

Fun Training Aids & Building Your Own Jumps, etc. (A How-To Guide)

In previous articles we have discussed basic training related to obedience. As you begin to look at more advanced obedience and other venues (like agility or even freestyle dancing) you begin to see that having access to some training aids, equipment and/or apparatus would be helpful or is needed. Training aids such as chutes, leashes of various lengths, cones, and buckets can be used to teach straight fronts, finishes, sits, stands, and backing up. Having jumps, tunnels, weave poles, and other pieces of equipment available at home is not only useful, but also necessary to train your PBGV for advanced obedience, agility, or other venues. As many PBGV owners have noticed, our little hounds are naturally athletic. Common examples are jumping small streams and logs while on walks, and scaling countertops to steal a thawing roast. With proper training, our PBGVs can compete in advanced obedience, agility etc. and confidently and safely negotiate obstacles such as fences, streams logs and walls while hunting, tracking or just having fun.

In this article, we will initially focus on training aids such as chutes, various leashes, cones, buckets, etc. that are simple to obtain or construct for teaching your dog to use his body in ways to more accurately position himself, or make him realize his body can move in other than forward movement. A description of how to use the training aid is included. Training aids such as chutes, etc. can be easily put together to teach fronts, straight sits, etc. The cones and tunnels can be obtained at Toys R Us or other such outlets.

The second part will focus on how you can build your own apparatus to make training fun and convenient for you and your PBGV. If you can cut plastic pipe, drill a hole, drive a nail, use a screwdriver you can easily build your own equipment such as high and long jumps, mini-dog walks, teeter totters, etc. for little or no cost. All of the apparatus described can be disassembled into smaller packages for storage and transport as long as one does not glue the PVC pipe and fittings together.

Training aids

Using the training aids described here is useful to teach your dog to use his body in ways to more accurately position himself, or make him realize his body can move in directions other than forward. Descriptions of these training aids or how to obtain them is included as much as possible.

Chutes

These chutes are intended to train our dogs to sit or stand straight without slouching. (These are not the cloth chutes used in agility.) Any material that's heavy enough to stand firm is great for making chutes. Chutes are handy tools for

several obedience exercises. Use any sturdy material that's minimally the same length as the dog's body. You can make them from wood 2-by-4's, four cinder blocks or two broad jump boards standing on edge, rain pipe, etc. obtained at your local hardware or home supply outlet. The length is important so that the dog learns to come into and sit inside the chutes. The chute's walls keep the dog sitting up straight without slouching. Use these for working on straight fronts for recalls and retrieving exercises, and teaching the novice-level Stand For Exam.



Figure 1: AbraHam in Chute

The wooden chutes shown in the photos are built from 2-by-4's. Figure 1 shows AbraHam in the chute with his nose very close to the Food Clip that is described next. The length of the chute is about 24 inches, with 4-inch wings nailed crosswise to keep the chutes standing upright. Use the chutes together with the Food Clip described below. For teaching straight fronts, position the chutes the width of the dog's body. Put your dog on a sit-stay about 1-2 feet from the end of the chute. Position yourself at the other end of

the chute, facing the dog, with your feet together just inside the chutes (Figure 1). Call your dog to "come", maybe helping by luring him into the chutes with a cookie, without moving your own feet. Tell him to sit so that his feet are just an inch or two from yours (not quite toe-to-toe). A more advanced form of teaching the straight front would include Fido carrying the dumbbell while coming into the chutes and doing the straight sit. Eventually though, you'll phase down the size of the chutes, perhaps gradually reducing them to long square garden stakes, and then to long 1/4" diameter dowels, and finally eliminating them totally.

For teaching the Stand For Exam, again position the chutes for the width of the dog's body. Have the dog sit next to you in heel position at one end of the chute. Give your command to "stand". The dog's feet should be squarely positioned so that he is well balanced. A conformation stand is acceptable, but not necessary. The chutes should prevent Fido from moving his feet when you tell him to stay and then walk away from him. Watch over your shoulder; use a mirror or reflection in a glass door. Fido should not move his feet at all. If he steps forward with one or both front feet, you may need to put a

length of chute material crossways in the front of the chutes to prevent Fido from creeping forward.

