

Lungeing Manual





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Foreword

Pony Club Australia is pleased to offer the first manual for lungeing.

The image we see in books and videos of the correct position of the handler working the horse, is typically the 'completed picture', showing experienced handlers and horses. The aim of this manual is to outline the simple building blocks of lungeing necessary to achieve that completed picture. You will note detailed sections on ground work, as it provides the foundation skills for lungeing.

It has been written to provide the knowledge necessary to make the right choices when lungeing and to address the welfare of the horse and the safety of the rider.

In 2019, Equitation Science principles were introduced into the Pony Club Australia Syllabus of Instruction. They have also informed this manual.

The lungeing methods explained in this manual align with the Pony Club Australia Syllabus of Instruction (C*/K/B/A certificates) and the requirements for Pony Club Australia NCAS Level 1 coach accreditation. Some of the information in this manual is provided in addition to those requirements. Rider Certificate and Coach candidates should refer to the assessment requirements provided in the appendices.

Your life of safe and effective lungeing starts here.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank members of the 2021 and 2022 Pony Club Australia Coaching Advisory Council, particularly Marissa Hall, Kathleen Kindler, Judy Rose, Dr Andrew McLean, Dr Kirrilly Thompson; also Dianne Colley and Dr Portland Jones for their contributions to this document.

This document has drawn on a range of resources including the PCA rider and coach manuals and lungeing guides from Pony Club® Associations in Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia.

The Aims of Lungeing

The aims of lungeing are:

- To train the horse's responses to signals, when starting a green horse
- The further development of a horse's education
- To develop balance, rhythm and looseness.

Reasons for Lungeing

There are many reasons why you might lunge a horse, including:

- To lightly exercise the horse when it has been ill
- · To exercise the horse when it has been confined
- To improve a horse's balance before it is ridden
- To retrain the horse or assist in training the young horse
- To teach the horse self-carriage of tempo and line.
- To warm the horse up before a riding session (note a rider is not to be lunged on a horse while in warm up phase)
- To keep the horse fit when it cannot be ridden
- To allow the handler to observe the horse's movement or behaviour from the ground
- To bring a horse that does not have reasonable muscle/topline to carry saddle or rider, into work or when beginning the 'backing' process
- · To provide variety in the training
- To train the mounted rider using suitable lungeing exercises to improve the rider's seat and balance. This will be done usually with an educated horse and handler.

The purpose of lungeing is not to 'wear out' the horse before riding as this will not benefit the horse and may even reinforce undesired behaviours.

Caution

Lungeing is a potentially problematic exercise as it sometimes allows the expression of the flight response. If tension and related behaviours such as rushing, bucking and shying become established on the lunge they can become incorporated into the horse's habits and show up elsewhere in his training. Immediate downward transitions should be used to delete any tension and prevent the flight response from being expressed. If tension and quickening persist ask your Pony Club® coach for assistance.

The Importance of Ground Work

Lungeing is an extension of ground work and leading. That's why it is so important that lungeing handlers (rider, coach or other person working with the horse), have good ground work training skills. Horses must be familiar and calm with go forward, stop, step back, head down, and moving the horse's shoulders/forelegs to move out on the circle and stay on that line. Park is also very important to ensure the horse remains still when altering or adjusting gear.

Ground work should precede each lungeing session to ensure safety of handler and horse. Some days, with some horses, it is not safe to proceed to lungeing and the day's lesson may just be ground work.

For ground work, the horse should be wearing a headstall or if the horse is green, a well-fitted bridle and snaffle bit with reins attached. Using a bridle helps connect the groundwork you have practised with the horse to under saddle work. Transitioning to a headstall when the horse is calm, teaches him the pressures on his nose for slowing that he will connect with when a lungeing cavesson is used.

Please refer to detailed information on basic ground work responses in Appendix 1.

Circle Size

- The horse's ability to maintain rhythm and line on a small circle is the basis for the same behaviour on a larger circle.
- However, it is crucial to remember that small circles at any gait faster than walk can be damaging to the horse's joints, tendons, and musculature.
- Circle size should be appropriate to the horse's level of education and physical development.
- A 10-15m circle is suitable for the beginner horse and handler at walk only.
- A well-educated, fit and supple horse would be capable of lungeing for short periods on an 8m circle.
- If the horse's nose is to the inside of its chest, then the circle is too small.
- Even on a curved line, the hind legs should step into or over the prints of the front feet.
- The horse is encouraged to spiral in and out on the circle in all paces at which he can maintain balance.



Environment

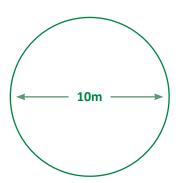
The lungeing environment must be a safe fenced arena or designated lungeing area with suitable surface to work on (eg, no electric tape or barbed fencing, or hard, uneven or slippery ground).

The handler needs to assess other environmental considerations such as internal traffic (as can be the case at competitions), external traffic on any nearby roads (especially with a horse that has had little exposure to cars, trucks, motorbikes etc.) external property gates being closed, dogs, or other horses that may be being ridden or lunged nearby. Are those horses under effective control? Is there a chance their behaviour will impact the physical or emotional wellbeing of the horse?

The handler must also make themselves aware of the rules pertaining to lungeing at rallies, competitions, or other activities.

Rider Gear

- Handler to wear compliant helmet, gloves, suitable closed boots and appropriate clothing. Suitable footwear and helmet should also be worn while tacking horse up.
- Spurs must not be worn when lungeing (they may cause the rider to trip whilst turning in a circle).



Saddlery

Handlers must understand the tack required to lunge a horse and how to apply and fit it comfortably to the horse.

Reminder - Never leave a tacked-up horse unattended.

Leg protection

- The handler can choose to apply boots or bandages to front and hind legs as this may protect legs from injuries that can occur. (Ensure that the horse accepts the boot on all legs before the lungeing session.)
- Bell boots can also be considered on front feet, to prevent over-reaching injuries or knocks to the coronet area that can be caused by a fixed boundary such as found in some covered round yards.

