

DRESSAGE, EVENTING, HUNTERS, JUMPERS

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PRACTICAL HORSEMAN

EXTRA

POLISH YOUR JUMPING ROUNDS

50 Health Tips

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POLISH YOUR JUMPING ROUNDS

Upper-level event rider Sinead Halpin shares her favorite cavalletti exercise to keep your horse confident.

BY SINEAD HALPIN • PHOTOS BY AMY K. DRAGOO

Compared to riding cross country, show jumping is difficult for a lot of eventers. On cross country, you can relax and get into the flow of the gallop, which helps establish a forward pace. You are riding at speed, collecting for technical obstacles and then galloping again so your horse engages his hind legs often. A forward and engaged pace makes it easier for him to jump well.

In show jumping, the fences tend to come up more

quickly and you need to support your horse by creating a quality canter in which he is going forward but is also engaged and collected. To establish that quality canter quickly in the show arena, I'll share a favorite cavalletti exercise that I often use to begin jump schools. I can easily adapt the exercise for specific horses and my students depending on their experience level.

The Exercise

The exercise is a straight line of four raised trot poles and three single canter cavalletti spaced on a circle (see diagram, page 4). You'll approach the poles on a straight line at the posting trot, trot over them, immediately start turning toward the first cavalletti and pick up the canter. Then, you'll canter over the first cavalletti and continue turning to canter over the next two cavalletti. After the third cavalletti, you'll bring your horse back to the trot and trot over the raised poles again.

▶ I'm riding Cutty Sark, a 14-year-old Canadian-bred Dutch Warmblood gelding owned by Linda Ackermann and myself, over an exercise that includes trotting over four raised trot poles and cantering three cavalletti on a circle. This helps create an engaged and collected, but forward, canter needed for quality show-jumping rounds.

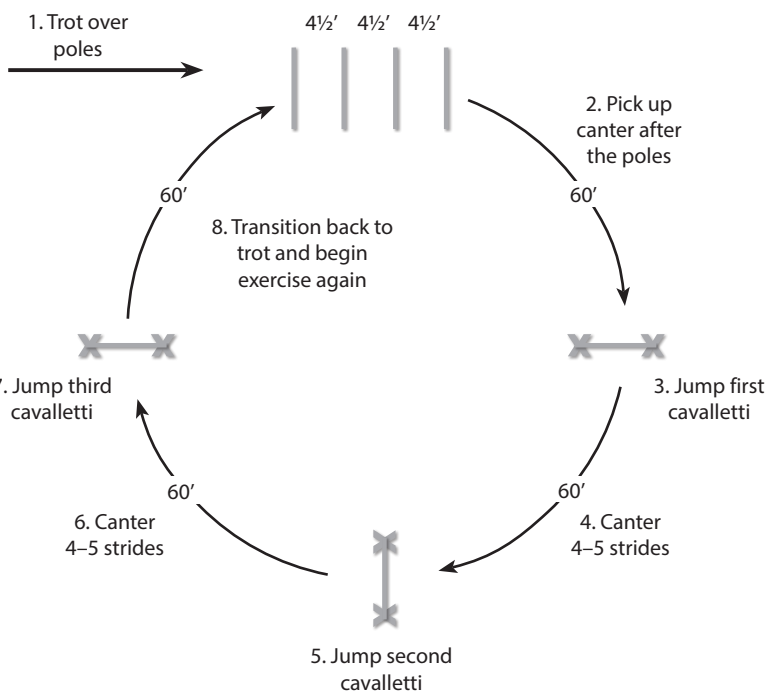


This exercise gives you all the skills you need to execute a great show-jumping round or a great cross-country round without implementing height. If you or your horse make mistakes (and you both will because the first few times through the cavalletti come up very quickly), you can sort through them without losing confidence.

The Benefits

The exercise allows you and your horse to work on and improve many skills. It:

- **Fine-tunes your horse's longitudinal (back-to-front) flexibility** during the upward transition from trot to canter and the downward transition from canter to trot. You also practice longitudinal suppleness when you increase the difficulty of the exercise by asking your horse to shorten his canter stride to add strides among the canter cavalletti or lengthen to leave out strides.
- **Encourages lateral suppleness (bending):** You can tell if your horse is a little weaker in one direction if he comes around a turn with his haunches shifted out or in. The haunches are the horse's engine and if the engine is not lined up with the steering-wheel (his shoulders), the power will be compromised, which impacts jumping clear rounds. Also, by practicing the exercise in both directions, you can increase your horse's overall physical suppleness.
- **Helps you keep your horse in front of your leg:** There is not a lot of time for the upward and downward transitions so your horse must be in front of your leg and on the aids.
- **Requires you to keep your eye looking ahead and planning your route:** Being able to ride by feel and looking where you're going is so important. Many people, myself included,



