The Great "Horsemanship Reality Test"

On the path to true partnership. Where do you stand with your horse?



📋 CHAPTER 1: Arrival and First Encounter

1. How does your horse behave when you bring it in from the pasture or stall?

- [ ] **A)** It notices me, often walks a few steps towards me or waits relaxed at the gate until I put the halter on. It seems contented and ready for me.
- [ ] **B)** It registers me, but usually stays standing unmoved, continues eating or turns away, so I have to walk up to "fetch" it and get its attention.
- [ ] **C)** As soon as it sees me with the halter, it actively creates distance, turns away, or in the worst case even walks away from me, so catching it requires patience.
- [ ] **D)** It comes running over immediately, but acts very demanding, pushes into my space, or looks directly for treats instead of just waiting relaxed in my presence.

2. How goes the walk to the grooming area or arena?

- [ ] **A)** My horse matches my pace. When I slow down or stop, it mirrors me. The lead rope hangs loose, and it respects my personal space on its own.
- [ ] **B)** It mostly walks nicely, but I have to maintain a subtle tension on the lead rope or pull briefly now and then so it doesn't dawdle or pass me.
- [ ] **C)** It takes every opportunity to pull its head towards grass, stops abruptly, or crowds so close with its shoulder that I feel restricted in my movement.
- [ ] **D)** My horse is often in a rush, walks ahead of me, or literally drags me behind, especially when it knows it's heading to food or its herd mates.

3. What happens during grooming and tacking up?

- [ ] **A)** It stands quietly and relaxed, often even without being tied up. It chews, dozes, or looks around calmly, visibly enjoying our time together.
- [ ] **B)** It frequently shifts position, shifts weight from leg to leg, pawing or appearing generally restless and impatient until we finally get moving.

- [ ] **C)** It shows clear signs of discomfort (e.g., pinning ears, swishing tail, snapping) when I groom certain body parts, place the saddle, or move quickly around it.

- [ ] **D)** It is well-behaved, but appears mentally absent. It stares into the distance, hardly responds to my voice, and only really notices me when we leave the grooming area.

📋 CHAPTER 2: Preparation and Equipment

4. How does your horse react when you approach with the rope halter, bridle, or cavesson to put it on?

- [ ] **A)** It accepts the bit or bridle, but holds its head fairly high or tenses its lower lip, requiring me to stretch or wait patiently.

- [ ] **B)** It lowers its head on its own, willingly opens its mouth, or almost slips into the halter by itself. It looks completely relaxed.

- [ ] **C)** It opens its mouth wide, snaps hectically at the bit, or appears generally very restless and stressed as soon as the halter comes near.

- [ ] **D)** It actively raises its head, turns away, or clamps its mouth shut, making putting it on regularly a little test of patience or a struggle.

5. What happens when you place the saddle or pad and tighten the girth for the first time?

- [ ] **A)** It shows clear defensive signals: pins its ears, swishes its tail, bites at the air (or towards the girth), or tries to snap at me.

- [ ] **B)** My horse continues to breathe calmly, stands relaxed, and shows no change in facial expression or posture.

- [ ] **C)** It briefly holds its breath, tightens its back slightly, or steps to the side, but calms down as soon as the girth reaches the first hole.

- [ ] **D)** It immediately starts pawing, dodges hectically, or shows signs of genuine stress before the girth even touches its skin.

6. How does your horse behave when you take the first steps with full equipment before mounting?

- [ ] **A)** The first few steps are somewhat hesitant, stiff, or choppy, and it takes a few meters of movement before its body visibly loosens up.

- [ ] **B)** It literally rushes off, immediately builds up immense pressure on the lead line, or tries to escape the situation by running forward quickly.
- [ ] **C)** It moves off loosely right away, perhaps stretches down briefly, or snorts in a relaxed manner immediately.
- [ ] **D)** It walks very hesitantly, hollows its back, or displays clear girth tension/saddle cinch issues (e.g., extreme chewing, head tossing, or rushing off during the first few meters).