Lunge cavesson

- The lungeing cavesson can be used with or without the bridle.
- Traditionally, a lungeing cavesson is placed over the top of the bridle (after the noseband has been removed from the bridle). Many of the modern bridles come with padding or thick browbands, which can create bulk and pressure points when the cavesson is fitted on top. If this is the case, we suggest placing the cavesson on first. A simple snug fit and comfort for horse is top priority.
- The cavesson must have a jowl strap that is fitted snuggly around the jowl (cheeks) to prevent the cavesson twisting from side to side in which case it is less effective and can injure the horse's eye.
- The nose band of the lungeing cavesson fits around the head like a usual cavesson noseband, allowing two fingers' width below the projecting cheek bone.
- The noseband must be removed from the bridle.
- Once the horse is tacked up, he should be led by head collar and lead rope to the round yard or lungeing area. It may be preferable to fit the lungeing cavesson, bridle and lunge rein on arrival at the lungeing ring.

Reins

Reins need to be kept out of the way whilst lungeing. They can simply be removed from the bridle or secured by twisting through the throat lash and fixed to the front of the saddle with a leather strap (monkey strap) to stop the reins going down the neck. Alternatively, the reins can be passed through the throat lash, passed over the neck once or twice and back to the throat lash and secured. (Image A). This method is not as sound as attachment to the saddle with a monkey strap/ leather strap (Image B), particularly if there is too much slack in the reins. There is a risk the reins could drop over the horse's ears if too loose. If a saddle is worn, the reins should not be tucked behind the stirrups as it is not as secure as fixing them to the saddle itself.



Image A- securing reins through throat lash.



Image B – securing reins with monkey strap.



Saddle/Roller

- Rollers should provide clearance above the spine to avoid pressure on the spinous processes.
- If a saddle is used, ensure stirrups are secured so they do not flap against the horse's sides. An example of how to secure the stirrups is provided here. It can sometimes be easier to remove the stirrups completely, which eliminates the risk of them marking the saddle flap.





Lungeing rein

- Preferably the lungeing rein should be made of soft cotton webbing or nylon and be approximately 30mm wide and 10m long. Lightweight lunge reins should be avoided as they are easily caught by the wind and make it difficult to maintain a consistent connection with the horse.
- The loop in the end of the lungeing rein should be knotted or stitched closed. This gives a secure hold for the handler. The loop sits across the hand not over or around the wrist.
- There should be a swivel clip at the end of the lungeing rein to attach to the cavesson. The swivel clip attaches to the middle ring (in front of the horse's nose), and not the side rings on the lungeing cavesson noseband. This makes it easier to change direction.



Lungeing Cavesson



The lunge rein loops should pass through the hand but not be looped around it. It should uncoil smoothly if the horse spooks.

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Lungeing Roller



The lunge whip

- Should be well balanced with a light lash on the end.
- Is to be used as an aid (to encourage a response), not as a punishment.
- Can encourage the forward movement of the horse by being used in a swishing, flicking movement when pointed behind the horse.
- Can help keep the horse 'out' on the circle by being pointed towards his shoulders or ribcage.
- Should not be used when the horse is already doing the desired behaviour. The horse should not rely on whip movement to keep going forwards. Otherwise, the horse will habituate to the whip, ignoring the whip or may stop when the whip stops.
- When not in use while lungeing the whip should be pointed toward the ground.
- Should never be dropped except in the case of emergency, as it can be tripped over.

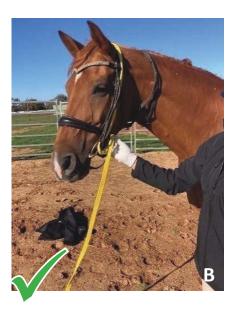
When being taken to or from the lungeing area, the whip should be carried under the arm, with the whip butt forward and the lash held, not dragging.

Attaching the Lunge Rein to a Bridle

Methods approved by Pony Club Australia

It is not always possible to access a correctly fitting lungeing cavesson. It is better to use a different method of attaching the lunge rein than to have a badly-fitting cavesson move around and cause the horse discomfort. It is important to have knowledge of different systems and their pros and cons.





A and B Show both sides of the horse wearing an approved method of fitting the lunge rein to a bridle.



Methods not approved by Pony Club Australia

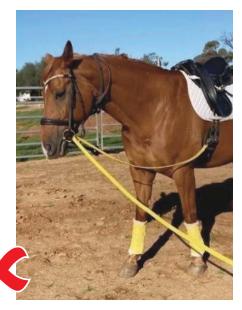
The following lunge rein attachments are not approved.

The method pictured right entails running the lunge rein through the inside bit ring, under the chin, and clipping it onto the outside bit ring. This can be confusing to the horse and can cause the horse to panic as his lower jaw becomes encircled by the bit and rein, especially if he or the handler pull. It can also cause rubbing or other injury behind the horse's chin.





Horses must not be lunged by connecting the swivel clip direct to one bit ring only. This method can cause extreme discomfort to the horse and there is a risk the bit can be pulled through the horse's mouth, possibly damaging the lips, tongue and bars.



The method shown at left where the lunge rein is fed through the inside bit ring and clipped back to the girth is not recommended because it can:

- Lead to the horse turning 180 degrees and being tangled in the lunge rein, especially for a horse new to lungeing.
- Create too much neck bend to the inside which has a 'jack-knifing' effect that pushes the withers/shoulders to the outside.
- Exacerbate a horse falling in on the circle.
- Cause the horse to fall-out.
- Pull the bit through the mouth.



Using the Lunge Rein

- The handler must always have complete control of the rein.
 - It should be gathered in or adjusted from hand to horse, so the loops do not become tangled.
 - The lunge rein can be looped or 'folded' and the hand is not to go through the loop which can result in the rider being pulled off their feet or dragged.
- The lunge rein should never touch the ground.
 - If the rein becomes slack, gather it just as it is when riding.
- If the handler wants to make the circle smaller, pressure and release each step. Do not pull constantly as it teaches the horse to lean on the rein.
- If the horse is falling in, gently move or flick the lungeing whip in the direction of his shoulder (as taught to him in ground work!) until he resumes the correct line.
- It is important to establish the correct weight with the lunge rein contact right from the outset. Think of the contact weighing something between 0 – 10. Zero is no contact and five and above is too heavy. Aim to maintain a contact between 1 - 3, which then gives something in hand when making a correction, and then softening when you get a response from the horse.
- Begin each lungeing session on a small circle to be close enough to touch the horse with whip (for 'go'), to effectively 'take and give' the rein (for 'slow') and to prevent the horse learning to suddenly turn in and change direction.