Food Clip

In the world of obedience shows, there are several instances when the dog must present himself in the front position. The food clip provides the focal point of what the dog should be looking at when he is in the front position. Refer to Figure 1 showing AbraHam in the chutes staring intently at the food clip. This front position should be constant whether Fido is doing the Pre-Novice and Novice recalls, or any of the Open and Utility exercises where Fido is required to carry something back to the handler. When he's sitting in the front position, the dog should present a beautiful sitting position when viewed from the side. The top of his head, his neck and top line will be in a straight line. For most PBGV's the focal point will be about 3-4" above the handler's knees. You won't want him focusing on your face because that will cause him to sit incorrectly. He'll either tilt his head waaaay back that may cause him to sit with his butt in or out. Or he will start sitting further and further away from you in order to see your face.

Build the food clip using a small-size binder clip and a paperclip. Hook the paper clip onto the one loop of the binder clip. Straighten the paperclip at the first bend. Clip the food clip to the inseam of your jeans about 3-4" above your knees. Stab the paper clip through a dime-size piece of Fido's favorite soft treat. Initially you will have to train Fido to not steal the food off the clip until you allow him to eat the food (One author uses the phrase "get it" to grant eating permission. You might have to hide the food clip after Fido realizes where it is by clipping it just a bit to the inside of your jean seam so that it's not readily visible.) For the first few repetitions you can reward him when he enters the chutes and sits in front. Then you will teach him that eating the food is a reward for a straight front...not just a unique and time-consuming way of feeding him his daily food ration!

Always use the food clip together with the chutes until you phase out the need for the chutes. Then continue using the food clip without the chutes to keep his body completely perpendicular to yours whenever he is required to sit in front. Only let him eat the food from the clip if he has performed a perfect sit. A word of advice from one author that will help you avoid training headaches in the future: use different words for the formal sit-in-front that the obedience world requires, and a different word for your Fido-come-over-here-next-to-me command. This way Fido will know that he is either supposed to sit neatly in front, or he can amble over and slouch on one hip. For instance, you might say "come" for the formal sit-in-front, and "here" for the other word.

Leashes of Varying Lengths

Long lines: Probably the most popular use for the Long line is for teaching Fido to "come". The long line can be any length you want, but most of the authors start with 30, 40 or 50 feet. Long lines can be obtained at most pet supply stores or you can simply use strong very flexible cord or thin rope. Sit your dog, tell him to "stay", walk the distance of your long line, turn and face your dog. Command him to "come!". Gather in the long line quickly as Fido runs all the way towards you. You want to keep your hands on the line at all times to prevent him from suddenly being distracted and darting off in another direction! This way you are able to control him in coming to you, and he proactively learns to be successful. The long line is very useful when letting him outside to potty, and then calling him back inside. Consistently keep using the long line until Fido is 100% successful in returning to you. If Fido gets distracted, a tug on the line will remind him to keep coming to you.

Another important way to use the long line is while teaching Fido to retrieve. After he has learned how to pick up an object from the ground (for instance the dumbbell in the Open level of obedience), you can gradually increase the distance between you and the item to be retrieved. Start with the object being just a few feet in front of you. Again, gathering in the line as he runs or trots towards you while carrying the dumbbell prevents him from darting off to visit something more interesting.

Tummy Leashes: The tummy leash will help Fido better understand heel position, and can be used to teach him how to walk backwards. Use a 6-foot leash. Loop the clasp end of the leash loosely under Fido's groin. Tie a knot in the leash a few inches above his back. Now clip the leash to itself above the knot. This prevents the loop from tightening around his groin when the leash is being used.

