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What I'd Teach Your Horse: Training & Re-Training The Basics: Horse Training How-To, Volume 8

What I'd Teach Your Horse
Training & Re-Training the Basics



Keith Hosman 

READ BY MIKE MCKENZIE



Synopsis

If I had a dollar for every email I get asking "what to do" to make a riding horse out of the mare Uncle Emo just traded for the old RV - or how to retrain a horse that's grown rusty - or some version on either theme, I'd be the world's first gazillionaire. With the publication of this book, I'm hoping to grab that distinction. If you broke your horse to saddle and rode it for the first time yesterday, this book (Chapter 1) is where you'd start tomorrow. If you have an older horse and you've taught him everything you know and he still don't know nothin', this book is where you'd start, (Chapter 2). It's a roadmap to building the foundation every horse needs, regardless of age, breed, or background, regardless of what you've got ultimately planned for that horse. Afterward, when your horse knows this book back to front, go train for barrels, roping, eventing, jumping, or dressage. But today, basics are basics. Section I is the stuff your horse needs to know. Section II is the stuff (the theory) you need to know. Practice the first handful of chapters in order. Beyond that, you should feel free to mix and match depending on your needs or abilities. Some chapters are dependent upon others - but in those cases, I've spelled out necessary prerequisites.

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Customer Reviews

Keith Hosman's books are a wealth of information written in a plain easy to understand manner. His love of horses and wry sense of humor come through in his books. Terrific information and tips for horse lovers on any level. Cannot recommend them highly enough. If you are having problems with your horse, then your horse is most likely having problems with you. Keith helps untangle that web.

Good training tips

My son is a professional chef, graduating from the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco and cooking at top restaurants. When he bought me a cookbook, it was the best: a phone-book sized tome, "James Beard's Theory and Practice of Good Cooking," written with Julia Child. This book contained everything I could possibly want or need to know about cooking. When I was reading Keith Hosman's What I'd Teach Your Horse, I thought of that cookbook. Hosman's book is a dense collection of very clear directions about how to do things with your horse that you probably never thought you could. I found this challenging reading, though it's clear, well-written and fully explains Mr. Hosman's techniques. The challenging part was that it describes a level of horsemanship and training that I could barely imagine. It also got me thinking about a bunch of things, which I'll touch on below. I began riding horses in 1955 and rode with some top trainers, back in the day. That was then; this is now. The new horsemanship is a whole new level of sophistication and training techniques. Hosman describes an exercise where the rider sits on his/her horse and imagines each of the horse's hooves planted in the center of a clock, the face marked 1 to 12 in a circle in typical clock fashion. The rider teaches, through carefully explained steps, the horse to put each of its feet on each number of the clock. This has a number of training benefits. The rest of the book relies on similar exercises. I can't imagine that level of training subtlety, yet I've been to seminars given by my top trainers where they demonstrated similar feats. The book is full of things like this which sound promising to produce a horse whose training level is beyond anything I've experienced. Midway through, I began to feel discouraged. "I can never do that. I'm so bugged up physically (I'm 70), I can't even ride for more than twenty minutes." A thread of hope runs through this book, though. Just when I felt like what Mr. Hosman was saying was a really good idea that I would never be able to actualize, that famous skit from Saturday Night Live came to me. "Lowered Expectations," about a dating service for regular people, as opposed to the supermodels usually pictured on dating sites. The opening credits of the skit show an exceptionally appearance-challenged couple walking on a littered path by a polluted river. "Lowered expectations!" I thought. "Baby steps. I didn't have to learn all that and apply it perfectly. "Just try a few things. Go slowly." I loved a couple of things he brings up, like talking to your

horse and telling it what to do. I do that all the time; horses are very good listeners on all sorts of things. I also loved his technique of visualizing your horse doing the right thing on the first try. That visualization technique won me lots of ribbons when I was a kid. I'd be going to sleep and imagine my horse and myself doing a stock horse routine. Piece of cake at the show the next day. This book piqued a fascination for Mr. Hosman's work. I want to check out his seminar schedule. I highly recommend this book to my fellow horse people. As I worked my way through it, I thought, "This is hard. This is relearning everything I do automatically, but the result seems like it will be better all the way around." I thought about why people want to do things better, with their horses, and in life. We have a responsibility, those of us who love horses, to do our best by them and give them the best lives possible. We also have a responsibility to do the best by the other creatures on this planet, the Earth itself, and our fellow human beings. And ourselves. So we learn new techniques in hopes of improving our riding and maybe improving this planet. That's as worthwhile as it gets. Keith Hosman's book definitely moves in that direction. I had a few thoughts come up while reading this book. First, I'd like to see more about gaited horses and using the techniques in this book with them. We've had Peruvian Paso horses since the 1980s. The saddest thing I've seen is a new person who buys a Peruvian Paso horse, puts it with a Western trainer and then enters it in a Western Pleasure class at a Peruvian show. Invariably these horses, trained to hold their heads between their knees, come in last. Their owners and trainers don't know they've violated the breed standard. There's got to be a way of incorporating the techniques shown here with gaited horses that won't get them laughed out of a show arena. Also, I'd like to see a book, or something audio, video for handicapped riders. My physical condition is such that I'm 70 and falling apart, it limits me. I'm still riding, and I want to ride as long as I can. But how? And how to be super safe so I don't go Splat!? How can I use these techniques with my limitations? New book, please. Maybe a workshop. :-)

That's my wish list, Mr. Hosman. Reading this book was a great experience. I was delighted to hear that there's an audio version. The information in the book would be even more useful if you could sit on your horse and leaf through the exercises, having a narrator explain the steps. It is a doing book, a cookbook. Keith gifted me a copy of this book in return for an honest review. This is

it!

I have been reading Keith Hosmans training tips for many years. In every aspect of training with my horses I can always reflect back upon what Keith has taught. Keith has taught me patience. Not only with my horses which is imperative, but also with my own self. I have learned not to get angry at my own self and give up. Something I was way too good at decades ago!! There is always an answer for everything that is presented to us as we work with our horses. All horses are different ofcourse. However the tips are based on common sense. Never forcing, never pushing. Also trying to view things behind the "horses eye". During the times that I am presented with a "scary" obstacle, such as rearing, striking, bucking or similar I know I can always search in my guides and find the right answer. I love that Keith is kind but straight to the point. There is no name calling or ridicule as you sometimes see out there in the horse world. Keith cares and he wants to help! I highly recommend this Book as well as registering your email address and receiving the highly needed updates, reminders and ofcourse high fives for continuing to try. Keith LOVES horses and he cares about people. You cannot go wrong!!

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