

The Working Equitation Handbook: Ease of Handling Trial

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United States Rules for Working Equitation

Revision 2.1, December 1, 2018

Rule Change UPDATE

Facebook: Working Equitation Handbook

www.WorkingEquitationHandbook.com

December of each year the United States Rules for Working Equitation are updated. This document reflects those changes as they pertain to the Working Equitation Handbook published in 2018. Handbooks printed in 2019 will include these changes.

For the most current version of the rules visit: www.ConfederationWE.us

The Working Equitation Handbook is NOT a substitute for the Rule Book. If there is a conflict, refer to the Rule Book.

USING THIS UPDATE

This update is printed over multiple pages to make it easy to print and cut out the changes and add them to the appropriate page in your Handbook.

The rules changes this year include many minor changes, such as changes in obstacle names, that have been changed throughout the Handbook. This update includes changes which affect performance.

NAMES OF OBSTACLES

	OLD NAME	NEW NAME
1.	Wooden Bridge	Bridge
2.	Figure 8 Between Drums	Figure 8
3.	Pen	Pen
4.	Earthenware Jug	Jug
5.	Remove Pole from Drum	Remove Pole
6.	Skewering Ring with a Pole	Spear Ring
7.	Placing a Pole in a Drum	Replace Pole
8.	Switching a Glass from one Pole to Another	Switch Cup
9.	Bell at End of Corridor	Bell Corridor
10.	Backing Up in "L"	Reinback "L"
11.	Rounding Several Posts or Obstacles	Rounding Posts
12.	Slalom between Posts	Single Slalom
13.	Slalom between Parallel Posts	Double Slalom
14.	Gate	Gate
15.	Jumping over Bales of Straw	Jump
16.	Side Stepping Logs(s)	Sidepass Rail
17.	Riding through a Water-filled Ditch	Water
18.	Bank	Bank
19.	Drums	Drums

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The penalty list now has less items.

PENALTIES

- **Failure to Salute the Judge** is a 5-point penalty for each occurrence. When saluting the Judge: the horse must face the Judge, halt (be immobile), the rider should make eye contact with the Judge, and salute.
- **Use of Voice** is a 2-point penalty for each occurrence. This includes verbal commands such as walk, trot, whoa, kissing or clucking.
- **Outside Assistance** is a 10-point penalty for each occurrence. If severe enough this could result in a DQ.
- **Stroking or Touching** the horse's neck in front of the rein hand is a penalty for the first two occurrences; three occurrences is a DQ.
- **Two hands on the reins and Use of hands on reins is no longer listed in this section. The -5-point penalty has been removed. It is outlined in "Use of Hands" section below.**

IMPORTANT RULES

Outside Assistance or coaching is not allowed in any trial. Assistance could incur a 10-point penalty or even disqualification. Outside Assistance is a DQ in Advanced (L6) and Masters (L7).

Use of Hands: Horses may be ridden with one or two hands in all levels up through Intermediate B (L5). Advanced (L6) and Masters (L7) riders must use one hand on the reins.

- **Use of Hands must be consistent.** *Riders may not switch rein hands. Switching of the rein hand will result in a DQ. I.e. if you start riding with your reins in your right hand and move them to your left hand to complete an obstacle, you will be DQ'd.*
- **If riding with one hand, the rider may not use their other hand on the reins.** *The free hand may help adjust the reins in a momentary action with the free hand touching behind the rider's rein hand. Children and Introductory (L1) thru Intermediate B (L5) riders riding one handed are allowed to use two hands to adjust the reins or correct the horse without penalty; however, if excessive, a lower score maybe given. Advanced (L6) and Masters (L7) riders will be disqualified if they have two hands on the reins for longer than necessary to adjust the reins.*
- *Riders may not hold the excess rein in the free hand. Exception: Western riders may hold excess rein loosely in their free hand when using a romal rein or knotted/connected split reins.*
- *The free hand may not brush the horse in front of the rein hand or provide any kind assistance. Brushing or touching in front of the rein hand is a 5-point penalty for the first two occurrences. The third occurrence is a DQ.*
- *Competitors may use either the right or left hand when negotiating obstacles in EOH and Speed trials; however, **the same hand must be used consistently for every obstacle** under penalty of disqualification.*

