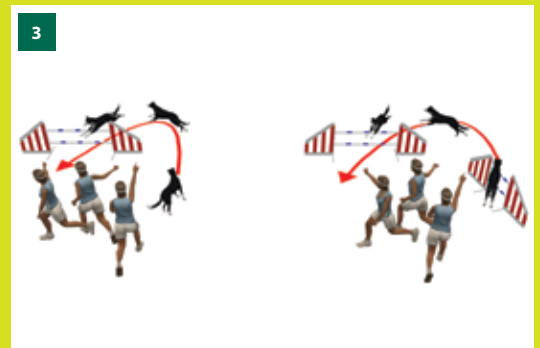
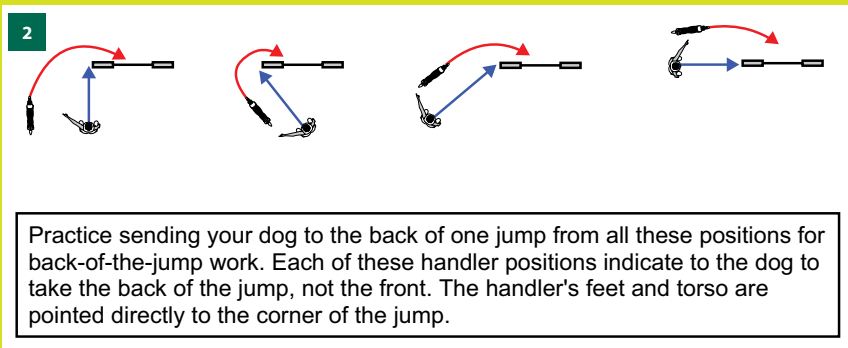
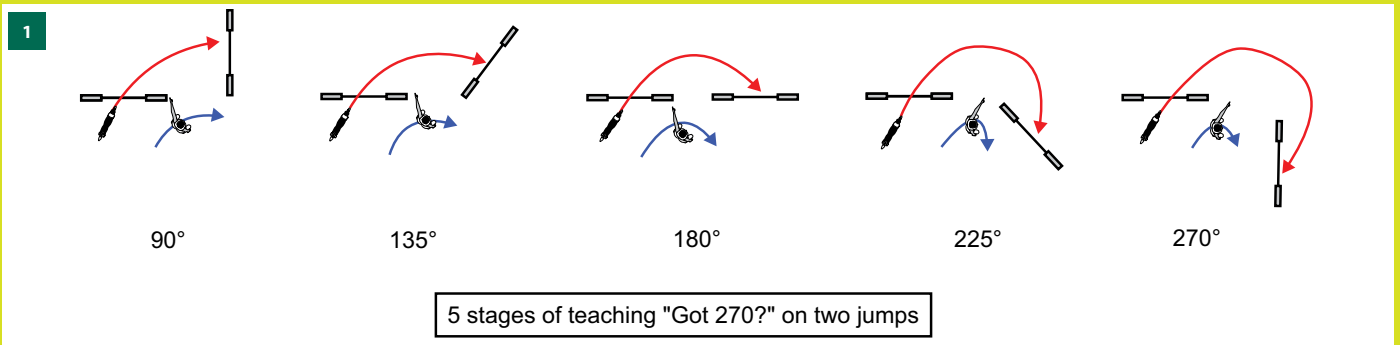


# Got 270?



“Got 270” is the name of the 270 training article and incremental training that I have used for many years to teach the agility pattern called the 270. It is a pretty simple process of starting with a 90° turn, building it up to a 180° turn, and that eventually morphing it into a 270, as shown in **Figure 1**. I still use this method when training young dogs, but it is not my primary or only way of teaching the skills needed for reliable independent performance of the 270 pattern.

I am often using more than one method to teach agility behav-

iors. Just like I still use 4 and 6 poles to work on entries and exits for weaves instead of a full set of 12, or I may use steps and short boards to continue to improve my dogs’ full contact performance throughout their careers. I am using “post work” as well as “Got 270” and one-jump “back-of-the-jump work” to help my dog to have reliable, independent 270 skills.

