



Heads Up: Recent Rule Changes You'll Want to Know About

A few changes have been made to the Agility rules lately, and they'll affect everyone out there competing. Here's what's new, and what it means for you and your dog.

Seesaw judging just got simpler

Good news: dogs will no longer be faulted for missing the up contact on the seesaw. That means the seesaw is now judged the same way as the other contact equipment like the dog walk and A-frame — only the down contact counts. It's a small change, but it helps keep things more consistent across the board.

Weave pole rules have been tweaked

There's been a bit of a shake-up with how the weaves are judged, too, mainly to bring them in line with the way we judge other obstacles.

What counts as a refusal?

First things first: refusals have not changed. They are still judged the same way they always have been. Refusals are all about missed entries. If your dog...

- Runs past the weave entry,
- Goes past pole number 1 on the wrong side, or
- Passes pole number 2 (on the correct side) without actually going in

...it's a refusal.

If it happens once, that's one refusal. If it happens again, that's two. Three refusals in Starters, Novice, Intermediate, or Senior equals an automatic disqualification. Elementary A is a bit easier: no refusals

are counted there.)

One important thing: if your dog gets a refusal, you do have to fix it before moving on. If you don't, it's a DQ.

What counts as a fault?

To start, your dog needs to enter the weaves correctly — between pole number 1 and number 2 from right to left — and then keep weaving in a forward motion all the way to the end. Simple, right?

If your dog misses a pole or pops out before finishing, that's a fault. But here's the key part: it's only one fault per run through the weaves, no matter how many mistakes happen. After that, you can either let the dog finish the poles or just carry on to the next obstacle. You don't get to retry the weaves once a fault's been called, just like any other obstacle now.

The easy way to remember this is to not remember anything at all — leave that to the judge. As soon as your dog has got the correct entry, you both keep going in a forward motion towards the next obstacle. If the dog makes a mistake, the judge will raise their arm, but it doesn't matter. You just keep going.

What gets you disqualified?

The two biggies to watch out for:

- Back weaving, when your dog goes through more than two poles in the wrong direction.
- Retrying the weaves after a fault's already been called. Once it's faulted, you cannot go back and doing so results in an immediate disqualification.

Yes, you can go back and fix the weaves, but you'll still be disqualified. It's treated the same as if you turned around and put your dog back on the A-frame after missing the contact: you're correcting the mistake, but it's still an automatic DQ because the obstacle has already been faulted.

What about Games classes?

In Games classes, the weaves might be scored a bit differently, depending on the rules of the game. Just make sure you check the specific instructions for that course.

Why this matters

Basically, these changes are about making things clearer and more consistent. The weaves are now treated like the rest of the equipment: once your dog makes a mistake, you don't redo it. It helps keep the flow of your run going, and it brings our judging more in line with how things are done across the board.

No smoking, vaping or consuming food in the ring. No food may be carried into the ring at any time.

So if you're heading to a comp soon, take a minute to get familiar with the new rules — and make sure your training reflects them! 🐾