

THE BASICS

According to Sue Hughes

I. FORWARD

- A From Behind
- B With Clear Rhythm.....and
- C Steady Tempo

II Straight – the horse

- A Back legs push as equally as possible
- B Shoulders and Base of Neck.....Both controlled by knees and thighs
- C Mid Neck and
Head.....Both controlled by reins
- D Level bit.....in horses' mouth controlled by riders' fingers which feel equal weight

III HORSE reaches for the bit/contact

- A Rider receives that contact elastically through the elbows.....and
- B through their combined “energy” systems of heavy shoulder blades, back of upper arms, Outside of forearms, mobile wrists, hands, reins, and to the bit which is being carried by the horses/tongue.

IV HORSE IS ROUND OVER THE ENTIRE TOPLINE.....

- Appropriate to the level of trainingand/or
- The task at hand.

April 30, 2009

The Four Kinds of Half Halts

Credits to Christian Theiss
USDF Bulletin 1988

1. Uni-Lateral Half Halts aka One Sided Half Halts

The calf muscle, the seat bone muscle and the hand on one side of the rider contract in unison as that seat bone moves from the back of the saddle towards the front of the saddle. The function is to help straighten the horse. Repeat as needed always applying this half halt in the horses' rhythm.

2. Alternating Half Halts

Expand the uni-lateral half halts so now they are applied on each side of the horse separately, but alternating as in right/left. The functions are to help straighten the horse, to steady the tempo for both horse and rider, and to remind the horse that the aids still are there. Use as needed.

3. Diagonal Half Halts

The inside calf, thigh and seat bone muscles contract, and are directed diagonally across the horse. That energy is received by the closing outside hand. The function is to bend the horse by shifting its rib cage to the outside thus putting its weight onto its outside two legs. This half halt is applied from the inside leg and seat just as the barrel of the horse swings to the outside. It is caught and released by the outside hand. The rider checks the result. Continuing application in the horses' rhythm may be needed.

4. The Simultaneous Half Halts

Both legs, with emphasis on the thigh muscles, contract and the hands close simultaneously as the pelvis comes forward. The pelvis rolls under some and then the core muscles become firm by expanding upward and outward as both hands close. These muscle contractions are quick, brief and are applied in a series if needed. The functions are to improve collection, to rebalance the horse, to produce a downward transition, or to halt. Collecting half halts are produced in a series until the desired result is achieved. The rider's body, seat and legs influence the hindquarters. The rein aids influence the front limbs and shoulders.

Sue Hughes
2010
Revised 2013