

Irish Pony Club



Lesson 5

The fifth lesson suggestion for Irish Pony Club members and their ponies or horses to complete.

Outcomes:

1. Will know reasons why to lunge.
2. Safety checks.
3. Technique, how to lunge.

Area:

- Safe area with good footing i.e. lunge pen, barn indoor or outdoor with temporary surround made with cones and plastic breakable tape.

Lunger equipment:

- Gloves, helmet, good foot ware and body protector.

Horse equipment:

- Cavesson or headcollar, lunge line, bridle, boots, breast girths, roller or saddle, side reins or (other training aid) and lunge whip.

Recap:

- Let horse see surround and become accustomed to the area.
- Let horse settle and relax.

Why lunge:

1. Training and breaking the young horse.
2. Helps teach the horse to go forward.
3. Helps teach the horse to be straighter.
4. You can observe how the horse is going and see muscle development.
5. Can work the horse if it can't be ridden.
6. Can get more horses exercised if time is limited (NO SHORT CUTS).
7. Can teach the horse new exercises from the ground.
8. Calm a fresh or excited horse before riding.

Lesson:

1. Start by checking the equipment and the girth. Make rapport with the horse and gain its trust by body language. IT MUST NEVER BE AFRAID.
2. Walk the horse around and stop. The horse learns to stop when you stop and walk on when you walk on. Next, when you turn, the horse will turn with you all without pulling. (See video)
3. Return to centre where everything happens (for safety). Check the girth and send the horse out on the left rein at walk, moving the while after the horse, low to the ground in circular motion in rhythm with horse.
4. A high whip to ask horse for a transition to trot and canter.
5. A whip pointed at the ground kept quiet to ask the horse for downward transitions.
 - WE MUST DO THE SAME THING WITH NO VARIATION IN ORDER FOR THE HORSE TO LEARN.
 - Use voice commands at the start, then Woooooosoooo soft voice for downward transitions and Himp short sharp for upward transitions.

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- Halt horse on circle and pick him up and walk half or more of the circle before returning to the centre.
 - Change and repeat on the right rein walking on the righthand side of the horse.
6. Care when attaching side reins never too tight and shortening as required, so as to work the horse from behind over its back into the contact.
 7. Warm up without side reins unless horse in excited and exuberant in which case put them on (ONLY IF THE HORSE IS ACCUSTOMED TO THEM). It may help with control.
 8. Cool down. Take off side reins and allow the horse to stretch and relax and walk in hand for a period before finishing,
(This can also happen if the horse gets tense during the session)

***** Lunging is hard on the horse's joints and should not be done for long periods. *****

REMEMBER SAFETY - LUNGING CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS IF CARRIED OUT WITHOUT DUE CARE AND ATTENTION

BE SAFE, BE SEEN, KEEP WATCH AND KEEP SMILING

By Tony Ennis, Irish Pony Club Chairman of Training

