

Horse(wo)manship Curriculum

Level 1: Learning Horse Body Language

Attention on/not on you/getting the mind

Displeasure/contentment

Moving their feet for safety

How they move each other and why

The concept of pressure/release

Leading and following

The space bubble

Predator/Prey dynamic

Calming Signals

Exercises

Observation in pasture and moving from space to space

Observe new horse being introduced

Observe and journal about what you see

Clean paddocks, observe horses, keep at a safe distance

Level 2: Working Horse Loose in The Arena

How to hold a flag/how to hold a lariat rope

Body Position for safety and effectiveness/The Balance Point

The power of our energy

Sending forward, slowing down, changing direction, stopping

Re-approaching

Blind Spots/Changing Eyes

Exposing the horse to the flag

Leading from behind

Horse following you

Sending the horse forward fixes everything-when you lose the impulsion, the angles don't work

Learning how to throw a rope

Exercises

All of the above

Level 3: Approaching, Catching and Haltering

Predator/Prey Dynamic and Horse Herd Behavior

Eye contact/body language

Learn to create/notice 'getting the eye'

Using 'rock back and pause' when approaching a wary horse-pressure/
release

Getting the horse to face you/using a corner without cornering when
needed

How to hold your equipment while approaching

Proper haltering technique

How to tie a rope halter

Learning how to throw a rope

Exercises

Practice all of the above first with one horse in a small paddock, then in
a larger field

Practice all of the above with multiple horses in a field

Level 4: Leading, Stopping, Turning, Backing

How to hold the rope properly and what length

Your body position, the 'space bubble' and the 'rectangle'

Dropping the head-pressure/release

Keeping the head up/the Rectangle

2 ways to back them up

Timing on how to slow down the walk

Using the tail of the rope

Two ways the horse turns/starting to watch the hindquarters and frontquarters

The influence of the herd/barn mates

Environmental influences

Safety going through gates/watching the hindquarters

Sending a horse

Learning how to throw a rope

Exercises

All of the above in and out of stall, in/out arena.

Walking over grass or by hay

Leading towards and away from the herd

Sending through gates

Sending through narrow spaces

Level 5: Groundwork 1

Sending the horse forward from the side-intention, body position and the balance point

Walking a balanced and rhythmic circle

Stopping the horse-body position and breath

Sending the horse from the front-following the feel

Bending the neck with different intentions for the hindquarters

Half Circle exercise

Learning how to throw a rope

Level 6: Groundwork 2

Sending horse between you and the rail

Flagging without trouble

Rope turnaround/changing eyes exercise

Walking a straight line and changing directions

Using a rope on the feet
Working the horse from the rail
Trailer loading
Learning how to throw a rope

Level 7: Grooming, Saddling and Bridling

Getting tack ready
Holding horse while grooming and tacking
Proper grooming technique
Parts of the horse
Picking out the feet-noticing the horse's balance
Doing groundwork while tacking
Tightening the girth gradually but getting it tight enough
Two techniques of bridling
Parts of the saddle and bridle

Level 8: Mounting and Dismounting

Importance of the horse standing still
Horse's neck position
Correct positioning of the horse
Body positioning when mounting
Holding the reins correctly
Correct hand positioning
Correct foot placement
Sitting softly in the saddle
Correct landing when dismounting

Level 9: Walk and Halt Exercises

The 4 seat positions

Correct leg, body and hand position

Bending the neck without the horse moving his feet

One rein stop

Having a plan

Putting life in your body to put life into the horse

Doing as little as you can but as much as you need to

Turning with legs only

Following inside front to get reach

Learn method 1 and 2 out of five ways to move the hindquarters

Practice the Half Circle Exercise at the walk

One rein stop into a back up

One rein stop into a back up then reach frontquarters

Level 10: Trotting, Cantering and Trail Riding