



Effective Communication

with

The Driving Horse

By

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For

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Effective Communication with the Driving Horse

➤ What is the subject of the communication *from* the Driver *to* the Horse?

1. When everything is right, the general subject range of the instruction from the Driver is:
 - a. Balance: 90%
 - i. Achieving it
 - ii. Maintaining it
 - b. Speed and Direction: 10%
 - c. Teaching a Horse about Balance like teaching a Horse to ride a bicycle.
2. These ranges of instruction fluctuate at times during any drive with any Horse and with the type of performance being asked.
 - a. Thru a hazard at full speed
 - i. A lot of the instruction is about speed and direction
 - ii. We hope the Horse has a good sense of Balance and self-preservation
 - b. Dressage will be very close to the ideal range
 - c. Cones somewhere in the middle.
3. The issue of comfort for both Horse and Driver is thrown over the entire experience.
4. Green/young/poorly educated Horses do not know about Balance. Horses do not come to us having read 'The Book of Balance'.
 - a. The instruction for these Horses will be less about Balance and maintaining it and more about achieving it.
 - b. The instruction might change suddenly from direction to speed and back and forth till eventually a moment or two or three opens during which the Horse will allow you to instruct him briefly on Balance.
 - c. The Driver keeps trying to get to that point and eventually the Horse will come to realize: Hey! It's about Balance! Because his job becomes easier to perform physically.
 - d. All athletic performance becomes easier and more efficient by the improvement of Balance control and maintenance.

➤ What is the subject of communication *from* the Horse *to* the Driver?

1. The Horse is primarily concerned with one issue: **Comfort** ~ Physical and Mental. Communication is impaired when the Horse is uncomfortable.
 - a. *Physical*
 - i. Pain can be anywhere.
 - ii. Pain can be obvious, in which case the Horse is fortunate because someone eventually will try to fix it.
 1. Poor Shoeing
 2. Poor equipment fit
 3. Poor conformation
 4. Injury History
 5. Disease History
 - iii. Pain can be subtle, in which case hopefully the owner will be sensitive and fix it.

- iv. Pain can be almost completely hidden.
 - 1. This is especially true of stoic Horses.
 - 2. With Horses that have layers of issues, it can be difficult to get to the root cause.
 - 3. Hidden pain and discomfort usually manifests itself as behavioral quirks.
 - a. Often written off as “That’s just how he is” or “He’s always like that.”
Etc
 - 4. Hidden pain and discomfort often overlooked with Horses having good performance records.
 - a. Few bother to see if the performance of champions can be improved.
 - b. Everyone tries to improve the performance of 7th place Horses.
- b. *Mental Pain: Stress and Anxiety*
 - i. From not enough Turnout
 - ii. From disease
 - 1. EPM
 - 2. Lyme Disease very common source of physical discomfort causing mental stress.
 - iii. From improper Nutrition
 - 1. Nutritional deficiencies can be the source of real problems.
 - a. Vitamin E / Selenium
 - 2. Feeding types and %’s of grain and roughage for the wrong kind of performance
 - a. Carriage driving horse need more stamina, lasting energy, less explosive energy, like a race horse.
 - i. Higher Fat/lower protein content: Blue Seal Sport Formula
 - iv. Poor training and handling causes:
 - 1. Confusion
 - 2. Frustration
 - 3. Resentment
 - v. Genetic deficiencies
 - 1. Wobblers Syndrome, Stringhalt, Shivers, etc.
 - a. Can be subtle
 - b. Can be very obvious
- c. *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder*
 - i. Both Physical and Mental Physical
 - 1. Physical: Door Latch Injury, buggy wreck
 - 2. Mental: Orphan Foals, teasing
 - ii. Difficult to cure/erase the effects of really traumatic incidents
 - iii. ‘The Emotional Brain’ by NYU Professor of Neural Science, Joseph Ledoux
- b) The Horse is constantly communicating his level of Comfort
 - a. *Thru body language*
 - i. Ears – tell a lot of the story
 - ii. Threatening positions: turning his hind end towards you
 - iii. Resting a hind leg constantly when asked to Halt or when resting in his stall may indicate hip, leg or foot problems

