


Another exercise I use frequently is loping circles. I know what you're thinking: how can this do anything but teach a horse how to go in circles? One of the best professional horsewoman trainers, Karen Hornick, taught me this skill, and I swear by it to teach rhythm and cadence. This exercise is very helpful to teach your horse how to keep its shoulders up and to engage its hind end.

Just as discussed in exercise one, start out in a medium-size circle and just get your horse loping or cantering around at first. After you feel comfortable, apply a give-and-take motion with your reins while applying calf pressure with your outside leg and holding the horse's barrel with your inside calf. Your hands shouldn't be higher than the saddle horn—I actually prefer to see them lower. With each stride, try to find the rhythm of your horse's lope. Ask the horse to harness his energy and come back to you using your hands and legs. The most important technique when performing this exercise is finding the rhythm. You must ask the horse

to collect his frame in rhythm with the stride—if you don't, you're just pulling and pushing for no reason at all, and it becomes useless and just upsets you and the horse.

Once you're able to find that rhythm, use it to your advantage when applying your reins and legs. This teaches your horse how to come back and rely on your legs, as well as your hands. Eventually, you should be able to move the hip toward the inside of the circle while maintaining little

pressure with your reins, as the horse begins to rely on your calf and spur pressure to maintain its consistency and rhythm. This is very important when showing on the rail or even weaving in and out of poles. As training progresses, it's also very effective in teaching a horse how to give its hip, flatten the front leg of a horse that uses a tad too much knee, or teaching

one how to round its topline. Using these exercises to develop your Paint's rhythm, balance and cadence will help you create a smoother, more effortless gait, which is a benefit no matter what your pursuit. 

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## Meet Adrienne Cober

Nestled in Pennsylvania's scenic Lancaster County, Adrienne Cober operates Strictly Show Horses in Lititz, Pennsylvania. Passionate about the Paint industry, Cober specializes in training Western pleasure, hunter under saddle and futurity longe line horses. Her associate, Alison Garman, guides their customers through the pattern classes and pattern training. Cober has trained with Ohio trainers Ty and Karen Hornick and was an assistant trainer at Yarnelle Farms in Fort Wayne, Indiana. While under Cober's watchful eye, clients have earned numerous APHA Top 20 and Honor

Roll spots, and futurity wins in both APHA and the National Snaffle Bit Association. For more information about Cober, visit [sshorses.com](http://sshorses.com).

Special thanks to Cober and her clients for their help with this article. Cober is riding Ms Flashy Sensation, a 2007 sorrel overo mare owned by Courtney Clopper of Denton, Maryland. Kassi Jones, a Youth rider from Williamstown, Pennsylvania, is riding A Krymsun Legacy, a 2005 sorrel overo gelding owned by Diane Harrell of Williamstown, New Jersey. Youth exhibitor Brianna Mason of Cleona, Pennsylvania, is riding her 2006 chestnut overo mare Scribbled Hot.