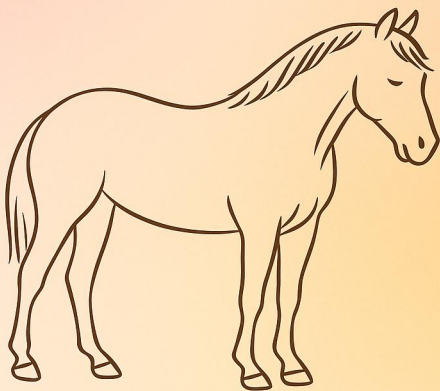


# Back Stretching & Strengthening Guide

Support Core Engagement,  
Spinal Mobility & Posture



[www.talkinghorseequine.com](http://www.talkinghorseequine.com)

## **When to Use This Guide**

This guide is ideal for horses who:

- Show signs of back tension or hollowing
- Have a history of back soreness or poor topline development
- Display discomfort when saddled or groomed along the spine
- Are recovering from back-related restrictions (with vet clearance)

Use 1-2x per week alongside your bodywork or groundwork routine.

## **Red Flags - When to Pause and Consult a Vet**

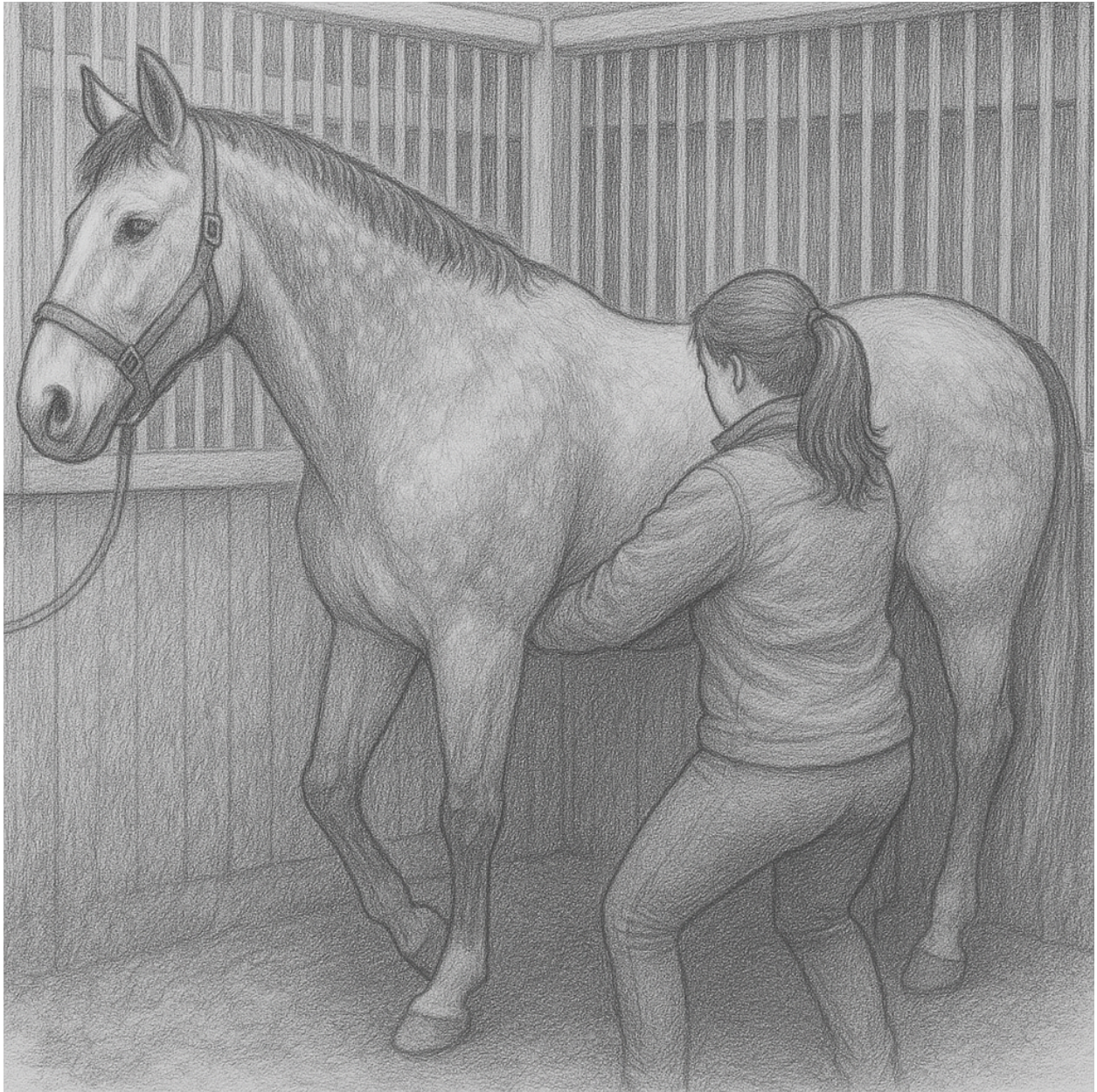
- Acute pain when touching or moving the back
- Muscle spasms or heat along the topline
- Resistance to saddling or being mounted
- Sudden behavioral changes under saddle

## **Stretching & Strengthening Exercises**

### **1. Belly Lifts (Stretch & Engage Core)**

Use fingertips or a blunt object to apply gentle pressure along the midline belly. Encourage the horse to lift through the back.