10 Principles of Training

10 Principles of Training

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n - your timing of pressured felesse and reward must be on time

ning – don't allow some behaviours one time and others another
4. Be consistent in all your training – don't allow some behaviours one time and other

orse to things he's nervous about times.

s to light aids by softening when lightness comes

5. Habituate (familiarise) the horse to things he's nervous about lightness about applied before and during a desired response

o each step is obvious for the horse rossures to light aids by softening when lightness comes

- 7. Voice aids are most efficiently learned if applied before and during a desired response
- Train behaviours gradually so each step is obvious for the horse to choose
- 9. Only give one aid at a time
- 10. Always focus on self-carriage

Positions for Lungeing

Position A and B

Like ground work, the handler must be familiar with the two different positions. The handler should know how these positions affect the horse and when to use them.

The angle of the lunge rein and position of the handler is the key. The distance from the horse varies during a lunge session as does the need for Position A or ability to get to position 2 when all is going well.

Position A: In the Position A diagram you will see 90 degrees in a box near the horse's gullet. This is to show that the handler maintains that angle of the rein from the horse, not allowing it to close slightly as it does in position B.

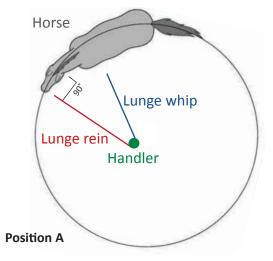
Position A is less common than Position B and is useful when lungeing green, young, and 'flighty' horses that are not yet established or confident on the lunge It enables greater control of line, tempo, and contact. This position is useful if the handler arrives at Pony Club®, or a show and the horse is lively or fresh.

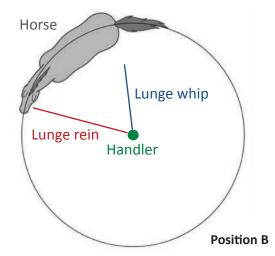
Position A requires the handler to move with the horse, although on a smaller circle than the horse. It allows quick control to the head for learning transitions, sliding the hand up the rein getting close to the horse, and stopping them on top of the nose, which is far better than pulling the horse in. It helps train the horse to stay on the line.

At times, the handler may be required to move closer to the horse which makes it easier to influence the horse's shoulder and speed and reduces the risk of the horse being able to turn away from the handler and kick in their direction. This position also enables more instant control should the horse exhibit the flight response.

Young, green, flighty or fresh horses are managed far better keeping this angle on the lunge rein whereas the temptation is to stay more behind with a closed angle. Remember, if the handler thinks their horse is so lively or fresh that he will exhibit the flight esponse or being difficult to control, they should reconsider even lungeing at all.

The arm and hand must be facing the horse's nose to keep the minimum 90-degree angle between horse and lunge rein (as shown in the diagram below). The whip forms the third side of a smaller triangle and is pointed in the direction of the horse's shoulder or front feet. If an assistant handler is used, the assistant should remain positioned on the horse's rump-side of the 'V' and facing the horse's head. Always begin with the handle of the whip towards the horse's shoulder. Avoid stepping backwards but instead ask the horse to move forward and away from you whilst maintaining a consistent contact and walking with him.





Position B

Position B as shown on the previous page is the more traditional lungeing position for the handler. A triangular shape is formed going from the nose of the horse to the handler with the whip angled towards the horse's tail. The angle between the lunge rein and the horse's head is now more like 60-70 degrees. The handler will be positioned in the centre of the circle and pivot around one foot but at times will need to walk a small circle.

A candidate wishing to be assessed for their C*/K/B/A or PCANCAS Level 1 will need to show competency in utilisng this position.

C*/K/PCANCAS Level 1 candidates are required to show walk and trot, although canter is permitted if offered.

B/A candidates are required to demonstrate walk, trot and canter.

This position is for a horse that has confidence in lungeing, and response level is already established.

Both positions

In both positions, the handler's rein hand should be in line with or slightly ahead of the horse's nose. The handler should turn their body to maintain this position as the horse circles around them. The lunge rein will need to be shortened and lengthened as the handler changes the size of the circle. It takes practice to develop the skills to shorten and lengthen the lunge rein in a way that:

- Maintains an even contact with the cavesson (ie the lunge rein does not develop loops, dangle or get so tight as to jerk on the horse's head)
- Can be done without the handler tripping on or becoming entangled in the spare loops of the lunge rein.
- Can be done without accidentally flicking the lunge whip.

Regardless of the horse's level of education, it must be remembered that lungeing is an extension of leading and the handler must be prepared to go back to basics (ground work) if the situation requires. This might be just what the horse needs to increase confidence and reduce tension. In fact, recognising when to take training back a step is a quality of an effective trainer. If the handler finds themselves making the call to take the horse back a step, they should see that as a sign that their skills at reading a horse's body language and the overall situation are developing - so well done!



Handler Movement

- When beginning lungeing with young or inexperienced horses, it is important that the handler is encouraged to move to some extent with the horse, (but not to be moved by the horse). This enables development of the control of circle size, tempo and a consistent contact.
- In riding, we become skilled over time (e.g., refining our position, balance, control, direction, speed). Our coordination and competence improve, and we become adept at maintaining our position and not interrupting the horse's balance. The same occurs with lungeing. The beginner handler might move with the horse. Then, as their skills improve, they become more centred, can pivot and have more control of the horse and their position.
- Likewise, the handler may need to move more with the inexperienced horse, which diminishes as the horse's education improves.
- When lungeing the experienced horse, stay centred and think of the foot as a 'pivot point' (like a compass).
- The handler should generally stand at 90 degrees or thereabouts to the horse's girth, to encourage the horse to go forward or to discourage the horse from going too fast or too slow.
- This angle may be accentuated of course if the handler needs to move with the horse until the horse is balanced and in self-carriage. The aim is that the horse describes a proper circle.

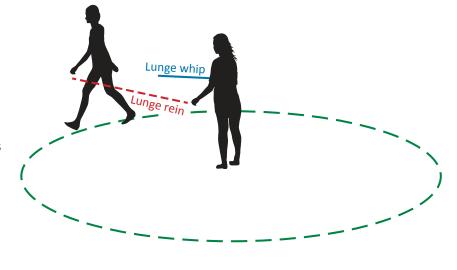
Practising with an Assistant

Lungeing a horse correctly is a skill which must be learnt through practice without a horse to start. The handler must learn how to manage the whip, the lunge rein, their own body positioning and use of voice before they lunge their own horse or if possible, a quiet schoolmaster.

A fun way to learn is to partner up with a friend. Take turns at being a handler and a horse. Ask your friend to hold the swivel clip of the lunge rein. The handler will hold the lunge rein as if he or she were lungeing a horse.

