

20 top tips to help achieve a clean jump, with Caroline Moore FBHS



Caroline Moore FBHS, the British Eventing Under 18 Team Coach, joined the recent two-day Horses Inside Out 2013 Conference in the UK to give two coaching demonstrations to the attended crowd of riders, therapists, saddle fitters, riding instructors and students. With all of the speakers present focusing on Assessment and Asymmetry In The Horse, and offering ways to help improve knowledge and ultimately equine performance, Caroline shared the following tips for achieving a clean jump while using gymnastic exercises in the arena:

Caroline Moore with Gillian Higgins and guinea pigs Ros Canter and Constance Copestake photo courtesy of www.HelenRichmond.co.uk

1. You can help address crookedness in the horse by focusing on gymnastic exercises that help raise the withers, and encourage the scapular to rotate backwards in a circle – it is then the rider's job to keep the withers central over fences.
2. Use flags with your arena-based jumps, to give the horse something with a side, to 'lock on' to.
3. Trot to small fences – the rider then has to work harder to maintain balance.
4. Work without stirrups to help develop balance – even Olympic level riders do this. If you 'stabilise' with a particular leg, occasionally take away just that stirrup in your training.
5. Look at the horse's outside ear to help you keep straight through the body – too many riders tip to the inside.
6. With your reins, remember to 'feel and give', not 'feel and hold'.
7. Remember that everything looks different from a new rein – don't assume the horse will jump the obstacle in the same way initially on a new rein.
8. Ideally the rider wants the horse to take off with the same amount of propulsion from both legs for a maximum springboard affect that optimizes straightness. Repeatedly pushing off from a stronger equine leg creates an asymmetrical jump and may also lead to unsoundness.
9. If you want to land on the left leg after a fence, you need the initial landing leg to be the right fore. So use more right leg over the fence.





10. Gymnastic jumping exercises should encourage the equine scapula to rotate backwards in a circle – this creates good technique and shape over the jump.

11. When using a gymnastic line of one stride and bounce fences, put a skinny fence at the very end, to help improve the quality of the line.

12. Always introduce exercises bit by bit, so you are building confidence and not inviting problems.

13. For a horse that 'drifts' to one side over the fences, keep the corresponding leg on, for a holding, 'leg yield' feel. Drifting usually leads to a knock down.

14. Eventers in particular must 'read' what's ahead – so a line of poles, e.g. one strides and bounces, set at extremely varying heights, e.g. from 2ft 3" to 2ft 9", helps develop focus and lightens the frame.

15. You can use a line of fences without ground poles – it is the riders that like ground poles, not the horses.

16. Instead of always aiming for the middle of a gymnastic line of fences, aim for one side – if you aim for the right side and come from the right rein for example, this is a big test of accuracy, as it is easy to overshoot the line.

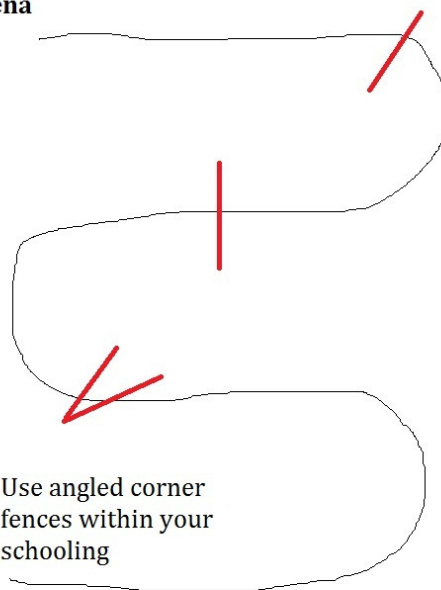
17. Horses ideally need three straight strides to a fence – you can use dressage boards to 'channel' them in, or put a placing pole three strides away.

18. Use angled corner fences within your schooling – you can be brave with the line to the fence you choose, if you have a good canter and both horse and rider are confident.

19. Use fences on a 'serpentine' shape in the arena – angle them at around 60 degrees on the 'curves' of the serpentine, to develop accuracy.

20. Aim for a particular area of the poles you are riding or jumping over – e.g. a coloured section on one side of the line of poles - to develop accuracy.

Use fences on a 'serpentine' shape in the arena



Use angled corner fences within your schooling

Caroline Moore FBHS has produced and ridden horses up to 4 level, competing at events including Badminton, Burghley, Bramham and Blenheim. www.Caroline-Moore.com*

Visit <http://www.horsesinsideout.com> for information on equine locomotion, training and management from an anatomical perspective.

This article was published in February 2013 on <http://www.an-eventful-life.com.au/>