

Mounted Lesson Plan – D1 Level – Flatwork

Topic: Posting Trot Diagonals, Reverses

Instructor: Mary Wardrop

Rating: C3

Students' Rating: D1

Equipment: Four cones or markers, Masking Tape

References: USPC D Manual p. 56 - 61

New Vocabulary: Posting Diagonal, Reversing across the ring, Reversing half circle

1. Introduction
2. Safety Check
3. Introduce Topic

Diagonals

- When horse trots its legs move in diagonal pairs. Left front and right hind move together and are called "left diagonal." Right front and left hind move together and are called the "right diagonal."
- When you post you go up and down with either the right or left diagonal. When your horse is going around the ring or on a circle you want to post with the outside diagonal. When you are traveling to the right you post with the left diagonal. When you are traveling to the left you post with the right diagonal.
- The reason we post with the outside diagonal is because it makes it easier for the horse to balance.
- You can tell which diagonal you are posting on by looking at your horse's outside shoulder while you are posting. As you sit look at the outside shoulder and if the shoulder is back when you sit you are on the correct diagonal. If the shoulder is forward while you sit you are on the wrong diagonal. You can watch the masking tape on your pony's shoulder to help see whether the pony's shoulder is forward or back.
- When you change which direction you are going you need to change which diagonal you are posting with. If you need to change which diagonal you are on you sit for an extra beat. Think "up, down, up, down, down, up, down." (Riders with more experience can practice staying up an extra beat to change diagonals.)

Reversing

- Reversing means to change which direction you are traveling. There are many different ways of reversing. We are going to learn about reversing across the arena.
- When you are riding along the rail you are going to go across the arena and cut it in half. When you reach the other side you are going to turn the opposite direction. There two cones at each side of the arena and I want you to go between the cones as you turn across the arena.

4. Begin Exercise

- Riders travel in single file line and pick up posting trot along rail. Begin by having everyone check which diagonal they are on. Progress to walk and reverse across the ring. Do same exercise the other direction.

- Have riders go through the two sets of cones but continue the same direction. (cut arena in half) Next time around have them change direction. Continue along rail in new direction using whole arena until everyone is ready to change directions again.
 - The amount of time spent going each direction and how much reversing is done depends on riders levels and how the lesson is progressing.
5. Review
 - What Diagonals Are, How to Tell Which Diagonal You are Posting With, How to Change Diagonal, How to Reverse By turning Across the Arena
 6. Open Question and Answer Session

Mounted Lesson Plan – D2 Level – Flatwork

Topic: 20m Circles

Instructor: Mary Wardrop

Rating: C3

Students' Rating: D2

Equipment: Eight cones or markers,

References: USPC D Manual p. 101 - 103

New Vocabulary: 20m Circles, quarters

1. Introduction
2. Safety Check
3. Introduce Topic
20m Circles
 - 20m circles are a good exercise to help you balance and supple your horse and also to control him accurately.
 - The circle should be round and not have any flat sides or lumps in it. We have set up four pairs of cones that mark off the four quarters of the circle. You are going to pass through each set of cones as you make your circle.
 - When you pass through one set of cones you are going to be looking at the next set of cones. Your eyes are the best aid you have to tell your pony where to go.
 - When you look ahead your body naturally steers your horse in that direction. While you are making your circle you are going to want to have your inside leg at the girth, your outside leg a little behind the girth, your inside rein guiding him where to look, your outside rein balancing, and your eyes looking ahead to where you are going.
4. Begin Exercise
 - Riders individually go around the cone circle practicing looking ahead and making accurate circles at the walk. Then progress to trot.
 - Go opposite direction.
 - Depending on level of riders possibly canter.
5. Review
 - Why we do 20m circles, What the aids are to guide your horse
6. Open Question and Answer Session

Mounted Lesson Plan – D3 Level – Flatwork

Topic: Planning Warm Up

Instructor: Mary Wardrop

Rating: C3

Students' Rating: D3

Equipment:

References: USPC C Manual p. 3, 98

New Vocabulary:

1. Introduction
2. Safety Check
3. Introduce Topic

Planning a Warm Up

- Warm Up supples, stretches, and warms up muscles and improves circulation, which prevents injury.
- It also develops rhythm, relaxation, and free forward movement, which prepares horses and riders physically and mentally for good riding.
- Warm Up usually last about 20 minutes.
- Begin at the walk for about 10 minutes, some horses need longer or shorter, it is important to create your own individual warm up for your horse.
- Rider warm up and suppleing exercises are a good idea to practice while your horse is walking.
- Change directions frequently and make sure you go both directions in all three gaits.
- Practice rings figures such as circles, half circles, figure eights, serpentines.
- Begin with posting trot, do not sit the trot until your horse has a nice forward springing tort or you have already cantered.
- Begin with easier figures such as 20m circles and figure eights and work towards harder maneuvers and smaller circles.
- Transitions help improve your horse's balance and make him pay more attention to your aids.
- Keep in mind what you are warming up for and what your end goal for warm up is.

4. Begin Warm Up

- Have riders go out and ride their own planned 20 minute warm up.
- Call out how long they have been riding and suggestions for exercises.
- Call all riders over and have them critique their own personal warm ups. Listen to other rider's warm up critiques and discuss what they would do to continue their warm ups.

5. Review

- What Makes a Good Warm Up, How to Critique Warm Up

6. Open Question and Answer Session