



*YOUR RIDING SUCCESS*

**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE**

# **CANTER HALF PASS & PIROUETTES**



## Upskilling Your Knowledge

What is a half halt?

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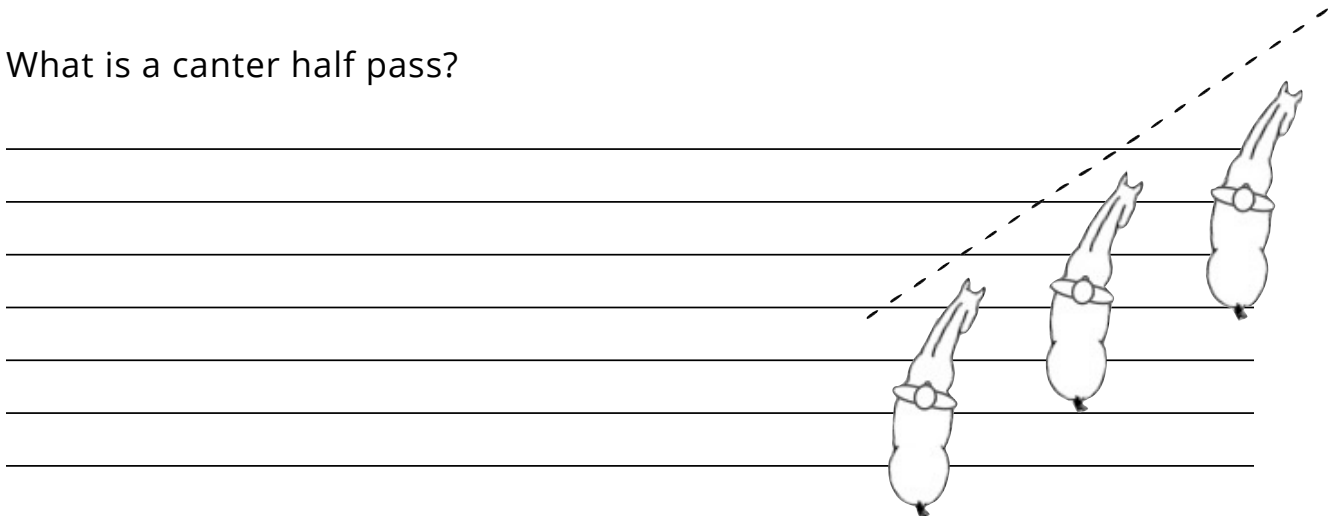
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**Travers = Half Pass Trot**

**Travers + Knowledge of How to Ride a Half Pass Trot = Canter Half Pass and Pirouettes**

How? Let's break it down so we can better understand...

What is a canter half pass?



Why is counting your strides important?

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What is a working pirouette?

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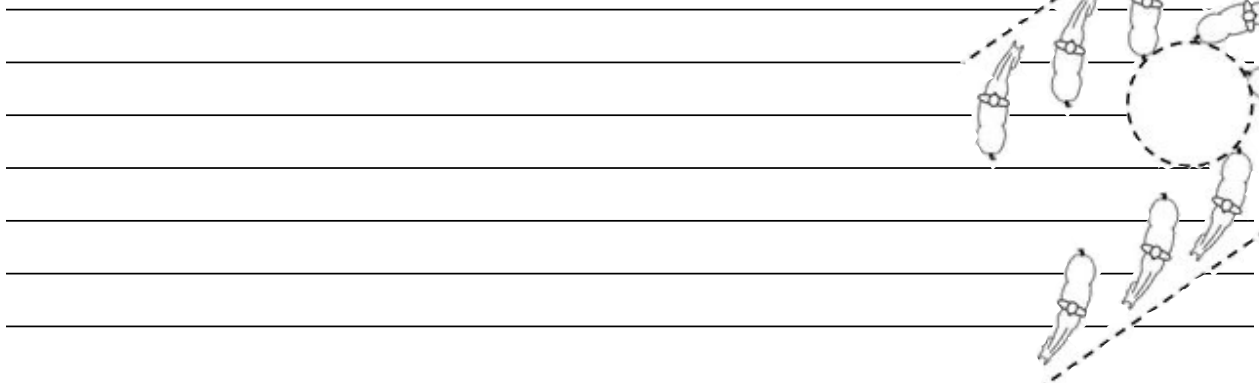
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How do we change a working pirouette into a 'real' pirouette?