- iv. Moving and fidgeting while being groomed
 - 1. Often overlooked and written off as “Just the way he is...”
 - v. Resentment when tacked up
 - 1. Biting at harness
 - 2. Moving away or flinching from tack
 - 3. Refusal to be bridled
 - 4. Flattening ears
- b. Thru his behavior*
- i. Dragging the Driver back to barn may be a sign of physical or mental discomfort or both.
 - ii. Refusing to Stand
 - 1. May indicate mental confusion
 - 2. Perhaps he has been mistreated in his training
 - 3. Flight animals may not feel safe while standing
 - iii. Jigging at the Walk
 - 1. Can be a manifestation of physical and/or mental anxiety
 - iv. Rushing
 - 1. Really manifestation of unbalance
 - a. Poor Training?
 - b. Pain?
 - c. Fear?
- c) Paying attention to all this communication effort by the Horse is overlooked in our eagerness to get out and enjoy our Horses. The result is performance suffers and/or is never fully realized. To fix some of these things takes:
- a. Sensitive, educated trainer/handler/owners*
 - i. Owner: To recognize there is a problem to be addressed
 - ii. Trainer to design and execute an athletic and behavioral program
 - iii. Handler/groom to not make the problem worse
 - b. A good vet is essential*
 - i. Diagnose lameness
 - ii. Advise on nutrition
 - iii. Disease management
 - c. A good chiropractor*
 - i. Modern Veterinary Medicine can not fix everything
 - ii. Chiropractic is now recognized officially as an effective therapy
 - iii. Other therapies
 - 1. Acupuncture
 - 2. Massage Therapy
 - 3. Myofascial Release Therapy
 - 4. Muscle Memory Therapy
 - 5. Animal Communicators
 - 6. Imprinting
 - d. A good dentist*
 - i. Dental issues clearly effect communication.
 - ii. One of the 1st places to look for trouble

- e. *A capable farrier*
 - i. Horses listen much better when their feet and legs do not hurt!

➤ Improving Communication

1. Improving Communication For the Driver
 - a. *Recognize that your temperament, mental state and general mental outlook will affect your communication with your Horse.*
 - i. Driving can be therapeutic psychologically.
 - b. *Eating well can mean the difference between a 4 and a 7 on a movement, missing a gate, miscalculating a time, unnecessarily confusing or agitating your Horse.*
 - i. Especially important during competitions. Avoid blood sugar and energy fading.
 - c. *Time Management*
 - i. The most unfair thing you can do to your Horse is to not have enough time for him.
 - ii. Col. Alois Podhajsky, Director of the Spanish Riding School said: "I have the time."
 - d. *The first 2 minutes are the most important.*
 - i. Assessment is made at the Walk. Not after a warm-up trot.
 - ii. It is the time for you to discover what kind of Horse you are driving today.
 1. Is the harnessing correct?
 2. What kind of a mood is he in?
 3. Is he tense? Is he stiff?
 4. Is he relaxed?
 5. Moving free?
 6. How does he feel in his mouth?
 - iii. It is the time for your Horse to discover what kind of Driver you are today.
 1. Is my Driver sitting well?
 2. Is my Driver allowing me to move his hand with my mouth?
 3. Is the Driver supporting me? Holding me?
 4. Or allowing me to find my own Balance?
 5. Is my harness comfortable?
 6. Is my mouth comfortable?
 7. Is the Driver focused?
 8. Or preoccupied?
 - e. *Labor and Management Relationship ~ Keep it clear*
 - i. Driver is the Manager
 - ii. Horse is the Labor
 - f. *Slow Down – Do not bring your frenetic pace to the World of the Horse*
 - i. Give your horse the time to feel what is happening, adjust his coordination,
 - ii. Give yourself time to deliver instructions with care, accuracy and in synch
 - g. *Use of the Aids*
 - i. Reins
 1. The Primary Aid
 2. Synthetic vs Leather
 - a. Leather is stretchy

