

## # 1 ONE AT A TIME

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**OBJECTIVE:** For students to **learn how to ride a jump course** of **ground poles** at the **walk**, linking **single fences** with wide turns.

**EQUIPMENT:**  6 GROUND POLES, SECURED WITH JUMP STANDARDS OR CONES

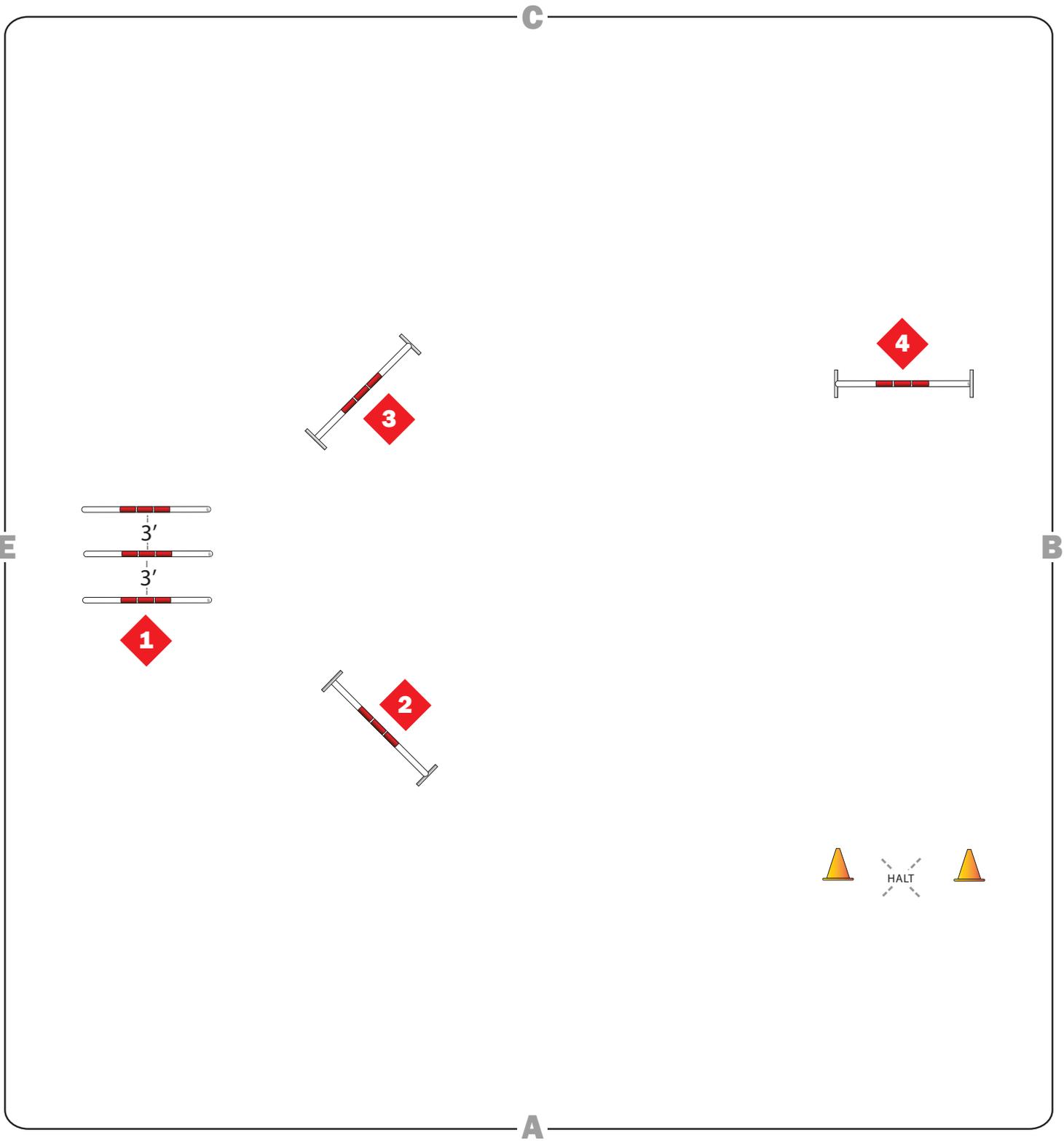
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**NOTES:** **At this level, “jumping” has very little to do with the obstacles themselves and a lot to do with planning and riding a smooth, flowing track.** We use this simple four-jump course to introduce Red Level students to coursework.

