

Online HorseCollege



Student Workbook

3.R.22 Lunging the Horse

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

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Lunging the Horse 3.R.22 Assessment Information

Students are to complete Riding 3.R.01–04 online assessments prior to attempting Riding 3.R.21-24 and to follow all recommended safety considerations.

Practical assessments for Riding 3.R.21-24 are as follows:

- A) Prepare for Lunging
- B) Lunging the Horse
- C) Lunging the Rider: Mounting & Dismounting
- D) Lunging the Rider: Walk, Trot & Canter

These assessments incorporate the following unit from the SIS30710 Sport Industry Training Package which include the listed elements

SISSEQS303A Teach the fundamental skills of riding

- Plan fundamental riding sessions
- Brief participants
- Conduct riding sessions
- Complete post-session responsibilities

Further information about this assessment is available at www.training.gov.au

Lunging the Horse Introduction

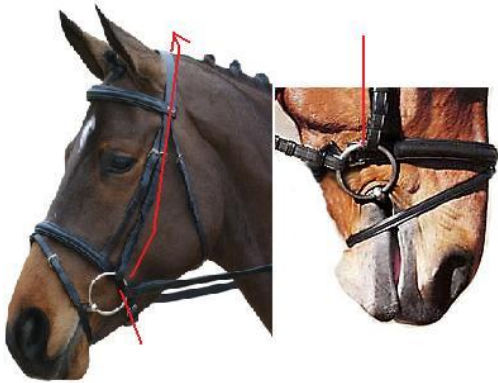
When performed properly lunging can have a number of benefits for horses. Lunging can teach a young or green horse obedience, balance and confidence or be used to introduce a horse to saddle and bridle, to re-school or re-educate horses with problems, as warm up in preparation for riding, to work ponies too small to be ridden, to bring a horse back into work and as a way of exercising a horse when short on time. But the focus of this work book is lunging a horse in preparation for teaching a rider on the lunge.

Using a Lunge Rein

There are a couple of different ways to attach the lunge rein to the bit if you are using a bridle. If you are using a cavesson it is fairly straight forward in that the buckle or clip at the end of the lunge rein, attaches to the ring on the noseband of the cavesson.

Each method of attaching the lunge rein to the bridle has both advantages and disadvantages, which have been outlined below.

Method 1



The lunge rein passes through the bit on one side, passes over the horses' head (in the same place as where the headpiece of the bridle lies) and attaches to the top of the bit on the opposite side.

Advantages:-

Provides good control over the direction of the horse.

Disadvantages:-

The lunge rein will need to be taken off to change directions. This method may lift the bit up in the horses' mouth when used firmly.

Method 2



The lunge rein passes through the bit then under the horses' jaw to the bit ring on the other side. The lunge rein can be tied in a knot around the first bit ring to prevent a pinching action occurring with the bit.

Advantages:-

Easy to attach

Disadvantages:-

If used without a knot around the first bit ring the lunge rein can pull on the outside which may confuse the horse as to the direction it is suppose to go.

Using a Lunge Rein (cont.)

Method 3



The lunge rein attaches to a ring in the centre of a strap which is clipped to each bit ring

Advantages:-

Easy to use. Doesn't need to be removed to changed direction

Disadvantages:-

Tends to put pressure on the outside of the bit and when used on inexperienced horses they may try to turn around to follow that pressure.

Lunging in Preparation for a Rider

It is very important to warm a horse up on the lunge before putting the rider on. Lunging the horse before mounting the rider will allow the horse to warm up, provide an opportunity for you to check for any lameness (there is nothing more time consuming then getting the rider settled on the horse only to realise it is lame) and to ensure the horse will not be fresh (excitable).

The horse needs to be lunged in a controlled walk, trot and canter (even if the rider will not be cantering) by doing so you will make sure the horse will respond to your commands and be controllable in all three paces.

If you are going to use a side reins when the rider gets on then you need to warm the horse up with side reins, again this is for safety reasons: to make sure the horse will work calmly with the side reins on, it is no good to test this theory out once you have a rider on the horse.

In regards to training of the horse, it is good to lunge the horse in both directions (i.e. to work the muscle groups on both sides of the horse evenly) however to lunge a horse in both directions in a thirty minute lesson is time consuming so unless the horse is particularly fresh or if you expect lameness, lunging through all three paces in one direction should be adequate.

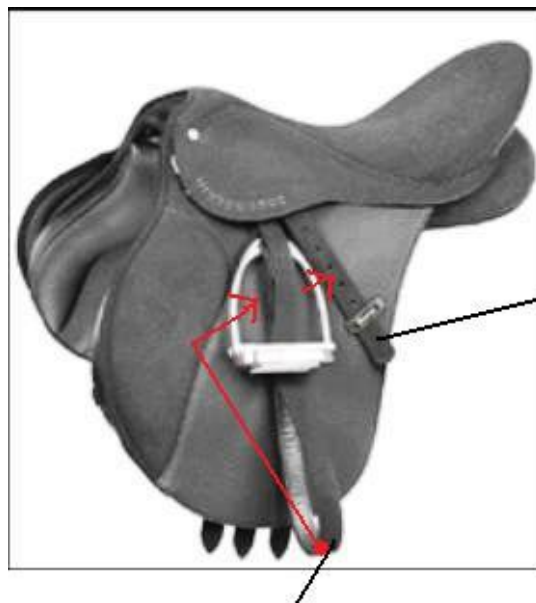
While you are lunging the horse ensure the rider is waiting outside of the lunging area and is not hanging through or sitting on the fence. The reason for this is that if the rider is waiting inside the arena there is the risk that the horse may run over them or kick out at them as they go past. They may also become injured from hanging through or falling off the fence. In addition it is not a good idea to have the rider stand in the middle with you while you lunge as it is easy to loose awareness of where they are around you.