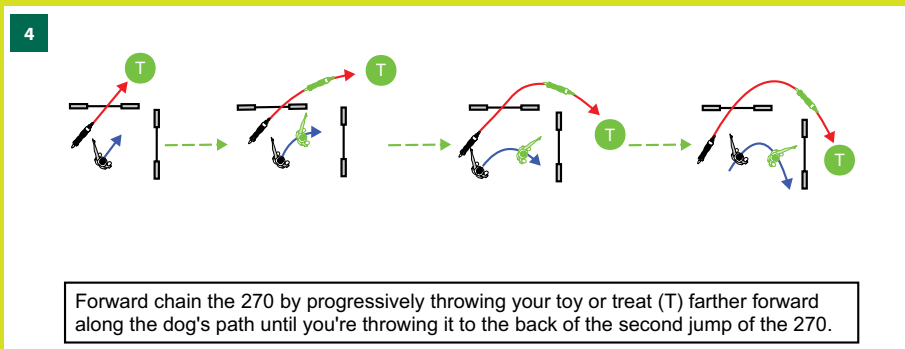
### Back-of-the-Jump Work

The skills of a 270 are very similar to back-of-the-jump skills and I find it difficult to have one exist without the other. If your dog un-

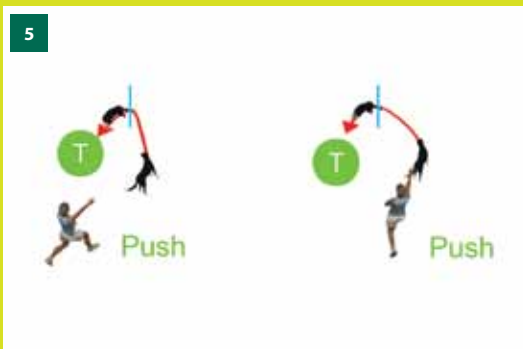
derstands how to get to the back of a jump and take the jump coming back toward you, he may already have a good understanding of a 270. **Figures 2 and 3** show that the handling to the back of the jump can look just like the handling on a 270. Practice sending your dog to the back of one jump from all the positions in **Figure 2** for back-of-the-jump work.

### Reinforce the Pattern

If your dog already understands the 270 pattern but you are having some errors once in a while, you could do a quick refresher of



Forward chain the 270 by progressively throwing your toy or treat (T) farther forward along the dog's path until you're throwing it to the back of the second jump of the 270.



Once you have your equipment ready, get out some cookies or a toy and entice your dog around the post and then throw your reward to the far side of the post.

“Got 270?” as well as do some reinforcement of the pattern by forward chaining the 270 as shown in **Figure 4**. These reinforcement spots will be mentioned in other parts of this article. Should your dog at any time get sticky in carrying out to the back of the 270, or in any parts of your 270 training, you will want reinforce any and all attempts.

### Mixing It Up to Prevent Patterned Behavior

One of the problems with teaching any pattern in agility (270, 180, 90, pinwheel, circle) is that we want the dog to understand the pattern well enough to have it be cued independently from a distance or with a side change before and/or after, but we don't want the pattern to override handling of the obstacles in the pattern or surrounding it. As soon as my dog understands the 270 pattern, I immediately start to put in threadles and front crosses on the 270 as well as asking for side changes before and after. My dog should only carry out to the second jump of the 270 if my body language, my verbal cue, and, most importantly,

my dogs' line, all support the pattern of 270.

I use the verbal cue of *Push* to tell my dog to go out to do the 270, and that is also the same cue I use for the back of the jump. I want my verbal cue to trigger understanding and expectation of reinforcement for going out to the jump. My verbal cue supports my body language, it never overrides it. I would not put my dog on a line to take the front of the jump and then give her the cue to take the back side. Body position, motion and your dog's existing path are the strongest cues to do the 270.

### Post Work

Nowadays my one-jump work includes teaching and understanding the back of the jump long before I get around to doing the two jumps of a 270. But before I teach one-jump work, I will have taught some stationary and moving “post work” to my dog. Post work can be done with a pup before you are ready to jump him; however, I don't like to continue it for very long before I introduce jumping. Occasionally I run into dogs that have been taught to run around

jump wings or posts and the pups may learn to target the second wing of a jump instead of the first, which can cause some training complications. So, there's the precaution. But I love using a post or folding chair for a variety of agility training, and I especially like it for back of the jump and 270.

Post work starts with teaching your dog to go around a post and then moving farther away until you have at least a 10-15' send. Items I use for posts: fence post with pool noodle, traffic post, freestanding jump wing, or a folding chair



From left to right: folding chair, jump stanchion wrapped with pipe insulation, traffic marker, pool noodle over post hammered into ground

I never use white fence posts because they look like weave poles or ring barrier posts. I don't use cones of any size, even huge ones, because they are still the same shape as the small cones used as agility markers. Cone work can cause havoc with weave pole execution; if the dog sees the cones within 10' of the weaves he wants to weave around the cone as the first pole.

