

HEAVENSENT
RIDING SKILLS

HEAVENSENT RIDING SKILLS

Levels 1, 2 and 3

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and CCHI contributors*

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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

There are many excellent books written on the subject of horsemanship. Many famous Riding Masters through the ages have taught us about our equine friend, the horse.

Back in the fourth century BC, Xenophon was the first Riding Master who showed an understanding of the psychology of the horse and of the approach to its training. Now many centuries later, Riding Masters are still perfecting the art of horsemanship.

While reading many horse books and studying the different methods, I discovered that different cultures concentrate on different approaches to riding and training horses. The French concentrate on feel. Through feel, they will know when the horse is ready for further training or will feel the exact moment when to give the aid.

The Germans will rely on thorough schooling for absolute obedience. The English will rely more on their partnership with the horse, giving the horse a chance to think also, while the Arabs will rely on friendship with their horses, handling them from day-old foals. Each approach has good results, both for enjoyment, or for the show ring, yet which one really is the ideal approach?

If you were to buy a car and something was to go wrong, who better to consult than the manufacturer? If the Lord created the earth and all the animals alive, would it then not be logical to consult the Lord also, in the field of horsemanship, in the riding and training of the horse?

This little book therefore endeavours to take a look at riding and training from the **Biblical Approach**.

Horse Riding Camp: how the Biblical Approach began

It was the third day of Camp. The hot Karoo sun made riding hard work. Even the horses were not responding well. "OK! Line up and rest!" I commanded. Suddenly a loose horse trotted past. Head arched, tail high, he trotted with beauty and grace of movement.

"How is it," asked one of the Campers, "that a loose horse looks so beautiful, but when we get on him, he will move like a donkey?"

"Good question!" I replied. "Why do you think the loose horse looks so beautiful?" "He is happy," said someone. "And free," answered another. "Then why," I said, "don't they feel the same when a person gets on them?" There was a silence.

I tried again. "How are you Campers feeling?" "Cross!" said someone. "Why?" I asked. "Jane took all the bacon at breakfast, so I had none." "Oh, *Jealousy!*" I replied. "Well," said Jane, "there were only three bits left, anyway." Oh, *Greed!*" I replied. "And you?" I went on, pointing to a sad-looking rider. "I had an argument with a friend last night." Oh, *Anger!*" I replied. "So if you are full of these unhappy feelings, how do you expect your horse to be when you get on?" Another silence.

"Maybe we should get rid of these unhappy feelings, then?" I suggested. "How?" asked one of them. I thought for a moment. "Well, the only way I know is to confess them to Jesus, ask Him to forgive us, and ask Him to fill us with the joy of His presence."

At that, a tall 19-year-old, dismounted, knelt in the dust and said, "Will you pray for me?" I had never done that in a riding lesson before, but I went ahead anyway and prayed. After the prayer, with everyone watching, he got up smiling, and remounted his horse.

"Trot a circle!" I suggested, "And then canter one." He went ahead. His horse moved with a new vigour and the rider's smile became broader and broader as his horse moved better for him than ever before. All the riders looked on, mouths gaping. It worked; prayer really worked!

Before the end of the Camp, every rider had given their lives to Jesus. The whole atmosphere of the Camp had changed and a new joy and excitement took over. It was their attitudes that had changed. The now happy riders, along with normal basic tuition, were getting better results on the now happier, more yielded horses.

For me, this was just the beginning. The beginning of a whole new way of teaching riding and witnessing for Jesus at the same time. Over the following ten years, the Lord taught me a whole new approach to the teaching of horsemanship.

There has been much success, both in the lifestyles of my pupils – and in the show ring. This is because the horses are more yielded to the fruits of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those riders, than they had been yielded to the old natures of those same riders before they became Christians.

CONTENTS

Level 1

CHAPTER 1	The Attitude of Horse and Rider	13
CHAPTER 2	Safety Rules	20
CHAPTER 3	Handling and Caring for Your Horse	24
CHAPTER 4	Mounting Aids and their Application	34
CHAPTER 5	The Seat Position	38
CHAPTER 6	Basics of Horsemanship	43
CHAPTER 7	Trail-Riding	51

Level 2

CHAPTER 8	Speaking the Language	61
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Level 3

CHAPTER 9	Show Jumping	71
CHAPTER 10	Your First Show	76
CHAPTER 11	A Brief Look at other Show Ring Activities Worldwide	79
CHAPTER 12	Feeding and First Aid	82
CHAPTER 13	Preparing the Horse for a Show	95
CHAPTER 14	The Riding Instructor	100
CHAPTER 15	Progressive Teaching	108
	Epilogue	124

LEVEL 1

The Attitude of Horse and Rider

In the wild, the horse's only defence is speed. He had no horns, no sharp teeth, only sensitivity, alertness and speed. A horse therefore has an acute sense towards danger, as our oldest Riding Master Xenophon writes. He says: *"Not to lose one's temper with a horse is a good precept and an excellent habit."*

"To lose one's temper is unreasonable and makes one do things one afterwards regrets. When a horse shows fright of an object and refuses to move, then one must make him feel that there is nothing to fear and this is especially so if the horse is a high-couraged one. The rider will do well to walk up to such an object and this reassures the horse.

"Those riders who force the horse by the use of the whip, will only increase its terror, for he will imagine that the pain he feels is inflicted on him by the object which frightens him. A horse of fiery nature is affected by everything he sees, hears or feels that comes upon him suddenly. It should therefore be remembered not to do anything to him unawares".

A horse is able to sense danger and evil and flee from it. A horse in the wild will also fear man and run from him.

If he is caught by man, he will try to buck him off. Only after perseverance from man will he be broken in.

There was one man in history that did not need to break in the horse or donkey first. His name is Jesus,

“And He said to them: “Go into the village opposite you and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which none has ever sat; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you ‘why are you doing this?’ Say “The Lord has need of it and will send it back immediately.”

And they went away and found a colt tied at a door out in the open street, and they untied it and those who stood there said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” and they told them what Jesus had said and they let them go.

And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their garments on it and he sat upon it and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields, and those who went before and those who followed cried “Hosanna, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming! Hosanna in the highest.”

(Mark 11:2)

The question is: “Why did the donkey not buck Jesus off?” Was it a miracle? or was Christ fulfilling the conditions. We all know that a donkey is much harder to break in than a horse.

Yet the donkey accepted Jesus calmly and not only that, entered into crowds of people and over cloaks and branches on the ground without shying away or trying to step round them. The clue comes from Zechariah 9:9:

“Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud O daughter of Jerusalem! Lo your King comes to you, triumphant and victorious is He, humbly and riding on an ass, a colt, the foal of an ass.”

We should study the three conditions:

Victory, Humble, and Triumphant

Victory

“Then God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

(Genesis 1:26)

In that passage, we were already given victory over the horse. That’s if and when we could stay on. After possibly being bucked off a few times, man would eventually achieve victory over his horse and ride him.

Humble

Who was the most humble person who ever lived? Jesus.

“Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him, John would have prevented him, saying, “I have need to be baptized by you and do you come to me?” But Jesus answered him: “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness.” Then he consented, and when Jesus was baptized, He went up immediately from the water, and behold the heavens were opened and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him and lo, a voice from heaven saying “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

(Matthew 3:13-17)

Though Jesus was sinless, He still came to John to be baptized. So too He said,

“Know that I love the Father and I only do what He tells me.”

He then went all the way to the cross to take away our sins. What a perfect example of humbleness. Therefore, we should also come to God in humbleness and confess our sins to Him, that He may forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we have had our sins forgiven, and have accepted Him as Lord and Saviour, we will be able to live in triumph.

Triumphant

Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

(Galatians 5: 19-21)

The fruits of the old nature are anger, malice, slander, foul talk, etc – no wonder a horse will sense them and fear them and thus run from man or buck him off. How wonderful it would be for a horse to have a rider with the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The fruits of the new nature in Christ are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. There is nothing to fear in these qualities. That is why the donkey had nothing to fear from Jesus to buck Him off. He went gladly wherever Jesus wanted to go, and so Jesus was able to enter Jerusalem in triumph.

These three basics will determine you as a Triumphant Rider. If you are in the right standing with God, with your sins forgiven and the fruits of the new nature forming within you, you will be able to more easily handle any horse or any other

animal. After the normal riding lessons, you will be able to ride in perfect harmony with your horse, to the glory of God.

In my own life, the first thing I do before I mount is pray, make sure I am right with God, and then I check my girth and mount. I have also broken in over 100 horses since the Lord taught me this secret, and not one of them has so much as even bucked once.

Some time ago, I bought a horse called *State Occasion* which had been ill-treated by a previous owner. The first year I could not achieve a thing with this horse, until the Lord taught me the above, and enabled me to get right with Him, and also to yield completely to Him, giving the Lord every part of my body and mind. When I re-mounted the horse, he relaxed for the first time; two weeks later, I entered for a Dressage event and he won the Textile Fibres Trophy. (See photograph on page 19

Everyone wanted to buy him, but before I could sell him, I had to teach the new owner to ride in the same way. I then wrote an imaginative poem – from the viewpoint of the horse! This is the poem...

State Occasion

*I was unwanted, a fearful creature
 Afraid, I barred my teeth
 I was blind, the blow remembered
 Vicious, nobody understood.
 Then one day someone bought me
 Fear caused my nerves to fight
 The new owner persevered
 But to yield was not my plan
 But then one day it happened
 She was changed and my fear was gone
 I then yielded to her commands
 To learn and to be trained.
 A spurt of new life followed
 As I extended forth my gait.
 A new joy was exulted*

*Myself and rider, more as one.
She braced her back to slow me
Even though against my will
Now down the centre line
There is still more to learn.
And into a half pass
To supple me up too
She thinks I am a dancer
Well to please her, may as well.
I am yielded to her now.
As she is yielded to God on high
I know He helps and guides her
As she learns to ride me still.
The Master of understanding
Who guides me through her hands
To transform me into the beauty
He first created me to be... a Horse.*

This poem was just the beginning for me to understand horses. There are two ways of handling horses:

1. Through force that can cause fear.
2. Through winning your horse to yield to you and your commands through love, the way the Lord deals with us.

Although this may take longer initially, it is by far the better way, causing a relationship with your horse that will bring much reward to you both for many years.

If the horse is started in these basics, you will never have a problem with him in the future. In Arabia, Arab horses actually have their foals inside the tent and the foals are handled from the very beginning.

One Arab chose his horse by leading all thirty horses down to the river to drink. Then he called his horse and the horse immediately turned round from going towards the water, and came back to his master instead. That horse was voted the most valuable.

Some horses do not have the pleasure of good basics, and are rushed through their training as fast as possible for a quick sale, or rushed into the show ring without any regard other than a rosette.

Sometimes these horses get over-faced with larger jumps or exercises than their training or muscle development is ready for, causing fear, shying, bucking or plain stubbornness, yet no-one understands them and they are sold on, sometimes to worse and worse problems.

I have often bought these horses. One pony (14.2 hh) called *Sage* was given to me because he bit and kicked everyone, and bolted with his riders. I brought him home and simply made friends with him to gain his trust, and soon he was following me everywhere. This horse turned out to be one of my best and most reliable school ponies, as well as one of our best show jumpers.

Remember that horses respond to love – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Once you have regained your horse's trust, you can then work with them, and they will want to please you. If we learn to ride with our thought and weight aids, we will be able to influence them with our weight to do what we want them to do, rather than driving them with leg, hand and whip to do what we want them to do, which can cause resistance.

Riding the horse with gentleness and communicating simple and easy-to-understand aids through our body movements will result in a happy, yielded horse, which will enjoy working for you – rather than having to work for you through force. By using our body, weight as we would on our own feet, is how the Lord intended us to ride.



State Occasion after he won the Textile Fibres Trophy, and after the Lord had taught me to train him in line with the Biblical Approach.

Safety Rules

Illustrated by Glynn Woods

Horses are some of God's most beautiful creatures. They are strong and powerful, and should be treated with respect and care. You need to remember that horses don't think or react like people do, so you must learn how to behave around them in order to stay safe.

In the Bible God gave us the Ten Commandments as guidelines for our lives, so we can live life to the fullest and best honour and glorify Him. The Ten Commandments are not to keep us from having fun; rather they are to keep us safe. Just as it is important to follow God's rules, there are also safety rules to learn and obey when you are around horses.



Safety Rule #1

Pray before you play!

Even the most well-trained horses can get scared. Only God can guarantee your safety, not your instructor or the horse's trainer.

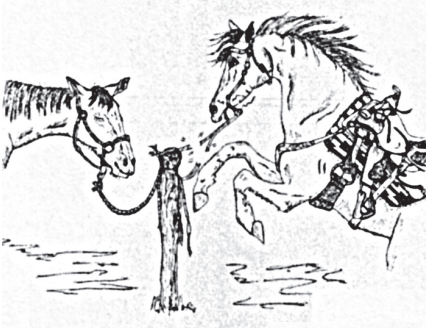
Encourage enthusiastically; discipline when necessary.

Safety Rule #2

Just like the Lord, horses need to be praised. Sometimes they misbehave, and when that happens you have three seconds to correct them, but the general rule is to praise more and punish less.

Horses, like humans, enjoy being rewarded for doing well but also must be punished when doing something wrong.



**Safety Rule #3**

Never tie with a bit and bridle. Always use a halter and lead rope! A horse can hurt himself and break equipment if tied with his reins.

Safety Rule #4

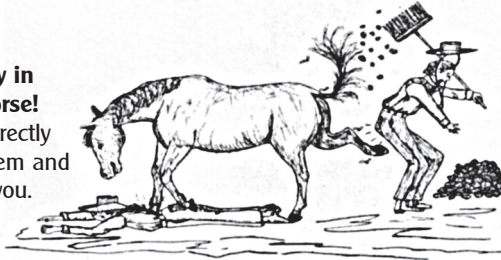
Don't tailgate! Always keep one horse length between your horse and the horse in front of you. Horses are not all friends, and might kick the horse behind.

**Safety Rule #5**

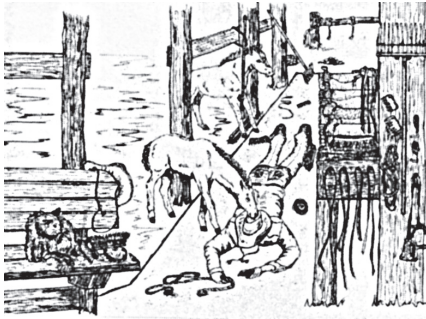
Don't be in a rush, and keep it quiet! Unexpected movements and loud sounds may scare horses and cause them to react violently.

Safety Rule #6

Do not stand directly in front or behind a horse! Horses cannot see directly in front or behind them and if scared could hurt you.

**Safety Rule #7**

Do not hand-feed a horse! Your fingers could be mistaken for a treat and get bitten.

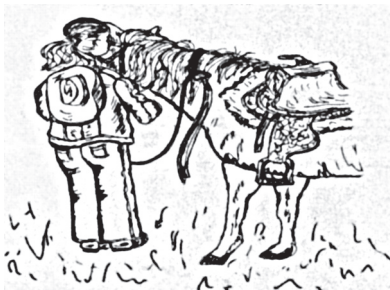


Safety Rule #8

Take good care of your equipment. Always put your equipment away correctly so that it does not get damaged. It will also last longer when properly cared for. Just as God has given us dominion over the animals, we need to care for our equipment also.

Safety Rule #9

Wear the right clothes! You should have on long pants, boots or shoes with a heel, and the correct headgear. Boots with a heel keep your foot from going through the stirrup; long pants prevent your legs from getting sores; and a helmet will protect your head.

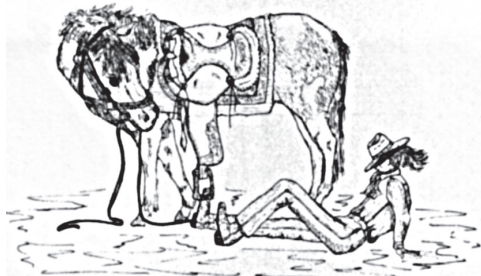


Safety Rule #10

If you need to adjust your clothing or equipment, do it from the ground. Horses cannot see behind them, and you could scare them by doing it behind their back.

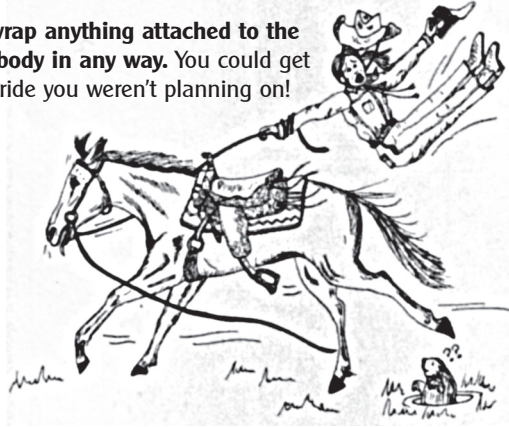
Safety Rule #11

Safety check before you mount! Always check and have your instructor check to be sure your equipment fits and is adjusted properly before you get on your horse. This can prevent accident and injury to you and the horse.