The handler will focus on the following:

- Maintaining consistent contact with the horse (assistant)
- · Position of hands, arms and body
- Correct lunge rein hold including shortening and lengthening when required
- · Stand balanced and relaxed
- Good posture with feet apart, knees slightly bent and hands in front of body with supple shoulders, elbows and wrists
- Body facing slightly in direction that horse will travel at angle of approximately 90 degrees.
- Concentrate solely on the horse and its response to commands
- · Regular changes of rein



- Use of voice different tones
- Regular transitions to halt
- Whip adjusting the length of the lunge rein without flicking the whip, or changing the rein contact
- Just as he learned voice commands via classical conditioning, the horse will also learn the posture of the handler.
 Try and ensure that your body language stays consistent all the time. In normal lungeing the handler should have a relaxed though alert posture. Remember that classical conditioning works on humans too! So, if you are feeling uncertain or unsure it will help to adopt a upright posture because you have learned to associate this posture with confidence.

Skill of activating the whip

A good exercise to learn the skill of activating the whip is as follows:

- Place a cone on the ground.
- Stand far enough away to be able to reach it with the lash of the whip.
- Practise using wrist action to bring the whip to touch the marker/cone.
- Begin turning in a circle and each time the marker/cone is coming into range, use the whip to touch it.
- Repeat until a smooth turn and correct wrist action can be applied.



Using Voice Commands

The handler may have already trained some voice commands during ground work and these can be used during lungeing. The process for training verbal commands is always the same, therefore the voice command (as an example 'whoa' for slowing down) should be given just before the existing cue (pressure on the reins) and repeated until the horse makes the association. Aids trained using classical conditioning are not always as long-lasting as aids trained using operant conditioning and therefore the training process (of pairing voice command and existing cue) should be repeated at the beginning of each lungeing session



The whip should go under the arm when not used. Be aware that the handler may inadvertently move the whip when they are lengthening or shortening the lunge rein.

How a command is said is much more important than what is said. Horses don't discriminate between words and sounds like humans do. That's why the 'clucking' sound should only be used for forwards and not for backing up. Horses and other non-phonemic animals hear vowel sounds more clearly than consonants. So for all voice commands, emphasise and elongate vowels.

For upwards transitions, use a quick and sharp upbeat inflexion, followed by a short sharp down beat inflexion e.g. walk-on!, trot-on!, can-ter! Of course the handler can use other words but remember to be consistent.

For downwards transitions or steadying the horse's pace, use low, slower double-downbeat inflexion: e.g. whoo-aaa: tro-o-ot, wa-a-alk etc.

The words used for voice commands must be distinct so that the horse can easily distinguish between them. They are trained using classical conditioning which means they become associated with existing cues such as the reins or the whip. Make sure the commands are consistent.

In the case of a young horse or a horse learning lunge, when he is comfortable in his ground work, it is useful to make the circle quite small to establish gently the go forward signal of the voice+whip and the go slow/stop of the voice + lunge rein vibration. It may be necessary to repeat the commands a couple of times before the horse responds and to be very tactful with the whip or lunge rein. In general, the handler should avoid excessive requests to the horse when he doesn't respond. Ideally ask once or twice and then add raising of the whip (go forward) or vibrations of the lunge rein (go slow). Be careful to use only a few words and to use the same one under the same conditions to avoid confusion. It takes practice.

Teaching Voice Commands to the Horse

When introducing voice commands for lungeing, it can be helpful have an assistant, especially if the horse is learning to be lunged. The assistant will stand beside the horse on the inside of the circle and behind the lunge rein. The handler will stand further away and may need to walk a small circle as the horse moves forward. The size of the circle should be half the size of a normal lunging circle when the horse is young/green.

The assistant walks quietly beside the horse and helps give the aids so the horse can associate the voice commands with an aid. Even an experienced horse will need time to adjust to cues being given by a different voice. Initially, the handler should say the word they are going to use for go forward and the assistant should immediately afterwards cue the horse to walk forward. After the horse has walked a few strides, the handler should say the word for stop and the assistant should immediately give the aid for stop. Repeat this several times. The handler should also practise slowing the horse.

If the handler gives a voice command and the horse doesn't respond correctly it is important that they immediately correct the horse using the existing aid. So, for example if the handler says, "steady" and the horse doesn't slow the handler should immediately correct the horse with a slowing rein aid."

Training the Horse to Stop on the Lunge

When the handler asks the horse to halt on the lunge, the horse should stay out on the circle and wait for the handler to approach.

To teach the horse to stop on the lunge, the handler should begin in the walk and stay near to the horse.

To ask for the halt, slide your hand up the rein with the hand holding the rein still pointing towards the horse's nose.

As soon as horse stops, soften the contact on the rein. Send the horse off by asking him to move forwards and keeping his shoulders out on the circle. Repeat until the horse starts to anticipate the vibration of the hand moving up the rein as the aid for halt and the handler can achieve the halt when repositioned toward the centre of the lungeing ring. Remember to reward the horse for a basic attempt to gain his confidence using the same techniques used when training ground work – such as a kind work, a scratch or a small food reward.

It may take several training sessions for the handler to demonstrate that they can achieve halt on the lunge at any time and in any place from walk. (ie the 'proof' stage). The handler must be patient and ensure the horse has the time to learn. The reward will be that you will have control over the horse, which allows improved balance, paces, and outline and keep both of you happy and safe.

Should the horse at any time speed up, instead of increasing the weight of the contact, keep it the same weight and move gradually towards the horse with the whip under the arm whilst maintaining a 90-degree angle.

As the horse responds and steadies, remain quietly opposite the bit, keeping the same contact and angle. Reward the horse verbally and ask him to move forward again if necessary.

When not in use, the whip should be pointed to the ground, and if the horse is reliable in rhythm and responses, the whip pressure can be released altogether by reversing the whip and lash backwards under the arm.

The trot should only be attempted once the horse shows understanding in the walk and when the handler has moved farther away from the horse and into the traditional position (Lungeing position 2).

The canter is much more advanced than trot and should only be asked for once the handler is confident that the horse can maintain his line and the handler is able to pivot on 90degrees in lungeing position 2.

Structuring a Lungeing Session

As with riding, lungeing has three phases, starting with a warmup and ending with a cool down.

1. The Warmup Phase

The recommended duration of the warmup phase is approximately five minutes (split between both directions), possibly more in very cold weather.

The warmup is mostly walk, leading into trot work and walk/trot transitions.

