



*Cohesive Horsemanship*  
*Trust - Confidence - Respect*

## *The 4 Basic (plus 2) Movements*

These 4 movements really build everything we do with our horses. No matter how 'complex' or 'advanced' the movement... It all starts with these 4 pieces. If we combine these 4 movements we can build many fancy things! :) So.... work on getting these super solid and soft. Play with how many different ways you can do these and with how little cues you need to get them done. Play with maintaining relaxation and tempo while doing them. Combine them and put them in a flowing sequence....

Below are some basic steps to get you started... there are many other ways to do these, especially in hand... keep the principle of 'do in your body as you would your horse in thiers' in mind. Play with these and be sure to stop while it's good!

Always release completely in the beginning or a little as you refine once you get the slightest try in the direction of the movement you are looking for. You don't need to go through all these steps... the fewer steps you need to get the movement... the better!

### **1 - Moving the Hind**

Being able to influence an equine's hind is very important. From a safety perspective, it is the key to a one rein stop and to disengaging a horse (removing some power from the hind when necessary).... It also is a basic building block for any lateral work and to help balance a horse. This becomes turns on the forehand.

In Hand -

- When standing at horse's neck Prepare your horse by changing your energy and focusing
- look and bend toward the horse's hind end...
- Walk or move pressure toward the hind on a semi circle...
- Lift hand with lead rope attached to halter if needed...
- tap horses hind if needed....

Mounted -

- Prepare your horse - lift your body and maybe your hands.

- Move your tail bone in the direction you want your horse's hind to move
- Look over your inside shoulder (inside the bend so if moving the hind end toward the right the left side is the inside - seems opposite of motion)
- lift or squeeze your inside rein
- Move your inside leg and maybe heel back

## 2 - Moving the Shoulders

Being able to move the shoulders over helps with quick movements and established bend and direction. The shoulders are also key to lateral movements and to balance. This becomes turns on the haunches, pirouettes, spins, etc..

In Hand -

- While standing facing the horses neck prepare your horse by changing your energy and focus
- Use your hand closest to the horse's head near the cheek or on the cheek
- Your hand closest to the shoulder on the shoulder
- Push the head away from you as you 'walk' through your horse's neck and help the should come across.

Mounted -

- Prepare your horse by lifting your body and maybe your hands
- Turn your shoulders in the direction you want to go (turn your sternum - keep shoulders level)
- Move your weight to the inside leg or stirrup (inside the bend, in direction of motion)
- Squeeze or Lift inside hand (goal is to move that front foot over first)
- Add outside leg at cinch area

## 3 - Backwards

Moving a horse backwards can help lift the back and engage the hind. Adding tempo and bend can help a horse find balance and strength. Backwards can be key to 'collection'.

In Hand -

- Standing in front of your horse prepare your horse by changing your energy and focus
- Gently place a hand on horses nose about halfway between eyes and nostrils
- Gently add pressure on the nose...
- Gently squeeze fingers against nose...
- Remove hand immediately as the horse moves back.... (keep hand on nose if horse attempts to move head away)

Mounted -

- Prepare your horse by lifting your body and maybe your hands
- Draw your belly button back toward your spine
- Keep shoulders forward - don't lean back
- Raise or squeeze hands
- Bring elbows back toward back legs

#### **4 - Forward**

Moving a horse easily forward with tempo is absolutely key to any movement. Forward should feel effortless and steady.

In Hand -

- Standing next to horse at about the neck prepare your horse by changing your energy and focus
- Grow tall and move hand next to horse forward slightly
- Start walking forward (eventually horse should step with you)
- Use hand away from horse to add pressure behind you (looking over shoulder away from horse)

Mounted -

- Prepare your horse by growing tall and maybe moving your hands up
- On an exhale move your belly button forward
- Squeeze legs starting at the hip (squeeze butt cheeks?)
- Tap with heel or use a crop on the shoulder

#### **Plus 1 - The poll**

As we start refining we start to focus on where the horse's poll is and is it level (ears stay level)... in any working gait or more 'collected' gaits the Poll should be the highest point on the horse. The poll should not be facing down, but rather the space between the horse's ears should be holding a coffee cup!

#### **Plus 2 - The ribcage**

The ribcage can roll and move as the horse bends and changes shape. The spine should stay pointed straight up toward the sky and the bottom of the ribs should stay pointing down. The ribs should move from pressure from side to side slightly.