



Intermediate Under Saddle Assessment

Are you looking for something new and different to do with your horse or are you stuck and aren't sure what to work on next?

These 10 activities will give you something to work on and see where you and your horse are at! If you get stuck on an activity, give yourself some grace! Make a note to work on it later and enjoy the activities you are comfortable and confident in!

Day 1: Up/Up/Sit Posting Rhythm

Any time we, as riders, can improve our maneuverability in the saddle, it not only benefits us but our horse's as well. Improved maneuverability gives us more balance and security in the saddle which will help our horse's balance and comfort.

When posting a rider will maintain a steady up/sit/up/sit/up/sit rhythm. When practicing a up/up/sit rhythm, the rider will maintain the up for two beats, then sit for one, up for two, sit for one. IE. up/up/sit; up/up/sit; up/up/sit; continue

Day 2: No Stirrup work

Drop those stirrups and ride around with your legs hanging loose and free!

If you are not comfortable with no stirrup work, start out slow.

Kick out your right foot (keeping the left in the stirrup) and ride around with only one foot out.

Then change and kick the left foot out and keep the right foot in the stirrup.

This is also a great way to practice picking up dropped stirrups.

Once you are comfortable with both feet out of the stirrups, kick both feet out and let them hang long and loose. Make sure to keep your feet at least level, or heels down.

Go at whatever gait you feel comfortable with. If you want to walk, that's awesome! You want to trot? Go for it! Canter? Absolutely. But do not move to a faster gait if you don't feel comfortable at the gait you are at.

Make sure to keep your seat centered and your shoulders balanced over your hips.

Day 3: Emergency Dismounts at Whoa/Walk

Emergency Dismounts are a great and necessary thing to practice before you might really need them.

Practice only at the whoa and walk. Progress to the trot if you feel comfortable.

If you are riding in a Western Saddle, make sure any clothing does not get caught on the saddle horn.

1. Kick feet free of both stirrups
2. Place hands on the pommel of the saddle or one hand on the horse's neck and one hand on the pommel of the saddle
3. Swing legs forward and then backwards to create momentum
4. Push with hands/arms and with the momentum of the legs swinging and swing off of the horse
5. Make sure to land with knees bent to reduce shock to the hips and back

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



Day 4: Simple Lead Changes

The easiest place to ask for a simple 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. Transition to a trot
4. Ask for a left lead canter
5. Finish out the diagonal or center line

You can set up poles or cones to help give you visual markers for where you should ask for the down transition.

Do not rush the transition - make sure you and your horse are balanced before asking for the up transition.

Use the same cues each time -

1. Transition to the trot
2. 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.
3. Cue with the outside leg (right leg for left lead/left leg for right lead)
4. Hands slightly forward
5. Add a kissing noise, if needed

Day 5: Seat Stop Transitions

Will your horse stop with your seat?

Practice seat stops - give your horse cues in this order - sit deep/stop following the horse's movement - say "Whoa" out loud to your horse - use your reins if your horse doesn't stop from your seat or word.