Safety Rule #12

Do not ever tie or wrap anything attached to the horse around your body in any way. You could get dragged or go for a ride you weren't planning on!



Handling and Caring for Your Horse

Approaching Your Horse and Tying it

Horses cannot see directly in front of them or directly behind them without moving their heads. To safely approach a horse, speak to him so he knows you're there, and approach him by the neck or shoulder. Reach out and scratch him on the neck or shoulder and speak to him gently.

If the horse is in a tie stall and you have to come in behind it, speak to him and be sure you have his attention, then place your hand on his hip. Apply pressure on the hip, asking him to move over, then go to his head and give him a scratch.

Should the horse be in a box stall, you want to call to him and have him facing you as you approach him. Whenever working behind a horse you want to be talking so he knows it is you. Have your hand on him so he feels where you are, and stay in close to his rump. If you are close to him, he cannot get the power he needs to kick hard. Horses should NEVER be allowed to kick at people, as this is very dangerous.

To catch a horse, you want to take your halter and lead-rope with you and approach his head or shoulder, then place your lead-rope around his neck so you have control of him. Standing between your horse's shoulder and head, put his nose in the halter, then fasten it up over his head.

Use a safety release knot and tie him to a string that is attached to a strong, solid object or pole. Just as we tie our

horses to something strong, we should tie our lives to God, who is strong and sturdy and whom we can trust to hold us.

Some barns have cross-ties built in, that hook to each side of the horse's halter. Other places may have sturdy hitching rails to tie your horse to, or you may need to use a fence post.

NEVER tie to a fence rail, as the horse could panic and break the rail! You should also avoid tying horses to the fence posts of wire fences, as the horse could get his leg caught and injure himself severely.

Horses need to be tied at a height level with the horse's back or higher, and, with just enough rope, he can put his head down comfortably, without the rope getting a lot of slack in it. This will ensure he will not be able to step over the rope if he puts his head down.

When tying your horse, tie him to a string attached to a post, so that if he gets a fright and pulls back, the string will break, rather than injure himself. Always use a quick release knot when tying your horse, so you can untie him easily when necessary.

Grooming with Christian analogy

Your horse has been entrusted to you by God, and you are responsible for caring for him. It is very important to keep him well groomed, and not just because it makes him look good! Grooming helps you to build a relationship with your horse, just as we need to spend time with God to build a relationship with Him.

Your first grooming tool is a **curry comb**. It is probably round, made either of rubber, plastic, or metal. If it is metal, do not use it on the horse. The curry comb is used in a circular motion, to loosen the deep down dirt and bring it to the surface.

When we accept Christ's gift of salvation, God removes the deep-rooted sin in our lives and gives us a clean heart again.

The next grooming tool you'll use is a hard brush, sometimes called a **Dandy brush**. The Dandy brush is made of hard bristle that takes off hard mud and dirt.

Just as we flick the dirt off our horse, God through the Holy Spirit works to “flick” the sin out of our lives. If you’ve ever had a rock in your shoe, you know how painful that can be. That is what happens to the horse if the dirt is not removed before putting the saddle on-it ends up with a sore. Sometimes there’s something bothering us in our lives and causing pain. We can take it to God, and He can help us to deal with it.

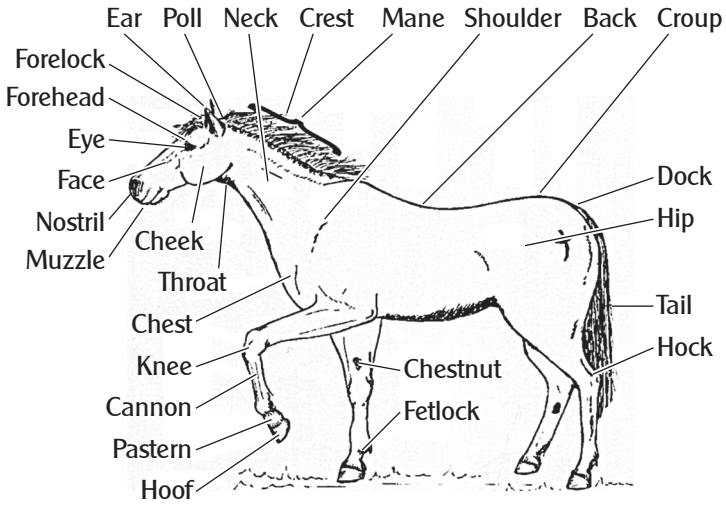
After the worst of the dirt is removed with the hard brush, you use a **soft brush**. It can be used on the face and lower legs as well as the rest of the horse’s body. The soft brush removes the fine dirt and brings a shine to the horse’s coat, just as God works to refine us and help us shine like gold for Him.

Once you have your horse’s body clean, you want to be sure to clean his hooves! It is important to remove all dirt and stones from the hoof to be sure it stays healthy.

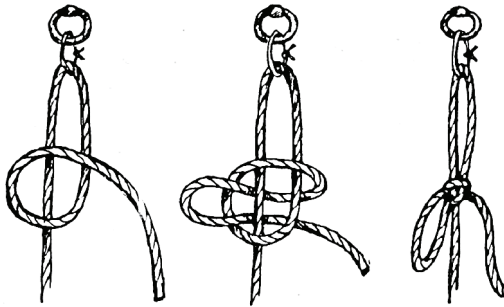
Mud left too long can cause damage to the hoof. Hold the **hoof-pick** (*above*) in the palm of your hand with the end away from your body, and clean working away from yourself from the sides of the frog to the toe. The hoof is the foundation to the horse, as Christ is the foundation of His church.

Last but not least is a **mane and tail comb**. This is used to comb out tangles and burrs that may get in the horses hair. Always start at the bottom and work your way to the top. Sometimes we get into tangles in our lives, but we can turn to God for help to get us out of those situations.

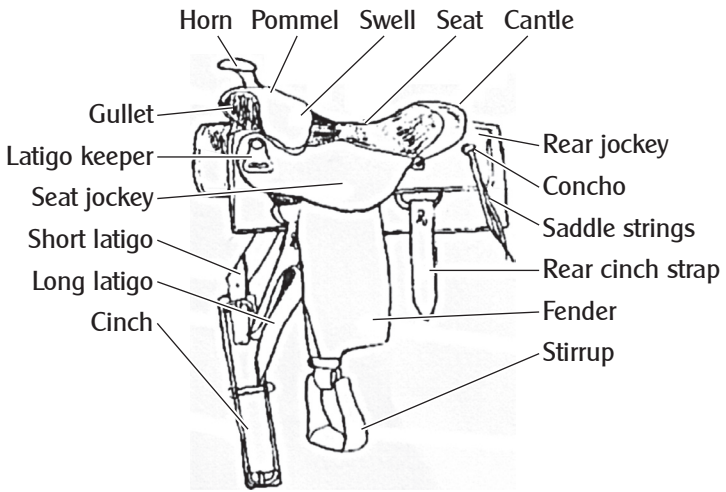
The horse must be kept clean and neat just like our souls. If our souls are dirty from sin, then we must repent and seek mercy and forgiveness to cleanse ourselves again. If we do this then we will be comfortable and happy and so will the horse when we groom it.



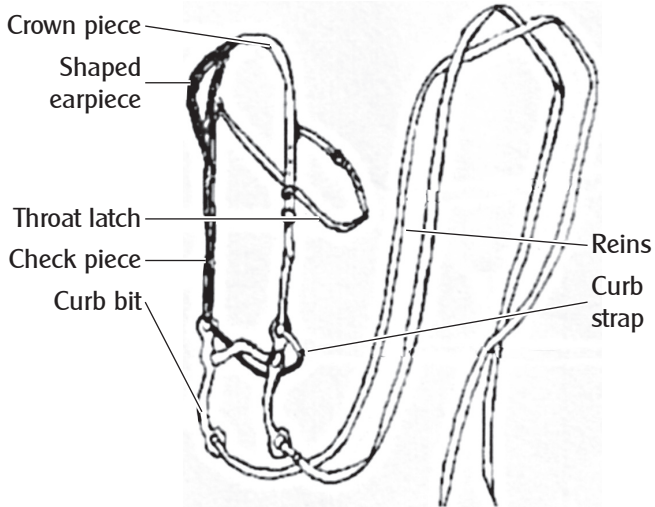
Parts of the horse



Quick-release knot and safety loop



Western saddle parts



Western bridle parts

Saddling & bridling Western style (Christian analogy)

The saddle is where we get mounted control of the horse. The rider is carried and stabilized in the saddle. It is important to stay centered in the saddle so the horse can perform its best. Staying centered allows the horse to keep its balance. When we keep Jesus at the centre of our lives, we can live balanced lives and have purpose and meaning. If we let our ego and selfishness to take centre place instead of Christ, our lives will not be in God's will and we won't be as happy and fulfilled as we should be. If we do not saddle the right way the result can be dangerous.

“There is a way that seems right to man, but after that the judgment.”

John 14:6 says,

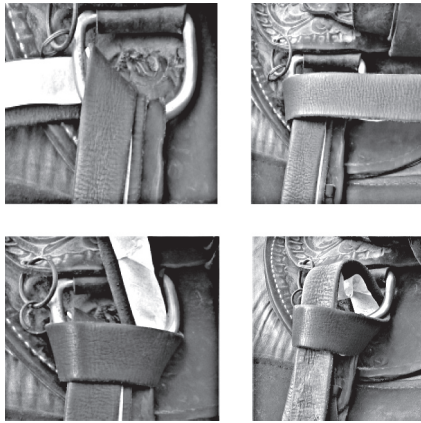
“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no one comes to the Father but by Me.”

Saddling with a Western saddle

Put the pad forward on the horse's neck, after checking it for any dirt. Then slide it back until the front of the pad is about even with the horse's chest. Before picking up the saddle, put the cinch and right stirrup over the seat. Gently place the saddle on the horse's back, and slide it back behind his shoulder blade. The picture shows proper saddle placement without the pad. Pull the pad high up into the gullet so it does not put pressure on the withers or back. Go to the other side of the horse and put the stirrup and cinch down, making sure nothing is twisted, tangled, or folded up where it does not belong. Return to the left side and put the left stirrup up and reach under to get the cinch.

You will then tie a **latigo** knot to secure your saddle on your horse. The cinch should be tightened enough to allow 2-3 fingers to fit between the cinch and the horse. Too loose and the saddle may slip while mounting, and too tight and the horse may be in pain.

(1) When tying the **latigo** knot, first take the **latigo** down through the cinch ring, down through the saddle ring, then down through the cinch ring again, making sure all layers are flat. Going down through three times is like the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (2) Then take the **latigo** out towards the head, as Christ is the head of the church, (3) then across to the tail which is where we are without Christ, (4) behind the saddle ring and up to heaven, where Christ is, through the ring again, (5 then down to earth just as Christ came down to earth for us.



Saddling with an English saddle

English saddles generally have the pad connected to the billet straps. Pick up the saddle and pad, being sure the stirrups are run up and the girth is on top of the saddle. Set the saddle and pad on the horse's neck and then slide it back behind his shoulder blades. Pull the pad high up into the gullet so it does not put pressure on the withers or back, and make sure it is smooth under the saddle. Go to the other side of the horse and put the girth down, making sure nothing is twisted. Return to the left side, reach under the horse, pull up the girth and buckle it. The girth should be tightened enough to allow 2-3 fingers to fit between the girth and the horse. Too loose and saddle may slip while mounting, and too tight and the horse may be winded and struggle to breathe.

How to bridle up

Remove the halter and holding the head piece with your right hand and the bit with your left hand, stand behind his head, open his mouth with your left thumb and gently slide the bit into his mouth, bring the head piece over his ears with right hand, do up the throat lash and nose band and check that the bit is not too loose or too tight in the horse's mouth. If too tight, the horse will be smiling – then loosen the cheek pieces.

How to inspect saddles for soundness

There should be no movement in the pommel if you try to part it. There should be no folds across the seat when trying to fold the cantle up towards the pommel. Any excess movement will tell you that the tree is broken.

How to fit a saddle to the horse

The pommel must not press down on the horse's wither or the gullet on the horse's spine. Make sure that there is a reasonable clearance above the wither and back, without being too high or pinching the wither. The saddle must fit comfortably, with the cantle slightly higher than the pommel.

How to clean a saddle and bridle

Place the saddle on the saddle horse. Strip the saddle – remove the girth, stirrup leathers and irons. Clean the leather. Remove all the dirt and sweat deposits, and soap with saddle soap, keeping the sponge as dry as possible. Then rub in the saddle soap over the seat outside, and underneath the saddle flaps. Remove all the sweat accumulations, grease and dirt. Soap liberally with circular movement. Never soap on top of dirt. The stirrup leathers and girths (if leather) should be cleaned in the same way. Clean all the metal work with metal polish and a duster. If the leather feels dry, oil with some saddle oil or neatsfoot oil. Clean your bridle in the same way as your saddle and stirrups.

Girths, martingales and bits

Three-fold leather: Are the best girths.

Nylon string: Is a good girth.

Webbing girths: Not good, they get hard with sweat and can cause girth galls. They rot and break unexpectedly. Must be used as a pair with another one.

Modern sythetic girths or cottage graft: Good, com-fortable and strong.

All elastic girth: used for racing, enable the horse to expand himself. Fairly hard-wearing but has a tendency to rot with sweat.

Martingales

The action of martingale is to stop the horse from throwing his head up above the angle of control.

Standing martingale: Attached to girth and nose band.

Running martingales: Attached to girth and reins by rings.

Irish martingales: A piece of leather with two rings attached, to keep the reins together, to that they cannot be thrown over the horse's head.

Bits and biting types

Snaffle: Many varieties. The action of the snaffle is a nutcracker action, acting on the tongue, bars and corners of the horse's mouth. The rubber half-moon snaffle is the mildest snaffle. The Egg-butt snaffle doesn't pinch corners of the mouth. A snaffle with cheeks stops the bit from sliding through the mouth.

Curb: Acts on tongue, bars, chin groove and poll flexes and lowers the horse's head. The curb must not be used without a bridoon (which is a thin snaffle). The curb and bridoon together bring the horse's head into the desired position, and are used in more advanced riding.

Pelham: The action of the snaffle and curb designed together in one bit. The bit is designed to do too much and therefore does neither job as effectively as it should. A snaffle or double bridle is therefore a better choice. A jointed pelham should not be used. Rein connectors can be used on a pelham for children or a kimblewick which is a mild pelham with one rein only.

Western curb or leverage bit: acts on the bars of the mouth, chin groove, tongue and horse's poll. The longer the shank and the tighter the curb strap, the more severe is the curb bit. These bits used in Western riding are always used on a loose rein, with very gentle rein aids, so as not to hurt the horse's mouth.

Mounting Aids and their Application

Mounting

- Make sure that you are right with God, for your horse, in your Daily Prayer.
- Check your bridle, girth and saddle to make sure that they fit and are comfortable for the horse.
- Mount from the near side. Take up your reins in your left hand, with your right rein shorter. So that the horse cannot walk off or turn round and nip you, face to the rear. Lift your left foot in the left stirrup. Put your right hand on the pommel. Hop round and with your left toe pointed down so as not to poke your horse in the ribs, lift your right leg over the saddle and sit down lightly. If you carry a stick, always mount with it in your left hand.

Dismounting

Take both feet out of the stirrups, lean forward and dismount lightly, landing with a giving knee-joint to your feet on the left side.

The aids

The **aid** is the horse's language through which you communicate to your horse what you want him to do. There are five **natural aids**: thought, weight, hands, legs and voice. There are three **artificial aids**: whips, spurs and martingale.

Thought

If you fail to plan – you plan to fail. Once you know what you want, bring your body into the position to lead your horse to do what you want him to do, through your weight aids.

Weight

Using your weight to influence your horse in the same way as you would influence your own body to move, lean forward to move forward, sit up to stop, slide your seat bones across the saddle to turn in the direction you wish him to do. In sitting trot, you can also use your weight to lengthen or slow down your horse, by moving your seat bones back and forwards in movement with your horse's stride. Once you can flow in unison with the horse's stride, you can then influence your horse to lengthen his stride by exaggerating your left or right movement with slow him down by slowing your own movement or your seat bones.

The hands

Use these to guide the horse and to restrict or release the impulsion created by the legs. The hands become the media between the rider's mind and the horse's mind.

The legs

Use them to create impulsion in the horse which is then released into movement. They are also used to guide the horse, and, in more advanced riding, used to execute the more advanced exercises.

