

Horse Training How-To from Horsemanship101.com

Get On Your Horse: Curing Mounting Problems

A handbook to gaining respect at the mounting block -- with additional, essential exercises

by John Lyons Certified Trainer Keith Hosman

*Part of the "Horse Training How-To" Series from Horsemanship101.com
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“Get On Your Horse: Curing Mounting Problems”

by Keith Hosman

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Keith Hosman

horsemanship101.com

PO Box 31

Utopia, TX 78884 USA

020714

Table of Contents

Preface 7

This is your roadmap to stopping an annoying and dangerous habit.

Section I: Days 1 through 5

A step-by-step plan to fixing your mounting block blues

Introducing: Curing Mounting Problems..... 11

Day One:

“Whoever Moves First Loses” 19

Start earning R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Day Two:

Sidepassing to You On the Ground..... 33

Move your horse back to the mounting block - and amaze your friends - when you teach your horse to sidepass to you on the ground

Day Three:

Now Moving Becomes Our Idea 47

Channel your horse’s unwanted movements into productive training as “Moving Becomes Our Idea”

Day Four:

Working from the Saddle..... 59

Work from the saddle to lock in your “standing order”

Day Five:

The Reins - 5 Ways to Improve Your Use 67

Without realizing it, the way we use the reins often causes many aggravating issues. Here are five tips to improve our rein-handling - and one giant step toward a happier partnership with our horse.

And, Finally..... 79

When you do get on, do this first

Section II: Additional Training

More steps you can take to transform your horse into a model citizen

Rider Checklists 83

Once you've "fixed" your horse at the mounting block, keep future attitudes and performance in balance by running each of these three checklists through your head with each ride. Think of this as "preventative care."

The First Thing I Do..... 91

The slightest resistance from your horse in the more peaceful moments - like when you're trying to mount up or even just hanging out - will be far worse at higher speeds or at traumatic moments, leading to balking, bolting - or far worse.

Cinchy Horses 99

If you can't "mount up" because your horse is half alligator at "tack up time," here's how to deal with the gnashing teeth, thrashing tails and stomping feet.

Pick Up Your Reins Like a Pro 107

More work with our reins. This is -- with super-specific detail -- how to pick up, handle, and release your reins. Based on all the riding and training clinics I've conducted, I truly believe that this chapter contains "the fastest way on the planet to ra

Meet the Author.....119

John Lyons Certified Trainer Keith Hosman

Preface

This is your roadmap to stopping an annoying and dangerous habit.

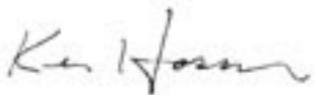
Your horse dances about and tries to keep you from getting into the saddle because he's either scared -- or there's been a coup (of which you may not be aware). This handbook shows you the steps you must take to put an end to this annoying and dangerous habit regardless of its cause.

Section I of "Get On Your Horse: Curing Your Mounting Problems" offers up a 5-day, step-by-step guide to teaching your horse to move to the mounting block, to lunge, to give respect - and to stand rock solid.

Section II presents four additional chapters designed to "round out" or "book end" the previous training. Each offers buckets of additional insight into the specific issue at hand, that is, the horse that's begun "dancing" at the mounting block.

While the "Days" of Section I should be worked through in the order presented, materials found in the second half are more or less "stand alone" and can be put into practice when common sense dictates.

Good luck in your training!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Hanson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Introducing: Curing Mounting Problems

If your horse has developed the annoying habit of dancing about as you try to mount up, this course is for you. If you dread the thought of heading out to the barn because you know your horse is going to embarrass you red-faced, refusing to stand at the mounting block, this course is for you. If the little voice in your head says it's only a matter of time 'til you get him (the little voice) killed...then yup, this course is for you. Take heart: When we're through here, you'll know how to remedy this situation. Your horse will stand there politely, and fellow riders will have new and positive impressions of your skills as a horseman.

