

# Online HorseCollege



## **Student Workbook**

### **3.T.19 Trot Diagonals**

[www.OnlineHorseCollege.com](http://www.OnlineHorseCollege.com)

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## ***Trot Diagonals 3.T.19 Workbook***

Students are to complete 3.T.13-16 teaching online assessments prior to attempting 3.T.17-20 and to follow all recommended safety considerations.

Practical assessments for 3.T.17-20 are as follows

- A) 3.T.17 RiderAssessments
- B) 3.T.28 TurnGuide
- C) 3.T.19 TrotDiagonals
- D) 3.T.20 Corners

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

SROEQO003A Supervise horse handling

SRXRIK001A Undertake risk analysis of activities

*Further information about this assessment is available at [www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au)*

## Trot Diagonals Introduction

Learning about trot diagonals is important for the progression of the rider because if a rider is able to ride to the correct diagonal they will be able to apply aids at the best time for the horse to be able to carry out the desired response.

## Pre-requisites for Trot Diagonals

Before teaching a rider to rise to the correct trot diagonal they need to be able to maintain rhythm and consistency in rising to the trot. They should be able to ride to and maintain their position in a trot with a clear rhythm and beat (i.e., not a slow 'barely trotting' speed). Riders who cannot do this will have difficulty learning to ride to and change their trot diagonals because 1) they are not yet established in rising trot, 2) they cannot ride at a trot speed where the beats are clear, 3) because of the two previous reasons they will not be able to co-ordinate their rising trot fast enough to change their diagonal.

## Demonstrations

Using a demonstration can help the rider visually understand the 'what' and 'why' aspects of trot diagonals. As you may have noticed by now an important part of each lesson is a demonstration. The demonstration of the activity should be as accurate and correct as possible as this is how riders will gauge what is expected of them. Demonstrations need to illustrate the preparation and execution of the activity or skill.

The type of demonstration you can use will depend upon the situation. The follow are examples of how you could provide a trot diagonal demo.

### Whiteboards

This type of demo is good if time is of the essence because it can be prepared before the lesson. On the whiteboard images can be drawn to illustrate how the horse's legs move and at what time the rider will need to rise and sit.

### Horse and Rider

This is the best type of demonstration to give because the student can see exactly what to do. The horse can have different coloured bandages on the diagonal pairs of legs to help highlight how the legs move in pairs during trot. it will also make it easier to see which leg the rider is rising in time with.

### Coach

Demos can be give on foot by the coach (which is ok when demonstrating figures and movements) but this could be difficult to illustrate when teaching trot diagonals however the coach will be able to show how the horse's legs move in trot (not on hands and knees as this would be unsafe!).



Apart from this rider not wearing a helmet, it is a good demonstration of using different coloured bandages to illustrate the sequence of legs in trot and identifying trot diagonals.



## Teaching Trot Diagonals

Some riders pick up trot diagonals much quicker and easier than others. It can be a challenging skill to learn because the rider needs to focus on how the horse is moving and co-ordinate and adjust their riding appropriately.

Begin by explaining to the rider the sequence of legs in trot (this can or may have been covered in earlier lessons but it is always a good idea to refresh their memory if this is the case) to the rider. This is important because the rider needs to understand the horse's movement so that they can time their rising trot correctly. After this you need to explain what, why and how to ride trot diagonals.

Next they will need to be able to identify when the horse's shoulder/front legs are moving. As a coach whether you teach a rider to rise when the outside shoulder comes forward OR to sit when the outside shoulder comes back will be subject to how you interpret rising to the correct diagonal and which way the student (rider) finds easier to grasp (To make this topic less confusing we will refer to teaching the rider to rise when the outside shoulder/leg come forward rather than switching and changing between the two methods).

Start in the walk and instruct the rider to watch the horse's outside shoulder/front leg, as the coach you will start off by saying when that leg is coming forward (i.e., now....now....now...etc). Then it is a good idea to check with the student as to whether they can see this happening. If they are having difficulty you can also get them to rest a hand on the shoulder to feel it move. Once the rider can visually recognise the movement it is their turn to say when the outside shoulder/leg is coming forward (or picking up) (i.e., now.....now....now...etc).