For teaching or reinforcing heel position, clip the tummy leash around Fido's groin. Hold the tummy leash in your right hand with the leash draping behind you. Hold the regular leash, clipped to his collar, in your left hand. As you heel forward, use the tummy leash controlled by your right hand to prevent Fido from forging ahead of you by gently holding him back. Fido might initially be concerned about the leash around his tummy, but work through it by not making a big issue out of it. Explain to Fido that it will help him understand the exact position to be in for heeling. It might take a few repetitions with the tummy leash to realize he can no longer forge. The regular leash in your left hand is used to remind him that he can't balk at heeling just because he's wearing a tummy leash. He won't feel the pressure of the tummy leash if he stays in correct heel position and doesn't forge.



Figure 2: Placing tummy leash on dog.



Figure 3: How to use tummy leash.

The tummy leash can also be used for teaching Fido to back up. The tummy leash is used to gently tug him backwards. As described in *Saber Tails* March 2004 issue (page 78), position Fido between yourself and a wall. You might need to unclip his regular leash, and hold a treat in your left hand at his nose level. Use the command “back”, gently tug the tummy leash backwards, and lure the dog backwards with the treat. Are you wondering why you would ever teach Fido this move? For showing at the Utility level in obedience, the dog must step backwards to remain in heel position when it performs the Directed Retrieve exercise to retrieve one of the three gloves. Or, for freestyle dancing, Fido will look really snazzy when he performs backwards spirals or walks backwards in a straight line...off leash! And for PBGVs who are practicing their

earth-dog skills, they'll need to know how to back out of the underground tunnels!

Light Lines: The next leash is called a light line. It's used to teach off-leash heeling. After your dog has been adequately proofed for heeling on leash, the light line keeps you in control of your dog as it learns to heel off leash. It prevents him from running away. The light line is made from lightweight string with a paperclip attached as the clasp to his collar. Tie the other end to your belt loop on the left side of your body. Tie it strong enough so that if Fido pulls away from you the string won't come undone. This line is never used as a leash; the handler should never reel the dog back into heel position by pulling on this line. The length of the string will be long enough so that it hangs in a nice U-shape under Fido's chin. Not too long and not too short. If the dog gets out of heel position, the handler will use food and praise to lure the dog back into heel position. You can

continue to use the light line again and again as your PBGV has memory lapses when heeling off lead.

Cones and Buckets

Cones or buckets are useful for teaching the dog to come up into a straight line when doing the “around” finishes (where the dog gets from the front position to heel position by trotting around the handler's right side). Cones can be obtained where toys are sold such as Toys R Us stores, etc. You probably have empty buckets from laundry detergent, paint, fertilizer, etc. You can even use a medium-size box.

Longer-bodied dogs have a tendency to sit with their butt curled behind the handler's feet because of their body length.



Figure 4: Sequence showing how a bucket is used to teach proper heel position.

The cone or bucket will cause the dog to travel a longer U-shaped distance behind the handler's feet so that the dog ends up walking forward in a straight line to come up into heel position. The cone/bucket is placed directly behind the handler's feet.

It's helpful to practice this finish in front of a mirror or use a reflection in some way so that you can observe how straight the sit is. Because the bucket/cone is in his way, Fido may have a tendency to initially sit with his butt curled away from you (the exact opposite of the butt-in sit that we're trying to correct). You can straighten out his sit by steering him with a piece of food in your left hand as he's walking around you. Swing your left arm *straight back* when he's still walking the loop at the furthest point behind you. Then pull your arm *straight forward* as he's walking forward to come up into heel position, and tell him to sit when he has reached correct heel position. Feed him the treat. Good job!

The Obedience Corner's December 2003 ST article, page 63, discussed how to teach Fido the basics of the Around finish. After your PBGV has learned to walk the larger U-shape because the bucket/cone are in his travel path, you can remove them and just use your right foot as a reminder that he must walk the longer loop. To do this, gently bend your right knee and touch your toe to the ground about 3-4 inches behind where your heel originally was as he starts moving around your right side. Keep using your foot or the bucket/cone until Fido automatically always walks the longer loop. Periodically go back to using your foot or the bucket when you notice that his sits are no longer straight.

Do-it-Yourself Apparatus: Your PBGV Will Love It!