How you set the ground pole obstacles is entirely up to you. We like to include a small grid, set at a comfortable walk stride distance, to simulate an **oxer** and to teach students to remain in two-point throughout the entire jumping effort. You might also include one or two **baby crossrails** or **pole stacks** to give students all the thrill of a “big” jump with none of the risk. Otherwise, **keep it simple!**

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- VARIATIONS:**
-  **Ride the course with invisible jumps first**, allowing students to test drive each approach and departure before riding over poles.
  -  **Use gateway cones** to set students up for a successful approach and departure on each line. This is particularly helpful when teaching **Lesson #13 Two-Point Time**, where students are encountering coursework for the first time.
  -  **Change the order of jumps.** Any of these fences may be used as the first jump on course, creating several possible variations.
  -  **Play a simplified version of Take Your Own Line**, allowing students to create their own course. **Discuss** what makes a good approach, using the two diagonal fences as an example.
  -  **Ride a closing circle** in place of the straight-line halt.
  -  **Add a straight-line halt** after any of the other fences on the course.
  -  **Ride a Whoa and Go course.** See **Lesson #14 Whoa and Go Poles** for more information.



## Jump Course - Red Level #1 - One at a Time

## #2 BENDING LINES

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**OBJECTIVE:** For students to **learn how to ride a bending line** by linking two lines of **ground poles** at the **walk**.

**EQUIPMENT:**  4 GROUND POLES, SECURED WITH JUMP STANDARDS OR CONES

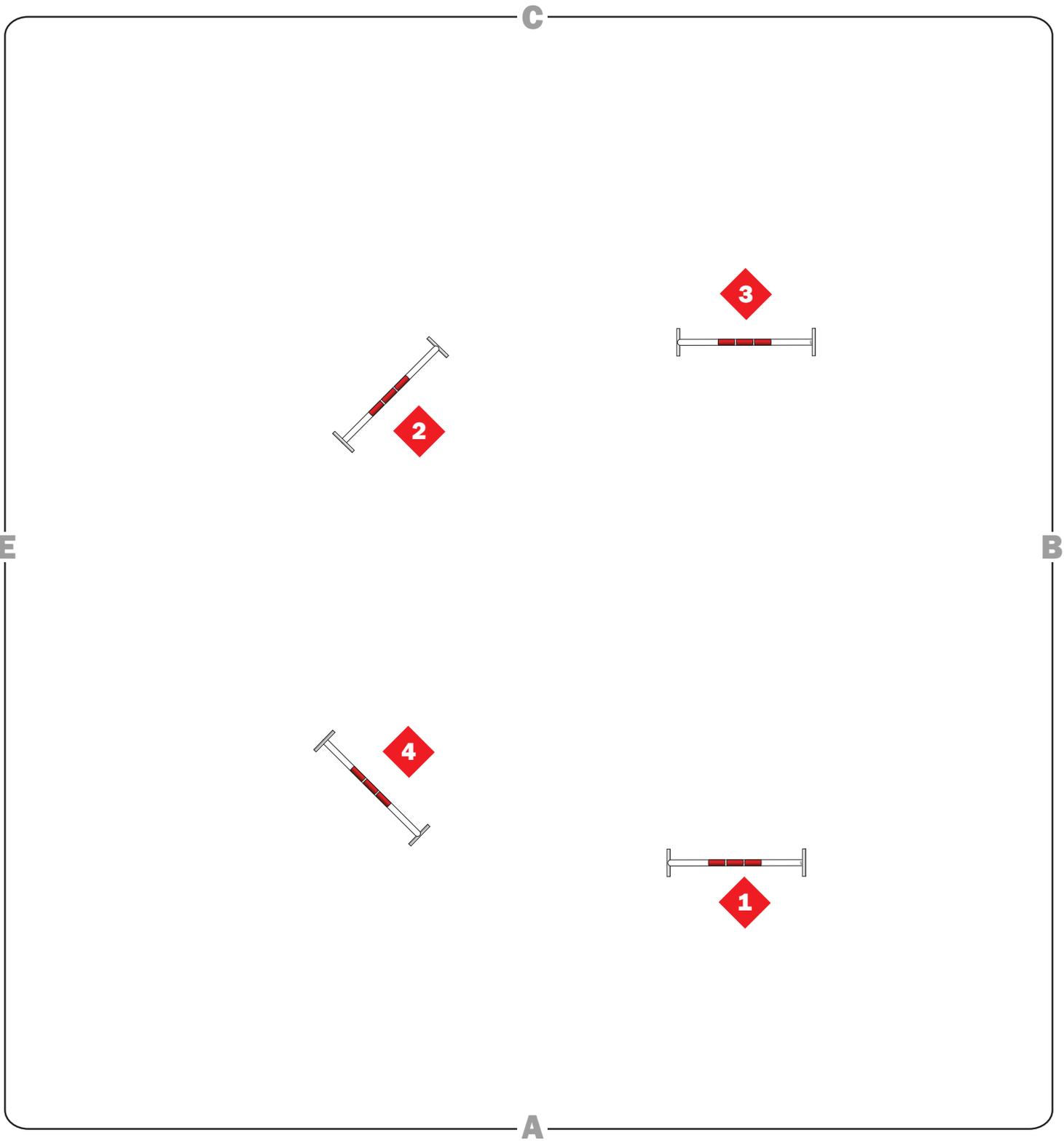
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**NOTES:** This **classic “dog leg” course** of four fences provides a simple **introduction to lines and bending lines**, with plenty of options for more advanced students. We like to practice bending lines early on with Red Level students as it encourages a lot of **active steering** and teaches how to set up a **good approach** to a fence.

