

SLOT MARKS

LEVEL - ADVANCED

PURPOSE - Teach dog to take a line between the gunner stations to get to the marks. Teach dog to deal with marks tight to holding blinds or gunners. Teach dog to see the slot on marks.

MATERIALS NEEDED - Bird boy, bumpers or birds, holding blinds and/or stick-men

PROCEDURE - Set marking picture up as shown on next page. This is a marking drill, so the dog will always be in heel position for the start of every mark. This marking scenario is also known as inline marks by some trainers.

Run marks as singles. All throws will be angle back between or outside the next station. Start with closest mark and work your way down the line. Bird boy should throw mark so dog has to negotiate past a holding blind or stick-man for each retrieve.

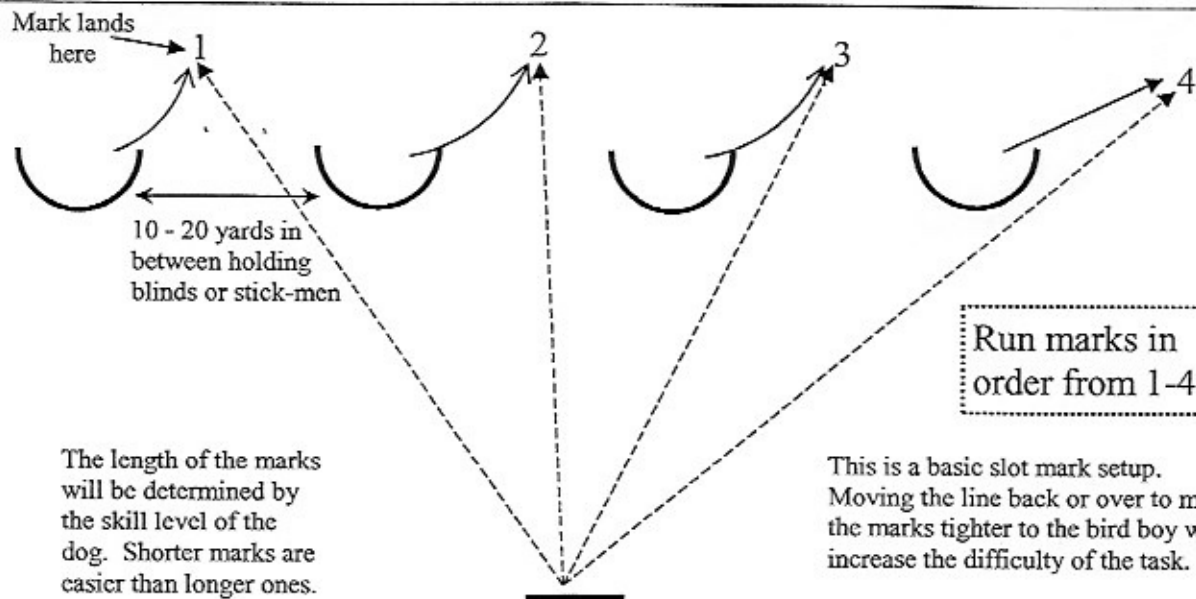
This can be a pressure picture for a lot of dogs. So, keep the session short but meaningful for maximum success. Limit marks to 4-6 per session.

You can run this drill with more bird boy stations.

This drill can be done with one bird boy walking from holding blind to holding blind or from stick-man to stick-man.

POTENTIAL PROBLEM	SOLUTION
Dog won't take slot between gunner stations to get mark, wants to "banana" line or go behind gun to get to mark	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shorten the distance of the mark by moving the line up 2. Handle if dog wants to bail or go behind the gun 3. Have bird boy help to keep dog on correct side of mark 4. Use a more visible target for the dog to mark off of (large white bumper or bird with white flagging tape)
Dog misses mark	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bird boy helps out 2. Repeat mark 3. Throw two marks from the same station to the same spot
Dog overruns mark	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bird boy helps 2. Handle 3. Have dog watch mark longer before sending