Know from the outset that this is no quick fix; it's a long-lasting, wrest-back-control fix that may very well take effect quickly (as in days or weeks) - but that results achieved are decided by you and your horse as a team. Results gained depend on how deeply entrenched the habit has become, your horse's temperament, how much quality time you're willing to spend and to what degree you're willing to personally change. Sure, I can get you into the saddle relatively quickly (see Day Two) - but there's no magic button to cause Ol Dobber to stand there politely. As you've doubtless heard, the only way to change your horse is to first make a change

in yourself so you're going to need to make a commitment to spend the time it takes - and commit to doing things a bit differently from here on out.

Understand that your horse moves off as you try to swing up because of one or two reasons (and maybe a combo of both): 1) He doesn't respect you or 2) He's scared of what happens when you do get up there. Furthermore, our "fix" comes in two parts as well: 1) You'll find a practical solution for the here and now, that is, how to get up there when he's skittering about tomorrow afternoon and 2) How to train him to dependably stand rock solid for future riding sessions.

Don't see "getting on the horse" as your end-all, be-all goal because just getting up there one time is the easy part. Instead, change your focus here and now. Beginning today, make it your personal challenge to discover why your horse has decided he doesn't want you up there and what you need to do to purge that thought. Fix that, the cause, and the "effect" will clear itself up. If he's moving off as you put your foot in the stirrup because he's decided "You ain't the boss of me" then jumping up there anyway only proves that you're nimble on your feet. Should you then change nothing else and simply ride off to meet your pals on the trail, you've done zero to deal with an underlying situation that may very well lead to a battle of wills that eventually plants you on the ground. Likewise, if he's rejecting your advances because he's just downright scared, then common sense screams that changes in your approach need to be made. (He weighs a ton, you're about a seventh of that; do the math.)

Here's how we're going to do this: I'm going to assume that if you're reading this that your horse has been resisting your attempts to get in the saddle for

awhile, that today wasn't the first time he pulled the trick. I will further assume that if he's gotten away with it for very long at all, he's probably gotten quite good at it, that you're exasperated, and calling Alpo has definitely crossed your mind. To begin tackling this we'll open with an article called "Whoever Moves First Loses." In it, we'll cover two concepts critical to you making a change: 1) Between the two of you, who is the boss in your horse's mind and 2) When you do your training, is he really trying or is he simply shuffling through his paces? If your horse has become a hard-core pain in the rear at the mounting block, you've probably ignored a few telltale signs that say he's decided "you're not the boss of me." And, given such an overall environment, it's quite likely that when you "train" he's simply walking through the material, his mind elsewhere and little is sinking in. Beyond the mounting block, this attitude is evidenced in other bratty behavior commonly written off with terms like "pushy, spoiled, tired or bored." Ignoring little things has led to big things. A horse that blocks us with his shoulder today as we lead is dragging us to a pile of grass tomorrow - and bolting across the highway the next. Our "Day One" then will open your eyes to your horse's view of human-to-horse dynamics (Has he assumed control?); it gives you a fix should you discover that you're not calling the shots in his mind - and it teaches you to be more aware of lessons that are having an impact as opposed to sessions where nothing is being accomplished. In these things, it opens the door to the training that follows.

By definition we have a horse that won't stand near us when we want to get into the saddle, so on Day Two we'll learn a very cool way to ask the horse to position itself correctly near us (or the mounting block) in a section called "Teach a Horse to Sidepass Toward You

Books by This Author

Check out these titles from Keith Hosman:

- *Get On Your Horse: Curing Mounting Problems*
- *How to Start a Horse: Bridling to 1st Ride*
- *Rein In Your Horse's Speed*
- *Round Penning: First Steps to Starting a Horse*
- *Stop Bucking*
- *Trailer Training*
- *What Is Wrong with My Horse?*
- *When Your Horse Rears... How to Stop It*
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Get On Your Horse: Curing Mounting Problems

Meet the Author

John Lyons Certified Trainer Keith Hosman



Keith Hosman lives just outside of San Antonio, Texas and divides his time between writing how-to training materials and conducting training clinics in most of these United States as well as in Germany and the Czech Republic.

Visit his flagship site horsemanship101.com for more D.I.Y. training and to find a clinic happening soon near you.

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