

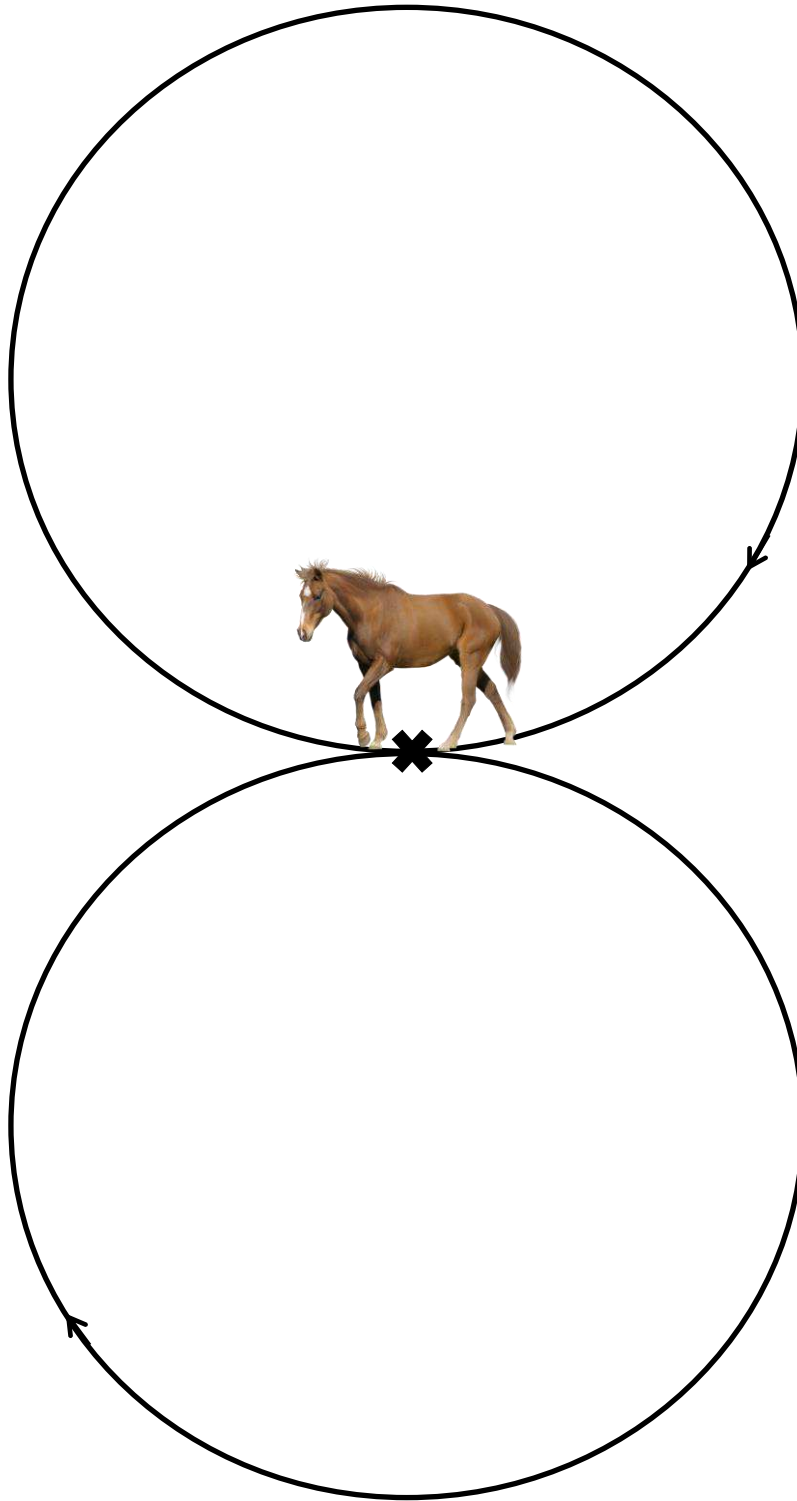


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10 Arena Exercise Patterns

The Basic Figure 8

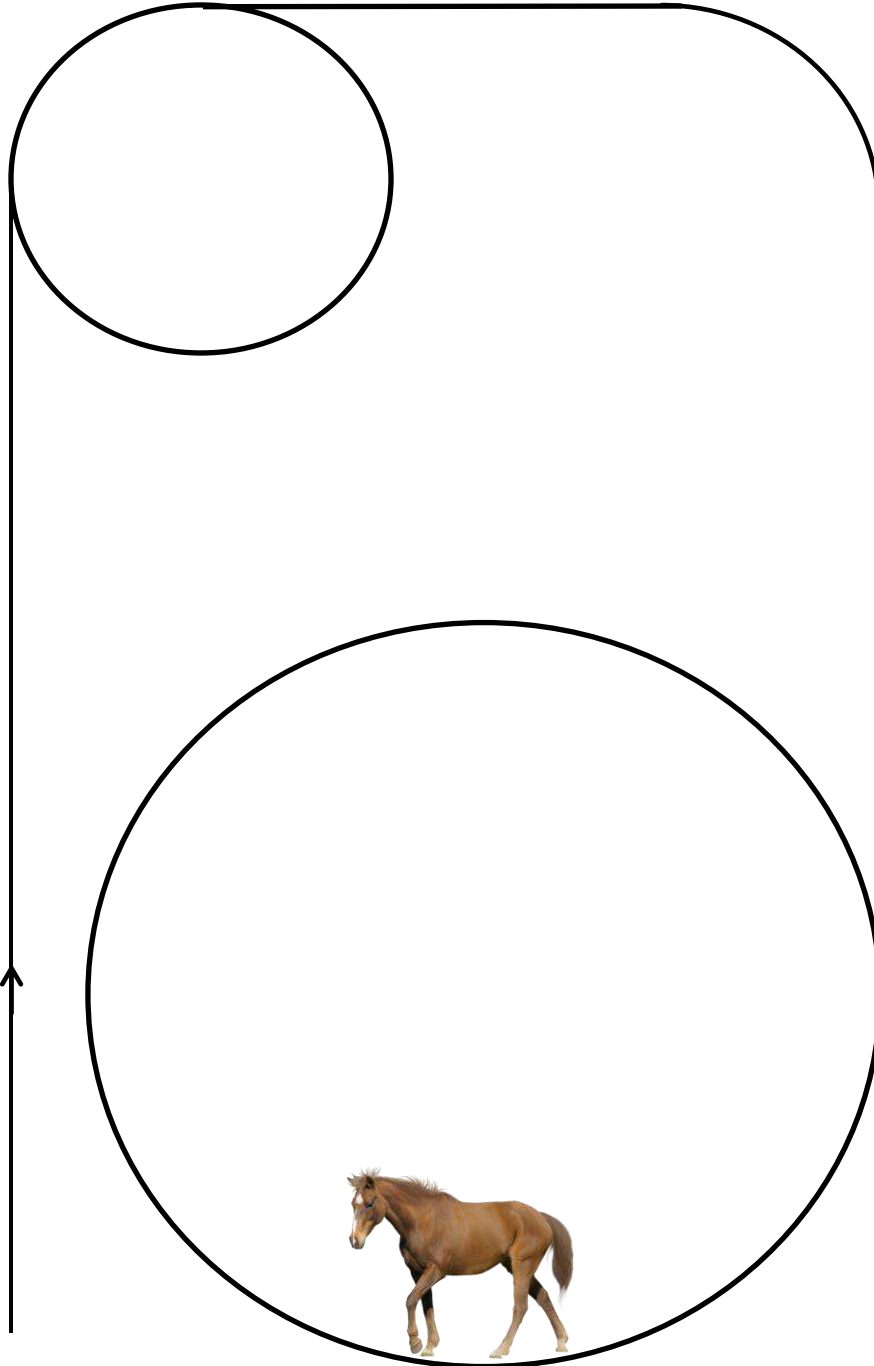


Goal: Round, even circles. Use the center, marked X (mark with a cone for visual reference), to change the direction of your horse's head, keeping a round, collected frame.

Success: Supple neck with nose tipped in slightly. Horse is straight between the reins and legs. Use the straight line in the center to bend the horse in the new direction all the while maintaining a calm, collected and supple frame.

Advanced: Change gaits at the X or at the lope, change leads at the X.