Once you have your equipment ready, get out some cookies or a toy and entice your dog around the post and then throw your reward to the far side of the post. Eventually only reward completion of the turn around the post as shown in **Figure 5**.

**6**

**A B C D E**

Train with the post until you can send your dog forward from any spot. Be sure to start your dog from a position facing directly to the side of the post. Your dog is learning to stay on a line and not to veer off of it unless you cue a turn away from the straight line. Do both stationary (taking one step forward as you send) and moving sends. A stationary handler position is shown in D and E.

**7** **How post work translates to jump work**

The handler's stationary position to the left and forward of the post is like a LOP position on a jump or the position for a FC between the 270 jumps.

The handler is lateral of the dog's line but is moving forward, parallel with the dog, indicating the line to the back of the jump

**8**

Now you are ready to add a jump before the post. Continue to reward the dog after executing each post turn.

**9**

**A B C D**

A: Square corner with equidistant jumps so handling on either your right or left side will be the same.  
 B: This 270 has a longer path for the dog to travel before he sees the backside of #2.  
 C: When your dog lands this 270 he will almost be to the refusal line on the backside of the jump. This one is easier than the last.  
 D: You should be able to turn your shoulders as soon as your dog has committed to the refusal line of the jump on both a 270 and a send to the back of a jump.

Always take at least one step forward to the post when you begin your send. You do not need to remain totally stationary in this work, but again, you want your body language to support the pattern and the obstacle, in this case, the post. It is here that I introduce my verbal cue of *Push*. I don't use *Go On* as a verbal cue on a post send since the dog is only going forward a short distance and then curling back around to me. I want my *Go On* to be a straight line which usually includes more than just one obstacle, and I am normally running with my dog when I give the *Go On* cue. Once your dog will easily send around the post you can start to add a bit more distance and you can move your position as well. This is shown in **Figure 6**.

I teach my dogs to move forward to the post even when I am lateral of them as shown in **Figure 7**. This helps your dog to have an understanding to stay on the line you have established.

The next step toward establishing your 270 skill is to place a jump prior to the post as in **Figure 8**. Continue to move your jump and post until you have the semblance of the 270.

Now that you are ready for the full 270, replace your post with a second jump, as shown in **Figure 9**, and build yourself a symmetrical 270 that is equidistant in the corner (A). Send your dog around on your right side and left side; remember to turn your shoulders to stay parallel with your dog's path. If you have to drive all the way into the corner of the 270 it will be difficult to get away from the second jump and get into position for a side change. Now change the spacing on your 270 (B and C) and practice on both sides again. You should be turning your shoulders as your dog is committing to the refusal line of the second jump (D). That statement trans-

lates to, “Indicate the line to the back of the jump. As your dog is approaching the invisible line that extends out into infinity on both sides of the jump, and she seems to be committed to that line, then it is time to turn your shoulders.”

Remember Figure 4 at the beginning of the article that refers to reinforcement? Make sure you are getting in some random toy or cookie tosses along your dog’s path to the second jump so that he is being rewarded just for going to the backside once in a while, rather than always rewarding on completion of the 270.

You will want a third jump for the four drills in **Figures 10 and 11**, which show some specific side changes you will want to perfect. Front cross after the second jump of the 270, rear cross the first jump of the 270, front cross between the two jumps on the take-off side of the second jump, and serpentine on the second jump of the 270. Obviously you will need rudimentary front and rear crosses as well as serpentes before you try them on the 270.

