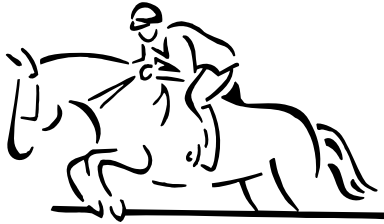


EQUINE REHAB AND THERAPY

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Two way stretch with cavalettis

Adapted from Gymnastic Exercises for Horses the Classical way, Eleanor Russell

This set of exercises is very good for loosening up the shoulders and helping the horse shift its weight to the rear. Start by loosening up horse and have him/her walk through seven cavalettis.

- 1) Take four cavalettis away and place them as in the first diagram
- 2) Turn from the climb through section to the stretch section without stopping, allowing the horse to think and concentrate
- 3) When the horse is confident, try at a trot.

Maximum Height _____ X _____ X _____ X _____ Climb through section

Minimum height _____ X _____ X _____ X _____ Stretch section

Variation #2

- 1) Start with seven cavalettis at maximum height at a trot, when successful :
- 2) Arrange poles at minimum height as shown below. Arrange the four poles according to your horse's natural stride and the other three poles should be 10-15 cm longer than your horse's natural stride.
- 3) Gradually raise the four poles one at a time to maximum height. As you raise the poles, shorten the distance between them 10-15 cm. The objective is to make the horse lift through the four poles and stretch and lower through the three poles. These three poles stay at minimum height

_____ X _____ X _____ X _____ X _____

_____ X _____ X _____ X _____

Importance of working with neck low for suppling and back issues

Working your horse with the neck low allows the back to open, with the neck and nuchal ligament stretching the spine. This is the opposite of the head high, hollow frame that causes so many back issues. Scientists have also found the proprioceptive nerves run outside the spinal cord along the back. When the back is braced and spasmed (hollow or inverted) it interferes with the transferring of information and affects coordination and athletic ability beyond just physical restriction. This frame also requires the building of the abdominal muscles, to support the horse's movement and it releases emotional sources of muscle tension. But it also subtly transfers weight forward on the horse and is counter indicated in horses that have front joint disease or tendonitis.