SETUP

Set four raised cavalletti trot poles on a straight line, 3 to 4 feet apart. Walk or measure four strides on a curve and place a single cavalletti (so from the center of the last trot pole to the center of the single cavalletti the distance is about 60 feet). Continue walking four strides on a turn to set the second and third cavalletti. The actual number of strides that you ride isn't critical at first. As you advance, you will change the number of strides by jumping different tracks—the center track, the inside track or the outside track.

like to fix a problem and then look to the next thing. In show jumping, you have to be able to feel the problem and address it while still looking where you're going. If you're late fixing a problem and already to the next fence, you're dragging the problem with you. In this exercise, if you're looking down at a canter cavalletti while riding over it, you're going to be late getting to the next one. You might



ABOUT SINEAD HALPIN

*Sinead Halpin is an international event rider and trainer and has been competing at the top levels of the sport since 1999. She was on the U.S. eventing team for the 2014 World Equestrian Games in Normandy, France, aboard Manoir de Carneville, the U.S. Equestrian Federation 2012 Horse of the Year. Aboard "Tate," Sinead had several top-10 results at the five-star level, most notably finishing second at the 2012 Burghley Horse Trials CCI****. A U.S. Eventing Association ICP III Certified Trainer, Sinead and her husband, Tik Maynard, operate their training business out of Copperline Farm in Citra, Florida. They welcomed their son, Brooks, in 2018, and their daughter, Violet, in 2022.*



HOW TO RIDE THE EXERCISE

1. In posting trot, I approach the center of the four raised trot poles. I lead a little with my inside hip so that my horse will lead with his inside hip and turn on his inside hind leg to help his haunches stay in line with his shoulders. I begin to post extra high to help him cover the ground higher over the cavalletti. When Cutty Sark is straight to the poles, I will look toward the first canter cavalletti.

2. Riding over the raised trot poles, I plan a route with my eyes that will put us on an outside track to the first canter cavalletti. This track gives a little more time to get organized and pick up the canter. I'm careful not to look down or turn my whole body as

I look, which could negatively influence my or Cutty Sark's balance.

3. After trotting over the final trot pole, I immediately ask Cutty Sark to pick up a right-lead canter. I follow the outside track to the first cavalletti, maintaining a leading right hip, opening the right rein and bending my outside left knee to keep his haunches from drifting out of the line. As soon as I'm on track to this first cavalletti, I look at the next cavalletti.

4. As Cutty Sark canters over the cavalletti on the outside track, I look at the second cavalletti. If you're looking down while jumping the cavalletti, you're going

to be late getting to the next one. You might overreact to a distance that is a little longer or shorter, whereas if you can keep your eye looking ahead, then the rhythm starts to even out. At this stage, I am more interested in the quality of the canter, not the number of strides we will do.

5. As Cutty Sark steps over the second cavalletti, I stay tall with a soft but steady feel of his mouth. I continue looking around the circle toward the third cavalletti. After riding over the third cavalletti, I'll ride a downward transition to trot by relaxing my leg and stopping the swing in my hips while staying tall. Keeping my eye on the raised trot poles, I'll repeat the exercise.

overreact to a distance that is a little longer or shorter whereas if you can keep your eye flowing and looking ahead, then the rhythm starts to smooth out.

• **Helps to identify your horse's strengths:** There are a lot of bending six- and seven-stride lines in show-jumping courses

these days. You have to be able to decide which is better for your horse: staying on the inside track and riding six strides so he remains focused and straight or staying on the outside track and riding seven strides so you have one more second to get coordinated and help him jump a good





INCREASE THE DIFFICULTY

Once you have a feel for the exercise, you can start to play around with the track. Riding the inside track over the first, second and third cavalletti in four strides to four strides increases the difficulty of the exercise because you have less time to organize your horse.

fence. This is an opportunity to get to know your horse and see which track is easier for him. Then if you come across this while walking a course at your next event, you'll know which line is better suited for your horse.

Set four raised trot poles on a straight line, 3 to 4 feet apart. For younger horses, I put the poles on the lowest setting, which is basically the height of a pole on the ground. As the horse advances, I raise the poles, going no higher than 18 inches. Then walk or measure four strides on a curve and set a second cavalletti (so from the center of the last trot pole to the center of the first cavalletti the distance is about 60 feet). Start with a height of 18 inches. Continue walking four strides on a turn to set the second and third cavalletti. The actual number of strides that you ride isn't critical when you first ride the exercise.

