

What Word Do I Use For That Obstacle?

The cue you use to direct your dog to perform an obstacle is entirely up to you. There is no requirement in agility competition that you favor one cue over another. However, once you decide what cues you want to use, it is important to be consistent with those cues. The following table summarizes the standard agility obstacles and suggests some commonly used cues for each. It helps if the cues for different obstacles sound different from each other.

OBSTACLE CUES

Bar Jumps	Hup, Jump, Over, Bar
Long Jumps/Spread Jumps	Hup, Jump, Over, Big Jump, Big Over
Tire	Hup, Tire, Hoop, Through, Ring, Key
Weave Poles	Poles, Weave, Wiggle
Pipe Tunnel	Through, Tunnel, Get In
Collapsed Tunnel	Through, Tunnel, Get In, Chute, Swoosh
Table	Table, Hup, Get On, Box, Load Up
A-Frame	Climb, Walk-Up, Ramp, Scramble, A-Frame, Frame, Up
Dogwalk	Climb, Walk-Up, Ramp, Dogwalk, Up, Bridge
See-Saw	Climb, Walk-Up, Ramp, See-Saw, Teeter, Tip-It

CONTROL COMMANDS

Come or Here	<i>Come or Here</i> means for your dog to stop whatever he is doing and come directly to you. In obedience, a solid recall usually finishes with a sit in front of the handler, awaiting the next instruction. This type of finish is not necessary, nor even desirable, on the agility field.
Down	<i>Down</i> means for your dog to lie down – chest, elbows, and the rear should be on the ground.
Stay	<i>Stay</i> means your dog should remain in place until released by you. In the strictest obedience context, <i>Stay</i> also means to maintain the current post – a sit, down, or stand.
Wait	<i>Wait</i> means for your dog to stop forward motion or hold himself back. The dog momentarily pauses, eagerly anticipating that he may resume the task at hand or continue on his current path when released by you. Whereas <i>Stay</i> is used when you leave the dog in a particular position and want him to maintain that position, <i>Wait</i> can be cued while the dog is in motion – you could use it when your dog is ahead of you and you want him to “wait up”.
Sit	<i>Sit</i> means that your dog’s rear should be on the ground and his front should be upright.
Okay	<i>Okay</i> is a quiet release cue. It is typically associated with releasing a dog from his position on the downside-yellow of a contact obstacle or from a stay on the table.
Bottom, Touch, Target, Zone	This cue is used to hold a dog in the downside-yellow zone of a contact obstacle, eagerly awaiting the release word (usually Okay) before moving on to the next obstacle. The dog can hold this position in any number of ways, including two feet on and two feet off the obstacle; front feet on the last slat of the yellow contact zone; sitting or lying down at the bottom of the contact; or by touching his nose to a target placed on the ground just past the end of the contact.

DIRECTIONAL CUES

Again, Look Back, or Turn	Used to reverse direction (a 180° turn)
Go, Go On	Continue in the present direction, possibly away from the handler
Get Out	Move laterally out to the side of the handler
Left	Turn to the left – the dog’s left, not yours
Right	Turn to the right – the dog’s right, not yours