DISQUALIFICATIONS (DQ's)

- Failure to correct a course error before starting the next obstacle
- Three refusals at an obstacle. Intermediate (L4) and above
- Failure to advance for 15 seconds
- Failure to complete an obstacle
- Showing an obstacle to a horse in an overt manner before your trial starts
- Crossing the line of an obstacle that has not yet been completed unless otherwise marked on the course map
- Knocking down part of an obstacle that has not been performed
- Improper use of whip
- Fall of horse and/or rider
- Gross disrespect from rider
- Riding through the course start/finish line in the wrong direction
- Unsafe horse/rider combination
- Using the incorrect hand *to manipulate an obstacle*
- *Using two hands on the reins for longer than necessary to adjust the reins when riding one-handed (L6/L7)*
- *Switching hands on the reins when riding with one hand. Children receive a 0*
- Entering/Beginning trial prior to the bell
- Taking more than 60 seconds to enter
- Blood: active bleeding from a previously existing wound *or an injury in the arena*
- Lameness
- Mistreatment of horse
- Dismounting to lead a horse through an obstacle
- Dismounting for any reason other than picking up a dropped or knocked down obstacle.
- Riding through the finish during the execution of your course prior to the course being completed
- Exiting the destination end of a corridor with all four feet
- Brushing or touching the horse in front of the rein hand, third occurrence.
- Outside assistance: Advanced (L6) and Masters (L7)
- *Not using the same tack/or attire throughout the competition*
- *Illegal Tack/Attire*

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ELIMINATIONS

A rider who is eliminated is eliminated from the entire competition and does not receive awards. Elimination may happen if:

- Horse shows signs of blood on any of its body caused by bridle, spurs, or whip, or any wounds apparently from abuse or mistreatment.
- Use/application of any foreign or caustic substance to or into any horse that would alter or influence a horse's natural carriage, movement, or behavior.
- Use of electronic equipment
- *Un-sports-mans-like conduct*

PAGE 24

Wooden Bridge is now "*Bridge*".

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COMPLETING THE OBSTACLE

The obstacle is completed when the rider passes between Markers C and D. If no markers are present, the obstacle is complete with the completion of the upward transition to the required gait between obstacles. *Stepping off the bridge prematurely is a course error. If the horse steps off the side of the bridge, redo the obstacle.*

COMMON MISTAKES

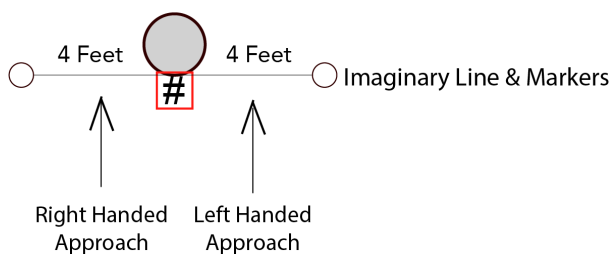
- Transition to the walk early or late
- Hesitation when approaching the bridge
- Not riding in a straight line
- Losing rhythm going over the bridge
- Looking down
- Breaking gait
- Rushing off the end of the bridge
- Stepping off the side of the bridge*

Lower marks may be given for:

- The change of lead and/or change of bend are not centered between the drums
- Late or delayed lead changes and/or changes of bend
- Poor circles: poor geometry, unequal size
- *Large circles*

Approaching from the Numbered Side diagram has been added.

APPROACHING FROM THE NUMBERED SIDE



Obstacles must always be approached from the numbered side. Failure to do so is a DQ. Working Equitation has a standard rule, “red on right”. The Jug is an exception to the rule in order to allow for a left-handed approach.

Approach the obstacle facing the number. Draw an imaginary line extending out 4-5 feet from the number and pretend there are markers on the ends. Use this line to determine your approach.

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ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ★ The approach, departure and transitions are included in the score.
- ★ *Approach and depart in the correct lead and correct bend.*
- ★ Maintain straightness in the departure.
- ★ Halt parallel to the table.
- ★ Halt with the rider's leg even with the placement of the jug.

