

Horse Training How-To from Horsemanship101.com

Horse Tricks

In Two Parts and Featuring:

**“Dr. Sutherland’s System of Educating the Horse”
(Annotated)**

Rules for Teaching the Horse Some 40 Different
Tricks or Feats

By G.H. Sutherland, M.D.
Originally published 1861



Together with: **“A Handful of Feats”**
Five More Handy Tricks for Horse and Man

By Keith Hosman, Clinician & Gadabout
Originally published 2012

*Part of the “Horse Training How-To” Series from Horsemanship101.com
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About this Book

“The real trick in this book... was compiling it.”

This book melds together material written by G.H. Sutherland, MD and by me, Keith Hosman. It is published in two sections. The first is a collection of dozens of tricks you can teach your horse and was written in 1861 by Dr. Sutherland. The second contains five “feats” I put to paper after finding them to be quite popular at my clinics. In the end, you will also find a fix for horses that bite, should they get nippy following some of the training which calls for the horse to pick objects up with its mouth and the like.

You will see that I have annotated the material which follows. That’s a fancy way of saying that I read through Dr. Sutherland’s material, then added comment to each chapter based on personal experiences, modern thinking and techniques. You’ll find my thoughts appearing as the italicized text at the bottom of each trick. Know that, while they may be short, each observation or insight was placed with care; each can make big changes

fast somewhere in your training. I daresay you just might recoup the cost of this book somewhere in that sea of italicized notes.

Note that, while you'll find many copies of this training material (originally "Dr. Sutherland's System of Educating the Horse") on the internet in an electronic format, you'll also find them to be scratchy, scanned-in copies that are too often blurry and tough to read at best -- a total turn-off to the modern equestrian with so many how-to training choices (video, internet, etc.). I thought this material worthy to pass on, however, and so what you'll find here represents my many hours of retyping and reformatting reams of material. Simply put, I felt the quality of Dr. Sutherland's work, his guidance and insight, to be worth the sore fingers and double-vision.

- Keith Hosman

Forward

“Old doesn’t mean out-dated.”

Four hundred fifty years ago, the famous Spanish Riding School of Vienna was born. Moments later, Lipizzan stallions were leaping about, thrilling audiences. Today they perform the same movements -- and the horses are trained by the same methods.

Two hundred fifty years ago Mozart wrote his music. Today you can buy his “The Marriage of Figaro” and play it on your smart phone. Same notes, recorded as written, brilliant as ever.

One hundred fifty years ago, Doctor G.H. Sutherland took out his pen and laid out some forty tricks that can be taught to your horse. His methods, with few alterations, are every bit as fresh and effective today as they were back then.... the year our Civil War started. You will find much of his work in the pages that follow.

Still, why should you lay down your hard-earned cash for -- let alone train from -- a horse-training book written generations ago? Because author G.H. Sutherland could train horses to do tricks that you’d like to learn. Because when something works, it works. And in all this time, what’s really changed? It’s still a human using the same simple tools to teach a horse to do the same maneuvers.

What's different, I would say, between the material you'll find here and another training guide written in modern times, would be that Doctor Sutherland -- somewhat refreshingly -- knew nothing of political correctness. While he does seem to have a love affair with commas, scattering them about with reckless abandon, he also calls it like he sees it. He's direct and to the point. He uses the word "hit" and he uses it a lot. However, all must be placed in context. Given the text as a whole, you will see that he is a very forceful advocate for kindness and restraint in training (perhaps the only such voice back in the day, perhaps an actual pioneer). Time and time again he advises that the quickest route to a trained horse calls for humanity on our part. Consider the following quote:

"By this one great principle, kindness, we can not only successfully govern our families, but control the inmates of schools, workhouses and prisons, and reclaim the most hardened criminal, when all other means fail. And the public have only yet to learn the fact that we can by this same system tame, subdue and control the horse sooner, safer and better than by any other system or method before practiced by the public. He surely is the merciful man who puts the whip into the manger and not on to the horse.... I shall strive to adhere still closer to that one great principle, kindness."

Given such outtakes from his text, I think we can give Dr. Sutherland the benefit of the doubt in those moments when he seems to veer a bit off the PC path.