- b. Synthetic non stretch delivers a more precise signal
 - i. Especially good for young uneducated horses
 - 3. Path the reins take will influence the quality of instruction
 - a. Don't be afraid to change your equipment, terrets especially
 - i. Correct placement will improve your communication thru the reins.
 - ii. Interruption of the rein path from hand to mouth will affect your Horse's performance.
 - 1. A slight adjustment may make a HUGE difference.
 - iii. Generally positioned based on where the harness makers pattern indicates they are to be placed.
 - iv. Placement should be based on the individual Horse's conformation, training and development
 - v. Experiment with lower positions,
 - 1. Especially with young inexperienced
 - 2. Confused Horses
 - 3. Straight shouldered Horses
 - 4. Low necked Horses
 - 5. Straight necked Horses
 - 6. Horses that invert
 - b.
4. Lots of room for Error on the Communication Path
 - a. Originates in Brain
 - b. Delivered by the Hands
 - c. Travels down the rein to the bit – path influenced by equipment
 - d. To the Bit – position and fit – influenced by TMJ/dentition/genetics
 - e. Interpreted by Horses Brain – education
 - f. Brain sends out instruction to the limbs/body
 - i. Coordination and conditioning thru training
 - ii. Balance
 - g. Feedback thru hands, seat internal gyroscope
- ii. Voice
 - 1. Primary and supporting aid – supports the Rein Instruction
 - 2. Quiet Instruction vs Loud Demand
 - 3. Verbal Instruction Structure
 - a. Not Commands: Instructions
 - i. Command = Dictate, Demand, Order
 - ii. Instruct = Direct, Guide, Request, Ask
 - b. Instructions are more about the transition than about the end result.
 - c. Can not use same verbal instruction for an up and a down transition
 - i. From Halt to a Walk: End result is Walking
 - ii. From a Trot to a Walk: End result is Walking
 - iii. Need a different verbal instruction for each transition.
- iii. Whip
 - 1. Supporting Aid – supports the Voice and the Rein
- iv. What is the 4th Aid?
 - 1. *Body Position and Control is the 4th Aid*

- a. Can you see over the top of your Horse?
 - i. Make sure your seat is elevated enough
 - ii. Reins should be off the Horses back
- b. Most people find a seat that slopes forward slightly will more easily allow them to sit in the correct position
 - i. When you are sitting level or tipped back, you will lean forward and tense your midsection, collapse your shoulders.
- c. Build an awareness of how you sit on the box

The **Check Yourself!** Routine

- ❖ To be repeated about every 5 minutes
- ❖ Start with the feet
 - One foot forward, one foot back
 - Lift them off the floor
- ❖ Set them back down. Rest them lightly on the floor.
 - Let gravity keep you in the seat.
 - Do not push with your forward foot.
 - Bracing is ok if it is necessary
 - In Hazards, Cones, not in Dressage or just driving down the road.
- ❖ Work your way up your leg, your knees, your thighs to your pelvis, relaxing tension.
- ❖ Let the motion of the cart move you.
 - Become a Hula Dancer, starting where your spine joins your pelvis.
 - Interface between the movement of the wheels over the terrain and your hands.
- ❖ Feel the back rest, do not push into it.
- ❖ Do a shoulder roll or 2.
- ❖ Pull your shoulders back, open your chest
- ❖ Elbows hang by your sides, even with the front of your rib cage.
- ❖ Hands as far apart as your shoulders and over your knees
 - Achenbach vs 2 handed rein method
 - 2 handed method: Origin of the motion of your rein movement should come from the spine-side edge of your shoulder blade.
- ❖ Hands held slightly higher than your elbow.
 - Do not pull down.
- ❖ Whip in your right hand at 45 degrees to the left side and 45 degrees forward.
 - Can you reach the parts of the Horse you need to without compromising your posture?
 - Longer stick with shorter lash may work better than a shorter stick, longer lash.
 - Balanced well in the hand, i.e. Not top-heavy
- ❖ Head Balanced on top of your neck
- ❖ Check where you are looking. Move 'Looking' up in priority over time.
- ❖ REPEAT APPROXIMATELY EVERY 5 MINUTES!

What does this teach?

For the Driver: The Driver learns the importance of regularly reminding himself **to maintain correct posture** for the type of driving being done. Correct posture and **body control is not automatic** and is subverted by the efforts to try to correct the issues of the Horse. The Driver achieves **the most responsive posture** for communication. The more correct the Driver is, the more correct the Horse will become. Aids in establishing and maintaining **the Labor/Management Relationship**.

For the Horse: The Horse will benefit from the Driver achieving the correct posture to establish and maintain **the Labor/Management Relationship** because it is the only posture in which it is possible for the Driver **to issue pure instruction** without interfering with or disrupting the Balance and self carriage of the Horse.