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HOW TO PRACTICE

PREPARE

- Practice transitions to the halt.** Walk to halt. Trot to halt. Canter to halt.
- Practice transitions from the halt.** Halt to walk. Halt to Trot. Halt to Canter. Maintain engagement of the hindquarters and straightness. Transitions should always be uphill.
- Practice halting and maintaining immobility.** Make transitions to the halt, immobility and a departure from the halt part of your daily routine. Approach various stationary objects; fences, gates, tables, etc., pick something up, practice leaning to reach an object, move around in the saddle and replace it, until this becomes a normal activity. Remain immobile for varied amounts of time.
- Practice balanced halts.** Balanced halts are key.
- Practice Half Halts.**
- Practice the approach and departure in the correct gait.**
- Practice the correct bend.** *If the obstacle is on the right the horse should have right bend. The rib cage should be away from the obstacle. Think and prepare for the using the right lead. If the obstacle is on the left, think left bend, left lead.*

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COMMON MISTAKES

- Loss of engagement of the hindquarters in the halt
- Losing straightness in the halt and departure
- Maintain bend and engagement through turns, if applicable
- Loss of immobility
- Stopping too close or too far away from the table
- Hitting table in departure because of failure to control haunches
- Allowing the horse to touch the pitcher/table with head
- Not halting parallel to the table
- Reaching for the pitcher prior to the horse being completely halted and settled
- *Not approaching from the numbered side*

PAGE 55

Remove Pole from a Drum is now *“REMOVE POLE”*

Skewering Ring with a Pole is now *“SPEAR RING”*

Placing a Pole in a Drum is now *“REPLACING POLE”*

PAGE 60

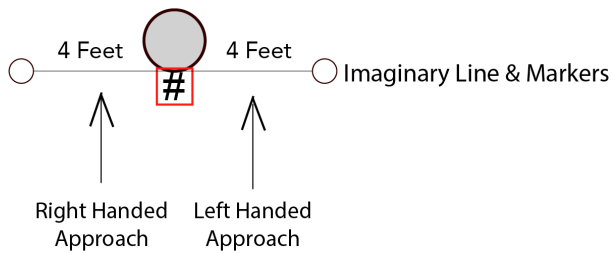
ADDED A SEQUENCE to allow for multiple rings.

Sequence Example:

Remove Pole	Scored as a single obstacle
Wooden Bridge	Scored as a single obstacle
Spear Ring	Scored as a single obstacle
Figure 8	Scored as a single obstacle
Spear Ring	Scored as a single obstacle
Pen	Scored as a single obstacle
Replace Pole	Scored as a single obstacle

Approaching from the Numbered Side diagram has been added.

APPROACHING FROM THE NUMBERED SIDE



Obstacles must always be approached from the numbered side. Failure to do so is a DQ. Working Equitation has a standard rule, “red on right”. The Jug is an exception to the rule in order to allow for a left-handed approach.

Approach the obstacle facing the number. Draw an imaginary line extending out 4-5 feet from the number and pretend there are markers on the ends. Use this line to determine your approach.

SWITCHING A GLASS FROM ONE POLE TO ANOTHER is now “*SWITCH A CUP*”.

Terminology change: Glass is now “*Cup*”.

FROM THE RULE BOOK

Assessment Criteria (EOH): The Judge will evaluate the horse’s attitude, calmness, straightness, and collection; the immobility of the horse, the rider’s use of aids; and fluidity, continuity, and quality of performance. Points will be awarded for the horse’s immobility when switching the cup from one pole to another, and its immediate exit from the obstacle at the prescribed gait. The transition should be smooth, uphill, and come from the haunches. The horse should not “jump” forward. *A lower score will be given if the rider has to reach out of the saddle to move the cup.* Dropping the cup will result in lower score

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ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ★ *Straightness of approach and departure.*
- ★ *Balance over the haunches in transition.*
- ★ Walking into the halt, if the obstacle is not to be performed in the walk, will result in a score deduction.

PAGE 75

BELL AT END OF CORRIDOR is now "BELL CORRIDOR"

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THE MARKERS

This obstacle MAY or MAY NOT have markers.

If the obstacle does **NOT** have markers (left) the **number** will be placed on the right-hand side at the approach end. The transition, *if required*, occurs one horse's length prior to the horse entering the corridor. The obstacle ends when the horse backs through the entrance and executes the transition back, if required, to the prescribed gait.