📋 CHAPTER 3: Ground Communication

7. You want to send your horse around you in walk or trot on a circle. How does it react?

- [ ] **A)** It reacts hesitantly, waits, or turns its head toward me first. I have to significantly increase my body language or wave the end of the rope or stick/whip to get it moving at all.
- [ ] **B)** It yields immediately and smoothly to my gesture, maintains distance on its own, and keeps one ear and one eye relaxed on me.
- [ ] **C)** It often shoots off headless, runs hectically on the circle line, or drifts outward.
- [ ] **D)** It moves off, but pushes its inner shoulder in towards me or cuts the circle on its own, forcing me to actively yield it out of my space.

8. How finely does your horse react on the ground when you approach it from the front and ask it to back up a few steps?

- [ ] **A)** It yields immediately to a fine gesture (e.g., light hand movement or minimal rope shift) and steps backward smoothly.
- [ ] **B)** It blocks initially, stiffens its neck, or ignores my signal until I exert clear mechanical pressure on the halter or touch its chest.
- [ ] **C)** It backs up, but very hurriedly and/or crookedly, throws its head up, or seems stressed that it might be doing something "wrong".
- [ ] **D)** It takes a few steps backward, but only after hesitating briefly or requiring me to reinforce the aid slightly (e.g., through more rhythmic rope swinging/pushing).

9. When you want to change direction or stop movement abruptly on the ground, how well does your horse mirror your body language?

- [ ] **A)** It reacts promptly: When I release body tension and exhale, it stops immediately; when I turn my shoulder, it changes direction smoothly.
- [ ] **B)** It often walks right past my aid unmoved, ignores the change of direction, or stops late only when the lead rope goes taut or I step in its way.
- [ ] **C)** It reacts extremely sensitively and almost panics during a directional change or sudden stop, turning hectically or jumping aside.
- [ ] **D)** It usually needs a short "thinking moment" or an additional visual signal (like lifting the stick/whip) to execute the turn or stop smoothly.

📋 CHAPTER 4: Mounting and the First Meters

10. You place your horse at the mounting block or arena wall to mount. How does it behave while you prepare?

- [ ] **A)** It stands like rooted to the spot, breathes calmly, and waits relaxed until I have sorted myself out and mounted. I don't need to hold it at all.
- [ ] **B)** It subtly evades the mounting block repeatedly with its hindquarters or gets crooked, requiring multiple corrections until the position fits.
- [ ] **C)** It fidgets around, walks off as soon as I put a foot in the stirrup, or pushes forward so much that mounting becomes a wobbly affair.
- [ ] **D)** It basically stays standing, but appears internally extremely tense, holds its breath, pulls in its belly, or slightly shuffles on the spot.

11. You are freshly seated in the saddle. What happens in the first few seconds, before you give the signal to move off?

- [ ] **A)** My horse "parks" with absolute patience. It stays standing until I consciously sort the reins and give the signal to move off with my body language.
- [ ] **B)** It immediately sets off on its own at a brisk walk, ignores my stand-still signal, or rushes off as if there's no stopping it.
- [ ] **C)** It stays standing, but takes immediate advantage to yank its head down (e.g., to nibble grass or scratch a leg), while the mental connection to me takes a break.
- [ ] **D)** It doesn't move forward at all, or perhaps even walks backward.

12. You give the first signal to move off at a walk. How do the very first meters go?

- [ ] **A)** My horse moves off, but walks quite stiffly, dawdling, or not at all, looking around a lot so we aren't focused on each other during the first meters.
- [ ] **B)** My horse shoots forward hectically on the first step, running away under me, starting us off immediately with stress and debate.
- [ ] **C)** It moves off willingly, but sometimes needs a clearer reminder (e.g., leg aid) before marching on smoothly and rhythmically.
- [ ] **D)** A minimal forward thought from me is enough: My horse immediately takes its first steps with a stretched neck and total composure.

📋 CHAPTER 5: Communication in the Saddle

13. You want to transition from walk or trot to a stop. How do you reduce speed?

- [ ] **A)** I usually have to exert considerable effort, pull back firmly on the reins, or use noticeable force because my horse tends to run through the braking signal.
- [ ] **B)** I usually need a combination of voice and clear rein aid because my horse doesn't respond directly to pure exhaling or my seat/leg.
- [ ] **C)** It reacts extremely promptly: As soon as I release my body tension, exhale, and stop my pelvis, the horse stops—reins are barely needed.
- [ ] **D)** It often aborts abruptly when trying to stop, throws its head up, shuffles backward or sideways, looking stressed and inattentive.

