



PATH Intl. CTRI® Application

Part III: Riding Instruction and Communication of Riding Skills

Video Preparation and Self-Assessment Activity

This activity is designed to help PATH Intl. Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor (CTRI)® applicants, mentors and supervising instructors determine if all of the skills required to meet expectations for the video assessment have been demonstrated to the necessary level.

The following should be kept in mind while recording the video and completing this activity:

- 1) The expectations for the video are not that the rider demonstrates flawless execution of the riding pattern, but rather that the applicant demonstrates polished, correct and timely instruction of the riding skills required to perform the riding pattern.** The full pattern must be demonstrated IN SEQUENCE at least once during your video.
- 2) Applicants are expected to develop and demonstrate their own style of instruction and a required element for a successful video is to communicate the whats, hows and whys for ALL of the riding skills required to complete the riding pattern. If more in-depth instruction of the whats, hows and whys is provided during the warm-up portion, instruction may be abridged reminders during execution of the riding pattern. It is imperative to note that instruction and communication of riding skills MUST also take place during execution of the pattern. Simply directing the rider around the arena or calling out the elements of the pattern will not result in the applicant meeting expectations.
- 3) The applicant should assess whether they took every opportunity to instruct corrections of posture/alignment, aids, maintaining or adjusting pace, posting on the diagonal, leads, etc. If the rider is advanced enough to independently perform the riding skills perfectly, the applicant will not have opportunities to demonstrate their breadth of knowledge, skills and abilities in the instruction and communication of riding skills.
- 4) Simply memorizing a script of instructions will not improve your success. Applicants are assessed on in-the-moment instruction and timeliness of feedback. Applicants must be able to instruct, observe the rider's response to their instruction and then verbalize corrections or confirmations to demonstrate awareness of the effectiveness of their instruction to be successful in meeting the video expectations.
- 5) Applicants should refer to the list of terms and helpful hints provided in this document to ensure they are prepared to align their instruction with the expectations of the video assessment.**

TERM	DEFINITION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE CTRI VIDEO DEMONSTRATION
1. The “what”	a specific riding skill
2. The “how”	task analysis of the natural aids (leg, seat, rein) to be performed by the rider to accomplish a “what”
3. The “why”	explanation of why riders should perform a “what” and/or “how”; think about why it is important to do the action(s) specifically and explain/describe that to the rider
4. Aid	<p>physical input from the rider to the equine to elicit a specific response from the equine</p> <p><i>Examples</i></p> <p><i>Natural aid: a physical input provided by an element of the rider’s body</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>leg aid: change in pressure or position applied by one or both of the rider’s legs; note this can be the upper leg/thigh or lower leg/calf</i> 2. <i>rein aid: change in pressure or position applied by one or both of the rider’s reins</i> 3. <i>weight aid: change in pressure or position of the rider’s weight; most often accomplished via the rider’s seat</i> <p><i>Artificial aid: a physical input provided by a device external to the rider’s body</i></p>
5. Cue	<p>prompt or signal by the rider to supplement physical aids</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>voice cue: verbal commands or sounds</i> 2. <i>breath cue: release of breath</i>
6. Complete aid	instruction of both the inside and the outside of one natural aid
7. Coordinated aids	instruction of two or more different natural aids
8. Light contact	soft tension in the reins to maintain gentle connection with the equine which allows for the equine’s natural head–neck movements
9. Bend	<p>supple arc through the entirety of the equine’s body around the riders inside leg <i>by bringing the hindquarters and shoulders in, bending the neck and flexing the poll, contracting the ribcage on the inside and stretching it on the outside</i>¹, creating the shape of a crescent moon</p> <p>¹https://www.fei.org/stories/lifestyle/teach-me/horse-doesnt-want-bend-heres-how-help#:~:text=Bend%20refers%20to%20the%20whole,the%20rest%20of%20the%20body</p>
10. Balance	the rider’s weight distribution, self-carriage and stability in the saddle

11. Posture	shape of the rider's shoulders, spine and pelvis relative to space
12. Alignment	the position of rider's body—specifically the head, shoulders, hips and heels—relative to the equine, demonstrating vertical symmetry which allows the riders joints and hinges to work effectively in harmony with the movement of the equine.
13. Instruction	the act of communicating “what” (activity/riding skill), “how” (specific, clear, step-by-step directions or guidance) and “why” (motivation) to perform an activity/skill. Instruction is provided PRIOR to performance
14. Feedback	communicating specific information to the rider, in the moment, that allows the rider to replicate or improve performance; describes the rider's effectiveness in following previously provided instruction; occurs DURING AND AFTER the practice of the skill; can be positive (such as a compliment), negative (such as a corrective measure), or neutral (such as a general observation)
15. Specific praise	timely positive feedback that specifies the aid(s) or action(s) the rider performed effectively to reinforce similar performance of the rider in future situations

