

A SAGA EQUINE PUBLICATION

July/August 2023

THE EQUESTRIAN



**ADD A LITTLE GOLD
TO YOUR BARN**

**BREED SPOTLIGHT:
THE HAFLINGER HORSE**

SUPPLENESS

*So Much More Than
You Thought*

**TIPS TO PREVENT
MID-SEASON BURNOUT**

THE SEAT

THE FOUNDATION OF ALL RIDING

Upcoming Events

COMBINED TESTS

7/29/23	Horse Aid Live Combined Test and Dressage Show
7/30/23	Stone Gate Farm Mini Trial
8/12/23	Tuscany Hollow Stables CT August
8/19/23	Meadow Lake Mini Trial and Combined Test 3
9/23/23	Horse Aid Live Combined Test and Dressage Show
9/24/23	Meadow Lake Mini Trial and Combined Test 4

DRESSAGE SHOWS

7/29/23-7/30/23	Trea Almost Heaven 1 and 2
7/30/23	KDA USDF Sport Horse Breed Show and USDF North Central Breeders Champ
8/5/23	SAGA Farm Schooling Show
8/12/23-8/13/23	ODS Down Centerline 3 and 4
8/19/23-8/20/23	KDA Schooling Show Aug
9/2/23	SAGA Farm Schooling Show
9/2/23	ODS Fall Schooling Show at Milestone Farms
9/3/23	ODS Fall Show at Milestone Farms
9/9/23-9/10/23	MSEDA Dressage at the KHP 1 and 2
9/23/23-9/24/23	Mid Ohio Dressage East Meets West

HUNTER PACES

8/12/23	Timber Run Farm Hunter Pace
9/9/23	RFHH Kennels Hunter Pace
9/10/23	Stone Gate Farm Hunter Pace
10/4/23	Beth Pisto Memorial Hunter Pace at Crosswind Farm



Having an Event?
Contact sagaequine@gmail.com for information on having it listed

Upcoming Events

continued

WESTERN DRESSAGE

8/12/23	CW Equestrian Dressage Show- Lite
8/16/23-8/20/23	Silverama/Region 14 Championship Show
8/19/23	KDA 16th Annual Dressage Show
8/19/23	Summer Heat WD Schooling Show
8/25/23-8/26/23	CMHA Year-End Extravaganza
8/26/23	Winning Ways in Western Dressage
9/9/23-9/10/23	Wyn Farm Dressage Show Series
9/16/23	Autumn Celebration WD Schooling Show
9/17/23	CW Equestrian Dressage Show- Lite

GET NOTICED

- Digital & Print Magazines
- Online Directory
- Annual Print Directory
- Web Banners
- Event Sponsorships



PH: 419-564-1205

advertise@sagaequine.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- | | | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|--|
| 02 | Upcoming Events | 12 | The Seat: The Foundation of All Riding |
| 05 | Why 'Suppleness' is More Than You Thought | 14 | The Equestrian Business Directory |
| 08 | Breed Spotlight: The Haflinger Horse | 18 | Overcoming the MidSeason Slump |
| 11 | Homemade Fly Spray | 19 | "The Snowman" Exercise |



WHY 'SUPPLENESS' IS SO MUCH MORE THAN YOU THOUGHT

BY: AMELIA NEWCOMB

Suppleness is at the base of the dressage Training Scale just above rhythm, so it's fair to say it's pretty darn important, but often times relaxation gets thrown into the Training Scale without much distinction from suppleness. The original German word for the second level of the Training Scale was "Losgelassenheit" which doesn't have an exact translation to English. This is where the confusion between relaxation and suppleness starts. Losgelassenheit translates roughly to 'Looseness' 'Moveability' or 'Freedom', so often riders make the mistake of it being only physical. The actual meaning behind Losgelassenheit encompasses both the mental AND physical states of 'looseness'.

When experts talk about relaxation, it refers to the mental state of your horse's suppleness. And then the physical side is generally just referred to just as 'suppleness'. Where the muscles are elastic and loose and the horse is bendable both side to side and over the back. It can get a bit confusing if you don't know the distinction between the elements. By the end of this article, I'm going to give you three effective exercises to help you get your horse relaxed and supple! True Losgelassenheit!