14. How does your horse react when you ride on curved lines (e.g. large circles or serpentine lines) and set the direction?

- [ ] **A)** It smoothly follows my line of sight and shoulder turn. It bends almost by itself and maintains balance without me having to hold strongly on the inside rein.
- [ ] **B)** At the slightest weight shift, it shoots into the turn, loses balance, or turns inside so hectically that the line becomes very cornered.
- [ ] **C)** It pushes massively out over the outer shoulder or stiffens its neck, so I have to force it onto the curved line with inner leg and heavy rein use.
- [ ] **D)** It turns, but drifts inward or outward; I constantly have to correct the path because focus is lacking.

15. You want to change gait and give the aid to trot or canter. How does the transition go?

- [ ] **A)** It responds immediately to a subtle, mental invitation or minimal leg aid and transitions harmoniously, smoothly, and without rush into the higher gait.
- [ ] **B)** It shoots off explosively, runs away under me in walk or trot, and then breaks hectically with a high head into trot or canter.
- [ ] **C)** It often ignores the first aid completely. I first have to drive more clearly with leg, whip, or voice to make it change gait.
- [ ] **D)** It changes gait, but takes the first steps very hurriedly, runs behind its center of gravity, or stiffens its back for a moment.

📋 CHAPTER 6: Special Situations and Everyday Life

16. You are in the arena or on a trail ride and suddenly a "horse monster" appears (e.g., a flapping tarp, loud tractor, rustling bush). How does your horse react?

- [ ] **A)** It startles minimally or flinches, glances briefly, but then continues completely unmoved and calm as if nothing happened.
- [ ] **B)** It immediately switches to pure flight mode: turns around instantly, shoots forward or sideways, making the situation barely controllable.
- [ ] **C)** It literally freezes, turns stiff as a board, and stubbornly refuses to take another step forward, even with strong leg pressure.
- [ ] **D)** It looks at the object briefly, but is easily calmed by my voice or a subtle signal, passing by bravely and trustingly.

17. How does your horse behave when leaving the familiar arena or yard (e.g., going out solo on a trail or moving to a different pasture)?

- [ ] **A)** It is extremely herd-bound: neighs continuously, keeps turning around, pushes back to the barn, or flatly refuses to leave the safe area and herd mates.
- [ ] **B)** It marches off deeply relaxed and curious with me. It doesn't care whether other horses are around or whether we leave the yard behind.
- [ ] **C)** It comes along, but gets more hectic step by step, prances, walks hurriedly, or builds so much internal pressure that it feels like a powder keg, sometimes pulling free.

- [ ] **D)** It trotts along nicely, but walks hesitantly, acts insecure, and needs repeated "invitations" or mental support from me to move forward bravely.

18. You spontaneously change your plan—for example, stopping an exercise mid-way, standing still, or demanding something completely different. How does your horse react?

- [ ] **A)** It remains flexible, switches instantly, and engages without hesitation in the new idea while staying mentally fully present with me.
- [ ] **B)** It acts completely confused or stressed, frantically continues the old exercise, or starts fidgeting because it is overwhelmed by the sudden break in routine.
- [ ] **C)** It immediately uses the change of plan for a break: switches off, lowers its head, grazes, or ignores the next signal because mentally it's already off work.
- [ ] **D)** It reacts with frustration: swishes its tail, pushes against aids, or shows me that it finds interrupting the familiar sequence quite annoying.

📋 CHAPTER 7: Returning, Ending Work, and Breaks

19. You have finished the session and bring your horse back to pasture, paddock, or stall. How does your horse react?

- [ ] **A)** The horse can hardly wait to get back to pasture or stall, showing much more motivation on the way back than when being picked up.
- [ ] **B)** It breaks loose while leading and runs back on its own because it had the idea before you did.
- [ ] **C)** It walks calmly beside you, lets itself be unhaltered quietly, and then immediately goes relaxed into pasture, paddock, or stall.
- [ ] **D)** Your horse is quite content after training and stays standing by you even when unhaltered, or might even follow you as you leave.

