



# SAFEGUARDING YOUR DOG'S KNEES



**Jennifer Holmes**  
**CHPHC, CCFT, CCRP,**  
**RVT, BS**

Jholmes@k9fitnessworks.com

970-817-3016

k9fitnessworks.com

@k9fitnessworks





# 3 FITNESS TIPS FOR HEALTHY KNEES

1

Body  
Awareness

2

Step up

3

Step Over





# STAY AWARE OBSERVATION



- Creating an awareness of your dogs body movements



- Observing to their body language in all daily activities i.e. walks, sleeping, dog play, jump in the car, stairs, and more



- Arched back, holding up a leg, sitting position







# STEP UP ELEVATED STAND



- Use a 1 inch phone book or catalog or solid foam
- Use a treat or toy to ask them to step up



- Ask your dog to step up on a low surface
- Hold for 1-3 seconds once they know what to do



- Keep back-to-neck line flat
- Back feet evenly spaced and evenly weighted
- Hip to foot alignment





# OBSERVATION



NOTE: Nice spine alignment. Back has a little arch in it. We want a flat back.



NOTE: Nice spine alignment. Neck to tail is in a straight line.



NOTE: Both dogs have back legs staggered. We want them even and evenly weighted.



NOTE: Back legs are even and evenly weighted. Nice spine alignment.





# STEP OVER CAVALETTI



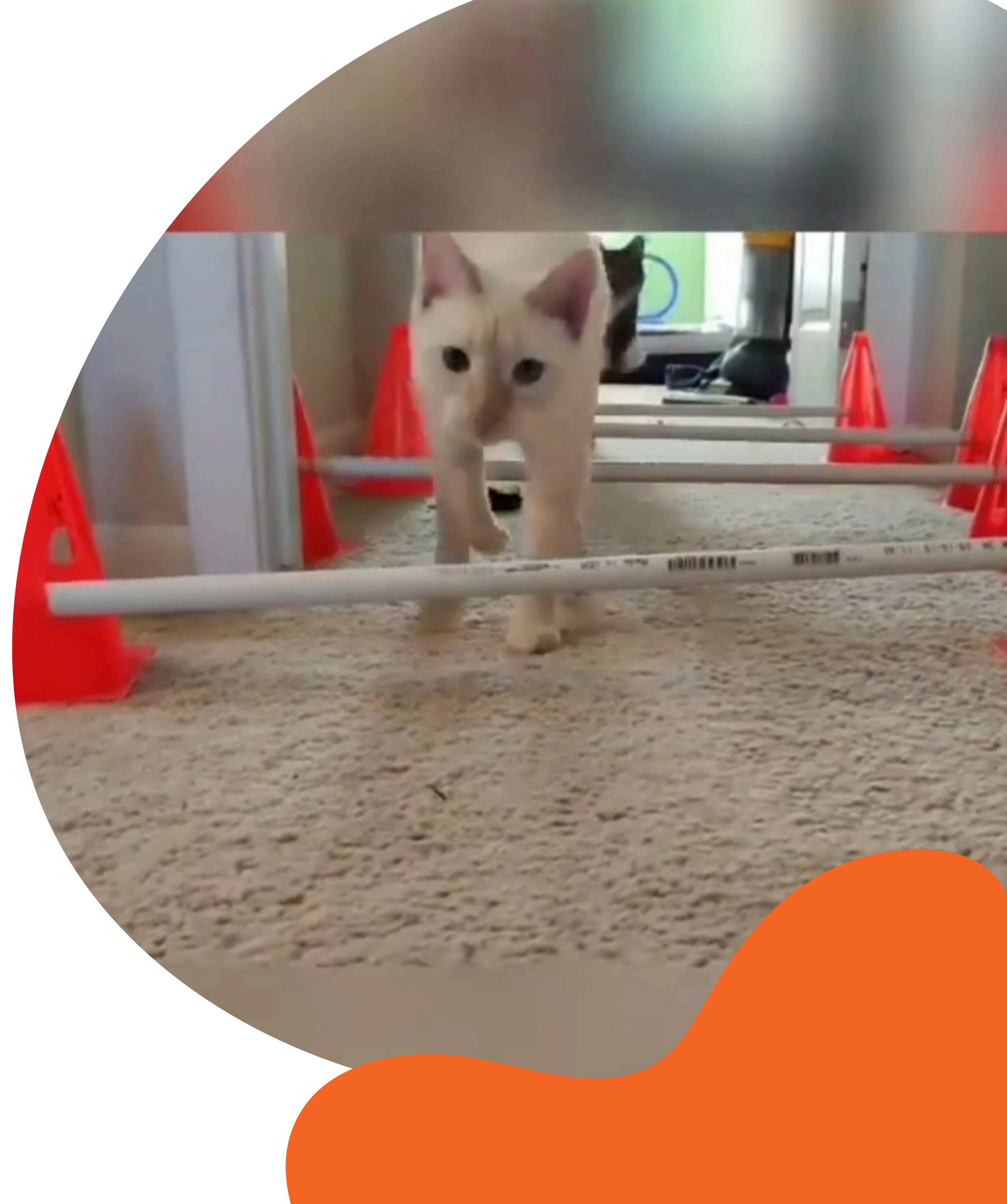
- Lay poles down on the floor
- Poles can be PVC, broom handle, pool noodle, or creative idea