1)WALK IT OUT! - The walk is the first port of call for getting your horse both relaxed and supple, but it has to be the type of walk that will help your horse. Firstly, take up a light contact and walk them on a circle with their head turned slightly in so you can see their inside eyelash. You may need to supple a little with the inside rein. If you let them just look where they want, that will often lead to them being more tense! Establish the tempo of the gait. It needs to be forward going, but not rushed (that's the mental side). You want to feel a swing through their body and follow with the swing of your hips and your elbows (that's the physical side).



2)BENDING! - Once you've done a good amount of walk (about 10 minutes) we can move it up to trot and start doing circles and serpentines. The reason circles help with suppleness is twofold. A circle helps your horse mentally to stay focused on the arena and on the task at hand. It gives them a pattern and repetition that is easy for them to anticipate and understand, thus lowering the stress or anxiety associated with it.

The aids for bending are: inside leg at the girth, outside leg behind the girth, outside rein turns the shoulder, inside rein gives slight flexion. We want to maintain the tempo rather than letting them speed up and slow down as, the pattern monotony promotes relaxation in your horse.

Once they're relaxed on one side, change the rein and start doing some serpentines. You'll notice that sometimes when you change the bend, you'll lose the physical suppleness, so make sure you repeat until you get a change of bend where they stay in balance. If you want to challenge your horse a little more, or if they're particularly hot, you can do a German Serpentine. This just means you make deeper loops and more frequent changes of direction and is very helpful for getting hot, tense or unfocused horses to come back to you mentally and physically. Asking a hot horse to slow down will only tense them up so letting the energy out through bending exercises is the best way to get access to their body and brain.



3) STRETCH - The third exercise is the stretch circle. This demonstrates the mental and physical relaxation we want from our horses. They need physical relaxation to be able to stretch, and mental relaxation to be able to place their head low as they lose some of their visibility of predators so they need to place their trust in the rider. Start slow, the first few attempts you might only be able to get your horse to slower their head slightly. That's ok!

Suppleness is all about increasing the adjustability of the horse's body over time. It's not an instant process. Simply get as much as you can, reward your horse, bring them back up, and then ask again for them to lower their neck. The more you practice, the better it will get.

PART OF THE BIGGER PICTURE.

Only with balancing both the mental and physical sides of suppleness will a rider be able to get a horse truly free, relaxed, and adjustable to be able to do the job that is being asked of them. Whether that's jumping a coffin on cross country, a tricky combination in stadium, or a half-pass in your dressage test, *Losgelassenheit* is a necessary ingredient... And there are a few other ingredients that are essential too! You can discover the whole Training Scale, how to use it to problem solve your riding, and exercises for each step of the way with my FREE PDF, [mini course](#) all about the Training Scale. [Click here to get your copy.](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Amelia is a USDF Gold medalist, a member of the prestigious USEF Dressage Development Program, and recipient of the Carol Lavell Prize from the Dressage Foundation. Based in Somis, California, she incorporates complete dressage training from starting the young horse through the FEI levels and hopes to one day

represent the United States at the Olympics. Amelia works to develop a trusting and confident relationship between horse and rider. Her approach incorporates all aspects of horsemanship from basic groundwork to advanced dressage movements. The emphasis is always on the foundation with the basic trust, understanding, and relaxation for both horse and rider to create a harmonious partnership.