Big Circle/Little Circle

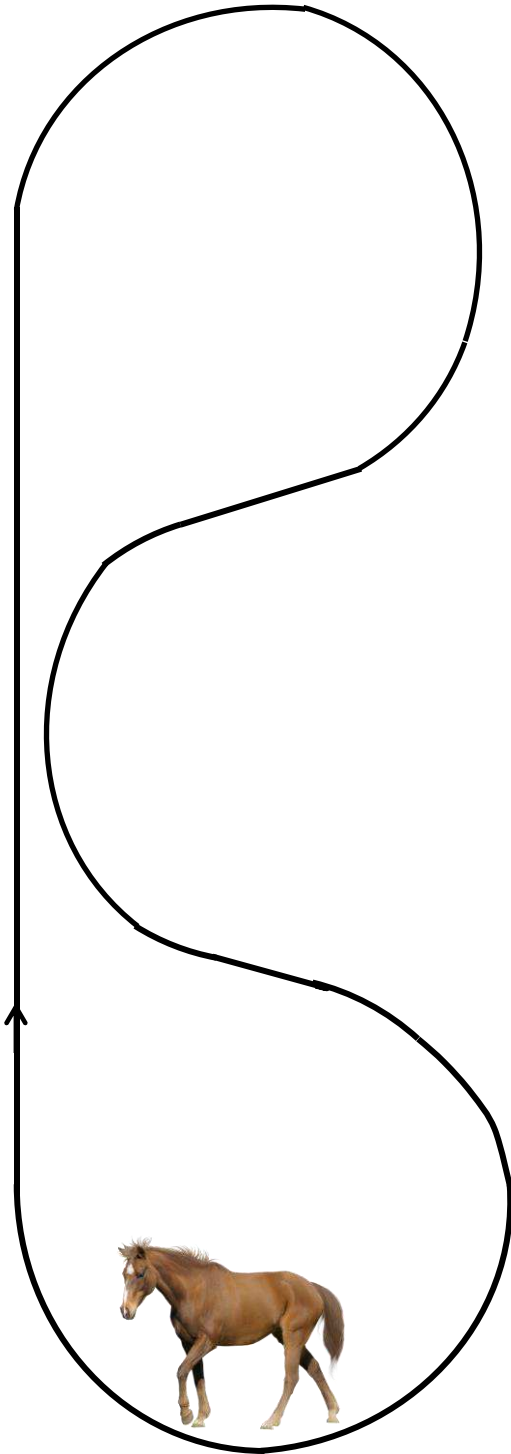


Goal: Go down the long side the arena, making a smallish circle in one corner, then a larger circle in the diagonally opposite corner.

Success: Both small and large circles made round and even with a supple, balanced horse

Advanced: Change corners where you ride the small and large circles and vary speed or lope the large circle and trot the small circle.

Loopy B

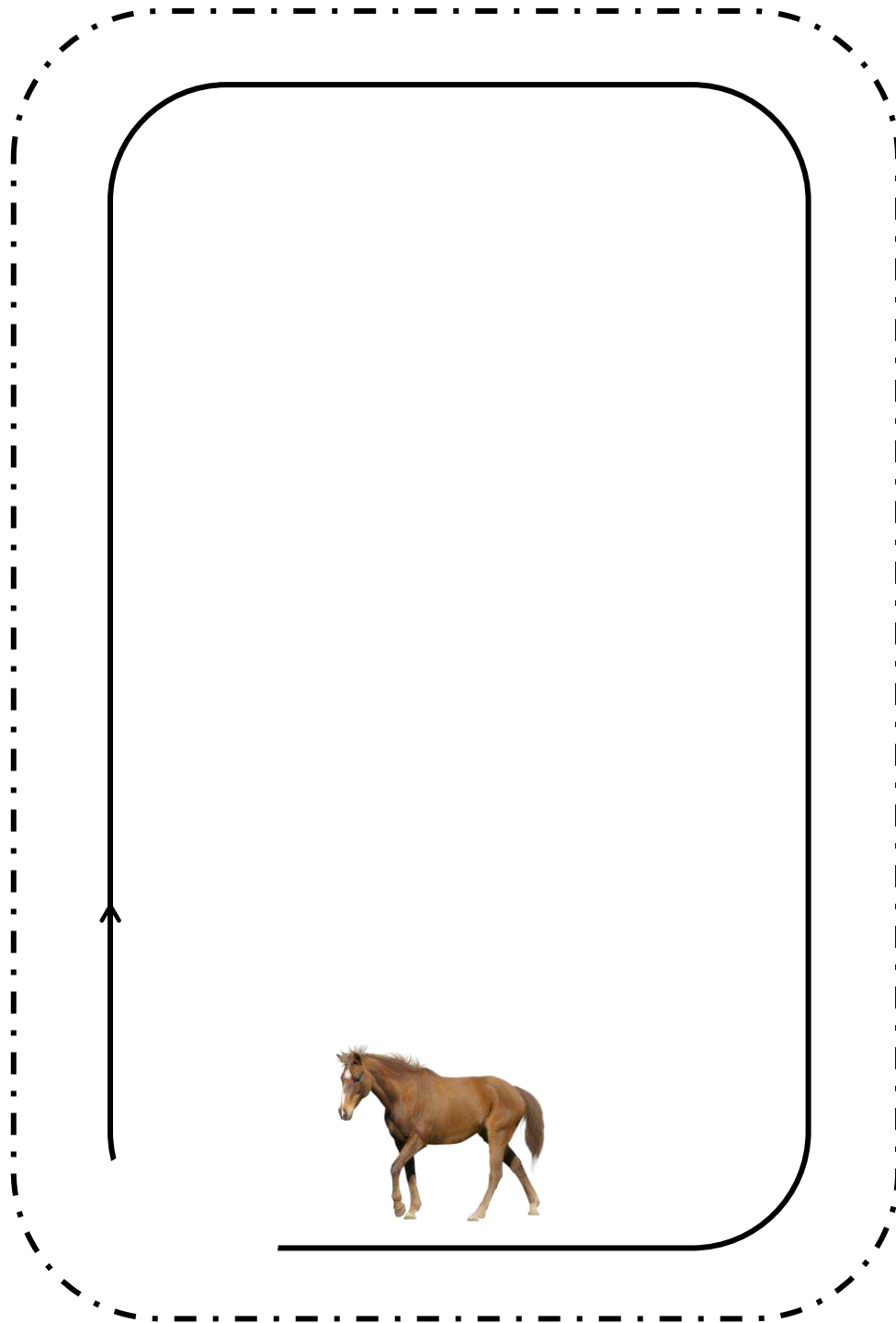


Goal: Ride down the long side of the arena, turning the corner as if to make a circle, instead angle back to the rail. Go straight a stride or two at the rail, then angle back out and circle around toward your starting point.

