



PALM PARTNERSHIP TRAINING™

Building a Partnership with Your Horse

“The Art of Longeing Your Horse” - Part 1

By Lynn Palm

Longeing is an art. When done properly, it benefits a horse by giving him conditioning, exercise, and muscle development. It teaches him to carry himself balanced on a curve and on a straight line.

We have all seen horses being longed that are running wildly around in endless circles, out of balance, and dragging their handlers all over the place. This is not what we are trying to achieve through longeing. Our goals are to use longeing to teach the horse to be responsive to voice commands, be obedient, have self-carriage, and enhance the proper muscle development that will help him in under saddle work.

Longeing allows you to exercise a horse at home, or in almost any area, without needing an enclosed fenced area or round pen. I teach all of my horses to longe as part of their training routine whether they are young or old. However, if you are working with a young horse, be careful not to do very much longeing as it can put extra stress on their bones, tendons, and ligaments.

Use the Right Equipment

All you need is a halter, longe line, and longe whip. I also recommend putting on leg protection such as splint boots or polo wraps for all lessons. Add bell boots on horses that might be uncoordinated, have hoof problems, or have a tendency to overreach with their stride.

I like a nylon halter for training. The halter must fit snugly but not tightly. The nosepiece should lie one inch down from the bottom of the horse's cheekbone.

The longe line connects the handler with the horse. It is used to control his position and communicate with him. I recommend using a flat, woven cotton longe line. It is easier to grip and keep organized than a round longe line. Avoid a nylon longe line which can cause serious rope burns if it slips through your hand. The longe line may end either in a snap or a length of chain with a snap at the end of the chain.

Learn To Organize the Longe Line for Safety

An important skill that you must learn

is organizing the longe line without looking at it. This lets you longe from smaller and large circles, from a circle to a straight line, and vary the amount of longe line being used without taking your eyes off the horse. I see too many handlers with their longe lines either dangerously coiled in their hands or dragging and getting tangled in their legs.

Learn how to keep the longe line safely organized in neat coils. Practice this technique first without the horse. Hold the tail end of the longe line in one hand, for example, in your left hand. Shake the rest of the line out on the ground. Slide your right hand down the longe, grasp it, and bring it to the left to create a loop. Continue doing this to loop more longe line into your left hand. To get the same sized loops as you coil up the longe line, simply stretch your arms apart the same degree so your right hand grasps the same amount of line. The right hand also untangles any twists in the line as it slides down the line. As you create loops, “stack” them in your left hand so one loop lies on top of the one before it. The result will be that the left hand is holding a neatly coiled line and the right hand is holding the short length of longe line with the snap end.

Attach the Longe Line Properly

The way the longe line is attached to the halter is important for responsiveness and control. For horses that are well trained in longeing, I may simply snap a cotton longe line, without a chain, to the halter side ring on the side that I am working the horse. This technique should only be used with a very well broke horse.

The next step in the progression to get more response from an inexperienced horse, or a horse that needs more control, also uses the simple cotton longe line. Take the snap end of the longe line and “thread” it over the chin piece on the side you will be working, behind (underneath) the halter's cheek piece, over the nose, and snap it to the side ring on the opposite side of halter. For safety sake, always make sure that the button of the snap is facing outward so it will be easier to release in case of emergency. I call this the “longe-line-over-the-nose” technique. It gives better control

of the horse's head.

If more responsiveness is needed than what is offered by the simple cotton longe line and snap, a longe line with a stud chain end can be used. This is more severe and is the next step in the progression. It is never used to punish the horse, but rather as a tool to get more sensitive responses from him. To properly attach it, thread the stud chain end through the side ring of the halter on the side you will be working from, over the nose and snap it either on the opposite side ring or to the opposite upper halter ring. At least one hand's length of chain, about five inches, should extend down from the side ring. Too much chain hanging down will swing and interfere with the horse. Too little chain will be too tight and cause you to lose sensitivity through the longe line, and the horse will become dull.

When longeing, **never** snap the longe line to the ring at the bottom of the halter, as this gives the handler no control of the horse's head and neck. You will not be able to keep him slightly bent in the direction of travel.