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Lower Marks may be given for:

- Dragging feet in back up
- Horse touching any part of the obstacle
- Losing diagonal pairs
- Loss of straightness
- Halting early
- *Leaning out of saddle to reach bell*

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COMMON MISTAKES

- Breaking gait
- Not maintaining engagement in the halt
- Halt not square
- Halt not straight
- Loss of immobility
- Backing up to early
- Halting early
- Using the incorrect hand to ring the bell
- Horse rings bell
- Knocking over part of the obstacle
- Backing crooked
- Dragging front feet in backup
- Not backing in diagonal pairs
- *Reaching out of the saddle to ring bell*

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Lower Marks may be given for:

- Horse touching or bumping any part of the obstacle without knocking it over
- A horse dragging its feet during the rein back
- Losing diagonal pairs in rein back
- Hesitation entering the corridor
- *Reaching out of the saddle to ring the bell or remove/replace the cup*

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COMMON MISTAKES

- Breaking gait entering corridor
- Not maintaining engagement in the halt
- Halt not square
- Halt not straight
- Loss of immobility
- Backing up too early
- Dragging front feet in backup
- Not backing in diagonal pairs
- Improper bend in “L” of rein back
- Incorrect lead
- Not executing a second halt when used with cups
- Back not fluid
- Incorrect hand used
- Placing the cup on the incorrect pole
- Not exiting through the markers
- *Reaching out of the saddle to ring the bell or remove/replace the cup*

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Rounding Several Posts or Obstacles is now *“ROUNDING POSTS”*.

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Lower Marks may be given for:

- Touching any part of the obstacle without knocking it over
- A horse dragging its feet during the rein back
- Loss of regularity in the rein back
- Loss of straightness
- Hesitation to enter the corridor
- Irregular bend
- Early or late halt
- *Rider reaching out of the saddle to remove or replace the cup.*

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COMMON MISTAKES

- Breaking gait entering corridor
- Not maintaining engagement in the halt
- Halt not square
- Halt not straight
- Loss of immobility
- Backing up to early
- Halting early
- Dragging front feet in backup
- Not backing in diagonal pairs
- Improper bend in slalom of rein back
- Exiting the corridor with all four feet
- Incorrect gait
- Incorrect hand
- Backing through the wrong side
- Placing the cup on the wrong pole
- Failure to execute second halt
- *Not keeping cup in rider's hands*
- *Reaching out of saddle to remove or replace the cup*

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Slalom Between Parallel Posts is now “DOUBLE SLALOM”

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Jumping Over Bales of Straw is now “JUMP”

THE BASICS

SETUP

A single jump set at the correct height for each level. The jump can be made of solid wood items, jump rails or bales of hay or straw.

CHILDREN and INTRODUCTORY (L1): A single rail placed on the ground between to upright jump standards with the jump cups removed. Up to two ground rails may be placed in front of the jump rail 1 to 1.2 meters (3.5 – 4 feet) apart.

NOVICE A (L2) AND NOVICE B (L2): Two cross rails are set between two jump standards. The rails should not exceed 0.5 meters (22 inches) high at the standard and 0.4 meters (15 inches) at the center.

INTERMEDIATE A (L4) – ADVANCED (L6): The jump should be solid looking or rails set about 0.5 meters (22 inches) high.

MASTERS (L7): The jump may be up to 1 meter (39 inches) high.

*If a classic **bale jump** is used, set three or four bales of straw (hay) placed end to end totaling at least 3 meters (10 feet) wide. A jump standard is placed on each end of the bales. A pole is placed between the jump standards just above the top of the bales. The bales may support the pole. The bales may be stacked two bales high, up to 1 meter (39 inches), for Masters (L7).*

Any solid-looking natural object may be used that does not exceed the approximate size of a hay a bale (22 in. x 42 in. x 15 in.) may be used.

