Drop-in tunnels are not allowed. A Drop-in tunnel is constructed such that a dog would have to climb over one or more bales then immediately down into (or climb up out of) the tunnel. Dogs of all sizes must be able to enter/exit the tunnel without encountering a blocking bale or bales (see [“Crossing Bales” on page 21.](#))
8. **U Turns.** A turn wrapping around a single bale is a 180° U turn which exceeds the 90° maximum and is not allowed.
9. **Dark.** In Open, Senior, Master and Crazy 8s, the tunnel must appear dark. Dark means that the dog is presented with a picture of darkness as he enters the tunnel. The opposite opening of the tunnel should not be readily visible to the dog.
10. **Elevated.** In Senior and Master, an official and/or unofficial tunnel may be elevated to the second level.

MINIMUM INSIDE TURN



The minimum distance a dog must travel after a turn is 2 feet of bale-length.
This is a two-turn tunnel.

TUNNEL CLEARANCE TO BLOCKING WALLS



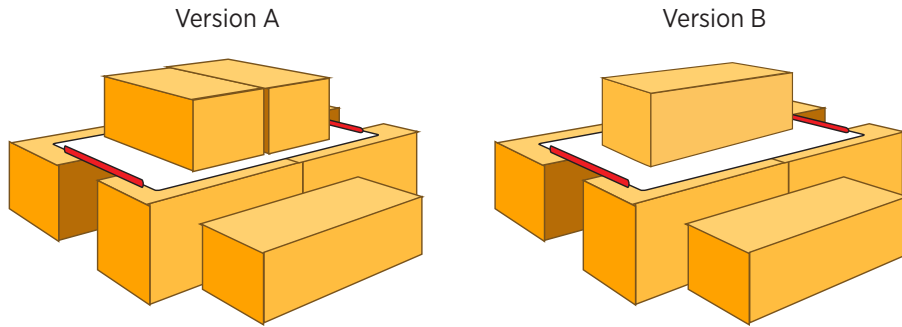
SECTION 1. Basic Design

1. All tunnels consist of bales turned to their taller side, covered by boards for the entire length of the tunnel and sufficiently weighted by bales to secure the boards from popping up.
2. Tunnels must have a safe step-ups/downs consisting of a minimum of 6" of exposed, foam-edged board over the top of each entry portal. The foam edging does not have to be permanently affixed.
3. Tunnels cannot contain interior blind alleys.
4. Bales in tunnels must be tightly abutted without gaps.

SECTION 2. Novice Tunnel

At least one Novice Level tunnel is to be set exactly as shown below with no variations or additions of any kind and must be set so that competitors may access all sides. If a single Novice tunnel is used, Leaners and Steps are not allowed on that tunnel. Version A is the preferred version. Version B is an option for clubs when the board would be too short to provide 6" step downs on either side of the tunnel opening. Version B does not qualify as a 2-high area of the course. Note the outside bales providing safe steps are required. Additional Official Novice tunnel(s) may be added. Additional Novice tunnels may share a single step down bale with the other Novice tunnel, be built directly against a wall, and/or have a leaner or a step.