Amelia's mantra has always been "Dressage for All," which is evident in both her in person and online coaching. With a successful YouTube video library of hundreds of free educational videos, over 80,000 subscribers (and counting!), and thousands of students enrolled in her online USDF accredited courses, it is clear that Amelia has a passion for teaching and dressage! "I have been blessed with many great teachers in my career and I hope to help each and every one of my students develop a connection and solid relationship with their horses." Learn more about Amelia on her [website](#), or discover her free educational videos on her YouTube channel "[Amelia Newcomb Dressage.](#)"

Now Enrolling

EQUINE MASSAGE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

In-Person, Online & Hybrid
Programs Available

www.sagaequine.com/equine-massage-certification/



REALITY STUDIOS

*Capturing the natural beauty of every moment
from blushing brides to muddy pups!*



(740) 501-1375



realitystudiosohio@gmail.com

HALFINGERS: VERSATILE, GOLDEN SPORT HORSES

BY: TARA WILLIAMSON

Once upon a time, we thought we knew what Haflingers were. They were ponies. They were drafty, as wide as they were tall and they couldn't canter. They were a great kids pony to start on or a old folks trail mount. Close to the ground, fuzzy and maybe even a little stubborn. But they were a darling "palomino" color and generally were met with smiles and compliments on their cuteness.

But for a serious competitor? No.

But what if what we knew about the breed was all wrong now? What if they are still "cute" but also talented athletes that can perform extremely well in a multitude of disciplines? What if it isn't just the breed that is versatile, but the individual horse as well? That's the Haflinger Horse that I want to introduce you to now.

A decade ago, I wasn't a Haflinger person. I was riding Quarter Horses and TB's and my motto was the bigger, the bay-er, the better. I admired how adorable Haflingers were when I saw one jumping, but I thought that athlete was an exception not a rule. It wasn't until I rode my sister's Haflinger, Magical Lights WRF, that I realized the talent was wide spread. Riding her opened the door to catch -riding several more and eventually meeting what would become my first Haflinger.



My first, Von. Wil-Von Mikas RVH officially. He is a 15 hand 12 yr old AHR Registered Gelding. Von has partnered with me for eight years and thousands of miles. Von trail rides over any terrain. He does well in Driven Dressage, shows Second Level Ridden Dressage, jumps four-foot fences, and performs well in Western Pleasure and English Pleasure classes. He enjoys Ranch Riding Classes and traveled this country and into Canada with a jumping Drill Team. He will also pull my arena drag to work up the footing or plow a garden patch. He's the reigning Reserve Champion Haflinger Versatility horse, having gone from Pleasure Driving to English Pleasure, Western Horsemanship to Barrels all in succession and with only 5 minute tack changes. He took me to a "Most Valueable Cowgirl" award at a local Cowgirls vs. Cowboys event where



he outran and outperformed dozens of other breeds to whip the Cowboy Team handily. And he isn't the exception, many Haflingers do this much and more!

Haflinger horses all over the world are proving that they are limited only by the imaginations of their people. A stallion named Brenner is competing in Grand Prix Dressage in the United States currently. Nordtirol was a prolific stallion that held the Haflinger jumping record at 5'5" and his son matched that, although not in a sanctioned event. Lutz was a lovely Haflinger that dazzled audiences with his upper level Dressage and even won a Flying Lead Change Competition at a prestigious festival. Driving events across the country see Haflingers competing and Three Day Events are often graced by a large team that specializes in the breed. They often qualify several horses for the Eventing Championships in Kentucky.

The modern Haflinger comes in many sizes and shapes. There are small, roundish Haflingers, but there are also nearly 16 hand Haflingers with substantial withers. The breed has athletes at every height and for every purpose. Many people are surprised to realize how much leg a Haflinger's ample ribcage will take up, with 6' riders easily riding 58"-60" horses. But the shorter stature of many of them make them a friendly height for shorter or younger enthusiasts as well. The only real constant is the Chestnut color (truly, they are chestnuts) with a flaxen mane and tail.

They are wonderfully smart and highly efficient to keep, sometimes to their own detriment. Though I can't say enough good things about the breed and the consistent talent you can find throughout, they are not everyone's horse. They are exceptionally loyal to "their" person, but can be less than helpful to others. They will go to ends of the earth and try their guts out, but they do not want to be bored and so they often don't appreciate drilling on a subject or maneuver. And they can keep their body score on virtually nothing, so people often struggle to keep them at a healthy weight. Add to this that they always claim to be starving, and founder becomes an issue. They are clever and can unfasten knots, snaps and every stall latch under the sun. If a Haflinger is where you left it when you return, it's because they wanted to be there.