Voice

Use your voice to encourage your horse. To reward him and calm him. or scold him. As you learn to ride, you will

realise that every muscle in the rider's body can influence the horse in a negative or positive way. It is important therefore to have lessons in order that you use your aids effectively. It is also important to allow your aids to grow, gently applying the aid, and then applying it stronger, until the horse responds, when you will release the aid. The horse is trained by repetition, and your rewarding the slightest response to your aid.

Invisible aids

Anyone can stay on a horse, but not everyone has the ability to get on a horse and make him look intelligent and graceful in performance. A good rider can get on most horses and make him look his best without anyone seeing how he does it. The horse and the rider seem to move as one. Looking as if the horse is doing everything, and the rider just sitting there looking natural with his horse.

The Aids to Walk: Squeeze with both legs, soften pressure on your reins, and then follow into the walk with a tall and supple body, allowing your hands to follow the movement of the horse's mouth.

The Aids to Halt: Stop your hands, which stops the movement of the horse's head; firm or deepen your seat, which slows the movement of your horse. Close your legs, which drives the horse forward into still hands and a square halt. If the horse does not stop then shorten your reins more firmly.

The Aids to Turn: Look in the direction you wish to turn. Shorten your inside rein slightly, keeping contact with the outside rein. Your inside heel should be down, your outside leg a little back to stop the horse's hindquarters from swinging out. Slide your seat bones across the saddle to the direction you wish to go and this weight aid will help turn your horse and looks better than leaning to that direction.

The Aids to Trot: Always remember: the rider's mind act through the hands to the horse's mind. Shorten your reins, as your horse will trot with his head a little higher than at the walk. Squeeze with both legs and follow the movement of the trot at either the sitting trot, or the rising trot, called posting.

The Aids to Canter. Feel and slightly shorten the inside rein, maintain the feel on the outside rein, which is the balancing rein. Bring your outside leg behind the girth, your inside leg on the girth, and squeeze with outside leg with a light inside hip. Your inside hand and leg is always the one to the inside of the circle or arena you ride in; the outside hand and leg is always the one on the outside.

The Aids to Rein Back. They are the same as the aids to walk, but instead of softening the rein, you restrict slightly. Because the horse cannot go forward, he goes backward; the moment the rein is softened, the horse will immediately go forward.

These are but the very basic Aids and as they are practiced, so the rider will be able to refine them, and go on to more advanced horsemanship. The aids are very logical but the word of the Lord is as logical:

*“His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor
His pleasure in the legs of man, but the Lord takes
pleasure in those that fear Him, in those who hope in
His steadfast love.”*

(Psalm 147:10-11)

As we love and respect Him who created us, so we will care for our horses with patience and kindness, always looking to ourselves first when things go wrong. It is a known fact that in 99% of cases it is the rider's fault.

As we become thinking riders, we will be able to correct ourselves, and try again more successfully. Then as we live in the steadfast love of the Lord, so shall we become the riders the Lord would like us to become.

The Seat Position

There are three basics required from the rider in order to ride a horse:

1. Balance: Balance comes from the “weight” of the rider, placed in the correct seat position.

2. Ability to be with the movement of the horse at all paces: From the correct balanced seat, the rider will be in a position to be with the movements of the horse with the greatest ease.

3. Influence: Once the rider has the correct seat position to give the aids correctly and be able to co- ordinate his hands, weight, and legs independently, he will be able to communicate what he wishes his horse to do, clearly and fluently.

We will therefore go into much more detail in this important aspect of the correct seat. From the horses’ point of view, the correct seat position is of vital importance, in order to carry the rider easily in his centre of balance, and to ease the burden of weight.

If you were to draw a line from the head to the tail of the horse and then draw a vertical line in the middle of that line, you would find that the centre will be exactly where the saddle is designed to fit the horse. This is the horse’s centre of balance. If the rider places himself in his own centre of balance, in the middle of the saddle in the horse’s centre of balance, he will have the basics of a balanced seat position.

What to avoid and why

The chair seat

If you were to sit at the back of the saddle known as *chair seat* you will sit on the horse's kidneys, the weakest part of the horse's back. This will result in the horse being in constant discomfort, and cause him to move with a poor gait.

The fork seat

Leaning too far forward on the fork which puts too much weight on the forehead of your horse. This causes him to move on the forehead with a lower head carriage and poor movement. The hind legs will be left behind causing a hollowed back.

The hands

If you ride with your hands too high or too low, they will be uncomfortable for your horse's mouth, causing him either to try and pull the reins from your hands or shake his head around. The bit should be comfortable in the horse's mouth to act evenly on the tongue, bars and corners of his mouth.

This is attained by the rider keeping soft yielding hands and keeping a straight line from the elbows to the horse's mouth. The angle and giving at the hips also has a direct influence on the hands.

The correct seat

From the rider's point of view, the correct seat is also of importance. Rounded shoulders or looking down will bring the rider out of his own centre of balance.

A rounded or hollow back will cause the rider to bounce instead of going with the movement of the horse. The lower legs in incorrect positions will give the rider a weak seat. This will either throw weight forward or backward. The lower leg is of vital importance in maintaining a balanced and secure position.

Head

Should be erect and supple, looking in the direction he is going.

Shoulders

Should be back, relaxed with the upper arm hanging naturally to the sides.

Elbows

Should be bent at the rider's sides to give a straight line from the elbows through the hands to the horse's mouth.

Hands

The thumbs should always be uppermost, held on top of the rein to stop the reins from slipping through the fingers. The baby finger should be under the rein, giving a firmer grip. There should be a friendly contact with the horse's mouth, that of a stretching elastic, able to softly follow the movement of the horse's head. There are two kinds of rein contact:

- 1. Weight of rein contact.
- 2. The firm handshake contact is for half-halts.
- 3. stopping, and for more advanced work.

Hips

Should always be soft: a very important joint for different disciplines.

Back

Should be straight and supple, in order to follow the movement of the horse at all paces; the small of the back will move backwards and forwards into the movement, taking away the bounce which a stiff back would give.

Seat

The rider should sit on broadly placed seat bones and slightly on crutch, in the middle of the saddle, to enable his legs to lie correctly to the horse's sides.

Thigh

Should be rotated inwards from the hips to cause the flat of the thigh and knee to lie in contact with the saddle. This brings the extensor muscles of the thigh into action, giving the rider a deep firm seat position without physical effort.

Calf

Should hang naturally from the knee in light contact with the horse's sides.

Heels

Should be down yet flexible, the ankle acting as a shock absorber on the stirrup. This will also bring the extensor muscles of the calf into a deeper and firmer position.

In this position you will be balanced, able to follow the movement of the horse and apply the aids more efficiently. It is interesting that both from the horse's point of view or the rider's, the correct seat position is of equal importance.

Who created the horse?

God. Who created the rider? God. He created the horse perfectly to carry the rider, even with a gap between his teeth for the bit to lie comfortably.

The horse also has a wither which stops the saddle from sliding down the horse's neck should he stop suddenly, a croup to stop the saddle from sliding back, and a girth to stop the girth of the saddle from sliding back onto his stomach. His conformation allows the saddle to fit him in exactly the correct place in the horse's centre of balance, just behind the withers. The girth fits snugly where the horse's rib cage is longest.

Not only has the horse the ideal conformation for carrying a rider, he also has an excellent memory, making him easy to train by repetition, and, on top of that, has a nature that is always willing to please. The horse should always be rewarded with a good pat, a word of praise or a piece of carrot. What more does a rider want ?

The rider is also perfectly designed to ride a horse; a back with a spine that can move fluently into the movement

of the horse. and muscles in the thighs that are able to grip if necessary to stop him from falling off.

These muscles – the triceps – are rarely used for anything else, so it is normal for the rider to feel them and be stiff after the first few rides.

The rider is also able to communicate with the horse and guide him with the hands and voice.

It is good to know that God intended the horse to be ridden by man and also created man to ride with feeling and enjoy this good-natured friend.

Molly Siveright, FBHS of the British Horse Society and one of the world's top instructors, says: "If we ride God's creatures, we should do so to the best of our ability." What a wonderful gift from God a horse is. He deserves to be ridden correctly and kindly, and it is up to each one of us to learn to ride this noble animal with consideration, respect, discipline and responsibility.

It is beautiful to see a horse and rider moving as one, to enjoy what they are doing. It would be even more wonderful to truly be what God created us for, joyful praise in movement, horse and rider moving as one in the enjoyment of being alive, riding to the glory of God.

Basics of Horsemanship

The Walk

Your first lessons will be mounting and dismounting, learning the correct seat position, learning to walk and halt and turn. Soon you will be ready to learn the trot.

The Trot

There are two ways of trotting – **sitting trot**, and **rising trot** called **posting**.

Posting

Named after a postman in England, who, having a sore back, discovered it was less tiring to rise up and down to the trot instead of sitting. Once the rider has a feel for the movement and rhythm of the trot, he can learn to rise up and down to the movement of the horse. This may take up to six lessons to achieve.

The sitting trot

It is important to lean to follow the movement of the horse with your seat bones, hips and back. If you try and just follow the movement, keeping your own bones together, you will restrict the horse's movement. If you move your seat bones forward and back – left, right, left right – with your horse's movement, as you would with your own two feet, you will flow with your horse and this movement will help take the bounce out of the trot. The engine of the horse is from the hind so once you have achieved the feel of flowing with your horse, then go in time – left, right, go left, right of the horse's hind

legs, which will be opposite to the shoulders of the horse. You would then swing your hip forward on the same side shoulder comes back.

This will help with the swing of the horse's back, improve activity of the hind legs and lighten the forehand. After you have achieved this with a comfortable flow, try to exaggerate the left-right of your hips and your horse will in turn lengthen his stride at trot. Then slow down your left-right and your horse will slow down his movement. Stop your movement and the horse will walk.

Here you will discover that you can influence every step your horse makes, and will start on more advanced riding with the joy of yourself and your horse moving as one. The above is easier to learn without stirrups, which will also deepen and strengthen your seat position, Often after trotting without stirrups, the rider will find he can lengthen his stirrups a further hole.

Once the rider has learnt to post correctly, it will be necessary to learn the diagonals of the trot. If the rider only rides on one diagonal, the horse will become one-sided. That is, more developed on one side than the other. The rider should sit when the outside front leg comes to the ground and the inside front leg reaches forward for the next stride. This frees the inside hindleg to get well under the horse's body, while the rider rises from the saddle, in order to take the next step. The outside hand and leg is towards the rail. The inside hand and leg is towards the inside of the arena.

To change diagonals: The trot is a diagonal two-beat pace that is the near fore and off hind, then off fore and near hind move together causing the bump in the trot. Every time you change direction it is necessary to change diagonal. To change diagonal, you simply sit one beat of the trot. This will take some practice, with your teacher helping and correcting.

Types of trot

Collected trot

This is a shortening and elevation of the stride.

Working trot (more advanced) which is the normal school trot; **medium trot** which is a lengthening of the

trot and **extended trot** which is full extension achieved by more advanced riders. The horse should always have an even rhythm, but at the tempo chosen by the rider. During many more lessons you will learn how to lengthen your horse's trot.

How to ride a corner

What is a corner? It is a quarter of a six metre circle. One therefore must begin the turn three strides before the corner, in order to make an accurate turn at the **walk** or **trot**. At the **canter** a corner is a quarter of a ten meter circle. One can therefore start the turn five strides before the corner. For more advanced work, ride your horse into and through the corner, persuading the horse to bend around your inside leg – bending laterally from poll to croup.

The canter

The canter is a three-beat pace giving the feel of a rocking horse. One should sit to the canter, able to follow the movement of the canter, without coming out of the saddle.

The correct lead

It is important to learn to strike off on the correct lead as soon as possible. To canter on the correct lead, sit to the inside by sliding your seat bones to the direction you are going. Your outside seat bone will then be in the middle of the saddle.

Shorten the inside rein, keep contact with the outside rein. Move your seat bones across the saddle to the direction in which you are going. Apply the outside leg behind the girth, keeping the inside leg on the girth and squeeze. This will bring the horse on the correct lead, the inside leg.

If the horse strikes off on the outside leg, bring him back to the trot and try again. If the horse is difficult to get onto the correct lead, then give him the aid coming out of a small circle. All beginners should learn to ride a horse onto the correct lead coming out of a corner and later on the straight.

The figure of eight

Basically a figure of eight is two 20 metre circles joined together to form a figure of eight. This can be ridden at a sitting trot or a rising trot, changing diagonal as one crosses over the centre line or at a canter. At the canter, one must do a simple change through four to six steps of trot in order to strike off on the other lead.

Lengthening or shortening the canter

As with the trot, you can lengthen or shorten the horse's canter. The collected or extended canter is both necessary for dressage as well as jumping. Probably the most important exercise for the Show Jumper.

Work in the school

School movements are necessary both to improve the control of the horse, by the rider, as well as to supple up, balance and teach obedience to your horse. They also teach you how to use the school arena more effectively, and improves one as a rider.

All the school movements will improve the basics of the horse's movement in some way or another. There are three basics that all riders should constantly try and improve in their horses:

He must have controlled, free forward movement. This means that the horse must look light and springy, intent on getting to his destination, yet waiting for the wishes of his rider.

He must have the correct bend. That is, bent through-out his entire length, looking in the direction he is going, with the hind feet following into the track of the front feet, around the bend on which he is moving.

He must have an even rhythm, but at the tempo chosen by the rider.

The 20 metre circle

The horse should be bent throughout his entire length, from poll to croup, so it coincides around the bend on which he is moving. The hindlegs must follow the tracks of the front legs. The 20 metre circle is the largest you will fit into a 20 x 40 or 20 x 60 school, normally used.

How To Ride a 20 metre circle

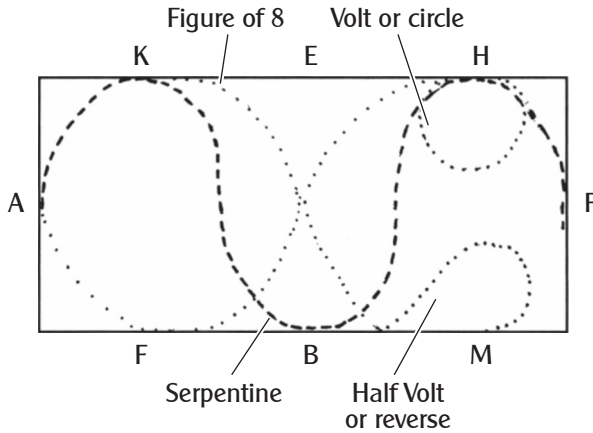
Keeping contact with the outside rein, feel the inside rein slightly so that you can see the outline of the horse's inside eye. Look ahead to the imaginary bend that you wish to ride. Keep your outside leg back, to stop the hindquarters from swinging out, and to keep him correctly bent. Keep your inside leg on the girth, acting as a pole for the horse to bend around, and to stop the horse from falling in and trying to take a short cut. Keep your inside heel down.

The serpentine

Once you have learnt to ride a 20 metre circle, one can learn the serpentine of three loops; this will improve your control, and teach you to correctly change from one direction to the other.

How to ride a serpentine

Start at **A**. Ride your first loop, using the same aids as a circle. To be accurate, use **K** and **E** or **F** and **B** as tangents, riding exactly in between them, as you approach the centre line. Straighten your horse out, being straight over the centre line and gradually change to your new direction. Ride your turn deep into **E** or **B**, using the middle of **B** and **M** or **E** and **H** again as tangents, straightening for the centre line and bending into your last loop, to finish at **C**. At the rising trot one must remember to change diagonal, each time one crosses the centre line.



The figure of eight

Basically a figure of eight is two 20 metre circles joined together to form a figure of eight. This can be ridden at a sitting trot or a rising trot, changing diagonal as one crosses over the centre line or at a canter. At the canter, one must do a simple change through four to six steps of trot in order to strike off on the other lead.

The volt

The volt is a six-metre circle ridden normally at the trot; this supples up the horse, and is the smallest circle horse can do correctly. A **half-volt or reverse** is half the circle and then coming back onto the track, facing the opposite direction. A **semi-volt in reverse**, is to come off the track at an angle, to six metres from the track, and then riding a half circle back to the track, to ride in the opposite direction.

These basic movements are but the very basics that will prepare the rider for more advanced work, such as riding on the bit, shoulder in, renvers, travers, leg-yielding and half-pass, which are taught to the more serious riders who wish to go further.

All these exercises will take a lot of lessons to achieve, as well as plenty of practice. Even so, things can go wrong when trying to work with a horse, who has a mind of his own to think

with also. Then who better can you consult than the Lord, who created the horse?

Isaiah 31:1-2 says:

“Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen, because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the Lord.”