What is the tempo change when you think pirouette? Faster or slower?

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## **Exercise**

Google the top 5 dressage riders at the last Olympics/WEG - have a look at their inside rein when they turn a pirouette. Where are their hands?

## **Sitting The Higher Movements**

We are getting into FEI with our seat in this part of the program!

The main thing I want to emphasise again is that the seat for the higher movements as we go into FEI is the SAME as the seat for similar, less complex movements in the lower levels.

It is that easy!



Even if you are not at this level - make sure you watch the videos for this part of the program, because it gives you that reassurance that if you learn how to sit properly in the lower movements, you will also be able to sit properly in the higher movements! It's just a matter of stringing things together.

In Advanced/Fourth Level and Prix St Georges, the new movements that we are going to work on are:

- Tempi changes
- Smaller pirouettes
- 8m voltes which are just a smaller circle
- Zig zag in canter and trot half pass

## **Tempi Changes**

In the tests for these levels, you might have changes on the 4th stride, 3rd stride and the 2nd stride.

The concept for ALL of these is the same.

When we do a flying change (just one change) we know that the outside hind is the leading leg. It's the first leg that takes the first step. When you are riding a tempi change, it's not so different.

4 time tempi changes I find the hardest because they are out of rhythm (because canter is a 3 beat movement).

3 time tempi changes are easier, because they stay in rhythm with the movement.

But either way, the concept is the same.

For example, if you are cantering on the right rein (the circle is to the right, so your outside hind leg is the left hind), to do a change you want to switch to cantering on the left (where the leading leg or the outside hind leg will switch to the right hind leg).



When you are cantering to the RIGHT, the small part of the banana is on the inside or the right side. You will have a little bit of extra seat on the right hand side seat bone.

When you want to change to the left, you want to change your seat so it has a little bit of extra seat on the LEFT to give the right side a bit more space (because the leading hind leg is the right).

### **So the steps with your seat are:**

- Seat is more on the right seat bone when you are cantering right (to give the left hind space)
- Seat is moved to the centre
- Seat is moved to the new side so is a little bit more on the left seat bone to give the right hind space
- Then ask for the change to the new lead

This is no different to doing a walk to canter transition or a flying change - you just need to think a bit quicker.

It's not new information, just thinking about it quicker - it does not need to be overwhelming.

The AID for the change is that your outside leg goes back and gives a little tap that says canter, but the SEAT is what provides space for the aid to work and allows the horse to change leads to the new direction.

Remember - don't bend your shoulders or change the weight in your feet, just change your pelvis a little bit.

If you have a younger horse who has not done it before, or you have not done it before, being able to do a tempi change will depend on how long it takes after the change for the horse to be cantering normally.

This will depend on the balance of the horse as well as the balance of the rider - how long does it take for your horse to go back to a balanced canter after doing the change, and how long does it take for you to go back to being balanced - this is why pilates is so important!

**A good exercise off the horse for you to do is to stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, and move your pelvis without moving your shoulders, and make sure the weight in your feet stays the same!**

## **Pirouettes**

You want the hind legs to stay within the track.

You come across the diagonal, then the horse is going to turn a half pirouette and then go out, or turn a full pirouette and then come out.

It's half pass on a very small circle. So you need to make sure you get a half pass shape before the horse turns. The shoulders come up and out a little bit, but you are not pulling the shoulders around. Think half pass and not pulling the horse around in a circle.



Inside rib cage needs to be the smallest part - that's going to be a banana. Give the outside hind more space, because that will be the biggest side of the banana, so make sure you sit to the inside of the banana.

You need to remember as you are asking for the pirouette, you are not trying to turn his shoulders, you are staying straight, it's just steps of the half pass on a smaller line.

When you get back on the diagonal after doing the pirouette, you need to move your pelvis to straight in the middle. This means you don't go too far in the pirouette, but also that the horse is not in travers when you come out of the pirouette, and this is all because of your seat!

