

Online HorseCollege



Student Workbook

3.T.21 Small Arena

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Small Arena 3.T.21 Workbook

Students are to complete 3.T.17-20 teaching online assessments prior to attempting 3.T.21-24 and to follow all recommended safety considerations.

Practical assessments for 3.T.21-24 are as follows

- A) 3.T.21 Small Arena
- B) 3.T.22 Half Arena
- C) 3.T.23 Full Arena
- D) 3.T.24 Final Summary

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

SISXRSK301A Undertake risk analysis of activities

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

Small Arena Introduction

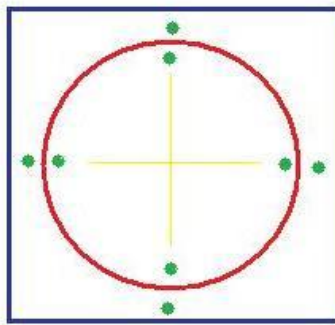
A small arena is anywhere from 20 metres by 20 metres to 20 metres by 40 metres in diameter. Small arenas are useful as a stepping stone to progressing riders to riding in larger areas where they will be required to have greater control.

Teaching Twenty Metre Circles

The beginner rider can start to learn how to ride and guide the horse around 20m circles from their first lesson on the lunge line. Even if they are not confident and stable enough to let go of the saddle or monkey grip they can still learn to sit correctly for the direction they are travelling on the circle.

Twenty metres circle are probably the most frequently used figures in lessons and when training horses and an accurate 20m circle is more difficult to ride than it sounds. Being the largest sized circle that can be ridden accurately in a 20x60 metre arena it is the easiest for the horse and rider at lower levels of training to maintain for long periods of time being that it is a continual curve line.

Markers and cones should be set out at least one metre apart (consideration given to the size of the circle and the space required to ride between them) to guide riders on the correct line for a circle. Markers should be put on the tangent points as illustrated in the image below.



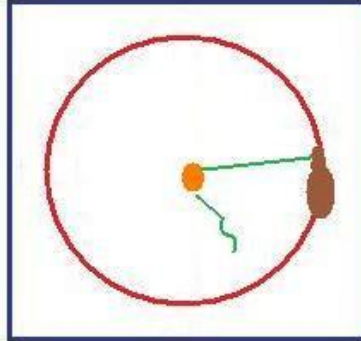
The yellow + or x in the middle of the circle indicates the tangent points at which the markers are located. As can be seen the tangent points cut the circle in half vertically and horizontally. Depending on the size of the arena and the size of the circle being taught in the lesson (bearing in mind that the smaller the circle the more difficult for the horse and rider), two markers can be used for the rider to guide between at each point or alternatively one marker and the arena fence/wall. If necessary more cones can be used to help riders maintain the circle shape (see troubleshooting section for more information and tips).

Cones, markers and other equipment which will interfere with the travel of horse and rider should be moved (i.e., a cone from the previous lesson on the outside track).

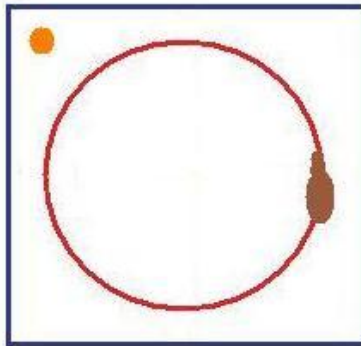
Remember to explain the what, when, why, where and how of riding circles to the student. After every explanation it is a good idea to seek feedback from the student to ensure that they understand and to answer any questions they may have before they start the exercise.

When instructing a rider who is performing circles off the lunge you should position yourself where you will be able to observe the inside and outside aids. The best place to do this is on the outside of a circle and remember that once positioning yourself away from the rider you will need to project your voice so the student can hear you.

Teaching Twenty Metre Circles (cont.)



