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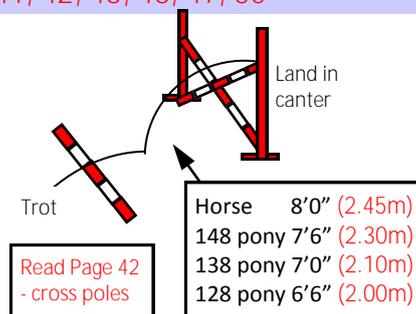
Introducing a Simple Grid from Trot

When a horse is first introduced to gridwork, it should be from a trot approach as it encourages calmness and is easier to keep control and maintain rhythm and balance. Before introducing a grid, a horse should be taught how to use a placing pole correctly. As it is difficult for a horse to jump a fence from trot (it is a two-time pace) the placing pole helps him to organise his legs into pairs to jump correctly. It also places him at a good point to jump a fence and encourages him to round his stride. Always arriving at a good take-off point helps a rider relax which, in turn, encourages his horse to work in a calm and relaxed way.

OTHER PAGES REQUIRED: 3 - Supporting Page Further reference 4, 41, 42, 43, 46, 47, 50

Exercise 1: (Read below - About the Placing Pole & Page 4)

- ◆ Build the exercise down the centre of the school or riding area.
- ◆ The 'trot' placing pole is positioned at a distance from the cross-pole which should create a 'compacted' stride encouraging your horse back onto his hocks to create a more rounded jump.
- ◆ To start, build a small cross-pole. If necessary, make it small enough to jump from a standstill. The steepness should be increased for an experienced horse to encourage him to jump neatly.



About the Placing Pole:

- ◆ Both you and your horse should learn how to use a placing pole correctly.
- ◆ You should ignore the pole and not attempt to "look for a stride". You should look upward and forward (not down at the pole), allowing your horse to learn how to use it.
- ◆ A horse jumps a fence by hitting the ground with his front feet - transferring his weight backwards onto his hindquarters – pushing himself up into the air to make the jump.
- ◆ The placing pole will help your horse to organise his feet into pairs encouraging him to jump neatly.
- ◆ You should not tip your weight forward over the pole (think of keeping your shoulders back) as this will unbalance your horse at the crucial time when he is transferring his weight backwards.

Teaching a young horse to use a Trot Placing Pole:

- ◆ Start with a single pole (the placing pole) – trot over it.
- ◆ Add a further pole on the ground where the cross-pole will be, at the distance given.
- ◆ Approach in trot and use the first pole to bounce into canter, land and cross the second pole. Remain in canter. *The horse must be obedient and must not canter before the placing pole.*
- ◆ When ready, replace the second pole with a small cross-pole fence.

Caution: Adjusting distances to suit your horse is important as incorrect distances can be dangerous. If you are unfamiliar with gridwork exercises you should ask for assistance and learn from an experienced person.

Riding the Grids - Horse:

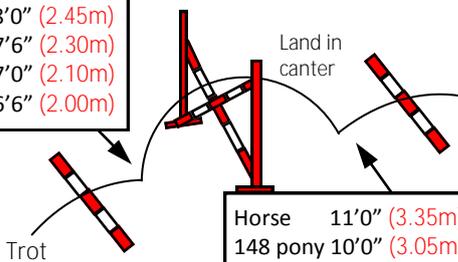
- ◆ Calm, forward, active trot with impulsion and in an even rhythm.
- ◆ Balanced around the preceding corner, with correct bend and straight approach to grid.
- ◆ Remain straight, calm and balanced. Maintain impulsion and an even rhythm throughout.

Riding the Grids - Rider: (Refer to Page 41 - A Rider's Position for Jumping)

- ◆ Shortened stirrups, weight into heels, soft ankles, relaxed knees. Squeeze with each trot stride.
- ◆ Rising trot - it is easier to keep a regular rhythm and to stay in balance.
- ◆ Ride with soft hands - light contact - light seat - sit quietly, level and in balance with your horse.
- ◆ Well before the preceding corner, look towards the grid to judge an accurate line and turn.
- ◆ Ride a rounded, accurate corner, inside leg to steady outside rein contact, maintain rhythm.
- ◆ Approach straight. Look upward and forward. **Read Page 47 Rider Focus when jumping.**
- ◆ Meet the placing pole in the centre. Do not tip your body forward over the pole. Maintain the contact right to the fence. Wait for your horse to come up before allowing your hands forward.
- ◆ As your horse jumps each fence - **allow your hands to follow the stretch of your horse's neck** - fold slightly at your hips - keep your seat close to the saddle - head up - heels down absorbing your weight - legs closed and not slipping back - *body movement should be minimal.*
- ◆ Keep in balance with your horse. On a young horse, using your neckstrap will help.
- ◆ Land in canter and finish in your pre-planned, disciplined way, riding all corners correctly.

