



Power Posture

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Power Posture: The best kept secret for strong, confident riding!

Most riders have heard “eyes up”, “look up”, “chin up”, or some other variation of that theme. Riders tend to look down. Why? Because that is where their hands are. Humans are wired to use their eyes to help their hands and since the hands are trying to affect the horse’s head and neck, that is where the eyes look.

So why bother looking up? Well, the obvious reason is that you need to see where you are going to avoid collisions. Humans are wired so their body will orient them to where the eyes are looking. By looking to where you want to be, your muscle actions will send you in that direction. Useful when trying to ride a specific track!

Another good reason to raise the eye level is to correct your posture. When looking down, the neck bends and the chain of muscles that runs from the base of the skull to the tailbone tightens. This reduces the mobility of the spine, limiting the rider’s ability to move ‘with the horse’. By gazing ahead, the rider’s spine maintains its normal curves and the core muscles work more effectively.

Possibly the most important reason to look up, especially in the show ring and even in daily life, is that it improves your confidence and even your mood. Adding a smile (whether you feel like smiling or not) makes it even better. Your physical being is able to directly affect your emotional and mental state. By using more ‘open’ and upright postures with positive facial expressions, you can very quickly improve your ability to perform mentally as well as physically. Some postures have been advocated as ‘power postures’ and adopting them periodically through the day as well as before and during riding, can have a substantial effect. Frequently looking down (can you say ‘texting’) weakens your body, causes poor posture and may affect your mood. So, sit up, smile and keep your gaze level with the horizon to feel, live and ride better!!