Athletic, smart, loyal and full of humor, this breed is gaining acclaim and respect around the world.

Maybe you could use a little Gold in your Barn too? 🐾

LEARN MORE



Learn more about the Haflinger and the Haflinger Community at haflingerhorse.com or and come see the Haflinger Breed in action at the 2023 American Haflinger Registry National Showcase

American Haflinger Registry
www.haflingerhorse.com



American Haflinger Alliance
www.haflingeralliance.com





**8/5/23
&
9/2/23**

SCHOOLING SHOW SERIES

**COMBINED TESTS
& DRESSAGE ONLY**

WWW.SAGAEQUINE.COM/SHOW-SERIES

Horse Fly Spray Recipe

Keep flies and insects away during your rides and pasture time with this homemade fly spray recipe.

Ingredients

- 1 c. apple cider vinegar
- 2 c. water
- 50 drops citronella oil
- 25 drops lemongrass oil
- 25 drops eucalyptus oil
- 20 drops lavender oil
- 1 tablespoon of Dawn dishsoap

Combine all ingredients in a 32 oz. spray bottle. Shake well before each application to combine. Apply to horse.



It is important to test the essential oils on your horse before using in a fly spray. Apply a drop of diluted oil (1:9 oil to carry ratio) to a small, easily visible area and watch for 24 hours before using on your horse. If hives/bumps appear in that area, do not use that oil on your horse as these are signs of an allergic reaction. Test each oil individually prior to use.

HELPING HANDS
— NATURALLY MINDED —
Equine Massage Practitioners



Kelly Potoczny
419-612-2300

Joe Potoczny
419-565-3307

Ohio to Missouri
Keeping your athlete in top condition



THE SEAT

THE FOUNDATION OF ALL RIDING

BY: SARAH AUCHARD

When discussing the aids, the rider's seat, legs and hands act concurrently to create the desired result in the horse. That being said, the rider's seat is the foundation of the aids. The rein and leg aids are secondary. As stated in the book Advanced Dressage by Anthony Crossley, "the greater the influence of the seat itself in the saddle, the less it will be necessary to inconvenience the horse with the potentially more disturbing actions of reins, legs, bit and spurs." That is why it is so important for the rider to develop a good seat. The development of a good seat is dependent on several factors.

A good seat cannot be depicted graphically as pictures cannot emphasize or illustrate the importance of relaxation and fell. Therefore, it is essential for the rider to understand the premise of a good seat physiologically. But the actual obtaining of a good seat can only be done through persistent, correct and disciplined riding. Forcing a static posture will inevitably result in tension or stiffness, which eliminated the rider's ability to remain relaxed and supple. Just as the force at the end of a lever is magnified, so to is the tension and stiffness of the rider through the reins and saddle. The end result of tension in the rider is tension and stiffness in the horse. As we look at the training pyramid, we see that relaxation is vital to the development of the horse from the very early stages of training. It must be stated then that the development of a good seat is essential not only to the progression of the rider, but also to that of the horse.

3 Essentials of a Good Rider's Seat

- Balance
- Relaxation
- Rhythm



Balance

In order to achieve balance, the rider must sit correctly in the lowest part of the saddle without gripping or contracting his muscles. His back should remain supple and relaxed so it can adequately absorb the concussion of the horse's hooves. The controlled relaxation of the rider's back also aids in the rider's ability to follow the horse's movement. He should establish a three-point seat, where the weight is distributed equally on the two sitting/seat bones. The pubic bone should also maintain contact with the saddle. The torso should be held upright with the top of the pelvis tipping forward slightly. This allows the lumbar spine to have a slight concave curvature. This curvature should be natural and unforced. It should not be mistaken with the negative hollowing of the back. Hollowing the back creates tensions and removes the sitting bones from the saddle, which impedes the rider's ability to absorb the shock of the horse's movement.