Success: Each end of the loop is the same size and shape with a horse that is listening to cues and not assuming a full circle will be made. Improvement with rider and horse's precision in bending and straightening.

Advanced: Vary speed. Ride at the lope and change leads on the straight line in the center. At any gate, use your outside leg and rein to move the horse laterally back to the rail in a forward and sideways two track.

Off-the-Rail-Rectangle

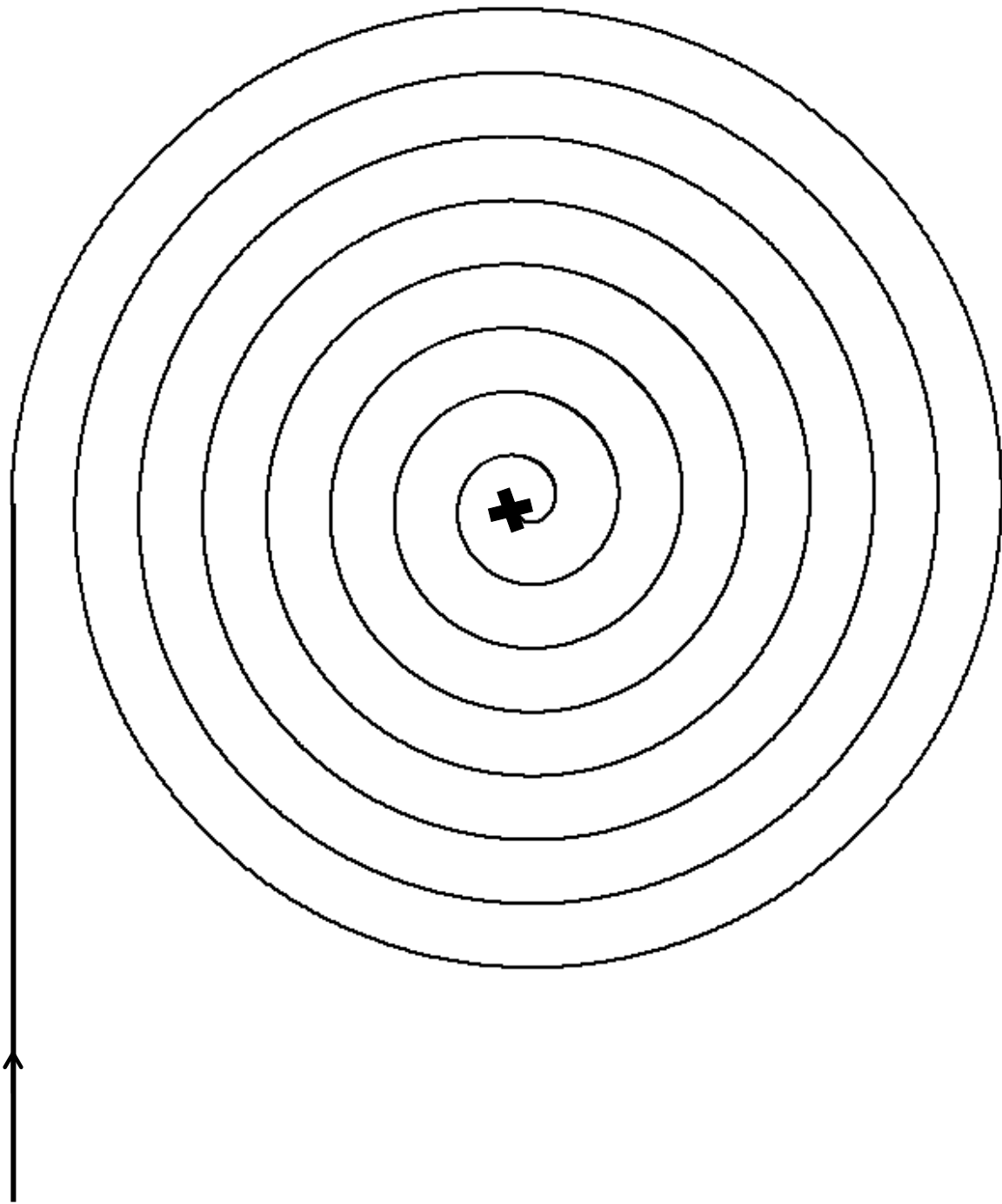


Goal: Ride a path off the rail about 8-10 feet

Success: The horse remains straight between the reins relying on you for cues, without the rail to guide and support.