How to Ride It

Review the diagram on page 4 to set up the exercise. Then determine your goal for the exercise. If your horse is young and you and/or he are green, your goal for the exercise might be to be able to pick up the trot smoothly, pick up the canter, return to trot quietly to the trot poles when you ask him to and stay on the track. If he's a little awkward here or there, it's no big deal. For a more advanced horse, you might decide to adjust the number of strides between each cavalletti to work on his range of flexibility. Much of this is being thoughtful about the progress and having the right mindset.

Next, warm up your horse so he is mentally and physically ready to accept your aids. Once you start to ride the exercise, the elements come up quickly and he needs to be listening to you. If he's a hot Thoroughbred, you might have to work on his mental suppleness in the warm-up—spend 10 or 15 minutes letting him trot and canter around the field a little bit loose in a light seat so that you can then sit down and collect. If he's a big, quiet warmblood, you might have to work on physical suppleness—take some time making sure he's in front of your leg.

Once your horse is warmed up on the flat, trot the whole exercise once or twice to get the feel of the circle. Practice the following:

- As you approach the four trot poles at the posting trot, post

extra high so you spend more time in the air during your post. This will help your horse cover the ground higher over the trot poles. Count “one—two, one—two” so you don’t hurry—he doesn’t need to cover ground faster, just higher.

- When you are straight to the poles, look beyond them to the first canter cavalletti with just your eyes. As soon as you are on track to your first cavalletti, look to the second cavalletti and repeat to the third cavalletti. This helps you rely on feel, rhythm and timing. This also helps you smoothly get your line to the next cavalletti, and then onto the next one, etc.

As you look to the next element of the exercise, be careful not to turn your whole body. If you turn your body, it will influence your horse’s balance in a negative way. Also, do not look down as you go over the trot poles—this can lead you to anticipate when your horse is going to leave the ground. This will cause you to lose your balance and often leads to getting left behind or jumping ahead.

- Stay centered in your position over the trot poles, and as you come through the turns to each canter cavalletti, almost lead with your inside hip because you want your horse’s inside hip to be leading as well and him to be turning on his inside leg. This helps keep his engine underneath him so he has power, and you can steer better. If you drop your inside hip, your horse is most likely doing the same, which will push his haunches to the outside of the track.

When you are comfortable trotting over the entire exercise, try trotting the four poles and cantering the three cavalletti and remember that your eyes have to keep flowing around the circle to what’s next while executing the transitions in the exercise:

- As you straighten your horse to the trot poles, post extra high and with just your eyes, pick the outside track to the first canter cavalletti. This will give yourself an extra stride to get organized.
- When your horse goes over the last trot pole, immediately ask him to pick up the canter (within two strides) and stay on the outside track. If you are going to the right, ask for the

right lead canter with a leading right hip, slightly opening right rein for the turn and bend your outside knee to keep the haunches from drifting out of the line. Bending your knee will place your calf slightly back to help keep the haunches in. Keep this position over the canter cavalletti.

- As soon as you feel your track is set to the first canter cavalletti, pick the outside track to the second canter cavalletti.
- Let your horse step over the first canter cavalletti. Stay tall with your position—think of the cavalletti as an elevated canter step, not necessarily a jump.



WRONG

You don’t want to look down at the trot cavalletti as I’m doing here because you’ll be late getting to the first cavalletti and because it makes you anticipate when your horse is going to leave the ground, which could lead you to jump ahead or fall behind.

- Repeat the process to the second and third cavalletti.
- Try to get to the third canter cavalletti to allow him to jump it quietly so the downward transition on the landing side is easier.
- Once over the third canter cavalletti, ask for the downward transition to trot: Take your leg off and stop the swing in your hip while staying tall to stay balanced.
- Trot to the center of the trot-pole line and repeat the exercise. Then reverse and ride through the exercise in the opposite direction. With my upper-level horses, I tend to ride through exercises until I am consistently riding it correctly. On the greener horses, I stop once I feel they are comfortable and thoughtful in the exercise, not rushing or anxious about the poles.