Having long and high jumps, hoops, weave poles, etc. available at home helps you train your PBGV and can be a lot of fun for him and you. The items shown in Figure 5 were built by one of the authors. The mini-dog walk was probably the most expensive but still cost less than \$40 for materials. In some cases, scrap material, such as unused shelving or left over house siding, was used to save money. In addition, it is enjoyable to do something for your PBGV.

The following are semi-detailed descriptions of how to build high and long jumps, a tire/hoop, a mini-dog, walk, weave poles, and a teeter-totter. Remember, the dog does not care what these look like so why should you? Most of the materials can be purchased at your local Home Depot, irrigation specialties store, or similar outlet, or perhaps leftovers in your own garage. You can also obtain a hand held plastic pipe



Figure 5: Max & friends training toys.

cutter for cutting PVC pipe and tubing or you can use a hack saw to cut the plastic pipe. All pipe, tubing, and pipe/tubing fittings are PVC. Be aware that the material lists contain what was needed to build the apparatus described and you may need to be creative when making your own.

High Jump

Materials Needed

- 2 10-foot lengths of 1" Schedule 40-PVC irrigation pipe
- 2 1" slip-slip-slip Tee's
- 6 1" slip caps
- 3 1" saddles
- 1 yard of plain white cloth or canvass



Figure 6: Saddle, cut in half.

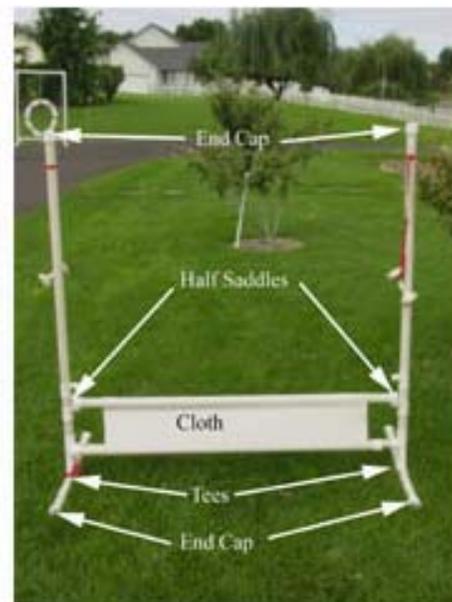


Figure 7: High jump.

Preparation & Assembly

Cut the two pieces of pipe into four 4-foot lengths and save the scrap. Cut one of the saddles in two as shown in Figure 6. Then cut your two pieces of scrap pipe in half; these will be used for the jump's feet. Assemble your jump as shown in Figure 7. Be sure that you use caps on the ends of the feet and on top of the vertical members. If you do not, the jump will wobble and vermin such as spiders can get in the pipe. The two pieces of saddle are used to support the crossbar and by moving them up and down you can set the jump height. As shown, the bottom crossbar used to stabilize the vertical ends of the jump clears the ground by approximately 4-1/2"; a good height to start training your PBGV to jump. Do not glue the jump together as you assemble it because you may want to take it apart for storage. Sew a loop in the cloth so that one of your four foot pieces of one inch-pipe will slide through it. Calibrate the rest of the jump heights by placing the crossbar on the moveable pieces of the saddle you cut in half and marking the height on the vertical members of your jump with a fine black permanent marking pen.

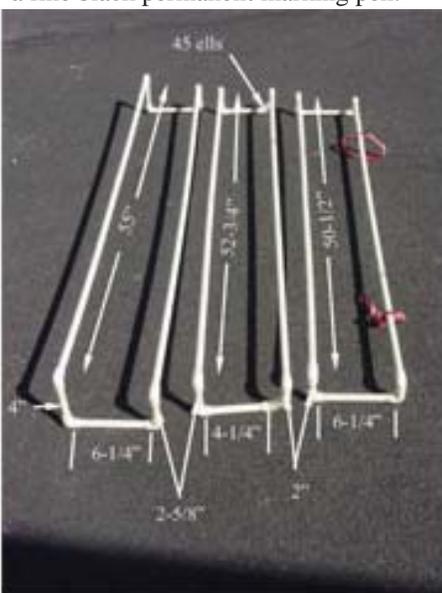


Figure 8: Frames for Long Jump.