20. You are walking or riding out (or in the arena/hall) and want to take a break. You stop or dismount. What does your horse do?

- [ ] **A)** The horse stands calmly beside me and waits to see what happens next.
- [ ] **B)** It almost breaks free, tries to storm off, looks around hectically, fidgets, and prances nervously, unable to stand still for a second.

- [ ] **C)** It stands tense and frozen with wide eyes and pricked ears beside me, feeling like it could explode at any moment.

- [ ] **D)** It drags you to the nearest patch of grass to eat or searches your pockets for treats, sometimes bumping into you heavily or rubbing against you.

21. You want to hose down your horse after training, cool its legs, or spray it with fly spray in summer. What awaits you?

- [ ] **A)** Unfortunately, that is not possible with my horse. It panics completely and I can neither spray nor hose it down.

- [ ] **B)** The horse stands calmly beside me and enjoys cooling off. Fly spray is also easy to apply; my horse has no issues with it.

- [ ] **C)** It stands tense and frozen with wide eyes and needs a moment before it can relax.

- [ ] **D)** My horse shuffles on the spot or back and forth; you can tell it doesn't like the procedure. I have to watch out it doesn't bump me or step on my foot.

22. Trailer training or an upcoming trip: How does your horse behave when asked to load into the trailer?

- [ ] **A)** It marches straight into the trailer with complete trust and zero hesitation, stands relaxed, and waits quietly until the chest/butt bar is closed.

- [ ] **B)** It blocks completely or won't enter at all. Stiffens up, throws head high, backs up, or shoots past the ramp as soon as it sees the trailer. Needs lots of pressure or equipment.

- [ ] **C)** It loads obediently after some hesitation, but is stressed inside: sweats, stomps, paws, bangs against walls, or tries to rush out backward (despite the bar).

- [ ] **D)** It needs a short "thinking moment" or a few attempts and persuasion, but ultimately goes in nicely when given necessary time.

23. Farrier/hoof trimmer appointment: How cooperative is your horse when lifting and holding hooves?

- [ ] **A)** Pulls hoof away repeatedly with stress, kicks, fidgets around, leans full weight onto the farrier holding the hoof, or can barely stand on three legs due to inner restlessness.

- [ ] **B)** Gives hooves at minimal touch, holds them nicely, and balances itself so it takes weight off the person completely while staying relaxed.
- [ ] **C)** Almost falls asleep, forgetting the human: sneaks out of the task, puts hoof down on its own, or looks around unfocused.
- [ ] **D)** Lifts legs, but holds them extremely tight or stiffens up so much that you have to hold back mechanically or correct it.

24. Vet visit (e.g., vaccination, taking temperature, examination): How does your horse behave with stranger contact or treatments?

- [ ] **A)** Panics immediately, trembles, throws head up and eyes wide, or tries to run away as soon as the vet pulls out the syringe or thermometer.
- [ ] **B)** Threatens (e.g. pinning ears, snapping, tail swishing), dodges, or tries to evade treatment in extreme cases by rearing or kicking.
- [ ] **C)** Allows touching even on sensitive areas without issue, stands completely still during treatment, and trusts me blindly that nothing bad will happen.
- [ ] **D)** Endures the treatment, but freezes internally, holds breath, and mentally checks out.

📋 Scoring Key

(Take your time to reflect on all questions again and answer honestly)

Question	If you checked A	If you checked B	If you checked C	If you checked D	Your Points
Question 1	4 Points	3 Points	1 Point	2 Points	
Question 2	4 Points	3 Points	1 Point	2 Points	
Question 3	4 Points	3 Points	1 Point	2 Points	
Question 4	3 Points	4 Points	2 Points	1 Point	
Question 5	1 Point	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	
Question 6	3 Points	2 Points	4 Points	1 Point	

Question	If you checked A	If you checked B	If you checked C	If you checked D	Your Points
Question 7	3 Points	4 Points	1 Point	2 Points	
Question 8	4 Points	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	
Question 9	4 Points	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	
Question 10	4 Points	3 Points	1 Point	2 Points	
Question 11	4 Points	1 Point	3 Points	2 Points	
Question 12	2 Points	1 Point	3 Points	4 Points	
Question 13	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	1 Point	
Question 14	4 Points	2 Points	1 Point	3 Points	
Question 15	4 Points	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	
Question 16	3 Points	1 Point	2 Points	4 Points	
Question 17	2 Points	4 Points	1 Point	3 Points	
Question 18	4 Points	1 Point	3 Points	2 Points	
Question 19	2 Points	1 Point	3 Points	4 Points	
Question 20	4 Points	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	
Question 21	1 Point	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	

