

Online HorseCollege



Student Workbook

2.R.09 Riding with Other Horses

www.OnlineHorseCollege.com

Student Name:

Student Number:

Email:

Phone:

Other Personal Information

www.OnlineHorseCollege.com

*(Ausintec Academy P/L ATF Ausintec Academy Trust T/as)
Ausintec Academy*

*Mailing Address:-
392 Bribie Island Road,
CABOOLTURE QLD 4510
(between Brisbane & Sunshine Coast)
AUSTRALIA*

*Registered Training Organisation No:31352
Centrelink Approval No: 4P530
CRICOS Provider Code: Pending*

*Phone within Australia (07) 3102 5498
Outside Australia + 61 7 3102 5498
Request@OnlineHorseCollege.com*

Contents

Introduction	Pg. 4
Riding in an Arena	Pg. 5 – 7
Riding in a Group Lesson	Pg. 8
Group Riding	Pg. 9
Troubleshooting & Tips	Pg. 10
Extension Lesson	Pg. 11
Recommended Reading	Pg. 12
References	Pg. 13

Introduction

It can be lots of fun to ride with other people and their horses. And there's many activities groups of riders can participate in for example games, trail riding (hacking out), polo and drill riding. But as with all horse related activities there are thing that you should know and be aware of to ensure the time spent with other horses and riders are safe and fun.

Riding in an Arena

It is important to keep a safe distance between horses that are working or being ridden in the same area. A minimum of 2 horse lengths behind and between horses will help to keep you out of kicking or biting range. But keep in mind some horses will like more space than others and will exhibit behaviours such as laying their ears back or swishing their tail if another horse comes too close, so keep an eye out for these signs.



Below are some important places to know and remember in the arena and your knowledge of these will help you to understand the arena rules further in the workbook.



The centre line. If you need to halt in an arena when there is other horses and riders the centre line is the place to do so. It is also a good place to mount and dismount.



The outside track is located about 1 to 2 metres from the wall/fence of the arena. Avoid walking on the outside track.

Riding in an Arena (cont.)



The inside track (marked in blue) is 1 to 2 metres in from the outside track. When riding on the inside track you should leave enough room for another horse to safely pass between you and the arena wall/fence.

When riding in an arena that is used by many riders there are rules to abide by to avoid collisions and interfering or interrupting training of other horses and riders and for general safety.

A considerate rider is aware that the practice of these rules is to keep themselves and others safe in the arena. Different establishments may have unique rules specific to their operations and facilities.

Some common and widespread rules are:-

- Announce to the other riders when the gate to the arena is being opened on your entry and exit. This can be as simple as calling out "GATE". In some places you may be required to ask for permission before entering and you should certainly check with the instructor if a lesson is being conducted. The purpose of this rule is to let other people using the arena that the gate will be open and to alert them to your location and presence in the arena.
- The gate should always be closed when mounting or dismounting. This is so a horse doesn't try to leave the arena.
- Maintain safe horse distances. A minimum of 2 horse length between each horse will ensure you stay out of kicking or biting range.
- Walking should be done on the inside tracks. Because it is the slowest pace walking is kept towards the centre area of the arena to keep out of the way of riders working at faster paces.
- The faster pace has right of way. This means trot has right of way over walk, canter has right of way over trot.
- Halting should be done on the centreline. If you are going to bring your horse to a halt the middle of the arena is the place to be because it will keep you out of the way. This means that if you are mounting or dismounting it should be done on the centreline.
- Lateral work (sideways work) has priority over walk, trot and canter.
- Jumping has priority over lateral work, trot and canter. Let other riders know you are going to approach a fence by calling out "JUMPING" or similar.
- When passing another rider (head on) you should pass left shoulder to left shoulder. It is desirable for riders to ride in the same direction however this is not always possible.
- Avoid horses which are being lunged.

Riding in an Arena (cont.)

- If a rider falls off everyone should come to a halt as safely and quickly as possible.
- Give way to riders on horses which are out of control.
- When passing another rider from behind pass to the inside or request the track by calling "TRACK PLEASE" or similar.
- Wear a helmet.



Some other rules you may come across include:-

- Removing any manure left by your horse from the arena.
- Putting away jumps and poles after use.
- Specific time frames for when the arena is available for use.

In the case of an emergency (for example a run away horse) bringing any other horses in the area to a halt will help to minimise the risk of other horses following or getting injured (horses being herd and flight animals are likely to flock after one another) .

It may also be useful to refer to your establishment's policies and procedures for detailed information on what to do in emergencies.

In the event of a fallen rider, as a guide, following action should be taken:-

- 1) The person who has seen the fallen rider should come to an immediate halt, raise their hand and say (loud enough for everyone to hear) something along the lines of "Halt! Fallen rider".
- 2) Horses are kept clear of the fallen rider while they are attended to and checked for injury.
- 3) The loose horse is caught to prevent further hazard.
- 4) Once the fallen rider is treated (i.e. removed from the area or given the all clear) riders can resume their activities.



