

# The Mindful Minute



FHF Sopresso

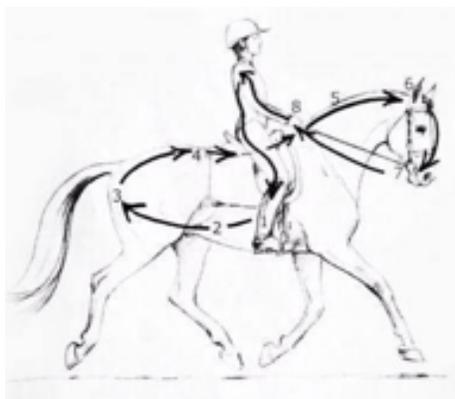
## Stretch Forward & Downward

How to achieve a long, low frame that encourages both lightness and throughness

While we start getting our horses legged-up and ready for fun spring time shows, it is of the utmost importance to develop a horse with whom, together, we may easily reach a “forward and downward” frame. This frame is important in order to encourage our horses to lengthen their whole body and really stretch over their backs. Once your horse can trot nicely in a forward and downward frame, they are completely being ridden with independent aids. When you pause for a moment and half-halt, the horse’s energy pauses also, at that point you will put on your leg to increase elasticity and suspension within the gait. So how do we get our horses to stretch down without running away? First, work at the walk and slowly let the horse chew the reins out of your hands. Be careful to catch any rooting, where the horse yanks the reins out of your hands. If they do this, simply close your hand on the rein quickly without pulling back. This lets the horse catch themselves with the bit, but be solid in your core so your horse doesn’t pull you out of the seat! As your horse is chewing the reins, softly play with your ring finger and have a “conversation” with their mouth. If they start to jig, quickly but gently shorten your reins and establish consistent contact, and try again. The most important thing is to focus on the four beat rhythm of the walk and slow it down by slowing

down the swing of your seat bones. Repeat the exercise until your horse stretches forward and downward with their nose. To prepare for this exercise, your horse may need to have a few halts within the walk, only off of your seat and leg aids, to slow them down. Always return to that solid, slow walk rhythm. This exercise helps to get your horse moving with “throughness”. Throughness can be described as a fluid motion of energy moving through your seat to your hands, moving towards the horse’s mouth, further moving in a clockwise motion through the horse’s legs, the hindquarters, and back to your seat.

**“Throughness cannot be achieved if the rider isn’t properly balanced in the tack and independent of the saddle and horse in every way.” - Lisa Wilcox**



## Top 3 Products for Spring

Try these three lifesaver items to combat daunting springtime shedding and icky mud

If you choose to let your horse’s coat grow freely, then you may be dreading the upcoming shedding season. If this is the case, definitely invest in a nylon tracksuit or raincoat to deter hair. You might also try Hands On grooming gloves, \$25. These gloves offer a great grip that really removes hair. However, the best part of the gloves is the ability to really feel the horses skin and groom them while improving



Bailey riding a horse at Colorado State

## Forward & Downward

Begin to stretch your horse to develop throughness



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## Top 3 Springtime Products

Implement these grooming items to banish shedding hair and the problems that come with deep mud

## Word Search



Casa Durango's Mango

Hop into spring with this fun word puzzle!

Contact Bailey at Mindful Equine with any comments or questions at 970.903.0665

your feel of where certain areas are sensitive. I've found most horses prefer these gloves to metal and rubber curry combs. After you've curried your sweet equid, be sure to lightly spritz them with Eqyss Marigold Spray, \$21. This shine spray not only has the most amazing scent, but leaves coats super shiny. To avoid slippage be sure not to spray underneath of where you place your saddle, or on the legs where the polos or brushing boots go. As the snow melts, and we get our muck boots stuck in deep, muddy footing think about the effect that constantly moist conditions have on your horse's feet. If they are constantly out in wet conditions, the hoof could become prone to soften, break off, and become super sensitive. Try Keratex Hoof Hardener, \$40, this product is applied halfway up the hoof wall, and all over the sole and frog. I've had great success with Keratex on sensitive-footed Thoroughbreds that, with regular applications, turn out to develop nice, hard hooves in a pretty short amount of time. In the old days we used to use formaldehyde but I think this is a bit safer and less toxic for sure.



Elin riding Sherron Hinkle's Sunny

**1**

**HANDS ON GLOVES**

**2**

**EQYSS PREMIER MARIGOLD SPRAY**

**3**

**KERATEX**

### Hopping into Spring

R	N	H	T	H	R	O	U	G	H	N	E	S	S	FORWARD
T	E	T	N	E	D	N	E	P	E	D	N	I	Y	DOWNWARD
R	N	O	I	S	N	E	P	S	U	S	H	D	T	ELASTICITY
S	E	F	H	I	A	M	E	G	H	S	O	T	I	SUSPENSION
H	H	T	I	O	E	H	N	N	D	W	E	N	C	HALF HALT
E	I	A	N	U	S	T	N	I	N	I	M	O	I	JIG
D	T	H	L	A	E	Y	A	W	R	T	E	L	T	REIN
D	R	E	A	F	C	H	A	E	D	A	N	E	S	CHEWING
I	O	A	V	N	H	R	W	H	R	E	M	G	A	RHYTHM
N	T	F	W	O	D	A	A	C	L	S	H	U	L	TROT
G	S	L	S	R	I	S	L	E	D	C	I	H	E	WALK
D	R	Y	D	H	O	C	K	T	R	E	I	N	I	CANTER
R	H	E	J	I	G	F	E	E	D	E	E	H	A	THROUGHNESS
G	H	H	K	T	G	S	H	D	S	C	I	I	N	INDEPENDENT
														AIDS
														SEAT
														HANDS
														LEG
														VOICE
														SHEDDING

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