CHART OF GAITS

	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	L7
Children	Intro	Nov A	Nov B	Inter A	Inter B	Adv	Masters
Walk or Trot	Walk or Trot	Trot or Canter	Canter	Canter	Canter	Canter	Canter

JUDGING CRITERIA

FROM THE RULE BOOK

*Assessment Criteria (EOH): The Judge will evaluate the manner in which the horse approaches **and leaves** the obstacle; **the horse's calmness, straightness, and tempo throughout the obstacle**; the bascule over the jump; and **the pair's confidence and style**. Knocking over any part of the obstacle will result in a negative score.*

The Judge is looking for and will evaluate:

- ★ *The horse's approach to the obstacle: The horse should approach the jump with confidence and bravery, show no hesitation and be on the correct lead based on direction of travel. Choose a route to the jump that sets the horse up for success.*
- ★ *The horse's calmness, straightness, and tempo throughout the obstacle: The horse's relaxation, straightness in approach and rhythm. The horse cooperates willingly and is in harmony with the rider, giving an impression of a cohesive partnership.*
- ★ *The bascule over the jump: The horse should lift his/her feet up under his chin upon takeoff. The horse's body should curve evenly over the jump and when landing. The height of the horse's jump should be in relation to the height of the bales. Over jumping will be penalized.*
- ★ *The pair's confidence and style: The rider should go with the horse over the jump and not become disorganized allowing the horse and rider to land with balance. The rider needs to ride in the two-point position demonstrating a release over the jump. The rider should not balance on the reins over the jump or during landing.'*
- ★ *The horse's departure from the obstacle: The horse should land with balance. The horse should not speed up or rush after the landing. Choose a route away from the jump that sets the horse up for success. The horse should be in the correct lead for the line of departure.*

Sidestepping Over a Log is now "SIDEPASS RAIL"

Graphic: Alternative to Parallel Poles is now "Two Rails in a Line"

FROM THE RULE BOOK

*Execution: **The horse approaches perpendicular to the rail. The horse's legs must cross in a lateral movement over the rail, keeping the rail between the horse's front and hind legs throughout the obstacle.** The course map may indicate which direction (right or left) the horse and rider must pass over the pole; when not specified, the rider chooses the direction. For the two rails in a line and the parallel rail configurations, the rails must be ridden in different directions. For the "L" configuration, the horse must be positioned so that its head is to the inside of the "L". Any changes in gait required to execute this obstacle must occur at the entrance and exit markers.*

*This obstacle is not used for Children and Introductory (L1) riders. Novice (L2/L3) levels can be asked to execute the **single rail, two rails in a line, or parallel rails.** Intermediate (L4/L5) and Advanced (L6) riders can be asked to execute single or parallel poles or the "L" configuration. Masters level (L7) riders can be asked to perform all configurations.*

COMPLETING THE OBSTACLE

The obstacle begins with the transition, *if required*, to the walk and is completed with the transition, *if required*, back to the prescribed gait between obstacles.

The horse must sidepass the entire length of the rails with front feet on one side of the rail and hind feet on the other side of the rail. The horse should not step over the rail with the hind feet to exit.

JUDGING CRITERIA

FROM THE RULE BOOK

*Assessment Criteria (EOH): The Judge will evaluate the horse's calmness, capacity to perform the obstacle, crossing of the legs, and the fluidity and continuity of the action. A bend in the direction of the movement will garner a higher score than if the horse is bent away from the movement. **A lower mark will be given for bumping the rail.** A negative mark will be given for knocking over the rail or if the horse steps across the rail with one or more feet. The Judge will give a lower mark for a lack of crossing of the horse's legs in the lateral movement. **Exiting the rail prematurely or failing to sidestep over the entire length of the rail is a course error.***

The Judge is looking for and will evaluate:

- ★ *The horse's calmness:* The horse should be calm, quiet and relaxed.
- ★ *Capacity to perform the obstacle:* The horse should understand the rider's cues and not show any resistance.
- ★ *Crossing of the legs:* The horse must demonstrate clear, consistent crossing of the legs. The legs must pass in front of each other not behind each other. *Example:* sidepassing left, the right legs of the horse should always pass in front of the left legs of the horse.
- ★ *Fluidity and continuity of the action:* The entire obstacle should appear to be one continuous and fluid movement. There should be no stopping, hesitation or resistance.
- ★ *Bend in the direction of movement:* A half-pass type movement is most desirable. The horse should not counter bend. If the horse is sidepassing to the right, the ribs should be towards the right. If the horse is sidepassing to the left, the ribs should be towards the left.
- ★ *Exiting the rail prematurely or failing to sidestep over the entire length of the rail:* The horse must sidepass over the entire rail with all four feet. Failure to do so is a course error.

