

Horse Training How-To from Horsemanship101.com

Your Foal: Essential Training

by John Lyons Certified Trainer Keith Hosman

*Part of the "Horse Training How-To" Series from Horsemanship101.com
Find step-by-step horse training articles 24/7 at Horsemanship101.com/Articles*



“Your Foal: Essential Training”

by Keith Hosman

ISBN: 1478238518

ISBN-13: 978-1478238515

Copyright(C) 2012

by Keith Hosman, PO Box 31, Utopia, TX 78884 USA

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Please note: The information appearing in this publication is presented for educational purposes only. In no case shall the publishers or authors be held responsible for any use readers may choose to make, or not to make, of this information.

Keith Hosman

horsemanship101.com

PO Box 31

Utopia, TX 78884 USA

Table of Contents

Preface	7
----------------------	----------

If you were the first person to someday ride your weanling, would you feel safer if the colt did - or did not - have a proper foundation?

Section I: Days 1 - 5

You have years till you can ride your colt or filly - and a lot of training needs to be done in the meantime.

Introduction.....	11
--------------------------	-----------

Your foal-training primer

Day One: Look At Me	19
----------------------------------	-----------

We begin with simple body control.

Day Two	31
----------------------	-----------

Sacking out and desensitizing

Day Three.....	41
-----------------------	-----------

Halter-training your foal

Day Four: Leading a Horse (Colt Basics).....	51
---	-----------

Your horse's ground manners today correspond directly to his quality as a riding horse tomorrow. (That is, if he drags on the lead now, he'll ignore your reins entirely later.)

Day Five: Bathing Your Foal.....	59
---	-----------

See this as an opportunity to teach your youngster to stand patiently and to strengthen your position as leader in your herd of two.

Section II: Additional Training

Further training for this stage of your horse's life

Biting Horses 71

Here's how to make your horse quit biting using the methods of John Lyons.

Picking Up Feet..... 77

Teaching your horse to lift its feet on command is actually much simpler than folks tend to want to make it. Here's how.

Sidepassing to You On the Ground..... 85

This trick, with its huge "wow" factor, is actually rather easy to teach to horses of any age!

Books by This Author 96

Meet the Author..... 97

John Lyons Certified Trainer Keith Hosman

Preface

If you were the first person to someday ride your weanling, would you feel safer if the colt did - or did not - have a proper foundation?

If you were the first person to someday ride your weanling, would you feel safer if the colt did - or did not - have a proper foundation?

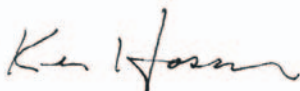
Do you have a foal on the way? Maybe you've got a weanling who's growing like a weed - but in need of training and possibly getting dangerous? Do you know what training is essential for baby horses, how to approach the work - and how much is too much?

You have years till you can ride your colt or filly - but there's a lot of training that needs to be done in the meantime. They need to cooperate for the farrier, to stand near you politely, to be lead around the barn, to respect your space - they need to become a cheerful member of your family. This book is your step-by-step guide and it shows you exactly what to do, what to look for and in what order.

Based on the gentle and proven techniques of John Lyons, "Days" 1-5 teach your horse to respect your space, to deal with fear, to stand calmly and to begin "giving to pressure." Take each "day" at a pace you set. Section II contains an additional three chapters that you might very well need at this stage in your young horse's life.

Putting a strong, solid and well-considered foundation into your foal will pay big dividends later when it comes time to start it to saddle. Remember: You ride the horse you lead - and that training begins today.

Good luck in your training!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Hosman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Keith Hosman
John Lyons Certified Trainer
Utopia, Texas USA

Introduction

Your foal-training primer

Weanlings are like hot house flowers. There's only so much you can do with them while you're waiting for them to grow and blossom into something you can ride or ask to pull a cart. You feed them; you water them; you show them off. Still, potted plants don't grow progressively more dangerous with each passing day as can the typical colt beginning to feel his oats. Few florists are done in annually by your average petunia, yet growing your horse into a safe and obliging member of the family requires buckets of consistent training from you, the owner. Loving horse owners are done in frequently by well-placed kicks; they lose fingers to "playful nips" and have their toes stepped on all too often. For safety's sake - and to ensure his value in future years as a quality "riding horse," there are certain training milestones that must be met as we wait for them to grow into "something we can use." If you could simply throw the horse into a pasture and come back two years later with a saddle, you could chuck this book - but that's not really possible. Above the simple fact that we'd like to pet our baby and hang out with him there are other considerations. Between now and your foal's first saddling, he's got to learn to stand for the vet, to be haltered, to respect our space, to be led from here to there - the list goes on. Your job then, is to shepherd your foal for the next couple

of years. You'll steer negative behavior into something positive, you'll quash poor habits, you'll set boundaries for the life of your horse.

