

Work without Stirrups

How do I ride this?

- 1** Begin at the walk with your legs hanging long under your hips.
- 2** Practice straight lines, circles, and transitions between the two at the walk.
- 3** Proceed to leg-yielding or other lateral work at the walk.
- 4** Practice sitting trot on the track large, focusing exclusively on your position.
- 5** Finally, practice numerous trot-canter transitions on a 20-meter circle.

Keep in mind

As you ride, stay relaxed and allow your body to follow your horse's stride. Work without stirrups will not benefit your seat if you just grit your teeth, hunker down, and remain stiff throughout the exercise. Focus on the quality of your position and your ability to follow your horse's motion. If you begin to bounce in the saddle or lose your leg position, come to a walk and reorganize.

If a ground person is available, it is useful to perform the above exercises on a longe line from time to time. If you do not feel 100 percent secure, borrow a reliable school horse. Commit to a few minutes of work without stirrups each week.