Now it is time for the rider to practice rising in time with the leg, so remaining in walk instruct the rider to now rise out of the saddle when the outside shoulder/leg comes forward/picks up. The rhythm will be much slower than in the trot but it allow the rider time to practice the skill in an easier pace/gait.

Once the rider can perform this task with minimal error they can begin to practice in trot. From sitting trot the rider should attempt to identify and rise on the correct diagonal. During the first efforts you will need to prompt them as to whether they are rising on the correct diagonal or not (i.e., if they need to change).



As the rider progresses you will be able to ask them as to whether they are on the correct or incorrect diagonal. It is better for the student to learn and practice their trot diagonals on the lunge initially as it will allow them to focus solely on the task without concerning themselves with steering and guiding the horse.



## Teaching Trot Diagonals (cont.)

To make a lesson on trot diagonals challenging for the more accomplished rider who is already familiar and competent in recognising and changing diagonals, you can create exercises where the rider uses feeling to identify the correct and incorrect diagonals.

Tasks such as stepping over a single trot pole in walk and trot and asking the rider to identify when a certain leg steps over the pole will encourage the rider to develop an awareness of what is happening underneath them. The use of the trot pole helps to exaggerate the steps of the horse making it easier to identify which leg is moving when and where.

Figures and changes of reins will help improve, develop, practice and test a rider's skill in changing trot diagonals. Serpentine can be the most demanding figure to ride accurately and change diagonals.

Sometimes a rider will have trouble co-ordinating themselves to sit for an extra beat when changing their diagonal. An alternative is to have the rider sit for multiples of two, so 4 or 6 beats (e.g., up...down...up...down...down...down...down...down...up...down...up...down). As their co-ordination improves the beats can be reduced to 4 and then 2. Remember if the rider sits for an even number of beats they will change their diagonal however if the rider sits for an odd number of beats they will remain on the same one.

The warm-up phase of the lesson should be relevant to trot diagonals. An example of a relevant warm-up could be practicing transitions between rising trot and sitting trot. An example of an irrelevant warm-up could be 2point seat over trot poles.

## Troubleshooting

Many problems could be encountered when teaching trot diagonals. The information below covers some common problems and possible solutions to their improvement or correction.




Possible Problem	Possible Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The rider loses the rhythm of the trot causing them to rise too quickly or too slowly.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Use your voice and help the rider identify the speed of the trot, encourage the rider to keep in time with you as you say 'up...down...up...down...etc'.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- When changing diagonals the rider bounces for 2 beats rather than sitting.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ensure the rider brings the shoulders back and sits into the deepest part of the saddle when they sit. Have the rider increase the number of beats they sit for to remove the pressure of having to rise up quickly after sitting. It may be necessary to revise sitting trot.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- When checking or changing diagonals the rider loses control over the direction of the horse.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Encourage the rider to glance down to check their diagonal and keep focused on where they are travelling.</li></ul>



## Extension Lesson

Develop a lesson plan for teaching trot diagonals. Lesson plan templates can be found at the end of this workbook.

In the following images identify if the rider is on the correct or incorrect diagonal.

## Recommended Reading

Publication:-

The Principles of Riding

Author:-

German National Equestrian Federation

## References

Publication:-

The Principles of Riding

Author:-

German National Equestrian Federation

Images:-

Page 8      <http://dlakeqh.blogspot.com/>

Page 10      <http://www.hickmanranch.org/HickmanRanch.Horses.htm>

Name:  
Student Number:

Fantasy Saddle Club  
StudyHorses.com

### Fantasy Saddle Club Lesson Plan

(To be prepared in advance and discussed with Coach Educator before each lesson)

Unit No:                      Subject:                      Level of Students:

Number of Students:                      Support Personnel:

Facilities:

Equipment/Resources:

Introduce Self ✓ Check Disabilities ✓	Introduce Subject ✓ Check Experience ✓	Check Gear ✓ Establish Control ✓
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Explanation - What:  • • • • • Reference:	Explanation - Why:  • • • • • Reference:	Explanation - How:  • • • • • Reference:
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Demonstration - Who:  What:
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Relevant Warm Up:	Progression to Lesson Plan (Map on back of page): (Include Class Formation, Changes of Rein and Position of Coach)
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Name:  
Student Number:

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**Fantasy Saddle Club Lesson Plan**  
(To be prepared in advance and discussed with Coach Educator before each lesson)

Potential Problems:	Corrections:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>