Figure 9: Assembled Long Jumps.

Long Jump (also known as Broad Jump)

Materials Needed

- 4 10-foot lengths of 1/2 inch I.D. PVC tubing
- 22 90° 1/2 inch I.D. PVC tubing ells
- 4 45° 1/2 inch I.D. PVC tubing ells
- Flat white spray paint to paint the tops of the jumps
- At least 18 self-tapping sheet metal screws
- Light-weight (preferably plastic) 8-inch material for the top of each jump such as plastic house siding. One of the authors (George) was able to use left over plastic siding (shown in picture) from scrap given to him by his son-in law after he re-

sided his house. 8-inch wide wood or composite siding will also work but plastic is lighter.

Preparation & Assembly

Cut one piece of tubing into two 55-inch lengths, a second piece into two 52-3/4 inch lengths, and the third piece into two 50-1/2 inch lengths. Cut the scrap from your first cut into two 4-inch lengths and the remainder into two 1-inch lengths. Scrap from the second piece should be cut into four 2-5/8 inch lengths, two 2-inch lengths and the remainder into 1-inch lengths. Cut remaining scrap into four 6-1/4 inch pieces, two 4-1/2 inch pieces, and the rest into 1 inch pieces as needed to have 6-1 inch pieces.

As shown in Figure 8, using the 55 inch pieces, two of the 4 inch pieces, two of the 2-5/8 inch pieces, and eight 90°ells assemble the frame for the longest and highest jump by simply pushing the ends of the pipe into the ells. For the middle jump you will need the 52-3/4 inch pieces, 6-90°ells, the 45° ells, and several of the one-inch pieces assembled in the same fashion. The shortest jump is similar to the largest but uses the

50-1/2 inch pieces, the 2 two inch pieces, plus one inch pieces and the remaining 90°ells assembled in a similar fashion to the largest jump. The reason for the differences in jump length is so you can nest the jumps for storage. Once the frames are completed put the 8 inch wide tops cut to match the length of the finished frames, i.e., approximately 57, 55, 52 inches long respectively, on the frames using appropriate length self tapping sheet metal screws. George used 1/2 inch self-tapping, hex head sheet metal screws. Depending on the color of the material used for the tops you may wish to paint the tops of the jumps white. George used flat white spray paint for his long jumps. Figure 9 shows the finished jumps set up for training.

To start training the PBGV use only the smallest jump. Once he gets the idea add

the next jump and then the longest one.

Weave Poles

Materials Needed for a Set of Six Weave Poles (Figure 10)

- 3 10 foot lengths of 3/4 inch PVC pipe
- 6 3/4-inch PVC saddles
- 1 3/4-inch PVC cross
- 10 3/4-inch PVC end caps
- 1 3/4-inch PVC plug
- at least 14-3/4 inch number 6 Phillips head wood screws

Preparation & Assembly

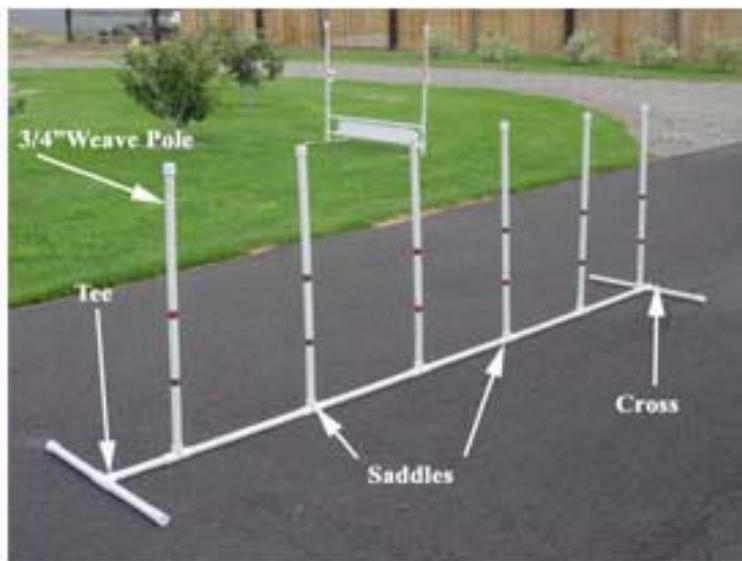


Figure 10: Weave Poles.

