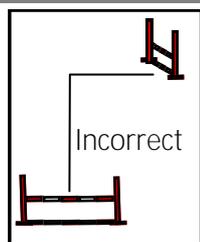




# The Dog Leg - A Related Distance built on a Curved Line

Fences built on a curved line are more difficult to walk and ride accurately than fences on a straight line because the distance will vary according to the route chosen. Riding the inside of a curve will shorten a distance while the outside curve will make a distance longer. Course builders often set related fences at an angle to each other, so it is important to practise walking and riding a curved line accurately.



Measure by laying the tape along what looks to be a good line. This also gives a visual guide

2 Build either square or slightly angled

See overleaf for distances

1 → 2 → 3a - 3 strides between each will be maximum in 20m x 40m arena.

Ride a smooth curved line - not a sudden change of direction. Jump each fence straight - not on an angle. Rhythm should be consistent. Ride from both directions.

This is also an option - walk the distance, decide how many strides, then ride it e.g. it may walk a short 5 strides.

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**Exercise 1:** Depending on your horse's experience use either:

- ◆ Just wings - Poles on the ground - Small jumps.
- ◆ Choose a distance from overleaf depending on the room available. Position fence 2 on the B/E line and measure from here. The exercise can be 1, 2, 3a ('S' route), 1, 2, 3b (circle) or both. If using the 'S' route, building fence 2 slightly angled makes the exercise easier. If angling fence 2 and also including a fence 3b, use 4 strides or more between 2 and 3b.

**Progression:** Add extra fences around the arena to make a course.

**Info:** Walking a related distance on a curved line: (Refer to Pages 9 & 10)

- ◆ Start striding from the centre of the first fence. Pace out 2 human steps. This gives the approximate spot where your horse will land (½ horse stride). Reminder: 4 human steps = 1 horse stride.
- ◆ Look to the next fence – start to walk the curve as you think it should be ridden, counting the strides. The second fence should be met straight.
- ◆ The final 2 human steps indicate the approximate take off point for fence 2. Look back to the line walked. Did the striding fit the distance well. If not, walk it again making a wider (longer) or shallower (shorter) curve. Does this fit the stride pattern better? If so this will be the line to ride.

**IMPORTANT:** A horse's normal stride length will shorten on a curved line, so this should be taken into account. If the distance walks 'short' it may then ride well. If it walks 'standard' it may be better to aim for an extra stride.

**Riding the Exercises:** Count the Strides out Loud

- ◆ Shortened stirrups, weight into heels, soft ankles and relaxed knees, legs closed on your horse.
- ◆ Ride the central route to start to see how your horse copes with the distances. Sit up, ride positively, maintain contact, keep your legs closed maintaining impulsion and an even rhythm.
- ◆ Allow the fences to come to you – not anticipating a jump by throwing your body forward.
- ◆ Look to the centre of the next fence along the curve. Concentrate on riding the selected route.
- ◆ Use your signals to ask your horse to land on the correct leading leg - see below.
- ◆ Experiment riding the longer and shorter routes. The longer route may ride better but may add in an extra stride - or two! The shorter route may suit your horse's stride pattern better. *Experiment.*
- ◆ The aim should always be to cover the distance between 2 fences on a nice even stride pattern i.e. a suitable stride length between fences so the second fence is met at a good take-off point (not on a long sprawling stride or too close so the horse has to make an awkward jump). It is also better to add in 1 or 2 extra strides than resort to long flat jumping in an effort to achieve a certain number of strides.

**Asking your horse to land on the correct leading leg:**

Approach each fence in a balanced, active canter - as horse takes off - turn your head and look to the centre of the next fence - slightly open the inside rein - on landing, shoulders back and regain the same controlled balanced canter - ride the curved line to the next fence exactly as you decided when walking the distance.