

Riding Level 2 Requirements

November 26, 2008 (7:12am)

- **Have satisfied all requirements for Groundwork Level 1 and Riding Level 1**
- **Watch “Riding With Fluidity” and fill out question sheet.**
- **Can identify these points of the horse**
 - ▶ canon
 - ▶ stifle
 - ▶ barrel
 - ▶ fetlock
 - ▶ pastern
 - ▶ coronet
 - ▶ crest
- **Can identify these parts of the saddle**
 - ▶ pommel
 - ▶ cantle
 - ▶ leather
 - ▶ flap
 - ▶ billet
 - ▶ girth
 - ▶ stirrup or iron
- **All riding for this level is done in an English saddle.**
- **Can put a saddle together**
 - ▶ Tester will take every removable part off the saddle for student to put together. No help from anyone during this part of the test.
- **Can demonstrate how to properly saddle a horse**
 - ▶ placing the saddle too far forward and sliding it back into place
 - this makes the horse more comfortable by keeping their hair smooth under the saddle
 - ▶ lift saddle pad up into the gullet of the saddle so the spine of the horse can move more freely and the heat from the horses back can dissipate.
 - ▶ demonstrates safety in getting girth under the belly of the horse.
 - stand by foreleg as you reach with one hand.
 - use hand closest to the horse to reach for the girth.
 - ▶ uses tact in tightening the girth
 - 1st fastening is with a very loose girth, just enough that the horse can feel it
 - 2nd tightening should follow the adjustment of the stirrups and/or the putting on of the bridle, tightening it enough that it will not slip off when the horse is led up to the arena, but still not very tight.
 - 3rd tightening is once the horse is in the arena, this is the time we tighten it enough that we can ride without slipping off.
 - After each tightening, the rider should run their hand under the girth so help the horses

skin be comfortable, no pinching of loose skin. It's also a good idea to walk the horse a few steps after each tightening.

- girth needs to be tight enough to feel somewhat firm, but still allow the horse movement and ease of breathing.

- **All riding at this level needs to be done keeping seat aids in mind. Seat should be used effectively and in advance of any rein aid.**

- ▶ My definition of seat aids and the general order in which they should be applied is:
 - being in timing with the feet and understanding how that helps a horse follow our aides more easily.
 - all sets of eyes
 - seat bones - tips of the pelvis
 - calf muscle - the inside of the calf
 - entire leg - from the hip down through the calf

- **Rider can explain the timing of the feet.**

- ▶ Walk is a 4 beat gait - explain and demonstrate (on all fours) the pattern of footfalls
- ▶ Trot is a 2 beat gait - explain and demonstrate (on all fours) the pattern of footfalls
- ▶ A good resource for gaits and timing of feet is the book: *True Horsemanship Through Feel* by Bill Dorrance and Leslie Desmond - see chapter 5. For a good study guide on this chapter, go to www.lesliedesmond.com, click on "Test Your Knowledge" on the left hand side of the screen; Then click on Take Home Test #11.

- **Can ask the horse to stand still at the mounting block during mounting.**

- ▶ If this is a real struggle, rider/handler should consider accomplishing Groundwork Level 2 before this level.
- ▶ Count to 20 before moving off after rider has mounted.

- **Mount with finesse**

- ▶ proper hand position
 - both hands need to be on the pommel area of the saddle.
 - The far hand, generally the right hand, should be used effectively in giving help balancing yourself as you are using it to help hold the saddle in place. A good placement is just a little lower than the pommel and even grasping the piece of leather flap as you mount.
- ▶ no toe in horse's side
- ▶ swing leg over the saddle and the croup of the horse without touching horse or saddle
- ▶ gently settle down into saddle
- ▶ legs are relaxed on horse's sides as settling
- ▶ pick up stirrup easily

- **Rider begins to demonstrate how they need to maintain a bend at the elbow so they have arms that move freely as the horse bobs his or her head up and down.**

- ▶ Spend some time on the reining board to develop a feel for contact and soft hands so your horse feels better about your hands being attached to the piece of metal in their mouth.

- ▶ **Rider understands that when they feel any fear, the LAST thing they wish to do is grip with the legs.**

- ▶ understand that gripped legs do NOT keep the rider on. Our center and balance with the help of

gravity, do this job.

- ▶ If there is fear from either the horse or the rider and the rider grips with the legs, this will only encourage the horse to bolt forward or buck. Generally dismounting the rider.
- **Do a shallow serpentine on both long sides of arena at the walk.**
 - ▶ shallow serpentine must be accurately ridden. (See Ex. 44 in *101 Arena Exercises*)
- **Can post a trot without holding onto whoa nelly (on lunge line). 5 times around the circle with arms out as “airplane.” Then 5 times around circle with hands in position to hold reins. This must be done in both directions.**
- **Do 4 one-rein stops as they are called out.**
 - ▶ 2 one direction and 2 the opposite direction.
 - ▶ The feel in the rein that you are asking the horse to follow, needs to be smooth and gentle.
- **Can do a 20 meter circle both directions at the walk**
 - ▶ minimal inside rein is OK at this level
 - ▶ Rider needs to begin to understand the bend of a horse. How to effect all 4 legs in order to help accomplish a 20 meter circle.
 - ▶ When thinking about a circle within a square - where the circle would hit the sides of the square on all 4 sides is the 4 points of the circle.
 - ▶ (See Ex. 35 in *101 Arena Exercises*)
- **Understand and demonstrate how to do a change of direction across the diagonal.**
 - ▶ Rider plans well for change of direction. (See Ex. 32 in *101 Arena Exercises*)
 - ▶ The diagonal line must be VERY straight, and accomplished with very minimal rein aid.
- **Can back the horse 2 steps**
 - ▶ Rider must be very clear with their body language
 - ▶ Think about backing up, have life in upper body and pretend you are “looking” out of your back towards your destination
 - ▶ Only use rein aid to help the horse understand that you wish to go backwards by blocking any forward movement.
 - ▶ Release rein and leg aid after horse is making attempt to back, but keep “life” and backward focus until you get the steps you are asking for.
 - This movement is built upon slowly. First look for a shift, that might be all you get in a session. Next session, if the shift comes more easily, ask for just one step. Then slowly build upon that.
- **Can do a figure 8 with 2, back to back, 20 meter circles at the walk.**
 - ▶ A short stretch of straightness exists between the two circles as the bend changes.
- **Do a serpentine at the walk.**
 - ▶ This may either be a 3 loop or a 5 loop
 - ▶ ride with good planning and accuracy
 - ▶ effectively planning ahead and using seat aids
 - ▶ See picture in Exercise 54 of *101 Arena Exercises*

- **Ride a straight line down the center line of the arena. Twice.**
 - ▶ rider demonstrates how to make a good plan for the turn down the center line so that the line is straight
 - ▶ Tester stands on one end to gauge the straightness of this line. Must be straight.

- **Trot around the arena one direction. Stop. Change directions at the walk. Trot around arena other direction.**
 - ▶ Rider understands about diagonals and is working to feel if they are on the correct diagonal or not.
 - ▶ Halt must be a balanced halt and may be done through the walk. Get in timing with the feet and bring them to a stop.

- **Squirrel off at the walk.**
 - ▶ Rider drops reins and stirrups efficiently.
 - ▶ Rider does not hit horse in the rump with their foot.
 - ▶ Rider lands standing up and gets reins into hands in a manner that shows they are in smooth control.

- **Tack is put away neatly and well**
 - ▶ saddle pad is lying on the saddle rack with no folds or crumples.
 - ▶ saddle has stirrups run up the leathers, with the leathers tucked neatly around the stirrup to prevent them from falling down.
 - ▶ Girth is lying over the seat of the saddle and tucked into the stirrups
 - ▶ reins are laying over the hook so that no clips are on the ground
 - ▶ lead rope is hung up with the loops and the clip is not on the ground
 - ▶ halter is hung from the nose band.
 - ▶ Bridle bit is wiped or rinsed off, so no dirt or slobber, or “food” is on it.
 - ▶ Bridle and reins have been wiped down with a leather conditioner.
 - ▶ Bridle is hanging from the crown piece and reins are hooked on the same hook.

- **Some Safety Rules**
 - ▶ When applying fly spray, be sure to never spray the horse’s face or towards the horse’s eyes. Always be sure to spray the horses legs all the way down to the coronet. Never spray fly spray towards another person’s face.
 - ▶ If adding only reins to your halter, remember that the reins are always the very last piece of equipment put on the horse, always put them on only when the horse and rider are completely ready to go to the arena and ride. When done riding, the reins are always the very first piece of equipment that is taken off of the horse. Before you even take time to take off your own helmet.
 - ▶ If using a bridle, the horse must be untied before removing the halter to put on your bridle.
 - ▶ Always keep your lead rope tied in such a manner that the horse cannot undo it.
 - ▶ Tie your horse just loose enough that they may drop their poll below their withers and tight enough that they cannot reach the knee with their nose.
 - ▶ Whenever leading your saddled horse, always have your stirrups run all the way up the leather. This keeps the horse from being constantly bumped in his or her side as they are walking along. This is also the way to keep you horse safe from getting caught on fencing or anything else you will be walking by.
 - ▶ Put tack and equipment inside if weather is threatening. Even if you plan to ride again. Rain can

be very damaging to leather and we do our best to make sure loose equipment is not just “hanging” around to get wet or damaged.

- ▶ If your horse is tied up and you see any sort of chaos, untie them. Chaos can be as “simple” as a group of horses or even a single horse who is free decides to walk up to the hitching rail to see what is going on. Or chaos can be as exciting as the wind blowing a tree over. Only tie your horse back up when the chaos has smoothed out.

- **HOMEWORK** - What does your horse eat? How much? How often? Why do you feed him/her what they are currently eating?

- ▶ Write up the answers to these questions and turn them in and present them to your school mates. If you do not own a horse, find out what your borrowed horse is eating and what a typical horse diet might look like.

- **Some interesting resources**

- ▶ *Riding for Beginners* by Sibylle Luise Binder & Gefion Wolf
- ▶ *Horse Handling & Grooming* by Cherry Hill
- ▶ *First Riding Lessons* by Sandy Ransford
- ▶ *Centered Riding* by Sally Swift

Note: Any required videos are available to borrow from Robin. Any recommended reading is the responsibility of the student to acquire. Many of these books are available at the local library.