No distances are noted on the course map as the measurements don't really matter when negotiating bending lines at the walk. If, however, you choose to incorporate the straight **line** from **#1** to **#3** or have students riding the lines in **trot** or **canter**, we recommend carefully setting each line at the **distance of your choice**.

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- VARIATIONS:**
-  **Reverse the bending lines** to start with #4 and end with #1. Ask students how they will need to change their **opening circle** to set up for the new first fence.
  -  **Include the tougher bending line** from #2 to #4 and/or the line from #1 to #3.
  -  If you have plenty of time, you can even **create a full-length course** by combining **all four possible lines**, giving students eight jumps in total. This course can be ridden individually or single file with attention to **spacing**.
  -  **Use gateway cones** to set students up for a successful approach and departure on each line. You may also use **cones** to help students ride the perfect arc between two fences. Note that at this level, we usually encourage students to ride a uniformly curved line, saving discussions of direct versus wide bending lines for **Orange** or **Purple** Level.
  -  **Increase the difficulty** by making several of your fences **grids of 3 to 4 poles**. If students do not ride straight to the center of the fence, they are unlikely to make it over all of the poles. You can also substitute one or more of your poles with **skinny poles**.



## Obstacle Course - Red Level #2 - Bending Lines

## #3 DOWN CENTERLINE

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**OBJECTIVE:** For students to **learn how to hold a straight line** by approaching a **grid of ground poles** at the **walk**, turning both left and right.

**EQUIPMENT:**  6 GROUND POLES, SECURED WITH JUMP STANDARDS OR CONES

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**NOTES:** There are a lot of different ways you can set up this exercise but we recommend using **at least four poles** on the centerline to emphasize the need to **ride straight at a target**. Once students have the flow of the course down, you can use the centerline grid to include balance exercises such as riding with one arm outstretched or stepping over the poles with eyes closed.

The **distance between the poles on centerline** should be set to allow horses to negotiate them comfortably in **walk** without changing stride. **Make sure to adjust the distances** before allowing any student to ride over the grid in **trot**!