- Use a treat or toy to get their attention
- Ask your dog to step over the pole

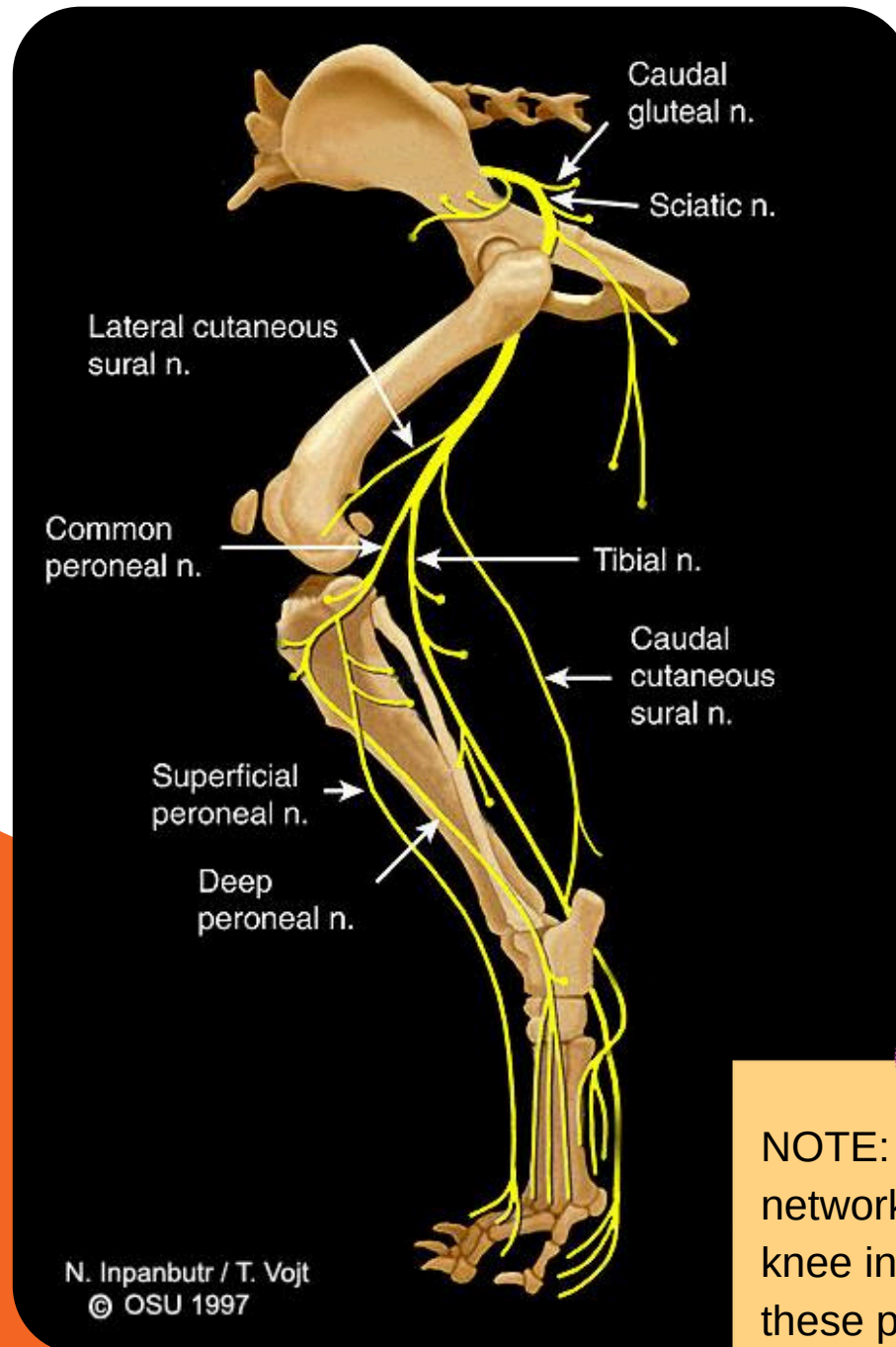
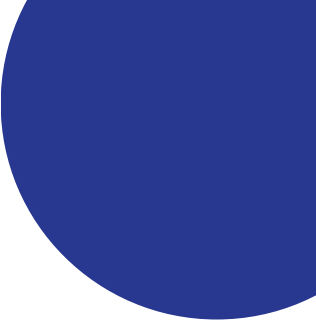


