

NOTES FROM MANUEL TRIGO'S LIGHTNESS CLINIC AT HARAS DOS CAVALEIROS JUNE 8-9, 2014

3 RESISTANCES AND THEIR SOLUTIONS:

Weight / half halt

Give an upward half halt on the snaffle. This is a short action which does not allow the horse to lean/resist. It can be very light or stronger depending on the response of the horse.

Force / jaw flexion

The TMJ, poll and or neck locks. Fix it by closing the fingers on the curb rein while maintaining the snaffle rein to prevent horses head from dropping. Wait for swallow response and soften the hand immediately. Try to avoid vibrating the rein. Do not ask for poll flexion with jaw flexion. You want to eventually be able to ask separately for jaw flexion or poll flexion. You and the horse need to learn different aids for each so you can separate them when needed.

Inertia / whip

Use the whip behind the leg in time with the lifting of the hind leg on the same side. It can be the inside or outside, wherever the whip is at that moment. With sensitive horse, tap the whip on your own boot.

With motion, resistance of weight occurs first, then inertia.

REIN BACK

Halt and ask for jaw flexion, THEN change seat to forward position, then add legs at girth, alternating in time with hind legs, bringing them back and sliding them forward again so that they resume the start position and don't end up too far back. Hands work in time with forelegs. The rider works in diagonal pairs, as does the horse. Use both the top and bottom reins, as the top will prevent diving.

Crookedness is often due to the rider not sitting in the middle of the saddle, but rather to the side the horse is traveling.

The horse should eventually start to back when the rider changes his seat.

To turn the horse while backing, the horse is bent in the direction of travel. The outside leg will travel a little further back and the inside rein will be a little (shorter/stronger?).

UNMOUNTED RIDER EXERCISES

Two people face each other while holding the same pair of reins. The “rider” closes his eyes and tries to softly follow as the “horse” moves the reins, individually and together, in all directions at varying heights, widths and speeds.

Then work on a resisting hand, where the hand stops the horse, but doesn't overpower and pull back. 'Horse' should pull/lean on reins with varying strength. 'Rider' must resist exactly as much as the horse pulls. As soon as the horse softens IMMEDIATELY resume the following hand.

Practice the half halt.

Horse' should vary the degree of responsiveness so that rider can practice with both lighter and heavier horses. 'Horse's' hands should be lowered to about hip level initially—representing the lowered head of the horse. Rider uses several upward half-halts to bring the 'mouth of the horse' up.

UNMOUNTED WITH HORSE:

Use the curb rein to ask the horse to lower his head. Be sure to release on the snaffle when you do this.

Use the snaffle with half halts (quick upward wrist flexions) to raise the head.

Immediate release for appropriate response will allow rider to use progressively lighter cues.

MOUNTED WITH HORSE

Practice the above on the horse after you have practiced on the ground. Spend entire rides becoming aware of which resistance is currently operating and immediately fixing it with the correct reaction. Include exercises like shoulder in and backing to provoke mild resistance so you have an opportunity to fix it. As you feel each resistance say the name out loud and then fix it (e.g. when the horse leans, say “weight” and then fix it with the half halt.

EXERCISES TO PERFECT BEFORE ADVANCING TO FLYING CHANGES:

Walk / canter and canter/walk transitions

Counter canter, including on the circle

HAND FOLLOWING SHOULDER-IN:

If tracking right, L hand will move over the withers as the inside foreleg crosses over the outside fore. The L hand will move out (open) as the L fore steps outward.
The rider's legs work with the horse's hind legs.

REVERSE PIROUETTE

No pivoting! (1/10)

Position haunches out and bend in the direction of travel (Direct bend).
Forehand circle is 1 Meter in diameter. Start big and spiral in if horse is going well.
Horse may be straight if haunches –in (bend) is not yet confirmed. Bend will develop with that.
Start pirouettes with young horses! Confirm the shoulder in first.
Why? It teaches collection, flexibility and schooling of the aides.

PIROUETTE

Enter with legs as for the first step of a half pass. Eventually may initiate with hands cueing the shoulders first. Again, start big and advance to smaller diameter turn. After 1-2 good steps, go forward. Refresh the horse with trot or canter as necessary.

RIDER EXERCISE

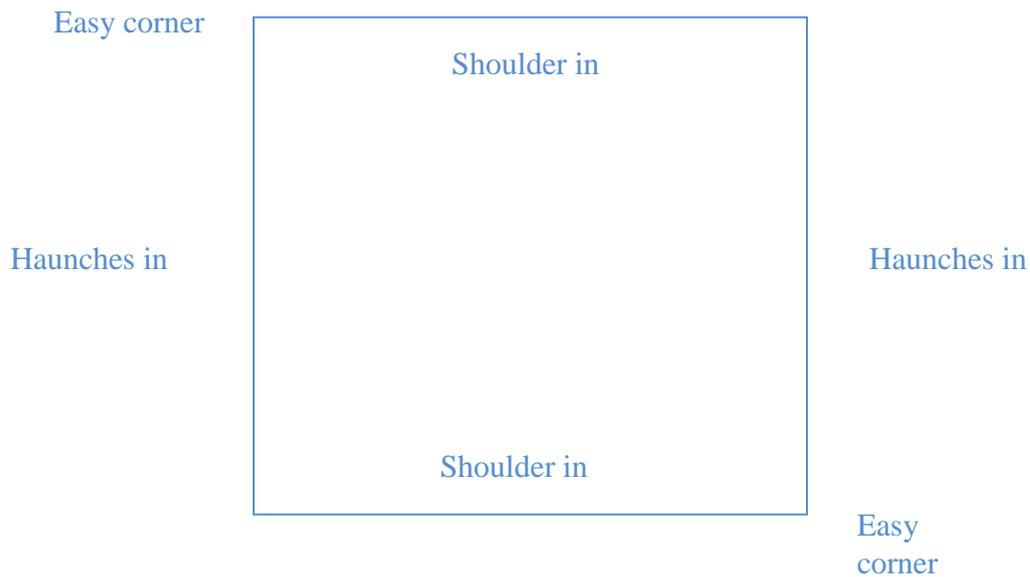
Identify the resistances during shoulder in, haunches in, and halt, backing.

TRANSITIONS

Halt-trot-halt-trot Use jaw flexion to prepare for trot

RIDING A SQUARE with haunches in on one side and shoulder in on another and a ½ circle around a pole or person. Rider must shift weight from inside to out when transitioning from shoulder in to haunches in.

I think this exercise was supposed to have SI on 1 side, HI, SI, HI.



The two indicated corners are easier; the only thing that needs to change to move from shoulder in to haunches in is the weight. The alternate corners are harder because the horse will have to make part of a circle (direct pirouette) to change from Haunches in to shoulder in.

SOME NOTES FROM SANDY: (Not verbatim!! hopefully clearer!)

The exercise above (square) can be done in trot after you can do it well in walk. To make this exercise easier (as with my young horse), do shoulder out on the sides where the more advanced horse does haunches in.

Manuel had Rupert, Josh and Iliane do this exercise at the canter in the last clinic. The horse must do a flying change at each corner. Always canter in the lead you are traveling toward.

If the horse is heavy in the hand, halt the horse, do a jaw flexion and then go forward again.