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*Raining... Grass is lush!...  
Horses stuck in...Life is good!*



New gate at the top of the driveway. Now it can be shut in the winter to protect drivers from sliding off the hill. Also to shut in the evening when the barn closes. Suggested time to be out of the barn 900- 930 pm. If you happen to come to the barn after the horses are "put to bed," please do not turn on all the lights USE GROOMING LIGHTS ONLY. I hate being disturbed once I go to bed, I imagine a horse may feel the same way!

**The Rider's seat :** Riding Bareback is one of the best ways to learn how to develop a following seat and learn how to coordinate your aids at the same time. Merging our legs, seat and hands into a "symphony of aids" to maneuver a horse with out disrupting the rhythm or flow can be challenging. If we are gripping with the legs, leaning with the torso or clasping with the hands on the reins~ all the delicacies of riding will not blossom into a

harmonious union of horse and rider going in sync. (Ha, another new way to ride 'In Sync Riding' : learn to merge with your horses sans the saddle.) Okay, so to improve your seat and learn how to precisely time the use of the aids, if you have the right bareback horse, practice bareback at least



once a week. Once you can keep a little 'school trot' without falling off and sit in confidence, start riding smaller circles, leg yields and serpentines. This will activate your aids to learn the timing of the aids while your seat learns to follow and balance.

Here is a great [YouTube video](#) that shows how much the seat has to follow the horse's back motion while riding. If any trainer ever told you to sit still, hold on and not breath while riding, well he or she needs to take up sculpting figures that don't move, not teach horse back riding.

### **Fitness Tip of the Month for Riders: Hips and Seat**

Learn the importance of hip mobility for riders and how to keep your hips flexible for riding. By Heather Sansom, Owner, Equifitt.com Equestrian Fitness.

Sitting in the saddle, your seat bones need to be able to move in all four planes so that you can follow your horse's motion: up and down, side to side, forward and back, and even cross-wise somewhat as in lateral movements. There is an excellent [YouTube video](#) that illustrates your seat bone movement nicely.

We not only need to be able to "ride" the horse's movement, but also able to 'read' it and direct it with the seat. When your hips are stiff, you are compromised in all three of those activities.

Riders have a tendency to orient their response to the motion of the front legs (as in knowing which diagonal to be on in rising trot). Feedback about the phases of movement of the horse's hind legs comes up through his back to your seat bones. Even if you are slightly out of the saddle because you are hacking in two point or doing other exercises than flatwork, you still need to feel his back indirectly to your seat-bones, through your thighs.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP98o4fD8QE>



Mighty Maverick jumping up a storm, I mean a sun! Maverick was reserve jumper at 3 foot. And, Matty was reserve hunter at 2'9".

**"If you're not making mistakes, your'e not trying hard enough."**  
Vince Lombardi, football coach