Relaxation

When discussing relaxation, it is imperative to understand that relaxation does not mean limpness. It simply means that the rider must have voluntary control over his muscles. In order for the rider to maintain a good seat, he must have control over each individual muscle group and use them in the appropriate fashion. Once the rider has developed his balance and confidence, it can often be helpful for the rider to perform some exercises while mounted such as looking from side to side, making arm circles, circles with the foot and to some extent mounted games. These can help create relaxation if the rider possesses some tension. It must be said that these exercises should be used sparingly and not at the demise of the rider's balance.

continued on page 13



continued from page 12

Relaxation also comes from riding outside of the lesson/arena setting. A trail ride or hack out can do a great deal for helping the rider to relax while mounted. Finally, developing a strong core and adequate musculature can be done through a well-designed exercise program that focuses on developing such muscles. Yoga, Pilates and regular stretching does a great deal for helping to the rider to alleviate any involuntary muscle tension and tightness.



Rhythm

The last major fundamental in establishing a good seat is learning to stay in rhythm with the horse's movement. It's about following the horse's movement without restriction. Because the reins and legs can be used to perform many of the same things that the seat controls, it is essential that the rider learn the importance of having an effective seat. A passive seat is one that follows the horse's movement perfectly. This encourages the horse to continue on in the same manner. If the rider wants to lengthen the stride, he should use a driving seat. The driving seat is similar to that used when pushing a swing higher or like polishing the saddle from back to front. When the rider wishes for the horse to come back, he should use a stilled seat. The stilled seat is created by growing tall, dropping the heels and tightening the abdominal muscles as if performing a sit up exercise. This essentially stops the hips and seat and can either half halt the horse or if held long cause the downward transition.

The benefits of developing a good seat are immeasurable when training the dressage horse. The seat is the foundation of all aids and the premise of all good riding. The seat is the primary aid and is used to control rhythm, speed, length of stride and downward transitions. It is essential that the rider go to the seat first with modifying any of the aforementioned because use of the reins only will stop the energy of the hind legs. Using the seat by varying the degree of movement, allows the horse to maintain his energy while performing the required tasks. The seat can be passive, driving or stilled. The passive seat tells the horse to continue doing what it is currently doing. The driving seat (like polishing the saddle from back to front) lengthens the stride. The stilled seat brings the horse back or aids in the downward transition. Because of its importance, the rider must understand the fundamentals of developing a good seat – balance, relaxation and following the movement.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Sarah is a USDF Bronze medalist, owner of Dressage Academy and SAGA Equine. Sarah's primary focus is simplifying the complexities of riding, biomechanics and training to help riders achieve their goals with their horses. For over 20 years, she has dedicated her time to working with riders of all levels to create positive relationships with their equine partners and over-come riding anxiety. In 2007, she launched www.Dressage-Academy.com - an educational site that allows riders to immerse themselves in the sport of Dressage. Through this site, Sarah has helped thousands of riders world-wide to train their horses up the levels through webinars, online training sessions, articles, videos, Q&A sessions and courses. Together with her husband, 2 daughters, 8 horses, several barn cats and loyal dog, Tippy, their Ohio-based facility, SAGA Equine, promotes longevity through the classical development of the horse and rider.

Learn more about SAGA Equine at www.sagaequine.com & Dressage Academy at www.Dressage-Academy.com

Lewie's Body Shop

Edge - To - Edge Rider's Fitness Program
Personal Training Programs

Designed specifically for riders

transformyourlife22@gmail.com
www.lewiesbodyshop.wordpress.com

DRESSAGE ACADEMY

Connecting You with the Dressage Community



DRESSAGE SIMPLIFIED

- *Tons of FREE information*
- *Training Tips*
- *Educational Webinars*
- *Online Lessons*
- *and so much more*

Uncomplicate your dressage journey and achieve your goals!