This book will be broken into five days or segments. Don't take the word "days" super-literally, as you should take each section at a rate that works for you and your colt. You might move through this material (initially at least) in one business week, but the teachings are more meant to be absorbed, to be ruminated and factored into your everyday interactions at the barn. You've got two or more years until you can first climb aboard, so relax and take things slowly. That's more than enough time to fix your foal, break him, and fix him again. Babies can be exasperating things, seemingly trained today and true hazards again tomorrow. When you're breaking an older horse to saddle, you could very well go from "My horse won't back up" today to "My horse backs like a champ" tomorrow. When you're dealing with a weanling, he may be frightened of you today - fine with you tomorrow - and terrified again next week. Or maybe your vet shows up - and you find that your colt is horrified of white hats. It's an evolving process and when you think you're done, you'll find you ain't. They're youngsters with no rhyme or reason so you'll need the patience of Job or an oyster or maybe both. Stay consistent with your training and, like a human teen, your foal will mature, even out and make you proud.

Throughout this course I'll be careful to call out certain elements that I believe to be super-important for you to understand, practice or simply remember. Here's our first: If you've got two babies in a pen, one can be easy to train, the other can be a nightmare. Or, both easy or both difficult. It's the luck of nature's draw. If you fly through this training, be careful to

keep your ego in check because your next filly can be the devil's spawn. Conversely, if your baby "doesn't seem to get it," take heed: I was speaking once to a mother of four who I believed (and still do) to be one of the all-time great (human) moms. She said that when her first two kids were born they were little angels and that for several years she walked around saying to herself "This mothering thing is easy. What's with all the brats?" Then she had two more kids, each a pill and a challenge - and she learned quickly that mothering is relative, literally. I tell you this because I've already walked a mile in the shoes you'll be walking in. I've been there and I know what it feels like to spend a fortune having a horse created, to have waited a year for it to be born, to brag to everybody about the great genes... only to have it exasperate me as I work to get it to lift a leg, to thoroughly embarrass me in front of the vet or to have it give me a look like "You can't make me. I hate you." Be patient when things don't go your way, smile and remind yourself there's plenty of time. They're just kids.

Note before we begin: I can't stress the following enough. Young horses can be damaged forever very easily. You've got to keep your aggression in check. They've got baby lungs, baby legs, baby necks and baby brains. They may weigh five hundred pounds, but they've got all the physical and mental maturity of your infant niece. This advice may be more appropriate for my male readers, but we'd all do well to remember that while an older horse can be worked to a sweat in the round pen, the legs and lungs of a young horse will simply not hold up to extended exercise. This is an important point: If you work a very young horse in the round pen, for instance, he'll run like a frightened deer - and you might be tempted to keep him going to make your point (whatever it is at that

Day One: Look At Me

We begin with simple body control.

Today, “Day One,” is a very big day for your weanling. It’s also a good day for you as you’ll be witness to the moment(s) when the foal first realizes that you matter in his life, that you’re not there to just throw feed out and be ignored. Symbolically it’s even bigger, as it marks the beginning of your foal’s training to be ridden. Huh? How’s this so? It’s “so” because all training is about making our horse’s better, more obliging “riding horses.” John Lyons says (because it’s very true) that “You ride the horse you lead.” Show me a brat on the ground and I’ll show you a pain to be ridden. Horses that pull you around by the lead rope are guaranteed to tug on the reins and horses that bully you with their shoulders are certain to ignore you as insignificant when riding. Your horse’s foundation begins here, in this most simple of simple lessons, as we begin to control his elemental movements, safely and from the ground.

