

Pick N Play 2

Day 1:

Option 1 -Patience Time - Tie your horse for 20 minutes while you read a book, clean tack or brushes, or whatever you would like

Do you only tie your horse when you are doing something with them, like brushing or tacking up? Can your horse stand for 20 minutes without you right next to them? Make sure you use safe tying practices & a slip knot, a tie ring or The Clip

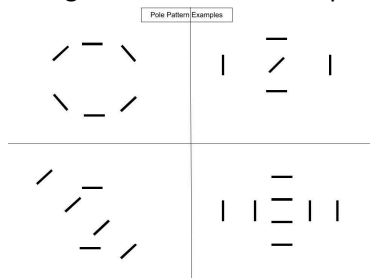
[How to tie a slip knot](#)

Option 2 - Practice Walk/Trot transitions under saddle

Transitions are a great way to polish the communication with your horse. During transitions you need to have clear and concise cues and your horse needs to be listening. The more you practice your cues, the better your horse will be able to learn what you want with very little lag time. This can be practiced out on the trail as well!

Option 3 - Ride over ground poles

Ground poles are a great way to work your horse's core and teach them to pick up their feet. You can set up the ground poles in any pattern you'd like. If you want to canter over the poles, make sure there is enough room between the poles for your horse's canter stride.



Day 2:

Option 1 - Set up some low jumps or raised cavalettis for your horse to jump over either at liberty or on the line

In an enclosed area, set up raised cavalettis/low jumps around the perimeter of the area. Let your horse loose or if the jump standards are low enough keep them on the line and ask them to go over the jumps! Let them stretch out and fly!

Option 2 - [Lunge around obstacles](#) (cones/ground poles/raised cavalettis/barrels/etc)

Asking your horse to lunge around obstacles can be a patience test for you and your horse. How well do they listen to your body when on the line? Can you move them in and out of the circle around obstacles? Give your horse and yourself some grace as you work through this activity!

Option 3 - 25 minute No Stirrup work

No stirrup work is a great way to reinforce your balance and confidence in the saddle. If you don't feel comfortable moving above the walk, that's fine! Stay at the walk! Don't feel comfortable dropping both stirrups, no worries, drop one at a time and practice picking them back up. If you need a break, pick your stirrups back up for a few minutes and then drop them again.

Day 3:

Option 1 - Wrapping polo wraps on your horse

If you don't use polo wraps or stranding wraps on a regular basis, it's a good idea to practice and keep yourself used to putting them on and your horse to wearing them. If your horse gets hurt and you need to wrap their leg, it's better that you practice now and get them used to it, instead of waiting until you and them have no choice.

How to wrap your horse's leg with a polo wraps

Option 2 - Sitting trot to posting trot transitions

Your horse isn't the only one who needs to learn how to transition. As a rider, being comfortable transitioning from a sitting trot to a posting trot will increase your maneuverability in the saddle! Increased maneuverability will lead to increased confidence in the saddle! It's important to remember that once you've committed to the posting trot, stay at the posting trot for at least 20 strides and vice versa.

Option 3 - Asking your horse to do a slow, medium and fast walk under saddle

Transitions don't need to be only from one gait to another. There can be transitions within each gait itself. Think about your cues and how you can seamlessly ask your horse to slow down, speed up and just move relaxed in between. If your horse is a speed demon, don't ask them to slow down for more than 5 strides in the beginning and slowly increase for more strides at a time.

Day 4:

Option 1 - Spend 20-30 minutes giving your horse a good, solid grooming session.

Is your grooming time a quick once over before you throw the saddle on and head out? Spoil your horse today and give yourself a break! Spend some extra time with the curry comb getting those special itchy spots.

Horse Grooming Basics

Option 2 - Practice Emergency Dismounts while the horse is stopped - either bareback or with the saddle.

*If you practice with the saddle, please make sure to not let any loose clothing get caught on the saddle

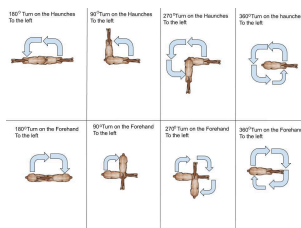
*Only practice emergency dismounts if you feel comfortable, ideally with someone around, and in an enclosed area.

Feeling comfortable leaving the saddle can greatly increase your confidence. Practice doing an emergency dismount while your horse is standing still - ask a friend to help hold your horse if need be!

[How to do an Emergency Dismount off of your horse](#)

Option 3 - Practice turns on the forehand under saddle

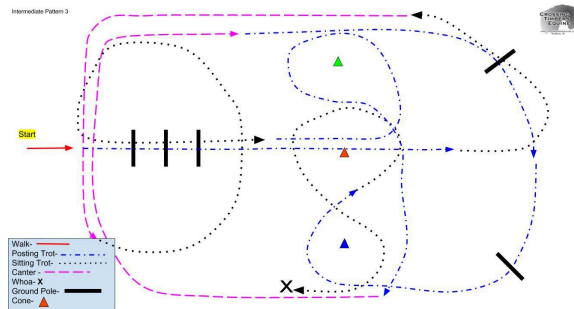
Turns on the forehand can be more than just a move you see in a trail class - it can have real world implications. Say you're out on the trail and you need to maneuver around a tree - can you ask your horse to move just their front end? What about opening or closing a gate while under saddle? What about just for fun? Remember to take the maneuvers slow and be patient with you and your horse!



Day 5:

Option 1 - Turn the horse loose and enjoy watching them run, buck and fart! Let them just be a pony for a day! Take out your camera to get some great action shots!!