- a. *Where to Look, How to See, What to Feel.*
 - i. Our brains are wired to use the data from the center of our visual field.
 1. Lots of information is available outside that central area.
 2. Train your brain to use the area outside the center of your visual field.
 3. Learn to drive by FEEL.
 - a. By the time you see what isn't right, it is too late to fix it!
 - b. Work on trusting what you feel.
 - c. You will feel your Horse starting to go wrong.
 - i. You can feel the rhythm change.
 - ii. You can hear it change.
 - iii. You can feel your tension change.
 - iv. You can feel your Horse's tension change.
 - v. You can feel him raise and lower his head and neck.
 - vi. You can feel his neck stiffen.
 - vii. You can feel him reach down and forward.
 - viii. You can tell if his is bent
 - ix. There is more information there; work on discovering it.
 - ii. How do you train your brain to pay attention of info outside the center of the visual field and to respond?
 1. Do not look at your Horse.
 - a. Some part of our brain says it is not right to have a live, 1000 lb animal trotting or galloping in front of us.
 - b. Our survival instincts do not trust this on a gut evolutionary level.
 - c. Our vision is constantly drawn back toward this threat.
 - d. The Eye Spy Exercise

Eye Spy

- ❖ Practice on a 40 meter circle.
- ❖ Look up and around.
- ❖ Do not look at your Horse.
- ❖ Be mindful of the Horse underneath the center of your visual field
 - In the bottom quarter of your vision.
 - See his ears?
 - What else can you see?
 - Look above the horizon
- ❖ 'See' at where you wish to end up without staring at it.
 - See halfway around.
 - See $\frac{1}{4}$ way around.
 - See $\frac{1}{2}$ way around.
 - See $\frac{1}{4}$ way around
 - Then $\frac{3}{4}$ way around. Etc
 - Seeing back and forth as you go around the circle.
- ❖ If you find that you can't stop staring at the back of your Horse's head, tape/tie a piece of bright ribbon to the water hook on the saddle. It will remind you "Not to Look There!"

What does this teach?

The Driver: Trains the Driver to use their **peripheral vision**, to focus on **where** they are going and **how** they will get there, **to drive by Feel**, to feel **what 'round' is**, to **prepare**.

The Horse: The Horse will also focus his attention on **where** he is going and **how** he will get there, will benefit by being **better prepared** because the farther in advance he is adequately prepared, the easier it is for him to **maintain his Balance** and the **more energy** he can devote to his movement.

2. Exercise: Driving with your eyes closed.
 - a. Removes all the input from your visual field.
 - i. Optic nerve is actually a part of your brain.
 - ii. As resources are removed or limited, our brains are wired from an evolutionary survival standpoint to rely on the resources still at its disposal
 - iii. Remove the sense of sight and hearing, touch (feel) are heightened.
 - iv. All that information is coming in when all the resources are available.
 - v. The brain filters on a priority basis.
 - vi. Removing sight allows the brain to focus on feel.

Driving Blind

- ❖ Find a field with no obstacles, holes, etc
- ❖ Bring your Horse to a point where he is driving responsively.
 - Check Yourself.
 - Close your eyes.
 - You can open them in a split second.
 - There are no Peaking Police.
 - Focus first on yourself.
 - Check Yourself. – AGAIN!
 - More effective with your eyes closed.
 - What can you feel?
- ❖ Drive with your eyes open.
- ❖ Then close your eyes and focus on your Horse.
 - What you can feel?
 - What can you hear?
- ❖ Open your eyes.
- ❖ Keep your eyes off your horse.
- ❖ Drive the cart.
 - Drive the cart to where you want it to go; do not drive the Horse.
 - If the cart ends up in the right place, your Horse will have been in the right place.

What does this teach?

The Driver: This is the best exercise to learn how **to drive by Feel**. The Driver learns how much information is being transmitted to him all the time through the senses at his disposal other than Sight. He learns **to trust** and use these other sources of information. He will learn **to sense incorrectness** in his Horse before it becomes a big problem requiring a big correction.

The Horse: The Horse will immediately **relax** when the Driver begins to focus on what he can **feel** rather than what he is anticipating when relying on his sight. The Horse will experience **increased responsiveness** and sensitivity in his mouth and as a result, also throughout his entire body.

Performance will improve as the quality of input from the Driver becomes more sympathetic to the needs of the Horse.