The image above illustrates the positioning of a coach (orange dot) from inside the circle when lunging. It is also acceptable to teach from inside the circle when a novice rider is attempting the skill for the first few times off the lunge because the coach can reach the horse and rider quickly from this point should it become necessary.



This image shows the position of the coach (orange dot) on the outside of the circle. From there the instructor will be able to observe all of the riders aids as they move around the circle. Alternatively the coach can stand on the outside of the arena fence/wall if the arena design permits this. This coaching position is better suited to riders who require little physical input from the coach (i.e., pointing to the next marker, horse encouragement with the lunge whip).

Twenty metre circles can be made more challenging for advanced riders by setting up markers closer together. This will demand greater accuracy, co-ordination and horse awareness. Also riding circles in faster paces will require more preparation of horse and rider, the rider to balance the horse (especially in canter and small turns which you are not required to teach at this level), the horse to be on the aids as well as accuracy, co-ordination and horse awareness.

Teaching Twenty Metre Circles (cont.)

For the horse circles (of any size) improve the lateral suppleness (i.e., bend) and encourage softening to the rider's inside aids. For the rider the main benefit is co-ordination of the aids, learning to position themselves (and the horse) correctly for the line they are travelling. Circles will also show up any stiffness in the horse and rider and stiffness will become evident in the size and shape of the circle.

Remember to check the rider's trot diagonal (when doing the practical assessment if the rider is unfamiliar with trot diagonals it can be covered in another lesson and you should articulate this to your assessor to show that you recognise that it is important for the rider to learn but that you can still focus on and teach the lesson you intended).

Introducing the rider to trot while still guiding the horse on the circle should be done progressively so that the rider does not lose control (and possibly confidence). This can be done simply by asking the rider to trot a quarter of the way around the circle and then return to walk. Once they can move the horse too and from trot without losing the line they are riding then the time spent trotting can be increased to half a circle, then three quarters and eventually the whole circle. This method can also be used on the lunge and is a good exercise to test if the rider is ready and capable to be let off the lunge rein.

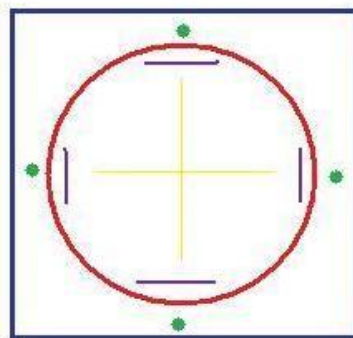
Another method that could be used for this purpose is trotting for a certain number of steps and returning to walk, the drawback to this method is that novice riders may not know what constitutes as a 'step' and that the rider may be distracted by their thoughts and forget to count (this can be used while the rider is on the lunge).

Or placing distinguishable markers a certain distance apart for the horse and rider to trot between, the distance between these markers can then be altered as the rider's skill improves (another method which can be used on the lunge).



Twenty Metre Circles Troubleshooting

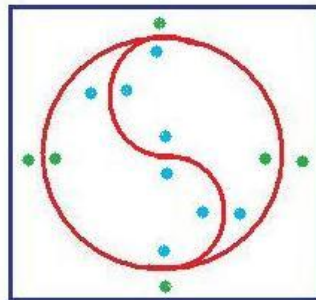
Common Problem/Fault	Possible Solution
The rider cannot get the horse to move out on the circle and guide between the markers.	Instruct the rider to use the outside rein and inside leg to guide the horse further out on the circle. Check the length of the reins and suitability of the horse for the exercise.
The horse and rider navigate the circle too large giving it a square shape.	Emphasise the shape of the circle and coach the rider to turn before and stay out of arena corners. Extra markers can be used to provide more guidance in circle shape.
The horse and rider turn from marker to marker giving the circle a diamond shape.	Emphasise the shape of the circle and coach the rider to turn before and stay out of arena corners. Extra markers can be used to provide more guidance in circle shape. Trot poles can be used at each tangent point to assist the rider to stay out on the circle line longer to improve circle shape (see image below).
The horse and rider keep missing markers on the circle.	Practice the exercise at a slower pace. Check the rein length and the rider's application of the aids.
The rider finds riding circles to be boring and becomes easily distracted (common in younger students).	Turn the exercise into a game where for each marker they successfully guide the horse around they get points.