Lunging in Preparation for a Rider (cont.)

Procedure for lunging a horse in preparation for a rider:-

- Ensure the gate to the arena is closed and direct the rider on an appropriate and safe place to wait until you are finished.
- The horse should be saddled and bridled (with or without a cavesson and side reins). Attach the lunge rein (if not already).
- Secure the reins so that if the horse puts its head down it will not become entangled in them. This can be done in a couple of ways 1) unbuckle the reins, wrap them around the horses' neck (around the gullet) then re-buckle them around themselves 2) If the saddle has a monkey rein/grip (strap that is fixed across the pommel of the saddle) the reins can be unbuckled then re-buckled around the monkey grip then twist the reins around and pass the throatlatch through them to keep them up away from the horses' legs.
- Check the tension of the girth.
- Secure the stirrups so they do not unravel and hit the horses' elbows. This can be done in a couple of ways 1) left down the stirrups and lie them over the seat of the saddle (this is quick & easy but they may flick back once the horse is in motion) 2) leave the stirrup run up, take the loop of the stirrup leather and pass it under the top of the leather (it will now loop around the stirrup iron and under the top of the stirrup leather) then thread the tail end of the stirrup leather through the loop of the stirrup leather and push it back through the keeper on the saddle. (See image on next pg.)



End of the strap
passed through the
loop of the leather
then back into the
keeper on the saddle.

Leather loop goes
up and under the
top of the stirrup
leather

Lunging in Preparation for a Rider (cont.)

Procedure for lunging a horse in preparation for a rider (cont.):-

- Attach the side reins. Outside first, then inside. So if you are going to lunge the horse on the left rein (i.e. to the left) then you would attach the right side rein before the left. (Alternatively the horse can be warmed up first without the side-reins then with the side-reins).
- When you move the horse off ensure the horse steps away from you and not you stepping backwards away from the horse. At no time when you are teaching or lunging should you walk backwards.
- Allow the horse adequate time to warm-up in each pace before moving onto the faster pace.
- Give loud, clear voice commands (i.e. *"trot on"* and *"whoa"*) followed by a flick of the lunge whip if the horse doesn't respond. Encourage the horse to go forward so that you know if the horse is going to react or be fresh in response.
- While lunging the horse the lunge whip and lunge rein should form a triangle with you at the point of it. The lunge rein should never touch the ground and the lunge whip should be directed towards the horses' hocks when moving. Pressure on the lunge rein can be used to assist in encouraging the horse to slow down, if this doesn't work decrease the size of the circle.
- Once you have warmed the horse up in walk, trot and canter return the horse to halt. This should be done progressively through the paces and with the horse in control, not just mindlessly cantering around in circles.
- At the halt remove the side reins. To remove them you will detach the inside first, then the outside. Make sure they are secured and not left to hang around the horses' legs.
- Recheck the girth.



This image illustrates how to secure the reins for lunging. The left rein (blue) goes under the jaw to the off side then passes over the poll back onto the near side. The right rein (red) goes under the jaw, over the left rein, over the poll returning to the off side of the horse. Both reins can then be fastened under the jaw.

Considerations for Lunging

There are some important considerations to think of while lunging the horse.

- As the handler you should stand in one place while the horse is on a bigger circle around you.



Avoid walking or following the horse around the circle as it will make the circle size and shape inconsistent and after teaching 4 or 5 lessons you'll be exhausted! Also because you will be teaching a rider you will not be focusing on where you are walking providing the potential for tripping over. Try to stand in one spot, turning to keep facing the horse as it moves around the circle.

- The lunge rein should never drag on or touch the ground.



Organise the lunge rein so that it cannot touch the ground or become tangled. A lunge line which drags on the ground behind the handler is dangerous as it can become tangled up, tripped over and does not ensure the control of the horse if the handler loses contact with the lunge rein being held. The section of lunge rein between the handler and horse should never be allowed near to, touch or dragged along the ground. This is very dangerous because the horse can stand on it or become entangled in it, the events of which could be dramatic. Use two hands to hold the lunge rein for example if lunging a horse to the right hold the bulk to the lunge rein along with the lunge whip in the left hand and use the right hand to feed the length of the lunge rein in and out and to control the horse.

- Always keep one hand on the horse when changing the lunge rein



Keep one hand on the horse's reins when changing the lunge rein over so that you maintain control over the horse.

Extension Lesson

Use two of the methods of attaching a lunge rein as described in this workbook.

Which method did you prefer?

What were the advantages and/or disadvantages you found with each method?

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Practice the procedure for lunging a horse in preparation for a rider (this will be assessed in the practical section).

What are your strengths?

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What do you need to practice?

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Recommended Reading

Publication:-

Foot Steps

Authors:-

Sally Hinton & Joan Eccleshare

References

Publication:-

Foot Steps

Authors:-

Sally Hinton & Joan Eccleshare

Images:-

www.greenhorn-horse-facts.com/horsecare.html

hopeforharley.blogspot.com

www.OnlineHorseCollege.com

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