Exercise 2: Introducing a Balancing Pole

Horse 8'0" (2.45m)
148 pony 7'6" (2.30m)
138 pony 7'0" (2.10m)
128 pony 6'6" (2.00m)



Horse 11'0" (3.35m)
148 pony 10'0" (3.05m)
138 pony 9'6" (2.90m)
128 pony 9'0" (2.75m)

- ◆ A balancing pole will encourage your horse to look down and so produce a more rounded jump. It will then encourage him to round his stride over the pole.
- ◆ You should sit up as your horse crosses the pole (think of bringing your shoulders back), legs stable and closed, holding the contact - all helping your horse to bring his hocks back underneath him - re-balancing him.
- ◆ Distances will need shortening if the jump is small.
(Also read Page 4 & 50 - Balancing Pole)

Exercise 3:

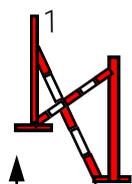
- ◆ Once your horse is confident with Exercises 1 and 2, further elements can be added to create a grid.
- ◆ Introduce one element at a time. As the grid is approached from trot, the distance between fences 1 & 2 is a little shorter than between fences 3 & 4, as the canter stride has not picked up momentum.
- ◆ Build the cross-poles small (Page 42) to start to ensure the distances suit your horse.
- ◆ In early training, the aim is to build confidence. Alter distances to suit your horse's natural stride length. Too long move closer by 6" (15cm), too short move further away by 6" (15cm) - more if necessary. Remember to alter all subsequent fences. Your horse should comfortably fit in the correct strides without being too close or having to stretch for the next fence. Distances can then be shortened or lengthened as he gains confidence.
- ◆ A young or 'spooky' horse's stride can be very inconsistent. If so, build each element very low to start (or even as a pole on the ground). Gradually build up the height.

Remember: When used with a grid, poles on the ground are for the benefit of your horse (Page 47). You should learn to ignore them and not try to 'place your horse'.

Read Page 42 - cross-pole safety

Use pole to pick up canter

Trot

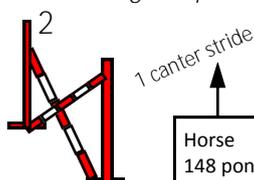


Horse 8'0" (2.45m)
148 pony 7'6" (2.30m)
138 pony 7'0" (2.10m)
128 pony 6'6" (2.00m)

1 canter stride

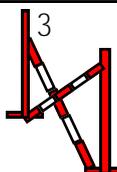
Horse 18'0" (5.50m)
148 pony 17'0" (5.20m)
138 pony 16'6" (5.00m)
128 pony 15'6" (4.70m)

Showing steep sides



Horse 21'0" (6.40m)
148 pony 20'0" (6.10m)
138 pony 19'0" (5.80m)
128 pony 17'0" (5.20m)

Non-jumping strides - (Page 46)



Horse 11'0" (3.35m)
148 pony 10'0" (3.05m)
138 pony 9'6" (2.90m)
128 pony 9'0" (2.75m)

Straightness is very important. Cross-poles encourage a horse to remain straight and central. If your horse waivers, ride with slightly widened hands and try to channel him straight (Page 42)

Exercise 4: Fences 2 and 3 can be converted to vertical fences with groundlines either underneath or slightly forward of the fence. Remain straight without the guidance of the cross-poles.

Remember: Think quiet, even rhythm. Allow the placing pole to come to you.

Horses learn by repetition. Give your horse plenty of time to learn.

Horse 8'0" (2.45m)
148 pony 7'6" (2.30m)
138 pony 7'0" (2.10m)
128 pony 6'6" (2.00m)

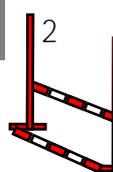
Use pole to pick up canter

Trot



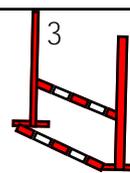
Horse 18'0" (5.50m)
148 pony 17'0" (5.20m)
138 pony 16'6" (5.00m)
128 pony 15'6" (4.70m)

1 canter stride



Horse 21'0" (6.40m)
148 pony 20'0" (6.10m)
138 pony 19'0" (5.80m)
128 pony 17'0" (5.20m)

This is now a basic grid which will help to build confidence in both you and your horse.



Horse 11'0" (3.35m)
148 pony 10'0" (3.05m)
138 pony 9'6" (2.90m)
128 pony 9'0" (2.75m)

Progression: A fence can be added behind jump 3 to create an oxer. Start narrow and gradually widen. To help build confidence in a young/inexperienced horse, the front rail of an oxer can be built as a cross-pole. It can then be changed to an ascending oxer and then a square oxer (Page 42). Any groundline should be placed directly under the front rail of an oxer. The balancing pole should be re-adjusted measuring from the back rail. An oxer will ask for more stretch and effort from your horse.