SLOT MARKS SETUP

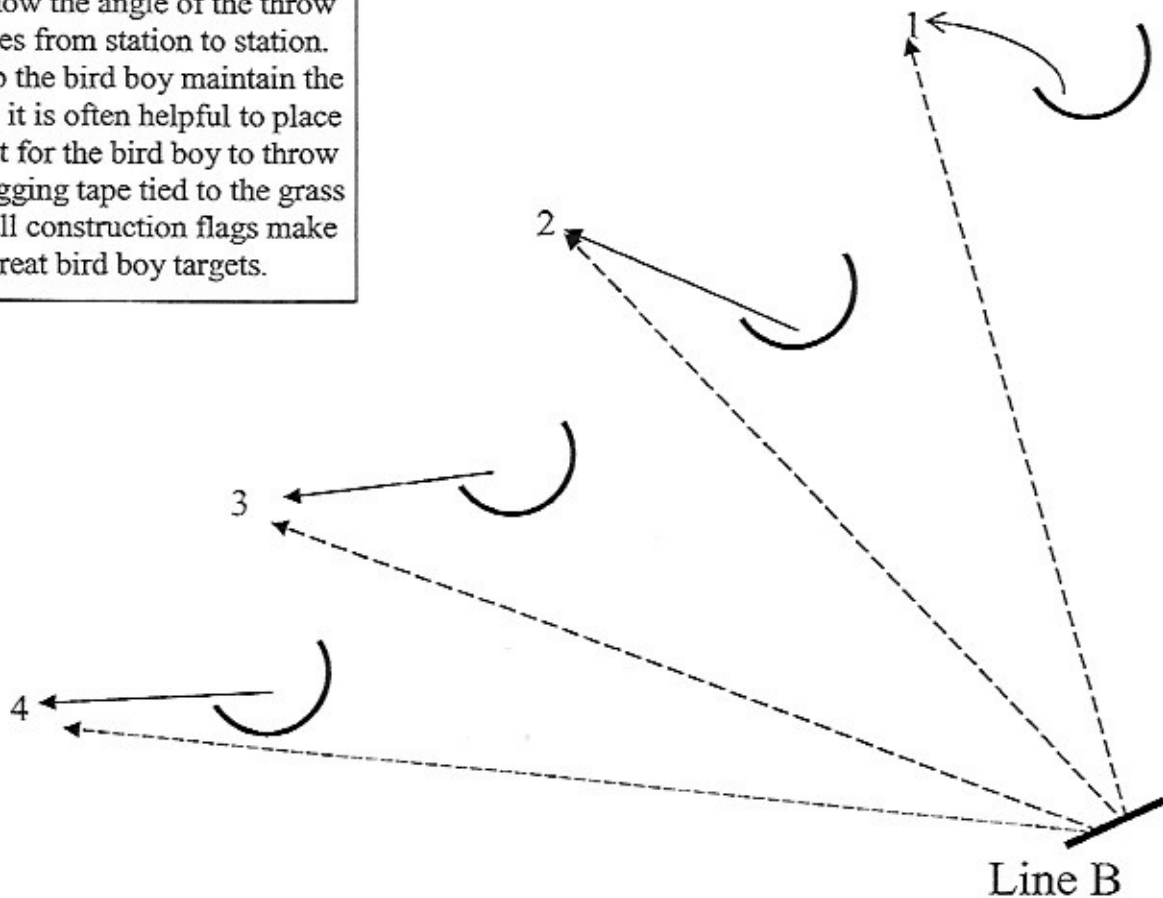


The length of the marks will be determined by the skill level of the dog. Shorter marks are easier than longer ones.

This is a basic slot mark setup. Moving the line back or over to make the marks tighter to the bird boy will increase the difficulty of the task.

Line A

Note how the angle of the throw changes from station to station. To help the bird boy maintain the picture it is often helpful to place a target for the bird boy to throw at. Flagging tape tied to the grass or small construction flags make great bird boy targets.



Line B