

Neck Flexion and Extension

- Stand to the side of the horse, near the chest
- Keep the horse's head straight, by watching his forehead, poll, and nose.
- Be sure that the horse is not tilting his head or nose to the side. (This is "cheating"!) Any torque to the movement to reach farther means that the horse needs to do less for now.
- Go slowly so that you can make tiny adjustments as necessary to help keep the horse's head and neck straight.
- It is helpful to cue the horse by gently rubbing or touching the area towards which you will be asking him to point his nose.
- Encourage him slowly to follow a carrot or other treat in the following directions, alternating between flexion (nose towards the body) and extension (nose away from the body).
- The target height for where the horse points his nose changes with the different exercises. Include a range of heights.



Nose to Chest Notice the height of the horse's head here, as compared to the next picture.



Chin directly back. This works different muscles than nose to chest.



Nose Away from Chest extends the neck. Practice this at different heights. Notice how the horse is stretching the base of his neck from this shoulder blades. He is not stepping forward, to reach the treat. His front legs stay underneath him. This is correct.



Nose between Knees Notice how the head remains straight. This is correct.



It is okay if the horse bends his knees a bit during this exercise. Ideally, his withers rise a bit as he does the exercise, although this varies from horse to horse and usually improves with practice. This horse needs to learn to raise his withers and back more while doing the exercise.