Advanced: Vary speeds along the straightaways

Spiral

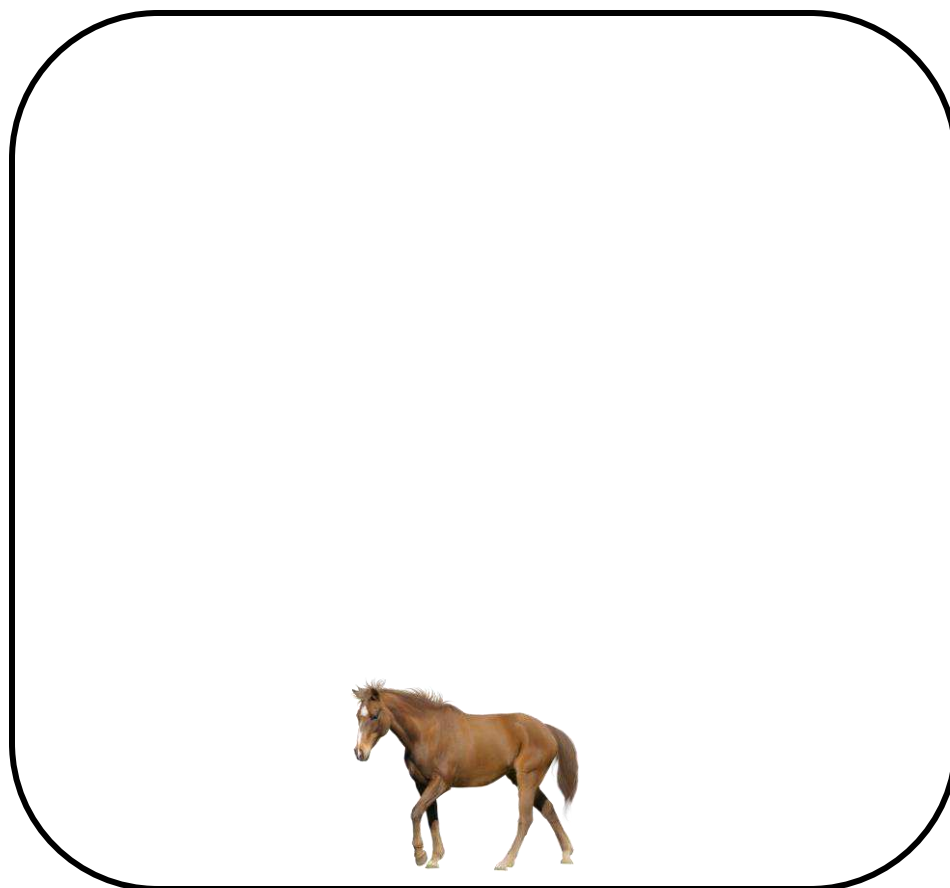


Goal: Move from the outside of a large circle to the smallest circle possible by spiraling in toward the center, then spiral back out.

Success: Maintain a consistent speed as the horse improves on bending, collection and responsiveness to the outside leg and rein as you spiral in and your inside rein and leg as you spiral out. The horse will remain supple and limber and engaged in the hind end

Advanced: Master at a walk and then attempt at the jog and lope.