3. Exercise: Squinting/Blurring
 - a. *Effective exercise when warming up for dressage*
 - b. *In areas where there may be obstacles*

Squinting and Blurring

- ❖ Check Yourself.
 - Especially where you are looking: Up and away.
- ❖ Let gravity keep you in the seat.
- ❖ Let the motion of the cart move you.
- ❖ Squint or, if you can, take your eyes out of focus. Blur your vision.
- ❖ Breathe out/blow out in rhythm with your Horse.
- ❖ What can you Feel?
- ❖ Drive a shortened version of your test or drive the problem movements.
- ❖ Do it at home first so you are comfortable with driving this way.
- ❖ See if you can drive an entire test this way.

What does this teach?

For the Driver: This technique teaches the Driver to trust and **rely on what he can feel**. When the Driver can feel when his Horse is correct, he will instantly know, without having to look or even think, when the Horse is incorrect and deliver the right instructions. He can **react faster** and thus allow the Horse less time to make the mistake even worse. **Little mistakes require little corrections**. Big mistakes require bigger corrections.

For the Horse: The Horse benefits from this technique because the Driver becomes more **sensitive to his Balance, rhythm, and tempo**. The movement of the wheel across the ground is absorbed more by the Driver and not transferred to the Horse's mouth. This allows for **clearer and cleaner communication** with the bit.

2. Improving Communication For the Horse

a. *Time Management can help make your Horse content, more receptive to communication.*

v. Standing can not be emphasized enough.

1. Is a Horse content because he is standing or standing because he is content?
2. Especially beneficial with forward Horses
3. Stand Tied/cross tied/ground tied

vi. Give Your Horse Enough Time Off!

1. Allows for processing
 - a. Human sleep study
2. Work out the best work schedule
 - a. Give him more credit for understanding; you may be surprised how well he understood his lessons.
 - b. A Horse in training is like a kid in school.
 - i. Horses need recess and vacations.
 - ii. Especially young and confused Horses

i. Manage his time at a competition.

1. Hand walk.
2. Take him to competition areas so his relaxed and familiar
3. Arrive early enough to allow him to settle in

b. *Equipment fit and adjustment can affect communication.*

i. Bits

1. A comfortable mouth is a quiet mouth
2. A busy active mouth is a manifestation of anxiety – but where is the seat of the anxiety?
 - a. In the mouth?
 - i. Dentition
 - ii. Bit fit and/or style
 1. Bit should fit the mouth
 2. Style should fit the job, the level of training, conformation
 - iii. Un-skilled rein handling can cause a fussy mouth.
 - iv. Non comprehension of what the response to bit movement should be.
 - b. The source of discomfort can be just about any place else.

c. *Exercises for the Horse to work on Communication*

- i. The primary Aid used in communication is the Rein
 1. Really: it is the rein and the bit combination.
- ii. The primary subject of communication is Balance.
- iii. Since the discussion between Horse and Driver is about Balance, the rein/bit should not hold up, support or Balance the Horse physically or, to put it another way, the Horse should not learn to rely on physical support from the hand for Balance by leaning on it.
- iv. Which means the hand has to act in a way that allows the Horse to Balance himself, yet still be capable of a continuous connection to the mouth so instruction can be executed.

Lets Make a Deal

The Essential Exercise

The Deal: The Horse gets to move your hand with his mouth in exchange for you getting to move and control his head and neck.

- When the Horse offers to move his mouth (head and neck) down and forward, you absolutely must allow your hand to be moved by his mouth.
 - Even if it temporarily takes you out of the ideal driving position.
- We have no method of pushing or pulling his head and neck down and forward.
 - All we can do is allow him to offer it and encourage him when he does by not blocking that offering.
 - Block it once and he will be less inclined to offer a second time.
- This down and forward position for a flight animal like the Horse is relaxing, content, vulnerable, trusting.
 - Allows the Horse to take a longer, more efficient stride.
 - If he travels too long and low, he will only do so for a short while because that is not an efficient position in which to pull a vehicle.
- By allowing him to experiment down and forward, he will eventually discover the most efficient frame *for his conformation and development* in which to do the job.
 - Do not pull or force him into a “frame”.
 - He can not Balance if he is pulled, held or forced.
- ❖ Constantly remind yourself to lighten your hand forward.
 - Give forward with your hand till you feel his mouth disappear.
 - Then rest your hand on his mouth and allow the movement of his mouth to move your hand.

What does this teach?

The Driver: The Driver learns give the Horse the opportunity and to not interfere with his effort **to achieve self carriage**. It is an integral part of establishing and maintaining **the Labor/Management Relationship**. It allows the Driver to achieve a relaxed driving posture and **to avoid a defensive posture**. He can not drive defensively with a light, giving, offering hand.