Work Through Mistakes

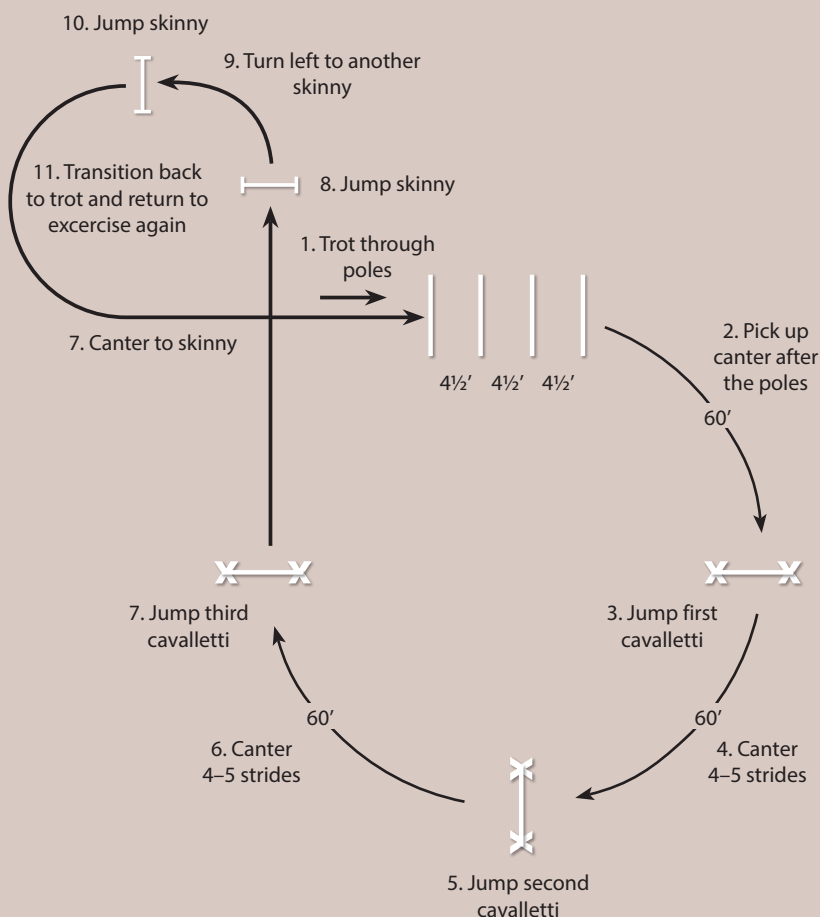
You’ll ride through this exercise

at least three times without feeling like you and your horse are in a blender—and that’s OK. As a rider, being OK with making some mistakes is good. The first time through, your horse may trip over the trot poles or cavalletti. Most horses aren’t impressed by a cavalletti, so they can get awkward. Support your horse by focusing on the next element in the exercise.

Also, think about practicing your cross-country skills. When you get in a jam on cross country, your instinct should be to slip your reins and get a little back in the tack instead of jumping ahead. In this exercise, if your horse

VARIATIONS

Often I scatter some jumps—skinnies, oxers or a little one-stride combination—around this exercise so that I can turn out and come back in. So I'll trot over the trot poles, ride over the three canter cavalletti and then instead of turning right to do the trot poles again, I stay straight and jump a skinny, then turn left to a second skinny and keep cantering around the corner and return to trot and come back through the exercise again. I don't add a lot of jumps that have height to them. As I ride through the exercise, I maintain an engaged, collected quality canter.



makes a little mistake, slip the rein a bit and come to the back part of the saddle. I think that a horse is always going to forgive you a little more if you're slightly behind the motion rather than slightly ahead of it.

Making mistakes gives you a good chance to just lean into the struggle. Nothing irritates me more than when the horse trips or something goes wrong and the rider pulls out of the exercise to collect herself to go back in again. Stay in the exercise and figure it out. That's why the cavalletti are small and insig-


nificant—your horse will have time to recover from a mistake and can continue to build his confidence.

Returning to the trot poles gives you and your horse time to reset yourselves and regroup if you've made a mistake. A common exercise is to have four canter cavalletti on a circle, which everyone jokes about but is like a circle of death. When you're doing it, you feel like when something goes wrong, it goes *really* wrong.

For this exercise with the four trot poles, when you make a mistake, realize that there are two things you can change—your track and your speed. Then it's just figuring out which one is going to help you the most. Do you need to stay a little on the outside track to recover or do you need to get your horse back in front of your leg and get into the inside track? Make sure you commit to staying in the exercise and thinking on your feet.

Increase the Difficulty

Once you are comfortable riding the exercise on the outside track in both directions, start to play with the number of strides that you do from the first to the second canter cavalletti and the second to the third. Stay on the outside track and ride the lines in five strides to five strides. Then ride the center line among the three canter cavalletti in a quieter five strides to five strides. Next, ride the inside track in four strides to four strides. As your horse moves up the levels, alternate the tracks each time through. Ride it in five to five strides, then immediately go back through in four to four and ride it a third time in five to five.

