

25 Ways to Become a Good Brush Beater by Sandi Myers

1. Come prepared for all types of weather and cover in the field.
2. Bring sturdy shoes, boots, hat, gloves, protective clothing, sun screen, lip balm.
3. Arrive at the gate or starting point at the judges designated time.
4. Always make sure the gate to the field is closed.
5. Line up and beat according to the Field Marshal or Judges instructions.
6. Always try to carry a stick or other brush beating implement!
7. Beat with your eyes up, don't look down toward your feet. Learn to train your eyes to follow which direction the rabbit traveled. Try to spot 2 points, one from where the rabbit was flushed (Point A) and another 6 to 8 feet along the direction of travel (Point B). This may be hard at first but just do your best. It takes practice to become a good spotter.
8. Watch your step. Be careful about climbing on top of brush piles or other cover, the debris could be unstable. Don't walk on planted, food strips.
9. If possible, let the Judges watch where the rabbit travels (Point C & beyond) while the beater(s) keep track of the start. Again, this can sometimes be hard, but do your best.
10. Help Judges and/or handlers (if asked by the Judge) -give clear directions. If the dog is placed on the line ahead of where the rabbit was bumped, don't have handlers turn their dog backwards, just give them the direction down the line to get forward momentum going. Handlers should be listening carefully to the directions from the Judges or spotter.
11. Don't walk on the line. Place your stick **near, not on**, the starting point (Point A).
12. Step back from the Start to give the handlers space to get their dogs on the line. Handlers should try to have dogs in the middle and a handler on each side of the line.
13. Be Quiet and Be Still while dogs are down. Do not talk loudly while dogs are running.
14. It is courteous to help beat for rabbits while you are not running dogs. For others, responsibilities in the clubhouse may demand attention. If one is physically unable to share with beating duties, please volunteer to help with other duties of running the trial. If you can run a dog, you can **HELP** with something that needs doing.
15. If you think one of the spotters is giving the wrong directions - speak up before handlers are brought to the line.
16. Stop beating when you hear "Tally Ho", especially on grounds with abundant rabbits. The idea is to try to not flush extra rabbits.
17. If you see another rabbit while dogs are down - don't yell Tally Ho.
18. **If you leave the field - use land that has been already covered by the beaters.**
19. Be a good sportsman, and give good instructions to fellow exhibitors. If you are unsure where the rabbit ran, it is OK to admit you don't have a good line.
20. In some rare cases, not everyone will need to beat for rabbits if the conditions exist.
21. Give someone who has beat in the hard stuff a break by taking the hard stuff yourself.
22. If a dog comes back to the beaters don't move around. Don't stare at the dogs that are running if they look up at you, just avert your eyes in a different direction.
23. Try to stay to the end of the trial (especially if you live within close driving distances). It is a good sportsman who volunteers to beat even though their dogs did not get called back. If everyone helps to the end, the end can come faster for everyone.
24. It is fantastic to have help from exhibitors with final clean-up and packing. For those who stay, you have no idea how much you are appreciated!
25. Remember too, that this is suppose to be fun, but sometimes rewards are not reaped without hard work. Now go out and beat for those bunnies. Being a Good Brush Beater does take practice.