Cut two of the 10-foot lengths of PVC pipe into six 3-foot pieces. You will have two 12-inch pieces remaining from the cutting the pipe. Save these pieces so you can use them for feet. Unless you can beg, borrow, steal or have a 24 inch scrap of 3/4 inch pipe you may want to add a 7th weave pole so you will need a 4th 10 foot length of 3/4 inch pipe and a 7th saddle. If you opt for a 7th weave pole, from the 3rd piece of 3/4" pipe cut two pieces 36 inches long and two pieces 12 inches long to have 7 weave poles with minimum waste.

Mark the 3rd piece of 3/4 pipe at 5 inches then at 22-inch intervals followed by a 5-inch section at the end (do not cut this pipe). Center a 3/4 inch PVC saddle over each of the 6 marks and push it onto the pipe at each 22 inch interval and insert one 36 inch piece of pipe with an end cap on one end into the hole on the saddle. You will now need to use the 3/4 inch screws screwed into the top (or side) of each saddle to hold the poles vertical otherwise they will fall over. Make sure that the poles line up either by leaving the tee and cross with the feet off of the assembly on a flat surface or by visually lining them up. Drill a pilot hole for one screw in each saddle and place a screw in each hole screwing it down tight. Place the tee and cross with the feet at each end of the assembly, insert set screws in these to hold the poles vertical and, "Voila!" weave poles. Do not glue anything since all you need to do for long term-storage is to pull out the pipe poles from the saddles, tee, and cross and the set will break down into a small package.

If you opt for a 7th weave pole set, simply insert one of the 36 inch sections you cut from the extra piece of pipe into the open end of the cross, measure 22 inches from the last pole, put on a saddle, add a cap at the end, and insert the 7th weave pole. Green and red electrical tape was used to stripe the weave poles.

Mini Dog Walk

Materials Needed

This will make a mini-dog walk that is proportional to the standard version used in agility at dog shows or agility trials but smaller. While it is still fairly large and bulky it is not a major problem to handle by one person and from the dogs point of view is a lot of fun to use!

- 3 10-foot lengths of 2-inch PVC Schedule 40 PVC pipe
- 8 2-inch 90° PVC ells
- 8 2-inch PVC saddles
- 2 5-foot long by 1-foot wide shelves (old unused shelving works fine)
- 4 2-1/2 inch rotating safety hasps (or 2 1-1/2" hinges to join one end of top to ramp)
- 4 3/16 inch carriage bolts plus 4 wing nuts
- 4 spring clips or 2 10-24 1 foot long threaded rods with 4 nuts.
- 3 rubber shelf liners 5 feet long by 1 foot wide
- 4 cans of spray paint staples

Preparation & Assembly

From two of the 10 foot lengths, cut four pieces 53 inches long. From the scrap cut two pieces 12 inches long. From the 3rd 10-foot length cut two more pieces 12 inches long, and four pieces 7 inches long. You are now ready to assemble the frame shown in Figure 11. Again, do not glue the pipe into the fittings. Assemble the sides first by pushing two 90° ells onto each end of the four 53" lengths of pipe you cut. Then push two of the 53" pieces onto two 12" pieces. This will give you two rectangles. You may wish to use a rubber hammer to pound the ells completely onto the pipe. Now press the 2 saddles onto each of the 53" lengths of the rectangles one at each end next to each 90° ell (See Figure 11). Once this is done insert the four 7 inch pieces into the saddles. The result is the frame shown in Figure 11. Because everything is loose you will need to square up the frame using a carpenters square. Set the frame on the floor as shown. Be sure the 12- inch pieces are vertical using a carpenters square. Then drill pilot holes in at least two of the saddles and two of the ells and screw a 3/4 inch number 6 or 8 wood screw into each pilot hole.