Once you start schooling your Intermediate and Advanced horses, practice mixing up those distances within the same pass. Ride a five to a four line or a four to a five line and back to the trot poles and then do the same thing in the other direction. 



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50 Tips to Be a Better Horseperson

HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT

*Insights from veterinarians, farriers and stable managers
on keeping your horse healthy and happy*

BY JOCELYN PIERCE

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Over the last five decades, veterinary care and best practices for horse health and management have undergone extraordinary advancements, driven by improvements in technology and research methods. Since the first issue in January 1973, *Practical Horseman* has informed readers of the latest findings and developments so they can provide the best possible care for their horses. Nutrition guidelines, fly protection, corrective shoeing—you name it, *PH* has covered it.

One common piece of advice remained the same throughout

the years: Know your horse and what's normal for him so you can detect problems before they become serious. This means making regular checks part of your routine. Take his pulse, respiration and temperature. Study him for bites, scrapes, loose shoes, and do a thorough check of all four legs. Many experts also stressed the importance of having working relationships with your veterinarian and farrier so that should trouble arise, your horse's team will be best prepared to help. And in an emergency, the more information you can provide, the better your veterinarian will be able to advise you.

On the following pages are some of our favorite horse health tips from the last 50 years.





Tip 2

AMY K. DRAGOO

GROOMING

1 “When you brush the legs, hold the brush lengthwise, or pointing down the leg; in this way you put all the bristles to work with each stroke.”

—Susan Harris, *Grooming Your Horse*, January 1980

2 “Bang his tail every two months to prevent split ends and tangles and to encourage faster growth.”

—Teresa Skidmore, *Drop-Dead Gorgeous Tail!*, February 1998

3 “Where I find hair ruffled from sleeping, I dampen my short-bristled mane brush in water, shake off excess, and brush in the direction of hair, over and over, until it lies flat. The more mussed the hair, the wetter I want my brush. A brush works better here than a sponge, which would get the hair wet but wouldn’t affect the hair’s direction.”

—Jo Long, *A Spic ‘N’ Span Horse In Twenty Minutes—Honest*, May 2002

4 “Many people conclude a grooming with a quick ‘going over’ with the rub rag. To me, this is neither firmly nor thoroughly enough. I spend more time with the rub rag—at least three to five minutes per side—than with any of my other grooming tools. And I don’t just save it for show time; I use it every time I groom. Apply quite a bit of pressure with each stroke of the rag, always following the direction of the hair growth. Your horse will love it!”

—Laurie Pitts, *Groom Like the Greats*, April 2008

5 “One of the main goals of bathing is to bring out the beautiful shine of a horse’s coat. Using an apple cider vinegar rinse after rinsing the shampoo off your horse is great for this. It cuts the soap residue and also helps to repel bugs.”

—Laurie Pitts, *Bathe Your Horse Beautiful*, Summer 2020

LAMENESS

6 “The knee and fetlock of a sound horse should flex until the shoe touches the elbow; if it can’t, movement is somehow being restricted.”

—Dr. Michael Collier, *Which Leg is Lame?*, November 1983

7 “The one thing I wish everyone whose horse has performance problems would do is slide the saddle back 3 inches and see what happens. Most horses—in every sport, with the possible exception of some dressage horses—wear their saddles too far forward.”

—Joyce Harman, DVM, MRCVS, *Seat of the Problem?*, January 1994

8 “Weight-bearing lameness—which causes pain when the horse puts his foot down—is about nine times more common than swinging-leg lameness, which causes pain when the leg advances. This is especially true for horses that jump. Weight-bearing lamenesses include foot bruises, navicular syndrome, hoof abscesses, suspensory tears, and fractures. Swinging-leg conditions generally involve pulls or tears in the muscles that move the legs.”

—Elizabeth Hammer, DVM, with Elaine Pascoe, *Which Leg is Lame?*, April 1994

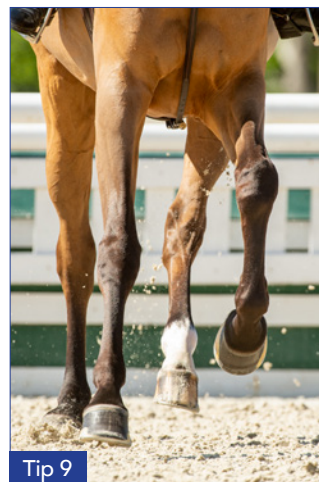
9 “Most lamenesses involve the front legs; of those lamenesses, most involve the foot.”