WWW.DRESSAGE-ACADEMY.COM

Don't Miss Out

- Horse training
- Health & Wellness
- Equine Nutrition
- Horse & Rider Safety
- Rider Fitness
- Breed Spotlights
- Educational Opportunities
- Products & Services
- and so much more



*Delivered right to your inbox
(or your door)*



Get your
Free Digital Magazine or
Subscribe for a Print Edition



Sign up today

www.sageequine.com/the-equestrian-magazine



5 REASONS YOUR HORSE MIGHT BE HAVING A MID-SEASON “SLUMP”

BY: DR. LYDIA F. GRAY

Just like the “mid-afternoon slump” people can get after lunch, horses can get a mid-season “slump” partway through the competition year. There are many reasons why a horse’s performance or enthusiasm might decline over the course of a busy year. In this article, we’ll take a look at five of those reasons and provide options for restoring your horse to his healthy, happy self.

Reason #1: Heat & humidity

This isn’t an article about the challenges of riding horses in the heat of the summer. However, hot weather – especially hot, humid weather – can be hard on horses, so it makes the list. Be aware that some horses feel the heat more than others, same as people. Dark-colored horses, larger breeds, and any carrying extra weight (fat) around have a particularly tough time with heat.

Solutions for #1:

Observe your horse and try to figure out at what temperature and humidity

he begins to be affected. Take into account whether it’s a sunny or cloudy day, if there’s any breeze, etc. Then use that information to plan out the rest of your summer, asking yourself:

- When would be the best time to ride (or should I even ride today)?
- Does his schooling session need shortened or made easier?
- Would it be best to turn out during the day or overnight?
- Should my horse be on salt and/or electrolytes?
- Does he have access to unlimited fresh, cool water all times?
- Is it too hot to trailer or compete him today?

And don’t be afraid to postpone an event or even scratch from a show if the conditions are going to be brutal. It’s just not worth it.

Reason #2: Overscheduling

Another reason horses lose their “spark” mid-summer is from having too many things on their calendar. Consider the Frequent Flyer. At first, it’s fun to hop on a plane for a

meeting on the East Coast, followed by a site visit on the West Coast, a brief stop at home for a change of clothes, and then off to somewhere else. But that lifestyle soon gets old, especially for horses.

Solutions for #2:

Every horse is different, and some like to go on adventures like extended camping trips or be part of the activity at a big show. But leaving the routine, safety, and social interaction of home is stressful for all horses, even the ones that seem to enjoy new places. Plus, it can be hard to recreate their home diet, let alone convince them to drink enough. Getting enough REM sleep (the kind they have to lay down for) can also be tricky when you’re on the road. So



take a look at your horse's calendar and make sure he has plenty of "down time" at home between trips so when you're ready to ship to your next event, he's rejuvenated.

Reason #3: Overtraining and Undertraining

It took Goldilocks three tries to get it right. You might have to experiment too with how much and how often your horse needs worked to stay in shape, maintain his skills, and still have something left in the tank for the showing or day of trail riding.

Wikipedia has a great page on overtraining or, too much work, saying it "occurs when a person exceeds their body's ability to recover from strenuous exercise." It goes on to say that "People who are overtrained cease making progress, and can even begin to lose strength and fitness."

Undertraining, or, too little work, is just the opposite. This is when a horse isn't properly conditioned for how hard or how long a session is. Luckily, Dr. Hilary Clayton has written a wonderful book called *Conditioning Sport Horses*, which describes how to lay the groundwork of fitness then tailor it to specific disciplines like eventing, reining, even chuckwagon racing!

Solutions for #3:

Know the signs of overtraining and undertraining in horses. Both have difficulty recovering from workouts, but the overtrained horse is still fatigued the day after, while the undertrained horse simply has trouble bringing the heart rate (HR)



Jul/Aug 23

down right after exercise. That is, a horse fit for the task will show significant improvement in his vital signs (TPR) within 10 – 15 minutes of stopping exercise while the unfit horse will still be huffing and puffing.

Reason #4: Boredom

Horses like routine (same food, same stall, same turnout time), but too much of a good thing can lead to problems. The FEI, the governing body for international equine sports, has a great article on their website that asks:

"If you were a horse who only ever jumped day in and day out, would you be sick of jumping? Or what if you'd been schooling in the same arena five days a week for the last five years."