Place one of the shelves on the frame making sure that it is centered on the frame both lengthwise and widthwise. Drill 4-3/16" holes through the shelf and PVC pipe as shown in the picture and insert the 3-16" carriage bolts into the holes and put on the wing nuts. Mount the rotating safety hasps to the underside of the top of the dog walk and ramps as shown in Figure 8. The clips (or 10-24 threaded rods) can be removed so that the ramps can be removed for storage and handling. As an alternative you could mount 1-1/2" hinges on one side of the top and attach one shelf to the other side of the hinge so that it folds over the top for storage.

Paint the top and ramps once the rotating safety hasps are attached to the underside of the top and ramps. Paint the

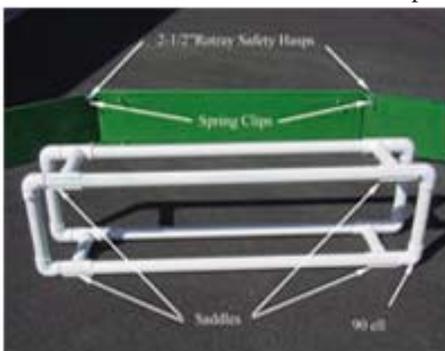


Figure 11: Frame, Top, & Ramps.



Figure 12: Mounting rotating safety hasps.

bottom and sides of the shelving first and let it dry. Immediately after you paint the tops of the top and ramps you will carefully lay down the 12" wide shelf grip liner on top of the top and ramps and staple it down. The paint will serve as glue for the shelf grip liner. Let the paint dry. George stapled the grip liner every 12" with staples at each edge and in the middle. Once all of the paint is dry and the grip liner is installed reassemble your mini-dog walk and let your PB have fun.

Hoop

The AKC essentially sets hoop diameter, and the hoop shown is within the AKC criterion. The frame is large enough so that larger dogs can use it by resetting the height.

Materials Needed

- 3 10-foot lengths of 2-inch PVC Schedule 40 PVC pipe
- 2 2-inch 90° PVC ells
- 2 2-inch PVC saddles
- 4 2-inch PVC end caps
- 1 4-inch aluminum duct connector
- 5 2-1/2 inch long eyebolts (size 10-24 with nuts if you can find them)
- 2 5 inch long eyebolts (size 10-24with nuts if you can find them)
- 1 1 inch long eyebolt (size 10-24 with a nut)
- 2 small s hooks that will go thru the eyebolts
- number 10 washers to go with the eyebolts
- 10 feet of 4 inch diameter dryer ducting
- 10 feet of heavy string or cord
- 2-feet of small chain
- 3 cans of urethane foam insulation
- 4 roles of white duct tape
- 1 role of red duct tape

Preparation & Assembly

Cut one of the 10' lengths of PVC pipe in half and cut 2 40" sections off of a second piece. This will leave you with one 10' length and a 40" length of 2" PVC pipe. Cut the 40" piece in half and cut 2-20" pieces off of the remaining 10' length. If your supplier will do it for you, just get him to cut these last two 20" pieces for you rather than buying a 3rd 10' length of 2" PVC pipe. Assemble the framework as shown in Figure 13. Drill holes in the 2" pipe as shown for the 2-1/2" long eyebolts and fix the bolts in the holes with a nut on each side of the 2" pipe.

To construct the hoop, first drill a hole in the center of the 4" duct connector large enough to accept the 1" long 10-24 eyebolt. Put a nut on the 1" eyebolt and screw it down about half way. Insert the eyebolt into the hole in the 4" duct connector and put another nut on the eyebolt. Tighten the two nuts together tightly with the duct connector in between. Take the 10' piece of dryer ducting and place each end of the ducting on each end of the duct connector to form your hoop and hold the ends of the ductwork in place using self tapping sheet metal screws. Because the assembly is not very rigid you will need to fill it with the urethane foam. To do this lay the assembly on a level surface such as a garage or shop floor with newspaper



Figure 13: Hoop Structure.