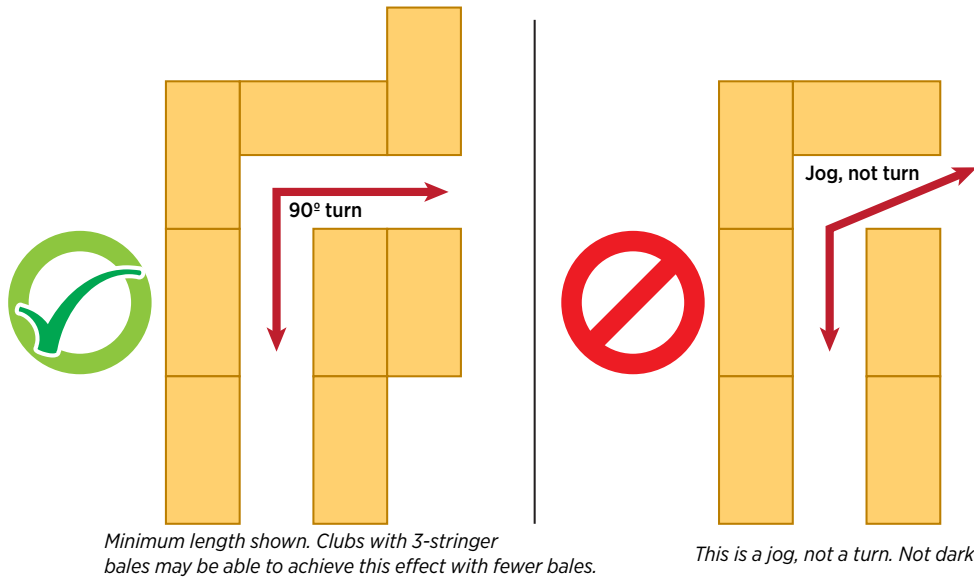
NOVICE TUNNEL CONFIGURATION



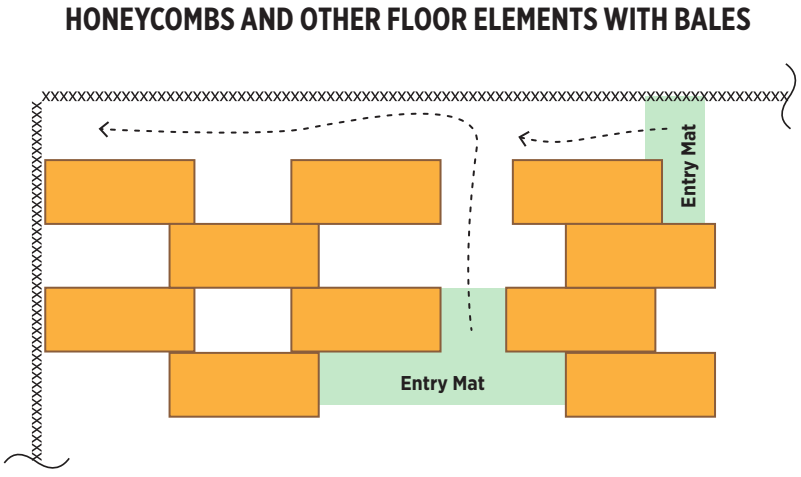
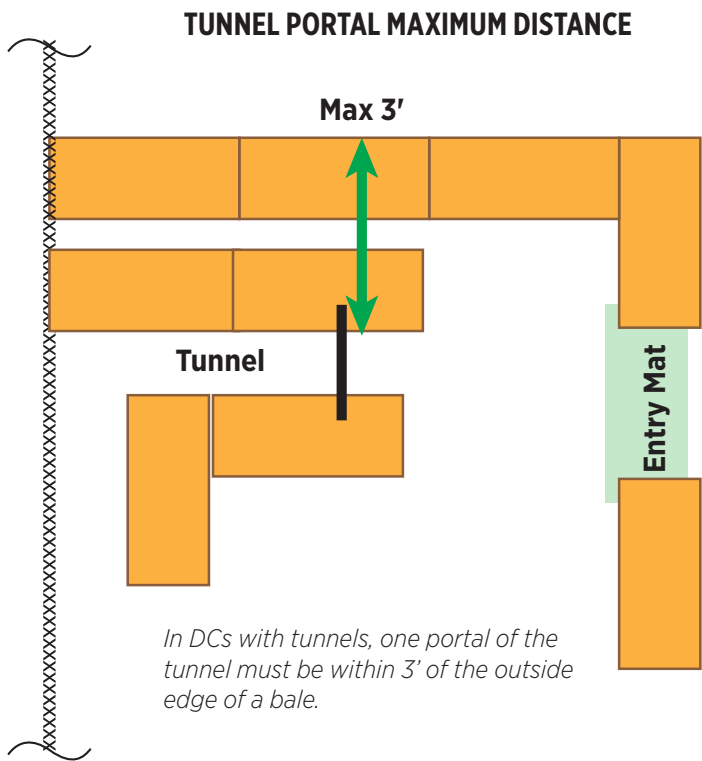
SECTION 3. Open Tunnel

The Open Level tunnel must meet the minimum configuration shown at left below, but may be longer. Jogs are not allowed in Open tunnel configurations.

OPEN TUNNEL MINIMUM AND DISALLOWED TURNS

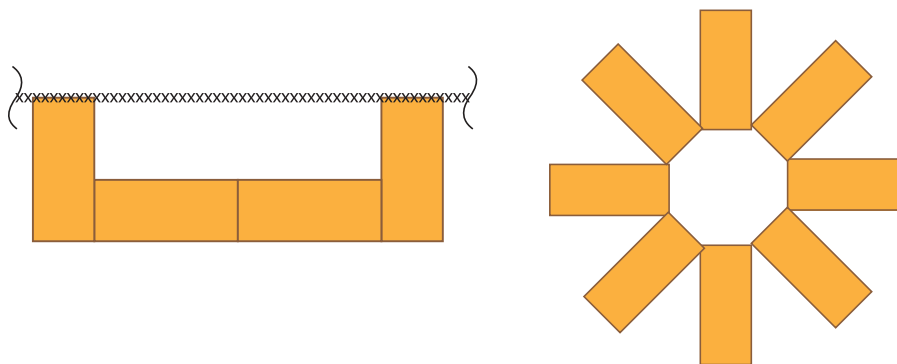


SECTION 6. Distance Challenges



Honeycomb and other floor structures must have a path leading into them. The holes in the structure must be large enough for small, long dogs (e.g. dachshunds) to get in and out without becoming stuck.