—John Herning, DVM, *Five Degrees of Lameness*, May 1994

10 [On checking tendons for injuries]: “Your hands are much more sensitive to temperature than you might think. They can accurately pick up variations of a tenth of a degree. The way to confirm your findings? If a tendon on the right leg feels warmer than usual to your right hand, check it again with your left hand. Compare the right tendon to the left. The opposite leg is always your ‘control’ unless something’s going on there as well.”

—Mark Rick, DVM, with Kip Goldreyer, *Keep Tabs on Tendons*, June 2005

11 “By regularly and systematically observing your horse, you’ll learn what’s normal for him, and you’ll be able to quickly



Tip 9

AMY K. DRAGOO

recognize when something isn't right. Monitoring subtle changes, recognizing patterns of soreness and taking action at the appropriate time are the keys to keeping your horse sound."

—Tim Ober, DVM, with Elaine Pascoe, *Hands-On Health Check*, April 2008

12 "The dynamics of a horse's motion occur on a diagonal, so tightness in the left poll can reflect a problem in the right hind and vice versa. And because your horse's body works as a unit that strives for balance, tight poll muscles can also be a secondary issue."

—Jo-Ann Wilson with Sandra Cooke, *The Problem Could Be His Poll*, January 2013

13 "Degenerative joint disease cannot be cured. However, you can manage the symptoms and potentially slow the progression of the disease ... The primary goals when treating osteoarthritis are to reduce inflammation in order to slow the degradative process and subsequently provide the horse with some pain relief."

—Leslie Threlkeld with Dane Tatarniuk, DVM, MS, DACVSLA, and Patrick Loftin, DVM, MS, *Combating Joint Disease*, September 2017

HOOF HEALTH

14 "White hooves are no softer or weaker than black hooves. There is no difference between the chemical makeup and white feet and black feet, other than the added pigment in the dark hooves' outer layer that gives them their color. Black hooves are of the same quality and have just as many problems as white."

—Vance Glenn, *Are White Feet Weaker?*, September 2001

15 "An abscess won't heal unless it drains. Some abscesses find their own way out at the frog, heel or coronary band, where you'll see a linear crack surrounded by swelling. But don't wait for this to happen; in most cases you'll need to create drainage. And an abscess that's left to fester can deepen and involve internal structures, such as the coffin bone."

—Elizabeth Kilgallon, DVM, with Elaine Pascoe, *Just a Bruise ...*, March 1998

16 "As a rule, the hoof and pastern angle should mirror the shoulder angle, so you can use that as a guide to what's right for your horse."

—Rodney King, CJF, AWCF, with Elaine Pascoe, *Shoeing Essentials*, August 2010



Tip 14

17 "A lot of times people talk about barefoot versus shod as if it's a competition. It's not one or the other. It's what's best for the horse."

—Esci Buff, PhD, APF-1, CF, with Leslie Threlkeld, *To Shoe or Not to Shoe*, August 2018

FEEDING AND NUTRITION

18 "Feed wet hay if your horse coughs or is allergic to the dust in hay. Soak the hay; don't just wet it down: Put the flakes in a clean muck bucket or wheelbarrow, fill with water, and let the hay stand for at least 20 minutes before taking it out and feeding it."

—Martha Bowen, *50 Feed Tips*, June 1997

19 "A horse who's reluctant to drink on the trailer may change his mind if he's given a chance to walk around, stretch his legs, and put his head down to graze. This can also help prevent shipping-related respiratory problems by giving him a chance to lower his head and clear his airways."

—Nancy Elliot, DVM, with Elaine Pascoe, *Is He Thirsty?*, October 1997

20 "If the horse is getting good forage and a commercially formulated feed that contains balanced vitamins and minerals, he is probably getting enough electrolytes to re-

AMY K. DRAGOO



Tip 20

AMY K. DRAGOO

plenish what he loses even if he works an hour or an hour and a half in warm weather. The horses who need supplements are those who compete and train at high levels—evening at Preliminary and above, combined driving, polo, endurance—and very hot or humid conditions.”

—Duncan Peters, DVM, MS, with Elaine Pascoe, *The Scoop on Sweat*, June 2009

21 “Looking, touching and smelling will give you clues to hay quality, but it won’t tell you much about the nutritional value. The only way to know if the hay will meet your horse’s needs is to have a sample analyzed, and that’s easy to do. Every state has a cooperative extension service or land-grant university that can analyze hay for basic nutrient content ... It makes sense to test if you buy hay by the ton. If you buy by the bale, ask your suppliers if they test and if you can see the results.”