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- VARIATIONS:**
-  **Ride an outside fence first** so students jump the grid facing A. This is a great opportunity to discuss how horses sometimes ride differently heading toward the herd or the gate.
  -  **Ride a closing circle** in place of the straight-line halt.
  -  **Add a straight-line halt** after any of the other fences on the course. If you really want to **increase the difficulty**, ask students to ride a **halt in the gap between the second and third poles of the grid**. This requires quick thinking and communication, especially if they are riding over the poles in two-point position!
  -  **Play Traffic Conductor** and stand at the end of the arena. Use nonverbal arm signals to tell students to turn left, right, or halt after the grid, encouraging them to keep their eyes up. For students who persist in looking down, you can also use the age-old trick of holding up one hand and asking students to tell you **how many fingers you are holding up**. Change the number of fingers frequently.
  -  **Increase the difficulty** by substituting any of the poles with **skinny poles**.
  -  **Slightly more advanced students** can walk over the centerline grid and **trot the outside fences**.



## #4 SHOW JUMPING STYLE

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**OBJECTIVE:** For students to apply coursework techniques to a **slightly longer course** of **ground poles**, including common **show jumping questions**.

**EQUIPMENT:**  7 GROUND POLES, SECURED WITH JUMP STANDARDS OR CONES

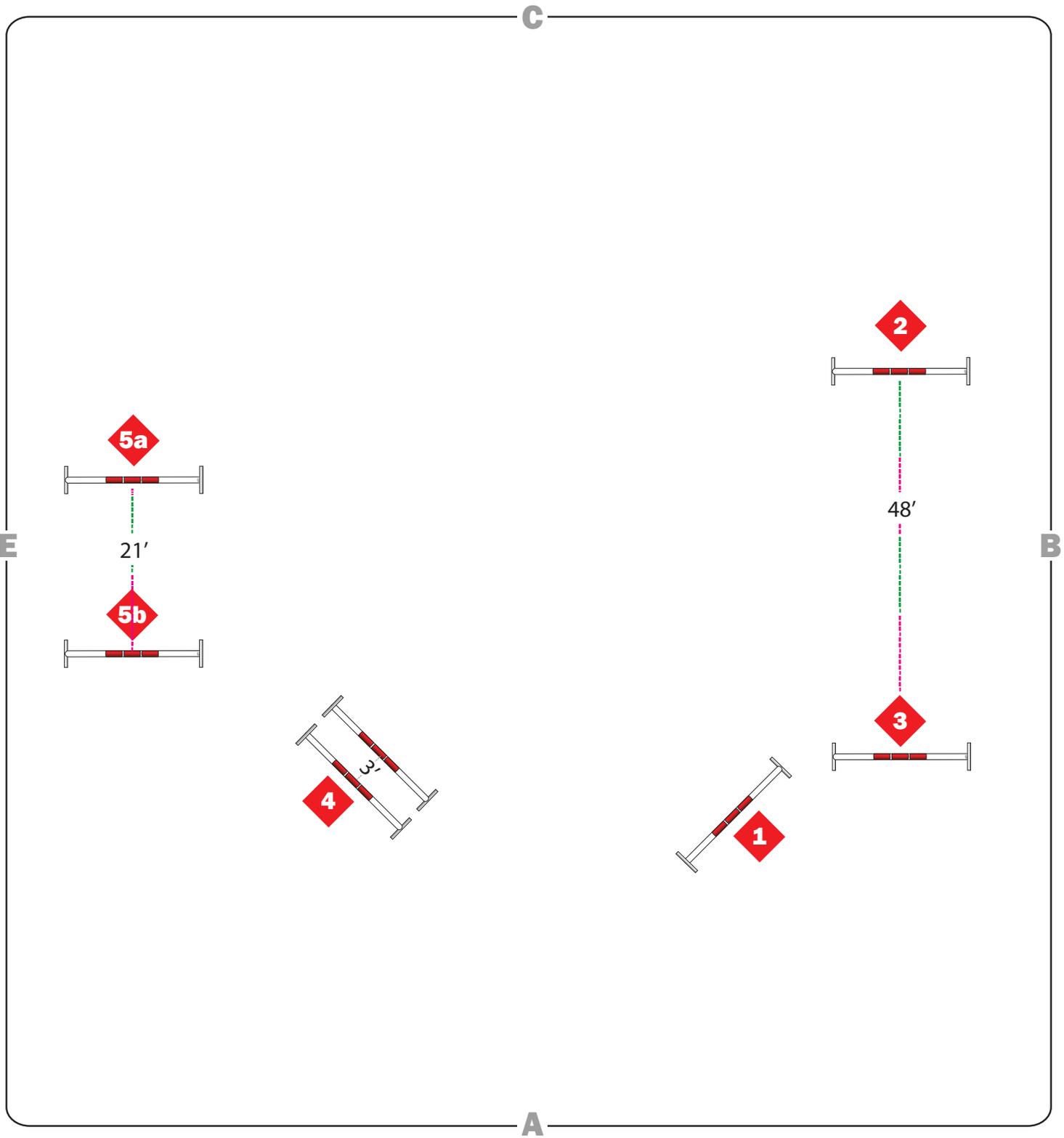
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**NOTES:** This course is designed to provide an **introduction to show jumping questions** at a slow, safe pace. You can discuss the different types of jumping competitions, or include it in a beginner-friendly show. Make sure to teach the **rules of numbering**: if they miss #5b, they must retake #5a on their second try.