Squared off Circle

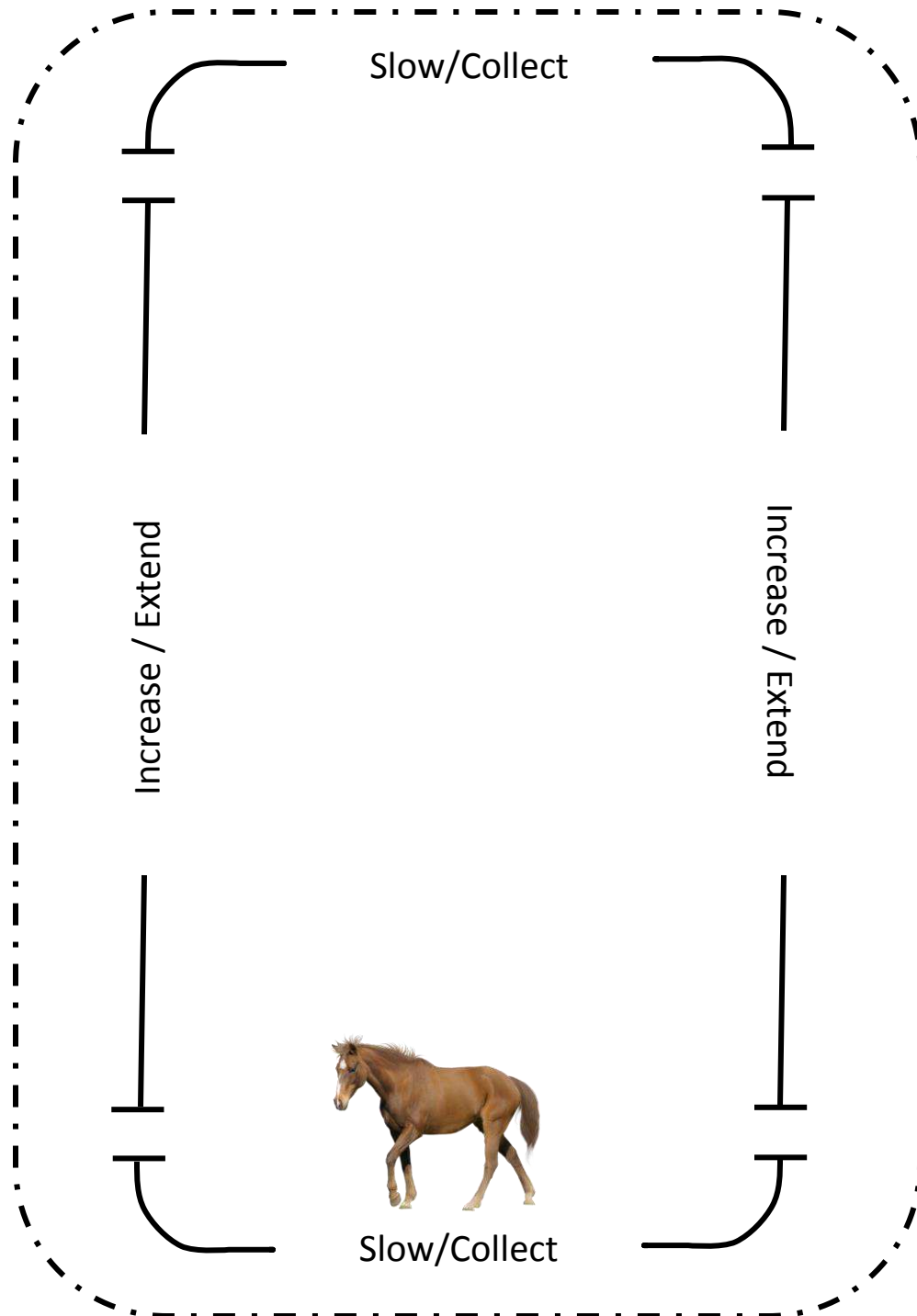


Goal: Ride the horse straight to each corner, bend the horse through the turn and realign for the next straightaway.

Success: The horse will gain confidence while learning the difference between bending and traveling straight.

Advanced: Change the size of the square and increase speed.

