



AGILITY CAMPUS

# THE SKILL ROADMAP

## Avoid Overwhelming Your Young Dog

The 5 Most Common Mistakes That Slow Progress  
Before Agility Training Even Begins

# Why Young Dogs Get Overwhelmed

Most handlers aren't doing too little.

**They're doing too much.**

Too many skills.

Too many cues.

Too many goals.

■ Confused dog

■ Overwhelmed handler

■ Slow progress

**You don't need to teach everything.**

**Teach the right thing at the right time.**



MISTAKE #01

## Teaching Everything At Once

**When you start training a young dog, it's tempting to work on everything at the same time — left, right, forward, turns, contacts, tunnels. The list feels endless, and every session becomes a mix of five different skills.**

The problem is that your dog's brain isn't built to learn multiple things in parallel. Every new skill needs repetition, processing time, and rest before it truly consolidates. When you pile on too many skills at once, your dog doesn't get faster — they get confused. You'll notice hesitation, wrong choices, and a dog who seems 'almost there' on everything but solid on nothing.

Real progress comes from depth, not breadth. Choose one main focus for the next four to six weeks. Master it until the response is truly automatic. Then — and only then — introduce the next skill.

**Mental Skills**

**Physical Skills**

**Obstacle Skills**



MISTAKE #02

## Building Skills Before Foundations

**It's exciting to move to obstacles. But the dog who skips foundation work hits a ceiling very quickly — and that ceiling appears exactly when you need the dog most: in a new environment, at a trial, under pressure.**

Foundation isn't just about 'basic obedience.' It's about building a dog who is genuinely engaged with you, confident in their own body, and able to focus despite distractions. A dog who loves to play, offers behavior, and trusts the training process will learn every future skill faster and retain it longer.

Skipping foundation is the most common shortcut that creates the longest setbacks. The time you spend here isn't slow — it's the investment that makes everything else easier.

✓ Engagement

✓ Focus

✓ Body Awareness

✓ Play

✓ Confidence

✓ Learning Skills

***"You can't build a second floor  
before the ground floor exists."***



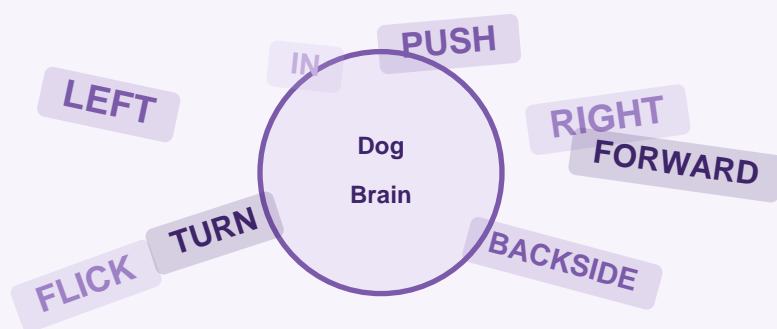
MISTAKE #03

## Introducing Too Many Cues Too Early

**Verbal cues are one of the most powerful tools in agility — but only when they are truly understood. The mistake most handlers make is introducing a long list of cues before any single one has been fully learned.**

When your dog hears a cue, they need to respond automatically — without hesitation, without looking at your body for hints. That level of fluency only comes from focused repetition on one cue at a time. Introducing Left, Right, Turn, Backside, and Flick all in the same month creates a dog who guesses rather than responds.

The goal isn't a dog who knows many cues. The goal is a dog who knows each cue completely — even at speed, even in a new location, even when excited. Clear beats complicated, every single time.





MISTAKE #04

## Underestimating Recovery

**More training does not mean faster progress. This is one of the hardest things for motivated handlers to accept — but it is absolutely true for young dogs.**

Young dogs tire mentally long before they tire physically. A dog who has been in a training session for too long stops processing and starts performing. They go through the motions, or they start making errors that have nothing to do with skill — they're simply done. And a dog who is mentally done is not learning anything.

Recovery days are not wasted days. They are when the actual learning consolidates. Muscles, joints, and neural pathways all need time to adapt. Short, focused training with full rest days in between isn't doing less — it's the structure that produces the best long-term results.



***"The dose makes the poison."***



MISTAKE #05

## Following Random Advice Instead of a Roadmap

The internet is full of agility training advice. Reels, tutorials, forum threads, training groups — every week there is something new to try. Without a clear roadmap, all of it feels equally important and equally urgent.

The result is a training plan that looks like a random collection of exercises rather than a structured progression. You might work on contacts one week, weaves the next, jump skills after — following whatever caught your attention or whatever your training group is doing. This creates dogs with gaps.

And gaps show up at the worst possible time — at competition speed, under pressure, when the cue needs to be completely automatic. A roadmap doesn't limit you. It frees you — because you always know exactly what comes next.

### ■ Random Advice

Everything feels urgent

No clear next step

→ **Confused dog**

### ✓ Clear Roadmap

Know what to teach now

Know what can wait

→ **Skilled dog**



## THE AGILITY CAMPUS SKILL ROADMAP

# A clear path forward.

### 01 FOUNDATIONS

Engagement

Play

Focus

Body Awareness

Startlines

Impulse Control

Directionals

Shaping Games

Targets



### 02 FIRST OBSTACLE SKILLS

Hard Turns

Soft Turns

Tunnel Cues

Contact Foundation



### 03 ADVANCED OBSTACLE SKILLS

Backsides

Threadles

Weaves

Contacts



### 04 COMPETITION PREP

Sequencing

Generalizing

Mental Preparation

Each skill at the right age — in the right order.

QUICK SELF-CHECK

# Is this webinar for you?

Check the boxes that apply to you.

I feel overwhelmed by everything I should be teaching.

I'm unsure what comes next in my dog's training.

My dog is learning things but progress feels slow.

I often compare my dog to others and feel behind.

I would love a clearer, structured training roadmap.

**If you checked two or more boxes —  
this webinar was made for you.**



# You're In — See You July 1st

## The Skill Roadmap · July 1st

What To Teach, When To Teach It, And Why Order Matters

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- ✓ How to reduce mental overload in your sessions
- ✓ How to protect your dog physically at every stage
- ✓ Which skills matter most — and what can wait
- ✓ How to build a clear, age-appropriate progression plan
- ✓ How to train with confidence instead of second-guessing

★ Come to the Webinar · July 1st ★

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