

## 4TH LESSON OF BIOMECHANICS FOR THE RIDER

### THE RIDER'S LEGS

To the horse the rider's legs mean so many things:

1. Go forward
2. Hold chest up – become more expressive
3. Gather hind-legs
4. Move to the side
5. Go backwards



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We as riders need to learn the many different ways to use our legs, and how the horse understands the leg.

#### Go Forward

The horse learns to trust the rider's legs and seat then begins to become more expressive in his gaits. The rider must make sure there are no negatives from the leg. The horse must hear the slightest touch from the legs.

#### Hold Chest Up – Gather Hind Legs

For instance, the legs must breathe on the sides of the horse. The rider's legs must be loose, never pinching anywhere. The horse's sides will touch the rider's legs at the correct moment and it is at that moment that the rider can touch a bit more to make the horse more springy. The horse should grow bigger in his chest and become bouncier...not racing off with the chest down. If your horse is dead to the leg, you must learn how to wake him up, so your legs can hang loose.

#### Move To The Side – Straightening and Lateral

The rider can help the horse to become straight by doing exercises that move the horse away from the leg. The leg, the hips, torso, and shoulders all help the horse build his body into a straighter moving animal. The torso must be tall and the seat very square or the horse could not be shifted into a balance to carry himself in an up-hill straight carriage. The rider's position also allows the horse to move laterally. It's important that the straightening balance has been solidly developed first. Then the rider's legs, hips, torso etc. may influence the sideways movement of the horse.

#### Rein Back

The legs are used in the rein-back. The horse's hind end must go under the horse in the rein-back and not out behind when in the rein-back. The only way this can happen is by the rider un-locking their hips while pressing the legs to rein-back. The horse easily gives away how he was asked if the rider's legs are not used. The rein-back is a diagonal balance from leg to rein with an unlocked hip.

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With the idea of helping Pony Clubbers understand the biomechanics of horse and rider better.  
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