



The American Driving Society, Inc.

Driving Aids Compared to Riding Aids

We use our hands on the reins to communicate with the horse when we drive much the same as we do when we ride, but the other aids we use to drive are not as similar.

As in riding, we use the reins to give direction and shape the posture (frame). Because the reins run through the terrets, we are not as easily able to use an indirect rein or an open rein as we are in riding, but we can still follow the “inside leg to outside rein” concept by using the whip in place of our leg. Teaching the driving horse to respond to the whip as he would respond to the leg (by touching him in the same area your leg would hang if you were riding) gives you much more communication than the reins alone. Our voice plays a much bigger role in driving than it usually does in riding; you are able to talk to your horse in all phases of driving competition and actually scored on it in the collective remarks of a driven dressage test. Some horses can develop quite a large vocabulary and increase our communication with our horse even more than just the reins and whip.



Photo credit: Jane Wilson

Produced by the ADS Education Committee, May 2020

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