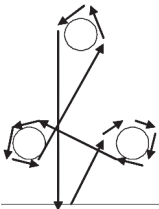
This speaks about relying on the Lord to save them in war, but why not look to Him for the smaller things as well, such as riding or training a horse, for He is the Creator of everything. Instructors and horse books will certainly help you, but when you consult the Lord, He **always puts you on the right track to solving problems.**

Western patterns

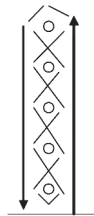
These are not only fun to do, they also help you practice your riding skills and give your horse something fun to do.

Cloverleaf barrel pattern

This is made up of three barrels set in a large triangle. There is also a start and finish line, marked by cones or a chalk line. The idea is to go around each barrel as fast you can without knocking any over. You need to start out slowly, go around each barrel individually, looking ahead to your next turn. Go slowly, at a walk and then trot, before attempting it at a canter.



*Start and finish line
Cloverleaf pattern*



*Start and finish line
Pole bending pattern*

Pole Bending

This rodeo game is also good for developing you and your horse's agility. In this pattern you take your horse from the starting line to the furthest barrel, then weave your way in and out of each barrel, circling the one closest to the starting point, weaving your way back to the end, then coming back straight to the starting point. You need to be certain you shift your weight and turn between each pole to encourage your horse to bend as he weaves his way through. Again, start learning this slowly, then speed up as you and your horse learn the pattern.

A professional rodeo horse needs to be well trained to win. It needs to accept the guidance of the rider. We need to accept God's guidance. In a barrel race or pole bending, a knockdown has a penalty. In our Christian life an area of sin greatly hinders us from God's prize. We need to deal with sin to get ourselves back on course (Hebrews 12:1, 2).

Trail-Riding

Everyone enjoys riding out into the countryside, but even on trail-riding there are things you need to know.

Safety

Prevention is better than cure. A few rules are good for us, to enable us to enjoy our ride in safety.

1. Ride a horse within your capability. It is better to ride one a little too quiet, than one too frisky for you to control. Always wear a hard hat.
2. Always tell someone where you are going in case of emergency. Wait until everyone is mounted and ready for riding out.
3. Check your tack for correct fitting.
4. Be attentive to your leaders, to signals, to unexpected dangers, and pass warnings back,.
5. Keep one horse length between you and the horse in front of you to avoid being kicked.
6. Do not allow your your horse to eat along the trail, as this can enforce bad manners from your horse.
7. Always walk your horse when approaching a group of riders, so as not to frighten them, or get them excited.

- ___ 8. When riding uphill, lean forward. When riding downhill sit in balance with heels down; always walk.
- ___ 9. Notify your leader if you need to adjust your tack or clothing, so your leader can stop the ride and help you if necessary.

Farmland rules

- ___ 1. Make sure you have permission, and never ride over crops, or too close to the farmer's home; ride with respect and courtesy.
- ___ 2. Never chase any animal.
- ___ 3. Never drop papers, light a fire or do any damage of any kind.
- ___ 4. Be polite to farm workers and thank the owner if you meet him.

Riding in traffic

- ___ 1. In England, ride on the left side of the road; always wear reflective yellow or white to be seen clearly. Learn your traffic hand signals, wave up and down to slow down, arm held out to stop.
- ___ 2. If riding at dusk, wear a stirrup torch and reflective yellow jacket.
- ___ 3. Make sure the road is clear before crossing. All the ride to turn together and cross the road together to get across the road as quickly as possible.
- ___ 4. If leading a horse, place yourself between the horse and the traffic.

What to do when things go wrong

Questions (answers underneath)

- 1. What would you suspect while riding if you hear a clicking sound and what should you do?
- 2. What should you do if your horse goes lame?
- 3. If the horse suddenly refuses to move, sweats and shivers, what would you suspect and what can you do for him?
- 4. If your horse got a fright and bolted, how would you stop him?
- 5. What should you do if your horse shies at something and refuses to go past it?
- 6. If your friend falls off and hurts her/ himself, what can you do?
- 7. If your horse cuts himself badly and bleeds profusely, how can you stop the bleeding?

Answers

- 1. A stone in the hoof or a loose shoe, remove the stone, with a hoofpick. If a loose shoe, walk your horse home.
- 2. If your horse is a little lame, lead him home. If very lame, get a horsebox.
- 3. A sickness called *Azatoria*; lay your jersey over his back, don't move him, and get a horsebox.
- 4. Pull him in by giving and taking. If in a large space turn him into a circle. Do not panic; pulling his head round to one side also works well.
- 5. Calm him down by speaking softly, lead him up to the object so he can see there is nothing to fear. Do not hit him, it will frighten him more.

6. If she is unconscious, roll her into recovery position and tilt her chin upwards to enable easier breathing, send for help very fast. If she has broken bones, do not move her, get help. If slightly hurt, help her onto her horse and walk home.
7. Take off your tie or sock, and tie it tightly around the leg between the cut and the heart and lead the horse home. Loosen for a minute or so, every 15 minutes until you get home.

Trail riding (further advice)

You should always be prepared and always wear safe clothing for riding. If you ride in an area with a lot of brush, you may wear long sleeves to protect your arms, and chaps for extra protection for your legs. Dress in layers if it is cold or windy so you do not become chilled.

“God sends the rain on the just and unjust.”

(Matthew 5:45)

He also sends *showers in season* (Ezekiel 34:26), so if it looks like it may rain, take or wear rain gear.

Use a rain coat secure around your body that will not flap. Plastic rain jackets and ponchos can catch the wind and make scary sounds for the horses, so avoid wearing them. It is better to be wet and safe than dry and hurt!

Prepare your horse the same way you would if were going to ride in an arena. Groom him thoroughly and check your tack for any signs of wear. Leave your horse’s halter on under his bridle and take along a leadrope in case you need to dismount and tie him up. Leadropes are handy in case you accidentally break a rein too!

Going on a trail ride can be lots of fun. You are able to get out into God’s creation, and see the beauty of the world He made around you. You may see deer, birds, squirrels, and other wildlife. However, your horse may see

them too, and you need to be prepared for how he may react to these things.

For horses that live in pastures, going out on trail is usually not a big deal. For those that spend their time in barns, however, there could be some new and scary sights, so the rider needs to be prepared.

Always pay attention to your surroundings and to others on trail, especially those in front of you. If you see a hole, or trash that needs to be avoided, let those behind you know.

Keep your horse going the same speed as those in front of you. If your horse is moving slower, use your legs to speed him up. If your horse is in a hurry, check and release on the reins to slow him down. You always want to keep at least a horse length between you and the horse in front of you. The easiest way to judge this is to look between your horse's ears. You should be able to see the back feet of the horse in front of you. If you cannot, slow your horse down until you can. Not all horses are friends, and some really like their space behind them. If you are riding a horse that you know may kick, you should warn other riders of the danger, or be sure you are last in line.

Never run up behind another horse with yours, as you could scare the other horse and cause an accident.

Do not let your horse eat along the trail. He could accidentally grab something poisonous that he would not ordinarily eat. It is also annoying to have your horse continually pulling on your hands.

Always walk on paved or rocky surfaces so your horse does not slip or hurt his feet.

If you need to adjust tack or clothing, let the leader of the trail know so everyone can stop and you can get down and fix the problem, or get help from a more experienced rider.

Find out the regulations in your state for riding along the side of the road, and any special rules for the trail you are riding on.

CCHI trail guide responsibilities

General

If someone else certified has not done so, give a brief riding demonstration and go over safety on the trail. If there is not a certified trail guide safety-checking in the stables, it is the trail guide's responsibility to do so prior to starting out on trail.

- ■ Start with prayer before leaving the stables!
- ■ Always carry a first aid kit and lead rope along.
- ■ The more experienced trail guide should be in the drag or float position.
- ■ Pick the trail and set the pace to the least experienced rider.
- ■ Make sure all the riders are in line together before trotting, let them know you are going to trot.
- ■ Trot only on areas with **no** rocks., only on level ground.
- ■ Trot short distances at a time to give people a chance to catch up and recover from trotting.
- ■ Never trot down hill!
- ■ Do not trot in the direction of the barn or the last part of the trail.
- ■ On hot days make brief water stops for the horses when appropriate, either on the way out of the stable, or at a trough along the trail.
- ■ Keep a ratio of about one guide to every five guests, more with small children and ponies.
- ■ Twelve riders with three guides should be the maximum size.
- ■ Upon returning to stables remind riders to stay on their horses until told to dismount.

- ANY time someone gets hurt on trail, by a horse in the stables, or comes off their horse (even if they are unharmed), an incident report must be filled out.

The lead guide

- Lead rider should NEVER leave the front of the line.
- Keep a constant eye behind you to check on the group. Never be more than 2 lengths ahead of first rider.
- You are responsible.
- Keep the trail moving but set pace to the least experienced rider.
- Communicate! Remind how to go up and down hills.
- Share God's creation with your riders.
- Lead rider opens all gates, leads trail through and then WAITS for drag rider to close the gate.

Drag guide at the back of the ride

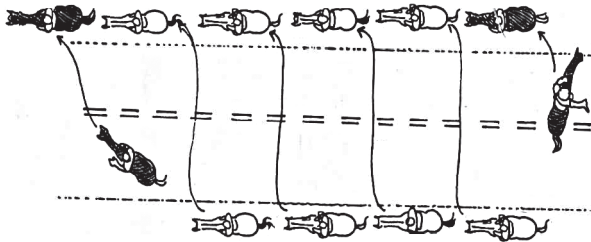
- Carry a whip. Do not use it on a mounted horse.
- Use your voice first then swish the whip if necessary. The whip gives you authority.
- Keep the trail together – let lead rider know if riders are falling behind.
- Watch for trouble-riders leaning, horses too close, etc.
- Alert lead rider if there is a problem.
- May ride up to help riders and talk to them, but NEVER canter.

- Encourage and instruct riders who are having problems with the ride or their horse.
- Close gates after the trail has gone through.
- Communicate with others!

Float guide is by the middle of the ride

- Carry a whip – do not use it on a mounted horse.
- Use your voice first, then swish the whip if necessary. The whip gives you authority and keeps you and your horse from getting kicked.
- May ride up to help riders and talk to them, but NEVER canter.
- Keep the line straight and watch spacing.

Crossing roads



*How to cross the road quickly:
all turn together and cross together.*

LEVEL 2

Speaking the Language

Level 1 covered basic safety rules about horses. Now we will cover some of the “whys” of what horses do in different situations. While a horse can be trained to learn some words, they understand body language and tone of voice better than anything. When God created horses, He did not create them as predators. Therefore, they are sometimes rather fearful creatures. Sudden movements, loud noises, and new things are often scary. As humans God has given us dominion over the horses, and we need to earn their trust, so they will pay more attention to us and gain calmness from us in scary situations. That also means we need to remain calm and not focus on whatever the horse thinks is scary (since it is usually not!). *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

When we have the trust of the horse, he will be more willing to obey in unusual circumstances. Each time a horse is worked with, it is learning something, either good or bad. A horse cannot tell the difference between a pat for being good, or a pat intended to calm him down, so if your horse reacts in a way you do not wish to have repeated, do not pat him – just be calm, and wait for him to calm down. He will read your body language and respond to it.

When you reward or punish a horse for his behavior, you only have three seconds to get the job done, because that is all his attention span is. Longer than that, and he does not know what he’s getting punished or rewarded for doing.

Rewards for the horse can come in many ways. You can speak in a gentle tone of voice to him, pet him or scratch

him some place he really likes to be scratched, or give him a food treat. If you are working him, a break from work is also a reward for a job well done. Punishment can be as simple as walking away from the horse, for horses are herd animals and like to be with others. Unless the horse is putting you or another horse in danger, severe punishment is not acceptable. Make the punishment fit the crime! Beating a horse is not to be tolerated. Horses need consistent love and discipline just as people do.

Hebrews 12:11 says,

“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

As caretakers of God’s creation, we need to be consistent in how we handle them, and never try to abuse a horse, intentionally or not.

Common words

In order to be able to communicate with other horse people, you need to know the terms used to describe horses and the equipment used with them. These are some common words you need to know:

Tack: bridles, saddles, horse equipment.

Hand: 4 inches, the way horses are measured, from the ground to the withers.

Pony: a mature horse that will never be taller than 14.2 hands (58” tall)

Off side: the right side of a horse.

Near side: the left side of the horse.

Green: an inexperienced or untrained horse.

Mule: a cross between a female horse and a male donkey.

Gelding: a castrated male horse.

Stallion: a male horse that can be used for breeding, fully mature (can be a father).

Mare: a female horse at least 4 years of age (can be a mother).

Colt: a male horse under 4 years old.

Filly: a female horse under 4 years old.

Foal: a baby horse of either gender.

Weanling: any young horse that has just been taken away from its mother.

Yearling: a horse that is officially one year old.

Stable chores

Mucking out – daily, remove all manure and wet bedding and replace it with fresh bedding. Straw sawdust, peat, reanut hulls or even paper bedding is good. Small fields and paddocks should also have the droppings picked up daily so as to not cause the grass to sour.

- ■ Always check the stables, stalls, yard or fields for any sharp edges, nails or hazards that could hurt your horse and remove them.
- ■ Always check that your horse has clean fresh water at all times. Buckets need to be emptied and slime scrubbed out daily.
- ■ Always pick up after your horse if he manures, rake up any hay or trash. Put tack and tools back where they belong as they can hurt someone if they tread on them and tack can get broken.
- ■ Always pick up papers, trash and make sure to remove any glass, wire, string or nails that injure horse or person.

Horse markings

Horses have different markings that help us to tell them apart. Some markings are on their faces.



Bald face



Blaze



Snip



Star



Stripe



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

Leg markings start at the hoof and go up.

1. If there are dark spots on white by the coronet band, they are called ermine spots.
2. If there is just a white spot at the coronet on the back of the leg, it is a heel spot.
3. A white ring all around the coronet is called a coronet.
4. If White to just above the fetlock is a sock or anklet.

- 5. If the white goes to the bottom of the fetlock, it is a pastern.
- 6. A half-stocking is white partway up the cannon bone,
- 7. If the white goes to the knee or hock, it is a stocking.

Some horses may also have scars from injuries, or deliberate markings known as brands. A hot brand will leave a mark where there is no hair, and a freeze brand leaves a mark where the hair has changed colour, light if the surrounding hair is dark, dark if the surrounding hair is light. *The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.* God does not care if we are attractive or good looking. He cares who we are on the inside, if we have pure thoughts and motives for doing things. Do not look at a horse and think, oh that is such a pretty horse, I bet he's great. Sometimes the plainest-looking horses are the most willing to do what their rider asks.

Knowing your breeds

Many horses are or a mixture of many breeds. These can come in all shapes, sizes, and colours. Other horses are products of years of careful breeding and record keeping, and come from specific areas of the world. Different breeds are known by their characteristics. There are literally hundreds of horse and pony breeds around the world, but we will only cover a few of them here.

Two of the more widely known breeds are the Arabian and the Thoroughbred. Since most riding horses can trace their ancestry back to them, the Arabian is known as the father of all breeds. Arabs are 14 to 15 hands in size, with a slightly dished face, small ears, and a teacup muzzle. They have one less vertebra than other breeds, so have short, sturdy backs. They are hot blooded and sensitive, very versatile and able to do many tasks. For more information you can go the Arabian Registry website, www.arabianhorse.org.

Thoroughbreds are used for racing, jumping, dressage, and other disciplines. They all trace their lineage back to three Arabian stallions that were imported to England in the late 1600s. They are 15.2 to 17 hands, with a slender body and hot temperament. Bred around the world, mainly for racing, they are beautiful animals when they run. You can learn more about them at www.horses.about.com.

A breed native to the United States is the American Quarter horse. Named because it was supposed to be the fastest breed alive for a quarter mile, this breed originated in the western part of the U.S. Cowboys used them to round up cattle, and they are still used for ranch and rodeo work today. They are sturdy, kind-hearted, and have willing personalities. They average 14.2 hh, and weigh in at around 1,000 kg. They come in all solid colours, are versatile and athletic, making them a good choice for many horse-related activities. You can find out more about them at www.AQHA.com.

While Quarter Horses need to be solid, the American Paint horse needs to have pinto colouring and a stock horse build. They need to have either Quarter horse or Thoroughbred breeding as well, and come in many combinations of large splotches of colour. Their website is www.APHA.com.

Pinto horses are simply a colour breed, with large splotches of white and a colour all over their body. They can come in numerous patterns, and also be registered as many other breeds, as it is their coat colour that determines their identity. The way a horse is marked identifies the horse. The way Christians are marked is the way they live their lives.

Another colour breed is the Appaloosa. While not unique to the United States in its colouring, the Appaloosa has typical stock horse conformation and has several different colour patterns, typified by small spots of white on a dark colour or just the opposite. Other distinctive characteristics include mottling of their skin around their muzzle and eyes, and stripes on their hooves. They range from 14 to 16 hands tall. More information on this colour breed is available at www.appaloosa.com.