Figure 14: Hoop Detail.

between the floor and the assembly. Be sure that the ductwork hoop assembly forms a circle. Make a small hole and inject the urethane foam into the ducting. You will need to do this in several places around the circular assembly. Let the urethane foam set up (this may take several days). Once it is strong enough, wrap the white duct tape around the ductwork so that the whole assembly is covered with at least one layer of duct tape. Then stripe the hoop with the red duct tape. You are now

ready to hang the hoop. As an alternative you may wish to use a piece of flexible 10' long 4" diameter sewer pipe to make the base hoop. This hoop will be heavier but all you need to do is form it into a circle and wrap it with duct tape. The rest is the same.

Place the small s hook in the eyebolt in the top of the frame and using a second s hook attach the chain to the eye bolt that is in the hoop by pressing both sides of the s hook closed with a pair of pliers. Press the side of the s hook that you put in the eyebolt closed with a pair of pliers. Leave the other end of the eyebolt open so that you can adjust the height of the hoop. At approximately 90° from the top eyebolt, push your two 5" eyebolts through the hoop and secure the eyebolt with two nuts on each side of the ducting as you did when putting the eyebolt in the duct connector. It is desirable to use washers between the ducting and the nuts. Hang the hoop as shown by threading a piece of string through the eyebolts on the sides of the hoop and tying the ends to the eyebolts on each side of the frame as shown in Figure 8. Be sure the strings are as tight as you can get them. Adjust the height of the hoop so that your PBGV can easily jump through it and have fun.

Teeter Totter

I have not built this yet but the unit as described and shown in Figure 15 should do the job.

Materials Needed

- 1 8' piece of shelving
- 1 1' piece of 10" diameter schedule 80 PVC pipe
- 2 2" long 5/16" carriage bolts
- 12' of shelf liner

Preparation & Assembly

Determine the center of the 10' shelf. Drill three holes in the shelf, two 1" from each side and one in the center at the center of the shelf. Draw a line across the piece of 10" inch diameter PVC pipe and drill holes at the same locations along this line as you did for the shelf. Paint the shelf and lay the shelf liner on it for traction in a similar manner as described for the mini-dog walk. Attach the shelf to the pipe with the 3/16" carriage bolts and have fun. You may wish to wrap a piece of shelf liner around the 10" piece of pipe so that the teeter-totter does not slip along the ground.

Summary

In the above paragraphs we have provided ways to obtain, construct, and use training aids or apparatus. Most of these items can be procured or built at minimal cost. For example: cones and tunnels can be obtained at toy departments/stores such as Toys R Us, etc. We have often obtained buckets at paint stores or building supply outlets. Materials to construct jumps, weave poles, etc., are found where irrigation supplies are sold. Each apparatus shown is easily constructed and the materials are very inexpensive. In some cases unused items

such as shelving or left over house siding can be used. All of the apparatus shown above can be disassembled for storage as long as one does not glue the PVC pipe together.

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, if you can cut plastic pipe, drill a hole, drive a nail, and/or use a screwdriver you can easily build your own equipment such as high and long jumps, mini-dog walks, teeter totters, etc. for little or no cost. So try it and have fun using it with your PBGV.

If you have questions or need help please do not hesitate to e-mail or call either:

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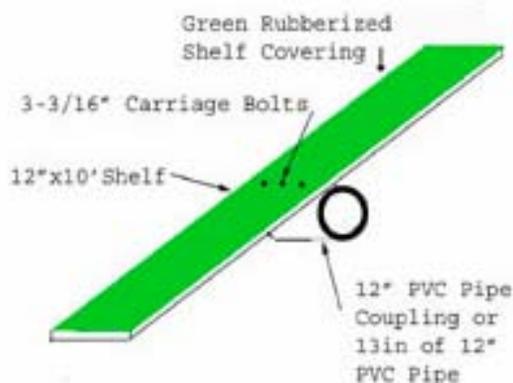


Figure 15: Diagram of how to build teeter-totter.