This is where everything ties in together.

A travers is a 4 track movement. The rib cage on the outside is very big and curved with the small part on the inside. The positioning of your body is similar to the leg yield - you need to put your seat to the inside of your pelvis which allows the rib cage on the outside to have space to bend.

Half pass is exactly the same as the travers, except you are on a diagonal line.

Pirouette is exactly the same again, except instead of your line being straight, your line is a circle.

Your seat is in the same place! The only thing that will stop you from doing it is how strong the horse is and how balanced you are.



## Zig Zag

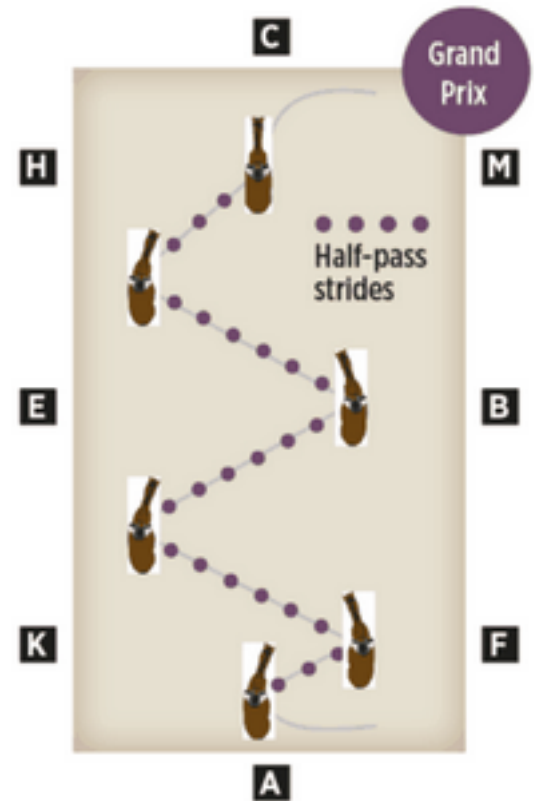
This is nice and easy - it is the same seat as the half pass again - sitting to the inside of the banana.

When you are about to change direction, go straight, then move to the new banana position for the other direction.

Then ask for half pass in the other direction.

It's that easy.

If you do that then the horse is not just falling left and right when you change direction.



## Questions

In your own words, answer the following as you understand them:

Where does your seat go when you are doing a tempi change? Explain the steps.

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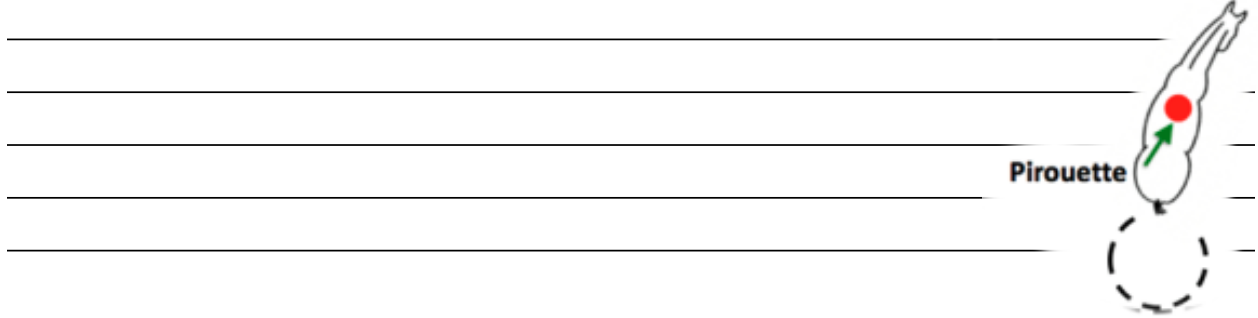
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Where does your seat go when you are doing a pirouette?



What is the difference between a pirouette and a half pass?



Where does your seat go when you are doing a zig zag? Explain the steps.

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If you learn how to ride with your seat in the correct position early, then when you get to the higher movements, you aren't going to have any issues, because the seat position is the same. The higher movements will just highlight any errors that you have in your more basic movements that you were able to get away with at the lower levels.

