

Asbury College Equine Center

Police Horse Curriculum

1st Stage: (6 months- 1 year)

Stage Focus: Creating a safe horse to handle.

Things to know:

- DO NOT BABY your foal! You will create a monster (a.k.a. 2,000 lbs. lap dog).
- Foals may be small, but they are still VERY dangerous.
- A kick from a foal can kill you.
- Foals bite...hard.
- Always be aware of your surroundings and your horse.
- Foals do not think like adult horses, you must be very clear and patient.
- If you are frustrated in training, they are probably more frustrated with you, and they can over react.
- Training any age horse can be very rewarding and fun. Do not give up!

Goals:

1. Approach and catch you horse safely- stall and field.
2. Able to be touched ALL over (ex. ears, face, feet, inside legs, genitals, under tail...)
3. Groom and pick up all four feet. Stand for farrier.
4. Stand tied (ground tied and to wall).
5. Give to pressure (Parelli Porcupine Game)
6. Halter and Leading

Suggested Steps: (* essential in the first 6 weeks)

- *Stand in stall with foal. Allow the horse to be comfortable with your presence in the stall.
- *Play the Friendly Game (Parelli) with your hand.
- *DO NOT ALLOW BITING or mouthy behavior! It isn't cute.

- *Introduce grooming tools. “Play” with them.
- *Use grooming tools to groom foal.
- *Teach baby to pick up foot and hold for you. Foal should never lean on you for support. Ask for hoof by squeezing the tendon or chestnut. **DO NOT FORCE.**
- *Leading: **NO** Dragging of horse (or handler). Use butt rope or extra person at first; then lead with out support from behind.
- Teach horse to stand and bend neck toward handler as halter is removed. This is for safety and respect. **Do NOT** let foal pull away as you release. **Do NOT** allow the horse to lean or rub on you, it is not cute.
- Begin Porcupine Game (Parelli) to teach foal to give to pressure, especially on halter.
- Play Friendly Game (Parelli) using soft rope.
- Once the foal has learned to give to pressure, teach him to tie.
- Introduce hose and bathing (Caution: only in warm weather- 65 degrees or warmer)

2nd Stage: (1yr. - 2yr.)

Stage Focus: Foundational Ground Manners and Skills

Important Things to Remember:

- **NO RIDING DURING THIS STAGE.**
- *Horses learn in cycles* (just because your horse did it yesterday does not mean that he will remember it today.)
- Do not come into a training session frustrated or rushed. You will have difficulty accomplishing your goal.
- The foal is entering his pre-teen adolescent stage. Welcome to Jr. High drama.

Goals:

1. Accomplish Level 1 of Parelli games.
2. Stand tied for a sustained amount of time.
3. Ground tie for a sustained amount of time.

4. Be able to load/unload quietly from trailer.
5. Navigate through a variety of obstacles (**Over, Under, Through**).
6. Join-up and respond with respect to trainer.

Suggested Steps:

1. Allow the horse to learn to trust the trainer through creative situations (obstacles, round pen)
2. Be consistent with what you ask of your horse.
3. Round pen training is for trust building not only physical exercise. (see Monte Roberts and Lew Sterrett videos)
4. Continue advancing through Parelli games. (see Parelli books and videos)
5. Apply Parelli games when teaching trailering, new scary objects, etc.
6. Begin to teach horse to lunge.

NOTES:

Mastery of Parelli games is essential to further progress. These are the **foundational** skills for all future training no matter the discipline. Mastery of Level 1 in the Parelli games is required before progressing to higher levels.

Training should progress slowly through all six goals and training steps. Be persistent, but patient with the horse, their minds learn in cycles. Always review and re-teach all concepts even when the horse is successful.

BE CREATIVE WITH THEM!!!! They're AD/HD.

3rd Stage: (2 yr. - 3 yr.)

Stage Focus: Beginning Riding and Street Work

**Horse should attend the Police Horse Colloquium at the Kentucky Horse Park in the fall of this year or training. **

Goals:

1. Level 2 mastery of Parelli games.
2. Responsive to long-lining and bit pressure.
3. Consistent under saddle at the walk and trot.
4. Successfully led and ridden through obstacles.
5. Load in trailer with little or not support (i.e. no grain or coaxing from behind).
6. Trail riding and pre-street training.

Suggested Steps:

1. Introduce tack using “friendly game”.
2. Begin to round pen/lunge with tack on.
3. Begin long-lining on circle and progress to straight-aways and figure eights.
4. Continue Parelli games on a regular basis.
5. “Sack o’ Potatoes” on horse’s back or “Mrs. Jeans” to desensitize to back pressure.
6. Load horse in trailer a minimum of once a week (feed grain ration in trailer).
7. Begin riding in closed arena with ground support. (Eventually wean from support)
8. Once proficient in arena begin trail riding with experienced horses and riders.

Notes:

Percheron/Thoroughbreds are extremely good at bucking. Be careful and avoid unnecessary risks. These horses will get big very quickly, but they are not structurally mature until age 5. You should limit riding time to short sessions (1 hour or less). These sessions can occur with greater frequency and duration as horse matures physically and mentally.

Take it slow. Be patient, be creative, and have fun.

4th Stage: (3 yr. and on)

At this stage you need to challenge the horse to learn new things. Work on a collected canter, side passing, jumping, advanced obstacles, street work, parades, etc. At

this point you continue using the training methods that are most effective for the horse. Be creative. Challenge your horses body and mind. Keep in mind; the horse is still developing so limit workouts that are high impact on feet and joints until they are at least 4 yrs. old. Also remember, horses learn in cycles. Keep reviewing ground manners and basic training, but keep the horse moving forward with high levels of expectation. The horse will rise to the level that you expect, for good or bad. Perseverance is the key, and have fun.

**This curriculum is an outline to help guide training. It is the trainer's responsibility to search out effective training techniques, attend clinics, and make the most of this training experience. The trainer should expect to spend at least 10 hours training a week.