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Article

Teaching The Hips To Move From Leg Pressure

Part 6 of The Basic Foundations Series

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Why on earth would you possibly want to take the time to teach your horse to move his hiney from leg pressure? Have you ever wanted to open a gate without getting off? Insure a correct canter lead departure? Control your horse's speed? Teach your horse to leg yield on the diagonal? Or when riding, have your horse soft and straight?

To teach this lesson you must have already taught your horse to give his head to the side without moving his feet. He should be bringing his head around to his elbow with the slightest suggestion from a soft, relaxed rein. He also should be comfortable leaving his head at his elbow until you ask it to return to the front.

The goal of this lesson is to help the horse understand that he can move his hips away from leg pressure without moving his front legs. In the beginning, we will only ask for a step at a time. Then add an additional step, until he can smoothly pivot his hips around his front. Another benefit of teaching him to move his leg from rein pressure is that you can use it to aid your rein if you find the need to gain control of your horse by either softening or disengaging his hindquarters.

Let's begin! Ask your horse to bring his head to the left side around toward his elbow. Lock your hand behind your thigh. Next, apply a slight rhythmic pressure with your leg, slightly behind his girth until his hip yields to the side. As soon as you feel his hips moving to the side, stop the rhythmic pressure of your leg and simultaneously release the rein. If he yields his hips, but also is moving his front legs, ONLY release your leg pressure; do not release the rein until he has come back to a complete halt.

Good luck, may you successfully yield your horse, each and every time you ride him!



Ask the horse to bring his head to his side. Anchor hand behind thigh to prevent it from moving.



Apply slight rhythmic pressure with your leg, slightly behind the girth.



As soon as the horse takes a step, **RELEASE** leg **AND** rein pressure **UNLESS** horse is moving, see next photo.



If horse yields his hip to your leg pressure but also moves his front legs, **ONLY** release your **LEG** pressure. As soon as front legs stop, immediately release **REIN** pressure.



You will eventually be able to ask your horse to move his hips around to the right, while pivoting around on his left front leg with a loose rein!

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