The **distances used between the fences are extremely flexible** and assume that the course will be ridden entirely at the **walk**. If you are teaching a mixed group or wish to allow Red Level students to trot portions of the course, feel free to **adjust the distances accordingly**; 20' or 24' may be a better fit for the combination, depending on the size of the horses and their natural length of stride.

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- VARIATIONS:**
-  **Change the order of jumps.** Assuming students ride the opening circle at the A end of the arena, any jump except **#2** and **#5a** can be used as the first fence, creating several possible variations.
  -  **Create a Build-It-Up course by increasing the difficulty as the course goes on.** A possible set-up for Red Level students might start with a single ground pole, use **baby crossrails** and/or **pole stacks** for the related distance, and a small flower box or vertical set on the first hole at **#5b**.
  -  **Run a timed jump-off for all students that ride a clean round.** Assuming all your jumps are poles and can be approached in both directions, you might ask students to start by jumping **#3**, riding a left rollback to **#1**, following the rail to the combination (jumping **#5b** before **#5a**) and finishing with a right rollback to **#4**. **Discuss** the risk of runouts and how to ride a time-saving turn without sacrificing rhythm and impulsion.
  -  **Increase the difficulty** by substituting one or more of your poles with **skinny poles**. This is particularly effective in the line from **#2** to **#3** and in the combination.



## Jump Course - Red Level #4 - Show Jumping Style

## #5 RED ROLLBACKS

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**OBJECTIVE:** To challenge students' ability to memorize and ride a **twisty, jumper-style course of ground poles** at the **walk**.

