Vaulting Compulsories

The compulsories are seven exercises done in a series by all vaulters. They are the foundation of gymnastics done on the vaulting barrel and the horse. The compulsories are used to enhance riding skills and the basis for higher level vaulting. Vaulting gives the vaulters opportunity to build strength, flexibility, stamina, confidence, social interaction and team spirit.

The Mount

**What:** This is the first element in the compulsories. The vaulter stands with the lunger, travels close to the lunge line, grasps both handles and vaults up onto the back of the horse. If the vaulter is not ready to vault safely on their own they will perform a leg up with assistance.

**Why:** The mount is an exercise in strength, flexibility and timing.

**How:** (Ideally)
- The vaulter begins next to the lunger. The lunger raises her whip and allows the vaulter to pass behind the lunge line.
- The vaulter grasps both handles of the surcingle while moving at the same pace as the horse.
- The vaulter jumps up off both feet to get elevation.
- The vaulter swings one leg over the horses back while transferring weight onto their hands.
- The vaulters head dives up and then down towards the horses shoulder.
- The vaulters shoulders should be above their hands, hips above shoulders, inside leg extended straight towards the ground and outside leg high in the air straight towards the sky.
- The vaulter presses down through the hands and arms to raise the body above the center of the horses back.
- Vaulted lowers their body slowly to sit astride the horse.
Giving a leg up (Beginning and for safety)

- The vaulter again starts beside the lunger with their assistant.
- The lunger lifts the whip allowing them to travel along the side of the lunge line.
- The vaulter grasps the handles of the vaulting surcingle facing towards the horse’s head.
- The vaulter bends the inside knee, the assistant supports at the ankle and knee of the vaulter.
- Be careful to not have the vaulter hang off the side of the horse.
- The same body mechanics are used in the regular mount.
- Siting softly with the weight on the horses hands and arms as they sit astride.

The Basic Seat

What: The basic seat is sitting astride the horse with the vaulters arms extended out to the side with finger tips out. The vaulters shoulders, hips and heels are aligned with toes pointing down.

Why: The alignment of the shoulders, hip and heels are the balanced seat. The balance comes from sitting on your seat bones evenly and bearing the weight, not gripping with the legs.

How:
- Weight evenly distributed on a neutral pelvis.
- Elongate trunk and raise arms out to the sides with fingers pointed out.
- Stretch toes towards the ground with toes pointed down.
The Flag
What: The flag is a balanced position of kneeling on the horses back with the opposite diagonal limbs are stretches out and eyes looking forward.
Why: Improve balance, coordination, spatial awareness, proprioception, confidence.
How:
- Go from the basic seat to the kneeling box position softly on the horses back looking forward.
- **Beginning Half Flag:** The vaulter supports with two hands on the vaulting surcingle handles.
- The vaulter lifts one leg straight with toes pointed.
- The supporting leg is slightly diagonal across the horses back with top of foot flat.
- **The Flag:** As above + raise the diagonally opposite arm with fingers pointed.
- Hold position for 4 strides.
- The vaulters leg and arm lower simultaneously.
- Return to the basic seat using handles to support the body.
- The ideal is to have: Flat back, eyes up, straight arm and leg with fingers and toes pointed.
The Mill
What: A series of leg passes over the neck, side, croup, side and neck back to a basic seat.
   Basic seat to inside seat (towards lunger), reverse seat (towards horse’s tail) outside seat (away from lunger) back to basic seat.
Why: Improve balance, coordination, strength, flexibility, confidence, team work, + respect for horse.
How:
- The exercise is done on a 4 count rhythm with the horse’s foot fall (i.e. every time the horse's outside front foot touches the ground).
- The vaulter pivots on their seat bones in the 4 seated positions.
- The leg that is remaining at the horses side grips with toes pointed down.
- The vaulter looks in the direction of the movement.
- The leg that is moving is straight with toes pointed moves high over the horse’s body being, careful to not touch the horse.
- The hands on the handles grip and release to move out of the way of the moving leg.

The Clicks
What: A preparation exercise for the scissors and vault off, whereby the vaulter swings from a forward seat to a hand stand and returns to a forward seat.
Why: Exercise to build the strength, timing and coordination for the scissors and flank.
How:
- Start in the basic seat and hands on vaulting surcingle handles.
- Swing legs forward and back slightly onto the back of the seat bones.
- Keeping body upright swing legs back behind the body with legs straight.
- Tighten core as body and bring weight onto arms as the body is supported into the air.
- The vaulter achieves a hand stand with the weight on the handles of the surcingle.
- The vaulter leans slightly forward as their legs pike keeping the toes pointed.
- The vaulters legs slit and slide down the horse’s sides.
- The vaulter lowers themselves into the basic seat position.
**The Scissors**

What: The scissors is a two part exercise. Part 1 is to do the click and then turn hips towards the lunger and sit down softly backwards. Part 2 is to bring both legs up supported by the hands and cross the legs and sit down softly in the basic seat.

Why: Arm and core strength, body awareness, coordination, confidence, balance and flexibility

How: Part 1
- The vaulter performs the clicks.
- Just before the apex of the handstand the vaulter turns their hips and torso towards the lunger.
- Cross legs keeping them straight with toes pointed.
- Continue the rotation with weight on their arms.

Part 2
- Start with the reverse basic seat.
- Swing legs behind and arch body.
- Swing legs towards the horse’s tail.
- Lift the buttocks up and shifts the weight onto the vaulters arms.
- Twist hips towards the lunger and shift weight onto the inside arm.
- Continue the turn of the hips and sit softly into the basic seat.

**The Stand**

What: Standing softly on the horses back.

Why: Builds confidence, balance, core strength, symmetry, body awareness.

How:
- Get in the box kneeling position.
- Using arms to help, hop to a squat position holding the handles of the vaulting surcingle.
- Be sure to have even weight in both feet with feet flat on the horses back.
- The vaulter stands up letting go of the handles of the surcingle.
• The vaulter remains with knees bent and relaxed to absorb the shock of the horse gait and balance.
• The vaulter stretches arms out with fingers pointed (Shoulders, hips and ankles in line).

The Flank
What: There is 2 parts to the flank.
Why: Balance, strength, coordination, flexibility, respect for the horse.
How: Part 1
• The horse must be moving to make sure his back muscles are engaged.
• The vaulter swings legs forward and then back into a hand stand (clicks).
• The vaulter forms a pike position, keeping the legs together.
• Slide down the inside of the horse and softly sit down using the weight on the vaulters arms.
Part 2
• Vaulter sits in an inside seated position.
• Swing both legs forward.
• Swing both legs backward and tips upper body forward.
• Press to a hand stands position.
• Bring both legs up and to the outside of the horse.
• Push backwards from the handles.
• Land with bent knees.

Vaulting compulsories utube

http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=vaulting+compulsories&FORM=VIRE3#view=detail&mid=9321501C5B196D1C555B9321501C5B196D1C555B


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