They describe a horse in this scenario as stale, unhappy, difficult to ride, and lacking enthusiasm.

Solutions for #4:

The advice the FEI gives for making sure horses look forward to their work and have a great attitude towards their job? Crosstraining! It's defined by the Oxford Dictionary as:

engaging in two or more sports or types of exercise in order to improve fitness or performance in one's main sport.

We often just think of crosstraining as adding in a jumping day for the dressage horse or, vice versa, giving a dressage lesson to a show jumper so they work different muscles. However, taking a break from your primary discipline to ask your horse to use his body differently is not only good for him physically but also mentally.

Learning how to negotiate Working Equitation obstacles, doing trot sets uphill, or seeing how your horse reacts to his first real cow (!)

stimulates both the mind and the body and may help improve any mid-season boredom that has set in.

Reason #5: Potential health or soundness problems

Finally, no article about declining or lackluster performance in a horse would be complete without a section on veterinary issues. While many medical conditions are obvious, such as a hoof abscess, severe colic, or respiratory disease like Strangles, others are more subtle.

Health and soundness issues that are so mild that, at least at first, all an observant owner or trainer can detect is that the horse "ain't doing right" are called subclinical. There can be subclinical lameness such as tendon or ligament inflammation, PSSM Type 2, or the beginnings of navicular syndrome. There can also be subclinical medical conditions such as mild gastric ulcers, the initial stages of equine asthma, or early Cushing's Disease (PPID).

Solutions for #5:

Any time a horse isn't acting like himself is a time to reach out to your veterinarian for advice. They'll ask you questions to try and troubleshoot the source of the problem and suggest additional things for you to look for or measure (such as a horse's temperature, appetite, body condition score, etc.).

They'll also let you know when it's time for them or another professional to come out for an exam and diagnostic testing. For example, maybe your farrier needs to have a look at the feet, or maybe the saddle fitter needs to make changes because your horse has been adding (or losing) topline muscle.

continued on pg. 18



Summary

Hopefully you and your horse are enjoying the season doing whatever it is you both love to do. But if your equine partner isn't looking, acting, or performing like his usual self, then it's time to start asking questions and seeking answers. And maybe trying something new! 🐾

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Lydia Gray, DVM, MA is a veterinarian with a master's degree in communication who loves horses, writing, reading, Earl Grey tea, her two cats, and her husband, in no particular order. In addition to private practice, she's been the executive director of a horse rescue, a supplement product developer, a program coordinator for veterinary courses and conventions, and has created lots and lots of equine health and nutrition content (articles, videos, presentations, webinars, blogs, brochures, etc.) for horse owners. She has learner judge "L" credentials in dressage and in carriage driving and plans to show her young Dutch Warmblood gelding "Stan Lee" in both disciplines.

DRESSAGE *for all*



Scan the QR code to enjoy **FREE** educational resources at
www.amelianewcombdressage.com



Do You Wanna Build a Snowman?

Ok, those who have never seen the Disney movie "Frozen" will not get the reference. And yes, it is the middle of summer. But this fun exercise is so beneficial for horse and rider alike.

Description

As you can see by the diagrams, this exercise consists of 3 different circles - a 20-meter, a 15-meter and a 10-meter. Additionally, with each change of circle size also comes a change of direction. The changes of size encourage the horse to become more engaged in the hindquarter while increasing the lateral suppleness with the increased degree of bend.