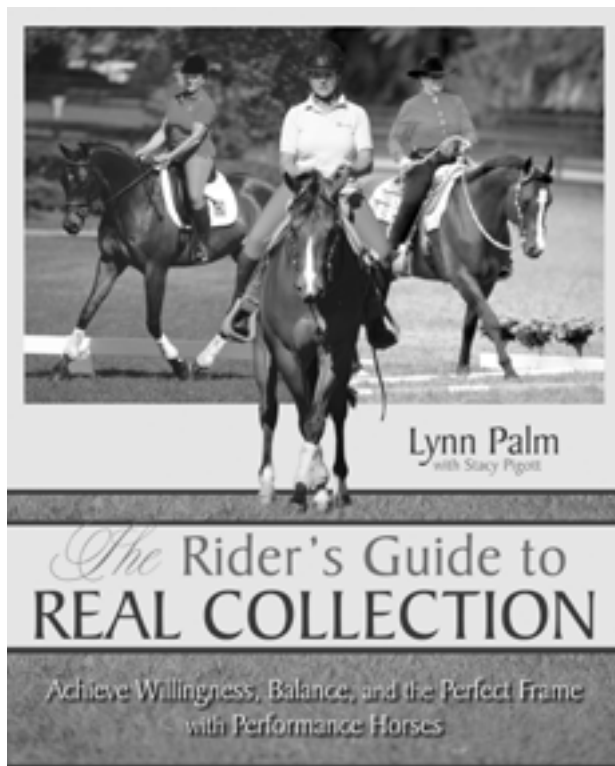
The most important goal in longeing is safety. I longe my horse—he does not longe me and drag me all around! It is extremely important to have control. The tool that will give you control is the way you choose to attach the longe line to the halter.

When the longeing session is done, use this neat trick for keeping the longe line organized when you are ready to put it away. Coil the longe line in loops as I described above. When you get to the end, take the portion of remaining line that would have become the last loop and wrap it around the top of the coil several times. Put the snap end through the top of the coil and pull it lightly. The result is a neatly organized coil of longe line with a handy snap at the end just right for hanging up in the tack room, and the longe line is ready to use in the next lesson.

Elevate your longeing sessions to an art with my “**Longevity Training—The Art of Longeing**.” It is available, with other fine Palm Partnership Training products, at www.lynnpalm.com or by phoning 800-503-2824.

REAL COLLECTION FOR THE WESTERN & ENGLISH HORSE & RIDER

World-Class Rider, Trainer, and Clinician Lynn Palm Explains Away the Mysteries of Collection in Her Highly Anticipated New Book *The Rider's Guide to Real Collection*



North Pomfret, Vermont—It is no secret that collection is one of the most misunderstood concepts in Western and English riding. Everyone wants it, but few people know how to get it. Real collection proves elusive because—until now—the instructions for achieving it have been complex, incomplete, or even incorrect. The result (false collection) is often based on a forced headset and little else, and ultimately leads to significant behavioral problems in the horse—and tragically, even physical breakdown.

In September, 2010, Trafalgar Square Books of North Pomfret, Vermont (www.horseandriderbooks.com) released *The Rider's Guide to Real Collection*—an exciting and ground-breaking new book by world-class rider, trainer, and clinician Lynn Palm—that actually debunks the myths of collection and demystifies it for even the most amateur rider, while thoroughly and thoughtfully explaining how anyone with any horse can actually attain it. With 40 years experience riding and training champion all-around performance horses, and a background in dressage, Lynn has perfected an easy-to-use system of exercises that gradually collect any type of horse, regardless of his build, and that are of particular value to stock horse breeds such as Quarter Horses, Paints, and Appaloosas. It is this amazingly successful, simple, safe, and fair system of training and conditioning that she will now share with the world.

Lynn's three stages of easy-to-use exercises will get your horse light, balanced, willing, and ready to take on any riding challenge with you on board. The rewarding results will be a horse in a beautiful frame that enjoys doing his "job" and doing it well, and for you riding will become more fun and less work. Plus, you'll extend your horse's athletic life and preserve his overall health. In the end

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“Real Collection;” (Continued from page 39)

you'll have the responsive, happy horse that every rider dreams of: healthy, willing, and ready to be competitive in the show pen or just simply a great pleasure to ride.

No other clinician today can begin to match LYNN PALM PITTION-ROSSILLON'S first-class reputation and proven performance record as an all-around trainer, showman, exhibitor, and entrepreneur. Some of Lynn's notable accomplishments include: 34 World and Reserve World Championships; Four Superhorse titles; American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) Female Equestrian of the Year; bridleless exhibitions with the legendary Rugged Lark at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, National Horse Show, The Washington International, and the International World Cup; 2003 Equine Affaire Exceptional Equestrian Educator Award winner; 2006 AQHA Professional Horsewoman of the Year; and Women's Sports Foundation 2000 Female Equestrian of the Year. Lynn and her husband Cyril Pittion-Rossillon conduct Ride Well Clinics at Fox Grove Farm in Ocala, Florida, and at Royal Palm Ranch in Bessemer, Michigan, as well as across the country.

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