The purpose of the warmup phase on the lunge is to prepare the horse for work, just as you would do for ridden work, when you first get on.

2. The Working Phase

The recommended duration of the working phase is approximately 10 minutes (split between both directions), depending on the fitness of the horse.

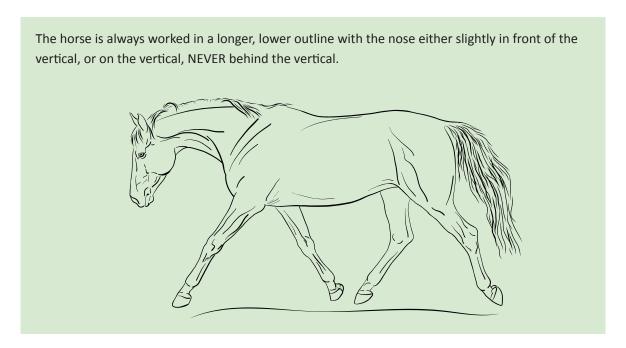
The working phase is typically mostly trot and trot/canter transitions with more canter where the horse is sufficiently fit, balanced and under control. Moments of walk can be used to reward or calm the horse, especially after strenuous work.

- To obtain calmness and response to the voice, handler position, lunge rein and whip.
- To ask the horse to move forward on the line and at the speed the handler chooses.
- To encourage the horse to work forward on a circle using all three paces.
- To use transitions, both within the pace as well as from the pace to another, to establish responses.
- To ask the horse to halt and stay outside on the circle or be able to manage the position.
- To encourage the horse to stretch forward and down, and so improving the lateral and longitudinal suppleness.
- To encourage the beginnings of correct working paces.

During the working phase on the lunge the handler will try:

- To maintain responsiveness and calmness throughout.
- To maintain a consistent contact.
- To encourage the horse to work in balance with a regular rhythm, tempo and contact.
- To regulate the rhythm and contact and establish working paces.
- To ask for bend and flexion (experienced horses and handlers will be more proficient), on the line of travel which improves lateral and longitudinal suppleness.
- To encourage correct balance and suppleness by improving the 'straightness' of the horse.
- To improve the working paces, introduce lengthened strides and work towards medium paces.
- To establish clear transitions both within the pace and from one to another.

This improves balance, introduces half halts, and encourages correct engagement and activity of hind quarters.



3. The Cool Down Phase

The recommended duration of the cool down phase is approximately five minutes (split between both directions), depending on the demands made of the horse in the working phase. The harder the work in the working phase, the longer the cool down should be.

Allow the horse to stretch forward and down in walk and trot on both reins.

The cool down should:

- Be a combination of walk and trot, tending towards walk.
- Allow the horse a soft contact to encourage relaxation and stretching down.
- Allow the horse to be active while not asking for too much forward.
- Maintain control over the size of the circle.
- Still emphasise rhythm and tempo, contact and correct bend and flexion.
- Finish by asking the horse to halt out on the circle without facing in or show management of position.

The handler should finish the lungeing session by walking out to the horse coiling/folding lunge rein as they go and folding the whip/lash backward under their arm; ready for horse to be lead away.

Session Length

- Lungeing is hard work on the horse's joints, tendons and muscles. Horses are not 'designed' to move in circles. In the wild they favour movement on straight lines or gentle arcs.
- Do not overdo lungeing. Remember 18 to 20 circuits is 1 km.
- Lunge for no more than 20 minutes.
- Overworking the horse on the lunge (or in any situation) can cause pain, injury, discomfort and fatigue which does not help set the horse up for success, and is not good for the horse's welfare.

Things to consider in a lesson

Commence the lungeing exercise by giving a **voice** command followed by raising the lunge whip for additional encouragement. If there is no response, swish the lunge whip towards the horse's shoulder. As soon as the horse responds, lower the whip and give praise. Timing is critical because raising the whip is 'pressure' and lowering it is 'release of pressure'. Ensure the horse can effectively be motivated to go forward and slow down without delays in responding. This like everything takes practice and timing.

Pressure and release the lunge rein when the horse falls outwards on the circle which makes the lunge rein tight and pulls against your hand. Avoid the horse learning to apply pressure to the lunge rein because just as with riding, we want the horse to learn to respond to pressure.

Note that continually pulling the lunge rein, waving the whip or clucking and giving voice signals when the horse is doing what the handler asked him to do will only serve to make those signals less meaningful to the horse. Maintaining the chosen circle line may be gradual with inexperienced horses and handlers. It is easier to maintain on a smaller circle, but remember that smaller circles place greater pressure on the horse's joints so they should be used sparingly and only for a minute or two.

Voice commands – when teaching voice commands, ensure the voice command comes just before the pressure (raising the whip or rein pressure for stop). Make voice commands distinct and unique for each command. Emphasise this and elongate words for clarity.

Ensure the training 'set-up' optimises success. It is best to teach horses in purpose-built round yards or temporary (but safe and secure) round yards first so that they learn to behave safely and correctly in the round yard before taking them out into the open.

Vary Session Content

- Keep lungeing interesting for the horse.
- Endless circles are of little use for anything except tiring the horse out, which can cause physical and behavioural problems.
- Do lots of transitions:
 - Transitions will help with control under saddle and the horse's response can tell you whether the horse is sensible and safe enough to get on.
 - Transitions remind the horse of go and slow responses, keep him mentally engaged and work different muscle groups.
 - Transitions are equally good to help horses that rush or are 'lazy'.
 - Vary the size of the circle, spending equal time on bringing the horse in as letting it out.
- Vary the rein length that lungeing begins from.
- Still always spend equal amounts of time on each rein.

- Incorporate straight lines:
 - Work the horse on some straight lines whilst lungeing to the effect that it can be lunged on squares, e.g use one end or corner of a dressage arena.
 - This is easier than it sounds, made possible by the handler stepping or jogging some strides to move the horse forwards and straight, then pivoting as the horse turns a 'corner'.
 - Straight lines will lessen the strain on the horse's legs caused by too much turning (especially the inside legs) and will encourage contact into the outside rein.
 - Straight lines are useful for remedying the horse that falls in.

Self-carriage

For inexperienced horses, begin at walk on a smaller circle (see Handler Position A) to use the aids more effectively and to avoid the horse learning that he can spin around and change direction.