Benefits: Activates the core, stretches the topline, improves posture.





## **2. Carrot Stretches to the Flank (Stretching)**

Hold a treat near the girth area, encouraging the horse to bend toward the flank. Repeat 2-3x per side.

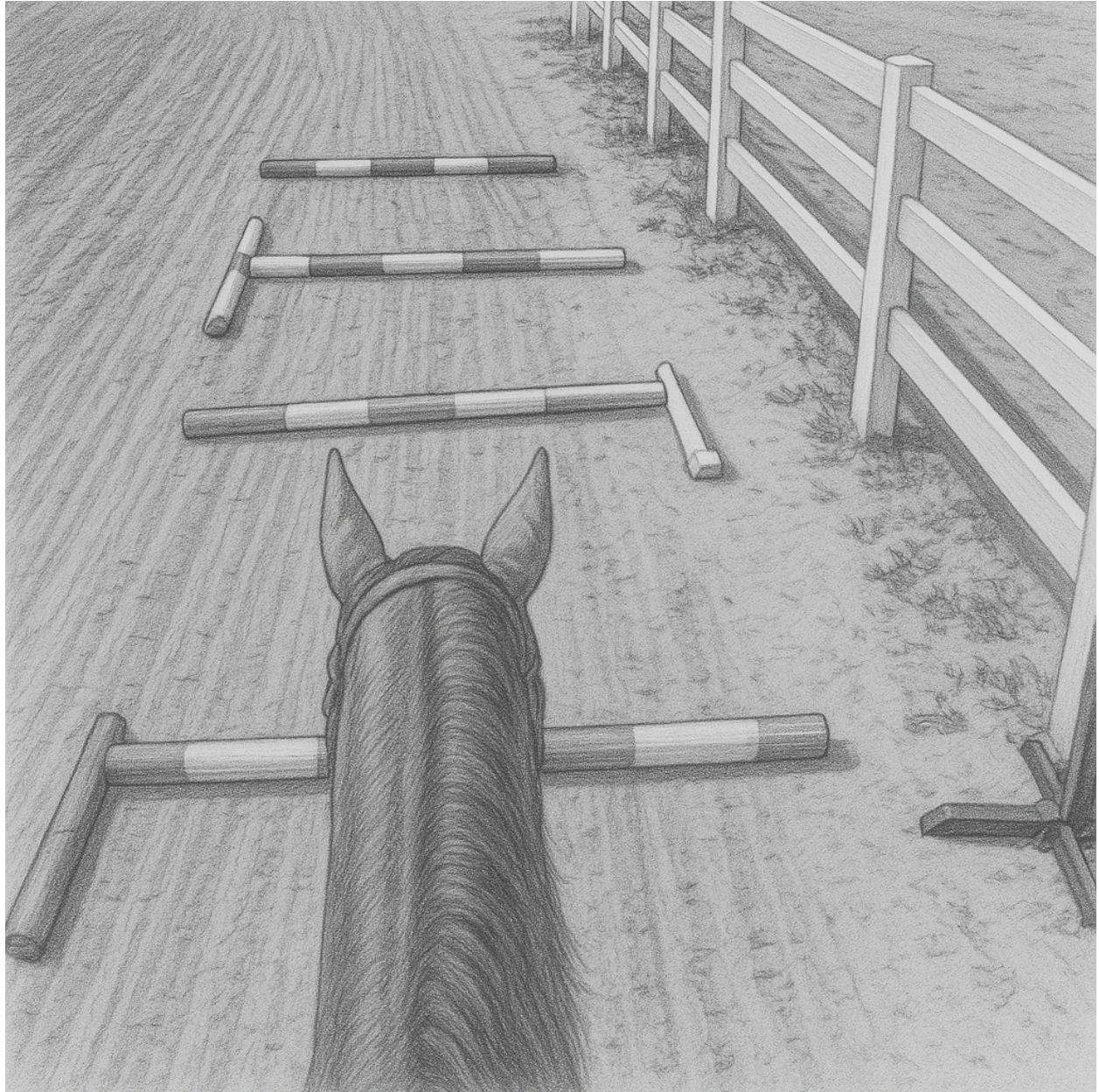
Benefits: Increases lateral flexibility and releases ribcage/back tension.