Other American breeds are gaited breeds, such as the American Saddlebred and the Tennessee Walker. Bred from

Arabian and Thoroughbred stock, these horses have unique gaits that are smooth and easy to ride for long periods of time. Bred originally for plantations in the south, they are now used for pleasure, trail, and show.

Popular pony breeds originated in Europe, then we imported all over the world. The smallest pony is the Shetland, which is only 11.2 hands or smaller. They are small, strong, and hardy, and come in many colours and patterns. They have been refined as show ponies in the US and while they are very intelligent, they are also sometimes very stubborn. A website for them is www.shetlandminiature.com.

A larger pony breed is the Welsh. It has Arabian in it, so you will find a dished-face and a floating trot in this pony. They come only in solid colours, and can be as tall as 14.2 hands. They are versatile animals, and do well. They can be quiet and gentle or fiery and raring to go, depending upon their breeding. www.poac.org.

The last pony we will consider, the Haflinger, is a mountain pony, originating in the Alps of Austria. Always a shade of chestnut, the Haflinger is considered the Arabian of the Alps, as it was often the main source of transportation and livelihood for the mountain people. Haflingers are a draught pony, able to pull heavy loads, carry heavy loads, and then be the family pet when they are done! They love attention, and are used for every discipline imaginable, from cutting cattle to dressage. Some of the more modern Haflingers have been bred to be more slender and longer-legged than their mountain raised ancestors. All Haflingers trace back to one of seven stallions, having been bred very carefully over the centuries. www.haflingerhorse.com.

LEVEL 3

Show Jumping

“Do you give the horse his might? Do you clothe his neck with strength? Do you make him leap like the locust?”

(Job 39: 19-21)

The Lord gives the horse his might, it is He who clothes his neck with strength. The Lord enables the horse to jump like the locust. For thousands of years the horse has been able to jump and today it has become a favourite sport amongst horsemen.

Your first lessons in jumping

Preparation

The first thing your Instructor will teach you is the two-point or forward show jumping seat. You will need to shorten your stirrups a few holes. With your weight well down into the stirrups you will then close the angles of your hips and with a straight supple back, lean forward and look ahead with your seat very light in the saddle.

To strengthen your jumping seat position, a good way is to take the reins in one hand and with the other hand take hold of the mane halfway up the horse's neck. You can then trot in this position around the arena, not posting, but to the rhythm, until you get used to the light seat position and also feel the elasticity spring in the hips, knees and ankles, and feel a little firmer in the saddle.

Your first jump

Once you have learnt the “jumping seat” position, you will be ready for your first jump. It is good to first practise this over a pole on the ground, with one hand holding the mane, halfway up the horse’s neck, for this will guide you as to how much to close your angles of the hips during the jump. Do not stand up in the stirrups, rather feel the spring in the knee joint. Lean forward with a straight supple back from the hip-joint full of spring, elasticity and going with the rhythm of the horse.

Caveletti

Next comes *caveletti*, a row of raised poles, approximately 30 cm off the ground, with a low jump at the end. This teaches you to get the feel of your horse’s movement over low jumps, at a trot, and to feel for yourself, exactly when the horse takes off.

The Instructor will make changes with the *caveletti*, first at a trot, approximately 4’ 6” apart, later set for canter strides, approximately 10 ft. apart. The jump at the end will also be changed from an upright, into a spread, and will go up higher as horse and rider progresses. Later a combination, another jump after one stride, will be added to it.

The jumping lane

Is a long lane or an oval – usually with four to six jumps. Once you have mastered *caveletti* work, you will need to improve your jumping. The jumping lane is excellent for this. The jumps are set at one stride or two strides apart. Here the rider can learn to jump without reins, to make sure he has an independent seat.

Start off with hands holding a neck strap. Then one hand on the mane, halfway up the neck, the other controlling the reins, and a little later without stirrups or reins.

Here the rider will learn to feel for the horse’s stride, to learn to keep his balance as he follows the horse’s movements fluently with his body in the correct seat position. There are also plenty of exercises to learn in the jumping lane, which are a lot of fun.

Your first course

After jumping lane practices, There should always be a neck strap – one finger should be curled in the neck strap over the jump. As a novice preferably do the first dozen courses at the trot. After this ride with both hands on the reins with a yielded giving of the hands as the horse takes off over the jump, as you lean forward from the hips.

Later you will learn how to ride in-between the jumps, how to approach the jump correctly, how to lengthen or shorten your horse's pace, how to ride over the jump and away from it on the other side. You will then learn how to ride against time, how to change your horse's leg while in the air, over the jump, and how to make use of turns.

Jump – in detail

Between fences

Riding between fences requires intelligence, knowledge and feel. He must use the track and turns to the best advantage keeping horse steady and balanced. Approach the jump on the straightest line to bring you in centre of the jump.

The start and finish must also be ridden correctly. Never ride through the finish on a loose rein, it could break down a tired horse.

For higher jumps, the turn itself can be used to improve the horse's balance, engaging his hocks and bringing him off the forehand. The rider, by collecting his horse, will increase the power within the horse as he rides the turn, and will direct this power towards the fence. A well ridden turn can decide whether you arrive correctly, into the centre of a jump. During the approach, the rider must assess the pace and the length of the horse's stride. If they are not suitable, he must lengthen or shorten the stride accordingly, before the last three strides. As the horse takes off over the jump, lean forward from the hips.

The speed must also be adjusted to suit the jump, slower for uprights, and riding forward in a strong rhythmic canter for spreads. For the last three strides, the horse must be allowed to concentrate on the jump. The hands should be kept low,

moving towards and maintaining a smooth contact with the horse's mouth.

In the take-off, the rider must soften his hands to enable the horse to lower his head and stretch his neck in order to make an accurate take-off. The rider's upper body must move forward easily by a supple closing of the angles of the hips. This forward swing of the rider's upper body will enable him to stay in balance with his horse, and will relieve the horse's back. The rider's weight will be on the rider's thighs and knees, lower leg remaining in position. A soft contact must be maintained with the horse's mouth throughout the jump. The rider must look towards the next jump.

During the jump, the rider must follow the movement, looking ahead and inviting the horse to stretch with a good bascule, by moving a slightly opening hand forward towards the horse's mouth, yet retaining light contact. The higher the fences, the more forward the rider folds.

On landing, the rider must stay in balance, allowing the horse to make his own adjustments. His seat should return smoothly to the saddle as the upper body becomes a little more upright. The smooth contact with the rein must be retained without interference with the stretch forward and re-establishment for the gait on the track. As soon as the horse has landed, ride straight forward at the required gait, rhythm and speed, looking to the next jump. The rider being ready to urge the horse forward with his seat and legs, to engage the haunches and lighten the forehand, to slow the pace or increase it as required. If riding a young or nervous horse be ready to reward him with a word of praise and a pat after a difficult jump and at the end of the course.

Cross-country jumping

This is also a lot of fun. One will ride a variety of ditches, banks, logs, rivers, hen coops, walls, gates etc., with possibly a lot of up-and-downhill riding. You should ride the jumps maintaining a light balanced seat, at a slightly faster pace. The eye – looking to the next jump, steering, maintaining quiet control, at that faster pace. This can only be learnt with time.

Hold the horse in the approach area into a controlled pace. Three strides away, put your legs on to lower the horse's head to allow him to find his own take-off. The approach should be ridden a little stronger, with more leg. If your horse needs it.

In all jumping, it is flat work that produces the best results, preferably working in an enclosed small arena. The arena should be ideally 40 m x 20 m. It should be enclosed with 2 or 3 layers of poles, reaching a minimum of 1 metre high. There are no short-cuts in training for the rider.

The better the basics and standard of the rider, the better the results. Your hours of practice and schooling in the arena will always pay off. It can never be wasted. Try to short-cut this, and your end results will be of no merit. Anything worthwhile takes hard work. If it does not take hard work, then it is not worthwhile in the end. It is said that good basics alone may not give ultimate success. But without a good proven foundation, there is no hope at all.

“There is a seat for every discipline.” “Seat’ applies to the position of the rider on the horse, for that particular discipline. In show jumping or eventing, the position must enable the horse to move forward at the canter (controlled gallop), with the rider’s weight placed where the horse carries weight easiest – where his ribcage is longest, a perpendicular line up from the girth.

When in the saddle, to get into this position, it is essential to get the lower leg under your body – with the toe in line with the girth, then lean forward from the hip to an angle from 20% forward to approximately 40% The hands placed just in front and either side of the wither.

Let us rather make the decision to ride God’s creatures to the best of our ability. The results? Only the best we can do of course, and why should any of us settle for less?

Your First Show

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and that which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the Pioneer and Perfecter of our Faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”

(Hebrews 12:1-2)

Preparation

Running a race demands much training and hard work. Preparing yourself for the show ring demands no less. Whether speaking of ourselves in a spiritual sense or in a practical way, we will be tempted to sin, to short-cut the training which the show ring demands.

Maybe pride will say “you are good enough any way”. Watch out, for it is then that you lose. It takes hard work and effort and this takes endurance. We need to set aside other things we may also want to do in order to perfect our riding, but then, if we wish to compete successfully, it is worth it.

A beginner will need to invest in two years with one lesson a week, before entering the show ring, with three years to go into the winning line. That is about 100 lessons before entering and a further 50 lessons to really start winning.

Of course some people, who are talented, can do it with less, and others may not even make the grade. Though the important thing is, to know you have done your best and you know your own standard and what you must work on.

At the show

In show jumping as with all competitions, there is only one first place. It is important that you do not show jump just to win. Winning should rather come as the result of good horsemanship. Never sacrifice your horse by riding regardless of him, for the sake of a prize. It is more important to win the approval of the spectators by good horsemanship, than win a trophy by wildly galloping your horse around the course, which would lose the approval of your audience, of which many are horse lovers and good horsemen. This can be character building if tackled with courage, self restraint and and above all, kindness and consideration for your horse.

On arrival

- ■ Unload your horse and lead him to his stable or a suitable place for him to rest with someone holding him. Check his grooming, etc.
- ■ Check your entries and time you will be riding.
- ■ Warm your horse up before you are called to walk the course, or before the event commences.
- ■ In a jumping competition, walk the course and memorize it.
- ■ Jump a couple of practice jumps, about six to eight riders before your call, before entering the arena.
- ■ Be ready to go in on time. In a jumping competition, after going through the finishing post, always reward your horse by patting him, never mind what the outcome.

After the event

- Pat your horse and walk him off. Give him a carrot or tit-bit.
- Put him in the stable, or load up to go home.
- If there for the day, MAKE SURE that you “water” him at lunch time and give him hay. Never feed or water just before the event. Water and feed two hours before riding or after the event, once he has cooled down properly.

Winning

We all love the joy of winning. That is why we enjoy competing. Revelation 2:7 says,

“To him who conquers, I will grant him to eat of the tree of Life, which is in the Paradise of God.”

We all know that true competing is to stand strong in the Lord for what is right and He will help us to conquer temptations of sin that comes our way.

To ride in the show ring with this attitude is worthwhile and “character-building”, whether we win or not, for we will be riding to the glory of God, we will be pleasing in His sight, and a good example to all our competitors, for they will see not only good horsemanship, but good sportsmanship also.

We will then be able to say, as David said in Psalm 20:7-8,

“Some boast of chariots, and some of horses, but we boast of the name of the Lord our God.”

Horses are noble and beautiful creatures, but God who created them is far above all, for He alone is God.

A Brief Look at other Show Ring Activities Worldwide

Dressage

Dressage is the classical art of horsemanship where the horse is judged on his performance in the dressage arena. One starts with Novice Tests which test the horse's natural movements between letters placed around the arena. From here, the horse gradually works up to more advanced tests through Elementary and Medium dressage tests.

- ■ His paces must be free and regular.
- ■ His impulsion must show elasticity of steps, suppleness of his back and engagement of his hind quarters.
- ■ He must be submissive, attentive, confident, light in front, show ease of movement, accept the bridle and move with a good outline.

Dressage goes back over the centuries and continues to be the foundation of all good horsemanship.

Eventing

These are competitions that combine dressage, cross country, and show jumping, to test the best all- round horse and rider.

Equitation

The rider is judged in horsemanship, in riding Equitation tests, including jumps in good style. The rider may also have to change horses to show his ability in riding different horses effectively. Riding without stirrups is also included and the better riders are chosen to go forward to the next phase.

Showing

There are many different types of showing classes.

Show hack

Where the most beautiful-looking horse with the best conformation, paces and manners is chosen.

Riding horse

The best ride, well-mannered, able to do all the many different things expected from a horse.

Working hunter

Jumping a course of rustic fences at a strong pace, has a good gallop and halt. Well-mannered, sound and well-built.

Utility horse

Quiet and well-mannered, with everything the rider asks of him. May have to pick up baskets, drink from a cup, mount from a chair, ride over sacks on the ground, ride with one hand and all sorts of interesting things. These are but a few of the main types of showing classes.

American saddle horse classes

A totally different type of horse and riding. These show horses are judged for their beauty, high action and three or five gaits. The rider sits with a long leg position in a special cut back show saddle. Hands are higher than normal to match the high head carriage of the horse.

Saddle Horse Equitation is a discipline that concentrates on the ability of the rider as well as the basic schooling of the

horse which is the same schooling required from any horse like serpentine, figures of eight, etc.

Western riding

Contrary to what one sometimes sees on the television, the real cowboy is a good horseman, riding with long stirrups, a deep seat and controls his horse with his weight and lightest touch of the reins. Apart from herding and roping cattle, are exciting events that calf roping, cutting contests and barrel racing. In pursuing the discipline of our choice, let us not get so caught up in competitive riding, that we forget our basic love and gratitude, to our faithful friend the horse, or to Him who created the horse.

Let us still find the time to simply be with our horse, or to watch him at play, like in this simple poem:

Gratitude

*Play, my horse!
Shake your noble head,
Paw the air, buck for joy,
Allow your mane to fly free,
You are God's creation and know it,
You appreciate the warm sun,
The cool earth, the shade of trees,
You know how to express your joy
in being alive,
You know how to show your gratitude
to the Lord, You teach us to do so too.*

Feeding and First Aid

Feeding

Objectives: Provides material for the repair of the horse's body, puts on flesh, helps develop muscles and supplies energy for work.

There are five groups of food

Proteins: For maintenance of growth and growth of animal tissues.

Carbohydrates: To give heat with oils, fats and sugar.

Fibre: Bulk to stimulate digestive system.

Minerals: Iron, salt, lime, magnesium and potash for the horse's health.

Vitamins: Fresh grass, carrots, roots and hay.

Digestion

Mouth: Food is taken in, masticated with saliva and swallowed.

Stomach: Reaches stomach which is small – 10 to 20 litres capacity, and takes one hour to reach the horse's intestines.

Small intestines: 50 m long; 50 mm diameter – starches change to sugars which are absorbed through the intestinal walls.

Large intestines: Five major components, including:

Caecum 1.2 m long, capacity of 36 litre – slower food passage.

Large colon 3,6 m long.

Rectum food becomes solid, 0.3 m in length.

Anus passes manure.

Veins collect food from the intestines and move it to liver.

Liver manufactures bile, processes digested proteins, sugar minerals and food proteins, destroys worn-out blood cells and helps to form blood proteins.

To remember about feeding

Feed only good-quality food at the same hours each day. Make no sudden changes of food or routine; do it gradually. Feed to age, size, temperament and work done. Feed little and often. spreading three feeds a day rather than two feeds. Feed plenty of hay or grass to aid digestion.

<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Use</i>
BRAN	By-product of wheat should have bread flakes.	Laxative is fed; the opposite is fed dry.
OATS	Should be large and plump; best fed rolled or crushed to expose kernel.	Provides energy, builds muscles and is a good conditioner; high in proteins but lacks calcium; good for horses in hard work.
MEALIES (corn)	Can be fed whole, crushed or milled also straight run or germ meal are used.	Good for horses in slow work; a cheap fattening food.
HORSE CUBES	A ready mixed diet to save time, labour waste.	Best fed with hay – expensive.

Do not work the horse straight after a feed. because when you start work. the digestion stops. It is best to wait one hour after a normal feed. Also make sure you remove all the old food from the manger and keep it clean.

Amounts to feed

15 hh and over – 10-15 kg pf food per day. “*The eyes of the master make the horse grow fat*” Watch your horse’s condition. If losing condition, feed more. If too fat, feed less.

How to make a bran mash

Fill a bucket half to three-quarters full with bran – pour boiling water and stir till flaky-wet – leave 4 hours to cool and serve.

Linseed: High in proteins and oils, a good conditioner and gives a gloss to the coat, do not feed raw -250 g per day, soak for 24 hours, then boil for 3 hours or boil for 6 hours in double boiler.

Linseed jelly: 250 g linseed to 1 litre water.

Linseed tea: Add more water – can add it to a bran mash.