Always focus on the tempo and rhythm of the horse so he stays at the desired speed and line, which will develop his self-carriage. As the horse learns these fundamentals of lungeing, he will begin to stay on the line of the circle and continue to do what is requested until asked otherwise. When he does that, he will be in a state of 'self-carriage'.

Equitation Science Principles and Lungeing

The principles of Equitation Science apply as much to lungeing and ground work as they do to riding or any other form of training and interacting with horses. In this section, we describe how the principles of Equitation Science apply to lungeing in particular.

Principle: Prioritise safety when around horses. Respect that horses are flight animals and can sometimes become aggressive if they feel threatened.

When lungeing with a short lunge rein, be aware the horses can swing their hindquarters and kick out. This underlies the importance of establishing control and calmness in lungeing at the walk before moving on to trot or canter and returning to a calm walk for at least a circle before stopping or changing rein.



Principle: Understand what the flight response looks like and how to manage it.

A horse exhibiting the flight response on the lunge will go faster than the handler asked, be hard or impossible to stop, be in a flight posture (head up, eyes and nostrils wide, tail high and back concave) and is likely to run off as soon as he feels some slack in the lunge rein. Handlers should avoid contributing to any of these signs of the flight response when lungeing and to also use downward transitions to slow the horse if he shows it. If the handler uses lungeing to wear out a horse that has an excess of energy or is tense, you can unintentionally be contributing to the flight response and tension or creating an association between lungeing and those things. Moreover, not all grounds, clubs, etc. allow lungeing. There are other, more effective ways of calming a horse such as the ground work described in this document.

Principle: Prioritise calmness.

Horses are much safer when arousal levels are lower, and they also learn more effectively when they are not stressed. Learn to recognise the signs that your horse is becoming tense or stressed so that you know when to stop and how to prevent stress escalating into something uncontrollable like the flight response. Before using a lunge whip around your horse, habituate him to having it moving near and on him so that he does not react with fear.

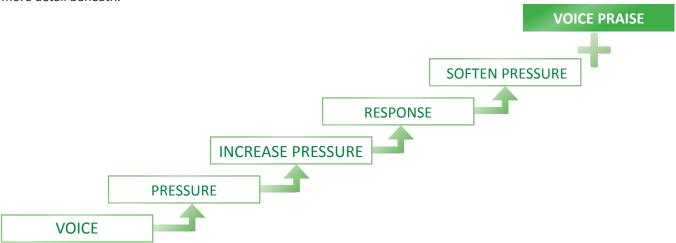
Principle: Horses think differently.

While horses have an excellent memory for places objects, other horses, people and stimuli that induce reactions, they do not have a recall memory as we do where we can recall details of events like replaying a video. The horse lives in the present moment and we need to be cautious about thinking that the horse knows what he has done wrong, feels guilty about something and humanistic thinking like that. Similarly, the horse has no idea of a circle and endlessly using lungeing to teach the horse to do a circle is pointless and can be physically damaging. On the other hand, transitions on the lunge train the horse to maintain a rhythm and at the same time to respond to increasingly light aids. While there may be some worth in the viewpoint that a circle can help teach a horse to flex and bend, the precise shape and lateral balance of the horse is difficult to achieve on the lunge compared to under saddle.

Principle: Always be consistent.

This means to use the same voice, same signals, and body posture. Horses are very quick to learn to associate your body language with their behaviour, good or bad.

Train effectively using learning principles and their proper sequence, as shown in the diagram below and discussed in more detail beneath.



Appendix 1:

Ground Work

When training in hand and leading your horse, there are two positions that are used.

Position 1 for Ground work

Position 1 is used when training or retraining basic attempt or response to signals. It allows the handler to see every movement that the horse makes which helps the handler to reinforce the correct responses with greater accuracy.

- Stand on the horse's near side facing him.
- Ensure you are beside the horse, never in front, in case he gets a fright and jumps forward or strikes with front legs.
- Reins/lead rope are held in left hand about 15cm from his chin.
- Long whip is held in right hand pointing to the ground ready for use.



Position 2 for Ground work

Position 2 is used when leading the horse.

- Face forward (same direction as horse), standing on his near side, next to his cheek.
- The handler's feet should be about one metre or less from the horse's hooves.
- Hold the reins/lead rope softly in the right hand, at most 15cm from the horse's chin, with excess in the left hand.
- The lunge whip should be in the left hand facing downwards (neutral).



It is important for the handler to learn how to quickly and easily switch between positions and for the horse to be habituated to the handler doing so.



Use Of The Whip For Ground Work

For ground work, the whip becomes an extension of the handler's arm, so they can communicate directly with the horse's body whilst maintaining a safe position relative to the horse. The whip should never be used with aggression and never with the intention to hurt the horse.

Before starting the session, ensure that your horse is not frightened of the whip by rubbing it gently all over him while keeping him standing still. He should be comfortable with it being used on both sides of his body.

The whip is used to motivate the horse with annoying pressure that is hard to ignore. The taps should not be hard, but fast, with no more than one second between taps. The pressure must cease as soon as the horse offers the correct response.

The whip should be reasonably stiff. This will ensure the taps are more accurate. It should be light and balanced.

The correct whip holding technique will ensure the handler can deliver the tapping quickly and effectively. Please refer to the images on this page for guidance.







For training Step Back

For training Forward

For forward, tap behind the girth. If that is not possible, tap the shoulder





For training Step Back

For training Forward



Training the ground work responses

When doing ground work, it is important to recognise that there is a great potential for confusing the horse if the handler's legs move before you apply the aid. For example, if the handler stops their feet before they apply the aid with the rein pressure to ask the horse to stop, the horse will learn to stop by copying the handler's feet – not from the stop aid. By doing that, the horse never fully learns the most basic of the stop aids which risks both his and the handler's safety. You must avoid this scenario to keep the horse's training as clear as possible and to make sure that what the handler teaches the horse from the ground will translate to when a rider is in the saddle. The importance of not allowing the horse to copy what the handler's feet do will become clear to them when learning how to teach a horse 'park' from the ground.

Stop, Step Back, Slow

The ground work aids for Stop/Step Back/Slow are the most important of all the ground work responses as they help keep the handler safe by preventing the flight response or hyper-reactive behaviour's e.g. jumping about, biting. striking, going sideways and/or pushing forward.

Training Step Back coincidentally trains all the downward transitions because the important muscles in the horse's chest that are used for slowing are prioritised in stepping back. So training Step Back from the reins deepens the Stop response from the reins which also helps in riding, as well as lungeing. The handler should train Step Back first as it makes a horse much safer to handle.

