

## Distance Handling— gamble 1

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Here are some typical distance challenges set up as gambles or FAST-type challenges. Keep in mind that Distance skills can help solve any kind of course but this helps illustrate how I think you can communicate at a distance - without the dog assuming or guessing where to go.

Here are the general tips:

**Move naturally.** Leave yourself enough room to add pressure and release pressure, even if it is only taking a step or even rocking forward or back on your feet.

**Keep working the 1/2 way points** on the path even if you are 30 feet away or behind your dog. While you are working the path, you aren't doing something else that would give a conflicting cue.

**Make your arms and your body work together.** Arms do not replace what your body is doing, they add to it. Throwing your arm out to your side while you turn away or lean away is a classic "push-me/pull-you" cue that only works for Dr. Doolittle.

**Use your verbals** to add to what your body is doing but not replace what it is doing. I also highly recommend using your verbals proactively to control the behavior of an obstacle, not fix the path between obstacles.

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Here is a specific example where I am practicing with Echo.

In the first video I send Echo to the purple tunnel on my right just stepping toward the 1/2 point (control point) on the path to the tunnel entrance.

As she goes in, the last thing she sees me do is pull toward the gamble line so she comes out turning. My decel cue as she goes in also indicates she should come out of the tunnel turning.

I use serpentine body language to send her across my feet to the first jump. I hold her on my right hand until I draw her out far enough to set a nice line to this jump (as opposed to changing hands right away while she is in the tunnel). When I like how far out she has come out of the tunnel, I change hands and send her toward the control point on the way to this jump.

Then I use serpentine handling again to pull her over the second jump. So on the approach to the second jump, I have my right hand (off hand) up again and I pull her over this jump.

### **Why serpentine handling?**

The reason I use serpentine handling is that if I pulled her over this jump with my left hand (as in a 180), she would be driving to the off course tunnel entrance. By using serpentine handling, she can recognize- aha “mom is pulling me over this jump, but I should anticipate a turn away”. That is what serpentine cues do - and of course she is right, I change hands and send her back out to the third jump in this sequence.

Finally a rear cross turns her away to the last jump. Notice when I rear cross I maintain pressure on the gap between the last two jumps until she commits to the last line.

That’s it. See other articles for other examples, but they all follow the same rules.