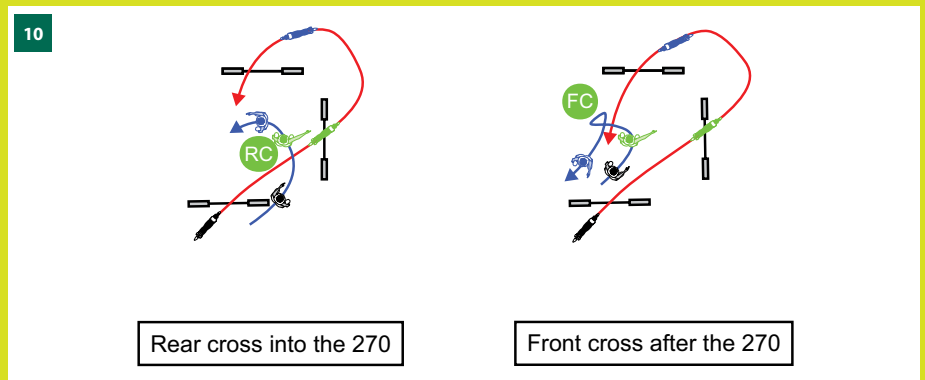
### The Ultimate 270

Of course you won’t really feel like you have trained all the 270 skills until you do some work in the ultimate 270 setup, the simple four-jump box shown in **Figure 12**. Start with one threadle on both your right and left side, making sure to reward your dog for coming into you. Then try multiple threadles in a row around the box. 270s on a diagonal line are much easier than the straight-line 270s, of course, but you need to train them all.

If you want more 270 work pull out your *Alphabet Drills* book and start with letter A; there are many exercises there to test what you have perfected with the drills included here.

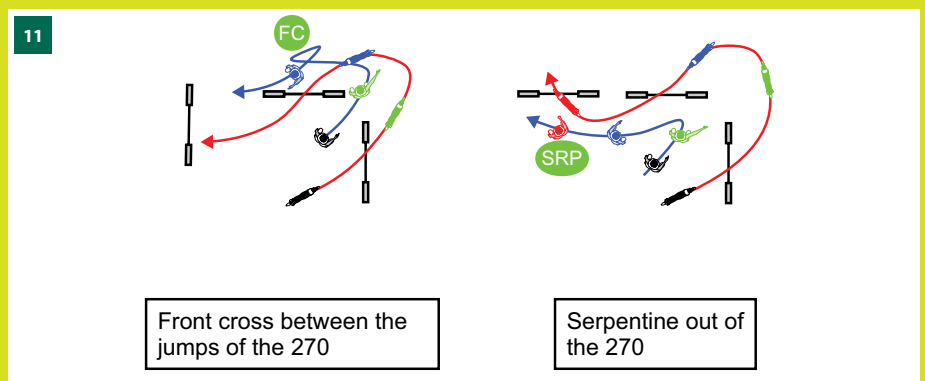
### Next Month

I will be presenting lots more interesting drills and challenges using the 270 pattern in my next “Power Paws Drills” article. See you then for more 270 training! 🐾



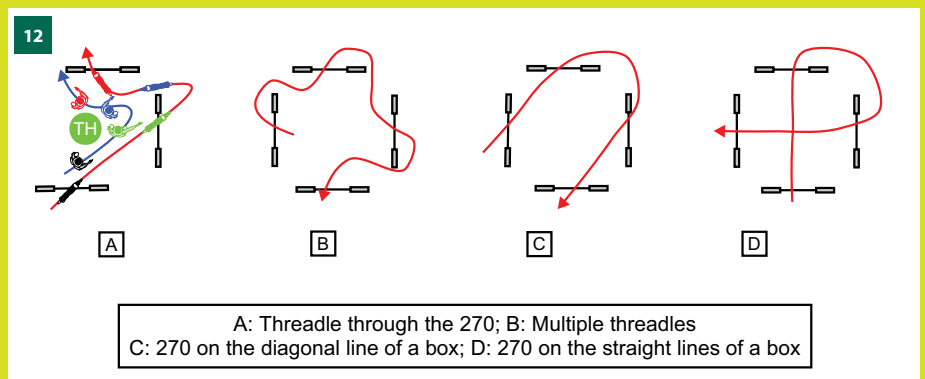
Rear cross into the 270

Front cross after the 270



Front cross between the jumps of the 270

Serpentine out of the 270



A: Threadle through the 270; B: Multiple threadles  
C: 270 on the diagonal line of a box; D: 270 on the straight lines of a box

*Nancy Gyes and her husband, Jim Basic, run Power Paws Agility in San Jose, California. Nancy has been the AKC World Team Coach since 2006, and has been on the AKC World Team seven times, four years with Scud and three with Riot. Nancy and Riot finished 1st in 2002 and 2nd in 2001 in Individual Agility classes at the FCI Agility World Championships. Nancy also won the USDAA Nationals four years in a row, 1998 to 2001, with three different dogs: Scud, Riot, and Wicked. In 2001 and 2002, Nancy and Riot were the 24" jump height AKC National Champions. Contact Nancy at [www.powerpawsagility.com](http://www.powerpawsagility.com) where you can also view other articles and videos.*