

## Carrot Stretches

**Three quick exercises to help increase your horse's flexibility.**

1. **CARROT STRETCHES** – Break a few carrots (or any horse treat) into small pieces so that you have enough to reward about 12 stretches (six on each side). Stand about where your leg would be if you were riding. Show the carrot piece to your horse and use it to encourage him to reach around to where you're standing. Note how far your horse can comfortably stretch, and record it in your horse log. After practicing these stretches for a month, compare your "before and after" results.

**STRETCH #1** - Hold the carrot about midway down your horse's barrel, where the girth would sit. When he reaches around to grab the carrot, try to keep him from snatching it and whipping back. Aim to keep his head there for at least three seconds, stretching through his neck and into the opposite shoulder. Repeat this stretch three times on each side.

**STRETCH #2** – This is similar to Stretch No. 1, but hold the carrot higher up on your horse's barrel – approximately where the corner edge of your saddle would be.

**STRETCH #3** - Hold the carrot on the outside of your horse's front foot, right at the hoof. Encourage him to reach down and stretch his neck out to grab his reward.

Add a nice neck scratch between stretches, and your horse will be very happy to see you the next time you visit!

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