Above:- The use of trot poles (purple lines) to help improve the shape of the circle. Horse and rider do not step over them instead the pole assists in keeping the rider from turning too soon towards the next marker (this creates a straight line rather than a curved one).

Teaching Change Rein within the Circle

This exercise is good for introducing the ten metre circle and encouraging the timely application of aids. Markers will be needed to guide the rider and to assist in maintaining accuracy but because of the amount of markers that may be used it can be beneficial to have two distinguishable types of markers (i.e., two different colours or sizes) to indicate the ones which map out the 20m circle and those which mark the change of rein through the circle.



Maintaining accuracy can be difficult for novice riders when they are required to ride multiple figures that are close together. To make the exercise easier it can be practiced in a slower pace or if the accuracy of the half 10m circles is the problem teach the rider how to ride complete 10m circles. Once the 10m circle shape has improved then they can return to trying the original activity.

Remember that circles smaller than twenty metres should be ridden in sitting trot and that will make this lesson more challenging for the novice rider because not only will they need to control and guide the horse but they will also need to remember to perform sitting trot and check/change their diagonal when they return to rising. For rider attempting this exercise for the first time you may wish to keep them in rising trot until they become familiar with where they need to go (remember to articulate to the student and assessor the purpose behind not instructing the rider to perform sitting trot in the half circles). It is important to note that this lesson cannot be performed on the lunge line due to the rein changes within the circle.

When delivering any feedback when coaching it should be given in the form of positive then constructive and finish with positive again.

Example:-

"Jenny, your trot has improved and now you keep a good even rhythm when you're rising. But your reins are too long when you go from walk to trot so remember to shorten them before you give the aid for trot. And that last circle you rode was very accurate and you didn't knock over any markers!"

By structuring feedback positive-constructive-positive you start with something encouraging then you give the rider something they need to work on and finish with more encouraging information so that the rider is left feeling more confident but still challenged.

Change Rein within the Circle Troubleshooting

Common Problem/Fault

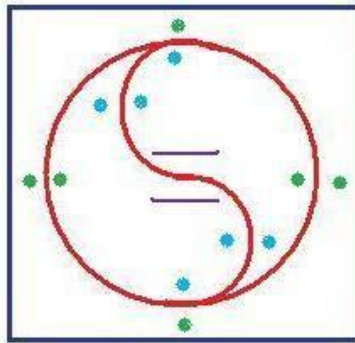
The rider has difficulty co-ordinating the aids fast enough to guide the horse around the change of rein.

Possible Solution

Return to or slow down the pace. Reduce the frequency with which the rider changes direction i.e., every 3 20m circle change rein within the circle.

The 'S' shape of the change of rein within the circle is ridden more like a diagonal line, losing the straight section from one half 10m circle to the other.

Use trot poles to emphasise the straight section between changing from one half 10m circle to the other (see image below).



Two trot poles (purple) can be used to help guide the rider straight when changing from the first half circle to the second.

Extension Lesson

Prepare a lesson plan for teaching a lesson on riding twenty metre circles and another for changing rein within a twenty metre circle. A lesson plan template can be found at the end of this workbook.

Can you think of another suitable method for progressively introducing a rider to trotting on a 20m circle?

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What other benefits are there in riding 20m circles for:-

Horses?

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Riders?

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Recommended Reading

Publication:-

The Principles of Riding

Author:-

German National Equestrian Federation

References

Publication:-

The Principles of Riding

School exercises for flatwork & jumping

Author:-

German National Equestrian Federation

Eleanor Ross

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:

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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StudyHorses.com

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">•••••	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••••