Helpful hints as you prepare your instruction:

- ✓ “Use” does NOT constitute instruction of a “how”. For example, “use your rein”, “use your leg”, “use your seat”, etc. are not sufficient explanations of the aids the rider should perform to accomplish a specific riding skill. Think about the manner in which they should use their rein/leg/seat in order to establish a structured task analysis for the aid(s) to be employed broken down into a sequence of actions to perform.
- ✓ “Look with your eyes” does not alone constitute instruction of a “how”. Consider the chain reaction of natural aids that can come as a result of the rider shifting their line of vision and instead instruct/describe those for a complete “how”.
- ✓ When instructing “hows”, consider that there are parts/sections of the arms and legs. BE SPECIFIC TO BE ACCURATE – should the rider apply pressure with their upper leg/thigh or lower leg/calf for the aid to be performed?
- ✓ Each component has a distinct set of aids. Even though many relate to each other, be sure to teach the aids separately to demonstrate the full breadth of your knowledge. For example, a half-halt alone does not meet the criteria for *Instruct the aids of a downward transition*.
- ✓ Balance, posture and alignment are different topics/skills.
 - Balance** is described as:
 - 1) even distribution of weight on both seat bones,

- 2) a neutral pelvis, and
- 3) feet positioned directly under body.

Posture is described as:

- 1) head up with chin parallel to the ground and eyes looking in direction of movement,
- 2) chest lifted and open and keep shoulders down and square and relaxed,
- 3) neutral spine sitting square on seat bones, and
- 4) legs aligned under hips.

Alignment is described as:

- 1) a vertical line through ear, shoulder, hip and heel with pelvis balanced on seat bones with
- 2) legs and feet under center of balance.

- ✓ While some conversational style teaching methods—such as asking the rider to recite a skill they have previously been taught to encourage the rider to self-reflect—may be helpful, instruction and explanation of how to perform the riding skills must come from the applicant, NOT the rider. For the purposes of this video and the assessment, the applicant is expected instruct complete and clear whats, hows and whys for each of the riding skills.
- ✓ Specific praise provides pointed feedback that describes the rider’s effectiveness in following instruction and allows the rider to replicate or improve performance. For example:
"I like the position of your heels" → Least effective
"I like how you keep your heels down" → Is more specific, but lacks follow through and explanation of why
"I like how you kept your heels down allowing you to stay balanced during that downward transition" → More effective
- ✓ Nonspecific feedback such “as good job getting the horse to do what you asked for” does not constitute acknowledgement of what the rider or equine is doing. It is always best to be as specific as possible to acknowledge precisely what is seen and to state that as simply as possible. For example, “Good job using the half-halt to rebalance before your transition. That led to a smooth canter/lope depart”.
- ✓ To ensure safe practices and preemptive risk management, control of the equine must be demonstrated at all times. Specifically during the dismount, control of the equine is required to prevent the equine from unexpectedly moving forward or reacting to an unforeseen event or circumstance. Such movement could cause an unsafe situation for both the equine and/or rider.

Gaits & Transitions	Skill	Describe how you will communicate the following in the warm-up and during the pattern:		
		The What	The How – Task Analysis	The Why
		Walk	Instruction of the aids for the halt to walk transition	Warm-up: Pattern:
Trot/Jog	Instruction of the aids for the walk to trot/jog transition	Warm-up: Pattern:	Warm-up: Pattern:	Warm-up: Pattern:

	The What	The How – Task Analysis	The Why
Instruction of the posting diagonal	Warm-up: Pattern:	Warm-up: Pattern:	Warm-up: Pattern:
Instruction of changing the posting diagonal	Warm-up: Pattern:	Warm-up: Pattern:	Warm-up: Pattern:

	The What	The How – Task Analysis	The Why
<p>Specific verbal acknowledgement of correct diagonal (BOTH diagonals required)</p> <p>Incorrect diagonals acknowledged and corrected</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>
<p>Instruction of the aids for trot/jog to walk transition</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>

		The What	The How – Task Analysis	The Why
Halt	Instruction of the aids for the downward transition to halt	Warm-up: Pattern:	Warm-up: Pattern:	Warm-up: Pattern:
Back	Instruction of the aids for the back	Warm-up: Pattern:	Warm-up: Pattern:	Warm-up: Pattern:

	The What	The How – Task Analysis	The Why
<p>At Any Gait</p> <p>Instruction of the aids to maintain or adjust pace</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>
<p>At Any Gait</p> <p>Instruction of the aids for a following seat</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>

	The What	The How – Task Analysis	The Why
<p>Instruction of coordinated aids for change of bend through a two-loop serpentine</p> <p><i>Refer to glossary of terms to understand "coordinated aid"</i></p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>
<p>Instruction of coordinated aids for maintaining bending through a full round circle</p> <p><i>Refer to glossary of terms to understand "coordinated aid"</i></p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>	<p>Warm-up:</p> <p>Pattern:</p>

General Instruction and Communication Skills	Did you provide:	When:	
	Clear explanation of the purpose of a warm-up for both the equine AND the rider	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern
	Clear direction of pattern elements including “where” the rider is to perform aids using points of reference	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern
	A minimum of 3 What instructions	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern
	A minimum of 3 How instructions	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern
	A minimum of 3 Why instructions	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern
	Accurate and timely feedback to improve balance, posture and alignment of the rider	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern
	At all gaits: provided accurate and timely feedback regarding effective use of aids	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern
	At all gaits: specific praise observed as appropriate to the rider’s effectiveness	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern
	Instruction of a safe technique for the dismount to include continuous control of the equine by the rider <i>MANDATORY COMPONENT</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern
	Overall safety awareness, particularly pertaining to PATH Intl. standards <i>MANDATORY COMPONENT</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern
	Tack checks <i>MANDATORY COMPONENT; NOTE THIS IS PLURAL</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm-up <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern

Keep in mind:

- ✓ The assessors can only give credit for what they hear and observe. Excessive or continuous noise may result in missed opportunities to receive credit. Make sure that any individuals operating the camera are aware of the sensitivity of the microphone. Even their regular breathing can be picked up by the microphone, creating difficulty for the assessors to clearly hear the applicant's instruction.
- ✓ While the goal is to produce a polished demonstration, simply memorizing a script of instructions will not improve your success. Applicants are assessed on *the accuracy and effectiveness* of in-the-moment instruction and timeliness of feedback, resulting in improvement of the equine's way of going. Applicants must be able to instruct, observe the rider's response to their instruction and then verbalize corrections or confirmations to demonstrate awareness of the effectiveness of their instruction to be successful in meeting the video expectations.
- ✓ Depending on the rider selected, the video demonstration may or may not represent the applicant's "typical" therapeutic riding lesson and/or riding participant. The video requirements and expectations allow for applicants to exhibit the teaching and communication style they deem appropriate for the rider. The overall expectation is not that the rider demonstrates flawless execution of the riding pattern, but rather that the applicant demonstrates polished, correct and timely instruction of the riding skills required to perform the riding pattern.
- ✓ It is suggested that the applicant instruct an intermediate rider so there are opportunities to instruct corrections of posture/alignment, aids, maintaining or adjusting pace, posting on the correct diagonal, leads, etc. If the rider is advanced enough to independently perform the riding skills perfectly, the applicant will not have opportunities to demonstrate their breadth of knowledge, skills and abilities in the instruction and communication of riding skills.
- ✓ Applicants who select a rider whom they have been regularly teaching should be particularly mindful not to skip over the basic information/instruction even if they know that the rider is familiar with it. What the assessment captures for credit is verbalized task analysis of basic whats, hows and whys for the riding skills required for the pattern. As a result, it's best to keep instruction basic so that it can also be complete in the whats, hows and whys in the timeframe of the video. Applicants should also refrain from using casual or colloquial terminology that may have developed over the course of instruction of the rider and is specific to that equine/rider.
- ✓ Trust that you do not need more than 20 minutes to effectively accomplish competent instruction. Over the years, PATH Intl. has found that instructors who take longer than 20 minutes to instruct a rider through the riding skills to perform the pattern do NOT have a higher success rate. Exceeding 20 minutes often results in wordy, drawn-out instruction that is difficult to follow and takes away opportunities for the instructor to give the rider timely feedback.

Key specifications for the video:

- Videos should be formatted in a common file type such as an .mp4, .MOV, etc. and uploaded to the secure PATH Intl. Dropbox (see the [PATH Intl. CTRI application instructions in the candidate handbook](#) for more information).
- The rider's tack and attire and the riding area shown are expected to comply with PATH Intl. standards.