### 3. Ground Poles with Raised Ends (Strengthening)

Set 3-5 ground poles with slightly raised ends (4-6"). Walk horse over them in a straight line. Benefits: Promotes spinal articulation and core muscle engagement.





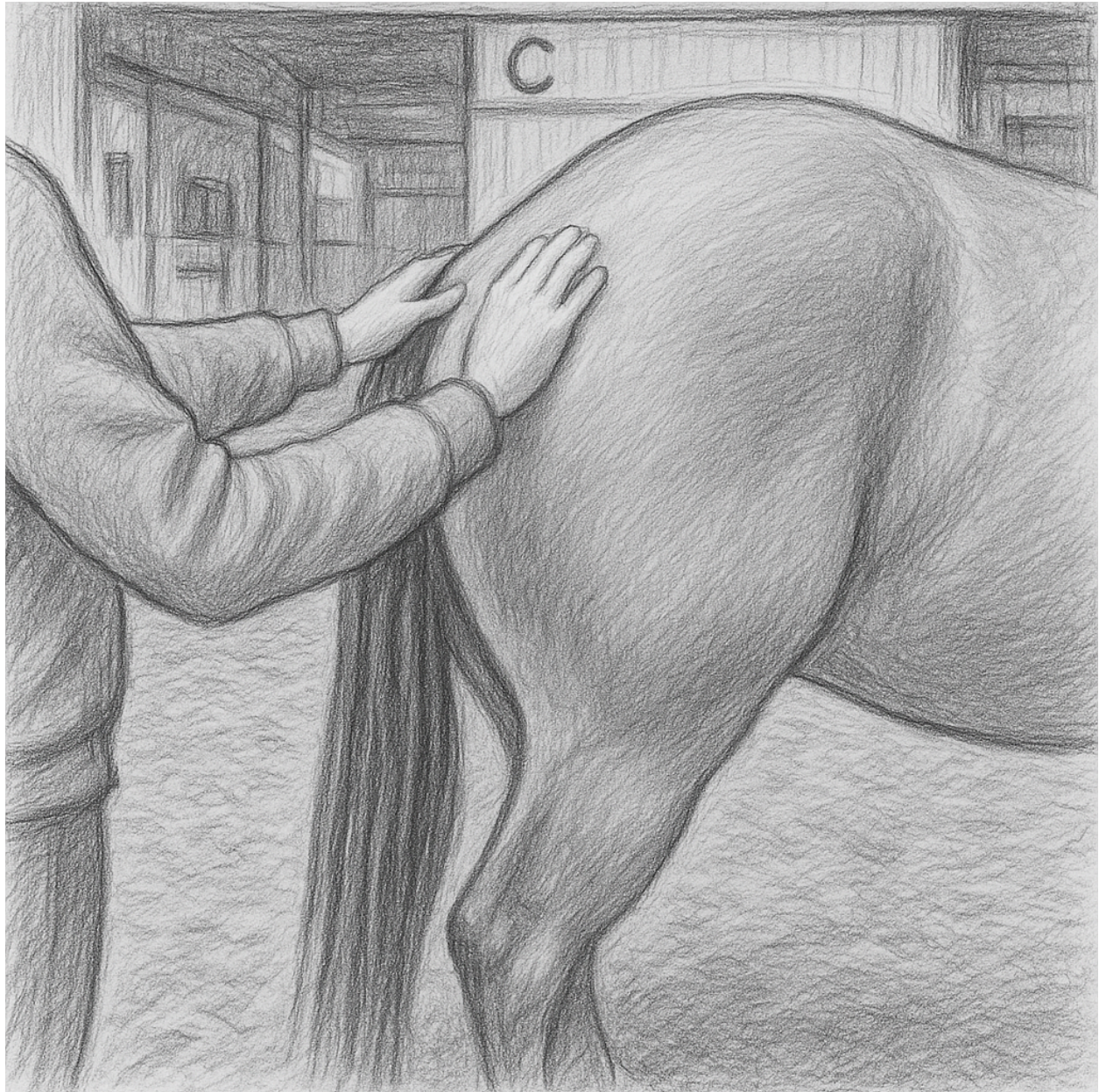
#### **4. Pelvic Tucks (Engage and Stabilize)**

Apply gentle upward pressure under the dock to encourage the horse to tuck the pelvis.

Combine with a belly

lift if tolerated.