FLOOR ELEMENTS THAT ARE NOT DISTANCE CHALLENGES

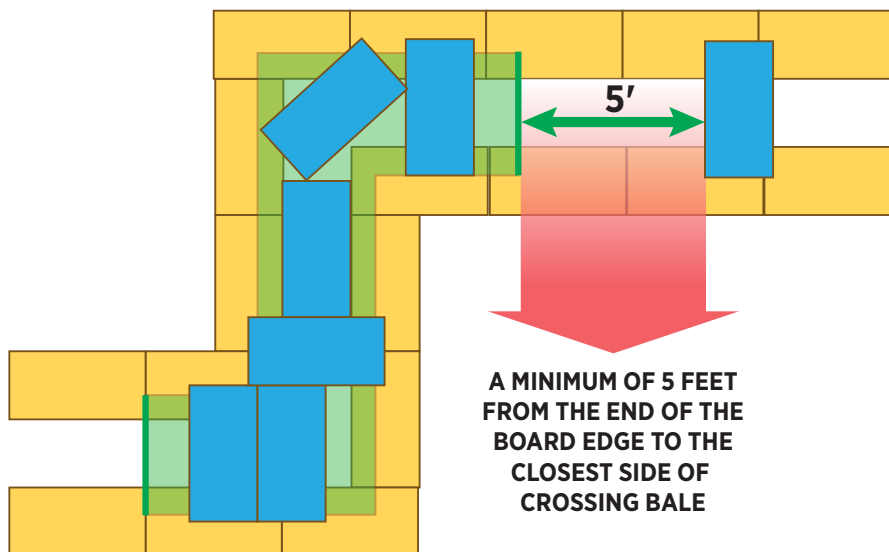


Not Distance Challenges. Handlers can easily reach out and touch a medium sized dog.

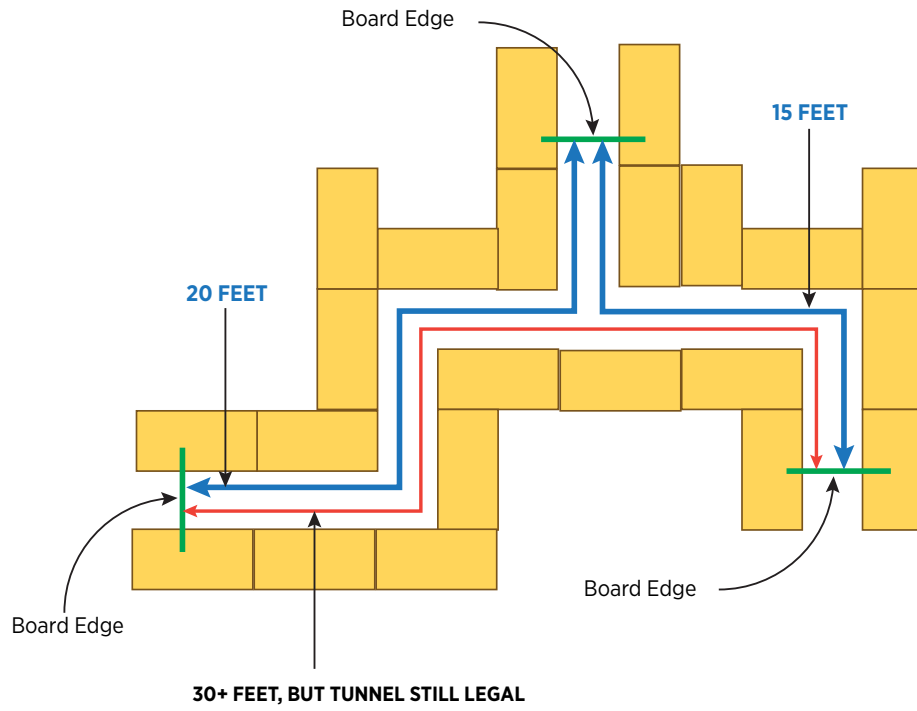
SECTION 7. Crossing Bales

A crossing bale (sometimes referred to as a skylight) is a bale added to the top of an alley leading to a tunnel. These bales cannot be placed such that they artificially lengthen the tunnel effort or make for a “drop in” tunnel. There can only be one Crossing bale on any alley leading to a tunnel, and that crossing bale must be a minimum of 5’ from the entrance portal to that tunnel. A crossing bale may be inside a Distance Challenge in Master. A crossing bale is only allowed in Senior, Master, and Crazy 8s.