Question	If you checked A	If you checked B	If you checked C	If you checked D	Your Points
Question 22	4 Points	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	
Question 23	1 Point	4 Points	2 Points	3 Points	
Question 24	2 Points	1 Point	4 Points	3 Points	
TOTAL SCORE					

📋 Evaluation & Results

Here you can read what your score means:

🟤 LEVEL 1: 24 – 45 Points | Noticeable Distance

What your result means:
Looking at your current everyday life, interacting with your horse likely feels heavy, blocked, or simply exhausting, as if an invisible wall stands between you—a distance that is hard to grasp but noticeable in your interactions. Unfortunately, you are currently still a step away from harmonious togetherness.

Perhaps your horse shows clear resistance, shuts down, or withdraws internally completely. Equally, it may express itself in constant restlessness, nervousness, or rush, making a relaxed breath almost impossible. Whether internal withdrawal, bucking, or external fidgeting: both behaviors stem from the same reason. Your horse does not feel safe in the current situation, finds no support, or is energetically overwhelmed by the overall situation.

You probably feel that trust on both sides is strained. The lightness and joy you wish for with your horse have been replaced in daily life by frustration, pressure of expectations, or excessive caution.

What lies energetically behind it:
Horses are masters at mirroring the moment. When resistance, defense, or rush dominate daily life, it is rarely malice or stubbornness from the horse. Rather, it is a cry for help or energetic self-protection. Your horse has learned to shut down or flee forward because communication is unclear or overlaid with too much pressure. You are currently stuck in a loop where expectation meets protection reflex.

Our tips for your fresh start:

1. **Take out all performance pressure first:** Such phases are immensely draining, but they are not a permanent state—rather a clear signal that the current path isn't leading forward right now. Do not attempt to force the situation with current training, stricter rules, or new random exercises. The best way to break this state is to get professional help.

2. **Create an expectation-free space:** The best step out is potentially a complete "reset". Put your training plan in the drawer for now. Spend time with your horse without wanting anything from it. Simply sit with it in the pasture, paddock, or stall, exhale deeply, and just be present. If your horse tends toward aggressive behavior, definitely seek support from a professional trainer and work through the next steps together.

3. **Observe the subtle signals:** When you remove pressure and stop demanding, you give your horse the chance to step out of protection mode. Pay attention to when your horse seeks first small eye contact or steps toward you on its own. Those are the moments where true connection can re-emerge. You don't need to reinvent the wheel, just give yourselves the space to discover the foundation for true togetherness anew, free of expectations, at your very own pace.

Would you like to change your current state and bring more lightness and trust into your daily life?
Send us a 10-minute video of your current biggest challenge—we will analyze exactly where the knot is and give you targeted impulses for your shared path. Here is your link: https://liberty-farm.systeme.io/ec8e6b5e

🥏 LEVEL 2: 46 – 68 Points | Everyday Friction

What your result means:
You are still a small step away from a truly good, relaxed togetherness. While you aren't stuck in a blockage every single second, your daily life is characterized by friction, half-heartedness, and recurring restlessness. It feels like a roller coaster: one small thing works decently, only to drift into fidgeting, lack of focus, or evasion the next moment.

Your horse is not yet reliably with you. It questions your cues, executes aids hesitantly, or mentally checks out as soon as a minor external distraction appears. For you, this means immense effort and frustration in everyday life, as you constantly have to correct, watch out, or energetically counteract to keep the situation from tipping over.

What lies energetically behind it:
You are stuck in a phase where roles and rules are simply unclear. Your horse has not yet found true confidence that your leadership offers genuine safety. Therefore, it repeatedly tries to take the wheel itself—through rush, evasion, or half-hearted execution. The energy between you is rather erratic, restless, and shaped by mutual insecurity.