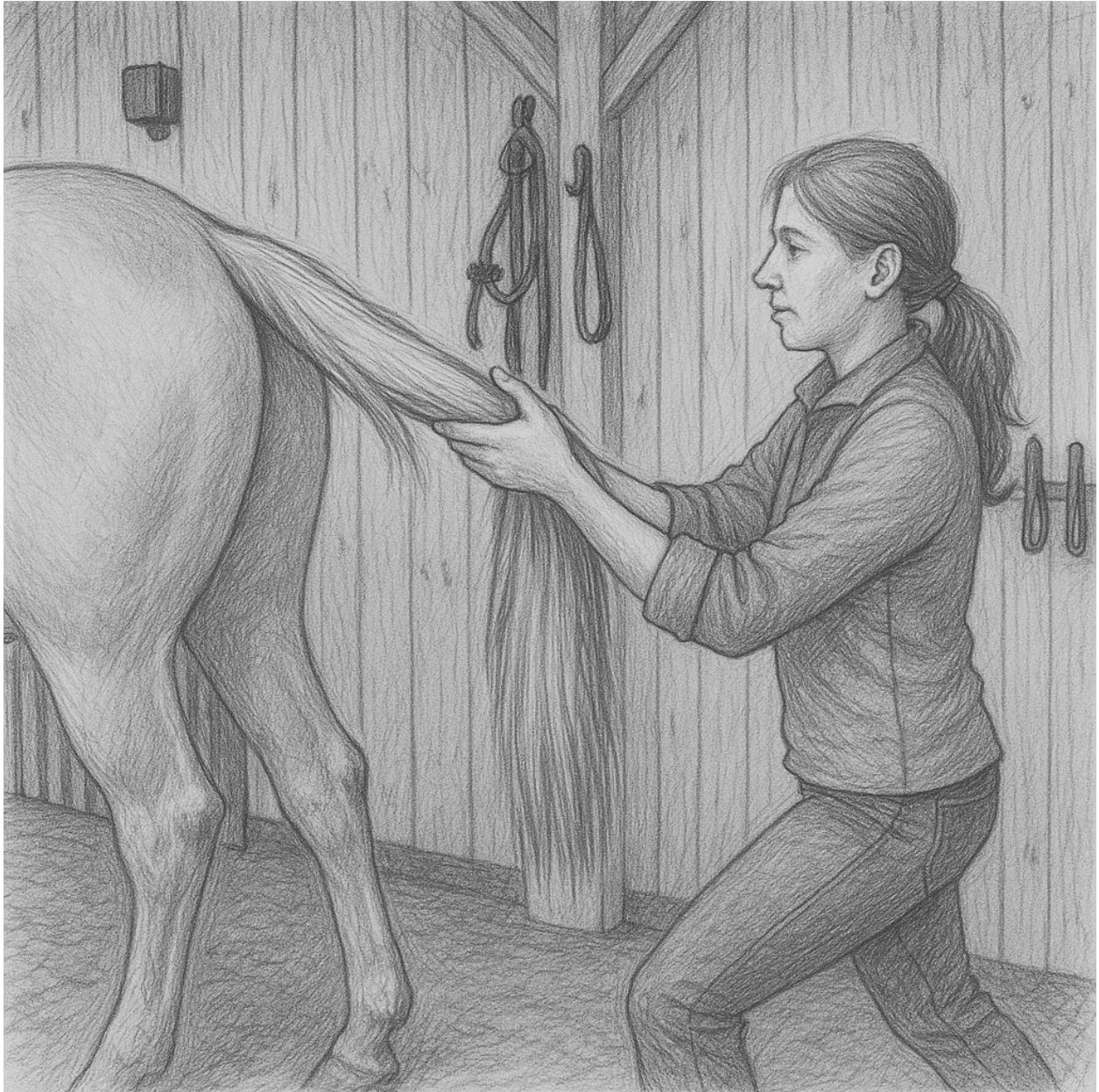
Benefits: Engages core and supports lumbosacral strength.





### 5. Tail Pulls (Straight Back - Isometric)

Stand behind and gently pull the tail straight back, encouraging the horse to resist.  
Benefits: Encourages isometric core activation and back strength.





## 6.Hill Work

### Purpose:

Improves core engagement, pelvic stability, and topline strength by encouraging the horse to lift through the

### Instructions:

- Walk the horse in-hand up a gentle hill.
- Aim for straightness and rhythm.
- Focus on short, controlled sets (2–4 repetitions with rests in between).

### Tips:

Avoid excessive incline or overly long sets to prevent fatigue or soreness





## **Tips for Success**

- Stretch after exercise, not before
- Keep stretches low-stress and brief
- Walk horse for 5-10 minutes prior
- Monitor for subtle changes in posture or demeanor
- Always work on level, safe footing

# Progress & Tracking Notes

Use this section to document your horse's responses to each stretch or exercise.

Date | Exercise/Stretch | Reaction/Notes

-----