SAMPLE CROSSING BALE



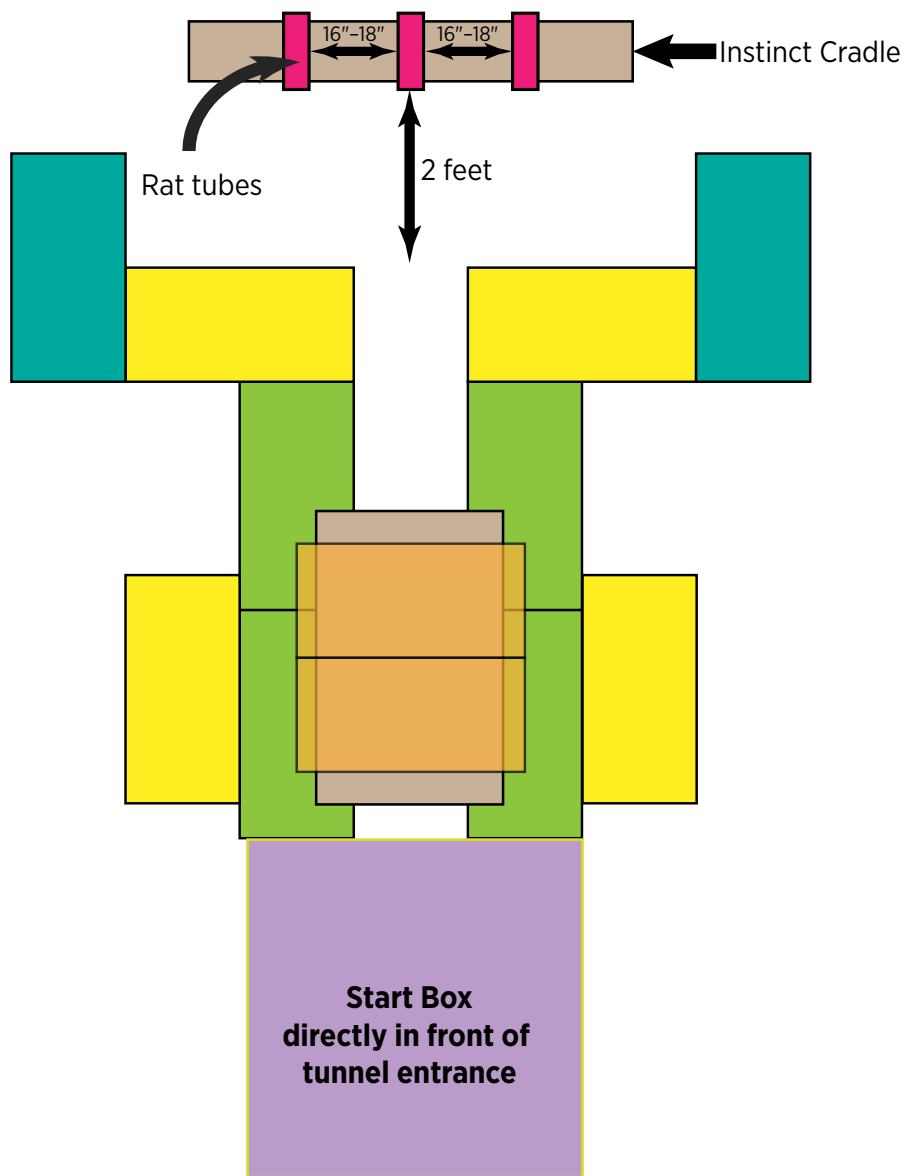
SAMPLE MULTIPOST TUNNEL



Part 18: Designated Instinct Course

 Bales laid flat  Bales laid on taller sides  Optional bales

3 tubes, placed on ground in such a way that dog entering area can see them as soon as he clears the tunnel structure.



See "[Barn Hunt Instinct \(RAT\)](#)" on page 18 of the [Competitor Rulebook](#) for setting Instinct on a Novice Course.