Ideally, you’ll do the following in a round pen. If you don’t have access to one, round off the corners of the pen you’ll use by placing something there like feed bags, a tied-off garbage can, boards, etc. Skip this step and you’ll find that they repeatedly head to the corners, stick their heads in there and freeze rock solid, just daring you to get those kicking feet moving again.

(While you don't need a round pen for any of the lessons contained in this book, it's always a plus, as the very "rounded nature" of the ring will enforce the, I dunno, futility of his dodges. He tries to run away... he runs and runs... and he looks up to see you standing there. Drat! You've never moved, he's run the circumference of the round pen. They buckle down quickly, and you can get some serious training done. You can still do all this training without one, you just have to adapt accordingly, squaring off your corners as mentioned earlier.)

Your goal here is twofold: Show the foal you're calling the shots and to build his confidence. See the seeming paradox? "Respect me, but don't be scared of me." You gotta walk a thin line - push too hard and you'll chuck prior improvements. Keep this in mind when you think about breaking a broom over young Dobber for dodging the halter for the 40th time. Lucky for us, horses are inherently wired to hand over respect to another being that gets it to move without hurting it. Watch horses in the field and you'll see how the dominant mare can move the others with simple body language - and how she rarely if ever resorts to actual, physical violence. We'll take advantage of this natural programming, factoring it into our first sessions.

Take your colt to your pen. I usually get them there by leading another horse he'll follow in there first, circling, walking back out and shutting the door before the baby exits. (I usually say something like "Gotcha!" at this point.)

Now I've got good news and bad news. If you've got a nervous horse, one that's just a real jack rabbit, he'll be super simple to teach here because we need movement to teach - and your Nervous Nellie has got

plenty of that. That's the good news. The bad news is, he'll be a pill later when you work to desensitize him to spooky objects. Alternatively, if you've got a real calm, friendly horse, you'll have to really work to keep him moving here. He figures he's your buddy, he's not scared of you - and he'll prove a challenge to keep moving. That's your bad news. Your good news is, he'll be a dream to desensitize later.

If you've got the horse that's just plain jumpy and skittish, then I want you to do the following. (If your horse seems relatively calm, absolutely do not do the following, skip ahead four paragraphs.) Super-jumpy horse owners, I want you to spend at least three days dulling your horse's sensitivity to his owner. I'll explain: You've seen this phenomena many times: In the same way that we burn out our brakes or clutch by constantly riding them, some riders burn out their "whoas" by saying it over and over to a horse. Repeat it often enough to a horse that doesn't stop and it doesn't take long before that word means nothing. Same thing with riders who constantly pull on the reins - their pressure soon means nothing. They've desensitized the horse to their requests. You're about to do the same, to burn out a "cue" but with my permission.

What you'll do is to bring your horse to the round pen, take up your lariat or lunge whip and ask him to move by taking a step toward it or raising the whip. (If it takes much to get the horse moving, you don't have a candidate for this particular work, forget this and skip ahead.) The direction doesn't matter as long as it's the same direction for five minutes, followed by a turn back the other way for another five and so on. Your high-strung colt will probably take off at a lope or high-speed trot. The higher speed is okay for a moment or two - but we want to conserve the

Books by This Author

Check out these titles from Keith Hosman:

- Get On Your Horse: Curing Mounting Problems
- How to Start a Horse: Bridling to 1st Ride
- Rein In Your Horse's Speed
- Round Penning: First Steps to Starting a Horse
- Stop Bucking
- Trailer Training
- What Is Wrong with My Horse?
- When Your Horse Rears... How to Stop It
- Your Foal: Essential Training

Available in the following formats:

Paperback | Kindle | Nook | PDF (You print)

Purchase 24/7 at [Horsemanship101.com/Courses](https://www.Horsemanship101.com/Courses)

Your Foal: Essential Training

Meet the Author

John Lyons Certified Trainer Keith Hosman



Keith Hosman lives just outside of San Antonio, Texas and divides his time between writing how-to training materials and conducting training clinics in most of these United States as well as in Germany and the Czech Republic.

Visit his flagship site horsemanship101.com for more D.I.Y. training and to find a clinic happening soon near you.

How-to articles & trainer listings: horsemanship101.com

