



10 Day Groundwork Assessment

Day 1: Walk slow, medium, and fast in hand

While leading our horses can be one of the simplest things to take for granted, what happens if you are sick and can't walk as fast as you normally do. Will your horse slow down for you or keep pulling ahead?

What happens if you need to hurry and your horse is lagging behind? Can they walk faster with you or trot to keep up?

Practice changing pace while walking with your horse, teaching them ahead of time to slow down, stay at a regular pace or speed up.

[Asking your horse to walk Slow, Medium and Fast in hand](#)

Day 2: Lunge - Walk/Trot/Whoa Only

Put your horse on the line. Work with them only at the whoa, walk and trot.

It's important to remember that just because a horse can do something, doesn't mean they always have to. Your horse needs to know that sometimes, some things are off of the table.

What happens if you put your friend's kid or your own kid on your horse and the horse doesn't know it only needs to walk and trot?

Practicing only a few gaits at a time can help teach a horse patience.

Keep things interesting for you and your horse while working on the lunge. Don't just have them walking around in endless circles.

Walk 2 circles, Whoa, Walk 3 circles, Trot 2 circles, Change directions, Walk 1 circle, Change directions, Walk 5 circles, Trot 3 circles, Whoa, Change directions

Keep changing it up to keep your brain and your horse's brain occupied!

It's very important to fully warm up your horse before you ask them to trot and make sure they are fully cooled down before you put them away. A horse who isn't properly warmed up is at greater risk to injury. A horse who isn't properly cooled down is at greater risk of tying up.

[Introduction to lunging your horse](#)

Day 3: Sidepass along the wall/Backing over poles

Can your horse sidepass along a wall? What about being graceful enough to pick their hooves up and back over poles?

Working on these skills takes time and patience. Don't push, don't rush.

Sidepassing along a wall and backing over poles can be a hard workout (think horsey crunches and burpees all rolled into one) so don't over do it and take plenty of walk breaks in between practicing.

Sidepassing along a wall and backing over poles is a great way to get your horse's hooves tip-toeing along.

[How to ask your horse to side pass along the wall](#)

[How to ask your horse to back over a ground pole](#)

Day 4: Lunge- Walk/Trot/Canter/Whoa

Put your horse on the line. Work them at a whoa, walk, trot, canter and plenty of changes of directions.

Keep things interesting for you and your horse while working on the lunge. Don't just have them walking around in endless circles.

Walk 2 circles, Whoa, Walk 3 circles, Trot 2 circles, Canter 5 circles, Walk 2 circles, Change directions, Walk 1 circle, Canter 7 circles, Trot 3 circles, Change directions, Walk 5 circles, Trot 3 circles, Whoa, Change directions

Keep changing it up to keep your brain and your horse's brain occupied!

It's very important to fully warm up your horse before you ask them to trot and make sure they are fully cooled down before you put them away. A horse who isn't properly warmed up is at greater risk of injury. A horse who isn't properly cooled down is at greater risk of tying up.

[Lunging your horse at the Trot and Canter](#)

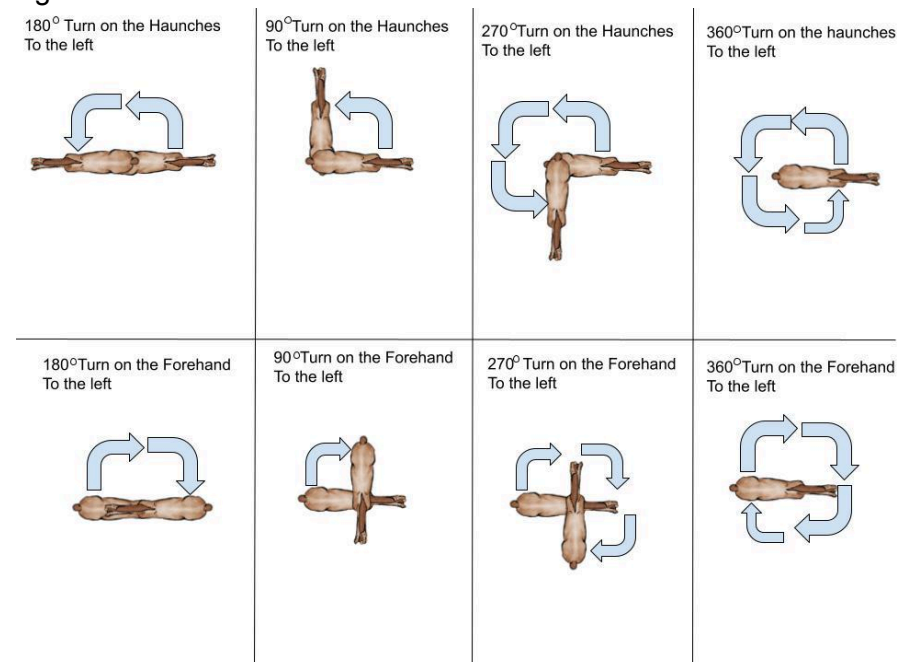
Day 5: Pivots/Turn on the forehand

Pivots/Turns on the haunches- When the horse's hind end stays in one place and their front end moves

Turns on the forehand- When the horse's front end stays in one place and their hind end moves

Both are great ways to teach our horses to move different parts of their bodies at different times. Can your horse perform a turn on the haunches, pause and transition into a turn on the forehand?