Variations

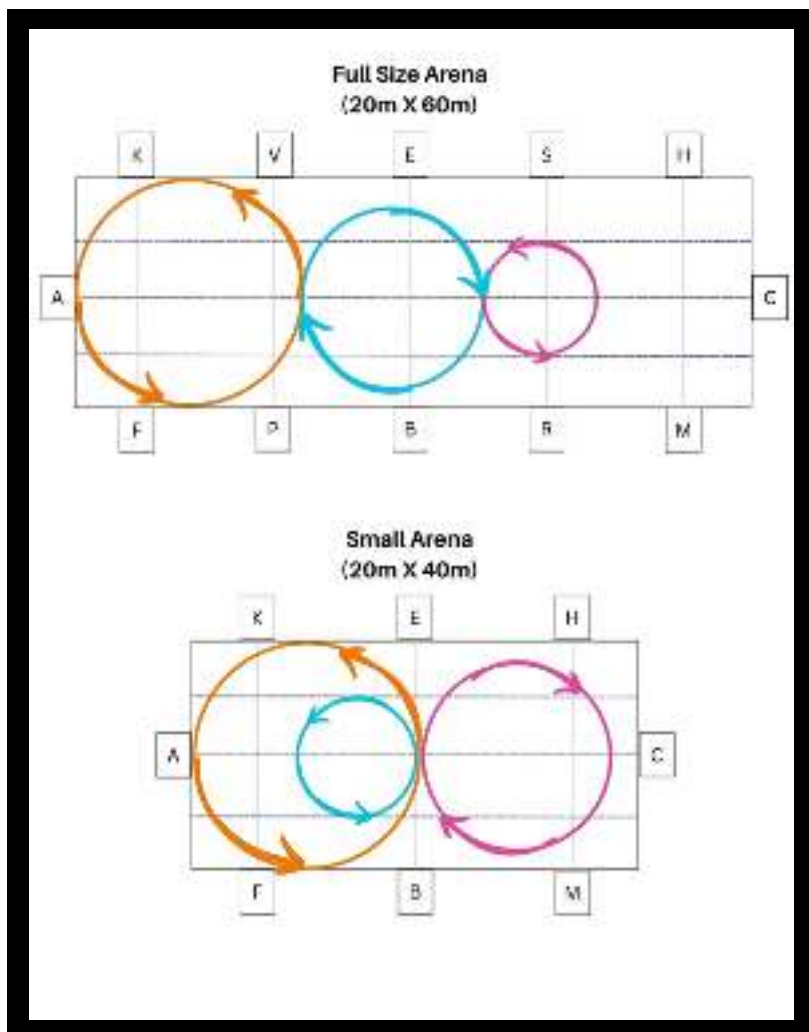
The variations in this exercise are endless, but here are a few to consider:

- As the circles become smaller, ask for more collection and lengthen stride on the larger circles to encourage longitudinal suppleness.
- Changing the gait at each change of direction will help to keep the horse attentive to the half halts and also to the leg.
- Adding lateral elements, like Shoulder In, for a portion of each circle will increase engagement and lateral suppleness.
- When performed in the canter, the changes of direction are a great opportunity to prepare for, or to execute, the flying change of lead.

Common Mistakes

Riding exercises like these quickly help us to realize where we are lacking in our training. This is especially true when it comes to geometry and the use of the outside aids.

One of the most common mistakes in this exercise is the geometry of the circles. It is often helpful to place markers at the quarter points of each circle to give a visual reference point. Another mistake is the bend throughout the circles. It is often difficult for the rider to maintain the inside bend on the horse's more difficult side. In this instance, apply the inside leg while stepping into the outside stirrup and half halting on the outside rein to help lift the horse's inside shoulder. Keeping the horse connected to the outside rein from the inside leg will help ensure that the inside hind leg is activated and that the horse does not drift out through the outside shoulder.



Benefits

- This exercise is excellent for "cooling" the hot horse because the horse must pay attention to the rider's aids and the execution of the exercise.
- It is also a great exercise for learning the geometry of the various circle sizes
- Additionally, this works to help fine tune and speed up the application the rider's aids.

Exercise provided by:



Coming Soon!!!

Dressage Academy is excited to announce the coming of our dressage exercise book designed to help riders of all levels maximize their training sessions and catapult their progress up the levels.

SAGA Equine Publications
13840 Armentrout Rd
Fredericktown, OH 43019

Horse Enthusiast

New Book!

**The Greatest of These is Love:
The Saga of TKC Silver Sabre a Horse Healing Hearts**



A Story of Love, Hope and Healing

This is the true saga of a horse who not only healed himself but also the hearts of those he loved.

Scan the QR code to order your copy today. Also Available on Kindle.

