RALLY
Dog

COMMON MISTAKES

Don’t let some of these common mistakes cause your kids to lose points.

- TIGHT LEASHES!!!! And correcting of dogs.
- No sign is a throw away sign - judges want to see a Left Turn or a Right Turn acknowledged not just a “curve” to the next sign.
- Don’t walk around signs. This is common on 360 and 270 turns.
- COUNT – no miss a sign! Its -30 points if you walk by a station.
- Change of pace on any slow or fast sign. Pace change should be maintained until the Normal sign.
- There should always be a pause after a Walk Around the dog exercise.
- Call Front ALWAYS means a sit in front.
- AND a Call Front is a fluid movement – not a sit your dog, step away and call your dog exercise.
- When asking dog to down after a sit - keep feet in place, do not step out in front of dog.
- Finishes on the Call Front/Finish signs, once there is a halt feet should not move. The exception is in Pre-Novice – a step back on the finish is allowed.
- Spirals – think 3, 2, 1 and the important words are INSIDE or OUTSIDE.
- Halt, 1, 2, 3 or Call Front, 1, 2, 3 - COUNT YOUR STEPS!!! Count them out loud if you want.
- Entry on the Weave/Serpentine signs. Entry is always with the pylon on the handler’s and dog’s left.
- Know the difference between a pivot and a turn. A pivot is sharp with minimal foot movement – it is turning in place. A turn is more relaxed and can be stepped into.
- NO retry on jumps
- At the Excellent level - NO clapping or patting of your leg.
- At the Excellent level - NO stepping forward or touching dog to get a stand.

Other things to remember:

- Signs that change direction most often block paths – this is confusing for beginners.
- TALK TO YOUR DOGS – keep them engaged. And don’t add to their stress with harsh commands.
- Retries – there can be 2 on a station. Help kids learn when to retry and when to move on. If the dog normally does the exercise – retry. If you know they won’t (i.e. the dog won’t down), then attempt it once and move on. If the dog gets up from a sit before it downs, etc. – a retry should be done to avoid an IP.
- Also on retries the handler and dog need to back away and re-approach the station. They can also tell the judge they are going to retry.
- Don’t beg the dog to do an exercise. If they aren’t going to do it move on – don’t lose the time as well as the points. Begging is -10 just like an IP.
- Don’t crowd signs, or get too close for turns. Be sure the dog has room to perform.