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Lower Marks may be given for:

- Inconsistent crossing
- Bumping a rail
- No bend
- Lack of fluidity
- *Lack of crossing of the horse's legs in lateral movement*
- Crossing behind rather than in front

DQ's

- Failure to complete the obstacle
- *Exiting the rail prematurely*
- *Failure to sidestep the entire length of the pole with all four feet*
- Failure to enter and exit between the markers
- Three refusals at Intermediate (L4) and above

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RIDING THROUGH A WATER FILLED DITCH is now "WATER".

SETUP

- The ditch should be a minimum of 1.5 meters (5 feet) in the direction of travel (long), and a minimum of 2.4 meters (8 feet) wide. The ditch may be flat to a minimum depth of up to 10 cm (4 inches) or gently sloping to a maximum depth of 0.6 meters (2 feet).
- The bottom surface should be safe for horses to travel across.
- Flags must be used to mark the entrance and exit.
- *The obstacle may be framed with logs, so the horses have to step over and into/out of the water.*

THE TECHNICAL

FROM THE RULE BOOK

*Execution: The horse should approach and maintain the chosen gait through the obstacle naturally and without any hesitation. The obstacle can be executed as either an up-bank or a down bank. **Both an up bank and a down bank may be incorporated and scored as one obstacle.***

This obstacle is not used for Children and Introductory (L1) riders.

JUDGING CRITERIA

FROM THE RULE BOOK

*Assessment Criteria (EOH0): The Judge will evaluate the manner in which the horse approaches the bank, the smoothness of the execution, the consistency and quality of gait throughout the exercise, and confidence in the rider's instructions. Lower marks are awarded for hesitancy. A horse that steps backward before going over the bank **or steps off the side of the bank** will receive a negative mark.*

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Negative Marks may be given for:

- The horse steps backward before going over the bank
- Breaking gait
- Refusals
- *Stepping off the side of the bank*

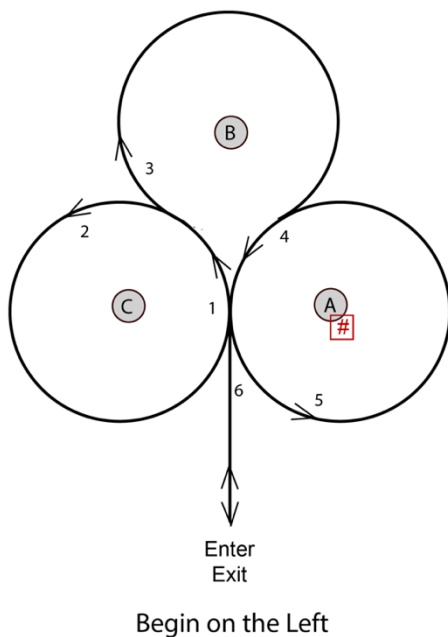
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COMMON MISTAKES

- Loss of straightness
- Hesitation
- Loss of forward motion
- Avoiding the approach
- Looking down
- Failure to pass through the markers
- *Stepping off side of bank*

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Added diagram to ride the obstacle to the left.



THE TECHNICAL

FROM THE RULE BOOK

*Execution: The horse enters at the appropriate gait for the level between drums A & C. **This obstacle can then be executed in either direction, depending on the course map or as designated by the judge:***

- 1. The horse makes a full circle to the right around drum A. The horse proceeds to pass halfway between drums A & B, with a change of lead and/or bend over the imaginary line between A & B. The horse makes a loop to the left around drum B. The horse then proceeds to pass halfway between drums B & C, with a change of lead and/or bend along the imaginary line between B & C. The horse makes a full circle to the right around drum C, and exits at the same point from which the exercise began.*
- 2. The horse makes a full circle to the right around drum C. The horse proceeds to pass halfway between drums C & B, with a change of lead and/or bend over the imaginary line between C & B. The horse makes a loop to the left around drum B. The horse then proceeds to pass halfway between drums B & C, with a change of lead and/or bend along the imaginary line between B & A. The horse makes a full circle to the right around drum A, and exits at the same point from which the exercise began.***

All circles should be symmetrical and of the same diameter.