

Irish Pony Club



Lesson 4

This is our fourth lesson suggestion for Irish Pony Club members and their ponies or horses to complete.

Outcomes

- Rider will know sequence of foot falls in
 - i. Walk
 - ii. Trot
 - iii. Canter

Recap

- Warm up in a calm way, show relaxation, using the systems from lesson 1 & 2.
- Work on transitions upwards and down wards.

Lesson

- Remember the horse's natural gaits are walk and canter or gallop and they like to work in these. However, they are the easiest to destroy with too strong of rein aids and sitting too heavy, causing tension and lack of forward movement.
 - The trot is a more man-made gait and we can do lots to improve this gait with the way and exercises used.
 - The walk is a 4-time gait, right hind, right front, left hind, left front and so on should be regular and with purpose and covering ground.
 - The trot is a 2-time gait, left hind and right front together, period of suspension, right hind left front together and so on.
 - The left canter; right hind, left hind and right front together, left front (leading leg) followed by a period of suspension and so on.
 - The right canter; left hind, right hind and left front together, right front (leading leg) followed by a period of suspension and so on.
 - The horse only knows how to move its legs slower or faster. With this in mind, we can train the horse to produce a difference in all the gaits. Introducing the horse to ride shorter steps and bigger steps, so he learns to accept the half halt and the forward driving aids when asked.
1. On the left rein work on a big circle and in the closed side, make a half halt, think slower and the horse makes shorter steps coming into the open side, make a half halt and push with both legs to an allowing hand ride bigger steps.
 2. Do this on the left rein a few times so the horse gets the idea, make a transition to walk, let him stretch.
 3. Repeat on the right rein again allowing the horse to stretch after a few attempts.
 4. Work a little in canter in both reins and do some light seat work allowing the horse to use its back and round onto the contact.
 5. Cool down letting the horse stretch before putting it away nicely

Be positive and keep smiling.

By Tony Ennis, Irish Pony Club Chairman of Training