The Horse: The Horse learns **to achieve self carriage** and to assume his correct role in **the Labor/Management Relationship**. He learns to find **the most efficient position** in which to pull the vehicle for his conformation and muscle development. He learns **to pay attention** to quiet, subtle instruction in his mouth with the bit. He learns **to not be afraid** of the bit and **to trust** the instructions. He gains confidence in his role because it is clearer to him what it is.

Figure 8

- ❖ Best done in a dressage ring to help encourage precision.
- ❖ Best done on level ground with good footing.
 - Removes some anxiety for the Horse about where and how his feet are put down.
 - Removes issues of balancing up and down hill.
 - Slightly up and downhill can be a good thing to teach him about Balance.
- ❖ Best to have enough room for least two 20 meter circles side by side,
 - Four 20's inside a 40 meter square works REALY well.
- ❖ To Start: Check Yourself! Walk in 20 meter Circle in either direction.
 - Doesn't matter which way, although usually best to start in his good direction.
 - Vary which direction you begin over time.
 - Larger is ok, smaller probably not better.
- ❖ Encourage your Horse to be precise. Do not let him decide where he is going.
- ❖ **You have 3 Rules to enforce:**
 - **The Horse must look inside the circle.**
 - **The Horse can not change the speed at which you ask him to travel, neither up nor down.**
 - **The Horse can reach down and forward all he wants.**
 - **He is free to explore. You can not hold or support him with your hand.**
 - **Note: no rule about size of the circle**
- ❖ Your outside rein is your friend.
 - Inside Rein asks the Horse to look inside.
 - Outside Rein Half Halt when the inside hind foot leaves the ground.
 - Outside Rein Half Halts asks your Horse to shift his center of Balance laterally, to his outside, then tells him to 'Keep it there, Keep it there....'
- ❖ When all 3 rules are being followed well, change direction thru the center of the Figure 8.
- ❖ Repeat in the 2nd direction until all the rules are being followed.
- ❖ Change direction randomly so the Horse does not change every time he comes to the center.
- ❖ If the rules fall apart, stay in that direction until re-established.
- ❖ Constantly Check Yourself! And then play Eye Spy and Squinting/Blurring.
- ❖ Move up to the Trot. ~ Same Rules apply.
- ❖ Flip the Figure 8 by staying straight to get to the next circle instead of changing direction thru the middle.
- ❖ Add more 20 meter circles.
 - With four circles you can drive four Figure 8's and flip them any number of ways by occasionally driving straight to the next circle.
 - Divide your 40 meter square with center lines and quarter lines.
 - Change direction every quarter circle thru the center. (from quarter line to center line to quarter line)
 - You can add halts down center lines.

What does this teach?

The Driver: Timing and precision of instruction due to limited strides. Every stride must count and be correct. On a circle every stride is the same as the one the Horse just took and the one he is about to take. The Driver readily learns precision in giving instruction because their mistakes show up rather dramatically. The circle is no longer round, the Horse falls out of Balance – side to side, front to back. The geometric precision of the dressage ring enables mistakes to be seen and forces a more precise performance. It's worth developing the habit of being precise.

The Horse: Balance: the Horse readily learns about balancing himself because when he guesses correctly, his job is immediately and noticeably made easier for him. The real value comes in the center of the Figure 8 when the Horse must shift his center of Balance from one side to his center to the other side. He must accomplish this in only a few strides, ideally 3. He learns **to pay attention** to your instructions because the more he responds correctly, the easier his job becomes.