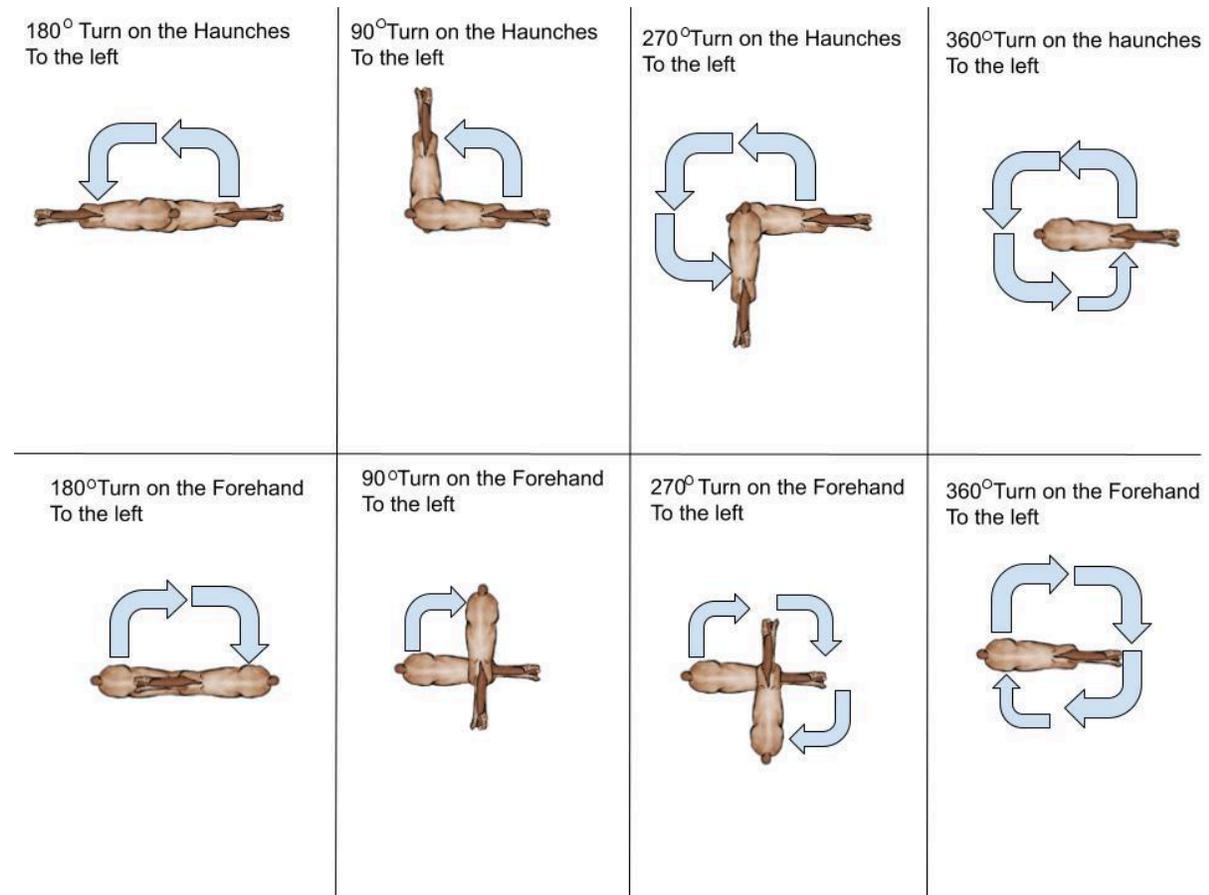
Remember the phrase "Sit/Whoa/Hands" to help remember this system EVERY time you ask your horse to stop. After a little while, they should be stopping off of your seat!

Day 6: Sidepassing/Pivots/Turns on the Forehand

Sidepassing, Pivots and Turns on the Forehand are great ways to work on our horse's maneuverability.

Don't overwork the maneuvers. All three are comparable to your horse doing burpees and crunches at the same time. If your horse is new to these maneuvers or isn't in very good shape, take it easy on them. As they get more comfortable or in better shape, you can do more at a time.

Make sure to take some walk and trot breaks between working on the maneuvers in order for your horse to stretch out their legs.



Day 7: Mounting/Dismounting from the Right

We always mount and dismount from the left. What if you were injured or out on the trail and you could only dismount from the right? Would your horse be okay with you mounting and/or dismounting from the right side?

If you've never tried to mount or dismount from the right side, take it slow in the beginning. When dismounting - Start by shifting your weight to the right side, then add swinging your left leg towards the right side. If your horse is okay with you moving like this, then you can proceed to fully dismount.

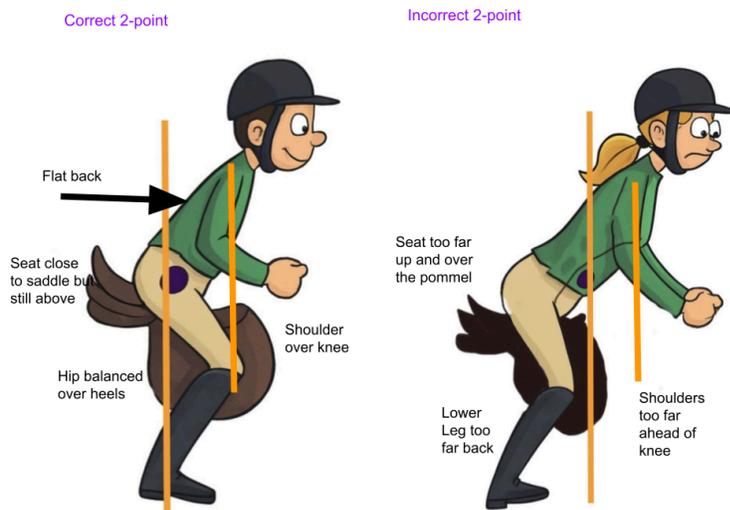
When mounting - Get your horse used to you lining them up on their right side to the mounting block or you standing on their right side. Pull and play with the stirrup, putting pressure in and wiggling the stirrup around. Then put your foot in the stirrup and add some weight. If your horse is okay with the weight in the right stirrup, then try swinging over and mounting up.