Cadence Builder

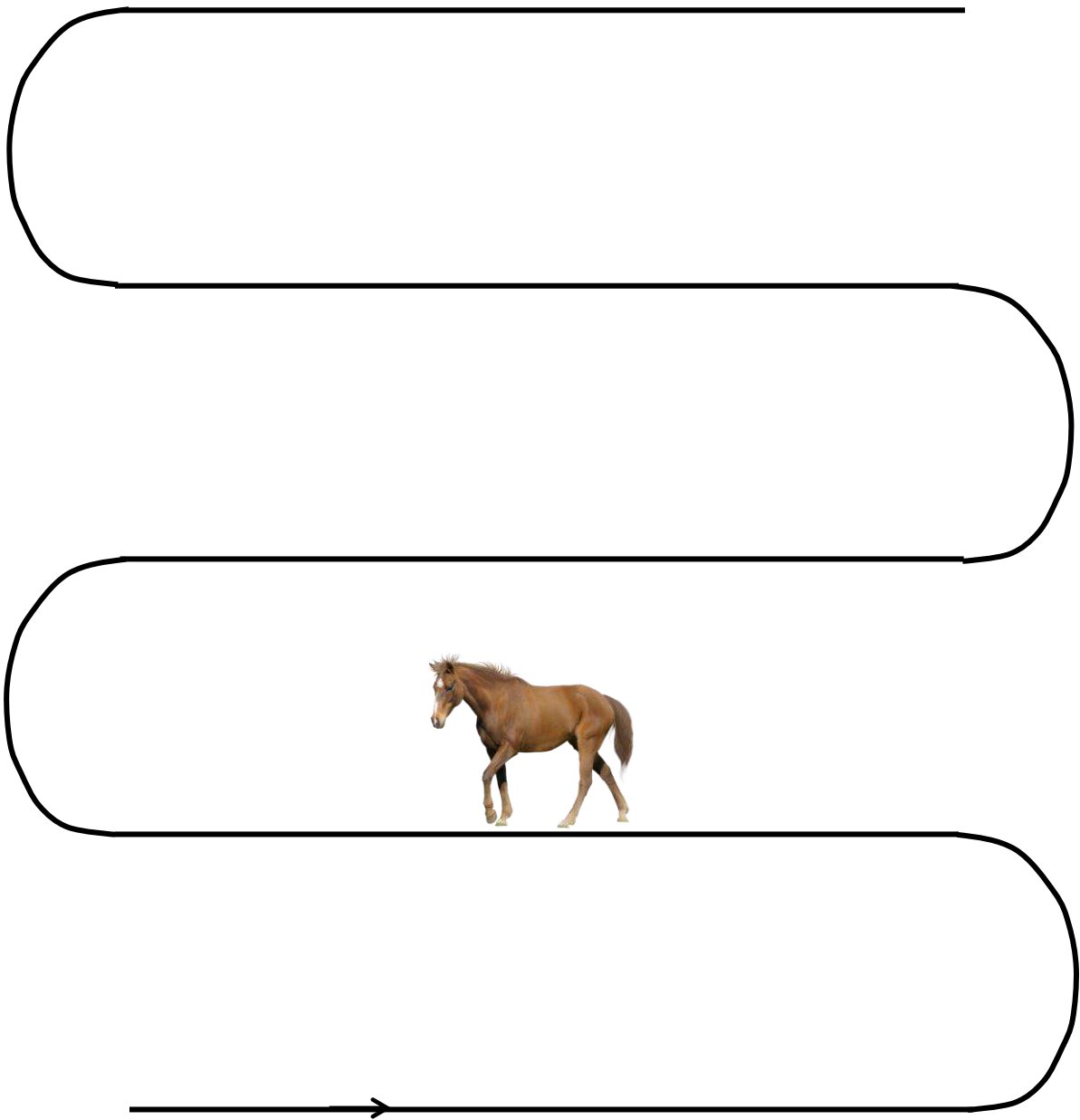


Goal: Increase speed while riding down the long side of the arena and slow and collect your horse on the short sides.

Success: Both horse and rider will gain confidence increasing and decreasing speed without excitement and the horse will learn to collect himself while developing muscle needed for collection

Advanced: Work at the walk and trot and then move on to loping the long side and trotting the ends.

Snaky Serpentine

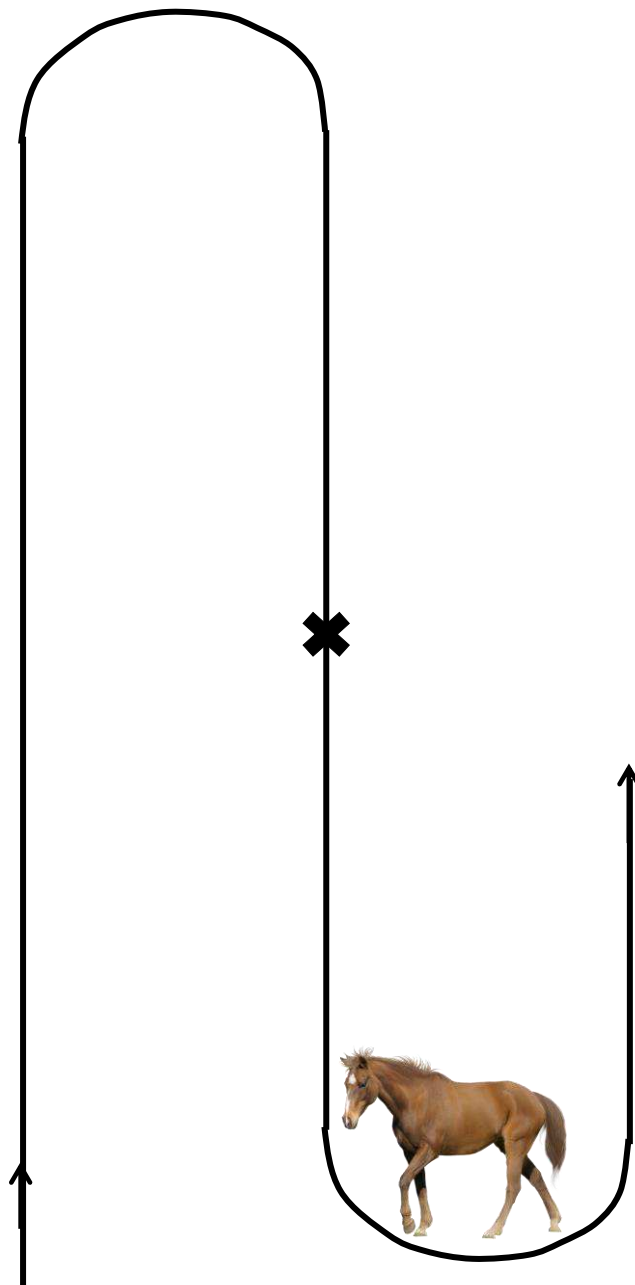


Goal: Make a series of connected S's back and forth across the width of the arena

Success: The horse will improve in lightness and flexibility and will listen to cues while making the loops the same size and shape.