—Rhonda M. Hoffman, PhD, with Elaine Pascoe, *All About Hay*, November 2010

22 “Many horses seem to prefer room-temperature water—neither warm nor very cold—and may drink less when their water is frigid. Add a little warm water to buckets during cold spells and use heaters in outdoor troughs.”

—Elaine Pascoe with Liara Gonzalez, DVM, PhD, DACVS, *6 Steps to Protect Gut Health*, Winter 2019

23 “The American Association of Equine Practitioners recommends using the acronym ACCLAIM to help you evaluate supplement labels. Here’s what to look for: A company name you recognize; clinical research that shows product safety and efficacy in horses; contents clearly listed; label claims supported by scientific data, administration recommendations, identification of lot and expiration date; manufacture information, including name, address, phone number and website.

—Mary Kay Kinnish with Kenneth Marcella, DVM, *What’s Your Supplement Strategy?*, Summer 2021

COLIC

24 “If your horse is prone to colic, begin a daily log to help you pinpoint common factors in any colic episodes that recur. Include details about his feed and water intake, turnout, exercise, medication, and travel. ... you may find a pattern that relates to the state of your horse’s health.”

—Richard Urban, VMD, *Colic. A Minute-by-Minute Game Plan*, March 1994

25 If your horse goes from an active life to stall rest, monitor him for increased colic danger. Make sure he has plenty of hay and water. Reduce or eliminate his concentrates, and split the amount into as many as six meals a day.”

—Elaine Pascoe with Babetta Breuhaus, DVM, PhD, Noah Cohen, DVM, and Robin Dabareiner, DVM, *Beat Colic 12 Ways*, January 1998

26 “It’s a good idea to invest in an inexpensive stethoscope and be familiar with your horse’s normal gut sounds before he shows signs of colic. Listen on each side by placing the stethoscope (or, in a pinch, your ear) at his flank, in front of and below the point of his hip. Normally, you’ll hear several gurgles a minute with a louder rumble every min-



Tip 23

AMY K. DRAGOO

ute or two. Silence is not good; neither is excessive noise.”

—Elaine Pascoe with Janet Johnston, DVM,
Colic Update, November 2012

STABLE MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

27 “Most [fly spray] concentrates are cheaper than pre-mixed products. Be sure to dilute any concentrate according to the label directions, though. Too weak, the product may not work; too strong, it may irritate your horse’s skin.”

—Elaine Pascoe, *Armed for Battle*, June 1997

28 For your horse’s sake and yours, protect your hands with one-time-use *disposable* latex or other rubber gloves when treating skin conditions. Not only do you want to make sure that the fingers touching the sores are clean, but some skin ailments can be spread by physical contact—including to *you* in the case of ringworm and rain rot—and some of the chemicals used in treatment are abrasive to hands.”

—Jill Beech, VDM, Dipl. ACVIM, with Sue M. Copeland,
The Skin Game, November 2002

29 “Toxic plants vary from one region to the next, so it’s essential to be familiar with the ones that grow where you live. Your county cooperative extension service and state land-grant university are good sources for this information and can help you identify plants you’re not sure about.”

—Elaine Pascoe, *Growing Danger: Poisonous Plants to Avoid*, July 2014

30 “Fans that direct a downward and outward airflow will help to keep flies from entering barns.”

—Practical Horseman Editors with Lee Townsend,
Boost Fly-Control Strategies, June 2015

31 “Although some people blanket according to exact temperatures, it’s best to let your horse tell you his needs: Feel his ears to determine if he’s cold (they’ll be noticeably colder if his temperature drops); slide a hand under the front of his blanket to check that he’s not hot and sweating. Do this frequently, especially when you first start blanketing him, and familiarize yourself with his internal thermostat. In cold weather, a sweaty horse can catch a chill easily, so it’s safer to underblanket than overblanket.”

—Max Corcoran, *Tips for a Trace-Clipped Horse*,
October 2015

32 “Because a horse’s lifestyle plays such a big role in triggering ulcers, management is vital in dealing with the



Tip 34

problem. Simple changes in your horse’s diet and routine can improve healing.”