**EQUIPMENT:**  6 GROUND POLES, SECURED WITH JUMP STANDARDS OR CONES

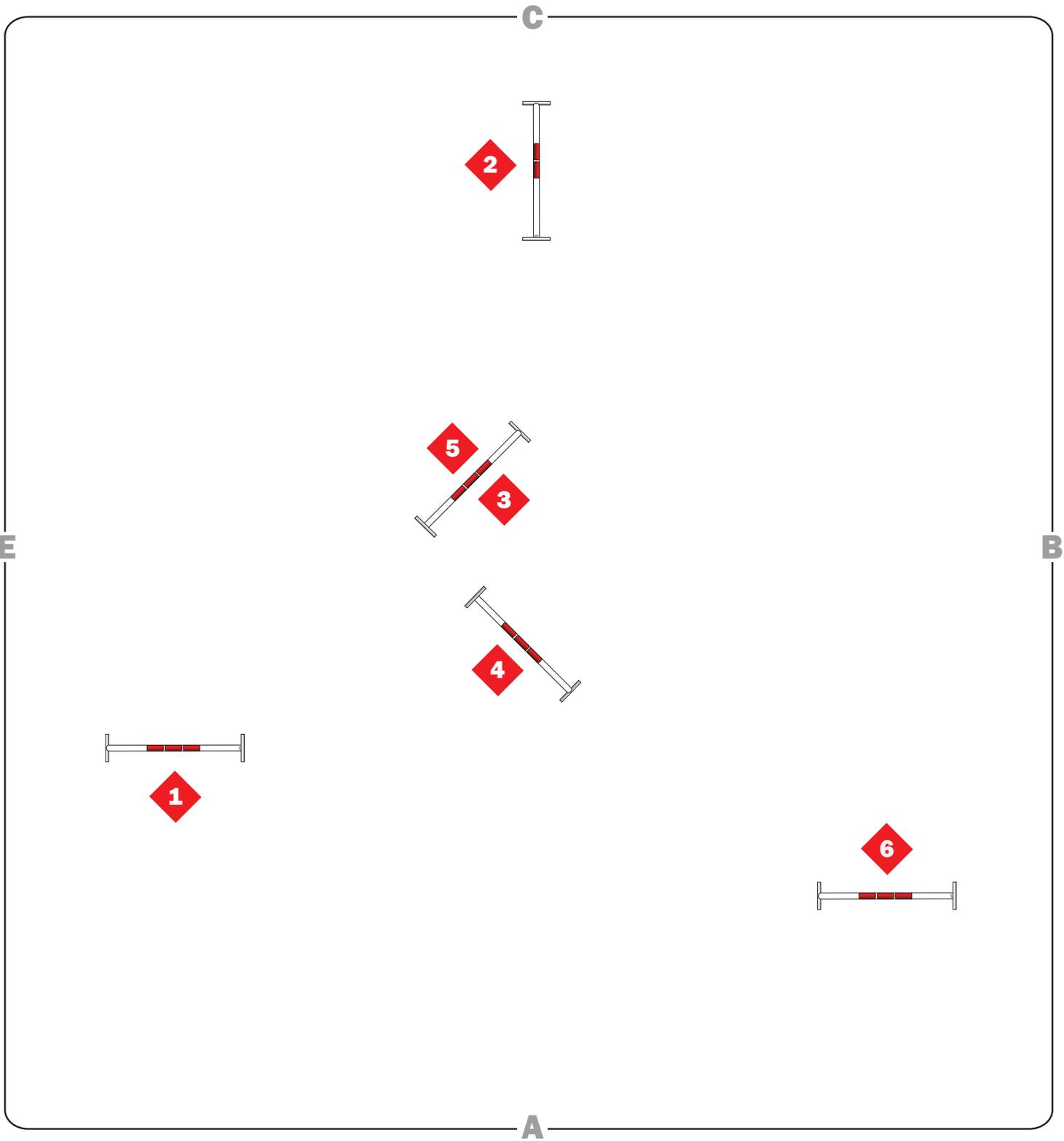
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**NOTES:** We love to use this course to **teach students to think about what makes a good approach to a fence**. The close proximity of the jumps makes the reasons for the rules apparent; if students do not ride **wide turns** that touch the rail, they will find it extremely difficult to line up with their next fence.

**Discuss** how the horse perceives the jump on the "takeoff" stride and what causes a **runout**. Remind students that they would be riding these turns three times as fast if they were cantering around an actual course!

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- VARIATIONS:**
-  **Change the order of jumps.** Assuming students ride the opening circle at the A end of the arena, any jump except **#2** can be used as the first fence, creating many possible variations.
  -  **Play Take Your Own Line.** The creative combinations of this course makes it a great choice for a friendly Take Your Own Line combination. **Discuss** how to determine if a turn is reasonable and suggest improvements to course plans as necessary. **Establish penalties** for unauthorized trots before timed rounds begin.
  -  **Play Gambler's Choice.** Vary the setup of your ground poles to include a few **baby crossrails** or **pole stacks**. (Make sure all your school horses will quietly step over these obstacles first!) **Assign each fence a point value** and give students a **time limit** to ride over as many poles as they can. At your discretion, you can withhold points for any fence approached poorly.
  -  **Increase the difficulty** by making several of your fences **grids of 3 to 4 poles**. If students do not ride straight to the center of the fence, they are unlikely to make it over all of the poles. You can also substitute one or more of your poles with **skinny poles**.



## Jump Course - Red Level #5 - Red Rollbacks