



Starting to Teach: First Lesson Checklist

This checklist is designed to help instructors **run an effective first lesson**, not just reference best practices. It provides a simple structure to guide how you observe, prioritize, and communicate during a lesson—so you can quickly identify what matters most, avoid over-coaching, and set the tone for productive future rides. Use it as a working tool to organize your thoughts in real time and to ensure each lesson ends with clear direction for both the rider and the horse.

Before the Lesson

- Review rider experience level
- Review horse history and current workload
- Clarify rider goals and expectations
- Confirm safe environment and equipment

During the Lesson

- Observe horse and rider before making changes
- Choose one primary focus area
- Keep exercises simple and repeatable
- Prioritize calm, confident progress

After the Lesson / Feedback

- Identify one thing that went well
- Identify one priority focus for next ride
- Share one clear takeaway with the rider
- Reinforce that progress happens over time

Use the space below to record key observations, decisions, and next steps from the lesson. Notes should focus on what the horse is communicating, what improved during the session, and what the rider should prioritize next. These notes are meant to guide your planning for future lessons and help track progress over time—not to evaluate a single ride in isolation.

Lesson Notes & Next Ride Priorities:
