

LUNGEING THE RIDER ON THE HORSE – SEAT LESSON

Exercises To Improve Balance, Suppleness, And To Gain Independent Hands



Exercise 1A.

Basic position to establish feeling of security and balance.
Hold pommel or safety strap with both hands. Explain how to pull down with the hands to feel seat bones, relaxing buttock muscles.
Go back to this position when student gets insecure or needs a break from the exercises.



Exercise 1B.

Like the basic position, but with outside hand only, while inside hand hangs down or carries out exercises.
1C. (not shown) Same as 1B, but with both hands down by side,



Exercise 1D.

When confidence and balance improve -
Basic position, but with only finger of each hand.
1E. (not shown) One finger of outside hand only, while inside hand hangs down or carries out exercises.



Exercise 2A.

Inside arm circles back-wards, while outside hand holds safety strap. Do this slowly and without jerks. Don't lift seat bones when arms are up. Supples shoulders and opens up chest.



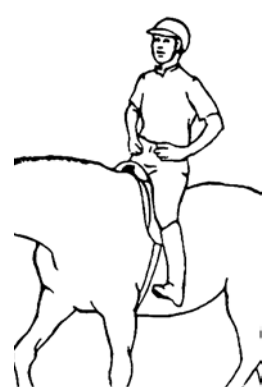
Exercise 2B.

Both arms, windmill fashion. Make sure thighs stay long and knees are down.



Exercise 3A.

Inside hand on hip, thumb to the back, while outside hand holds onto safety strap. Pull deep into saddle.
More advanced: Outside hand in rein holding position.



Exercise 3B.

Both hands on hips. Stay deep on seat bones, thighs long, knees down. Be steady in the hips and stomach, with chest open.



Exercise 4A.

Exercise 4A.

Inside arm straight up, outside hand holding safety strap.

Exercise 4B.

Arm forward at eye level.

Exercise 4C.

Arm sideways, should-high and level.

Supples shoulder, improves balance.



Exercise 5A.

Both arms up.



Exercise 5B.

Both arms forward.



Exercise 5C.

Both arms sideways.

Exercises 5 A., B. & C. Same as exercise 4 but with both arms. Stay deep in seat bones, thighs long, knees down.



Exercise 6A.

Inside arm behind back.

Exercise 6A. Outside hand holding onto safety strap, pulling deep into saddle. Open chest and push stomach forward. Steadies lower back.



Exercise 6B.

Both hands behind back.

Exercise 6B. Stay deep on seat bones, thighs long, knees down. More difficult: outside hand in rein holding position.



Exercise 7A.
Looking to the right.



Exercise 7B.
Looking straight ahead.



Exercise 7C.
Looking to the left.

Exercise 7. Keep arms shoulder high to the side, look slowly from right to left. Supples neck, improves balance. Stay deep on seat bones, thighs long, knees down, stomach and chest open. More difficult: with eyes closed.



Exercise 8A.
Rotate left.



Exercise 8B.
Straight ahead.



Exercise 8C.
Rotate right.

Exercise 8. Keep arms shoulder high to the side, rotate upper body from the waist, one hand toward the horse's head, the other toward the horse's tail. Both seat bones must stay down and central in the saddle. Supples torso, improves balance.



Exercise 9B.

Exercise 9A.

Hold inside hand in rein holding position, outside hand holding safety strap.

Exercise 9B.

Both hands in the rein position.

Exercise 9C.

Flex wrists as in half halts.

When the student has reached this stage, he/she should be able to keep the hands absolutely quiet.

Test by having the student hold a glass of water.

Exercises to Improve Leg Position



Exercise 10A.

Pull both knees up to the withers.

Supples hips, stretches thighs. Keep seat bones deep in saddle.



Exercise 10B.

Then push them down.



Exercise 11.

Grab heel, pulling foot up toward cantle, stretching knee down. Give an extra pull. Supples hips, stretches thighs.



Exercise 12A.

Side view.



Exercise 12B.

Frontal view.

Exercises 12 A. & B. Keep knees rigid and swing legs from hips alternately, concentrating on a pronounced backward swing. Keep seat bones deep in saddle. Supple hips, stretches thighs.



Exercise 13.

Rotate ankles, one or both feet in both directions. Supples ankles, helps to keep heels down. Steadies lower back.



Exercise 14.

Holding the pommel or safety strap, pull well down onto the seat bones, stretching both legs from the hips through the knees into the heels. Keep toes up and calf muscles against the horse. Steadies the lower leg.



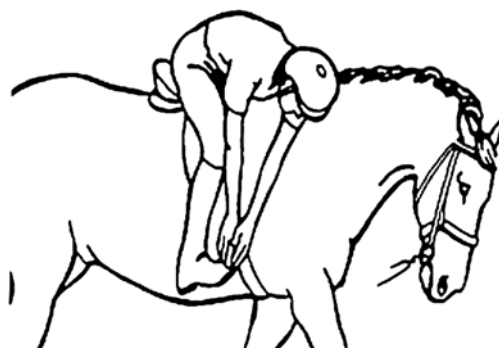
Exercise 15A.



Exercise 15B.



Variation on Exercise 15.

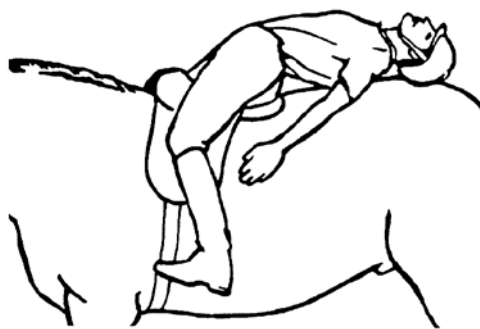


Exercise 15C.



Exercise 15D.

Exercises 15A.-D. Touch right toe with right hand (15A), touch right toe with left hand (15B), repeat same movements with left hand, then alternate with both hands (15C, 15D). Keep seat bones deep in saddle. Keep lower legs quiet with deep heels. Stretches spine, improves overall suppleness.



Exercise 16.

Exercise 16. Lean forward into the jumping position. Then lean all the way back until the head is touching the croup. Keep legs absolutely steady with deep heels. Strengthens the muscles of the lower back and abdomen.

Exercise 17. (Not Shown) Test of balance (and courage) - take the legs entirely off the horse, balancing only on seat bones.

Exercises For Relaxing

Exercise 18.

Shrug shoulders, together or alternately.

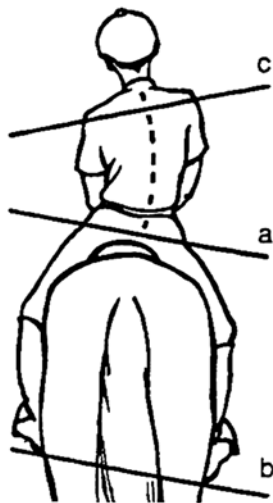
Exercise 19.

Roll head (moderately!).

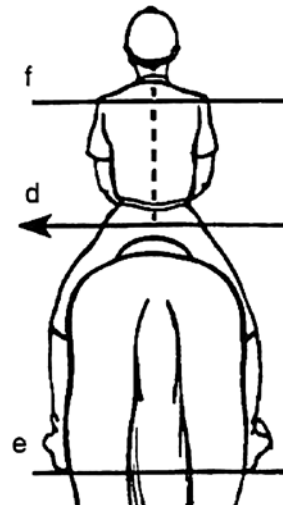
Exercise 20.

In the walk only, go limp like a rag doll, then resume correct position

The Crooked Rider (Collapsed Hip)



Exercise A.



Exercise B.

This fault can occur in a very subtle form to quite severe, as shown in Fig. A.

Exercise A

When collapsing the left hip (a), the seat bones are not equally weighted on both sides of the horse's spine. Both seat bones are off to the right in the saddle, causing the right leg to be longer (b) and too far forward, some times even with very little contact to the horse. the left leg is drawn too far back generally with the heel up. The shoulders are not level, the left lower than the right (c). In most cases this causes a stiff left arm and a rigid contact on that rein. (Of course, the reverse applies when the rider collapses the right hip.)

Exercise B

To correct this problem the rider must first be taught to move both seat bones to the LEFT (d). In the beginning this will feel very strange since the rider's subconscious is programmed that the fault "feels right." it often helps to take the stirrup away (e) so that the left leg can be stretched down from the hip and adopt a correct position on the girth and not behind it. The shoulders will become level more easily (f) when the base of the seat is corrected. Arm exercises (especially *Exercises 2, 4, 5, 7, & 8*) to supple the shoulders can help.

Remember: A horse trained by a crooked rider can never be really straight and therefore not truly collected either.