Spiritual lesson

“Meanwhile the disciples besought him saying Rabbi eat, but He said to them “I have found to eat of which you do not know”, so the disciples said to one another, ‘Has anyone brought him food?’ Jesus said to them ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to accomplish His work. Do not say “there are yet four months and see how the fields are already white for harvest, He who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life.”

(John 4:31-36)

It is important to feed your horse well and also yourself well. It tells you how important it is to do the will of God, and to share with others what God has done for you. After all, to gather fruit for eternal life is forever.

Water

A foal consists of 80% water and a horse of 50%. Water quenches thirst, keeps the temperature down, avoids exertion, aids digestion and nutrition. The lime in the water helps bone formation and tissues. Without water the blood circulation will be impaired, and the digestive process impossible, therefore water is of extreme importance and should be available to the horse at all times. A horse drinks 30-40 litres of water per day and will make 30 litres of saliva for mastication every 24 hours.

Purity

Best water is from a running stream, hard water being better than soft. Hard water consists of carbonate of lime, magnesium carbonate and traces of common salt which is lacking in soft water.

What to remember about watering

- **■** A horse should have a constant supply of water or 6 times a day in summer and 3 times a day in winter.
- **■** Remember to change the water each time, so it does absorb ammonia, also clean the water bucket daily.
- **■** Water before feeding and do not water before hard work, rather 3 hours before or it will press on the diaphragm.
- **■** If a horse is in continual work, water a little, every two hours.
- **■** If a horse has been deprived of water, water little and often at first, rather than letting the horse drink his full.
- **■** Do not heat the water for a tired horse.

Ways of watering

- Bucket in the stable.
- Automatic water bowls.
- Trough in yard.
- Trough in the field away from fences on level ground.
- Running stream in the field; ponds are not suitable as they can become stagnant.

Daily routine

It is important to your horse and advisable to yourself to have a daily routine. For instance:

7:30: Check your horse for cuts and check he is in good health, remove rugs and fill up the water bucket and feed him.

8:00: Groom your horse, put him in a paddock or exercise. Muck out the stable.

1:00: Check your horse and feed him if necessary.

4.30-5.00: Lay down the bed, clean and fill the water bucket, bring your horse in, rug him up and feed him, give him a hay-net.

A late-night check is always advisable.

How to take off a rug

Undo all catches, fold blanket back off withers toward back, lift gently off the already-folded blanket.

How to rug up

Put the folded blanket onto his back, open the blanket onto his neck, pull the blanket back into position and do up the catches.

How to tie a hay-net

Loop it through the ring, double the end of rope, loop round and through. To undo, simply pull end of rope.

First aid

A horse in good health:

- Temperature 37-38.5°C.
- Pulse rate 36-40 beats per minute.
- Respiratory rate 16-20 minute.
- Pass droppings 8-9 per day; they should break as they hit the ground.
- A healthy horse should look alert, bright eyed, skin supple and loose, coat shiny, salmon pink mucous membranes.

Pulse points

Jaw: Submaxillary artery

Neck: Carotid artery

Under tail: Middle cocoteal

Eye: Zygomatic artery

Elbow: Radial artery

First aid medicines, etc.

Cough: Cough electuary, Vicks *Vaporub*.

Cracked heels: Raw linseed oil and Stockholm tar.

Thrush: Gentian Violet, Stockholm Tar.

Strains Rest, Americaine.

Poultice: Americaine, Epsom Salts.

Leg reducing: Americaine, Fullers Earth.

Proud flesh: Caustic dressing (3 Boracic Powder to 1 Copper Sulphate).

Abrasions: Gentian Violet, Antiseptic cream.

Antiseptic ointments: Iodine, septisal soap, Boracic Powder.

Fungus: Medicated shampoo.

Hooves: Hoof oil to stop the hoof from drying out too much.

The veterinary cupboard

This should contain:

- Scissors
- Thermometer
- Bandages
- Cotton wool
- Gauze tissue
- Lint
- Epsom Salts
- Gentian Violet
- De-worming powder
- Hoof oil
- Colic drench
- Astringent lotion
- Wound aerosol

To remember about sick nursing

Good nursing is to give prompt attention to the horse noticing his needs and meeting them. For example; clean fresh water, fresh air, warmth, privacy and quietness. A clean deep

bed with short straw or sawdust. Have regular times for feeding and grooming and mucking out. Avoid noise and bright lights. Keep the horse on a laxative diet and never leave the old food in the manger. Before putting the horse back into full work, remember to build him up gradually.

Parasites

Bots

Are the larvae of the gadfly, the Female lays her eggs on the horse's hair down the front of the horse's legs within reach of his tongue. The Eggs hatch in 10 -14 days; with a suitable temperature. The Larvae then itches. The moisture (saliva) and friction of the horse's tongue loosens them and the horse eats them off. They then make their way to the horse's stomach. There they attach themselves to stomach walls by means of mouth hooks remaining 9 to 10 months. They are then passed through horse's stomach and discharged in manure. They become pupae and 3 to 6 weeks later, adult flies emerge and the cycle is repeated.

Treatment An up-to-date worm powder. Remove yellow eggs with a bot knife to avoid them being licked off.

Warbles

These show as lumps beneath the skin of the back in the saddle region. They are caused by the maggot of the warble fly which in the course of a few days bores a hole in the skin and pops out.

Treatment Best left alone – if the maggot is killed, a permanent lump may result.

Worms

Oxyuris (thread or whip worms)

Adult worms live in the posterior regions of digestive system and feed mainly on vegetable remains. The female gets to the rectum and lays eggs in clusters on the skin in the perineal region. They form a greenish sticky mass around the dock which may cause irritation. Embryos hatch in 3-8 days.

Eggs containing infective larvae drop off with the manure into the pasture, where they are later eaten with food or water, developing into worms in the intestines.

Ascaris (common round white worm)

Generally live in the small intestine. When fully grown can be up to 610 mm long. Eggs are laid in the small intestine and ejected in the manure faeces. They develop into mature larvae and are eaten with the grass. Larvae burrow into the walls of the intestine, travel through the blood stream to various organs, and eventually back to the intestine. Trouble is caused by large worms in the intestine (which can cause a blockage) and larvae in the organs. As a result, horses have irregular bowel movements, loss of condition and possibly a very small amount of fluid after bowel movement. In very young horses, worms may completely block the intestine, which leads to impaction and rupture in the bowels. Larvae can also cause bronchitis.

Treatment: Give an up-to-date worm medicine. If heavily infected, the vet must come and tube him.

Strongyle (red blood worms)

These worms are dangerous. They are 12 mm long. Have the same life cycle as Ascaris. They attach themselves to the gut wall, suck blood and eat digested food. The gut walls also produce an acid reaction. Strongylidosis is a blanket word to describe three to four types of strongyles.

Symptoms: Loss of condition, staring coat, anaemia, diarrhoea with a rancid smell. Worms may be ejected after a laxative. These worms can penetrate arteries' walls around the gut and cut off the blood supply. This can cause colic and possibly death. Worms can also cause a blockage to an artery supplying a particular area and that area will die off. Treat with Equivalin or get a vet to tube him.

Dictyocoulus (lungworm)

Adults live in a bronchial tube – lay eggs in the mucous membranes, which causes coughing, Eggs are then swallowed

and passed out. **Always consult your vet and have manure samples tested.** You should de-worm your horse every two or three months.

Ear bugs:

Treatment: Remove them from the ears with cotton wool soaked in tick dip.

Ticks

Treatment: Use dips and tick grease to control them.

Dandruff

Treatment: Use medicated horse shampoo or soap.

Wounds (4 types)

1. **Puncture wounds:** penetrating thorns, nails, etc.

2. **Clean cuts:** knives, pieces of glass, not common.

3. **Lacerations:** barbed wire, etc, common.

4. **Bruises:** kick, fall, overreach, etc, common.

Treatment of wounds

Remove cause. Clean out with warm water with added salt. Treat with healing ointment and if bad call the vet. Use Boracic powder to dry the wound, and Proud Flesh powder to remove proud flesh. Also give an anti-tetanus injection and antibiotics (if needed) by vet.

Excessive bleeding

Lay a folded cloth over the wound and bandage over it firmly with one or two bandages. Call the vet if bleeding continues.

Colic

Causes: Sudden changes of diet, feeding after hard work, greedy feeding. Bad-quality food, feeding very tired horses, excitement, watering directly after feeding, feeding

sweating horses, worms, diarrhoea, constipation, inflammation from eating sand, or a twist in the intestine.

Symptoms: General uneasiness, restlessness, pawing, looking round at the belly and flanks, kicking at belly, rolling, a cold sweat.

Types of colic

Spasmodic colic: Due to spasmodic contraction of bowel caused by local irritation. Pain to acute to very acute, but intermittent. Symptoms may re-occur. Temperature may rise after the onset of colic, and respiration will become sharp and hard, a cold patchy sweating, horse may roll.

Flatulent colic: Similar to above but the pain is constant. Respiration is short and frequent, abdomen is swollen, especially on the right flank. Pulse very rapid – majority of deaths occur from a twist of bowels.

Sand colic: Horse eats sand with grass, causes a constant nagging pain, but no distension of the stomach.

Treatment of colic

Colic is serious and acute, CALL VET. To prevent rolling, walk horse until the vet arrives. If the vet cannot come, administer drench, 2.5 litres liquid paraffin or 100 millilitres linseed oil or a colic drench.

Biliary

(Caused by ticks in some countries.) Horse goes off his food and has a high temperature of 40°C and over. Get vet immediately.

Rest for one to four weeks before working horse as vet directs you. Prevent by de-ticking daily.

Equine influenza

Caused by a virus and is extremely infectious, rise in temperature up to 41°C, dry shallow cough, slight nose discharge, loss of appetite and signs of exhaustion.

Treatment: Consult vet, treat as for cold, give antibiotics.

Prevention: Give Equine Influenza injection.

Horse sickness

Fatal disease of lungs caused by midges; various strains are known:

Prevention: Give Horse Sickness Injection each year.

Laminitis

This is caused by too much rich grass or overfeeding causing pain and heat in the hoofs. The horse will point the feet forward to get weight off the hoofs.

Treatment: Call vet, cut down hard food and take the horse off grass and stable him. Treat as the vet advices and once sound, make sure to not overfeed this horse again.

Spiritual lesson

Why do we have disease in horses?

“And to Adam he said, Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you shall not eat of it, cursed is the ground because of you, in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life, thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you and you shall eat the plants of the field”.

(Genesis 3:17-18)

“For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God, for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of him who subjected it in hope, because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail until now.”

(Romans 8:19-22)

All of creation through Adam and Eve have been subjected to disease and decay, whether it be animals or plant life. All life through we are fighting against disease and parasites, ugliness and filth. It takes much care to keep any animal in good health and good condition.

Diseases and parasites are on earth to remind us of the deadliness of sin. As much as a tiny tick can cause a large horse to die of Bilary, so a tiny sin in our lives can also cause death.

Let us constantly be reminded to turn to God in confession and be cleansed by His loving care. Let us also take the time to keep ourselves in good health in God's eyes, free from any sin or ugliness that may tarnish it.

Preparing the Horse for a Show

Clipping

Reasons for clipping

To help the horse keep in good condition by reducing heavy sweating. To enable the horse to carry out work longer and faster. To enable the horse to cool off quicker, thus avoiding chills. For easier grooming and to prevent disease.

Types of clip

Full clip: The whole coat is removed.

Hunter clip: Same as above, except that the hair is left on the legs as far as the elbow and thighs and a saddle patch is left on the back.

Blanket clip: The hair is removed from the neck and belly patch. The rest corresponding to that of a blanket being left on the body.

Trace clip: Hair is removed from the belly only, Tops of the legs and under the neck.

When to clip:

Clip after the winter coat is set and then when necessary. Do not clip after the summer coat has started to set.

Do not clip: Whiskers, ears, cat hairs and fetlocks.

To remember about clipping

Horse should be dry and well groomed and free of dust. Clip in daylight preferably in a well lit box. First mark the area to be clipped with chalk. Allow the horse to get used to the noise, then clip in long sweeps against the coat. Do not force or push the clippers. Let them go at their own speed leaving the difficult parts to last. If the horse starts to sweat, stop clipping. Avoid using a twitch unless absolutely necessary.

Care of clippers

Make sure the clippers are earthed. Arrange the wires so that horse does not walk on them. Keep clippers clean and well-oiled. Tension should be sufficient to cut the coat. Keep a pair of spare blades. Never clip with dull blades.

Mane pulling

This is done to thin and shorten thick long manes and allow it to fall flat. It should be done after exercise when the pores are open, starting with the underneath hairs. Never pull the top hairs. Don't use scissors or clipper, unless hogging. To hog the mane, pull ears downwards to stretch the horse's neck. Clip from poll to the wither. Clippers are best for this. Clip again every three weeks.

Tail pulling

Pull the hairs from underneath, evenly at the sides, making the tail thinner and neater to show off the hindquarters. Banging is putting your hand under the dock to get natural tail carriage and to cut off square below the hocks. A switch tail is a tail thinned to a point.

Washing the tail

Use a soft soap. Put the tail in a bucket of warm water, then soap it, rinse it well and swing it dry. Then bandage it with a dry tail bandage to get it into a nice shape.

Plaiting

Part the mane with a mane comb every 3-4 mm, plait down and stitch or put an elastic on the end, roll up the plait and stitch, or put an elastic on to keep it in place. Put more plaits in a horse with a short neck and larger fewer plaits in a horse with a thin or overlong neck.

Trimming

Singe or cut off the hairs under the horse's jaw, trim some of the hair around the nose and around the outside of the ears. Trim hairs off the fetlock keeping a point at the point of fetlock for water to run off. Can also trim around the coronet to give a neat line around the top of the hoof.

Travelling

Ways of travelling with horses

Best: A motor driven horse float. The horse has plenty of headroom, plenty of light, it has less movement than a trailer. Some horses won't go in a trailer but will go in a motor driven box.

Trailer: For one to two horses, most common. It is the cheapest way to move horses. It is essential to check the hitch, brakes, lights, connection and floor regularly. Because many horses are soured to travelling. Know how to stop, start and back correctly. Get a box of a decent size for horses.

Before going on a journey, check the horse for soundness and shoes. If going through another country, get a vet's certificate. Take a bucket of water, a water carrier and sufficient hay and feed for the entire journey. Prepare equipment at other end, by notifying the person there the time of arrival.

Clothing will depend on the time of year. Best to take a rug anyway. Bandage legs with stable bandages with plenty of cotton wool, or gamgee tissue or shipping boots. Put overreach boots on the front legs, plus knee boots. Hock boots on the hind legs and a tail bandage or tailguard on the tail to prevent it rubbing. Don't bandage too tightly. Put on a halter with a poll guard. The horse is now ready to load. If the horse is difficult

to load, load a quiet horse up first, then load the difficult one immediately. If he's a shy loader, coax him with a bit of food. Two ropes at the back of trailer crossed behind the legs above the hocks also helps.

If the horse is difficult, put on a bridle. Never look him in the eye. You can feed a horse in the box on long journeys, but if it's over a few days, unload and exercise him, because if a horse can't urinate, it can cause a number of problems.

It is possible to take out special insurances to cover a horse against transportation risks.

Spiritual lesson

"Do your best to win full approval in God's sight as a worker who is not ashamed of his work, one who correctly teaches the message of God's truth."

(2 Timothy 2.15)

Let us do all to the glory of God, in our Horsemanship as well as in our daily lives, so be a true reflection to others.

Horse behaviour

Pecking order

Knowing horse behaviour will help you understand the horse reasons for certain action or habits. Horses have a pecking order with the boss horse at the top and rank down to the weakest horse that may eat or drink last. This is done by biting or kicking or making threats. Once the horses know their place there is little fighting. Bring in a new horse and the new horse will test all the others to find out where he stands in the pecking order.

When horses are ridden they must respect their riders as if they were the boss horse. Never let a horse get away with threatening you or he will think he is the boss and try and get away with doing what you tell him to do. If your horse tries to boss another horse while you are riding him, do not allow it.

Herd instinct

All horses have a strong group or herd instinct but it can be controlled with training. If one horse shies or runs they will all shy or run, but if you use herd instinct to your advantage, you can ride a young horse with a steady well trained horse and use exercises to correct problems eg a horse that is hard to stop. Get all the riders to ride in a circle and then ride on the outside of that circle in the opposite direction and the horse will be easier to stop because he wants to rejoin the other horses.

Always be consistent and have a routine that the horse can get used to as they love to know what is happening; routine gives them this.

A horse has an **excellent memory** making him easy to train, but it also means that any unpleasant thing is also remembered, causing a fear in that area.

Horses also have a **homing instinct** which means we must always walk the last mile home so that he does not learn to bolt home out of control.

Horses form **habits** fast. If he does things two or three times, he is forming a habit, good or bad, eg stopping at the arena gate. To form good habits, do things in different places to change his routine quickly to stop undesirable habits.