If your horse is good with mounting and dismounting from the right side, then mount up, ride around for 10-15 minutes, dismount on the right. Take your horse for a little walk, tie them up for a couple of minutes, then mount again on the right side, ride for 15-20 minutes, dismount on the right, and repeat.

Day 8: Sitting/Posting/2 point transitions

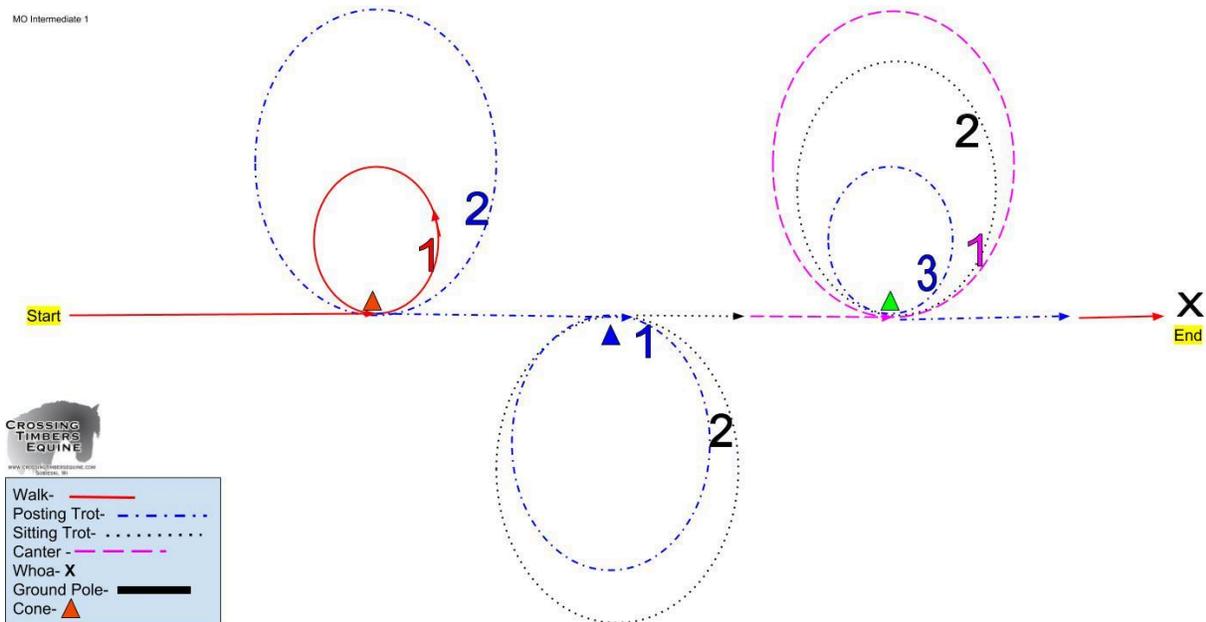
Practice changing between a sitting trot, posting trot and 2 point while working your horse. Change up where you change your position. Sit the trot for 6 strides, post for 16, 2 point for 9 strides, post for 5 strides, 2 point for 20 strides, etc.

This can be done out on the trail or in the arena.



Day 9: Monthly Intermediate Pattern 1

MO Intermediate 1



Day 10: Slow/Medium/Fast Trot

Asking for different speeds during the walk can help improve your horse's listening skills and their maneuverability. You also never know when it might come in handy, either working around obstacles or in certain situations.

If you are in an arena, don't just stick to the rail. Trot patterns, Figure 8's, circles, etc. Ask your horses to slow down for 5, 10 or 15 strides, then let them trot regular, slow down again for 5, 10 or 15 strides, and trot regular, speed up for 5-10-15 strides and trot regular. Gradually increase the number of strides being asked for until you and your horse can trot a full lap or a full pattern at either the slow or fast trot.

If you are out on the trail, you can ask your horse to do the same along the trail.

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.