- No hopping
- Step all the way through
- Right height for exercise goal (foot position vs. body awareness vs. joint flexion)

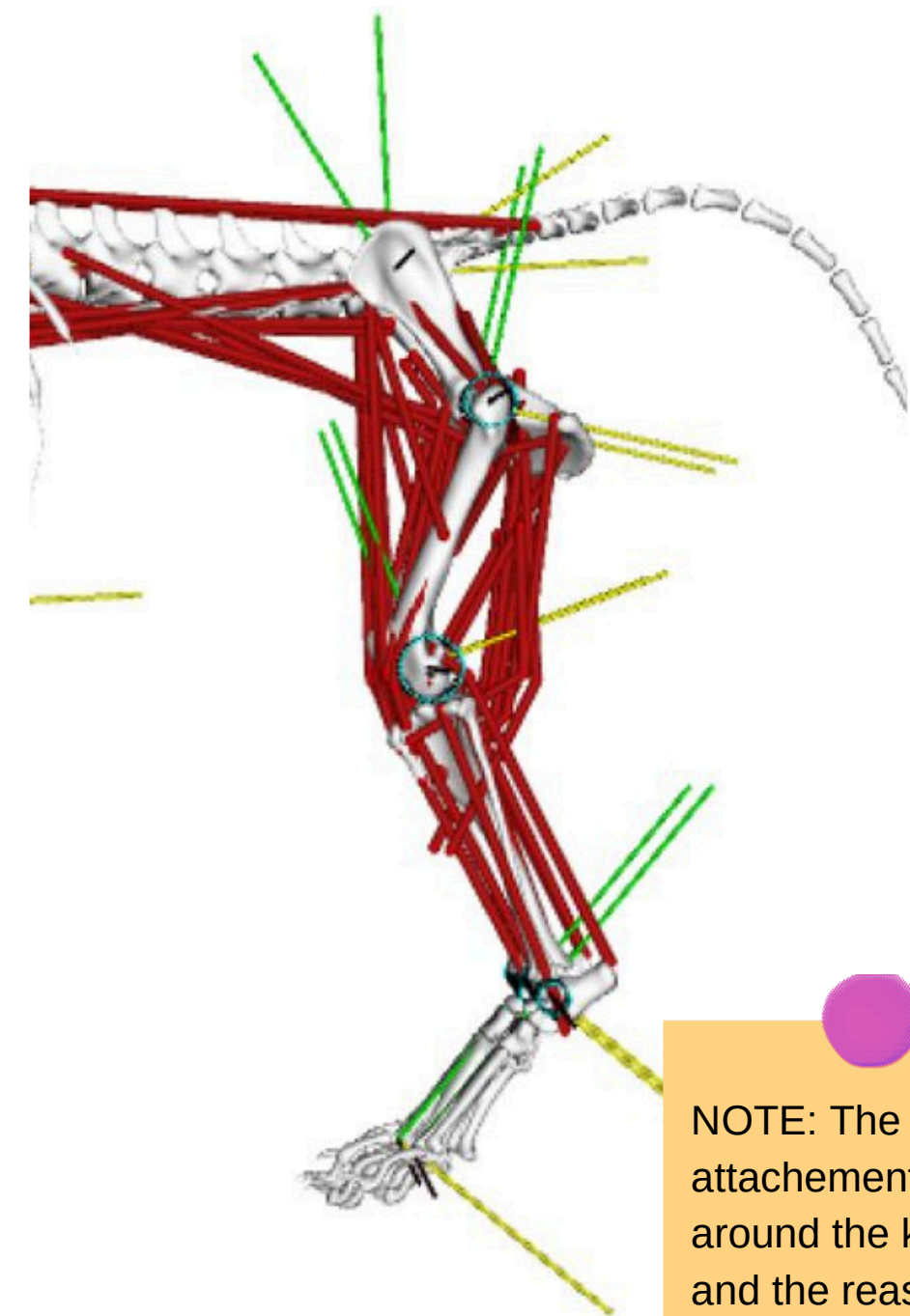
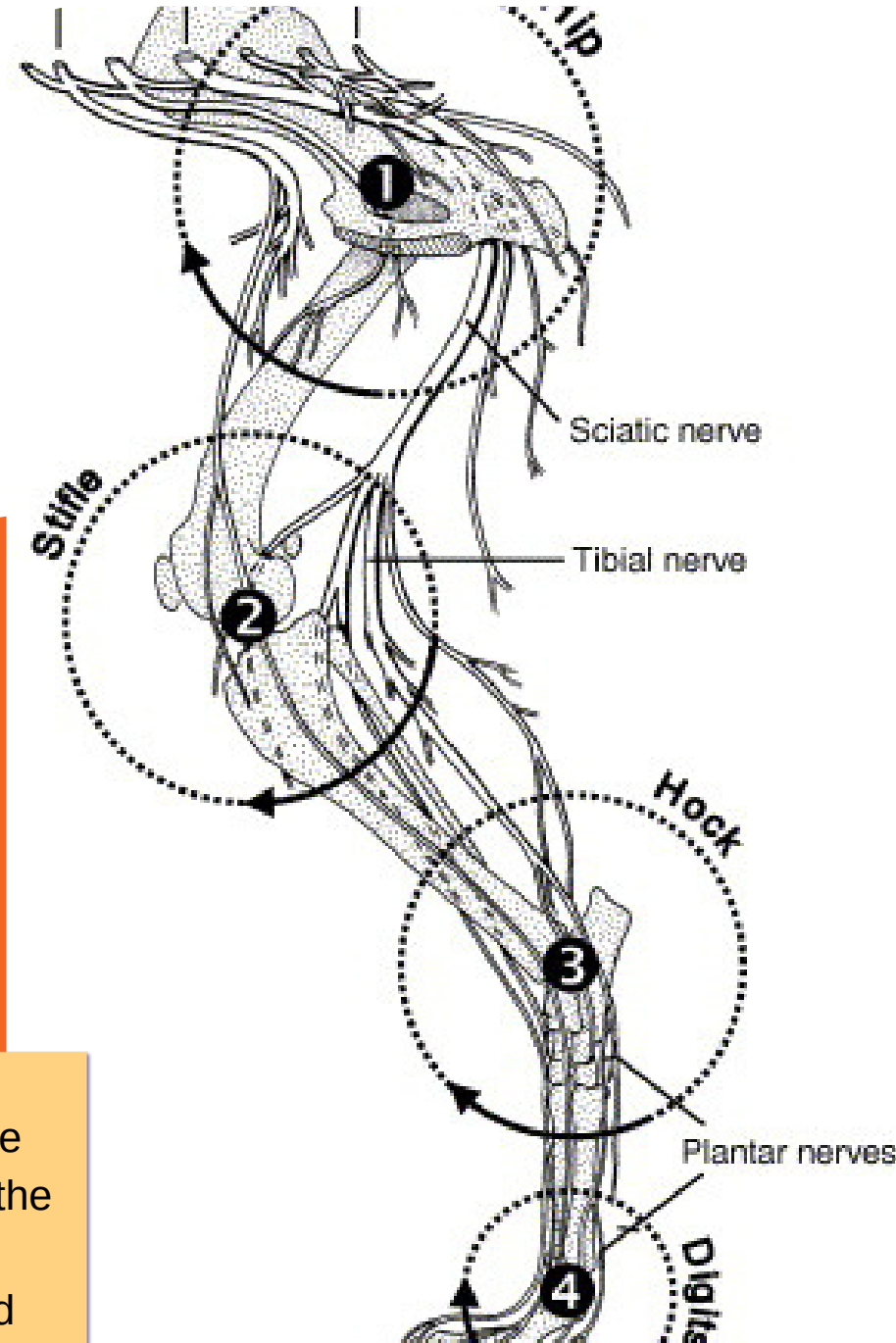




