

## Rubric

### Learning Activity:

When teaching horsemanship there are no “assignments,” however there are different tasks that students will want to learn depending on their goals. For this rubric, I considered a student learning how to go sideways at a trot. This task could be done while riding or on the ground and use the same rubric.

	<b>0 points</b>	<b>1 point</b>	<b>2 points</b>	<b>3 points</b>
<b>Perform the task: sideways at a trot</b>	Sideways is not achieved	Sideways is performed at a walk – fence or log may be used to limit forward movement	Sideways is performed at a trot – fence or log may be used to limit forward movement	Sideways is performed at a trot with no barrier to limit forward movement
<b>Human motor skills</b>	Human is rough, abrupt, or uncoordinated with tools	Human is exaggerated but coordinated in movement	Human is fluid with basic techniques	Human is fluid and refined with more advanced techniques
<b>Physical movement of the horse</b>	Horse has significant bend in its body (not true sideways)	Horse has mild bend in its body, sideways may be choppy (front and back moving in isolation), legs may or may not cross, hind quarters may lag more up to 45 degrees	Horses body is straight and fluid, front legs will cross, hind quarters will not more than 30 degrees	Horses body is strait, movement is fluid, both front and back legs and move together (hind quarters not lagging)
<b>Harmony between human and horse (x2)</b>	Unharmonious – horse is scared/trying to escape, lots of opposition reflex, human gets mean or mad, phase 4 must be used more than 2x	Horse understands what is being asked, phase 4 used 1-2x, horse may show some displaced behaviors or mild opposition reflex, human does not get mean or mad	Horse understands what is being asked, phase 4 is not used, only mild displaced behaviors okay, horse is obviously making an effort to do what is asked	Horse and human are in sync with each other, only phase 1 or 2 used, no displaced behaviors or opposition reflex, horse is engaged and transitions are seamless

**Reflection:**

Creating this rubric was an interesting process for me because we don't typically use grades or points in this fashion with horses. I think this would be a valuable tool for helping students understand where they are in their development with their horse. It could also give students some tangible things to look for when they are practicing different skills. Another positive thing with using a rubric with numeric values like this one is that when students compare scores with each other (which most of them do) then they will know exactly what that score means. The concern with a rubric is keeping the relationship and psychology more important than the task itself. I tried to address this by making the harmony between horse and human worth twice as many points. Also, if the students get focused on being able to do a task with a certain score they may forget about the importance of being able to do tasks in continuity with each other. When students cannot do various tasks in continuity and with spontaneity they have usually been taught as tricks and do not represent true communication between horse and human. There are definitely some clear benefits to having a rubric. But, it would be important to closely monitor that tasks were being done to enhance the relationship and not at the horse's expense.

"The horse doesn't care how much you know until he knows how much you care." - Pat Parelli