—Elaine Pascoe with Frank Andrews, DVM, MS, DAVIM,
LVMA, *Understanding Ulcers*, November 2016

33 “Biosecurity is extremely important. If you have a horse who has a fever and respiratory signs, he needs to be isolated from other horses so there is no nose-to-nose contact or cross-contamination of things like water troughs and buckets or where he can sneeze or cough on another horse. Once the horse is isolated, the next biggest component is that the people working with the horses are appropriately using biosecurity techniques.”

—Erin S. Groover, DVM, DACVIM-LA,
with Leslie Threlkeld, *Deep Breath: Equine Respiratory Disease*, August 2017

34 “Make a game plan for a referral to a hospital. Know where you’ll go and how you’ll ship your horse there. Time counts—if it takes four hours to arrange transportation to a clinic, your horse could arrive sicker and stand less chance of recovery.”

—Margaret Mudge, VMD, with Elaine Pascoe,
911 Action Plan, November 2017

SANDRA OLIVNYK

you could make the ulcer worse.”

—David W. Jensen, DVM with Kip Goldreyer, *Here's Med in His Eye!*, October 2003

43 “Because Cushing’s disease weakens your horse’s immune system, regular deworming and vaccinations are extra important. Groom him daily to prevent skin diseases and check for cuts or minor problems that could blossom into serious infections. Treat health problems promptly, at the first signs. Some horses with Cushing’s are so prone to infections that they may need long-term treatment with antibiotics.”

—Harold C. Schott, DVM, PhD with Elaine Pascoe, *Is It Cushing’s?*, March 2005 **EDITOR’S NOTE:** *Cushing’s disease is now described as pituitary pars intermedia dysfunction (PPID).*

44 “As a general rule, a wound that is an inch or more long and extends all the way through the skin is a candidate for suturing. But stitches must be put in promptly, generally within the first six hours. After that, loose flaps of skin that might have been stitched are likely to die and infection may have already taken hold. The presence of infection rules out sutures.”

—Elaine Pascoe with Steven J. Berkowitz, VMD, *He’s Bleeding!*, August 2005

45 “Although we don’t yet have a sure-proof way to prevent proud flesh, one the best defenses against it is to be proactive during the early phase of the wound-healing process. Minimize contamination by immediately hosing the wound with plenty of clean, lukewarm water. As you run water over the wound, gently rub it with clean fingers to remove dirt and debris.”

—Elizabeth Prax with Christine Theoret, DVM, PhD, DACVS, *Proud Flesh Problems*, March 2016

46 “A small imbalance on the cheek teeth can turn into a significant issue within just a few months, especially in a younger horse. This is one of the main reasons that a yearly or biannually dental examination with attention to the causes of these imbalances is so vital.”

—Scott Wilson, DVM, *Banish Imbalances in the Mouth*, January 2017

47 “The most common indication of a neurologic problem in horses is some degree of clumsiness or incoordination. That’s because neurologic disorders often affect the spinal cord, which delivers messages to all of the horse’s limbs. So you might notice your horse standing in unusual posi-



Tip 44

tions—say, with his legs crossed or placed more widely than usual. Or your horse might trip, stumble, move more slowly than normal or have trouble performing his regular work.”

—Amy L. Johnson, DVM, DACVIM with Sushil Dulai Wenholtz, *Diagnosing Neurologic Disorders*, December 2017

48 “If a [senior] horse is sound enough and healthy enough to continue some form of exercise—and most are, even if it’s just at a walk—frequent, low-intensity exercise is the best thing an owner or rider can do for an older horse.”

—Lisa Kivett, DVM, MS, DACVIM with Sushil Dulai Wenholtz, *Head to Hoof: Senior Horse Health Concerns*, February 2018

49 “To keep your horse’s eyes in good health, reduce the chance of irritation from dust, insects and UV light. A fly mask may help as well as providing shade during peak sunlight hours. Also work to decrease the risk of trauma by paying attention to stabling and pasture. Low tree branches, thorny plants, hooks and other sharp objects can be hazardous.”

—Sushil Dulai Wenholtz with Eric Ledbetter, DVM, DACVO and Brian Gilger, DVM, MS, DACVO, DABT, *Evolutions in Eye Care*, September 2018

50 “PPID [pituitary pars intermedia dysfunction] is seen in middle-aged horses as well as the aged horse. Now we recognize horses with EMS [equine metabolic syndrome] often develop PPID. So it’s a question of finding out if there is one endocrine disorder or two endocrine disorders in the same horse. Detecting PPID is important because we can treat that and take that factor back out of the picture.”

—Nicholas Frank, DVM, PhD, DACVIM with Leslie Threlkeld, *Understanding Equine Metabolic Syndrome*, October 2018

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