Option 2 - [Intermediate Pattern 3](#)



Option 3 - Backing over poles under saddle

Backing over a large distance is not a natural maneuver for a horse. Most will back until they get to a point where they feel comfortable to spin and move forward. Asking your horse to back over poles under saddle will take some trust from them and possibly some patience for you. Keep it slow and easy - one step at a time!

Day 6:

Option 1 - Walk/trot transitions while your horse is at liberty

How well does your horse listen to you? How clear and concise are your cues? Can you turn your horse out at liberty (in an enclosed area) and have them change transitions when you ask? Use word cues, use your body and see how well you can get your horse to listen! Once it clicks - it's like dancing!

Option 2 - Practicing throwing a lasso/rope while your horse is by you on the ground

If you have a lasso, practice throwing the lasso while you are near your horse on the ground. Unless your horse is used to lassos, don't throw your lasso AT your horse, throw the lasso in front of your horse, to the side of your horse but not near or on your horse. If your horse reacts violently to the lasso, keep the practice short and do it frequently. If you don't have a lasso, (you can find some used ones on Ebay) - use a rope.

Option 3 - Practice flying lead changes

The easiest place to ask for a lead change is in the middle of the arena or area where you are working your horse.

1. Ask for a right lead canter
2. Continue on a diagonal or the center line
3. Ask for a left lead canter
4. Finish out the diagonal or center line

Switch for left to right lead flying lead change

You can set up poles or cones to help give you visual markers for where you should ask for the transition. Do not rush the transition - make sure you and your horse are balanced before asking for the up transition. If you or your horse are struggling with the flying lead changes, break it down to a Simple Lead Change

Use the same cues each time



Make sure you and the horse are balanced - use as many strides as necessary - don't rush this part. As you and your horse progress, you will need fewer and fewer strides.

Cue with the outside leg (right leg for left lead/left leg for right lead)

Hands slightly forward

Add a kissing noise, if needed

Day 7:

Option 1 - Practice backing over poles on the ground


Backing over poles can be nerve-racking for a horse. They are being asked to step over sometime right in their blind spot. It can take a lot of trust from them to you. Stay patient, keep calm and guide your horse over the poles. Make sure to give them lots of walk breaks to free up their brain and their legs.

How to ask your horse to back over a ground pole

Option 2 - Give your horse a health check

The worst happens and you need to call the vet. The vet would like to know what your horse's temperature is - do you feel comfortable taking your horse's temperature? Is your horse comfortable with you taking their temperature? Check their temperature once a week to get a baseline for their normal temp!

[How to take Horse Vitals](#)



Normal Horse Vitals

Temperature - 99.5 - 101.5

Pulse/Heart Rate - 32-44 beats per minute

Respiratory Rate - 8 to 16 breaths per minute

Mucous Membranes - Normally pink w/ capillary refill time of 1-2 seconds

Skin Pliability - Pinched skin should relax in 1-2 seconds

Gut Sounds - Constant sound is normal, gurgles are normal, no sound could indicate colic. Running water sound means overactive interior due to some cause

Option 3 - Ride with Music

Let loose and let your favorite music guide your ride today! Put on your favorite playlist, sing along and just have fun! Wanna change it up? Can your horse go as slow as your favorite slow songs beat? Can your horse move out to the hopping beat of a fast song?



Day 8:

Option 1 - Ground driving at the whoa/walk

Ground driving can be a great exercise for your horse. Please only use a snaffle bit or a halter. Grab the long lines and your surcingle, tack up your horse and go for a walk. If your horse has never been ground driven before, expose your horse to the line near and around their hind end before you set off at the walk. Make sure to stay outside of kicking range if they object to having the lines near their bum.

Option 2 - 2-point/half seat at the walk and trot

2-point/half seat is another awesome way to get comfortable maneuvering in and out of the saddle! Make sure to keep your heels down/level and allow your calf muscle to stretch. Take as many breaks as you need but don't just give up either! Stay balanced over the saddle! If need be, ask a friend to hold your horse for you!

Option 3 - Practice a sit/sit/up posting trot rhythm

When posting, you may have learned the sit/sit/up move to change diagonals when you change directions. Practice the sit/sit/up while on the rail, continuing the sit/sit (sitting two beats) with one beat up. IE. sit/sit/up; sit/sit/up; sit/sit/up; etc

Day 9:

Option 1 - Tacking and Untacking your horse

For most, if not all horses, they are tacked up, worked and then untacked. What would your horse do if you tacked them up, worked them for a 15-20 minutes, untacked them, worked them on the ground, then tacked them up and continued riding? Would they be upset because once they get untacked, they are usually done? What happens if you need to change tack or move something? Keep your horse guessing and they will keep listening to you.

Option 2 - Find a recipe for fun, healthy treats for your horse and make some homemade snacks! Most recipes use items we have in our pantry - oats, peanut butter, carrots, apples, etc

Option 3 - Ride Bareback - walk, trot, canter, doesn't matter - just enjoy some time wandering around without the saddle

Day 10:

Option 1 - Grab a book, a chair, your horse and some hay! Read a book while your horse enjoys a little snack! Take a break today and give your horse a break! Stretch out and read by or to your horse while they munch away!

Option 2 - Does your horse need some desensitizing? Practice with pool noodles, shower curtains, or a rock jug (milk jug with rocks on the inside) or whatever you can come up with. Take it slow and easy if you find something your horse is timid towards!

Option 3 - Slow, medium and fast trot under saddle

Transitions within the gaits can greatly increase the communication between you and your horse! You need to be clear and concise with your cues and your horse will listen! Don't forget to change it up - 5 strides medium, 10 strides slow, 10 strides fast, 15 strides medium, etc.



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