Horses can also be **possessive** about their food, stall, friends or foal. Therefore do not disturb them while they eat and take this into consideration while handling him. Horses can also be lazy when work is boring so use a variety of exercises. Horses are also **generous** and **courageous** so make sure you value this and never abuse it.

Reading his ears – ears pointed stiffly forwards shows he is alarmed or nervous. **Ears forward and relaxed** is interested. **Ears back but relaxed** is listening. **Ears stiffly back** is annoyed. **Ears pointing to the sides** is relaxed. Droopy ears is resting. **Ears flattened against neck** and wrinkling up face is angry. **Tucking the tail down tightly** also shows anger. **Switching the tail** shows annoyance and irritation. The horse's sense of **touch** is very acute sense of **hearing** and a keen sense of **smell**. Horses don't have a very accurate vision close up but can detect the smallest movement at a distance.

The Riding Instructor

The responsibility of any riding instructor is to influence young people into the right direction in riding ability and Horse Care. Every child loves horse's and through this have a high esteem of their riding instructor. Many children will also confide in their riding teachers above sharing with anyone else. This puts the riding teacher into a place of influence, and I believe that God's call on any riding instructor's life is as important as that of any pastor, as riding instructors have riders who may never have entered a church, and are probably their only contact with the Creator of the Universe – God.

Horses also have a big role to play in the development of any child's life. Riding develops a precise balance between strength and suppleness which naturally involves moral values, leading to a more balanced and more disciplined training, developing the body as well as the spirit.

Riding also develops courage, self-confidence, initiative and determination. Working with horses develops patience, calmness and self-control. Riding also sharpens our observation and stimulates our desire to learn, and all these qualities extend into other areas of life as well.

Riding instructors, by their good example of kindness, patience, fairness, encouragement and continual giving of themselves in many areas of their contacts with young people, will find a satisfying and rewarding career. As they aim for excellence in every area of horsemanship, they are influencing their pupils to do the same, This leads to leadership qualities, skill, strength and stamina, and above all moral qualities as well.

Teaching Riding needs to be well planned with safety first, fun second and education third in mind. We will start with safety.

Safety in starting the lesson

Check list for instructors

Tens safety tips for the arena

- 1. Always check the gate is shut, Jumps and jump cups down and no dangerous hazards.
- 2. Always line up on the centre line for mounting and dismounting.
- 3. Always do a safety check before the horses move off.
- 4. Always check the girths again after the first ten minutes.
- 5. Always have leaders for beginners or nervous riders.
- 6. Always mount riders on horses suitable to their ability and size.
- 7. Always put a kicker at the back of the ride.
- 8. Always put faster horses in front and slower horses to the rear.
- 9. Always keep one horse length distance between horses.
- 10. Always trot individually first and then as a ride if capable.

The girth check: Is she holding the reins, raising left saddle flap, tightening girth one hole at a time, sliding down buckles, that she has not tightened the girth too quickly or pinched the horse.

The stirrups check: Check that the arm is through the reins, the stirrups are not pulled down but lowered, that the stirrups are the correct length to armpits. That the buckle is pulled up under the skirt, that the stirrups are even.

Mounting: Check that the girth is tight enough for riding, the reins are over the horse's neck, that the reins are taken up evenly in a straight line to the bit. That the reins and stick are held with some more in the left hand facing to the rear, lighting the left foot pointing down into the lowered left stirrup. Place the right hand on the far side of the pommel, swing the right leg over the saddle and gently lower the seat into the saddler, turn the right stirrup until flat against the leg and place foot into stirrups, take up reins in each hand.

Adjust girth mounted: After a few minutes, take both reins into right hand with whip, lean down and check girth. To shorten it, bring foot in stirrup forward, lift flap and adjust girth by guiding the tongue with index finger into higher hole. Pull buckle guard down over buckles.

Check stirrups mounted: Hold reins and whip in opposite hand, keep foot lightly in stirrups, move knee outward, adjust stirrup leather hole up or down, put spare leather behind your leg.

Shorten or lengthen reins: To shorten, gently pull the loop end of rein through one hand and take up both reins.

Taking age into consideration

We know that children 5-8 years take longer to progress through levels due to their smaller size and weight as they are growing physically and mentally. Games are therefore a fun and useful learning tool. Plenty of fun trail rides, up and down hills, in and out of woods, also develop balance, co-ordination, and also fun. This balanced with progressive exercises of the material provided on the chart will enhance their riding enjoyment. 9-13 year old's are able to grasp much more detailed teaching and can actively achieve comparable goals with adult learners.

The most important thing in planning is to have clear objectives either for a series of lessons or individual lessons, this includes dividing the objectives into tasks of the lesson.

The clearer the objectives the better the lesson can be organised. The better the lesson is organised the more certain it will follow to plan. The more it flows to plan the better the instructor can change, improve or re-arrange for the next lesson. Every lesson must be based on the knowledge gained in the previous lesson. In planning lessons the following four points need to be considered.

Theme of lesson: Objectives, what should be taught, consider age of students, their fitness, mental attitude, how many in the class, and how many lessons in the course.

Theory of lesson: Inform class of objectives, stimulate interest to its importance, give instruction, explanation and demonstration, find out what they know, how successful the previous lesson has been, and what method to use to improve on it.

Time and place of lesson: Consider what time, day or evening you will be teaching them, indoor or outdoor, summer or winter as this will influence your lesson plan and method considerably.

Teaching aids of lesson: Type of horses available, saddlery, jumps, music, video recorder etc, can improve the lessons.

The lesson: the main points to be dealt with is theory, practice, basic exercises, improvement of technique, elasticity, endurance, maximum strength.

The form of lesson: is the way you teach the lesson and how to organise the lesson, for example, as a ride, in open order, independent of each other or one at a time. You would also cover explanations, demonstrations, exercises, instructions, commands, motivation and correction.

The results of lesson, what has been learnt, or what were the weak points, due to inexperience or ingrained faults: was your lesson planned at the right level for them and how would you improve your next lesson.

Lesson title	First lessons
Objectives	To mount and dismount correctly. To do a safe and thorough safety check. To sit in the correct position. To ride walk and trot using the correct aids. To be able to lead a horse correctly.

Useful games for children

Grandmother’s footsteps: – Instructor stands at end of arena watching pupils. She commands stop! Spells stop, everyone not halted on stop misses a turn. The first to reach the other end wins.

The halting game: Two poles are placed a metre apart at various places in the school. The children ride in between the 2 poles and halt, if they cannot halt they are out, the rider who halts each time wins.

Musical sacks: At walk or trot, rider dismounts onto a sack when the music stops, there is one sack short to the number of riders, so the last rider who cannot find a sack is out, until only one rider is left.

Obstacle course: Rider does one activity at a time until they are all done, possibly halt in a square, walk through a zig zag, take a cup off a drum and place it on a pole, take a letter off another drum and post it in a post box on another drum, pour out a cup of water and drink it, there are many possibilities and all of them are fun.

Gymkhana games and races are also fun with or without leaders, learning without even realising they are learning.

Individual lesson plans – Level 2 examples

Lesson 1

Date

Time

Location

Lesson title

Sitting trot

Objectives

Sit comfortably into horse's stride moving seat bones forward and backwards with the horses stride.

To control and lengthen horse's stride by exaggerating seat bones.

Able to halt horse by stopping the movement of your seat bones.

The pointers

- 1. Teach rider to sit to trot by moving the seat bones backwards and forward with the horse's stride.
- 2. Teach rider to sit in a rhythm with the hind legs opposite to front legs and shoulder.
- 3. When exaggerating the left and right of the seat bones the horse will lengthen his stride.
- 4. When stopping your seat bones and back, the horse will come to walk and halt.

Exercises

- 1. Lengthen along the long side, slow down on the short side.
- 2. Do exercise with and without stirrups.

Results

Objectives are easy to recognise, and thrilling for the pupil to achieve.

Lesson 2

.....
Date

Time

.....

Location

.....

Lesson title

Turns

.....

Objectives

How to ride a corner correctly

How to ride all turns correctly

.....

Theory pointers

What is a corner to a horse! A quarter of a six metre circle, which means we should start our turns 3 metres before the corner or turn.

Exercise

1. After explanation and demonstration student can work individually.
2. Can practice in open order riding correctly into corners or down the centre line.
3. Can do it as part of a dressage test for marks.

Avoid over-riding turn, turning too soon, cutting corners.

All lessons have a similar routine

The warm up: Through walk and rising, trot without stirrup, possibly canter, then rest for a few minutes.

The lesson: The main theme of lesson possibly divided into 2 sections with a rest period between.

The cooling off: At a walk on a long rein.

Evaluating the results of the lesson

1. How did the lesson go?
2. Did the riders improve?
3. How do I know they improved?
4. Did anything go wrong? Why?
5. How could I improve the lesson for next time?

Lesson routine for one hour

1. Mount and adjust stirrups on centre line – 5 mins.
2. Warm up at walk and rising trot – 10 mins.
3. Line up for lesson title, explanation & demonstration – 5 mins.
4. Practice the lesson with advice and correction – 10 mins.
5. Rest at walk with questions and answer – 5 mins.
6. Practice second stage of lesson with advice and correction – 10 mins.
7. End with a game, jumping or competition – 10 mins.
8. Walk off on long rein and line up on centre line – 5 mins.

Progressive Teaching

Position in the saddle at the girth - dismounted in detail

Position in the saddle at halt

- Rider should sit tall and balanced. The seat bones should be in the saddle as possible, with equal weight on the seat bones.
- Lower back should be supple, with shoulders back and down.
- Arms should be hanging naturally from the shoulders, elbows slightly bent and wrists soft and supple.
- Legs should be softly hanging against the horse's sides – not gripping with thigh, knee, calf or ankle.

Riding from halt to walk

- The reins should be the same length and have a light contact with the bit. Keep upright and give a little nudge (not a kick) with your legs on the horse's side just behind the girth.
- As the horse goes to move off release the seat and lower back and ease the fingers on the reins a little to allow the horse to go forward.

- If he does not respond to a little nudge, repeat the signal with a stronger nudge. If that is not sufficient, put both reins in one hand, repeat the signal and tap him with your whip just behind your leg. In a Test you will not be penalised for this as long as it is clear that you gave a very good signal which had been disobeyed. Hitting the horse without reason will be heavily penalised.

- Keep a soft but steady feel on the reins as the horse walks forward.

- From the first step of the walk you should remain supple and harmonise with the walking movement of the horse and not be tense and left behind.

- Keep your legs softly resting against the horse's sides ready to give a signal when needed.

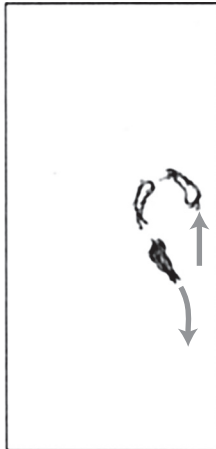
Progressive lessons

Turns

Look in the direction you are going, shorten inside rein, sit to inside, squeeze with outside leg. A turn is a quarter of a 4 metre or 12 ft circle for the smallest circle a horse can do. So start your turn 2 metre or 6 ft before the turn.



Learning to turn



Step a reverse

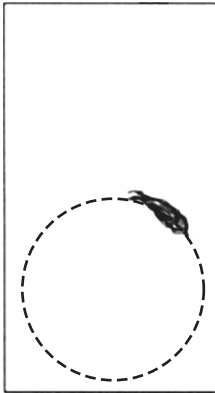


Step a circle

A circle: Prepare by bringing outside seat bone to centre of saddle, look to the direction you are moving, keep inside heel down, outside leg on girth and shorten the inside rein.

A figure of eight is 2 circles joined together in the middle where you change direction.

A serpentine is riding three loops remembering to change direction over the centre line.



Circle

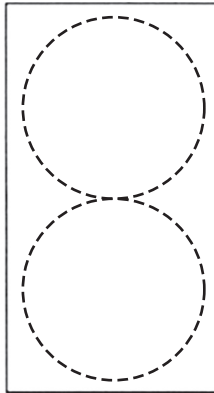
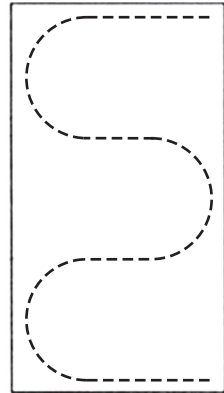
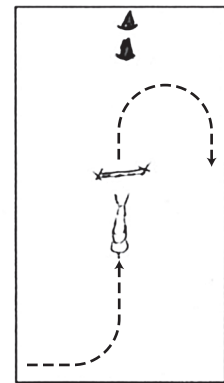
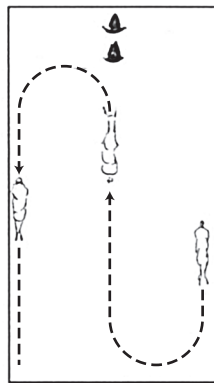
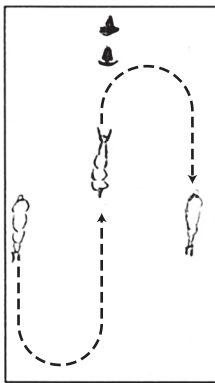


Figure of 8



Serpentine

A straight line: Ride forward and straight. Use two cones by lining them up as you turn down centre line, to see how straight you are. Correct crookedness with your outside leg.



*Learning to ride in a straight line in three stages
using two cones at end of centre line to line up for straightness.*

Introduction to lateral work

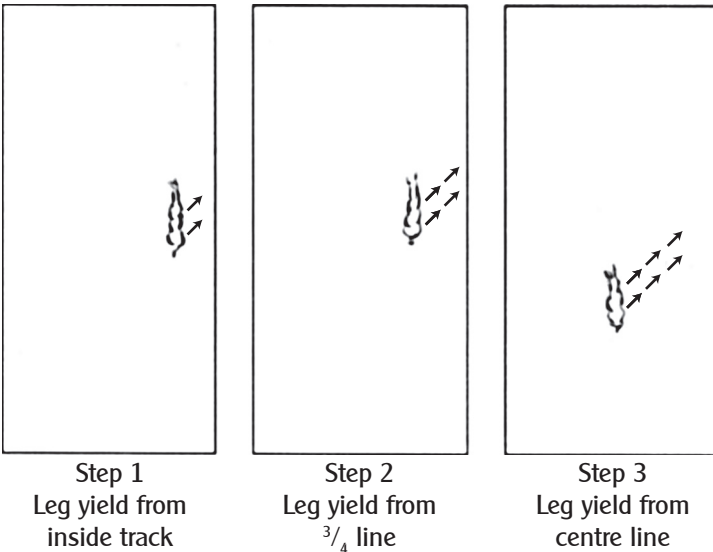
Leg yielding

This is carried out at walk first then trot.

1. Start with three steps from inside track to the outside track at the walk. To ask horse to leg yield he must step forward and side ways moving on two tracks. His body is straight except for a very slight bend at the poll away from the direction he is going.

Aids: Use your inside leg to step one stride sideways then outside leg to step one stride forward, repeat.

2. Repeat exercise in both directions. This will take much practice. See the diagram below.

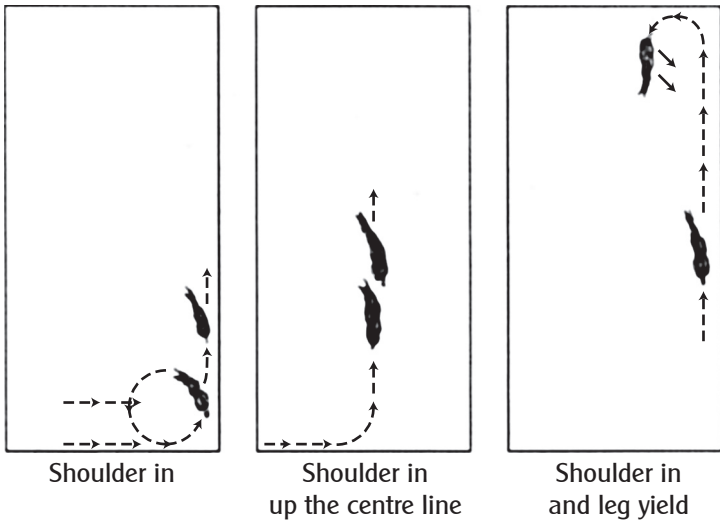


Shoulder in

This is carried out at walk first and then trot. The horse is bent throughout his body, to move forward and sideways up the outside track, looking away from the direction he is going.

Aids: Start with a small circle to position him by turning him off outside track then shorten reins and squeeze him forward and sie ways up outside track with inside leg.

1. After he can do it at walk try at trot, and then without circle. Once he can do it well, you can do it up the centre line.
2. Use exercises to do shoulder in and then half circle to leg yield back to outside track.