# KNEE ANATOMY



NOTE: The nerve network around the knee in both of these photos and the reason for Step Over Exercise

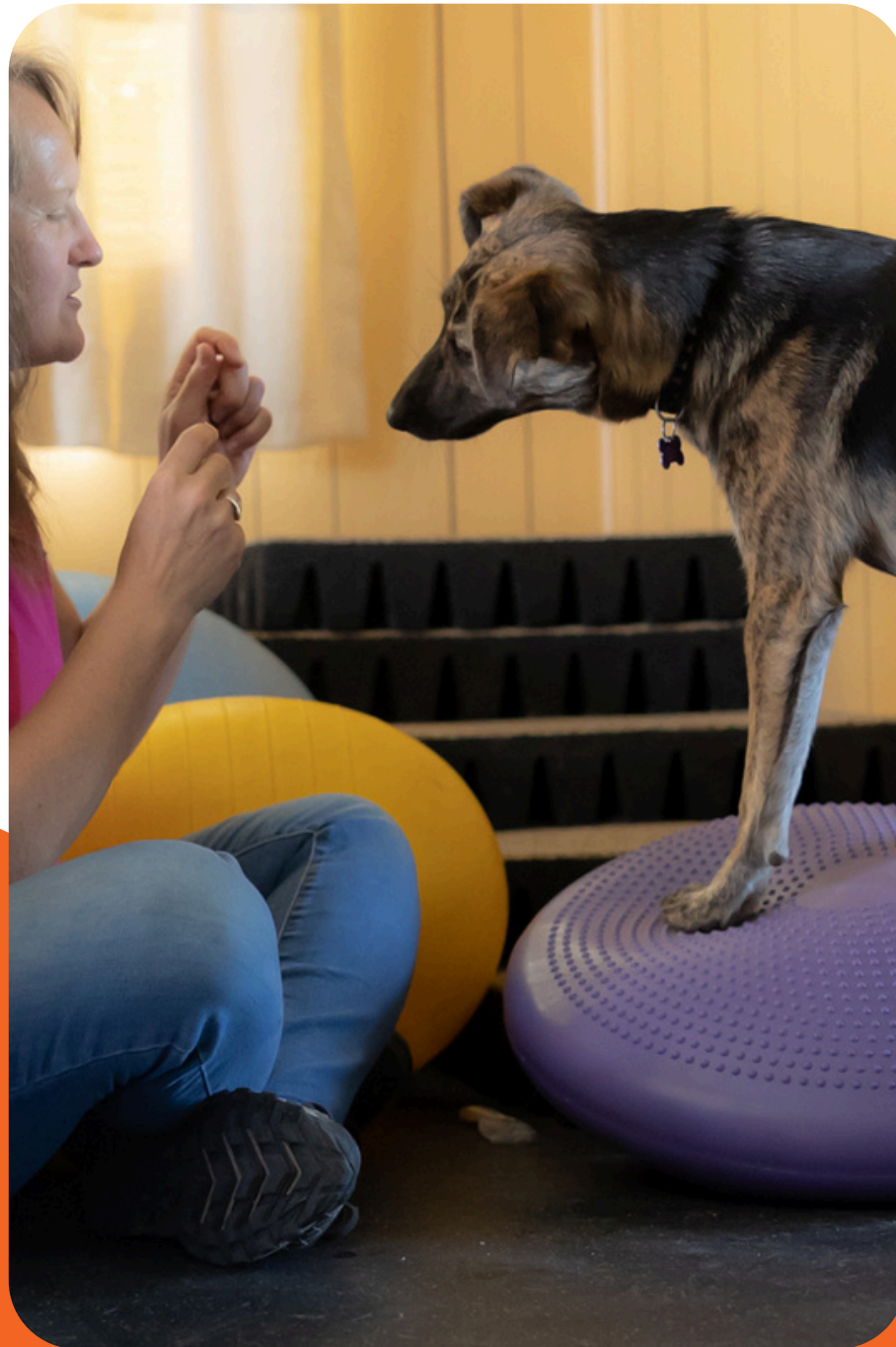


NOTE: The muscle attachments around the knee and the reason for the Step Up Exercise





# EXERCISE VARIETY







# NEXT LEVEL

## TIPS: PLANNING

- Observe first
- Hold positions for up to 30 seconds
- Do exercises on different surfaces: sidewalk, grass, mulch, gravel...
- Do step-ups and step-overs with different obstacles: curbs, rocks of different sizes, logs, benches...
- Look for equipment at your local thrift store or garage sales or free on the curb
- Be creative: Think outside of the box!



### The 5 Legs of Fitness

- Body awareness
- Strength
- Flexibility
- Balance
- Nutrition







# NEXT LEVEL

## TIPS: FORM

- **Back alignment.** Notice the line of the spine from head to tail. Guide your dog into alignment using their attention to a treat or toy to move their body. Test holding the treat higher or lower, right and left. You can also gently massage along the spine to help it relax into a flatter position.
- **Foot placement.** Noticing how the feet are placed in relation to the hips. We want the back feet even with each other and butt over the feet. You can apply gentle pressure at the with your leg or hand (depending on the size of the dog) to help the dog initiate shifting to a proper placement. This becomes part of the dogs natural body awareness.



YES Cats can do these too!

**Live your best life together**  
Go do your K9 Fit Time!







# NEXT LEVEL TIPS: NUTRITION

- **Our Pet's Diet.** Notice what foods go into your dog or cat's bowl. Those foods are what feed their joints. Are they supportive, vegetables and collagen, foods? Are they inflammatory, carbs and processed, foods?
- **Joint supplement.** Noticing what ingredients are in your joint supplement, how sustainable are they, and how are they processed. The quality of ingredients effect the quality of support.



**K9 Fitness Works Blog**  
When Your Dog's Tail Tells a Story





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# K9 FIT TIME

## GUIDE



This guide is a great start for safeguarding your dog's knees.

To customize a fitness plan for your dog's individual needs, contact me directly to schedule a time for a full evaluation.

### Upcoming workshops

- Nutrition & Fascial Stretching
- Gait Analysis
- Shoulder Injury Prevention



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