Our tips for you:

1. **Become clear and consistent in small everyday moments:** Good leadership doesn't begin with difficult exercises, but with the smallest details. Watch how your horse behaves when leading, standing still, or grooming. Set gentle but crystal-clear boundaries at the very first sign of inattention, before friction can even arise.

2. **Scale down expectations significantly:** Don't try to demand complex tasks as long as simple basics are not reliably sitting. Stop when a small thing went well, and reward every attempt at attention immediately.

3. **Bring calm into your own energy:** Your horse mirrors your inner posture. If you go to the stable expecting it to be strenuous again, exactly that tension will transfer. Exhale consciously before every contact and approach the encounter without a fixed schedule.

Would you like to bring more calm and reliability into your daily life and create genuine clarity?
Send us a 10-minute video of a typical situation where things get stuck—we will analyze exactly where the misunderstandings lie and give you targeted impulses for relaxed togetherness. Here is your link: https://liberty-farm.systeme.io/ec8e6b5e

🟢 LEVEL 3: 69 – 85 Points | The Solid Foundation

What your result means:
You stand on firm and safe ground! On the whole, your daily life runs well, relaxed, and reliably.

Your horse brings good basic calmness, listens to you, and accepts your aids willingly and relaxed in familiar everyday situations. You have established a shared language that you can mostly rely on. Naturally, there are moments where ultimate precision is missing or a completely new challenge temporarily throws you off—but your foundation doesn't shake because of it.

What lies energetically behind it:
Your horse has predominantly understood that it can relax, orient itself, and lean on you, feeling safe. The basic energetic vibration between you is calm, clear, and supported by mutual respect. You have reached a point where handling your horse doesn't drain energy, but gives you joy and power.

Our tips for you:

1. **Use your safety for new stimuli:** Since your foundation is firm, you can now venture step by step into new tasks or unfamiliar environments. Playfully observe how stable your connection remains when more external distraction is added.

2. **Start refining fine details:** From now on, pay attention to how pinpointed and fine your cues arrive. You can start reducing your aids further and prompt your horse's responses to be even more alert and subtle.

3. **Enjoy what you've achieved:** Realize how much you've accomplished and where you stand! Enjoy the lightness in daily life and the reliability you built together.

Would you like to leverage your solid foundation and bring even more subtlety and lightness into your communication?
Send us a 10-minute video of a typical daily or training sequence—we will analyze your interplay and give you targeted impulses on how your communication can become even more effortless. Here is your link: https://liberty-farm.systeme.io/ec8e6b5e

✸ LEVEL 4: 86 – 96 Points | The Fine Connection

What your result means:
Congratulations!! Your relationship is an absolute highlight!! You are in a realm that many riders and horse owners search for a lifetime. Your partnership is defined by harmony, trust, and a lightness that often looks like magic to outsiders.

Your horse mirrors high mental presence and emotional safety to you. Even in unforeseen or stressful everyday moments, the bond between you remains intact. You don't need loud aids or clear corrections. Your togetherness is fluid because you perceive each other sensitively and your communication is based on mutual esteem and respect.

What lies energetically behind it:
You vibrate on a fine, shared wavelength. Your horse doesn't just react to physical aids, but reads your inner alignment, breath, and pure intention. It is an energetic connection at eye level where leadership and co-creation seamlessly merge. You radiate a clear, calm presence, and your horse answers with joyful, alert willingness.

Our tips for you:

1. **Discover play with the invisible connection:** Use this unique harmony to refine liberty work, increase distance between you, or solve complex tasks solely through body language and energy. You have the space to test true weightlessness.

2. **Stay in the moment and guard your subtlety:** A fine relationship grows with mindfulness in the here and now. Preserve this judgment-free space and the joy of being together—completely without performance pressure, simply out of joy in your connection.

3. **Be an inspiration for great horsemanship:** Enjoy this special state to the fullest. What you have built together is the most beautiful gift in working with horses and shows how quiet and wonderful true communication can be!

Would you like to experience your wonderful fine-tuning in new or challenging situations as well?
Send us a 10-minute video from your daily life—we will give you targeted impulses on how to preserve this lightness and further refine your communication at a high level. Here is your link: https://liberty-farm.systeme.io/ec8e6b5e