Western reining

This is a demonstration of western horses balance, rein responsiveness, attitude and ability to perform all the western movements.

1. **Turn on the forehand:** Useful for opening gates and for your first basic lateral exercise.

Aids: Sit tall, bring outside leg back and squeeze. Do one step at a time, until he has pivoted round to face opposite directions.

2. **Side pass:** The horse moves straight sideways without moving backwards or forward. Outside

leg should cross over and in front of other leg with slight forward motion.

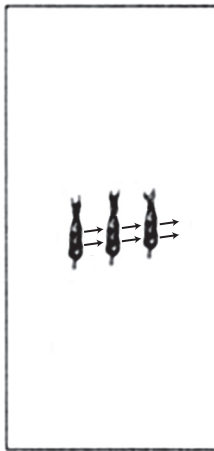
Aids: Use outside leg behind girth, sitting over to direction you are going, neck rein him to direction.

3. **Pivots:** These are developed from the turn back on the rail (top) to pivot on hind leg as he turns round, sitting on hocks without moving hing feet except to pivot in small circle (lower pictures pivoting on a 20 m circle) on inside hind leg.

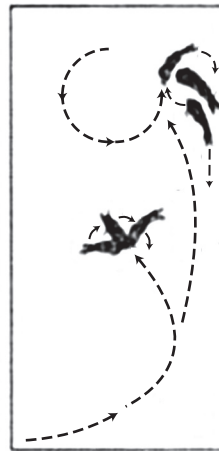
Aids: Halt, collect your horse by squeezing your leg by shifting weight back and in direction you are going use outside leg and rein him round with short light neck reins.



Turn on forehand



Side pass



Turn back and pivot from circles or later outside track

1. **Lead changes:** Simple change on figure of 8 centre circle trot. Five or six strides and centre circle in other direction.

2. **Flying change of leads:** He must change front and hind leads together. If he only changes in front go back to simple changes.

Aids: Centre on correct lead with your outside leg behind girth as you approach middle of figure of eight, straighten horse, and as the horses come off the ground, put opposite outside leg back so that he switches change of leads instantly.

Western turn back on the rail

A **turn back** teaches the horse balance, collection to turn on their haunches and help lighten the forehand. It is taught to horses who have already completed basic training and at least 5 years old. Balance relaxation and correctness is more important than speed.

Preparation: the horse must be able to circle correctly and relaxed.

Aids: Heading towards the rail at 45 degree angle about 15-20 feet away from the fence, the rider shifts his seat bones to the inside of the turn 10 to 15 feet away; the rider turns the horse towards the fence and directs the horse around 180 degrees with minimal use of the reins to the opposite direction, and using his outside legs of the turn.

As the horse consistently turns and pivots on his new inside hind leg, continue outside leg and rein contract with rider's weight on the inside until the 180 turn is complete.

The rider should then release the rein and squeeze with both legs to ride forward coming out of the turnback on the opposite lead, if cantering, then he entered it.

Always start turn backs at the trot first.

Benefits: An excellent preparation for more advanced work by getting the horse more attentive, light in the mouth and able to balance on his hauches better.

Turn on the forehand

This is a good co-ordination exercise for the rider and one of the first exercises in moving away from the leg for the horse – testing the horse's obedience to the rider's legs. This exercise must be carried out on both reins. You will be expected to do a 180-degree turn at this stage. As you progress you may be asked for a 360-degree turn. The simplest way to prepare for the turn is to collect the walk a little and, without losing any power, turn down the arena on an inner track. If you are on the right rein, your turn will bring you between the $\frac{3}{4}$ line and the corner – the inner track is approximately 1.5 metres (5 ft) from the wall.

1. Keep the horse straight.
2. Ride into a square halt, but with the horse's head very slightly flexed to the left.
3. Hold the right rein to prevent the horse from walking forward.
4. Keep upright.
5. Keep the right leg close to the horse.
6. The left leg just behind the girth nudges the quarters over one step at a time. The left hind stepping under and across the right hind leg. The right leg regulates the steps until the horse is facing the other way.
7. Do NOT pull the left rein – this is a common fault.
8. Once the turn is completed, walk or trot forward. When the horse is on the right right, the turn on the forehand will be to the left. For a right turn on the forehand, (off the left rein) – see the previous diagram.

A smaller turn of 90 degrees can be asked for, In this instance, the horse will need to be ridden at right angles to the wall and then asked for a right or left turn on the forehand.

Leg yield – first in walk, then in trot

A useful exercise to teach both horses and riders of lateral work. It is best started by riding a $\frac{3}{4}$ line diagonally to the track (5 m)

- 1. Ride your horse forward, straight and sideways toward the side of the arena from one line to the next (see diagram). The horse should be straight with a very slight bend at the poll – away from the direction of travel, ie if leg yielding to the left, the slight bend should be to the right, only enough to see the horse's eyebrow and edge of the nostril.
- 2. Slide your seat bones to the direction you are moving with.
- 3. The inside leg just behind the girth will apply intermittent light pressure just behind the girth to ask the hindquarters to move over.
- 4. The outside leg assists the inside leg with impulsion. It also help to maintain straightness.
- 5. Ask your horse to move step by step in the rhythm of the walk, then later in trot, moving with the diagonals.
- 6. Reward your horse after a few good steps of leg yielding by riding him forwards in a lively trot.
- 7. Do not let your horse run out at the shoulder by bending head too much – only a very slight inclination is necessary.
- 8. Keep going forward with impulsion and rhythm.

Canter from walk

The walk must be of quality, with hind legs engaged and the forehand light, before the canter depart can be attempted. When the walk is established, be conscious of the footfalls, and be ready to give clear aids for canter.

The outside rein supports, the inside rein is softened, the inside leg is long and at the girth with the inside hip a little forward, the outside leg is drawn back just behind the girth. As the horse's inside shoulder begins to go forward, give a nudge with both legs in the position already described. This will activate the outside hind leg, which will be the first step of the canter. Immediately keep the body supple and in harmony with the canter movement. Do not lean forward at the moment of transition, as this will throw weight onto the horse's forehand, and you will not be able to achieve the walk/canter depart.

Transition down canter/trot

Square the hips, keep the legs at the horse's side. Close the fingers on the outside rein and rise at the first step of the trot. If the canter is fairly collected, then sit to the trot at the transition.

Lengthened strides

The trot you require is one which requires lively impulsion from the hindquarters which will produce a more exaggerated action of the forelegs. The rhythm and tempo will remain the same even though the length of the stride is increased and the horse covers more ground.

To achieve this, it may be easier if you rise to the trot to begin with and once you have mastered the lengthening techniques, then you can sit to the trot and float with the strides.

Hold the power in the horse with both legs close to the girth, the hands quiet with the reins resembling pieces of good elastic, rise a little taller and as you feel the surge of power surge through the horse, open the fingers a fraction and the horse will lower his head and neck and you will feel the push from the quarters into the lengthening stride. Do not give the reins away.

When you feel the lengthening begin, keep the rein contact. After a few strides, return to a working trot. Keep the balance and rhythm during all of this time.

Guidelines to opening a riding establishment

Being qualified to teach is sufficient if you work for someone but if you open any riding establishment much more is required.

Check list

1. Permissions to run a riding establishment on your property
2. Planning permission for your stables etc
3. A license to run a riding establishment
4. Liability insurance and employer's liability insurance

Find out these requirements from your State or Country.

Once you have these in place, you need to think about the paper work side for your type of equestrian activity. These can be kept in a loose leaf file so that you can add to them each year.

1. **Risk assessment forms** for each activity showing risk. What has been done to lessen the risk and ongoing works to maintain it.
2. **Fire risk:** A list of what to do if a fire were to break out with phone numbers, a fire bell, hose and yearly inspected water fire extinguisher with dates of last inspection of the fire extinguisher and papers filed yearly. No smoking signs.
3. **Accident / Incident book** to keep record of every fall or incident no matter how minor, in order to keep facts that may be needed at a later date. Old books or pages out of each book must be filed.

- 4. **First Aid boxes and Kits** that are kept up to date for people and a green first aid box for horses.
- 5. **Medical consent forms** for every student to fill in when they join your riding establishment.
- 6. **A mission statement** – This establishment mission is to provide safety conscious, knowledgeable and correctly trained individuals who will be an asset to the horse industry.
- 7. **Boarding agreement** for every horse.
- 8. **Emergency procedures.**
- 9. **Rules for riders, boarders etc.**

Emergency procedures

- 1. All staff are in a position of responsibility at all times and should be trained in first aid. Prevention is better than cure.
- 2. Watch and correct anything that could lead to an accident.
- 3. Keep to the rules of the establishment.
- 4. Check tack each time a rider is mounted, the horse's temperament and suitability of rider's standard to riding the horse. Teach lesson or take out hack to the standard of the weakest rider in group.

If a rider falls off

- 1. Stop the ride, have them dismount if necessary.
- 2. Assess the situation.
- 3. Delegate someone to get help, phone, take ride home etc while you as the first aider do the first aid until help arrives. If unhurt, help the rider remount and lead if necessary. Then carry on with the ride.

Accident book

All accidents, injuries **MUST BE RECORDED** in the accident book, to the proper medical staff and in the horse's personal records. Report facts as they are known, with the rider's full name, address and horse ridden.

Contact parents.

Problems that may occur and how to handle them

A horse pulling back on a rope: Tell riders to stand back and lead the horse forward quietly speaking to the horse to reassure him. If the horse is panicking pull the quick release knot to free the horse or cut the rope. Explain what happened to the riders to reassure them and teach them about the horse's natural instincts, prevention, tie horses correctly a wither height or higher.

Horse stepping on a person's foot: Instruct rider to "push horse off your foot". Help push the horse off the rider's foot. Reassure others and examine the rider's foot.

Horses fighting while being ridden: Stop ride, call out 'sit up, kick horse forward' etc. Get the fighting horses apart, reassure riders and re-emphasize spacing. Keep horses that don't like each other apart and keep correct spacing.

Horse rolling with rider: If horse is pawing the ground, lowering head or bending the knees, call out 'kick horse on pull head up to prevent the horse rolling. If the horse does go down, call out 'get off the horse'.

Shying: Calm the horse, tell the rider to talk to the horse and let him look at the object. Reassure riders and tell them about the horse's instincts.

Rearing or backing: Call out to rider to lean forward and grab the mane, get the rider to walk the horse forward into a circle. Only put riders with soft quiet hands on a sensitive horse, mounting them last.

Run away or bucking horse: Stop ride, call out 'sit up, tighten reins or circle horse's move to block the run away. Never chase a runaway horse. If the other horses are excited, dismount ride and lead horses home if on ride, or until the horse has stopped if in a arena. If a rider falls, then follow the procedure for a fallen rider.

Prevention is better than cure

To avoid emergency situations:

1. Select quiet suitable horses with none of the above vices.
2. Correct stable management with proper routine and care.
3. Know your horses and only use them accordingly.
4. Good supervision and control in the horse arena.
5. Never assume any rider knows how to ride or be safe around horses.
6. Use application forms to help you assign suitable horses to their experience.
7. Never leave riders unsupervised.
8. Have sufficient staff available to the number of riders.
9. Horse activities require safe footing, free from holes, rocks or other hazards.
10. The horse area must be securely enclosed and away from traffic.

Before you begin your ride

1. Take weather into consideration, heat, humidity, cold, rain, and equip riders with suntan lotion or rain coats etc. accordingly.
2. Require a safety check of each horse and rider and tack.
3. Make sure riders are wearing hard hats up to the required standards.

- ___ 4. Check for safe footwear, shoes or boots with a hard smooth sole and definite heel.
- ___ 5. Use stirrups and saddles that fit the riders as well as the horse.
- ___ 6. Only allow qualified staff to teach riders.
- ___ 7. Insist that safety rules and procedures are followed at all times.
- ___ 8. Involve staff in risk management policies and that they understand their responsibilities.
- ___ 9. Good communication with other staff is very important.

Keep written records of...

- ___ ■ Horse descriptions valuation and use.
- ___ ■ Rider liability forms and written permission to ride.
- ___ ■ Rider information, skill level, disabilities.
- ___ ■ Horse work hours daily and weekly.
- ___ ■ Veterinary and farrier care, deworming and treatment of individual horses.

ALWAYS KEEP UP WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS.

Fire emergencies

- ___ 1. Clear people away from the fire.
- ___ 2. Call the fire department.
- ___ 3. Evacuate the horses, have halters and lead ropes available by the horses stables, stalls or paddocks at all times, secure an area away from the fire,

open the gate for fire fighters and fight the fire with fire extinguishers.

Forest or bush fires: Ride to the nearest road or safe area, across a river or fire break. If fire is out of control, stop a motorist to get riders to safety and remove tack and let horses loose.

Weather emergencies

Lightning: In an open area, stay away from lone trees and find a low area. **On hills,** go to the bottom of the hill or half way down if flooding. **In forest,** choose the shorter trees.

Hail wind or tornadoes: Find shelter in a depression or lower ground away from falling trees, use saddles for rider's protection if bad, remove tack and turn horses loose.

A child finds life

*Life! – a racing wheel of humanity
 Life! – the materialistic modern society
 Life! – hidden within its concrete cities
 The course of history, unstoppable,
 crazy, sanity
 A child makes friends with a horse
 The horse tells her a better way
 Find balance, find peace
 See life from the back of a horse
 The child finds the balance she needs
 She is brought back to the basics of life
 She can appreciate nature as God created it
 And through this, finds peace with
 God Himself
 Now she has strength to face the world,
 Now she is ready to enter its racing wheel,
 Not to simply grab what life may have to offer,
 But to give to it instead; from what she
 has learnt,
 She has found a new dimension to life.*

EPILOGUE

Jacky Boy

The accident

The deadly thump pulled the reins from my hands. The worst had happened. The speeding car had hit my horse and crashed into a bank. Luckily the driver emerged unhurt, but Jacky Boy just lay there. Later we discovered that the damage was actually fatal. The shoulder bones were broken in two places, the main deltoid muscle and nerve severed right through, and a 12 by 8 inch piece of flesh was torn from his neck.

Yet I would not give up. I sent Jacky to Onderstepoort where he would receive the best treatment. But the vets could do nothing. They refused to pin the bones, due to no muscle to keep the bones in place anyway. The horse was a complete cripple, his leg absolutely useless. They therefore tried to revive the muscle, but the treatment failed.

Jacky Boy's healing

After 6 weeks, I realised that I had to have Jacky put down, and made arrangement with the vet for 4 days later. That night I thought and thought – was there anything that I had not tried? After some time, I realized that there was – I had not prayed.

But how could I pray if I had not gone to church for years. Yet, if God created the heavens and earth and everything in it, then – I reasoned – it is logical that He has also the power to re-create.

Yet, if all this was real, why had I disregarded it? Would God forgive me? Could I even ask God to forgive me? This is

what I did do. I asked God to forgive me and still more (only if it were His will) just heal Jacky well enough so that he could walk again. That was all. I could accept him as a cripple so long as he was not in pain. If God did this for me then I would in return serve Him for the rest of my life, for I would know for sure that He really is alive and really is God.

God did hear me. I went out to see Jacky the next day. He looked just the same, then he stumbled and fell. My heart fell too. What did I expect? A miracle? Miracles don't happen today, do they? But if Jesus died on the cross for me, then I should be able to give up Jacky for Him. I should put Jesus first in my life, not a horse. I said: "Jesus! I will put You first in my life from now on."

Then, in the next instant, Jacky picked himself up with his hind legs, and trotted on all four feet. God had healed my horse! Not only that, the horse was soon entirely healed and has taught children in the riding school (as I wrote in 1992) "for the last 12 years") without one day's lameness.



Due to this wonderful miracle, my life was changed. I accepted Jesus into my heart as my Lord and Savior and today serve the Lord with joy in the work He has led me to do, and has enabled this book to have been written. To accept the Lord

into your heart as your Lord and Savior takes a simple decision and prayer.

1. A decision to turn around from any sin and follow Jesus.
2. Come to the Lord in prayer and confess to Him any sin in thought, word and deed and things left undone that you know of, right back into your early childhood and ask for His forgiveness, knowing that He will forgive you immediately. Then accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior.
3. Pray daily. Read your Bible. Join a church or Christian Fellowship, and live out your new Christian life day by day, allowing the Lord to guide and help you live it. Tell someone about your new commitment to the Lord.

Let's pray

Jesus, I come to You as I am. Please forgive me for where I have sinned against You in thought, word and deed, and in things I have left undone. Please come into my life as my Lord and Savior and help me to live closer to You day by day.

Thank You Lord. Amen.

We hope you enjoyed reading this New Wine book.
For details of other New Wine books and a wide
range of titles from other *Word* and *Spirit*
publishers visit our website:
www.newwineministries.co.uk
or email us at newwine@xalt.co.uk

