



YOUR RIDING SUCCESS

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE HALF PASS



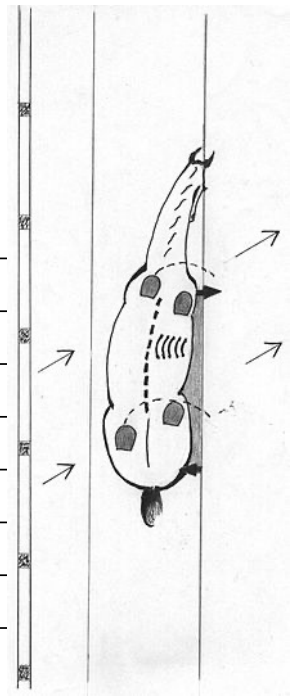
What is Half Pass?

Write down in your own words what you understand a half pass to be:

Why did we learn about travers before learning about the half pass?



What is the difference between travers and the half pass?



What is your basics 'check' or measure to see if you are ready to try half pass?

Is Half Pass a sideways movement? _____

Let's get the basics in check...

- ☒ Are all of the horses feet in the right spot?
- ☒ Is my body sitting in the right spot?
- ☒ Am I straddling? Is the backbone of the horse right in the middle underneath me?
- ☒ Are my feet 80/20? Is it even?
- ☒ Where are you telling the shoulders to go? Where is your line?
- ☒ Is your rhythm even? How do you know your rhythm hasn't changed?

Extrapolating Your Seat Position Into The Higher Movements

This is where it will start to make sense that knowing your seat in the lower level movements is really essential for the higher level movements!

In Medium/Third level dressage, the new movements that we are going to work on today are:

- Half Pass
- Change of Direction in the Half Pass
- Flying Changes
- Working Pirouettes

Remember - Advanced TSMG is all about exactly where to sit for those movements.



This is demonstrated off the horse, because dressage is a sport of millimetres. The small adjustments are the difference between executing the movements perfectly... and feeling frustrated because you just can't get it right.

It's not just the positioning that will allow you to nail the movements - it's understanding how the movement works.

Questions

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

Where does your seat go when you are doing a half pass?



Where does your seat go when you are doing a change of direction in the half pass?

What is the difference in your seat between a half pass and a change of direction in the half pass? Why?

Where does your seat go when you are doing a flying change?



Where is the difference in your seat between a walk to canter transition and a flying change?

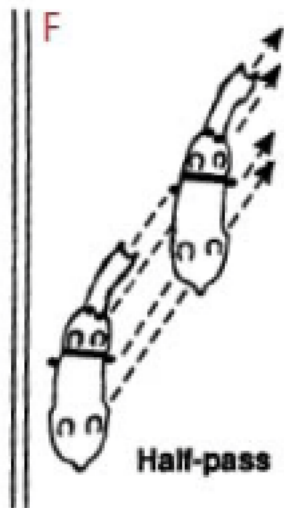
Where does your seat go when you are doing a working pirouette?

Half Pass

Recapping the **Travers** (you will see why in a moment): This is actually 4 tracks - it should be an even space between all of the legs. When looking front on, you should be able to see all 4 legs with the same space between each one.

The rib cage on the outside is very big and curved to the outside.

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.



When you ride a half pass, you go across the diagonal, but it is actually NOT sideways - it's a travers on a diagonal line!

A lot of people find when they ride the half pass that they are sitting to the outside.

That's because the larger part of the rib cage is to the outside, so there is more surface area to sit on.

If you aren't conscious of this and moving yourself more to the inside and sitting on the backbone, then you end up sitting on the biggest part of the horse.

So when you think about sitting on the horse in the half pass, it's exactly the same as the travers seat position.

The inside seat bone comes a little bit to the inside (which means you are more over the middle of the backbone). Both of your legs have exactly the same weight in them.

