

## GROUNDWORK YES OR NO?

I feel the subject of Groundwork needs to be talked about, why do we do it, is it essential, and can you overdo it.

Teaching the horse new movements can be taught from the ground helping the horse to understand the lesson before adding a rider to the equation. Pre-ride flight checking our horse for soundness or just expanding some energy before we mount up.

Before the horse's first ride, I want them to be able to walk, jog and lope on either the lunge or ground driving lines. Understand how to give nose and body pressure off one rein, move hind and shoulders independently and back from steady pressure. Giving one rein will help prepare the horse for bending to a stop when commencing their ridden career.

Once the horse can do all the above manoeuvres, you don't want to drill over and over the same thing; the horse will see no point in it and become sour. You can add variations to the above by taking the horse on the trail and finding jumps to pop the horse over or obstacles to cross whilst practising Groundwork.

At the beginning of the horses training, the Groundwork takes the most time in the training session. Still, as the horse develops in their education, the Groundwork becomes less, and the riding becomes the more considerable portion of the training session. If you want to do the Groundwork and no riding, then move onto liberty or training on obstacles; challenge your horse with new things to keep their mind active.

Happy Riding

*Mandy*