Begin in Position 1. Remember again, only a single step is initially necessary to offer a reward. The aid for stepping back in ground work is pressure on the reins towards the base of the horse's neck (in a similar direction as when riding). If the rein pressure does not produce a response, the handler can combine light rein pressure with a tapping of a cannon bone on the horse's foreleg (choose the one that stands more forward as it is easier for him to move it). Alternatively, if he is standing square, choose the cannon of either leg. It is important to tap the same place on the cannon bones to make the signal and response easier for the horse to acquire.

Repeat this process until the horse steps back from a light rein aid. He usually learns this very fast. If the horse does step back quickly from a light pressure, ask the horse to step backward using rein pressure a few times in close succession. Reward with scratches. Now ask for more steps backward and as soon as the horse becomes heavy on the reins, (e.g. after three or so steps), increase the rein pressure or tap the leg that is about to leave the ground, softening the rein or ceasing to tap as soon as he steps back again. In a very short time, the horse will learn to step back many steps from a single light rein aid, so long as the handler is consistent.

Horses are very good at learning what comes first, so be careful that you do not move your feet before asking for the horse to step back with the use of rein aid or tapping. Also be aware that if you have a habit of making a cluck with your tongue to send the horse forward, that you do not 'out of habit' use this when asking the horse to step back. It can create confusion in the horse.

Always reward any and all attempts. From little things, big things grow!





Most horses like having their wither scratched.

Go Forward

Begin in **Position 1**. Apply pressure with the reins in the direction you want the horse to go. Use the minimum pressure that achieves the response of walking forward. This is another reason why the handler should not be standing directly in front of the horse, blocking his path. Release the pressure on the reins as soon as the horse walks forward and provide a reward such as a scratch or treat. If the horse's response is slow, repeat the halt to walk transitions and if still no improvement, introduce the tapping of whip (on rib cage). The ideal place to tap is on the horse's rib cage, where the mounted rider's leg would be. This will help him associate the whip 'go forward' pressure when under saddle. If the handler is unable to reach the rib cage, tap on the shoulder (near horse's brand). However, tapping the shoulder is also used for 'moving the forehand'. If the handler taps on the same place for 'go forward' as well as 'moving the forehand' we should be aware of the potential confusion here from the horse's point of view. In such cases the handler should choose different parts of the shoulder to tap for the different responses (e.g. higher up and lower down the shoulder).

The taps will be light and increase in speed until the horse steps forward. If an alternative response like stepping back or sideways is shown, continue tapping until the handler get a forward step, then stop tapping and reward by rubbing his neck, or scratching his wither.

Continue practising until the horse responds to minimal light taps, then reintroduce the rein pressure. Apply a light rein pressure.

When the handler moves from ground work to lungeing, the handler may not be close enough to use rein pressure or whip taps. That's why it is helpful to help the horse associate walking on with a voice command. Once the horse understands the aid applied to him for go forward then the handler introduce their voice command "Walk On".

Consistency of these voice commands is vital when lungeing.

It is now the time to turn and face the other way (**Position 2** right). Using pressure and release, the handler can now work on the horse's speed, going slower and faster and remaining on the chosen line. These qualities will be important when the horse begins lungeing as he is more likely to remain out on the circle while maintaining the controlled tempo requested by the handler.



Park

Once Stop and Go are established it is time to train the horse to stand still. This will assist the handler when lungeing, as it means the horse will remain still when you adjust his gear, or after asking him to stop out on the circle.

Training Park also improves safety when around a horse. It makes it easier to groom, rug, shoe, and clip. It creates calmness in the horse.

To train Park, begin in Position 1. Then step away from the horse. If the horse steps forward towards the handler or sideways, he should be immediately stepped back to his original position. Always do this calmly and with no hint of anger. The handler's calmness will help his calmness. As soon as the horse remains immobile reinforce him with praising and stroking. This will greatly increase the chance of success.

After success with a few steps away from the horse, the handler can then try to move toward the end of the rein or lead. Again, correct the horse if he misinterprets and moves forward or sideways. Continue to go in and out and reward often. Soon the horse will realise that he is not required to follow the handler. This is also learned very fast if the handler are consistent.

To extend the Park even further, the handler can progress to moving away from horse in a semi-circle. As the handler moves to the offside, for some horses this is unusual, and they will move. Some horses may have been taught to 'face up' to people and always turn their body to face people. If this is the case, the handler will need to be patient as the horse learns that it is OK to allow a human to walk past or along their sides. Keep practising and rewarding. If necessary, go back to the near side and regain the horse's confidence before trying the semi-circle while holding the end of the reins. It will be almost as if the horse is lungeing the handler!

If the handler keeps practising, they will soon be able to move away, a little past the horse on both sides while he stands still.









Moving the Forehand

This ground work exercise requires the horse to respond to slight pressure on the shoulder by taking a step sideways with his front legs, while his hind legs remain in the same position. It will become useful when lungeing as the handler will be able to use this training to ensure the horse stays out on their own line. Should the horse fall in, the handler has a technique to which the horse can respond, and a correction can be made. This exercise will also assist the handler when asking for a change in direction.

To teach the horse to move the forehand, the handler stands in Position 1. This will help discourage the horse from moving forward. With the hand that is closest to the horse's nose, hold the rein or lead rope about 15cm from the horse's chin. This will ensure the handler can correct him if he tries to walk forward only (rather than sideways), but also provide slack for when the horse moves away. There will of course be a little bit of stepping forward because the horse will tend to move both forward and sideways.

To ask the horse to move his forehand, lightly tap the air with the whip in rhythm and then add annoying taps on the lower part of the horse's shoulder until the horse moves a small step sideways away from the handler. The tapping of the air with the whip pre-trains the horse to respond sideways when the lungeing whip is pointed toward the horse's shoulder, should the horse fall-in or make the circle too small.

Reward immediately as a correct attempt is provided. If the horse steps forward only, stop him and ask again. Should the horse step forward persistently, step him back a step and then ask him to yield his forehand again.



AskAnkitoshiovecthe the shoulder



Horse responding to the whip by moving the foreleg Horse respersional toethe waip hip

If the horse goes backwards, follow him until he stops and then immediately ask for the shoulder yield again. Reward only when correct response is achieved.

As always, when not used for tapping, the whip is pointed to the ground so as to be neutral, but raised again when you need to correct the horse. The photo at right shows the whip in neutral position.