You'll be surprised at just what can be learned here. All told, there are over forty tricks contained in this guide and I'll bet you can't read through this material without stopping and saying to yourself "So that's how

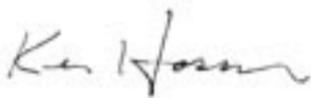
do teach that!” Do you know, for instance, how to teach a horse to cross an arena and pick up your hat...? You will -- and it’s easy.

There is a small collection of “tricks” at the end written by me. Granted, not all the material found there in Section II are “tricks” in the typical sense, but they certainly do fall outside the realm of “everyday training.” Actions such as “dropping your horse’s head on command” or causing your horse to sidepass toward you do tend to “wow” the average horse lover -- so I felt it warranted to include them here.

As a postscript, I would like to add that there are some tricks contained herein that you may want to think long and hard about before you teach them -- each might bring more “side effects” than you’re prepared for. Teaching the horse to rear on command or manipulate (anything) with its teeth come to mind. Either might prove to be a real runaway train, should your horse decide to take what he’s learned and practice it on his own schedule.

Also, please note that, while the original text had forty tricks, I did remove one, having decided that it was just a bit too risky and not something I’d necessarily advocate.

Good luck in your training!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Hosman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Keith Hosman
John Lyons Certified Trainer
Utopia, Texas USA

Chapter 1

To Come When Called

“To Come When Called” will be the first trick or feat to teach the horse after he has been properly tamed and broke to the halter. This trick is very soon taught to the young horse, and will not only serve as a sort of stepping-stone to other tricks that follow, but it is a very pretty and convenient accomplishment for any young horse to possess, besides adding materially to his value.

To teach the horse this trick and many of those that follow, it will be necessary to provide a small training yard some 30 feet square, or what would be still better, one with eight sides, or eight square; let it be surrounded with a high tight fence, so high that the horse will not even think of breaking out; have the ground inside well littered with straw, saw dust or tan bark. If you should not wish to go to the expense or trouble of building such a yard, a large stable with the stalls removed will answer a very good purpose. Indeed a person could teach his horse many of those tricks in any common stable. Next provide your pocket with a few handfuls of corn, or a few cookies, so that you will be able to pay him well for every time that he obeys, or makes an effort to obey. In educating, as in taming and breaking, better to be all alone with your horse, if possible, and treat him always with the most affectionate

kindness. Never allow yourself to get angry or out of patience with him. Never use the whip unless absolutely necessary to make him obey you, and then very gently.

All being now ready you will take your horse into his training yard or stable and attach to his halter some small rope or cord to some 15 or 20 feet. You will now take hold of the cord with your left hand and with a long "bow whip" in your right: stop some six feet in front of him, and then address him with, "Come Charlie," or "Come Kitty," (always calling your horse by his name), and at the same time hit him lightly around his fore legs with your whip, and then by means of the cord lead him up to you. Now talk to him, pat, caress and give him a few kernels from your pocket; always speak to your horse in a pleasant manner, tell him what you want, repeat the same words or sentences every time in connection with the same act or actions, and he will soon learn to comprehend what you say. Every time that you call on him to come to you, call him by his name, and hit him around the fore legs with your whip. When he walks up to you drop your whip and caress him.

Now gradually work back by taking hold nearer the end of the rope; as soon as he will walk up to you when called, or at the crack of the whip, you can take off his halter and turn him loose in his yard, and he will now not only hurry up when called to receive the caresses and corn, but he has likewise learned that this is the only way of escape from the lash; repeat these lessons often until he will come to you from any part of the yard at the crack of the whip, and then you can take him into the field or street, and he will follow you around like some pet lamb without your saying one word, merely by the motion of your whip.

By the humane and timely use of the whip, you can compel him to perform any of the following tricks which makes it a certainty, and you will never be disappointed. First, gain his love by kindness, and then you can mould him as you would a child, into whatever form you may choose, that is if you are composed of the proper material and understand "Horseology."

See Section II of this book for my own version of "Come to You."

Note that you would be well-served to substitute words like "hit" in your mind with "annoy." Remember, if the common house fly can cause a herd of wildebeest to stampede, you can certainly be annoying enough with the tap, tap, tapping of your dressage whip.



Books by This Author

Check out these titles from Keith Hosman:

- Get On Your Horse: Curing Mounting Problems
- Horse Tricks
- 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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Horse Tricks

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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