Riding in a Group Lesson

Depending on your situation and preferences you may be involved in group lessons. A group lesson is a riding class with anywhere from 2 to 8 riders, more in some countries. When riding in a group lesson the riders will be under the control and direction of the instructor/coach.

There are different formations the group will be required to ride in depending upon the lesson situation single file, open order and riding independently (you may find the names for these formations vary slightly in your area).

Single File

In single file riders form a line one behind the other leaving at least 2 horse lengths distance between each horse. All riders go in the same direction and remain in the order as directed (i.e., rider's cannot change the order) and as a guide if you can not completely see the hind legs of the horse in front then you are too close and need to slow down.



Open Order

Open order allows the riders' some more freedom by increasing the distance between the horses so that they are spaced evenly around the arena or riding area. If a rider catches up to the horse in front of them they must turn across the arena and find a new place (they are not in a specific order). All riders travel in the same direction and at the same pace.



Riding Independently

Still in a group situation but riders will be able to work in either direction and at different paces. This is when knowledge of arena rules will be of greatest benefit.



Group Riding

Riding towards a group

Horses are herd animals therefore when you ride towards a group of horses (with riders), particularly familiar horses your horse is likely to need little encouragement. This kind of situation can become quite dangerous if the rider loses control of their horse and ends up running back to the rest of the group.

When returning to a group of riders it should be done slowly at a steady pace so as not to startle or excite any of the horses. Horses which are in a hurry can be ridden in zig-zag lines or circles which spiral towards the group to help the rider maintain control and speed of the horse.

It is advisable to stay clear and not approach unfamiliar horses (without riders or handlers) because horses will want to establish a pecking order when a new, unfamiliar horse enters the herd and this will create an unsafe situation for the horse and rider.

Riding away from a group

When riding away from a group of horses and riders it is often that horses can be reluctant to leave, some more than others. This stems from their natural instincts to stick together as a herd because a horse on its own is vulnerable to predators.

Upon first leaving the group it should be done at a slow, steady pace so as not to panic the rest of the horses. If a horse becomes 'stuck' when leaving the group and is reluctant or refuses to go forward it can be useful for the rider to turn the horse a little one way then the other to get the horse 'unstuck' and moving the front legs. Once the horse starts to move the aids should be relaxed.

Riding in a group on trails

Trail riding or hacking out can be enjoyable for both horse and rider especially in group situations. Whether the group rides in single file or in some other formation it is still important to remember to give each horse its space and leave at least 2 horse length distance between them. Horses which are unfamiliar with each other can want to assert dominance or their place in the pecking order and it may be necessary to increase the space around that horse so keep a look out for tail swishing, laying the ears back and biting.

Some horses are 'leaders' and some are 'followers'. Leaders tend to be more forward, moving faster (sometimes even a little impatient) and tend to like being at the front of the ride. Followers are slower, happier to be at the back or behind another horse and may be reluctant to be at the front of the ride. When moving into a faster or slower pace it is a good idea to check with or let everyone know before doing the transition.

Troubleshooting & Tips

'Nappy' horses

These horses are those that like the company of other horses and are difficult to control when riding towards or away from other horses.

Young horses are often a little nappy due to their inexperience. The more they are ridden on their own and to and from other horses generally the more confident they become.

Some older horses can be just as difficult due to adopting bad habits from young or inexperienced riders (young riders often lack the strength to be able to effectively control and influence the horse and inexperienced riders often lack the confidence or 'know how'). In the hands of an experienced rider they can become quite humble and obliging but usually revert to old habits if ridden by someone less knowledgeable.



Aggressive horses

Some horses are very dominant and will only get on with a select few of horses. This can become difficult when riding in group situations. Some horses can also be disposed to or have a habit of kicking or biting. Let everyone know and be aware of your horse's antics so that they can give you the space you need. In some pony clubs and riding groups it is customary to put a red ribbon in the tail of a horse which kicks and a green ribbon on the bridle of a horse which bites.



Extension Lesson

Do you know of or can you think of any other important rules to follow when working in an arena?

.....

.....

.....

Observe a group lesson and describe the type of formations they ride in.

.....

.....

.....

What sort of riders were in the above group lesson? (i.e., level of riding, what were their riding capabilities)

.....

.....

.....

Were there any 'nappy' or aggressive horses in the group lesson?

.....

If 'yes', what were the behaviours of horses and how did the riders cope?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Recommended Reading

Publication:-

Pony Club Manual No.2

The principles of riding

Author:-

Elaine Knox-Thompson & Suzanne
Dickens

German National Equestrian Federation

References

Images:-

Page 8 humblehorse.com/Riding%20Programs.htm

Page 10 www.realbuzz.com/.../posts/pony-power/