

Tips to Aid Longe Exercises

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Don't expect instant results, and never force your muscles and joints. Work on the rusty-hinge principle: When a rusty hinge makes a door stiff, you oil the hinge, and then rock the door to and fro to loosen it, trying to increase the distance with each stroke. If you force it, the hinges or the door could break. When your joints say "enough," ease off and ask for a little more next time.

Obviously doing these exercises regularly will bring the greatest benefit, but this may be difficult when facilities or assistance with longeing is limited. In such cases many of these movements can be done while sitting at the halt — preferably with someone holding the horse.

Many of the individual arm exercises can also be done riding off longe by holding the reins in one hand — use a little imagination. However, never compromise on safety and proper technique. Do the exercises correctly, otherwise they'll be of minimal benefit.

Additional tips: Be sure that the horse you choose to do these exercises on is obedient and steady. Be certain that the person controlling the horse is experienced with longeing and is knowledgeable about handling horses. If the horse has just come out of the stable, warm him up for a few minutes to loosen his muscles before starting. Keep the sessions to a half-hour maximum and practice regularly if possible. Look at these exercises as a challenge rather than a chore.

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