Make sure to not over work the turns. Turns can be taxing for a horse who isn't used to doing them all of the time. Take plenty of walk breaks between practicing, letting them stretch their legs.



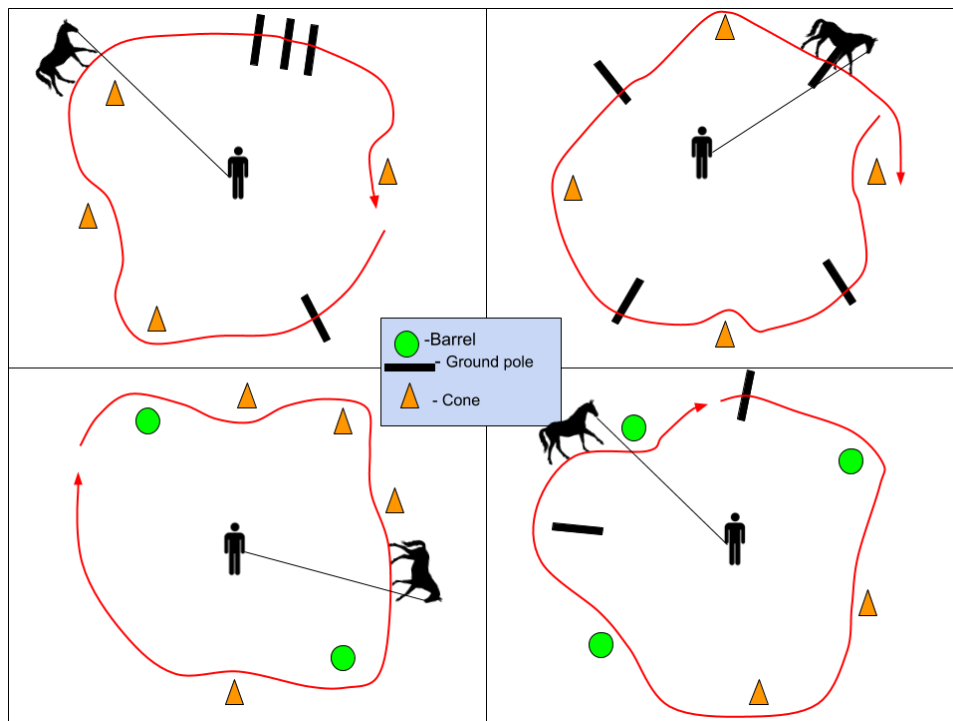
Day 6: Lunge Around Obstacles

Set out poles, cones and/or barrels on a circle.

Put your horse out on the line and work them at a whoa/walk/trot only. Ask your horse to go to the left or right of the cones and to the left, right and middle of the pole.

Can you push your horse out on the line or ask them to come in?

Lunging your horse around Obstacles



Day 7: Free Walk

Will your horse walk next to you without a lead rope? Will they follow you to the left or right? Will they stop when you stop? Will they back up when you back up?

Free walking can be a fantastic way to build and grow a bond with your horse! Use free walking on days it is too cold to ride, to warm up and/or cool down, or to just spend time together.

Warm up Examples

Day 8: Trot in Hand

Whether you are interested in showmanship or not, teaching your horse to trot alongside of you while leading can come in handy every so often.

What happens if someone needs you and you need to book it to get to them while you are holding your horse? Will your horse balk and pull back? Will your horse run ahead of you - possibly making you trip or hurt yourself?

Ask your horse to trot in hand with you. If you need walk breaks, take walk breaks. This isn't a race!

Day 9: Free Lunging

Also called "At Liberty"

**When first let loose, the horse may run, buck, fart and play. This is acceptable. Let your horse burn off some steam, if they have any, before asking them to work and pay attention.

Ask your horse to whoa, walk, trot, canter and change directions.

Did they listen to you on the down transitions? Can you ask your horse to change in towards you and away from you?

Warm up Examples

Day 10: Walking Lunging

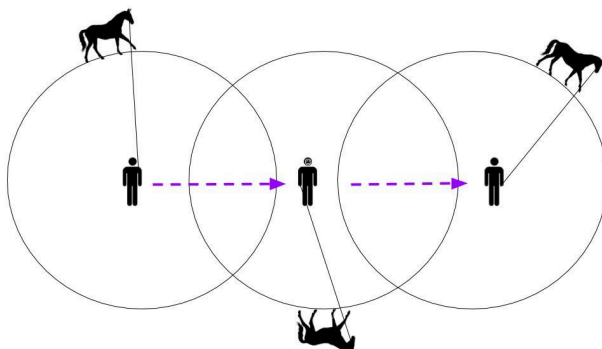
Will your horse move with you as you walk to change the spot of their circle?

Can you keep your horse moving on the line as you move up and down an arena?

It can be a lesson in futility or the most fun you've ever had!

Make sure you stay behind your horse's drive line. If you get in front of the horse's drive line, your horse may change directions or stop.

Stay patient!





Disclaimer:

Horses, being a flight animal, can be dangerous to work around and with. Activities with and training a horse can be unpredictable at times. Do not attempt any of these activities, training or procedures without proper supervision, safety equipment and proper facilities. Neither Crossingtimbersequine.com, Crossing Timbers Equine, LLC, nor Kristin Hodge and its/their employees, agents, and sponsors are responsible for any injury(its) or loss resulting from these exercises and demonstrations for horse and horse training activities contained herein.

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