Advanced: Make larger and narrower loops with the intention of keeping the horse listening to cues of when to turn.

Long Ways Serpentine

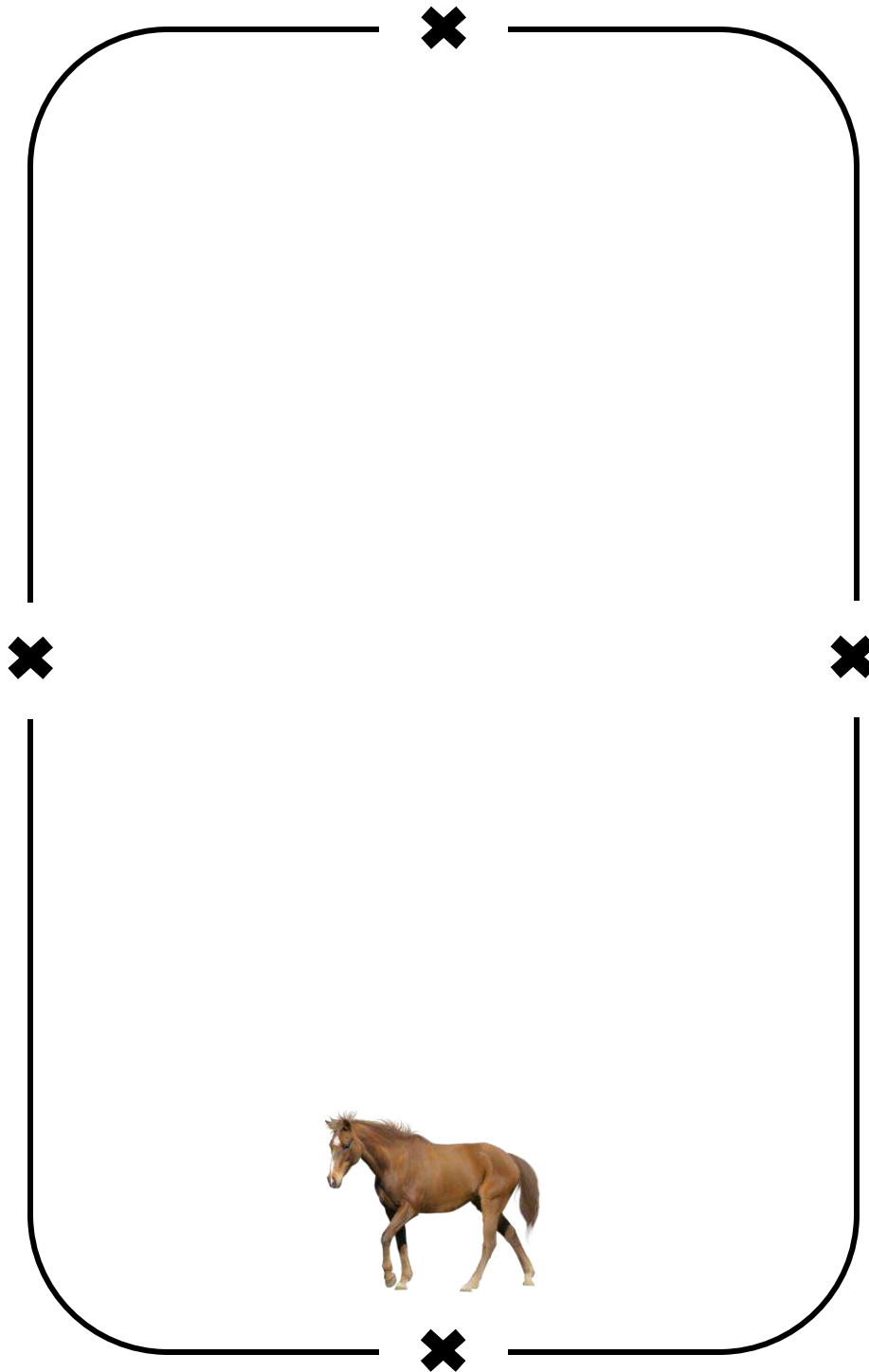


Goal: Make a serpentine the length of the arena, rather than across the width. At the X, perform a new maneuver like a sidepass, pivot, back-up etc) or cue a lead change. Continue down the remainder of the centerline, turning back up the rail in the opposite direction.

Success: Enhancement in bending, traveling straight, and transitions while keeping the horse straight down the center of the arena before and after the X.

Advanced: Vary speed and increase in difficulty of maneuvers at X.

Transition Tuner



Goal: Work on the rail, performing gait transitions at the mid-point of each straightaway.

Success: Enhances smooth upward and downward transitions and overall control which improves focus, collection and hind-end muscles. Prep the horse with half-halts to prepare the horse for each coming change.

Advanced: Work at faster gaits or coming to a complete stop at the X's.