Head Down

Lowering the horse's head further deepens the training of the yield to pressure. It is calming due to its effect on blood pressure and consequently heart rate, lowering when the head is lower than the withers.

To train the horse to lower his head from downward pressure of the rein, apply gently pulsing pressure downwards, then release the pressure the instant the horse lowers even just a little. It is important that the handler does not release the pressure until the horse lowers his head, even if only marginally. This is to train the 'basic attempt'. Eventually, the horse should be trained to lower his nose to the ground.

The handler can also train head down with a lungeing cavesson or head collar. The pressure will then be on the nose of the horse, rather than the mouth.

Final progression is that the horse keeps his head and neck straight and lowers his head with a light touch all the way to the ground.

Note: be sure that the reason the handler wants to lower the horse's head and make them calm is not because of deficits in the handler's training that are the cause of stress (or pain for that matter). That is why the handler should ensure that the horse is good at Stop, Go and Park before 'head down'.





Ask Yield

ASK



Reward

Appendix 2:

Ancillary Equipment

Side reins are an ancillary aid for lungeing and should only be used at Pony Club® under expert guidance in Proficiency Testing situations for B and A certificate levels.

There are other lungeing aids (besides side reins) for use as ancillary equipment when lungeing. Ancillary equipment is for training in a controlled environment carried out by, or supervised by, experienced handlers.

Ancillary equipment including Chambon, Pessoa, Draw Reins, De Gogue, Market Harborough and Side Reins are NOT Permitted at Pony Club® or Pony Club® events.

Please refer to the Pony Club Australia National Gear Rules at https://ponyclubaustralia.com.au/sports/national-gear-rules/

All lungeing aids are easily abused

Do not use an aid if you do not know all about its use. Like all aids, their purpose is to solve a problem (which in many cases is actually a symptom of a training deficit). If the aid has 'worked', it should then be removed. Remember that you can't take non-approved lungeing aids to a Pony Club® certificate assessment, a rally, muster or event, so never rely on a lungeing aid to do the work you should be striving to achieve by good equitation.

Moreover, some lungeing aids hold the horse in a restrictive position. Not only can this be dangerous if the horse loses his footing but holding muscles in a fixed position can lead to pain, injury and muscle damage.

Research has proven that strengthening the horse's back is best done with no gadgets.

Rhythmic, balanced, steady lungeing will get the best results.

Appendix 3:

Long Reining

Long reining is not included in this guide, but the following outline of competencies is provided for A certificate candidates.

The horse must be lungeing and working correctly at all three paces and in both directions before introducing long reining.

Contact your State Coach to obtain a list of suitable mentors with experience in long reining.

Candidates at the A certificate level are expected to:

- · Demonstrate a good understanding of the reasons for long reining
- The steps of long reining
- · Equipment use when long reining
- Sound knowledge of the safety issues which must be observed
- Explain what a safe and suitable long reining area would look like
- · Explain process involved with starting off a young horse including mouthing, use of breeching strap
- Demonstrate the accepted rein positions
- · Work on two reins, with the second rein being around the hindquarters or across the horse's back
- Explain how the horse is familiarised to the outside rein
- Explain what precautions have been taken
- Candidate may use an assistant if required



Appendix 4:

Preparing for a Practical Assessment Day

Lungeing skills will be assessed from C*/K Certificate levels.

It is important to spend time with a mentor who can work with you to improve your skills of lungeing well before your assessment day. Often candidates misjudge the amount of time they need to spend preparing and training their horse to ensure a successful outcome. If a schoolmaster is not available to use, plenty of time must be set aside to teach your horse how to correctly lunge. Starting from ground work level is the key to success.

NOTE: Always have well-fitting and well-maintained equipment with which you are familiar. Do not arrive for your assessment with equipment that you have not tried and tested earlier.



Appendix 5:

Lungeing Assessment Check Lists

All candidates to have suitable gloves, footwear and an approved helmet.

REQUIREMENTS	C*/K)	В	А
Discuss the reasons for lungeing	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Discuss correct and safe attire and tack for lungeing			
Assessor will be looking for:			
Handler to wear compliant helmet and clothing.	✓	\checkmark	✓
 Use of correctly fitted cavesson, placement of reins, correctly fitted roller or saddle with secured stirrups. Adequate Length of lunge rein and whip. 	✓	✓	✓
Demonstrate correct and safe lungeing practices			
Assessor will be looking for:			
 Handler's control of the rein, safe lunge rein length with no loops, safe and correct use of whip. 	✓	✓	✓
Walk and trot only in both directions with even contact on rein	\checkmark	✓	✓
Giving clear and consistent commands	✓	✓	✓
Halt horse on command	✓	✓	✓
Know the principles, benefits and potential dangers of lungeing			
Assessor will look for:			
 More in-depth knowledge of advantages of lungeing and examples of when lungeing is not appropriate. 		✓	✓
Present the horse to lunge with correctly fitted gear			
Assessor will be looking for:			
 Snaffle bridle to be used including reins correctly secured but no noseband; plus correctly fitted lungeing cavesson with jowl strap and rings. 		✓	✓
Boots or bandages should be used.		✓	✓
Lunge whip must be of the correct length and in good condition.		√	✓
Lunge rein to be of suitable length and thickness.		✓	✓



Present the horse to lunge with correctly fitted gear (continued)		
 Present the horse to lunge with saddle with stirrups correctly secured or roller may be used 	✓	✓
 Demonstration how to correctly attach side reins and explain when the could and should not be used as a training aid 	✓	✓
Discuss use of ancillary equipment including purpose and benefits	✓	✓
Demonstrate warm up and cool down on the lunge with no side reins		
Assessor will be looking for:		
Maintaining contact	\checkmark	✓
 Handler's position and what position to use when lungeing green or flighty horses. 	✓	✓
Size of circle	\checkmark	✓
Rhythm and tempo	✓	✓
Demonstrate control of the horse at walk, trot and canter in work session		
Assessor will be looking for:		
Handler's position consistent	✓	✓
Strong and consistent voice commands	✓	✓
Horse's head position to be in front of the vertical	✓	✓
Change rein effectively and safely		✓
Work horse on both reins		✓
Demonstrate change of tempo within pace		✓
 Increase and decrease stride in walk, trot and canter and show slow and medium trot 		✓
Long reining		
Assessor will be looking for:		
Correctly fit roller, bridle and long reins		✓
Discuss how to begin long rein training		✓
Demonstrate long reining on both sides at walk and trot		



Notes	



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