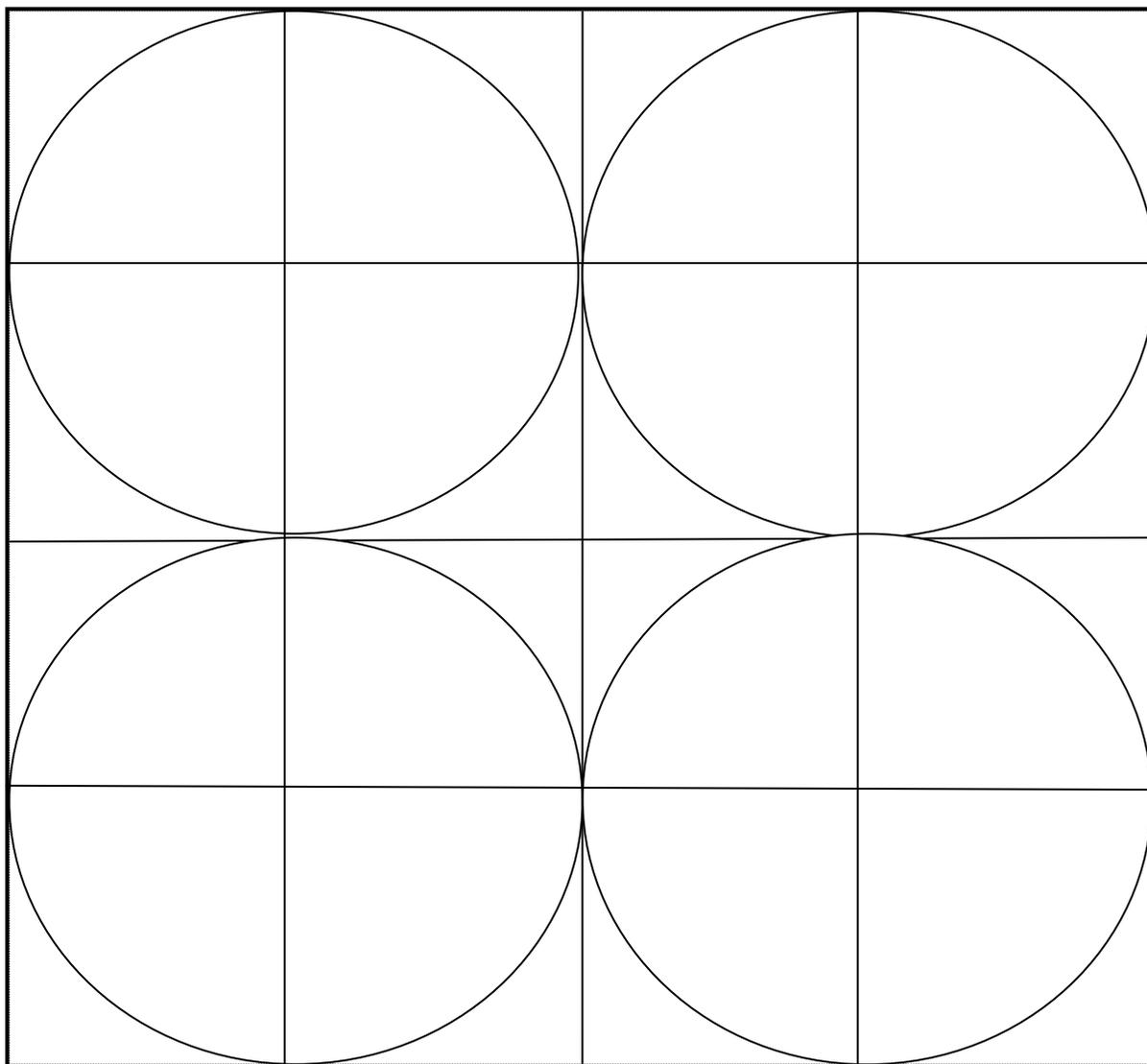


Figure 8 Map
Four 20 Meter Circles inside a 40 meter Square
Center Lines in two directions
4 Quarterlines

Loop and Wave

- ❖ Best done starting on the short side of a dressage ring.
- ❖ Best done with a fence or barrier of some kind.
 - Rails on the ground., Dressage chain
- ❖ Check yourself.
- ❖ Begin at the Walk.
- ❖ Walk deep into the corner
- ❖ Continue in a tight turn all the way around to the short side.
- ❖ Turn back to travel straight into the opposite corner
- ❖ Continue in a tight turn back to the short side
- ❖ Turn back to travel straight.
- ❖ Repeat.
- ❖ Change to the Trot and repeat.
- ❖ Can be extended to a Wave around the inside of a full dressage ring.
 - Really, a series of shallow deviations.
 - Maybe with Loops in the corners.
 - Maybe with a 20 meter circle thrown in somewhere.

What does this teach?

The Driver: Your goal is to **manage every stride**. **Timing of instruction** is improved.

The Horse: The Horse will learn to **find the most efficient positioning** for his front feet and hind legs, in particular, because with so few strides, every stride counts.

Response to instruction by the Horse is improved. **Patience** is improved. Forward Horses learn **to wait to be driven**.

Note from the Author:

If you have **any** questions, suggestions or comments on this material, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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