Troubleshooting: What happens if your horse start falling in? Without the balance of the wall on the inside like we had in the travers, sometimes it feels like your horse starts to fall in, and it is tempting to then move your seat more to the outside, to the bigger part of the ribcage to counteract that.

NO!!! Remember - begin with the end in mind. If you counteract it by sitting up - it might fix it for that moment, but the half pass will be incorrect and your horse will never learn the correct way to hold himself in the half pass.

Solve it in another way (that's where Dressage Mastery comes into it) - leg yield, go forward to change the balance etc.

Recognise that you sit in the correct position regardless of what your horse does! This is what gets you to a place where you are able to get to the higher levels.



Change of Direction in the Half Pass

This is just adding an extra layer of complexity, but essentially it is the same as the position for the initial half pass.

Let's use an example where we are moving to the LEFT to start with.

The biggest part of the rib cage is on the OUTSIDE which is the RIGHT side.

Your seat is slightly to the INSIDE which is the LEFT side.

Then when you want to change direction, your horse goes straight and there is no banana as you change, and your seat goes to the middle... then we move our seat back to the NEW OUTSIDE as we change direction, which is now to the RIGHT side.

Remember - you are always sitting in the small part of the rib cage, in the banana.



Flying Changes

What is the leading leg in the canter? It's always going to be the outside hind.

As a rider to make sure the horse takes the correct lead - you need to make sure you are not sitting on the outside hind leg of the horse.

When you are **cantering**, you need to think to yourself - even though you are sitting on your horse evenly, you want to give the outside ribcage and leg have enough space to lift up without having to lift you.

This does not mean you change your weight in your legs or lean in either direction - what you are doing is manoeuvring your position ever so slightly to take your weight off the outside leg by moving slightly off centre with your seat/pelvis - but you need to make sure you stay straight with your weight evenly in your feet and make sure you don't lean.

Flying changes use the same concept as any normal canter transition... but remember, we are now at a higher level of training with our horses and the horse should be much more balanced. It's important to understand the progression to the higher movements from back where we started first learning and teaching our horse canter transitions.

Your horse should now be much more established and much more balanced and need less 'help' with the transitions, so you won't need to give him as much 'space' and help on the outside hind in order to be able to do the transition.

You are still asking the horse to lead with the outside hind and you need to create space, and then when the horse changes lead, you are asking the other outside hind to lead, so you need to create space on the other side... but it doesn't have to be as much space, it can be much more subtle, because your horse is more balanced.

Of course if your horse is struggling - when you have asked for the change and the horse struggles, you don't kick harder, you will just give your horse more space again until the horse is getting it right more

consistently. Think about how you can help your horse to success.



What's mind-blowing... you already knew what to do for a flying change when we talked about the seat position in canter back in week 1 when we talking about Preliminary/Training Level movements!!!

Working Pirouettes

In case you are feeling confused - you are right, working pirouettes are not present at this level, but we do start training them at this level, so it is important to include them in here.

A working pirouette is just a half pass on a circle line... so you already know how to do it!!

The difference between a working pirouette and a half pass is... it never ends! A half pass you can only go from point A to point B (when you hit the other wall) and then you have to change!

On a circle in the working pirouette - you can keep going forever!

The other thing you might find is that when you do a half pass, the horse will tend to head for the wall. In a working pirouette, they tend to stay on the line because there is no wall to head towards.

A working pirouette is really going to help you, because you might find that there are some issues with bend that you need to work through that you weren't aware existed when you were just working on the half pass. Get those ironed out in the working pirouette, and your half pass will be so much the better for it!

Remember even though you are on a circle, the weight is the same in each leg, and you need to stay straight - nothing in your body changes. The travers on the wall, the half pass on the diagonal and the working pirouette are ALL THE SAME - your body should not change.

The same with walk to canter transitions, flying changes and then eventually tempi changes - they are ALL THE SAME in regards to your seat.

It shouldn't be an eye opener - it should just be a recap for you. You knew everything already - you just hadn't applied it to the higher movements before!

